

Opinion: Time to recognize EMS workers

To the community,

Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Holidays and bad-weather days included. These are the times that paramedics and emergency medical technicians of the fire departments are on the job serving the communities we live in. Long shifts, extreme weather conditions and an ever-changing and unstable work environment make pre-hospital Emergency Medical Services truly a labor of love.

Monday marked the beginning of National EMS Week and presents an opportunity to honor the men and women who deliver pre-hospital 911 emergency medical care throughout the Lake Tahoe region and beyond. This vital service in our area is provided primarily by cross-trained multi-role emergency responders who are based at South Lake Tahoe Fire Department, Lake Valley Fire Protection District, and Tahoe-Douglas Fire Department. Over the last 20 plus years, the fire services have been re-tooled to be an all hazards responder including the provision of pre-hospital emergency medical care.

Fire service-based EMS providers are located, trained, and equipped to provide local communities with timely pre-hospital 91-1 emergency medical response and patient care. Pre-hospital emergency providers respond quickly, professionally, and compassionately in serving the community – and they do it everyday– 24/7.

California Tahoe Emergency Services Operations Authority (CTESOA) the EMS operations portion of Lake Valley Fire Protection District and South Lake Tahoe Fire Department has completed its first 10 years of providing reliable high quality 911 services to the South Shore community. Because of

this exceptional performance El Dorado County Department of Health has awarded CTESOA a new 5 to 10 year performance based contract to continue serving the local community.

National EMS Week is a time to pause and say thank you to the entire EMS Community, including Paramedics, Firefighter/EMTs and Dispatchers – our nation's emergency response professionals.

Bryan Pond, CalStar South Lake Tahoe