



## Professional Paramedic Association of Ottawa

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# OttawaParamedics.ca

### Professional Paramedic Association of Ottawa

By Suzanne Noël, BSc(Kin), ACP  
Director of Print Media

The Professional Paramedic Association of Ottawa is excited to announce that we have a new executive. These folks will be responsible for growing the association, promoting the profession and ensuring the continuity of our vast array of projects.

We will get to business.

### Disaster—Over, But Still Growing

We thought the play, *Disaster*, was going to come to an end on June 29. After months of hard work, it was difficult to see it all come to a close. To our surprise, on closing night, the writer and director asked if the PPAO executive would continue to work on this production in the future. They want to spend time developing the characters and enhancing the play for larger venues that have expressed interest in running the production.

The PPAO and the cast and crew of *Disaster* would also like to extend our sincere appreciation to Chief Anthony Di Monte, deputy Chief Kevin Newell, deputy Chief Pierre Poirier, coordinator Peter Kelly and Special Operations liaison John Rathier from Ottawa Paramedic Service. Their support through lending of uniforms and equipment, N95 fit testing and authorization for ride-outs gave actor Sarah Finn enormous insight into the accurate portrayal of paramedics.

We also took great care in the development of our secret postcards that were handed out after the play. Even though the cards contain the title of the play, the message was designed to be very basic and generic so long after the play was over, paramedics could continue to deliver public messaging about the number one hazard we face—civilian drivers.

This play received excellent reviews from medics to theatre critics and will be reappearing at larger venues within the next couple of years. Keep your eyes open for it!



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With flares out, emergency lights activated, bright reflective clothing on, vehicles strategically positioned and even Ontario's "Move Over Law" to protect us, paramedics still have almost twice as many occupational fatalities as police officers or firefighters, with 74% of paramedic occupational deaths occurring at roadside disasters.

Please do your part to eliminate paramedic injuries and fatalities at roadside disasters.

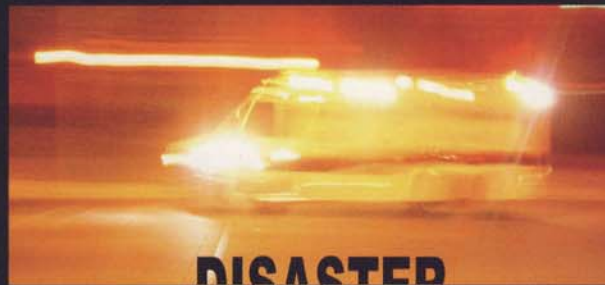
- 1 Reduce your speed significantly
- 2 Pass by with caution
- 3 Leave plenty of space between us and you

Our passion for life and helping others should be worthy of your consideration and patience.



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## THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS AN "ACCIDENT"



Roadside disasters kill paramedics every year. These aren't "Accidents". They are all preventable "Incidents".



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### PPAO Has New Executive

Following this year's annual general meeting, the PPAO now has a new executive team who will fill the roles for the next term. We would like to welcome five new executive members, six returning executive members and thank those from past executives who helped us get to where we are today.

Indicating a wide variety of skills and abilities, each member was nominated for a dif-

ferent position so the board was filled quite easily. The following are the PPAO executive for the next term.

- Secretary/Treasurer: Robert Mallett
- President: Darryl Wilton
- Vice-President: Jennifer Biskup
- Director of Print Media: Sue Noël
- Director of Corporate Development: Bruno Gendron
- Director of Academic Provisions: Micah

Rietschlin

- Director of Public Information: Rob Wilson
- Director of Community Services: Patrick Lamoureux
- Director of Team Events: Kane Newell
- Director of Education: Chantale Dumas
- Director of Professional Development: Jeremiah Soucie

**PPAO Nominates Award Winners**

At the beginning of 2008, the PPAO executive were pondering a question: In an effort to create incentive and ensure the continuity of initiative, how do we go about recognizing the hard work of members?

This presented us with a few puzzle pieces to sort out.

We knew Ottawa Paramedic Service Staff always do a fantastic job; most are often humble overachievers whether on or off duty so unfortunately, there is some inherent complacency toward greatness. Regardless, we had to be able to isolate the members who participated in exceptional events that truly de-

fine paramedicine and conform to the PPAO mission statement.

The City of Ottawa Staff Investment Group pointed us towards the Peer Nomination Awards, which cross two important desks: that of deputy city manager Steve Kanellakos and that of Chief Anthony Di Monte. These awards were created by the city and allow peers to recognize one another in a variety of categories. By earning these city awards, our selfless peers were recognized not only by the PPAO but by co-workers, supervisors and the City of Ottawa.

In January, each of the following members was nominated for their award based on individual accomplishments achieved outside of their normal job requirements and operational duties. The awards were distributed this summer.

**Health & Safety & Wellness Award**

Alexandra Hopkin - for coordination and instruction of annual CPR/AED training for first year paramedic students and related media appearances defining paramedic scope of practice and the importance of CPR/AED training.

**Community Service Awards**

Natalie Labelle, Hans Oberholzer and Yannick Roussel - for ongoing volunteer participation in collaborative events between the PPAO and the Ottawa Anaphylactic Support Group

Robert Wilson - for ongoing volunteer work such as EMS week coordination, radio, television and newsprint media appearances promoting paramedics and participation in various community events

Normand Robillard - for creation and implementation of a community marathon to raise funds for KidSport Ottawa, a local charity helping underprivileged kids play team sports.

Annik Allard - for coordination of a year-long "virgin" hair growing event followed by hair cutting and subsequent hair donation to raise awareness and donations for Angel Hair for Kids, a charity donating real hair wigs to children experiencing hair loss due to severe illness.

**Teamwork & Collaboration Awards**

Steve Hallam—for development of the Helping Every Local Paramedic (HELP) Fund, a fund that donates to Ottawa Para-

*In memory of those brave Paramedics who have given their lives in the line of duty*

**Paramedic Association of Canada Benevolent Society**

**The Ultimate Sacrifice**

From 1995 to 2006, 18 Paramedics from across Canada have lost their lives in the line of duty. Paramedics regularly face dangerous situations while helping others. When Paramedics die or suffer grievous injury in the line of duty, the emotional & financial burdens placed upon their families can be overwhelming.

The PAC Benevolent Society provides initial financial assistance to the immediate family and later makes education scholarships available for survivors.



**'NOT TO BE FORGOTTEN'**

*Donations and Inquiries may be made to the Benevolent Society by contacting our office*

**Benevolent Society of the Paramedic Association of Canada**

300 March Road, 4th Floor - Ottawa, ON K2K 2E2

Tel: (613) 836-6581 or Fax: (613) 836-2914 - [benevolent@paramedic.ca](mailto:benevolent@paramedic.ca) - [www.paramedic.ca/benevolent](http://www.paramedic.ca/benevolent)



medics and their families who may require medical treatment, home renovations, equipment purchases and other services due to illness or injury. The HELP Fund also provides oversized life event cards to all paramedic service staff.

François Côté - for coordination of two successful training sessions for Global Medic, a charity organization that deploys medics to third world countries across the world to aid victims of natural and man-made disasters.

Michel Verdon - for promoting the profession of paramedicine and educating national stakeholders about the high level of training paramedics possess and the importance of having paramedics included with the new Health Emergency Response Team (HERT) under Health Canada.

Peers can nominate each other for operational awards by completing a form on the City OZONE website. For example, Derek Marriner's partner nominated him for the following award.

#### Individual Achievement Award

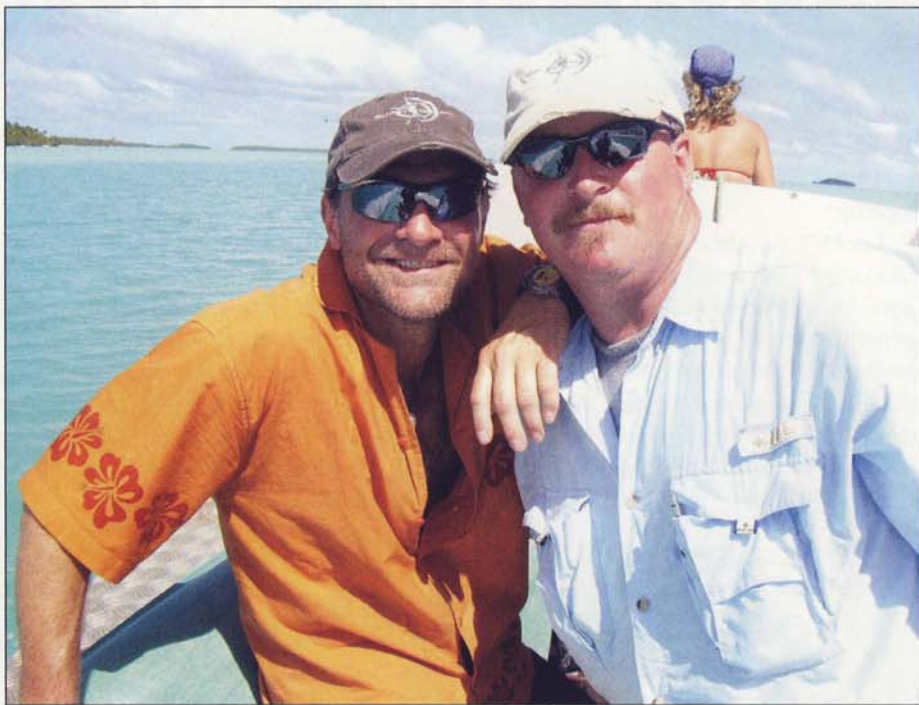
Derek Marriner—Noticing a faint shadow move behind some trees in the darkness of early morning, Derek took it upon himself to investigate further. Derek turned around and found a quadriplegic who was stranded and hypothermic after his electric wheelchair battery had died en route to the hospital hours earlier. Unable to summon help and far from the view of the public, the man was sitting and hoping someone would notice him before day-break. The man would not part with his 350-pound electric wheelchair, would not go by ambulance and a number of other attempts at transport options had failed. Derek went above and beyond the call of duty and pushed the man in his 350-pound wheelchair six blocks to the hospital.

If you know of a PPAO member who participated in exceptional events that truly define paramedicine and conform to the PPAO mission statement, please contact Sue Noël at [printmedia@ottawaparamedics.ca](mailto:printmedia@ottawaparamedics.ca)

#### A Paramedic For Survivorman

Every week, Discovery Channel's *Survivorman* Les Stroud battles the extremes from temperature to lack of water to predatory animals in an effort to teach survival skills.

Putting himself at risk, sometimes stranded alone, miles from civilization, can end up taking a toll on his body and health. So what does *Survivorman* do when he needs immediate medical attention and the closest hospital is



**SURVIVORMAN LES STROUD** with Ottawa Paramedic Barry Clark in the Cook Islands.



**OTTAWA PARAMEDIC** Barry Clark ready to go on the African plains.

five days away? The answer is simple, he picks up his Iridium Satellite phone and calls Ottawa Paramedic Barry Clark.

Now, you're probably wondering, "How does an Ottawa medic end up treating the ultimate survival expert on a regular basis?" Well let me explain just how this happened.

In 2006, after Crocodile Hunter Steve Irwin died as a result of a lethal penetrating injury from a stingray, Discovery Channel was

mandated to have medical professionals on site for all high-risk shows. *Survivorman* was one show now in serious need of a paramedic.

Being the largest local paramedic association chapter in Canada has enabled the PPAO to become well-known in many circles. Recognizing the need for improved communication between ourselves and the outside world, the PPAO developed its sophisticated, interactive website, [www.OttawaParamedics.ca](http://www.OttawaParamedics.ca). This

website is so popular it receives over 3,700 hits per day, processes over 1,000 e-mails each week and generates the highest traffic volume and bandwidth of any paramedic-specific website in Canada.

This is where the story starts to come together.

Looking for some medical assistance, Discovery Channel came across [www.OttawaParamedics.ca](http://www.OttawaParamedics.ca) and sent us an e-mail asking if getting an Ottawa paramedic to travel with the show would be feasible. Darryl Wilton posted the e-mail request in the Think Tank (located in the password-protected members area) where it caught the attention of PCP Barry Clark.

Barry was extremely interested in this unique opportunity but wondered what his chances were to be selected for the position among a group that included such applicants as general practitioners, emergency department physicians, intensive care unit physicians and neurologists.

Despite Barry's hesitancy, president Darryl Wilton strongly encouraged him to apply for the position and focus on the elements that separated him from the other applicants. Barry was the only applicant who had real military training, the only applicant who had been subjected to extremely unstable environments for extended periods of time and the only applicant who had already experienced many of the

same environments that *Survivorman* subjects himself to. If anything, Barry has not only fine-tuned his ability to adapt, improvise and overcome, but more importantly, he had first hand experience providing good medicine in bad places. It was just the thing he needed to survive in conditions such as the Arctic, the Amazon and the lion infested plains of Africa. Ultimately, it was being a paramedic and not a doctor that won Barry the position of being *Survivorman's* personal onsite medic.

Barry has done a number of *Survivorman* shows since being hired. You can see his name in the end credits of each show and he can be seen in person on the *Survivorman* DVD under "Making of *Survivorman*".

What is important to note is that sometimes the excursions take the crew to locations many days from the closest hospital. While *Survivorman* is alone in the wilderness, so is Barry, usually waiting a few hours away from *Survivorman* by plane, boat or dogsled. Barry's new position is the ultimate example of bringing the emergency room to the patient. The main difference: Barry has some great camping gear, clothing, medical equipment and excellent food. *Survivorman* gets nothing.

This fall, the PPAO has lined up *Survivorman* himself, Les Stroud, to write an article for *Canadian Emergency News Magazine* detailing his experiences and the benefit of having a Paramedic nearby.

For those in Ottawa, video clips of Barry in action will be seen in briefings this fall.

This is just one example of the kind of work a paramedic association can pull off with a consolidated voice and effective promotion of the profession. Thanks to hours of work educating, promoting and pushing for inclusion into activities, the paramedic profession has come a long way. We lobby not only for enhancements but opportunity—and the work has paid off. Who would have thought just a few years ago that medics could hold research positions in groups such as the Ottawa Health Research Institute or Ontario Pre-hospital Advanced Life Support, or have the Discovery channel requesting their skills? Many of these opportunities started with [www.OttawaParamedics.ca](http://www.OttawaParamedics.ca)

The best thing is, there will be more to come!



# PARAMEDIC PAINTBALL

[OttawaParamedics.ca](http://OttawaParamedics.ca)



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COMMANDO PAINTBALL

Dunning Road (south of Colonial)  
Tuesday Oct 07, 2008 (08:00hrs - 16:00hrs)

[paintball@OttawaParamedics.ca](mailto:paintball@OttawaParamedics.ca)

Coordinator: Kane Newell

[www.OttawaParamedics.ca](http://www.OttawaParamedics.ca)