



Message from the Chief



As the pandemic continues to impact both our work and personal lives, I would like to take Toronto Public Service Week as another opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for the incredibly important work that each of you does every day.

Paramedic Services, by nature, provide vital support for our communities. Whether you work on the frontlines as a Paramedic, in our award-winning Communications Centre, in one of our many critical support roles, or as a member of our leadership team, rest assured that your courage and commitment makes a difference. Thank you for your professionalism and dedication to those we serve.

I am looking forward to building on our past success and ensuring that we are able to meet the needs of our

community. As we move into the fall season, we are looking forward to continuing to grow our staffing and system resources. These essential resources will help us meet the demands of a growing and aging population as we return to pre-pandemic call volumes.

While we focus on our patients, please don't forget to take the time to ensure your personal health and well-being is prioritized. If you or those close to you are in need of support, please reach out. Our staff blog centralizes all of the resources available including the Peer Resource Team, our Staff Psychologist and more.

Thank you again for all that you do. Remember to celebrate the positive impact you make each and every day, and take care of yourselves and each other.

Happy Toronto Public Service Week!

— Paul Raftis.



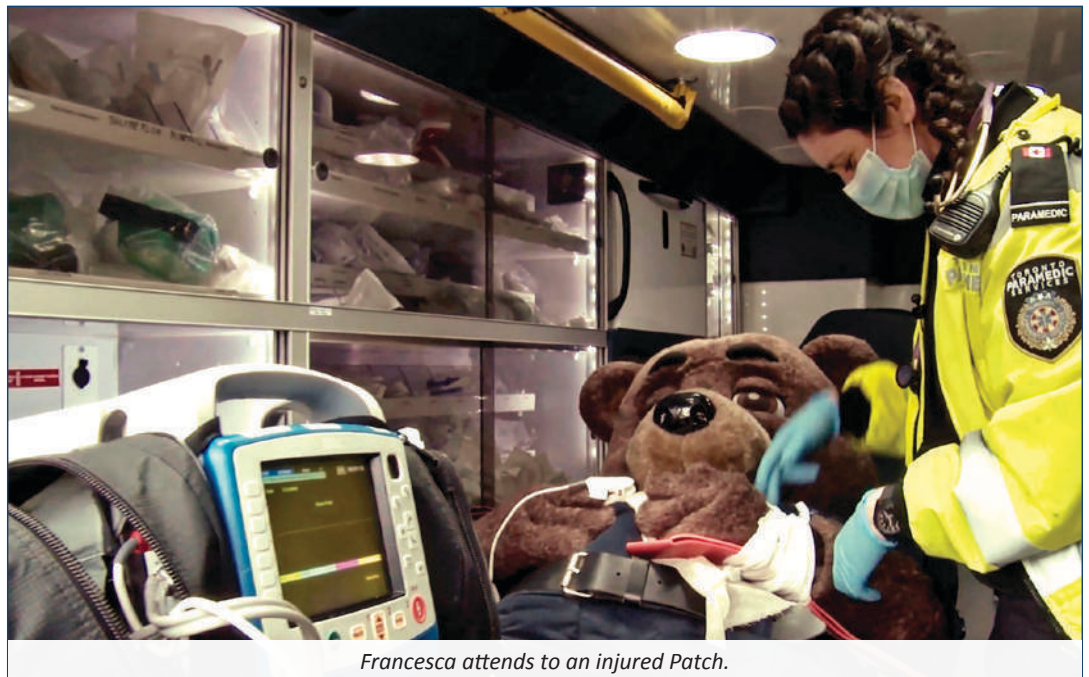
Follow the Chief on Twitter @ChiefPaulRaftis



Paramedics as Educators

During Paramedic Services Week in May, we focused on the important role that Paramedic Services have in public education. Since then, local school boards have started using this video to educate young children about when and how to call a Paramedic, and what happens when they arrive.

Thank you to Francesca, Heather (and Patch) for this great video! Watch "Patch the Bearamedic Takes a Tumble" (<http://tiny.cc/bearamedic>).

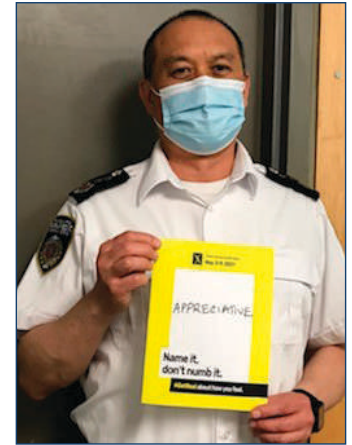


Francesca attends to an injured Patch.

Mental Health Awareness

This past May was the 70th year of Mental Health Week in Canada. Our Staff Psychologist, Leslie Langdon, and the Peer Resource Team delivered Life Savers candy to staff to raise awareness of the importance of proactive mental health care, and remind everyone of the resources that are available to them.

On June 27th, the Canadian Institute for Public Safety Research and Treatment (CIPSRT) recognized PTSD Awareness Day, and the 41st anniversary of PTSD being recognized as a mental health disorder. The CIPSRT works to shine a light on PTSD and the profound impact that it has on so many Canadians, with a special focus on Public Safety Personnel (PSP).



City of Toronto Employee Assistance Program (EAP):
416-392-6633

Family Services EAP (Local 416):
1-800-668-9920

TPS Peer Resource Team (PRT):
1-855-PRT-TEMS (1-855-778-8367)

Staff Psychologist (Leslie Langdon):
416-392-5095

Or visit:
<https://torontomedics.ca/today/PHWP>

Career Advice

Do you know someone who is considering a career as a Paramedic or Emergency Medical Call Taker? Superintendent Kelly Clarke (<http://tiny.cc/kelly-career>) and A/Superintendent Niall Laamanen (<http://tiny.cc/niall-career>) discuss their paths to Toronto Paramedic Services and reflect on what drew them to the profession, as well as offer some advice to those thinking of joining our team.



Celebrating 25 Years of Tactical Paramedic Excellence

In 1996, Toronto became the first Paramedic service in Canada to recruit, train and mobilize a Tactical Paramedic team, and has continued to be a leader in this specialized field for the past 25 years.

Tactical Paramedics, often referred to as “Tac Medics”, work closely with the Toronto Police Service Emergency Task Force (ETF) unit; as medical support for anyone who may be injured during challenging and often potentially dangerous situations. When team members are not engaged in tactical operations, they support general operations responding to 911 calls.

Tactical Paramedics are recruited from within the Service, and are subject to rigorous fitness testing, followed by a comprehensive specialized training program. Once welcomed as members of the team, they continually train and enhance their skillsets with their counterparts from Toronto Police. Tactical Paramedics are outfitted with an array of protective gear and receive training on specialized equipment and techniques that broaden their scope of practice.

Congratulations to the entire Tactical Paramedic team on their silver anniversary!



Chris Rotolo rappelling during training.

“I’m proud to have been one of the ten original members of our ETF Team. It was a truly exciting time for us and it holds a special place in my career as we worked with our police partners to build a solid foundation for the future. To all of the past, current, and future members of the team: Congratulations on 25 years of exemplary service and partnership.”

- Paul Raftis



Four of the original ETF team members (L-R): Paul Raftis, Patti Whitten, Debbie Wicks, and Jim Cochrane

Indigenous Peoples Recognition

2021 has been, and continues to be, a time to reflect, listen and learn about the experiences of Indigenous peoples in our country. In recognition of Indigenous Peoples Month in June, and to honour and remember the lives of those whose graves have been discovered at former residential and day schools throughout the country, our Service adorned the antennas of all Service vehicles with orange ribbons. These ribbons are a part of our Commitment to Action for the



Acting Deputy Chief Jennifer Shield and Commander Janice Baine at the Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre's Every Child Matters Walk on July 1, 2021.

advancement of reconciliation, and our support for our Indigenous staff members and the community we serve.

These orange ribbons, as well as the five Indigenous flags hung in the Atrium at Headquarters, will be in place until September 30, 2021, which is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, and coincides with Orange Shirt Day.



The indigenous flags which are hung in the HQ Atrium include the symbols of the Métis Nation, Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Haudenosaunee, and the Huron-Wendat.

Congratulations Andrew Lock

Acting Superintendent Andrew Lock was recognized by the Province of Ontario for his act of bravery at the Ontario Awards for Paramedic Bravery ceremony. This ceremony occurred during Paramedic Services Week 2021 and recognized acts of bravery from 2019 and 2020.

From the award backgrounder:

“On January 29, 2019, Superintendent Lock responded to a crash scene where a large tanker truck had rolled onto its side in the middle of Highway 401. Assessing the scene, Superintendent Lock noted that the situation may become dangerous and volatile as an unknown liquid was rapidly leaking out of the truck, putting the trapped driver, bystanders and moving traffic in potential imminent danger. He took out the trapped truck driver through the

truck windshield and instructed a bystander to care for the driver’s injury while he returned to the scene to confirm that no other individuals needed assistance.”

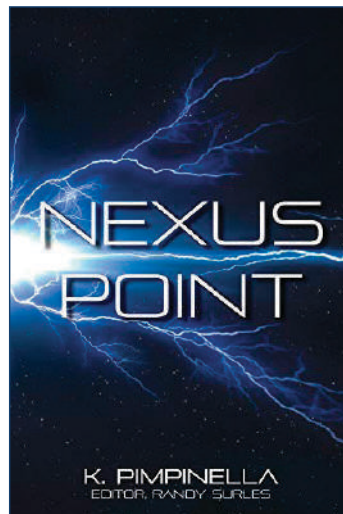


Paramedic & Author Krista Baillie

Not only does Paramedic Krista Baillie care for the community as a Primary Care Paramedic, but she is also a published author!

Writing under the name K. Pimpinella, her first novel, “Nexus Point” is a time-travelling thriller set late in the twenty-third century and features teams of Time Rangers seeking out renegade time travellers who risk the future by attempting to change the past.

Congratulations on being published, Krista!



Krista signing a copy of her book

Communities of Inclusion

Communities of inclusion are groups of City staff who share a common identity, lived experience and/or set of interests and meet regularly to network, dialogue, share best practices, build capacity, learn and develop. Find out more about these groups, their activities, and how to join as a member or Divisional representative by searching “Communities of Inclusion” on the Intranet. The five groups include:



Ambe Maamowisdaa Employee Circle - The City of Toronto is on the traditional territories of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Huron-Wendat, the Haudenosaunee and home to many diverse Indigenous Peoples, many of whom work in the Toronto Public Service. The Circle is open to Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Inuit and Métis) working at the City.

The **Black Staff Network** supports professional development and engagement, and advocates for a better working environment for City staff who identify as Black, of



African descent or origin, African Black Caribbean, African-Canadian, or Canadians of African descent.

The **Employee Disability Network (EDN)** promotes inclusion and accessibility in the workplace by welcoming employees with disabilities and nurturing their professional development. The EDN is committed to activities that foster a sense of belonging and empowerment, and contribute to an environment that enables the City to be a leader in accessibility, diversity and equity.



The **Pride Network** is an inclusive group that supports 2SLGBTQ+ employees to bring their whole selves to work, to achieve their full potential and to deliver excellent public service. The Network organizes events and advocates for a safer, more equitable and respectful working environment for 2SLGBTQ+ employees of the Toronto Public Service.



TO Network of Women (TONow) encourages equality, increases leadership, enhances professional development and promotes achievements of women in the Toronto Public Service.



40th Anniversary of Pride in Toronto

On June 1, 2021, the Pride and Transgender flags were unfurled in the HQ atrium recognizing Pride Month and marking the 40th anniversary of Pride in Toronto. While celebrations were virtual again, we recognize that this remarkable anniversary was made possible by the brave people who came forward 40 years ago to drive change and acceptance.



Transgender and Pride flags in the atrium.



Paramedics Shane, Chris, Victoria, Julianna, Zach, and Nadia took part in some photos throughout the city.

Lloyd Cresswell Retires after 31 Years!

On August 31, 2021, Paramedic Lloyd Cresswell retired with 31 years of service under his belt! Lloyd was presented with certificates from Chief Paul Raftis, Mayor John Tory, and Premier Doug Ford recognizing his service and the immeasurable impact he's had on the lives of so many.

Lloyd has worked in the Scheduling Unit for the last couple of years where he was focused on the daily staffing needs of Operations and the Communications Centre. He was a mentor, advocate, and friend to all those who had the opportunity to work with him. Prior to his time in Scheduling, Lloyd was a Level 2 Paramedic in the city's northeast where he had the privilege of working with several long-time partners, including Don Reid, Lisa Livingston, Mike O'Donnell, Sue Bagley, Leo Tsang and many others. Lloyd was the recipient of a Long Service Medal, a Governor General's award, and the Paramedic of the Year awards during his career.

Lloyd is looking forward to kayaking, a lot of relaxing, and travelling with his wife, Janet, of 30 years. Please join us in wishing Lloyd all the best during his well-deserved retirement!



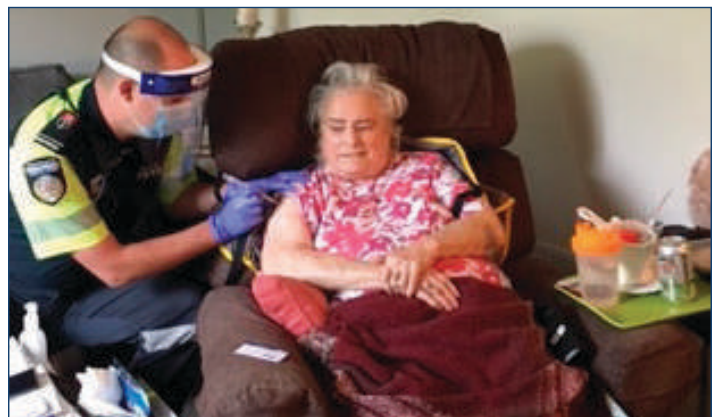
Community Paramedicine

Our Service's Community Paramedics have delivered over 6,000 COVID-19 vaccinations to Toronto's homebound individuals. This program is the result of new and innovative partnerships that enable vaccine delivery to vulnerable clients, ensuring that no resident is left behind.

For clients like Jean Gallagher and Audrey Morgan, the collaboration amongst Community Paramedics and the Local Health Integration Networks/Ontario Health, Community Hospitals, and the Ministry of Long-Term Care has been the only way for them, and thousands of others, to receive their COVID-19 vaccinations.



Community Paramedic Derek Hulbig vaccinates Jean Gallagher (the first client to be vaccinated in her home by a Toronto Paramedic).



For people like Audrey Morgan, being vaccinated by Community Paramedic Paul Roberts was a welcome birthday present!



Kudos to Our Employees

Below are some notes of thanks to recognize the outstanding work of our staff who made a difference for their patients, their families, as well as fellow staff members:

Paramedics Scott Sharpe and Marvin Marin Austin:

"Yesterday evening we called for an ambulance after my father, had a seizure as a result of ongoing complications with a brain tumour and anti-seizure medication. We never got to obtain the names of the two paramedics who attended but I wanted to express our thanks for their professionalism, courteousness, and kindness in how they handled the call. My father cannot speak due to the impact of the tumour but they were patient with him and very gentle as he has also lost mobility in his right arm and leg. People are often quick to complain but rarely take the time to express positive experiences especially during such difficult times. The two gentlemen who attended were an excellent reflection of Toronto Emergency Services and definitely showed their dedication and pride in their work. Well done and kudos to them."

Paramedics Robert Boyd and Andrew Metcalfe:

"I just wanted to say thank you to the two paramedics who arrived at my house that day for helping me get through such a stressful experience. They were instrumental in keeping me calm and reassuring my family. Moreover they went above and beyond to take care of me and advocate for me in the ER (the COVID-19 pandemic has understandably caused significant delays and stress on the healthcare system but they stood up for me and advocated for me needing immediate attention and resuscitation). Without them things could have gone very differently and I am so grateful for their care. Please let them know how much their support meant to me and how much I appreciate them going above and beyond to help me. I thank them for putting themselves at risk during these times to care for others so genuinely."

Community Paramedic Susan Devries:

"I wanted to let you know that my parents were both vaccinated (Pfizer vaccine) earlier this afternoon. I am so very grateful to both of you for your help. Thank you very much for taking the time to help and guide me through the home vaccination program. I couldn't have done it without you!!"

To the Community Paramedic who vaccinated my Aunty:

"She is 92 years young!! Thank you for all you do and your hard work year round but especially during this pandemic. Going into homes to administer the vaccine is a huge time consuming task and undertaking and no doubt challenging.

Since I wasn't there in person that day to say thanks and this week being "Paramedic Service Week" I like to take this opportunity to say to all of you, the great men and women of the Toronto Paramedics "THANK YOU", you are all HEROES and we salute you!!!

Thank you to the other team members who returned my calls to make sure Aunty was on the list and coordinated the date. I appreciate you too.

Stay safe and Aunty looks forward to seeing you in September for the 2nd dose."

Paramedic Derek Hulbig:

"Derek, who didn't know me or my family, quickly became very active in supporting myself and my family during this difficult time. In a very short period, Derek was able to build great rapport with my mother and father and also maintain consistent contact with me to help guide me through the process of getting crisis intervention services. Words cannot describe how helpful Derek's hands-on support was for me during this very emotionally difficult time. Derek and Tracy's kind supportive words and amazing relationship building skills were very much appreciated and helped make a very difficult situation feel like it was under control.

I am truly grateful for the amazing work that Derek and Tracy have done to support my family and it has really restored my faith in the healthcare system. They both reminded me that there are healthcare providers out there who truly care about their patients, families and will work tirelessly to ensure that everyone receives the care that they need."

Paramedic Adam Bardgett:

This compliment came into the Service by way of TikTok. Joanna Johnson took her mother to Toronto General Hospital emergency department and was having difficulty

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moving her mom from the car to the waiting room. Thankfully, Joanna was assisted by Paramedic Adam Bardgett who had just completed transferring his patient to the emergency room staff and was preparing to leave the hospital.

Little did he know that his act of kindness would be shared by social media influencer Joanna with her TikTok audience. "...incredibly amazing to my mom at one of her most vulnerable points... he was an EMT, that's all I know about



him... not only did he talk to her with incredible compassion but he empowered her to let her know that she was in the driver's seat for whatever she needed during this horrible time."

Joanna met with Adam to thank him in-person for the care and compassion he showed when assisting both her, and her mother. Adam was presented with a gift package, filled with items donated by Joanna's TikTok followers, which he graciously donated to the City of Toronto's 2021 United Way campaign to be auctioned off this fall. Many thanks to Adam for his generosity.

Call Taker David Nguyen:

"Thank you to the 911 call taker, a wonderful fellow who talked us through a traumatic situation this evening which was difficult at times for him to understand us in the franticness of the moment and who guided us with correct CPR counts as we waited for paramedics to arrive. It was very reassuring to hear your coaching and I was grateful for your assistance."

Call Taker Omar Thomas:

The mother (who was alone with her 3 year-old child) during the delivery, passed along her most sincere gratitude to Omar for his help during the 911 call. Omar provided excellent customer service, guidance, and reassurance during one of the most special moments in both mom and baby's life. Omar continues to shine as a call-taker with Toronto Paramedic Services, and is calm, patient, and respect to every caller with whom he interacts.

TPS' social media handles are as follows:

Facebook: **[Toronto Paramedic Services](#)**

Twitter: **[@torontomedics](#)**

YouTube: **[Toronto Paramedic Services](#)**

Don't forget to follow us, like, and share our posts!

Toronto Paramedic Services Today is a quarterly publication for staff of Toronto Paramedic Services. It is edited by Kim McKinnon, Superintendent of Public Information and Media, with support from the Multimedia Group. If you would like to share

a newsworthy story, please contact Kim at (416) 392-2255 or Kim.McKinnon@toronto.ca. Feedback from staff is welcome and appreciated. For the latest internal communications, please visit us on the web at: torontomedics.ca/today