



# The Responder

Volume 10, Issue 6  
June, 2017

## Feature Stories

- Fire Officers
- Recognition
- Safety Check
- Appreciation
- Safe Kids Safety Fair
- Healthy Recipe

## 2017 STATISTICS

May 1 — May 31

## Responses by Type:

Fire: 9  
EMS: 205  
Other: 111  
**Total: 325**



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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”*

## Fire Officers: the Buck Stops with You



*By Timothy E. Sendelbach*

By now, it's become almost cliché to refer to the company officer as the most important position in the fire service. But that doesn't make it less true. Company officers determine whether the crew will spend the shift working out and training or sitting on recliners. Company officers determine whether kitchen table discussions foster open-minded discussion about safe tactics, or promote a bravado-driven culture of excessive risk-taking. There simply is no other person in the fire service that has the daily impact on firefighters that company officers do. That's why company officers are key to achieving the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation's (NFFF) new goal of reducing firefighter line-of-duty deaths to under 50 annually.

For many company officers, becoming an officer is the consequence of the right mix of seniority and opportunity. There's not always a

lot of preparation aimed specifically at readying you to be the person in charge as opposed to just one of the crew. As a result, company officer development was an important part of the NFFF TAMPA2 summit last year and will continue to be a key focus of the NFFF's efforts.

Whether your department has a robust company officer development program or a “sink or swim” approach, there are some things you as a company officer can do that can have a significant impact on the safety and survivability of those in your command. Here are five you can start with:

1. *Ensure that the rig doesn't move until everyone's belted in* - We oftentimes think of firefighting as a dangerous profession because of *fire*, but the truth is, vehicle accidents that occur responding to and returning from calls continue to injure and kill a greater number of firefighters each year. In 2013, 11 firefighters died while responding to incidents. A seatbelt doesn't always mean you'll walk away unharmed, but it does greatly improve your chances.

2. *When your crew is operating at roadway incidents, require high*

*-visibility vests* - The [Emergency Responder Safety Institute](#) keeps a running tally of “struck by” incidents. At the end of February, it had already recorded five incidents in 2015 in which fire/EMS personnel were struck when responding to roadway incidents, some with multiple victims. For whatever reason, drivers often do not see firefighters operating on the roads. Unless you're actively engaged in fire suppression-related activities (exposed to thermal insult heat), put on the vest and make sure others do too.

3. *Stock wet wipes in the apparatus* - More and more research is detailing the dangerous chemicals we're exposed to on the fireground, and the cancer risks that result. The good news is, decon doesn't have to be a highly complex procedure. In a post-event survey, several TAMPA2 participants took the cancer message to heart and began carrying wet wipes on their apparatus for on-scene skin cleaning. Getting the chemicals off your skin as soon as possible reduces your exposure and, potentially, your risk of developing firefighting-related cancers.

*continued on pg. 2*

# The Buck Stops with You cont.

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

continued from pg. 1

4. Reward safe practices - One of the key recommendations from TAMPA2 related to Life Safety Initiative #4 (empowerment) was to reward safe practices as a way of positively reinforcing and building a culture of safety. Company officers are in the best position to see safe behavior and immediately recognize it. Is your engineer especially fastidious about cleaning her PPE? Did your rookie firefighter take himself out of the fight at a house fire in extremely hot weather because he felt faint? Did a veteran member take the time to explain to some newer members about the dangers of the old auto parts warehouse down the street? Each of these is an opportunity for you to recognize the firefighter, reinforcing the importance of safe practices.

5. Encourage health and fitness - Although you can't control what your crewmembers do on their own time, you spend a lot of time with them in the station, where you can influence their health and wellbe-

ing. Encourage everyone to eat together, and strive for meals that are heart-healthy (not all meals need to be weeds and nuts), include fresh fruits and vegetables whenever possible, incorporate low-fat protein and use only minimal amounts of processed foods and sugar. Devote part of every shift to some form of

PT—whether it's a functional fitness workout, a simple pickup basketball game or training for an upcoming Memorial Stair Climb, Tough Mudder or other fitness event, do something every day. And push yourself to have those tough conversations when you notice a firefighter giving in to bad habits. An uncomfortable conversation now could prevent a heart attack later.

Becoming a better company officer isn't just about learning to navigate personnel issues and moving from "buddy to boss." It's also about the little things you can do every day to set a standard for safe behavior and fulfill this incredibly important role.

It's a powerful position, and a significant responsibility: To a large extent, the safety of your crew rests in your hands. Commit to doing your part, and together, we can reduce LODDs to under 50.

**TIMOTHY E. SENDEL-BACH** is the Editor-in-Chief for Firehouse. A 29-year student and educator of the fire and emergency services, he is responsible for the content and editorial direction of Firehouse® Magazine, Firehouse.com, Firehouse Expo, Firehouse World and related products. He has served as an assistant fire chief with the North Las Vegas, NV, Fire Department, as the chief of training for Savannah, GA, Fire & Emergency Services and as assistant fire chief for Missouri City, TX, Fire & Rescue Services. He is a credentialed Chief Fire Officer and Chief Training Officer and has earned a master's degree in leadership from Bellevue University, bachelor's degrees in fire administration and arson and an associate's degree in emergency medical care from Eastern Kentucky University. You can e-mail him at [tim@firehouse.com](mailto:tim@firehouse.com)



## NWFR Member Recognized by Blaine School Board



Lieutenant Leslee Smith was recognized by the Blaine School District Board of Directors at a recent May meeting. The award reads "We thank you for enriching the lives of

so many students in our community through your support of the cultural partnership between Blaine and the Funabashi Music Festival in Japan."

Leslee has helped organize five (yearly) ten day long Band to Japan trips since 2003. During that time over 250 Blaine High School band students have made the trip to Japan and over 300 Japanese high school band students have made the trip from Japan to Blaine to perform, for an

experience of a lifetime.

Congratulations!



# Safety Check: Stand Up to Falls



*Making our World Safer®*

Home is the place where we feel most safe, so it may come as a surprise to hear that falls in the home are one of the leading causes of injury-related death in the U.S., second only to poisoning. Falls are the most common cause of traumatic brain injuries, including concussions.

## *Eliminating tripping hazards*

Prevent falls at home—at work—by removing the sources of tripping:

- \* Secure electrical and phone cords away from waling areas, such as hallways or in front of your desk
- \* Use non-skid rugs and be sure to tape them down to prevent rolling
- \* Keep drawers and cabinets closed when you're not using them
- \* Wear proper footwear, paying special attention to outdoor conditions
- \* Clean up any spills immediately and include warning signage if necessary

- \* Refrain from walking while distracted—stay focused on your surroundings
- \* Ensure there is adequate lighting in your workspace
- \* Don't carry more than you can handle—large loads can obstruct your vision and affect your balance
- \* Plug in nightlights in and around the bathroom for increased visibility
- \* Clean up any condensation or puddles on the floor
- \* Place nonslip decals on the bottom of your shower or tub
- \* Keep shampoo, soap and other bath products higher up to avoid bending
- \* Install grab bars by the toilet and in or near the shower and tub to assist older adults
- \* Make sure the bathroom door swings outward in case of a fall

**GREEN CROSS TIP**

Reduce your chances of falling by getting your vision checked regularly. If you take any medication, discuss common side effects such as dizziness and drowsiness with your doctor.

## *Preventing falls in your bathroom*

Falls can happen anywhere, but in your home, the bathroom is one of the most dangerous places. According to the CDC, about 235,000 people over age 15 visit the emergency room each year due to a bathroom related-injury. Older adults are especially susceptible. According to the National Institute on Aging, 80 percent of senior falls happen in the bathroom due to slippery floors and surfaces.

- \* Place a non-slip mat both inside and outside of the tub

Make your home safer by starting at the source. Remove tripping hazards around your home and ensure your bathroom is slip-free to eliminate the risk of falling.

**FAST STAT**

Falls are the most common cause of traumatic brain injuries, including concussions.  
*(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)*

*For additional information check out [www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org)*

## Odell Station 61 Recognized

Chief Pernet, Lieutenant Ahr-enholz and Odell Station 61 crews were recently recognized by community member Jake & the Threshold, a charitable organization serving the Autism community in the Pacific Northwest since 1992. The appreciation certificates were presented for providing adaptive fire

safety education, emergency drill of independent fire escape skills and volunteer job skills practice opportunities to adults with Autism.

*For more information about Threshold and autism visit: [www.thresholdinc.org](http://www.thresholdinc.org)*



## *Events to Celebrate*

### *June Birthdays*

- 2—Mike Nelson
- 8—John Geleynse
- 10—Joel Nielsen
- 11—David Varivoda
- 15—Jason Donnelly
- 17—D.J. Riehl
- 21—Blake Scott
- 28—Kelly Freeman
- 29—Larry Johnston



*Father's Day—18*

*Flag Day—14*

*Blaine Food Bank—40 lbs.*

### *Fire Commissioner Meetings*

**NWFR**  
*Thurs. June 15*  
9408 Odell St 61 Blaine — 7:00 p.m.

### *District 4*

*Wed. June 14*  
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 Heartsaver CPR  
Classes  
2017

January 17  
February 27  
March 28  
April 18  
May 23  
June 17  
June 27  
July 26  
August 22  
September 25  
October 23  
November 15  
December 20



# SAFE K:IDS Save the Date! WORLDWIDE™

The 8th Annual Safe Kids Safety Fair will be held Saturday, June 3 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Regal Cinemas parking lot in Barkley Village.



Lots of fun, free activities for families, cool stuff to look at and safety messages to take home!

## Braised Balsamic Chicken



Recipe courtesy of [allrecipes.com](http://allrecipes.com)

### Ingredients

6 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves  
1 tsp. garlic salt  
ground pepper to taste  
2 TBS olive oil  
1 onion, thinly sliced  
1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomato  
1/2 cup balsamic vinegar  
1 tsp. dried basil  
1 tsp. dried oregano  
1 tsp. dried rosemary  
1/2 tsp. dried thyme  
2 cups heavy cream  
2 TBS crème fraiche

Calories: 196

Servings: 6

Prep: 10 min.

Cook: 25 min.

### Directions

Season both sides of chicken breasts with garlic salt and pepper.

Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat; cook seasoned chicken breasts until chicken is browned; 3 to 4 minutes per side..

Add onion; cook and stir until onion is browned, 3 to 4 minutes.

Pour diced tomato and balsamic vinegar over chicken; season with basil, oregano, rosemary and thyme.

Simmer until chicken is no longer pink and the juices run clear, about 15 minutes. An instant-read thermometer inserted into the center should read at least 165 degrees F (74 degrees C

*“This chicken is good with either rice or pasta. Green beans make a nice side dish.”*

