

# 2024

## ANNUAL REPORT

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# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Since 1960, CARS has proudly served the citizens of Charlottesville and Albemarle County. Over the past 65 years, we have adapted and grown to meet the changing needs of our community. Each year, we take time to reflect on our challenges and celebrate our successes. 2024 gave us much to celebrate.

Last year, our volunteers contributed over 27,000 hours of service to their community, responded to over 3,000 incidents and standby requests, welcomed 33 new members to our family of more than 70 active members, and discovered new and meaningful ways to engage our community. This year also marked one of the most significant milestones in our history: we hired our first full-time Chief.

Leading an organization as complex as CARS is no small task. The demands of the role have grown beyond what a volunteer leader can manage alone. At the same time, building strong, consistent partnerships with the Charlottesville Fire Department and Albemarle County Fire Rescue has become essential. Each of these responsibilities is vital, and none can be set aside. Dedicated leadership is needed to bring them all together.

Following a nationwide search, we were fortunate to welcome Chief Dan Paxton as our first full-time Chief. Chief Paxton has already made a strong impact, and our members deeply value his leadership. His vision and guidance position us for continued growth and success.

For 65 years, our volunteers have worked tirelessly to earn your trust, and we remain committed to giving you the very best care whenever you need us.

**JON HOWARD**  
PRESIDENT

# OUR MISSION

To provide continuously improving high quality emergency medical and special rescue services to the citizens of the Charlottesville, Albemarle and the University of Virginia communities by utilizing the collaborative effort of a diverse team of highly skilled volunteers in alliance with partner agencies.

# OUR VISION

The Charlottesville-Albemarle Rescue Squad is committed to responding to the challenging needs of our service area and being a recognized leader in innovative, cost effective, clinically sophisticated & scientifically based delivery of comprehensive emergency medical & rescue services.



# A YEAR IN REVIEW



## 27,000

Total number of hours of service by CARS members to their community



## 2,944

Total calls for service in Charlottesville and Albemarle County



## 2,919

EMS incidents



## 25

Technical rescue incidents



## STANDBYS AND SPECIAL EVENTS



65 Unique standby events in 2024



3.5 hrs Average event duration



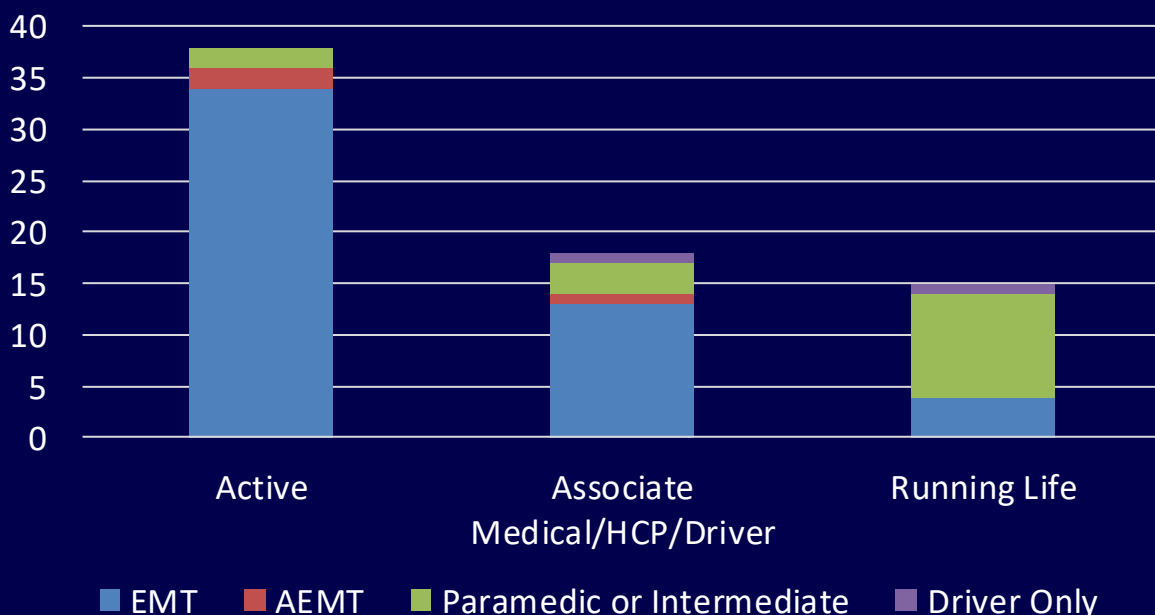
1-2 Providers per small events



20+ Providers per large events (Foxfield)

# MEMBERSHIP

Membership by Type and Certification Level



## RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, and WELLNESS

Examples of events organized by the Wellness Committee include general member social events, observer/collector brunches, RVA Marathon/Half Marathon team, group hikes, badminton, and peer support training.

CARS has greatly enhanced our ability to care for our own members through the work of our Chaplain, Chad Crowley. Chad conducts one-on-one and group follow ups after critical incidents and has been a fantastic resource for our team.



33

Number of new members welcomed to CARS in 2024.



20+

Member-oriented wellness events in 2024.

# ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITY

CARS CARES is the community outreach and engagement arm of the organization and was founded to help reduce health inequities and systemic barriers, rebuild trust in the healthcare system, prevent emergencies before they occur, and empower community members to respond effectively until EMS arrives. CARES initiatives—warm bags, community Narcan kits, and the “street sheets” stocked in our ambulances—are visible reflections of this important work. CARES is also present in the many community events led in large part by Marisa Falsone.

In 2024, the CARES program participated in or hosted 35 events across our community. We estimate that these events reached approximately 800 people based on event size and firsthand experience. We are working to improve our data collection so that in the future we can provide a more precise measure of CARES’ impact.



# A LOOK AHEAD

It has truly been one of the highlights of my professional life to serve as Chief of the Charlottesville-Albemarle Rescue Squad. Over the last two decades at CARS, and the last five in the role of Chief, I have had the privilege of working alongside an extraordinary group of volunteers whose unwavering commitment to excellence in emergency medical response exemplifies the very best of public service. Day and night, our members respond to 911 calls with skill, compassion, and professionalism, safeguarding the health and well-being of our community in its moments of greatest need.

Our service extends beyond emergency response. Through our CARES initiative, we have strengthened our ties to the community by expanding education, prevention, and support resources—helping to create a safer, healthier, and more resilient Charlottesville-Albemarle region. Equally important, we have deepened our commitment to the well-being of our own providers, recognizing that sustaining their health, resilience, and professional growth is essential to sustaining the high standards of care our community deserves.

As I conclude my tenure, I do so with profound gratitude—for the trust placed in me, for the dedication of our volunteers, and for the opportunity to lead such a remarkable organization. I have every confidence that the Charlottesville-Albemarle Rescue Squad will continue to innovate, grow, and uphold its proud tradition of service for many years to come.

**VIRGINIA LEAVELL. CHIEF 2020 - 2025**

