



Volume 14 Issue 12  
December, 2021

### Feature Stories



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- Retirements
- Safe Kids

### 2021 STATISTICS

Nov. 1 — Nov. 30

#### District Average Response Time:

9 min. 48 sec.

#### Responses by Type:

Fire: 14

EMS: 341

Other: 139

**Total: 494**

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*Proudly serving the communities of Blaine, Birch Bay, Custer, Laurel and the unincorporated areas of Lynden & Bellingham*

## *"Providing Quality Service for a Safe Community"* New Member Biography



*Firefighter Kat Stewart*

I was born, and raised in the Skagit Valley. My family lived in Burlington WA. When I completed middle school we relocated to our family property in Clear Lake, WA. My Dad and Grandfather had both volunteered for the Clear Lake Fire Department, and some of my Dad's stories about helping out in the community. After my kids were born, their stories inspired me to volunteer.

When I was young, my grandparents taught my sister Sally and I how to shoot, fish, bake, and butcher a deer. They shared their experiences of living through the Great Depression, WW2, the Korean War, and our family's agriculture and logging history in the Skagit Valley. My thirst for knowledge about these topics and my dream to be surrounded by the Cascades, led me to contemplate careers.

Park Ranger seemed like the perfect fit for me. I was lucky to be hired by the Youth Conservation Corps, out of the Marblemount Ranger Station when I was 17. The following summer North Cascades National Park hired me as a seasonal laborer. The summer I graduated from high school, NPS sent me to Peninsula College to earn my Red Card certificate. That summer, I was deployed on my first few wildland fires.

I continued to work seasonally for the park service for three more years, until I enrolled at Bellingham Technical College. I studied Diesel Equipment Technology, and Machining, with the intent of going back to the park service to work year-round as a maintenance mechanic.

I was hired by BP Cherry Point Refinery, in the Machine Shop in 2003, and worked as a machinist/millwright for nine years. BP was a very satisfying place to work, and I loved solving mechanical problems, and working with, and learning from very skilled craftsmen.

I met my husband Matt while working at Cherry Point. We live on a couple of acres off of N. Enterprise Rd. with our son Abe (10), and daughter Lauren (9). We also live with a flock of

chickens, two kitties, a one-eyed sweetheart of a horse, and a cranky little Shetland pony. It is my paradise.

I began my structural firefighter training as a volunteer/intern at Whatcom County Fire District 7. I couldn't get enough as a volunteer, and after three years, was hired by the City of Lynden Fire Department, where I worked full-time as a FF/EMT.

I enjoy spending time with my family and friends, adventuring in the mountains, studying the rocks, minerals, and history of the Cascades. When I have the luxury of spare time, I can be found dragging my dear ones up to some crusty, forgotten, historic fire lookout.

I am humbly grateful to be able to do the work that we do in our community, and I'm very excited to become a member of the North Whatcom family.



# CAP Thanksgiving Basket Program

*Please remember to keep the district up to date with any changes including your contact information.*

*All changes should be directed to Kelly.*

*These changes may include:*

*Phone*

*Address*

*Email*

*Family Additions*

*Name changes*

Under the direction of Lt. Mike Nelson, Local 106 NW firefighters gathered turkeys, milk, butter, potatoes and other items needed to cook Thanksgiving dinners. The meals were donated to families in need within the Blaine area, courtesy of the Community Assistance Program's Thanksgiving Baskets on Tuesday, November 23. Our Firefighters also volunteered their time and were on hand to transport the Thanksgiving baskets to community member's vehicles.

It is expected that the baskets will feed about 1,239 members of the community.

The Community Assistance Program provides a variety of services for Blaine, Birch Bay, Point Roberts and Custer residents in need including:

- Crisis Assistance Program
- CAP Clothing Bank
- CAP Community Meals



## Blaine and Birch Bay Community Toy Store

The Community Toy Store is a holiday gift assistance program that seeks to provide a hand up instead of a handout for families facing difficult financial circumstances. This model fully involves the parents, giving them the joy and dignity of personally providing gifts for their own children, as well as being contributors to their community. The program has been operating successfully in Bellingham for over ten years. The Blaine and Birch Bay program began in 2018. It is sponsored by The Community Assistance Program with support from many churches, businesses, organizations, and individuals in our community.

### How Does the Community Toy Store Work?

Brand new, unwrapped toys are donated by community members and prices are marked down about 75%. Gift cards to a variety of stores will be available for children between the ages of 11 and 18. Gifts are arranged in a store-like setting where parents can shop on a cash-only basis, choosing several gifts per child. Voucher assistance is available for families needing extra help. Proceeds from toy sales will be distributed to non-profits that serve families in our own community.

*Your donations will have a big impact in our community!*

*For more information visit:*

<https://blainecap.org/community-toy-store/community-toy-store-donations/>



**The donation drive will run from November 1 – December 3.**

# NWFR Honors Lt. Zylstra & Lt. Smith

Friends, family and coworkers joined North Whatcom Fire and Rescue at Laurel Station 69 on Sunday, November 21 and at Blaine Station 61 on

Tuesday, November 30 to recognize and honor Lieutenant Keith Zylstra and Lieutenant Leslee Smith as they both retire from long careers in the fire service.



## Events to Celebrate December Birthdays

- 7 — Leslee Smith
- 7 — John Swobody
- 13 — Chris Hollander
- 17 — Jason Van der Veen
- 26 — Bruce Ansell
- 30 — Gary DeJager



**NWFR Board Meetings may be conducted via Zoom Meeting**

Thurs. December 16  
9408 Odell St 61  
Blaine — 11:00 a.m.



HAPPY  
*retirement*



1507 E. Badger Rd.  
PO Box 286  
Lynden, WA 98264

Providing quality service for  
a safe community



### CPR / AED Classes 2021

Class will be held at various  
fire stations around the district. Check out  
<https://www.nwfrs.net/resources/classes/> for more  
information and to reserve  
your spot.

*Donations of nonperishable food  
items are encouraged but not  
mandatory. All food donations  
will be forwarded to local area  
food banks.*



FOR THE SAFETY OF  
EVERYONE IN OUR  
COMMUNITY, ALL CPR  
CLASSES HAVE BEEN  
CANCELLED UNTIL  
FURTHER NOTICE.

WE APOLOGIZE FOR  
ANY INCONVENIENCE

## Safe Kids



**Follow our favorite Olympic snowboarders as they navigate their way through the Snowlympics!!**

**Learn winter safety as they take us through experiences with their athletics, families and friends.**

**Virtual Live Event presented with Kickstand Comedy**

**Topics include:**

**Tips for being safe and preventing falls on snow/ice  
Brain injury prevention tips for winter activities  
Make a plan for winter weather safety  
and more!**

**Snowlympics on 14 January 2022 (2 – 3pm) and 15 Jan  
2022 (10 – 11am)**

**[TBI Events Portal](#)**

**Additional Information, Resources, and downloadable  
materials can be found at WA State DSHS TBI Resources  
– [WA State DSHS TBI Resources](#)**

**Share with your communities, partnerships, and every-  
one in between**

**Bring it on Winter, We will be ready**