

Volunteer firefighters have protected the Estes Valley since 1907. This [#EstesValleyFirefighter](#) series will introduce you to the unique individuals who keep that tradition alive, celebrating their contributions to our fire department and the role they play in our Estes community.

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At 26, Rachel Hofsess is dynamite in a small package. She's not threatening when you first meet her, and once in conversation, her laugh and friendly demeanor will put you at ease. It's when you start to talk business, or about her passions that she will surprise you. Rachel has a lot of letters after her name as a registered nurse, it looks something like this: RN, BSN, CEN. She has certifications in TNCC, PALS, ACLS, NRP, BLS and NREMT. They are all acronyms for education that makes her a better nurse, and real asset caring for patients. Her story isn't complete without mentioning her athletic accomplishments in NCAA D1 cross country running and college track & field.

Rachel joined the EVFPD in 2017 and has already completed firefighter academy (part of the District's first class who graduated last fall). She's excited about firefighting and has been on all of the structure fires this year, performing ventilation, search, and other demanding tasks. As a volunteer she always delivers a high level of service, especially on medical calls where along with her nurse background, she functions as an EMT (Emergency Medical Technician). EMT involves less training than a nurse but is more specific to field conditions. Rachel has always been interested in working as a flight nurse, though she says she will continue with the EVFPD once she lands that dream job.

Being a volunteer organization doesn't impact the level of care EVFPD provides to its patients, and with well-trained members like Rachel, our pre-hospital care is among the best in the world. It's often said that emergency service providers are adrenaline junkies, and that seems true among our membership. For Rachel, that means exploring the world with passion. She's often first to cut through back country powder snow, she enjoys trail running and looks at home doing anything outdoors.

Rachel's 'tool chest' of training is full, and her gesture of offering that to community residents at no cost by volunteering is what makes up a strong organization like the EVFPD. Each member brings a variety of skills whether they are medical, construction, engineering, education, geology, business or any other discipline- each person becomes part of the solution that is the EVFPD. There's a reason people say to "Call the Fire Department" when they can't figure out any other solution to a problem, and it's our people who make that possible.

All of this considered, you may be surprised to learn that she's terrified of butterflies. So, she's not perfect, and we're all human, contributing to making our community a better place.

