



PRESS RELEASE

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AMBULANCES FOR UKRAINE – TWO ENROUTE FROM MUSCATINE

Two surplus Muscatine ambulances begin journey to continue service in Ukraine

MUSCATINE, Iowa – Two Muscatine ambulances are on their way to serve in Ukraine, a nation that is losing an average of seven ambulances per day in their war with Russia.

“These two units were declared surplus after we took delivery of new units,” Gary Ronzheimer, Battalion Chief for the Muscatine Fire Department, said. “They may

not have additional life in this country as ambulances but they still can serve to assist the sick and injured, and are badly needed in Ukraine.”



Ronzheimer had been looking for ways that the Muscatine Fire Department could help the citizens of Ukraine and ran across a story about OSF HealthCare, headquartered in Peoria, Ill.,



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who was working to send medical supplies and ambulances to Ukraine in response to the Russian invasion.

“I discussed donating our two older ambulances to the effort once they were declared surplus with Chief (Jerry) Ewers and he agreed that this would be a great way for Muscatine to support Ukrainian Medical Services.”

While the paperwork was being completed to declare the two ambulances surplus, Ronzheimer contacted Chris Manson, Vice-President of Government Relations with OSF Healthcare System, to determine just how Muscatine could donate the ambulances.

Working with the Consulate General of Ukraine in Chicago and the Ukrainian Medical Association of North America (UMANA), Manson has been able to ship five ambulances and medical supplies in three flights from Chicago since March 29.

Once the donation was approved by UMANA, the ambulances were scheduled to be shipped to Baltimore where they were to be loaded onto a ship in last half of June, taken across the Atlantic Ocean, and arrive in Ukraine in early July. The opportunity to speed up the delivery process presented itself earlier this week, with the contingency that the Muscatine ambulances needed to be in Chicago by noon on Thursday (June 9).

Manson informed Ewers and Ronzheimer that an aircraft large enough to handle both ambulances would be available on Monday out of Philadelphia but the ambulances had to be at the Philadelphia airport by Sunday. If the ambulances make the plane, they will likely be in Ukraine by Wednesday and transporting injured, sick, and wounded by the end of next week.

“We were excited to learn of the opportunity to put the ambulances on a cargo plane and see them in service to the Ukrainian people sooner than transporting them by ship,” Ewers said. “Once we received word about the opportunity, we prepared the ambulances and made arrangements to take them to the staging area in Chicago.”



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The two ambulances left Muscatine Thursday morning with Ronzheimer and Firefighter John Peters driving the two ambulances and Ewers following in his SUV to bring the pair back. They were greeted by Manson when they arrived at the Chicago warehouse staging area just after noon.

The Muscatine ambulances are the sixth and seventh to be sent to Ukraine as part of the OSF HealthCare project.

“This is an ongoing effort as, unfortunately, the need continues to grow,” Manson said in an OSF HealthCare press release. “Everyday ambulances are being destroyed in Ukraine. As soon as our ambulances arrive, they are immediately put to use across the country.”

CAPTION: Two surplus ambulances from the Muscatine Fire Department completed the first leg of their journey for service in Ukraine Thursday morning, arriving at the staging area in Chicago just afternoon. The ambulances were outfitted with stretchers and loaded with additional provisions and loaded onto the truck that transported them to Philadelphia Thursday afternoon. Pictured are, left to right: Muscatine Firefighter John Peters, Muscatine Fire Chief Jerry Ewers, OSF HealthCare Vice President Government Relations Chris Manson, and Muscatine Fire Battalion Chief Gary Ronzheimer.

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