The Responder

Volume 10, Issue 12

December, 2017

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2017 STATISTICS

Nov.1 — Nov. 31

District Average Response Time:
8 min. 52 sec.

Responses by Type:

Fire: 10
EMS: 234
Other: 112

Total: 356

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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 Members Graduate from State Academy

North Whatcom Fire and Rescue recruits Steve Latham, Sean Roberts and Zak Balonick, graduated from the Washington State Fire Training Academy on Friday, November 3rd. All NWFR career firefighters are required to complete the twelve week, 480 hour intense course, located in North Bend, WA.

CAP Thanksgiving Basket Program

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

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 Wednesday, November 22. Our Firefighters also volunteered their time and were on hand to transport the Thanksgiving baskets to community member's vehicles. Over two hundred sixty baskets were prepared this year.

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

The Company Officer: Competency First

By Kevin F. Burns

A lot is written and talked about how the Company Officer is the backbone of the American Fire Service. I believe this to be true although I am always quick to point out at the same time that we need soldiers too, and a good senior man in particular is invaluable. But the Company Officer holds a special place upon which much depends. In many ways, they hold in their hands the balance of the success or failure of their particular Company.

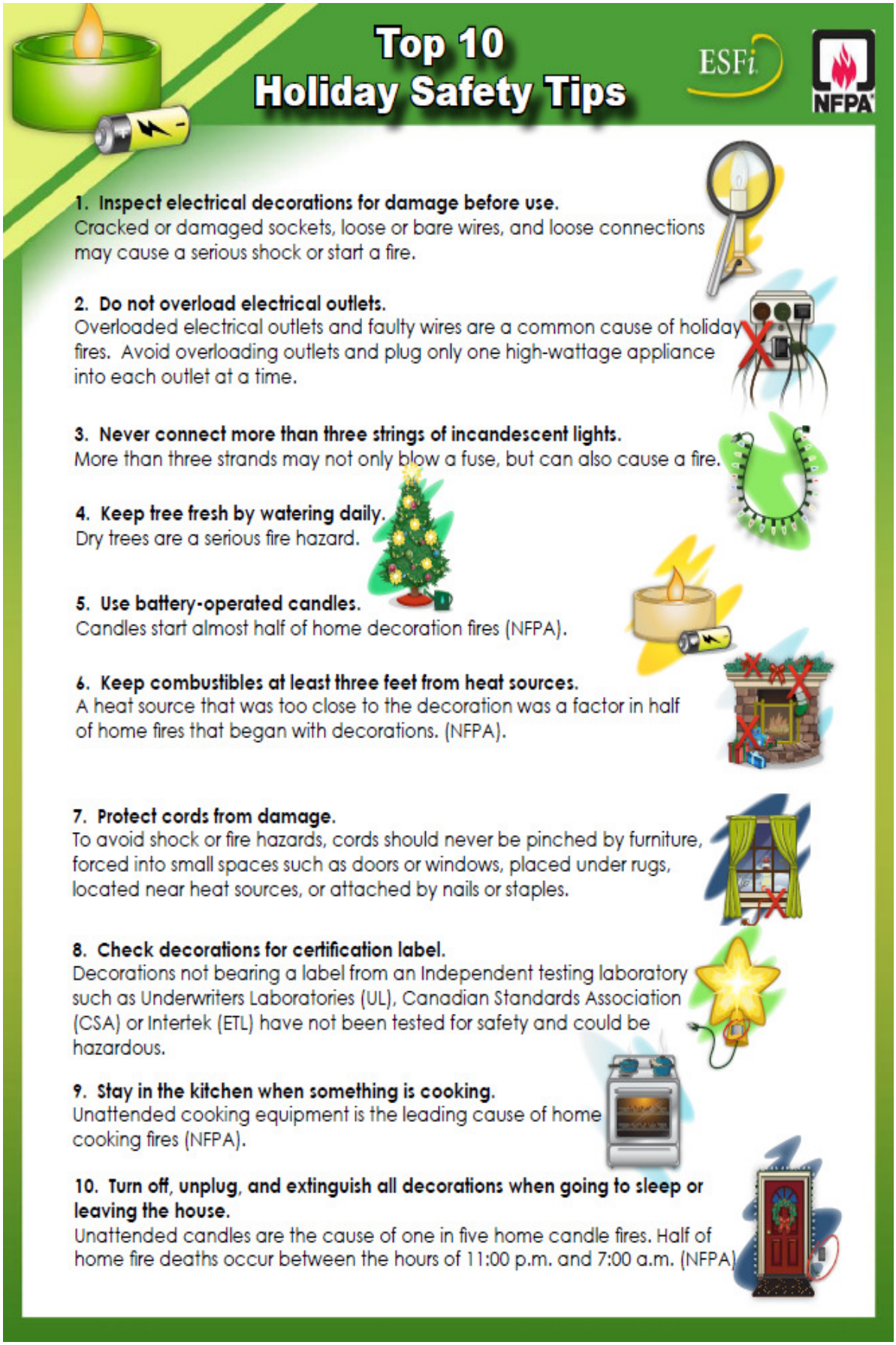
Also, a lot is written and talked about regarding the need for Company Officers to be leaders and to have character. Again, I agree with this. Who wouldn't? But I propose that the most important characteristic for a Company Officer to have is tactical competency. If you're going to lead other members into battle, you have to know what you're doing. Leadership and character are important. Competency is more important.

As an example of the primacy of competency, I submit Rooster Cogburn from the movie "True Grit", played by either John Wayne in the 1970s or Jeff Bridges in the remake of a couple of years ago. Rooster Cogburn was a U.S. Marshal but he was also ornery and was a drunk. Now these are not virtues to be imitated, in fact, they are vices and should be avoided, but Cogburn's most important characteristic was that he was tactically competent – he knew what he was doing. He could shoot. He could ride hard. He could track outlaws. He could stay alive and keep those with him alive, even in the harsh environment of the wild west or during a gunfight. What he did off duty when his character flaws were manifest was less important than what he did on duty. When he was on duty he knew his job and he did it well.

A Company Officer needs to know how to force a door, get a chain saw started after it's been flooded, and be able to open a roof. He has to be able to push down a tough hallway. He can't be the first one out of air, or have to leave because of a mask problem. He must be in reasonable physical shape. He's got to know building construction, fire behavior, how to read smoke, and be proficient with a thermal imaging camera. He's got to know what to look for during a 360. If the pump operator can't get water, the Officer has to know how to correct the problem. Now, a big part of his job is to teach these skills to his members and in many cases the members are the ones who should be performing these tasks with the Officer right beside them supervising and maintaining situational awareness. But in the moment, when it's on the line, he's got to be able to perform tactically if called upon. The members that are with him are depending on his competency and they want to know he is competent. He's got to be able to do what he asks them to do.

Returning to character for a moment, it is my experience that most competent Company Officers do have character and thus are leaders. In our job, if you love it and are good at it, almost naturally you have character. In a nutshell, this job is about putting others first – the epitome of character. Turns out the competent Rooster Cogburn did have "true grit". He rescued Maddie Ross from the snake pit she had fallen into (competently rigging a rescue rope!), rode all night with her until the horse could take no more, then carried her until she reached a doctor. He even stayed with her until she was out of danger. All evidence of his character, but first he was competent. He knew what he was doing. That was the foundation of his success. A Company Officer should have character and be a good leader but he's got to be a competent fireman first.

NFPA Holiday Safety Tips



Events to Celebrate December Birthdays

2—Commissioner McPhail
7—Leslee Smith
7—John Swobody
13—Chris Hollander
17—Jason VanderVeen
22—Richard Walter
26—Commissioner Ansell

Christmas—*December 25*

Blaine Food Bank—295#

Fire Commissioner Meetings
NWFR
Thurs. December 21
9408 Odell St 61 Blaine — 7:00 p.m.

District 4
Wed. December 13
4142 Britton Loop St 12

4142 Britton Loop Rd.
Bellingham, WA 98226

Providing quality service for a safe community

Free Friends and Family CPR Classes

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

January 31
February 17
March 28
April 25
May 30
June 27
July 25
August 22
September 26
October 24
November 28
December 19

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

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 2, 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 the District 4 website: 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.

Crudité Vegetable Wreath with Ranch Dip

Courtesy of Eating Well.com

Crudité

8 cups broccoli florets
3 cups Brussels sprouts, trimmed
2 cups green beans, trimmed
1 cup sugar snap peas, strings removed 1/2 bunch curly kale, washed
2 cup cauliflower florets
9 cherry tomatoes

Dip

1 cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt
1/2 cup mayonnaise
2 TBS finely chopped shallots
2 TBS chopped dill or 1tsp dried
4tsp white wine vinegar
1 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp sugar
1/2 tsp salt
1/2 tsp ground white pepper

To prepare crudité: Put a large pot of water on to boil. Set a large bowl of ice water by the stove. Blanch broccoli for 1 to 2 minutes in the boiling water. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the broccoli to the ice bath to chill. Drain well. Blanch Brussels sprouts, green beans and snap peas in the same way.

To prepare the dip: Whisk yogurt, mayonnaise, shallot, dill, vinegar, garlic powder, sugar, salt and pepper in a medium bowl. Transfer to a serving bowl; set it in the center of a large circular platter or decorative board.

Arrange kale around the bowl, with the frilly edges on the outside. Top with the broccoli, Brussels sprouts, green beans, snap peas and cauliflower. Garnish with cherry tomatoes.

To make ahead: Refrigerate for up to 1 day