

## Okanagan Falls

I wanted to write a short letter with respect to our Paramedics. A few months ago, my family had the unfortunate news that my mother –to put it simply – was full of cancer. After many discussions, she opted out of chemotherapy and decided to go for radiation in attempt to preserve her swallowing and maintain some quality of life (however short that was to be). Since my mom was hospitalized and could not walk, this entailed a daily ambulance trip for ten days back and forth to the Cancer Clinic in Kelowna. I can not begin to express the gratitude and thanks that I have for the Penticton and Summerland Paramedics. These paramedics treated my mother and me with the utmost dignity, caring, and respect that words cannot describe.

I gained a true understanding of the dedication, pride and professionalism these paramedics exhibit on a daily basis. I looked in the dictionary for a relevant definition of “PARAMEDIC”. I kept finding something to the effect of “*a person who is trained to give emergency medical treatment or assist medical professionals*”. Yes, this is true but one must look at the meaning behind this definition. These are our front line people who we entrust with our lives. It is the paramedic who often gets to the scene of an accident first, it is paramedic who transports our critically ill family members and must make split second life or death medical decisions; and finally, it is the paramedic who often enters the realm of danger and risks his/her life given the nature of the call.

So, the next time you see a PARAMEDIC – say thank-you. One day you may meet him or her when you least expect it. And if so, you are lucky to be in the hands of such a professional and caring group of individuals.

Much Gratitude,

Deborah Shields  
Okanagan Falls, BC