

Dear Sarah:

In recognition of paramedics week, I write this letter.

I reside on the Sunshine Coast and I am employed by Howe Sound Pulp & Paper. I've been located on the coast for over 45 years and have seen and interacted with a good number of our local paramedics. At our mill we have gatehouse personnel these persons provide first-aid services as well as many other duties. A good portion of them are paramedics, serving the good people of the Sunshine Coast. I am honoured and privileged to have these awesome people to attend to me, if I should be injured, which has occurred a couple of times. Once for a concussion which happened at work, another when I amputated 3 out of 5 fingers on my left hand. Once when my elderly father burned his face (3rd degree).

Each and everytime that I or my family have required their services we felt safe and secure in their capable and passionate hands. Response times, incredible, as we on the Sunshine Coast are dispatched from E Comm in Vape. There are times when directions may be confusing, but as most of our paramedics are local, they can cut through the confusion and maintain these incredible response times. Once on scene, it is with a sense of awe to watch them perform their duties. A sense of calm and control and professionalism is almost overwhelming. Not only do ~~they~~ they do such wonderful work with their patients but ~~are~~ ^{are} also aware of others that are affected by the situation, taking time to observe their well being. Safety is first and foremost in their work and it shows.

I, myself, have been involved in first-aid and safety for over 20 years, so I have a critical eye when I observe paramedics perform. Yet even with that eye I have never been let down by our paramedics. The profession they have chosen is not for the faint of heart or the weak of soul. Every day every hour, every minute may be fraught with danger, fear, heartache, sorrow and maybe just maybe once in a while happiness and jubilation for a save or a life returned to loved ones. 24/7 365 days a year these amazing people without hesitation or trepidation attend to scenes that maybe be so horrific that it is unspeakable and go about their duties without doubt or flaw. And I always remember that these amazing people are just as human as everyone else, they have feelings and emotions, yet they lay them aside to do their job with focus, compassion, professionalism, absolutely selflessly putting others in their care first and foremost, as well as hours of training and study to maintain their skills. To some being a paramedic is a secondary job so not only do they perform these amazing duties, but work a primary job as well, and then just when you think they can't give another ounce of their life to others, you can find them volunteering at community events such as our drag races, competitions, marathons ect. Every Christmas I have made it a point to call dispatch and ask them, if they can find a minute to dispatch a message to all their paramedics on duty. Thank-you for all you do all year, please be safe and have a Merry

Christmas. This of course is one thank-you on just one day from just one person. So therefore, I who NEVER writes to anything has sat down and taken the time to put pen to paper and let my feelings be known. For that, I ask you a ~~favor~~ favour.

Please let these amazing people know that they are never forgotten or put aside, but looked upon with adoration, admiration and compassion for all they do each hour, each day, each month and each year with a drive and determination that most of us could never hold a flame to. God bless each and everyone of them and keep them safe from harm for we all depend upon them in some of our darkest hours.

Jim Stew.