The Responder

Volume 8, Issue 12
December, 2015

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2015 STATISTICS
Nov. 1 — Nov. 30

District Average Response Time:
min. 8 sec. 33

Responses by Type:

Fire: 8
EMS: 174
Other: 86
Total: 268

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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"

NWFR Member Profile

by Firefighter Jason Donnelly

Jason who……?

Many people have asked this question throughout the years. As I sit here typing by the light of a candle, I will attempt to fill in some of the blanks.

Keeping a low profile was not easy in the early years. My grandparents met while working for Walt Disney, and started a family which would keep them in Southern California while they worked in the animation industry until their retirement. My parents lived in Hollywood and were working for Capitol Records when I came on the scene. With many relatives involved in the film industry I also got involved. I worked on some T.V. commercials and did some modeling for clothes. Cursed with a wicked case of stage fright, it was tough for me to land any speaking roles.

Through an unfortunate chain of events, coupled with the fact that I had hit the glass ceiling in my acting career, we moved to Mammoth Mountain, California. Living in a ski resort, it became very clear to me that I needed to learn to ski. That first winter it snowed so much we had to tunnel out of the second floor window to get out of the house. I was hooked on the snow scene. I got my first Ski School Season's Pass in Kindergarten, and really began to log some serious vert doing hot laps on the TBar and Poma Lift.

Season's Passes, at the time, cost us $5.00 and the school would bus us to the mountain every Thursday for PE class. By the time I was in fifth grade, my friends and I would skip ski school and bomb around terrorizing the mountain. Always game for some adrenaline, we would often venture higher and higher on the mountain. More often than not, we would get in way over our heads in the steep chutes, and massive bowls on the mountain. I took a few good tumbles and mastered the art of the complete "Yard Sale", which meant you crashed so hard everything came off except your boots. A good Yard Sale was always a crowd pleaser, evoking cheers and whistles from the chairs above.

In middle school, we moved to Sequim, Washington. Not able to ski as frequently as I had in Mammoth, I managed to find my adrenaline fix with dirt bikes. With a couple of quarts of fuel in my backpack, I would ride my dirt bike south across Highway 101 and go deep into the Olympic Mountains. I would ride on single track and logging roads until I ran out of gas, fill the bike back up with the gas from my backpack and try to make it back home before it got dark. I worked summers putting up hay for the local farmers and made enough money to keep riding my dirt bike throughout the year, and go on ski trips during winter break.

During High School I headed down a darker path and started to get into trouble. After getting knocked around a bit and getting suspended my Freshman summer year, I found Wrestling. I was never very good, but I had a lot of fun and it

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

All changes should be directed to Jennie. These changes may include:

Phone

Address

Email

Banking

Family Additions

Name changes

NWFR Member Profile cont.

continued from pg. 1

kept me on the straight and narrow. Our team was like a big family to me. We raised enough money cutting firewood during the summer that we were able to pay for the whole team to go to a wrestling tournament in Hawaii. We didn't win many matches, but we did get pretty wicked sunburns learning how to body surf at Sandy Beach on Oahu.

After High School, I moved to Los Angeles and got a job driving for Goodhew Ambulance. I figured that if I could handle the medical side of the fire department, I could handle anything. So at 19 years old, armed with a Thomas Guide Map Book and a three week crash course in EMT school, I hit the ground running. My first station was out of Culver City and covered Santa Monica to East L.A. Looking for more adventure, I transferred to Torrance and covered Inglewood, Watts and Compton. I was on the fast track to learning about the local culture and what colors not to wear while going to a late night movie in the big city.

With constant gridlock and heavy traffic, most of our Code 3 calls were spent almost entirely in the oncoming lane. Several times while driving a patient to the hospital, the hospital would radio back that they were full and to take our patient to a different hospital. I got fairly proficient at reading my Thomas Guide while weaving through traffic and radioing the next available hospital.

As things were heating up in Los Angeles during the late 80's, I threw my name in the hat to go to L.H. Bates Fire School in Tacoma. After a year of living and working in L.A., a spot opened at Bates and I jumped at the chance. During my time at Bates, I was also involved in the Resident program for Pierce 10 in Fife. As a resident we were assigned to a shift with three career firefighters. We were only required to work our assigned shifts, but if bigger calls came in, the extra guys would ride tailboard to the calls for manpower. Riding on the tailboard to calls in the winter, we would try to keep the hose bed tarp over our head to stay a little warmer or keep the rain off, which didn't always work. I learned a lot about living and working together as a team and the value of crew continuity. To be able to graduate from Bates, one of the requirements, along with good grades, was to do an "auditorium" raise in the parking lot. Everyone would take a turn climbing up and over in full turnout gear. We all passed with flying colors.

In 1991, I moved back to Sequim where I met my soon to be wife, Melisa. We really hit it off climbing, hiking, and skiing together. We moved a few times and ended up in Seattle. She finished up her degree in Sociology at UW, and I worked a few seasons on the Professional Ski Patrol at Stevens Pass, throwing bombs and skiing deep powder.

Hit fast forward, and where are we now? Melisa just finished Grad School at Western and works as a Speech Pathologist for the Stanwood School District. We have two teenage boys, Evan, a gifted musician who is studying Sound Engineering at Shoreline Community College and Ben, an aspiring Pro Skier, who is also the proud owner of a 1975 first generation Honda civic wagon.

I try not to drive in the oncoming lane, or throw bombs any more, but if you come up to the north end of Whatcom County, you are welcome to stand on the tailboard of a fire engine and talk about the good old days with me.

Rehab 70—Up and Running

This past summer Division Chief Henry Hollander and Health and Wellness Coordinator Kelly Freeman worked together to re-vamp an older ambulance that was donated from BC Cherry Point Refinery into a ready to go Rehab unit. The concept of this unit has been in the works for quite some time and NWFR was finally at a point where they could move forward with it. NFPA 1584 "Standard on Rehabilitation Process for Members During Emergency Operation and Training Exercises" explains the benefits of having either an informal or formal rehab set up during working structure fires and training exercises. Safety for our firefighters is our number one priority; we want everyone to go home safe to their loved ones at the end of the day. Rehab 70 is currently located at North Whatcom Fire and Rescue's Wiser Lake Rd Station 70 as it is central within the district for an expeditious response.

The unit is stocked with snacks, water, Gatorade, wet towels, spare T-shirts, medical monitoring equipment and more. The goal is give firefighters a place to have shelter, fluids, remove their personal protective equipment (PPE) and sit down and rest before being cleared to go back into active structure firefighting. The Rehab team currently has five members that respond on an on-call basis when needed at a working structure fire. Although still evolving, North Whatcom Fire and Rescue believes this is an extremely beneficial step in keeping our firefighters safe during critical fire calls.

NWFR Assists CAP with Thanksgiving Baskets

Local 106 NW firefighters gathered turkey, 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 Wednesday, November 26. Firefighters also volunteered their time and were on h and to transport the Thanksgiving baskets to community member's vehicles. Over Three hundred baskets were prepared this year.

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

For additional information please email: blainecap@comcast.net

Events to Celebrate

December Birthdays

2—Commissioner McPhail
7— Leslee Smith
7— John Swobody
13—Chris Hollander
17—Jason Van der Veen
28—Jeff Schwab

WCRA Graduation

Thurs. December 17
Lynden Christ the King Church—7:00 p.m.

Fire Commissioner Meetings

NWF

Thurs. December 17
9408 Odell St 61 Blaine — 7:00 p.m.

District 4

Tues. December 9
4142 Britton Loop St 12 Bellingham —12:00 p.m.

4142 Britton Loop Rd.
Bellingham, WA 98226

Providing quality service for a safe community

Free Friends and Family CPR Classes 2015

Class will be held from 6:30 p.m.—9:30 p.m. at various fire stations around the district. Check out www.nwfrs.net for more information and to reserve your spot.

January 27
February 25
March 25
April 22
May 27
June 17
July 31
August 27
September 23
October 38
November 18
December 30

NWFR and District 4 Santa Run

North Whatcom Fire and Rescue will be collaborating with District 4 and local law enforcement officers to gather and distribute food, toys, clothing and other necessities to families who are truly in need. The tremendous success of this program is due to the generosity of all of the members of this community who selflessly donate each year.

On Saturday, December 5, North Whatcom Fire and Rescue and District 4 firefighters along with fire trucks will escort Santa through parts of the district to pick up donated items. Hot cider and candy canes will be provided and each child will have the opportunity to visit with Santa.

A route schedule is posted on both district websites:
www.nwfrs.net
www.wcfd4.com

While deciding what to donate, here are some guidelines to keep in mind:

- Toys, coats, clothing and books—all ages
- Food donations must be non-perishable and not expired
- Cash donations
- We cannot accept used items.

Sweet Potato Shephard's Pie

Recipe courtesy of Haley Pomroy

Ingredients

1 cup dry lentils
3 large or 4 medium sweet potatoes (peeled and chopped into 3/4" cubes)
1/2 cup unsweetened rice milk
2 large onions, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
5 carrots, peeled and chopped
2 cups fresh green beans trimmed cut into 1 inch pieces
1/4 cup organic vegetable broth
1 tsp. dried thyme
2 tsp. tamari
1/2 tsp sea salt
1/4 tsp pepper

Serves 4 Prep time: 15 min.

Directions

Preheat oven to 400°

In a medium saucepan, combine the lentils with 2 cups water. Bring to a boil over high heat and immediately reduce the heat and simmer on low for 15 min. When cooked, remove from the heat and cover to keep warm.

Meanwhile, bring 4 quarts of water to a boil in a large pot. Add the sweet potatoes and boil for 10 min, or until tender. While the lentils and potatoes are cooking, sauté the carrots, onions and garlic in a large skillet with 1/4 cup vegetable broth. When the carrots begin to soften, add the green beans and cook for about 5 min. more. Add the cooked lentils, thyme, tamari, salt and pepper. Stir well to combine.

Pour the lentil mixture into a large, 10 cup casserole dish. Drain and mash the potatoes with 1/2 c up rice milk. Top the lentils with the mashed potatoes and bake for 30 minutes.

You can add by cooking the vegetables in 3 or 4 TBS of olive onion and by adding coconut milk to the mashed sweet potatoes. Meat eaters can substitute 1 pound lean ground beef for the lentils.