

Who was Al Hess? Al was a devoted husband and father of two children Kristen and Al E. He was a registered emergency nurse and he loved Norwood, NJ. He was a resident of Norwood who believed in the goodness of people. He believed in serving his neighbor.

Al was raised in a volunteer service minded family. Al's mother, Irene Welenc, moved to Norwood in the early 1950's. She lived in a home on Blanch Ave. which was later purchased by Al and his wife Susan. Al's grandfather, Henry Welenc, helped establish the Norwood Senior Citizen Club.

Like his father, Al was heavily involved in the Boy Scouts of America. He was an Eagle Scout and preformed many Eagle Scout ceremonies for new Eagles. He was a Cub Master and an Assistant Scout Master. He couched baseball, soccer and was a member of the PTA.

When Al was a teenager he was a lifeguard at The Norwood Swim Club. Later he became a 25 year member and severed on the Board of Trustees for over 20 years as President and Secretary. Al Served on the Norwood Board of Health.

Al's biggest love was the Norwood Emergency Medical Service where he served as an EMT for over 25 years. He held the positions of Chief, line officers and trustee. He responded to over 4000 calls for help and has been credited with saving many lives including that of a former NJ Jet and that of a Norwood firefighter. He was a CRP and First Aid Instructor. Al had also been credited with helping to end a long time feud between the EMS and Fire Company and on September 11, 2001, like many others, Al responded to the call for help at the World trade center attacks.

On November 5, 2008, at 50 year old, Al passed away from gastric cancer. This is an accounting of a memory written by a close friend Lee Wallin. It says who Al was. It was his last EMS call.

Al had been through a bad week. He was getting weaker and feeling poorly. The corps was going to provide EMS support for the Jr. Football League game, and he always enjoyed those types of events. I encouraged him to come down to Kennedy Field and sit with us, assuming it would just be a visit. There were two games going on at the same time and the place was packed. Other members of the corps were spread around the field.

Al and I were sitting on a big rock. I had just gotten a cheeseburger. A parent came running up to tell us that child had hurt his neck on the far field, maybe seriously. I made a radio transmission to the other members who headed to the player, put down my cheeseburger, and went to the ambulance to get equipment. Al said "Want some help?"

I said "It's up to you. If you feel up to it, sure." We all know what he did. We loaded up a cot with a long board, collars, straps, and more and headed across the field. We met up with the rest of our team and Al helped us package the young player. We wheeled him across the field to our ambulance.

A concerned mom showed up and got into the ambulance with her son. I asked Al if he felt up to coming, you know what he said. He and Sara, got in the back. As usual, Al put the child and mother at ease. The child is fine and came home that night.This is the Al I remember.

