



Haley Knudsen minutes after birth in FRS ambulance on July 6, 1998



Lisa Kline, shortly after birth in FRS ambulance on September 15, 1998

FANWOOD COUPLES FONDLY RECALL BIRTHS OF DAUGHTERS IN AMBULANCE

By Moria C. Cappio, Times of Scotch Plains-Fanwood, July 29, 1999

Many people believe that each newborn baby is a miracle in itself. But for two Fanwood families, the miracle of their babies' birth seemed just a bit more momentous.

In 1998 Haley Knudson and Lisa Kline were very eager to get an early start in the world-- so eager, they didn't even allow their parents time to reach the hospital, choosing a Fanwood Rescue Squad ambulance as their delivery room.

For Joyce and Neil Knudson, July 6 of 1998 began quite early with a call to 911 around 4:30 a.m. after Mrs. Knudson's contractions jumped from eight minutes to two minutes apart. A speedy arrival of the Fanwood Police and Rescue Squad got mom and dad into the ambulance and three blocks away from the house before a persistent baby decided she had had enough.

"The Rescue Squad was only able to drive about a hundred yards away from the house before it had to pull over," remembers Mrs. Knudson.

The ambulance pulled over, traffic was stopped and, with Mr. Knudson looking on from the front seat, baby Haley was delivered on site by the team of Ed Sargent, Sue Davis, Bill Muirhead and Al Rossi.

Squad members focused on dealing with the clinical aspects of the situation, trying not to get too wrapped up in all the emotions. Mr. Sargent admitted he wasn't on the real "working end" of the delivery, but couldn't describe it as anything else but a "great experience."

Prior to Haley, the Fanwood Rescue Squad had gone almost two decades without delivering a baby, but their delivery days weren't over yet. Two months after the Knudson baby, on September 15, 1998, a desperate call brought the Squad to the home of Councilman Stewart Kline and his wife, Susan. Strong contractions had caught Mrs. Kline home alone and forced her to crawl to the phone to place the 911 call.

"I actually had to crawl to the phone and then all I could say was, 'I'm having a baby!'"

It was about 11 a.m. when squad members Bob Kruthers, Steve Siegal, Ruth Wegmann and Bill Crosby arrived. Mr. Kline returned home just in time to see his wife being loaded into the ambulance, but there wasn't even time for the rig to pull away from the Kline home. With two pushes, Lisa Kline was born in the parked ambulance, out in front of her own house.

"It was just amazing," said Councilman Kline of his daughter's birth.

Even after considering a more traditional hospital setting, Mrs. Knudson admitted she "wouldn't have done it any other way." Amongst all the families' excitement there was still lots of room to give credit to the Fanwood squad. Both sets of parents stressed how thrilled the squad was for the baby girls and how supportive they have remained.

(Scroll down for more pictures)



Joyce and Neil Knudsen with baby Haley and part of the childbirth team, from left to right, FRS member Ed Sargent, paramedic Al Rossi, FRS member Sue Davis and Fanwood Patrolman Tony Nassaur.



Same day, this time in front of the ambulance with FRS member Bill Crosby holding Haley's big sister Cara, FRS members Ed Sargent and Sue Davis.



December, 1998, Cara Knudsen with baby sister Haley.



Haley Knudsen at 1 year old, 1999, above, and 2 years old, 2000, right.



Lisa Kline at 2 years old, 2000.



Lisa Kline at 3 years old with mom, Susan, at the Shady Lane block party in September, 2001