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Oct. 5, 2016

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GOLD CROSS AMBULANCE CELEBRATES 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

Menasha, WI. This fall, Gold Cross Ambulance marks 25 years as a private, nonprofit, regional ambulance service owned and operated by two local health systems – Affinity Health System, part of Ascension, and ThedaCare.

The company that today serves more than 260,000 people in a 1,200 square mile region of northeastern Wisconsin traces its roots back almost 50 years to 1967, when Jim Welch purchased Lindy's Ambulance. In 1969, Lindy's Ambulance was renamed Gold Cross Ambulance Service. In 1974, the company advanced to paramedic level, or advanced lifesaving, care.

The former Appleton Medical Center (now ThedaCare Regional Medical Center-Appleton) and Theda Clark Medical Center (now ThedaCare Regional Medical Center-Neenah) bought the service from Welch in 1990. About that same time, St. Elizabeth Hospital and Mercy Medical Center, which are owned and operated by Affinity, purchased Metro Ambulance. Twenty-five years ago, in 1991, Gold Cross and Metro Ambulance merged, creating the current Gold Cross Ambulance Service.

"We are humbled to celebrate 25 years of providing ambulance service to the entire region," said Executive Director Mark Fredrickson. "Our founder, Jim Welch, had a vision and made it happen. Today we continue to strive to meet that vision of being the best in EMS. We do that in partnership with our owner health systems, our 27 first responder agencies across the region, and our many community partners," he added. "We are thankful for everyone's support through the years."

As it served the Fox Valley proper, the company continued to grow. In 2013, Gold Cross and Waupaca Area Ambulance merged, and in 2014, Gold Cross merged with ThedaCare Medical Center-New London's ambulance service. These mergers paved the way for regional residents to consistently receive paramedic-level EMS care in rural communities. Today, Gold Cross serves parts of Outagamie, Calumet, Waupaca and Winnebago counties.

With a fleet of 17 ambulances and 186 employees, the service provides emergency medical care, advanced lifesaving care, quality transportation and healthcare training to the scores of communities it serves. In 2015, Gold Cross responded to more than 21,000 calls. With 10 stations throughout the region and roving units at the ready, Gold Cross always dispatches the ambulance that is closest to the call.

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Gold Cross 25th Anniversary – Add 1

Gold Cross works closely with its owner healthcare systems' emergency departments and other specialties such as trauma, neurology and cardiology to develop collaborative care processes. That collaboration allows Gold Cross to provide the right pre-hospital care, and ensures a smooth transition from paramedic care to hospital care. Paramedics know the ins and outs of trauma, stroke and heart care – and everything in between – and expertly provide pre-hospital care to prepare patients for the next steps upon arrival at the hospital.

Each Gold Cross paramedic experiences 600 patient encounters every year. That means they get very good at what they do. In addition, they receive ongoing training in new technologies, new clinical processes, care of seniors and care of children. As the highest trained level of EMS providers, paramedics also carry key medications in the ambulances to support their lifesaving care.

About Gold Cross

In its 25th year of service, Gold Cross Ambulance provides paramedic-level care for 911 medical emergencies, and non-emergency transport services to more than 260,000 people in 1,200 square miles of portions of Outagamie, Winnebago, Calumet and Waupaca counties, responding to more than 21,000 calls each year. The company also brings EMS expertise to the region through its management services, making it the only not-for-profit, regional ambulance service in the state. Gold Cross Ambulance is jointly owned by Affinity Health System, part of Ascension, and ThedaCare. To learn more about Gold Cross Ambulance, visit www.goldcross.org.