



# The Responder

Volume 8, Issue 3  
March, 2015



## Feature Stories

- Member Profile
- Bellingham Parade
- CAP Dinner
- Career Fair
- Community Partnerships
- Healthy Recipe

## 2015 STATISTICS

Feb. 1 – Feb. 28

### District Average Response Time:

min. 8 sec. 10

### Responses by Type:

Fire: 6

EMS: 182

Other: 54

**Total: 242**



*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 Robert Mulrooney*

Many people know that I grew up in New Jersey, but I'm actually a native of New York. I was born in Brooklyn, NY in the fall of 1967. My parents were devout Catholics and had seven children of which I am the second youngest. I have two brothers and four sisters. With four sisters, I learned patience at a very young age. Also, I learned to talk, walk and run on the harsh streets of Flatbush. My accent has since left me, but whenever I go home to visit, it returns with a vengeance.

At the ripe old age of five, my family moved from Brooklyn to a lovely little town in Central Jersey called Middlesex. *(I've heard all sorts of jokes about the town's name, so there's nothing new there).* Like my brothers and sisters, I went to a private Catholic School from first grade thru eighth grade. We were each given the choice to go to Catholic high

school or the town's public high school, we all chose the public school. I guess we were just tired of the uniforms.

I enjoyed playing football and being a member of the track team in high school. *(I was no runner. I threw the Javelin and the Discus).* After high school, I went to a small university in Pennsylvania called Kutztown University. *(It was so small that on Sunday mornings you could hear the horse and buggy going through campus – Amish Country).* I did not do well in school. It was my first time being away from home. After the first year, my father said he was not going to pay for another year of school, so I had to look at my options. This led me to enlist in the United States Army.

I served in the US Army from 1986 – 1992 as a Military Policeman. My assignments included: South Korea (1987-88); Arlington, VA (1988-90); Panama (1990-91); and Ft. Lewis, WA (1991-92).



Upon receiving an Honorable Discharge from the Army in 1992, I enrolled at Tacoma Community College. I thought I would try my hand at school again, and I did fairly well. I guess I grew up during my time in the military and learned how to be responsible. While going to school at TCC, I worked part-time at a local restaurant where I met my wife Renee. When I graduated from TCC, Renee and I moved to Bellingham, so I could attend Western Washington University and study Planning and Environmental Policy at Huxley College. I graduated from WWU in 1998 with a BA in Environmental Studies. Renee and I got married July 1998 in Hawaii.



*continued on pg. 2*

# NWFR Member Profile cont.

*continued from pg. 1*

*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*



My family has had a long history of public service. On my father's side of the family, there are many relatives who have served in the Military and as Law Enforcement officials with NYPD. My mother's side of the family has three generations on the Fire Department of New York (FDNY).

I always told myself that once I landed a full-time job, I was going to give back to my community. That full-time job was working for Whatcom County Planning and Development Services as a Land Use Planner. *(I worked there for six long years).* I looked around for an opportunity to give back and found one with Whatcom County Fire District 4.

I began to lose interest with my job as a Planner and gain more interest in the fire service. I

took every opportunity to go to any training I could: FF1, Incident Safety Officer, Instructor 1, and as a Company Officer for the Whatcom County Recruit Academy for three years. I advanced up the volunteer ranks to the rank of lieutenant. I also started testing for a career position, when WCFD4 said they wanted to hire career day staff to help manage the calls that occurred between 0600-1800 hours Monday - Friday. At the time, there were plenty of volunteers willing to respond at night and on the weekends. I applied, tested and was offered the job in May 2007. There were only two of us then.



*I must say – I love this job!!*

Like everyone else, I was in a State of Shock when our country was attacked on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001.

This attack hit my family very hard. My father worked for years in the Financial District of New York City.

Many of my relatives lived and worked in the City. One of my cousins, Ed Geraghty, was lost that day when the first tower fell. He was a Battalion Chief (Battalion 9) out of Times Square.

For five years I tossed around the idea in my head of joining the Reserve or Army National Guard. In December 2006, fourteen years after leaving active duty, I decided to join the Guard. I enlisted in the Guard to serve a two year enlistment as a Combat Medic. I thought this additional training and experience would give me an upper hand while testing for a Career Fire Fighter Position.

The Washington State National Guard, 81<sup>st</sup> Heavy Combat Brigade was activated to deploy to Iraq, July 2008, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. As a kid I used to love going to the Jersey Shore and put my toes in the sand...I don't really care for the sand anymore.

I am still serving in the National Guard and my plan is to retire in a few more years with 20 plus years of military service.



Bellingham's St. Patrick's Day Parade is a "green" parade to honor our Police and Fire Departments. Its also a chance to

green up our community and celebrate all the great businesses, groups, schools and non-profits that make this community such a wonderful place to live. Featuring the Bellingham Firefighters Pipes and Drums, other marching bands, plus human and green-powered floats.

Saturday, March 14 at noon.



visit <http://www.stpatsbham.com/> for additional parade information

# Community Assistance Dinner Program

By Lt. Leslee Smith



On Wednesday February 11th, Local 106 and North Whatcom Fire and Rescue prepared and served dinner for approximately 80 community members as part of the Blaine Community Meals program. We had 17 volunteers plus 5 high school students who did various jobs from greeters, food prep and setting up to dishwashing, bussing dishes, take down and clean up.

The meals are held each Wednesday from 5pm -6:30 p.m. at the Blaine Senior Center through the school year (August/September- May/June)

Everyone from Blaine, Custer, Point Roberts and Birch Bay communities are Welcome!

Guests were also treated to some entertainment as 92 year young Eleanor Blakely serenaded the group with a song.



Blaine Community Meals (BCM) are part of the Community Assistance Program (CAP). This program (CAP) is an outreach of Blaine Community area churches. The group (CAP) also organizes and sup-

ports St. Martins Clothing Bank, Mother Hubbard's Kitchen, The Emergency Assistance Program and Thanksgiving Basket Program.

The BCM currently has twelve different organizations/groups providing a team who plan, shop and prepare a meal and then serve and clean up afterwards. Any group of twelve or more can become part of this amazing program. If you would either like to be part of an already existing group or form your own, you can contact Director Jerry Williams 739-8184 or by email [communitymealsblaine@gmail.com](mailto:communitymealsblaine@gmail.com)



## March Birthdays

- 5—Tom Kettman
- 11—Kirsten Stout
- 13—Gina Ball
- 13—Joe Noonchester
- 17—Elliot Courage
- 17—Commissioner Berkeley
- 29—Ray Davidson

## Food Bank Count

370 pounds

## Firefighter Association

**Meetings**—Laurel St. 69—  
7:00 pm—Mondays May 18,  
Aug. 17, Nov. 16

## Fire Commissioner Meetings

**NWFR**  
Thurs. March 19  
9408 Odell St 61 Blaine —  
7:00 p.m.

## District 4

Wed. March 11- noon  
4142 Britton Loop St 12  
Bellingham—12:00 p.m.

# Potential Volunteers Attend Career Fair

North Whatcom Fire and Rescue welcomed potential volunteers during a Volunteer Career Fair held on Monday, February 16 at 7:00 p.m. at Blaine Station 61. The district along with the Lynden Fire Department is in the process of recruiting volunteers for an upcoming joint academy. Volunteer and career firefighters from both departments were on hand to answer questions about their profession. additional career fairs were held in Lynden on Wednesday, February 18 and Saturday, February 28.





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.net](http://www.nwfrs.net) for more information and to reserve your spot.

### 2015 Dates

- Tuesday, Jan. 27
- Wednesday, Feb. 25
- Wednesday, March 25
- Wednesday, April 22
- Wednesday, May 27
- Wednesday, June 17
- Friday, July 31
- Wednesday, Aug. 27
- Wednesday, Sept. 23
- Wednesday, Oct. 28
- Wednesday, Nov. 18
- Wednesday, Dec. 30



## Community Partnerships

by Captain Joe Noonchester

Fire departments are required to train to the level of proficiency in the areas of the service they provide. For North Whatcom Fire and Rescue, one of these is rescue and removal of patients from motor vehicle crashes.

The best way to provide realistic and meaningful training to our firefighters is by using real cars and trucks to cut, stabilize and move. Two companies have been supporting us very generously by donating damaged vehicles for us to train with.

These are Berk's Towing, (360) 734-4738 and Gundie's Auto Recyclers (360) 733-5036. Both have not only donated the vehicles but space at their facilities for us as we practice patient removal and stabilization of wrecked cars.

Thanks go out to Cary and Don for their continued effort and support to our department. Without companies like these, we would struggle in our attempts to use real vehicles for this vital service we provide to our citizens.



## Colcannon



Recipe courtesy of Eating Well

### Ingredients

- 6 sprigs fresh thyme
- 1 cup low-fat milk
- 6 cloves garlic, peeled
- 6 scallions, sliced
- 5 cups finely shredded green cabbage, (about 1 pound)
- 4 medium Yukon Gold potatoes (about 1 pound), peeled and cut into 2-inch chunks
- Salt & freshly ground pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

*"Colcannon potatoes are traditionally served on St. Patrick's Day and Halloween but are also enjoyed throughout the year. The name colcannon comes from the Gaelic word for white-headed cabbage, an essential ingredient in the tasty mash along with potatoes, cream, butter, and sautéed leeks or onions. Home cooks customarily bury charms or coins, foretelling good luck or wealth, in the dish, perhaps in an effort to get children to eat their vegetables."*

**Servings:** 6  
**Total Time:** 30 min.



### Preparation

1. Tie thyme sprigs with twine or in a cheesecloth bag. Combine milk, garlic and thyme in a small saucepan. Bring to a simmer over medium heat. Reduce heat to low and simmer gently until garlic is soft, 5 to 10 minutes. Discard thyme.
2. Transfer the milk mixture to a blender and puree until smooth. Return to the pan and stir in scallions. Cover and set aside.
3. Bring 1 inch salted water to a boil in a large pot. Add cabbage, cover and cook until very tender, 8 to 10 minutes. Drain well.
4. Meanwhile, place potatoes in a large saucepan and cover with cold salted water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to medium and cook, covered, until tender, 10 to 15 minutes.
5. Drain the potatoes and return to the pan. Mash with a potato masher or hand-held electric mixer. Gradually add the milk mixture to the potatoes, stirring until smooth. Stir in cabbage and season with salt and pepper. Transfer to a warmed bowl and garnish with parsley.