



## *History of Telluride EMS*

*The story behind The Telluride Volunteer Fire Department is well known. It is steeped in tradition and selfless service. The history of Telluride EMS may not be as old, but the community members that laid the groundwork were no less dedicated.*

*Up until 1960 there was no recognized type of service that aided the ill or injured. In those days fellow workers or loved ones would take their sick and injured to the “Town Doc” by any means available. Pre hospital care in Telluride is the history of dedicated community members providing care and transport to those in need. In small towns that lack much of a population or tax base such services must be operated by volunteers. Telluride’s mining community saw no recognized type of service for their trauma and medical needs. So, the mine provided the land and the original clinic as a community service. Soon, basic first aid and transport became part of the responsibility of Telluride’s Finest, The Telluride Fire Department. The majority of accidents that challenged the Telluride Volunteer Fire Department were auto and mining accidents. The purchase of a used black 1953 Pontiac Hearse from a Montrose Funeral Home lent an air of professionalism to the basic “load and go!” service.*

*This filled a gap while Idarado’s mining success was good, and the Company helped with the purchase.*



1953 Pontiac Hearse

*The Fire Department introduced a matching grant in the late 1960's, which would help pay for a new "Ambulance". The Hearse was quickly sold to the fledgling ski area to aid their increasing knee injuries. This sale's funds went to a matching grant, which provided a new red 1960 raised top Chevrolet Suburban that held a gurney, and so the "Telluride Ambulance Service" was born.*



1960 Chevrolet Suburban



*In 1970 the Federal Government's Committee on Highway Safety mandated a national certifying agency for Emergency Medical Technicians in order to establish and standardize training requirements. The individual States improved upon these basic Federal Standards for pre hospital medical*

*providers and established their own qualifications for out of hospital care. Members of the Telluride Fire Department quickly embraced the new standards, which the State of Colorado Emergency Medical Services called for. The first EMTs graduated from a Montrose Hospital course in May of 1973. These dedicated citizens wanted to increase training to help them respond to emergencies where close to 80% of the patients were community members. Local care and transport to Montrose Hospital was soon enhanced by the Ambulance service purchase of a 1975-raised top Dodge 300 Maxi Van.*



**Photo C**

***1975 Dodge 300 Maxi Van***

*Telluride's transition from a mining community to a resort community created new needs for training and dealing with the general public. Full time emergency medical personnel became necessary due to increasing demands on volunteer time. A growing tax base fueled by resort development and donation dollars provided funding for upgrading equipment and training. As definitive care and transport became a larger service, the Telluride EMT Association was born and the Ambulance Service was no longer a branch of the Volunteer Fire Department. Both services remain under the same roof and under the financial umbrella of the Telluride Fire Protection District. As it was in its infancy so it is today, many individuals continue to do both Fire and EMS.*

*Today, emergency medical services in Telluride are a sophisticated system of pre hospital care equal to our urban counterparts.*



*Currently Telluride, Placerville & Mtn. Village maintain 42 EMTs, 17 of them are Basics, 15 are Intermediates, 2 are RNs and 7 of them are Paramedics. They not only cover the 390 sq. miles of the Fire District but also aid Norwood, Rico and Ridgeway as well as the Telluride Medical Center when they are in need. In 2009 EMS cared for 570 people in our community, 404 of those were 911 emergencies and 318 of these folks needed advanced life support. This is all made possible from four station locations, five ambulances and two quick response vehicles all of which are ALS.*

*Telluride EMS performs many tasks for Law Enforcement and Corrections. EMS provides service for festivals, commercials, weddings, races, and all other sorts of special events. EMS runs education such as EMT, CPR, and First Aid courses, public awareness and injury prevention, Health Fair, school programs, and many other services.*

*On May 30<sup>th</sup> 2013 Telluride EMS will have reached its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.*

*We are proud to be “The Best Part Of Your Worst Day” 24/7, 365 days a year, since 1973.*



*“Let’s be careful out there”.*