

Like Guardian Angels

Twice I have required the assistance of some of our local paramedics on the Sunshine Coast where I live. Each time gave me a sense of relief from the moment they arrived. The first situation was when I tripped on my front doorstep while loading the car for a Christmas trip to Whistler five years ago. I broke my right ankle and sprained my left. I couldn't move. While my young daughter comforted me as best she could, it felt like an eternity until the paramedics arrived. Immediately they helped to relieve the pain, and within minutes I was in the ambulance on the way to the hospital. The next day they were equally patient and caring while transferring me to Lions' Gate Hospital where I had surgery.

The second situation was last summer. We were at our summer place on an island near Gibson's. Our propane oven exploded in my face, causing severe burns to head and arms.

I was transferred by boat to Gibson's, where I was met at the government wharf by two young paramedics. The minute I was in the ambulance they were able to administer cooling bandages, which helped to reduce the heat right away.

This year while waiting for a friend who was in emergency I saw one of the paramedics from my broken ankle incident. She was being so kind and caring to a woman whom they had just brought to the hospital. I made a comment that she had been so helpful to me as well. We quickly went over the details of my accident, and she was able to recall the night, more than five years later.

Paramedics are so hardworking often doing double shifts. They are part of the First Response team that help to patch people together in order to get them to medical facilities. They never know what is going to be waiting for them, whether at a traffic accident, or a home accident, or a domestic dispute, or caring for an elderly person who perhaps has fallen and is confused.

They use the most caring voices, and are often able to put the injured person at ease. I sometimes feel like they are the guardian angels who look after us in that first moment of shock and pain.

No greater comfort is felt than in those first few minutes of being helped. I wish they could all know how grateful I am.

Sally Quinn
Roberts Creek, B.C.