

## Estes Park Ambulance Service: A Critical Community Asset

*Guy Beesley, Director, Emergency Medical Services*

Estes Park Medical Center contributes a significant role among first responders in the Estes Valley. Our EPMC EMS department serves 3 counties in a more than 1000 square mile area working alongside five different fire departments as well as the Rocky Mountain National Park rangers. This includes all territory east of the continental divide within RMNP, the Town of Estes Park, Hwy 43 to "The Retreat" past Glen Haven, Hwy 34 to Waltonia Bridge, Hwy 36-mile marker 14 past Pinewood Springs, Big Elk Meadows Fire Department community, and the Allenspark Fire District. Twenty-four hours a day, we staff 2 Advanced Life Support ambulances and a quick response supervisor vehicle with a Critical Care Paramedic. These resources respond to all 911 calls within our territory as well as perform inter-facility transfers to other medical institutions within the state.




Our fleet consists of 6 ALS ambulances, 1 quick response suburban, and a mental health transport vehicle. Our geographic location and response area incur high demand on our transport apparatus and require continuous reallocation and maintenance within our operations. During peak tourist season, June through November, it is not uncommon for us to have 4 or more ambulances requested for response during the same timeframe. This occurred 81 times in 2017. Fortunately, we have 7 local paramedics that are dedicated to our community and monitor our EMS radio channel on their days off to respond if needed.

We live and/or work in a unique and desired location. Thus our EMS team experiences extenuating circum-

stances throughout the year with weather, roads, terrain, and distances of travel with an increase during the busy tourist season. Common but not limited to this short list include:

- Carry outs either in Rocky Mountain National Park or nearby National Forest Lands with hiking, biking, 4x4, ATV and horse access. When called to a back country event, the crew is designated to the call, often hiking in, until the patient or patients are treated and evacuated.
- Extended response times can occur when responding to the far ends of the district.
- Multiple 911 calls or multiple transfers or a combination of both are common.
- We also have a contingency agreement with Left Hand Canyon Fire District to provide ambulance response if the primary ambulance from the Front Range has a delayed response.
- Our team also instructs CPR/First Aid/Advanced Care Life Support/Pediatric Advanced Life Support to EPMC Clinicians as well as surrounding community organizations and citizens.

Often when networking with other hospitals and EMS departments, it is noted just how fortunate the Estes Valley is to have the experience and clinicians we employ. Our team averages 19 years of advanced life support experience and currently we have 5 Flight Paramedics on staff. This clinical excellence has contributed to time efficient programs such as the EPMC Air CAT and Stroke Alert protocols to ensure maximum effort in saving heart muscle and brain. Due to our geographical location, air medical support is determined on scene and if unavailable, our utilization of Critical Care Paramedicine is launched for critical care ground transport. As one can see, we strive to serve the Estes Valley Community and its visitors at the highest level possible. We may be a small EMS service in Front Range comparisons of staff, equipment, and budget, but we are **Dynamite** in patient care and service to our community! 

## From the Executive Director

The EPMC Foundation recently had the pleasure of hosting nearly 60 donors, staff and friends to celebrate the recent launch of the new Infant Security System and the installation of 35 new beds at Prospect Park Living Center, EPMC's on-campus skilled nursing facility. These two projects will have significant impact on the patients in the New Life Center as well as the residents at PPLC. We are grateful to those who made these projects possible, and we salute them for their generosity.

Projects like this cannot happen without the support of philanthropists. As I was considering this, I thought to myself "what would Estes Park look like without philanthropists?" For the purpose of this discussion, I am identifying philanthropists as "those who demonstrate altruistic concern for human welfare and advancement, usually manifested by donations of money, property, or work to needy persons, by endowment of institutions of learning and hospitals, and by generosity to other socially useful purposes." Isn't that a great definition? To be clear, I downloaded it – I am not taking credit for creating it. Getting back to my question, what would Estes Park look like without philanthropists?

First of all, we would have no Veteran's Memorial. People like Vern Mertz, Dick Life and many others from various branches of the military worked very hard to establish a tribute to service members right here in Estes Park. Additionally, without philanthropists, the Estes Valley would not have the Quota Club Loan Closet. Many Quota Club members, including Peggy Lynch, Mary Jo Seifert and Linda Polland work tirelessly each week to ensure that people get access to medical equipment needed for recovery and rehabilitation.

Philanthropists are important to Estes Park. Without them, the YMCA of the Rockies would not be the organization that it is today. Donors and volunteers like Bill Sweet, Steve Goldmann and others ensure that families from across the nation and beyond experience the Rockies. Also, what about the Elizabeth Guild? Not only do people like Jan Kilgore, Susan Henshaw, Rita Bruce and many others help ensure EPMC is successful, they also make low-price clothing and household items available for the underserved here in our community.

Additionally, literacy is important in a community like Estes Park, filled with very educated people. The Estes Valley Public Library started because of the vision of the Estes Park Woman's Club over 100 years ago. Today, members like Becky Elrod, Diane Palmer, Kathy Osborne, Pat Pickering and Sue Hansen continue to promote projects that enhance the community.

Lastly, without philanthropists, we might not have a hospital in Estes Park. Roger Knutsson (grandfather of Debby Hughes) made a generous contribution which secured the property that would eventually be known as EPMC. And since then, the tradition of philanthropy continues as donors such as Paul and Donna Newendorp, Cynthia Krumme, Audrey TeSelle and others provide charitable contributions to ensure the tradition of excellence continues.

Thank you, philanthropists – your generosity makes Estes Park what it is today.

Sincerely,



**Kevin L. Mullin**, MNM, CFRE  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**MAY 19**

*Estes Park Safety Fair*

**JUNE 1–JULY 7**

*Paint Estes Pink*

**JUNE 16–17**

*Estes Park Marathon/Half Marathon*

**JULY 5–10**

*Rooftop Rodeo / Paint Estes Pink*





## Marianne Solms, RN, BSN

My Mom, age 16, came to the YMCA of the Rockies from her Kansas high school in 1927 as a representative for the Girls Reserve. I first came to Estes when I was just a toddler as my parents stayed at Woods' Camp, on The Big Thompson River just below the old original entrance to Rocky Mountain National Park. My family fell in love with RMNP and Estes. My folks built their Estes home in 1973 – just a short time after the beginnings of EPMC.

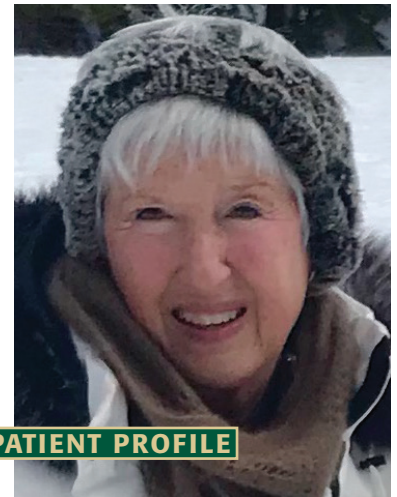
My husband, Bill, and I finally made Estes our permanent home two years ago. Through this journey our family has had EPMC help us with several medical incidents including my dad's massive heart attack – triaged at EPMC ER and helicoptered down to Denver; my mom's dehydration with electrolyte imbalance; our daughter-in-law's flu/altitude sickness while visiting from Miami resulting in two ER visits and a 4-day admit to prevent seizures; my two emergent 911 visits to our ER – one heart attack with ambulance to Medical Center of the Rockies and another for severe flu/dehydration. Also, EPMC did my carpal tunnel surgery and routine colonoscopy – *all* with excellent care and good outcomes!

I spent my working years at Miami Children's hospital as Nurse Manager of our Surgical, Orthopedics, and Trauma Unit. So, I have observed these experiences at EPMC with a critical and very interested eye. I have been relieved and so very pleased to realize the expert care we have all received from all departments at the medical center.

I am very comfortable living in these mountains – in our so special, unique Estes Park - with EPMC at the "ready". We are able to comfortably and responsibly live in our little bit of "Heaven". Now that we are here year-round, our doctors and care are *here* in *Estes Park*. We are currently followed by cardiology, orthopedics, dermatology, gastroenterology, and gynecology. Without EPMC I don't believe our Rocky Mountain dreams would be reasonable. Thank you to all the amazing, dedicated staff, professionals, and administration for making this possible!

My heart and support are totally with EPMC. A growing, excellent community facility like this one always needs our support. I would encourage us all to consider making small to significant gifts, whatever we can, to EPMC to solidify its future and, thus, our future so our family members can make this their home as well.

And, in case you're wondering, no one prompted me to say any of this! It's all my story of growing with this community and with EPMC! +



## Quota Club of Estes Park

Quota International is a non-profit organization empowering women, children, the deaf, hard of hearing, and speech impaired in local communities around the world. More than 5,000 Quotarians – women, men, and youth – are Volunteers in Action, known for their outstanding enthusiasm and service in 260 communities in 13 countries.

The Estes Park Chapter of Quota International was chartered in 1949 by a small group of women with hopes of raising money to purchase an ambulance for the local hospital. To date, the chapter has helped purchase 19 ambulances for EPMC and the community.

Today, fundraising to provide ambulances for the Estes Park Medical Center continues to be a project of the local chapter's 49 members. They will be raising funds this fall to purchase another new ambulance for EPMC through a media and mailing campaign according to chapter president, Alicia Cossota.

Along with the ambulance drive committee, the chapter has seven other very active committees that

help support our wonderful community: Community Action, Disadvantaged Women & Children, Hearing and Speech, Service to Seniors, Service to Youth, Student Grants and World Services.

"Another notable item is that we recently completed a fundraiser for the Estes Park Police Department. This fundraiser purchased 14 Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) – one for each police vehicle. Wonderful lifesaving technology for each car since many times the police are the first on the scene," states Cossota. "This is an indirect support of EPMC as well."

The chapter hosts two fundraising events each year to support its activities – the Holiday Home Tour in December and Taste of Estes in April. For more information on the EP Quota chapter and how to get involved, visit <https://quotaclubofestespark.org/> +





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## Benefits of a POD Account

We have all heard the stories of probate taking inordinate amounts of time, tying up assets, and generally causing trouble for our loved ones during a time of great grief. In most cases the process is relatively smooth and straightforward here in Colorado under existing laws. In other states that is not necessarily the case. Probate laws are constantly evolving in many ways but the likelihood is that the process is here to stay. The good news is that there are ways to work within the law to make it a bit easier to manage. I hope that this info will help your family navigate the process more effectively.

It may be beneficial for you to have the ability to transfer money to heirs or other people outside of the probate process. One way to accomplish this objective is the use of a "Pay on Death" (POD) account. Typically, these are for deposit accounts at the bank, and they could include Savings / Checking Accounts, Certificates of Deposit (CDs), etc. By setting up a POD beneficiary with your bank, this will allow your designated person to receive these funds upon your death and it is very simple and outside of the probate process.

Once you have designated your beneficiary, upon your death the person will simply need to provide a copy of your death certificate along with their official identification and the funds will be transferred to them. There are a couple of things that you will want to consider, however, in such a scenario. First of all, it is not advisable to

*Kevin L. Mullin, MNM, CFRE*

use this method to transfer all of your liquid assets. Using a POD account does not negate the probate process and so you do not want to risk leaving your estate with significant unfunded liabilities. It is likely that the government will seek to recover funds distributed through POD if taxes are unpaid by the estate.

Another important consideration is to ensure that your will/Estate Plan does not conflict with your POD account(s). This could cause stress and discord amongst surviving heirs as they attempt to interpret your intent.

Lastly, it is important to mention that your beneficiary cannot access the funds while you are still alive, you maintain total control of them. You can spend all of the money if you wish, and you can change your beneficiary at any time. It does not count as an asset for your beneficiary while you are alive, and so their creditors cannot attach it in satisfaction of their own debt.

POD accounts are a good tool when used in the right way. POD accounts allows you to transfer assets quickly and easily without a lot of difficulty. Whether it is your relative, the future caretaker of your pet, or your favorite charities, you will be able to direct dollars effectively and efficiently with minimal administration or taxation issues.

If you have questions about estate planning strategies, you can contact me at (970) 577-4306 or [kmullin@epmedcenter.com](mailto:kmullin@epmedcenter.com) and I would be happy to visit with you. ✚