
Thanks and so long

FROM THE EDITOR



Kelly Harrell

“When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.’”

Fred Rogers

Talk about bittersweet. Not only is this the last column I will write for Texas EMS Magazine, it is also the last issue of Texas EMS Magazine as you know it now. I am retiring as of July 31, and Texas EMS Magazine will become a smaller online edition, which will be offered free of charge on the DSHS website. (Refunds for current subscribers will be issued. Please see page 5 for information.)

Texas EMS Conference will go on as usual. It will be in Fort Worth on November 24-27. I promise you won't be able to tell any difference – same great education, networking and exhibit hall.

When I started this job in 1992, I barely knew what the letters E-M-S stood for. I remember sitting at my desk thinking I'd give the job six months – and then I'd start looking elsewhere. Now I look back on 21 Texas EMS conferences and about 130 issues of Texas EMS Magazine, and I'm certain this is the place I was meant to be. I never even got around to applying for another job. Six months became two decades in the blink of an eye.

As you'll see from the magazine retrospective starting on page 16, we've been through a lot of changes since the magazine began. Licensed paramedic, accreditation, outsourcing testing, the transition to National Registry, computerized testing, hurricanes, tropical storms, state EMS directors, tornadoes, the repeal of retesting for certification, local projects grants and 19 regular sessions of the Texas Legislature (and couple of special sessions). It's mostly been fun and if it wasn't fun, it was, er, interesting.

It's impossible to name all the wonderful people who helped me learn about EMS and trauma along the way, so I'll just say it to everyone: Thanks for your patience and good humor over the years. I've never met a better bunch of people, so passionate about emergency response and so willing to help out – whether it's moving a table across the room at GETAC or jumping into the back of a truck at 2 a.m. to go on a cardiac call.

Which brings me to the Mr. Rogers quote at the top of the page. I first read that quote after the Boston Marathon bombings, but it made me think of all the times I've watched a disaster, natural or manmade, and felt helpless – until I saw the rescuers. So thank you all for all you do, whether it's a routine transfer or a major MVC. You made a six-month job last 21 years. Thanks for letting me tell your story.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Kelly".