

# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



EAGLE COUNTY  
PARAMEDIC SERVICES

# FROM OUR CEOS

Trying to sum up 2020 is difficult yet there are some words that will forever be associated: unprecedented; pivot; PPE...pandemic. At Eagle County Paramedic Services, we too experienced the challenges that 2020 presented. However, it is also a year that we will hold up as an example of what can be accomplished when faced with adversity. We have another set of words that we use for 2020: resilience; creativity; dedication; evolution.

At EC Paramedics our mission is to provide skilled, professional and compassionate healthcare to our community. This past year provided an opportunity to prove our mettle and showcase the breadth of our professionalism, experience and the invaluable service we provide to our community.

But we've also seen changes. Seasoned veterans retired and EC Paramedics adopted a dyad model. In this model, the union of in-the-field and administrative leaders provides a best-of-both-worlds structure.

However, we feel that in the midst of change comes the opportunity for new growth. We hope this report illustrates the challenges we faced and showcases the spirit, creativity and resilience of the entire EC Paramedics team.

Jim Bradford  
CEO/COO

Amy Gnojek  
CEO/CFO

# WE ARE ONE ECPS

Our mission is to provide skilled, professional, and compassionate healthcare to our community. As always, we hope that the community will have no need of our services but the reality—as shown by the past year—is that EC Paramedics is a critical asset to the community. Eagle County is truly a small, rural community but the knowledge, professionalism and level of care provided by EC Paramedics is world-class, rivaling that of much larger organizations in major metropolitan areas. Looking back on 2020 is important; our focus is now looking forward to 2021 and beyond.

## MISSION

**Our mission is to provide skilled, professional and compassionate healthcare to our community.**

## VISION

**Our vision is to be a world leader in out-of-hospital healthcare.**

## OUR VALUES

- **Integrity**                      **We are honest, committed and consistent in our words and actions.**
- **Excellence**                    **We exceed expectations by continuously improving knowledge, practice and skills.**
- **Community**                   **We are helpful, compassionate, and respectful in all interactions.**
- **Patient Advocacy**           **We act in the best interest of our patients.**
- **Professionalism**            **We are loyal, ethical and team oriented.**

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Jeff Babb  
CHAIR, PRESIDENT



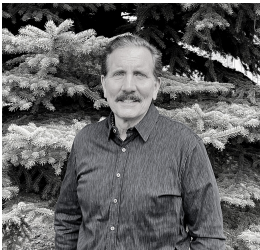
Janet Bartnik  
VICE CHAIR, SECRETARY



Mark Bergman  
VICE CHAIR



Dan Smith  
VICE CHAIR



Dr. John "Chip" Woodland  
VICE CHAIR, TREASURER



# **2020: READINESS, RESPONSE, RESILIENCE**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

### **READINESS: JAN. 1 - MARCH 15**

A strong start to the year brought optimism yet the storm was approaching.

### **RESPONSE: FROM EPICENTER TO EXCELLENCE**

Eagle County emerged as one of the COVID-19 "hotspots" in the nation; 9-1-1 calls decreased as people sheltered in place yet the Community Paramedics (CPs) saw a dramatic increase in cases. Prepping for the pandemic included securing PPE, creating a "surge crew" and revising job descriptions. New programs were created and community partnerships were strengthened and expanded.

### **RESILIENCE: GROWTH FROM ADVERSITY**

As hope for a vaccine became reality, EC Paramedics started looking to the future: new programs, new opportunities and a new perspective on what being "a world leader in out-of-hospital healthcare" means.

## **READINESS: JAN. 1 - MARCH 15, 2021**

Looking back on the beginning of 2020, most people could not have anticipated what was to come. We started 2020 with our busiest month ever by almost all measures. For the month of January, 911 calls were up 6%, transports were up 4% and transfers were up 26% over prior years; mental health transfers were also up.

Eagle County Paramedics hired Coco Andrade and Gladys Tellez--the first Behavioral Health Navigators--in March 2020; Katie Coakley, the Communications and Marketing Specialist, was slated to start in April 2020. Two new Board members joined the District: Janet Bartnik was appointed in February; Mark Bergman was appointed in May.

COVID-19 was just a specter, looming on the horizon. However, as an international tourist destination, Eagle County public health officials starting making plans, preparing for the worst while still hoping for the best.

By March, the "worst" seemed to approach like a tsunami. Within two weeks of Eagle County's first confirmed case on March 4 (an international tourist), Vail and Beaver Creek made global headlines as a Covid-19 hotspot. Vail Health CEO Will Cook warned that the number of infected persons was already likely "in the hundreds, if not thousands."

On March 15, Vail Resorts shut down its North American ski resorts for the season six weeks early, an unprecedented move that effectively emptied Eagle County of tourists. By the end of the month, the governor had issued a stay-at-home order and closed in-person schools.

That was the end of "normal."

However, EC Paramedics' leadership was already planning with community partners. EC Paramedics enacted an emergency declaration and plans were set in motion.

# RESPONSE: FLIPPING THE SCRIPT



**20%**

## DECREASE IN VOLUME IN 911 CALLS

When the stay-at-home orders were put in place, call volume dropped 20% from 2019.

**93%**

## COMMUNITY PARAMEDICS CALLS INCREASED BY >90%

However, the need for in-home care increased drastically. CP referrals rose more than 90% over 2019 numbers.

# RESPONSE: PROACTIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING

However, demanding times call for creative solutions. The field staff and administrative team rose to the challenge.



As fears of losing crews to the pandemic rose, EC Paramedics formed a surge crew of stand-by paramedics from Vail, Beaver Creek Ski Patrol and Mountain Rescue.



When PPE was scarce and difficult to procure, we purchased Helly Hansen rain suits at a discount to serve as reusable, washable PPE.



As the CPs were stretched to their limits, we brought in nurses from Vail Health to help handle the load.



And as testing became of paramount importance, the newly hired Community Health Navigators joined forces with the MIRA bus to facilitate mobile testing.

By the end of April, even after treating more than 120 COVID possible and/or positive patients, not a single employee had tested positive for COVID.

During the entire pandemic, not a single employee contracted COVID from work.



## RESPONSE: OUTSIDE THE (EMS) BOX

In the midst of COVID, wildfires raged across the state and in our backyard. EC Paramedics was able to respond after the formation of our inaugural crew of red carded paramedics. The six ECPS paramedics are specially trained to respond to medical or traumatic events in the wildland environment; they're also certified to serve on the line or from an ambulance that is equipped with specific tools and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to deploy for weeks at a time.



In 2020, EC Paramedics deployed to two wildfires and stood by for another for a total of 11 weeks of deployment. These deployments generated more than \$175K in revenue for the District, invaluable training for staff and critical partnerships with our fellow responders in keeping our communities safe.



## CLOSE TO HOME: THE GRIZZLY CREEK FIRE

On Aug. 10, 2020, the Grizzly Creek Fire ignited in Glenwood Canyon. The fire's proximity to I-70 resulted in a 13-day closure of the interstate; it also threatened the Shoshone Generating Station and resulted in the evacuation of residences in the area as well as closure of recreational land in portions of White River National Forest.



EC Paramedics not only responded to the fire in an EMS capacity but also as part of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) from Aug. 17-31, 2020.

The Grizzly Creek fire burned a total of 32,631 acres and was declared 100% contained on Dec. 18, 2020.

# RESPONSE: ANSWERING THE CALLS



18

## TYPES OF TRAUMA TRACKED

58% of injuries were falls; 15% were motor vehicle accidents

30%

## CALLS THAT ARE MEDICAL IN NATURE, NOT TRAUMA

This can include chest pain, headache, fever, seizure, etc.

15

## NUMBER OF TIMES WE RESPONDED TO AN EPISTAXIS CALL

"Epistaxis" is a nosebleed.

# RESPONSE: ANSWERING THE CALLS



EAGLE COUNTY  
PARAMEDIC SERVICES

## In 2020, EC Paramedics

Responded to 4285 9-1-1 calls



61% of patients required transport to a receiving hospital



Community Paramedics treated 644 patients in their homes



CPs responded to 146 behavioral health crisis calls with Hope Center clinicians



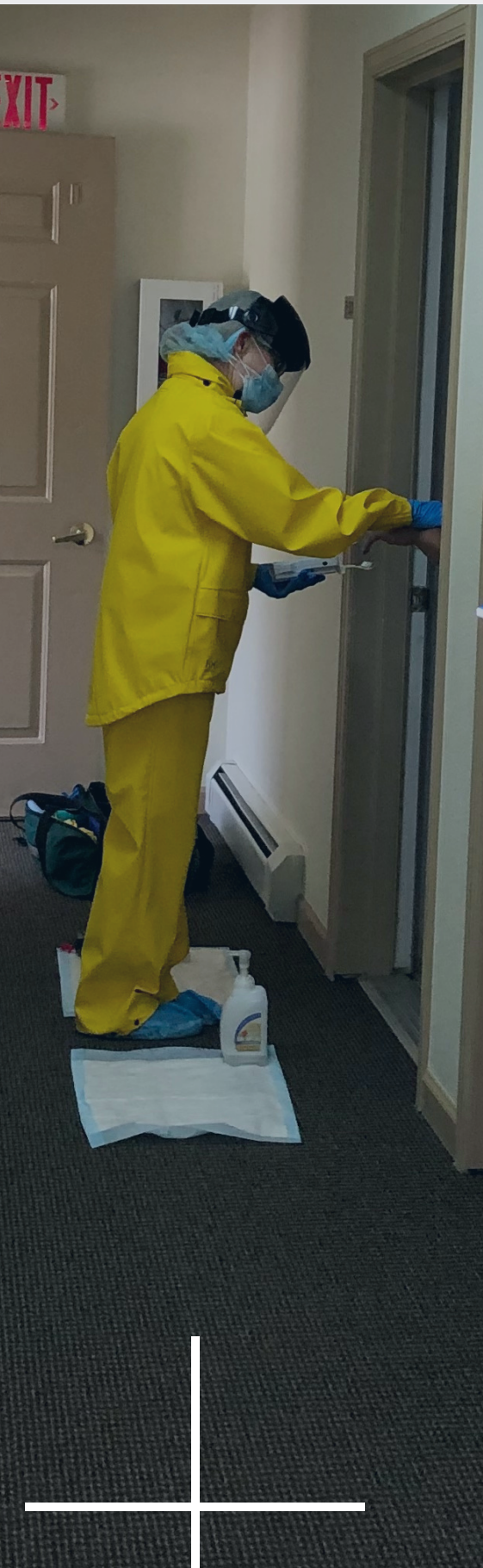
Critical Care paramedics transported 486 patients to >17 hospitals



5 Paramedics deployed for 11 weeks to wildfires



# RESPONSE: COLLABORATION FOR COMMUNITY



## Eagle County Co-Responder Crisis Team: Mental Health Therapists In Partnership with Community Paramedics

Thanks to a Colorado Health Foundation grant, a co-responder program was established between the EC Paramedics' Community Paramedics and Hope Center in 2019.

Before the grant was awarded, Community Paramedics were only on duty for 10-hour shifts, five days per week. Because of the support from the Colorado Health Foundation, EC Paramedics and the Hope Center expanded to a 24/7/365 co-response model. In 2020, the second year of round-the-clock availability, the calls for co-responders to consistently provide support to people with a mental health crisis grew significantly.

Their unfailing availability also made a big difference in the way law enforcement responded to people experiencing an emotional crisis. In 2020, Law Enforcement officers consistently call crisis co-responders to the scene when behavioral health issues are a factor. Law enforcement officers also report a much higher degree of trust, faith and utilization of the co-response crisis team when clinicians are available around the clock.

The direct benefits to people in crisis and to First Responders are clear.

By the numbers:

- CPs responded to 146 behavioral health crisis calls to 101 individuals with Hope Center clinicians in 2020, up from 113 co-responding crisis calls in the prior year. The mental health crisis team responded more than one time to approximately 75 individuals.
- EC Paramedics transported 216 behavioral health patients to a hospital in 2020, more than double the 104 behavioral health transports in 2019. Many of these patients were experiencing both mental health and substance abuse challenges. This reflects the significant increase in stress and behavioral health challenges facing the whole community during the COVID crisis.

# RESPONSE: BEST OF THE BEST



## What does it take to work at Eagle County Paramedics?

Paramedics and EMTs are at the intersection of healthcare, public safety and public health; we are here to respond to emergencies and provide skilled, compassionate care for our community. We're more than ambulance drivers: We have some of the most highly trained and skilled paramedics in the country providing exceptional care to you--our community.

EMTs and paramedics provide basic and advanced medical care to patients in the field. In addition to achieving national certifications, our EMTs and paramedics complete a six month training program before working in the field.

We also have paramedics with these advanced certifications. These certifications require hundreds of hours of additional education, training and experience.



**SEARCH & RESCUE**



**CRITICAL CARE**



**COMMUNITY PARAMEDICS**



**WILDLAND FIRE EMS**



**TACTICAL**

# RESILIENCE: AWARDS AND ACCOLADES



### Named to Outside's Best Places to Work

- Included in top 50 companies
- Only EMS or Medical Group on the list



### Named Top 5 EMS Patient Satisfaction & Engagement Results for 2019:

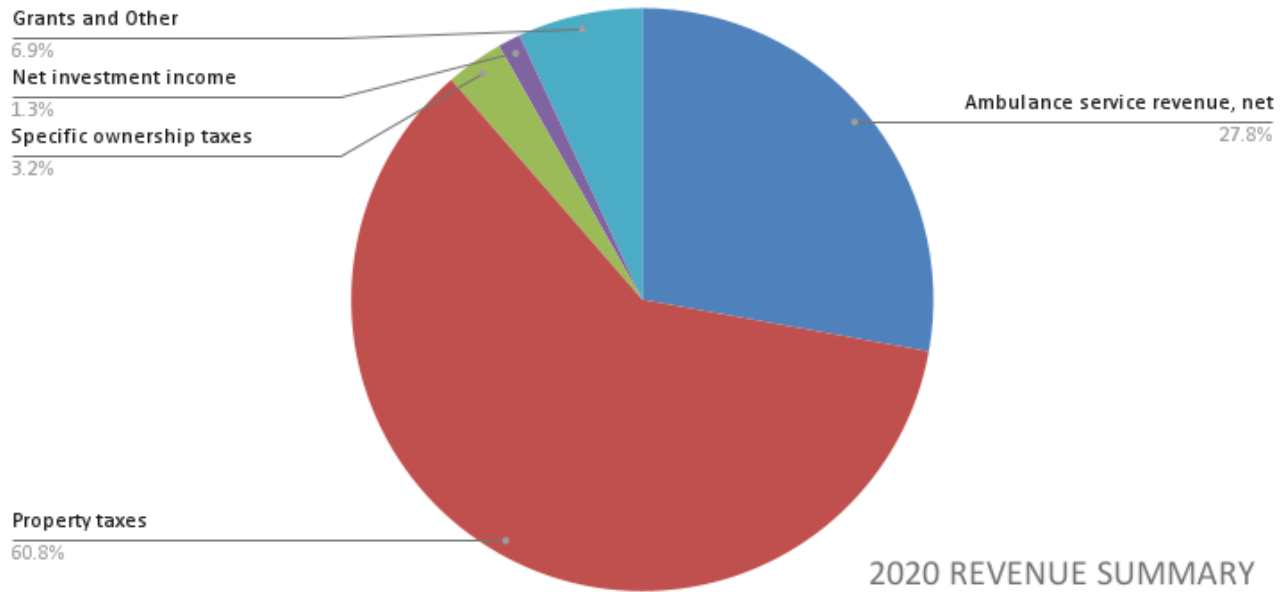
- Awarded for achieving the highest levels of EMS patient satisfaction and engagement (% very satisfied) results for the calendar year ending 2019 in Baldrige Group's national database of clients



### Eagle County Public Safety Appreciation Awards

- These awards are community-based, illustrating our impact in our service area
- Pete Brandes received Distinguished Service Award
- Kevin Creek and the Behavioral Health Navigators received the Unit Citation Award

# RESILIENCE: BY THE NUMBERS (FINANCIALS)



## 2020 ASSETS SUMMARY

