

## East Fork Fire District Continues Heart Safe Mission with Donations



East Fork Board of Fire Commissioners, former members of Jack's Valley Volunteer Fire Department, Angela Barosso with Carson City Health and Human Services along with Deputy Fire Chief Dave Fogerson receive the donations for two cardiac monitors.

East Fork Fire District, one of five Heart Safe Communities within Nevada, is continuing our mission to provide the best pre-hospital cardiac arrest survival chances possible through the efforts of our community. As a heart safe community, community partners offer CPR classes, Douglas 9-1-1 provides hands only CPR instructions when you call 9-1-1 and a list of automated external defibrillators (AED's) is maintained by Douglas 9-1-1 to send someone for one if its close to the scene. When you do call 9-1-1, Douglas County Sheriff's Office responds with East Fork Fire to all cardiac arrest calls to assist with CPR and their AED if they arrive first. The firefighter/paramedics provide much of the same treatment available in an emergency department to attempt in restarting a stopped heart. We partner with a cardiac cath lab to bring patients directly to the cath lab for immediate repair when indicated thus saving precious time.

A huge component of East Fork's roll is having a cardiac monitor that allows the firefighter/paramedic to view the heart's electrical activity. Our current cache is aging in technology years: they are over ten years old. Every paramedic unit at East Fork maintains one of these units, including our paramedic engine companies. A group, led by Firefighter/Paramedic Derek Jackson, evaluated three different cardiac monitors over three months before selecting the Zoll cardiac monitor. This device, at a cost of

\$40,000 each, allows the paramedic to see the heart through 12 different views, monitor oxygen and carbon monoxide levels in the blood and exhaled air, takes blood pressures and also provides electrical energy for the paramedic to alter the heart's activity. Due to the District's participation in consortium purchasing with several regional agencies, the cost was reduced to \$28,000 each, reflecting a total savings of \$60,000 for the five units being purchased.

Even at the reduced cost replacement is difficult for the fire district after seeing annual reductions in revenue due to the impacts of the Affordable Care Act. The District was extremely fortunate to receive community donations to purchase two of them. Carson City Health and Human Services was able to purchase one on a federal public preparedness grant. The second donated unit was funded by the former Jacks Valley Volunteer Fire Department. While closing down the non-profit group's accounts, which once supported the volunteer department, they sought a public safety related issue to donate the money. In doing so, Jack's Valley Volunteer Fire Department legacy will live on for a number of years. East Fork was able to purchase the three additional units with both budgeted funds and with additional unanticipated revenue.

A personal experience with these monitors exists for East Fork Fire members. One of our dispatcher supervisors, who is responsible for providing CPR instructions over the phone and was ironically previously a member of the Jack's Valley Volunteer Fire Department, had a lifesaving event from our old devices. As a typical forty-year old male, he was experiencing chest pain but did not want to see the doctor. His wife talked him into stopping by an East Fork Fire station. While there, he was placed on a cardiac monitor where the firefighter/paramedics saw changes to his heart's electrical activity indicating a heart attack was occurring. He was immediately transported to the cardiac cath lab for treatment. He left the hospital a few days later after undergoing bypass surgery because his issue was too great for treatment in the cath lab. He is back on the dispatch floor today because of the technology, professional expertise of our firefighter/paramedics, doctors, nurses and a loving wife who made him seek help.

Deputy Fire Chief Dave Fogerson stated on behalf of the Fire Protection District he, "would like to thank the former members of the Jack's Valley Volunteer Fire Department, Carson City Health and Human Services and the Board of Fire Commissioners for the donation of funds and approval of additional funds respectively, for the purchase of the five new cardiac monitors".