

# Letter: Saying thanks during difficult time

To the community,

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District, the South Lake Tahoe Fire Department, the fire departments on the North Shore, and so many wonderful residents of Lake Tahoe for their generous outpouring of support for our nephew, fire Capt. Pete Dern of Fresno.

Only 10 days ago, Pete led his firefighting team onto the roof of a burning garage. Suddenly, the unimaginable happened. Pete fell through the roof of the garage into the inferno below. Pete's fellow firefighters removed the garage door and, guided by Pete's own voice, they found their way through the heavy smoke to locate him. Their rescue was heroic and life-changing.

Currently, in critical condition with severe burns over 70 percent of his body, Pete's new life has begun at the Leon S. Peters Burn Center at the Community Regional Medical Center in Fresno. Numerous surgeries are scheduled for Pete over the next several months. His family, including his very large firefighting family, stand beside Pete every single day. In turn, the outstanding nurses and support team at the hospital and the tireless Fresno firefighters stand beside Pete's wife and daughter every second of the day.

The outpouring of support for Pete and his family has extended throughout California, Nevada, the entire U.S., and even internationally by kind-hearted and caring firefighters and citizens everywhere. To all of them, we say thank you.

Most of all, we cannot thank our local Tahoe firefighters for the impressive support they have provided to Pete and our

family. Their encouraging words, emails, and outreach have been tremendous and we are deeply thankful. We are so fortunate to be part of a community that has such admirable heroes among us.

Our deepest gratitude,

**Joan and Joe Truxler, Marla Bay**