

The Highlander



August 2019



Message from the Chief: Alan Feldman

The Highland Rescue Team Ambulance District is your local Emergency Medical Ambulance service. I am proud to say that with over 50 members and a record year under our belts, Highland is stronger than ever and will continue to be

here for you 24/7. Our annual "Thank You" Open house is coming up and I encourage you to come by for some free food, free CPR training, and take some time to meet some of our members. We are always looking for volunteers, and with our next orientation coming up in October, we are starting to collect applications.

Highland is constantly growing and taking on new challenges; a year ago we hired a new training officer, Captain Abbey Travers, who has revamped our training curriculum and created new training opportunities for our members. We expanded our fleet a few years back, adding a Quick Response Vehicle, and we are now in the process of building a new garage, that will be completed this summer. We could not have done this without the generosity of the Mount Vernon community donating the land for the garage. Also, just over a year ago we transitioned to the new consolidated dispatch center, JeffCom, which brought new challenges, some growing pains, and gave us the opportunity to look for ways we can improve. We are working hand in hand with JeffCom to provide the best possible service to our constituents.

As a volunteer myself for the last 14 years, I am grateful for my dedicated staff and volunteers and amazed at what we have accomplished as a Team. With only one more year left in my term, I am looking to the future, and working to find someone to keep driving the mission and values of the District. In 2005 Highland became a special district and since then, the expectations of the Chief have become more demanding, especially for a volunteer. My Assistant Chief, Jan Keating, has extended her term and we are working closely with the board as we search for a successor. Highland is one of the last public safety organizations in the Denver Metro area with a volunteer Chief. The board is considering transitioning to a paid Chief and we look forward to your support through this next challenge.

Highland Rescue Team Open House Saturday, August 24th 11am-2pm



Please join us at Highland's Annual Open House. Come meet the team. Planned activities include a helicopter landing, State Patrol education, bouncy house, lunch, basic CPR instruction, and station and ambulance tours.



Highland Annual Awards

Our top honor "**Member of the Year**" was given to **Abbey Travers**. Abbey took over the position of Manager of Personnel and Training in July 2018. She initially joined the team as an EMT volunteer in 2011. Since then she

has earned her paramedic and RN. Abbey has breathed new life into our training program and we feel extremely lucky to have her. **The MVP award was presented to volunteer John Singsheim**. John worked more than double the required shifts last year. He took on whatever task was needed and did so with a great attitude. John has also become one of our best instructors. **Rookie of the Year was awarded to Brian Davis and Keilani Fuqua**. Brian and Keilani give their all, attend all trainings and are eager to learn. They live in district and are a great asset to this community.



Hiking in the Mountains:

Prepare for the worst and hope for the best

We all know the Colorado Mountains are beautiful but they can also be unpredictable and unforgiving. Below are tips to keep you safe while hiking.

1. **Tell someone your plan and route.** Stick to the plan and stay on the trail. Avoid hiking alone if possible.
2. **Pack well.** Must haves for your day pack:
 - Water- a good rule of thumb is 1 liter for every hour you are hiking
 - Food – energy and candy bars
 - Navigation tools – compass/map/ phone
 - Rain protection and waterproof matches
 - Extra clothing- wear layers and opt for bright fast drying fabrics instead of cotton
 - Sun protection- sunscreen, hats and sunglasses
 - First aid kit

3. **Leave early and plan to be back at tree line before noon.**

The most common time of the day for lightning strikes is the afternoon.

Colorado is notorious for lightning with over 500,000 lightning flashes per year. We have the 4th highest number of fatalities per year with an average of 3 deaths and 12 injuries each summer. When possible follow the rule “when thunder roars go indoors”. When on the trail look for shelter under a growth of saplings or small trees and avoid standing near tall isolated trees or out in the open.

If you see someone struck by lightning don't be afraid to touch them, they do not carry an electrical charge. Lightning can strike twice so make sure you are in a safe place. If someone is hit and they are not breathing and have no pulse start CPR immediately and call 911.

4. **Be aware of your surroundings.** Rattlesnakes are common in our foothills on trails, rock outcroppings and tall grass. (see details in next column) Keep your eye on the trail ahead and if you are hiking with a dog, keep them close. If your dog gets bitten it is important to seek veterinary treatment as soon as possible.
5. **Know your limits** – falls and injuries often occur when you are tired. Don't push your physical limitations and make sure to take breaks to hydrate and enjoy the view.



Highland held our 9th annual 9HealthFair this past April. 176 participants came to the fair to get blood tests and for screenings for colon cancer, prediabetes, high PSA levels, and to have their blood pressure checked. The average age of the participants was 63. 30% of those testing for prediabetes had abnormal results and 12% of those tested for PSA had out of normal range results. Our members always enjoy the opportunity to meet District residents when they are not in the middle of a health emergency. Join us next April for our 2020 Health Fair.



Outdoor Enthusiast Should Keep an Eye out for Rattlesnakes

Rattlesnake sightings are common in our District and we respond to several bites each year. Rattlesnakes are generally nonaggressive toward people unless they are startled, cornered, or stepped on. They typically avoid temperature extremes and are usually seen out in temperatures ranging from 50-80 degrees. The pictures above were taken by some of your neighbors- who both found these rattlesnakes on their back patios.

Do not try to move a snake. Many people bitten were trying to move or kill the snake.

If you are confronted with a rattlesnake, remain calm and still at first, then try to back away slowly. Human fatalities are rare (1%) as long as the victim seeks **quick medical treatment and gets to the hospital.**

General Care: Call 911. A dead rattlesnake can still bite and inject venom until rigor mortis is complete. Remove all constricting items from bitten limb- rings, jewelry and clothing. Immobilize bitten part and keep in neutral to below the heart position. Initiate prompt transport to the hospital for antivenom. **DO NOT** use ice, refrigerants, tourniquets, scalpels or suction devices. Mark margins of redness and or swelling with pen and include time.

ROSC-U Grant

Rosc-u stands for return of spontaneous circulation. Highland was awarded a \$24,146 grant to purchase two ROSC-U Mechanical CPR devices. These devices ensure that the frequency and depth of compressions are accurate and consistent throughout a rescue effort. Captain Brown wrote and submitted this grant which was funded by Firehouse Sub's Public Safety Foundation. So, next time you get a sub and they ask if you want to round up your change for the local fire/EMS department you will be helping agencies like Highland.

COMMUNITY CPR

350,000 "out of hospital" cardiac arrests occur in the US per year. Seventy percent of those happen in homes. According to the American Heart Association, nearly 45% of "out of hospital" cardiac arrest victims survived when immediate bystander CPR was administered. Unfortunately the majority of victims do not get immediate help because only 20% of Americans know how to perform CPR. With a greater emphasis on compressions, not only is CPR easier, it is more effective and we are actually saving more lives.

Community CPR is offered quarterly in conjunction with Foothill's Fire and Rescue and Genesee Fire and Rescue. The instructors are kind and compassionate and will do their best to take the fear out of CPR. Please call the Station at 303-526-9571 for details.

The Highland Rescue Team

Who are we? We are **your** 911 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Special District which serves the Foothills, Genesee, and Idledale communities. We are located at 317 S. Lookout Mountain Road.

Highland Rescue Team is very unique. 78% of our team are volunteers. Most similar agencies have a few volunteers at best. We have 50 volunteers. 14 of our volunteers live in our District while 36 commute to work here. All volunteers work (3) 12 hour shifts each month. Our volunteer staff saves the District \$295,000 per year. Our paid staff is made up of 2 full time and 2 part time paramedics in addition to a part time administrator. All of us work together to make sure the District has advanced life support around the clock.

How are we funded? As a Special District we receive approximately 60% of our annual budget from property taxes and 40% from fees for our services.

Other facts:

- We only respond to 911 calls. We do not do facility transports.
- If you need us, call 911, not the station.
- Having a list of the medications you take and medical history really helps us.

We have a new website highlandrescue.org if you want to learn more about the team. Our board meetings are open to the public and the schedule is on the website. You can also find board minutes, budgets, audits and special events there.

Highland Board Members:

Rob Keating, President

Wendy Henke

John Zima, Treasurer

Steve Carpenter

Roxanne Lenny, Secretary

Message from the Board President

Highland Rescue Team is again having our annual Open House on August 24th from 11am-2pm. As we have had in the past, there will be food and other activities. We use this event for the Team to say "Thank You" for your continued support. It was your support in 2005 that moved Highland Rescue from a non-profit to a Special District supported by your tax dollars. It is my hope that you will attend and meet the Team and see some of the equipment we carry on the ambulances and rescue vehicle.

For 2018 we met our revenue forecast and expense budgets. For the first half of 2019 we are tracking the same as in 2018. In 2018 we responded to 692 calls and had 270 transports. Highland Rescue only bills when we treat or transport patients. In 2018 we experienced a 19% increase in transports over 2017 and a 29% increase over 2016. In the past three years we have also experienced a significant shift from billing private insurance to treating more patients on Medicare, Medicaid, and those without insurance.

Medicare and Medicaid pay significantly less than private insurance (approximately 66% less) causing Highland Rescue to write-off more dollars than in the past.

In last year's *Highlander* I mentioned that we could be facing some revenue issues due to the Gallagher provision. Both Genesee Fire and Foothills Fire, facing the same issue, held special elections to De-Gallagherize and both initiatives passed. Genesee Fire also proposed, and the district passed a mill levy increase. Our tax revenue for 2019 was not affected by Gallagher but unless the legislature fixes this issue we will be impacted in the coming years.

Highland Rescue provides a competent, well trained team that handles all of the district's emergency medical needs.

Again, thank you for your support and I hope you will consider joining us at the Open House.

Rob Keating

Board President

**HIGHLAND RESCUE TEAM
AMBULANCE DISTRICT**

317 S. Lookout Mountain Road
Golden, CO 80401

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Thank you to our District Residents; as always, your generosity is deeply appreciated. The Highland Foundation helps support training opportunities for our members. The residents of the District continue to open their hearts and wallets to provide support to the Highland Rescue Team Foundation. From all of us, a heart-felt **Thank You!**



Highland Rescue Team Foundation Donations

Contribution: \$25.00 \$50.00 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1,000 Other: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ **Zip:** _____

Phone: _____

Please make check payable to the "Highland Rescue Team Foundation." All donations are tax deductible.

**Highland Rescue Team Ambulance District
317 South Lookout Mountain Road
Golden, Colorado 80401**