



Volume 13 Issue 5

May, 2020



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2020 STATISTICS

Apr. 1 — Apr. 30

District Average Response Time:

7 min. 24 sec.

Responses by Type:

Fire: 30

EMS: 256

Other: 94

Total: 380



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



by Chris Lubenow

Born in Colorado into a military family, I was fortunate to see much of the county at a young age. From the Rocky Mountains to Oklahoma, my childhood as a military brat had me on the move. My family eventually settled in the Pacific Northwest where I developed a deep love of the outdoors. My parents still reside in Maple Valley. I have a younger sister, Emily, who returned to Colorado with her husband, and a little brother, Spencer, who took a liking to city life in downtown Seattle where he works as a management consultant.

After graduating from high school in Maple Valley, I headed to the sunny side of the state to attend college at Central Washington University. I enjoyed playing lacrosse and studying business and economics in my free time. When the economy tanked in 2008, I lost my summertime position with the Seattle Laborer's Union.

Building plywood forms to be filled with concrete for high-rise, commercial construction was no longer an option. I headed to a college career fair in a suit and tie and ended up walking away with a few pens from Boeing and a brochure for whitewater raft guide training in Leavenworth. I traded in the new suit for a dry suit and completed guide training on the frigid, spring waters of the Wenatchee River. I was hooked! I spent the rest of my college summers guiding river trips all over the state.

I feel like I've always had one foot on each side of the Cascades. After college, I leaned westward again in search of a "real job" and a 401(k). I began work at Beyond Clothing, an outdoor clothing company with unique ties into the Special Operations community. My first job was on the production floor where I spent my days cutting shapes out of rolls of camouflage Gore-Tex to be sewn and seam-sealed into custom-ordered jackets and pants. As the company grew, it was acquired by 5.11 Tactical, and I was promoted into customer service. In this role, I learned the importance of being a support element for teams that refused to fail. You don't want to disappoint a SEAL team getting ready for deployment! A period of rapid

growth continued, and I found myself on the marketing team traveling to Virginia Beach, Las Vegas, Salt Lake City, and other cities where outdoor and tactical trade shows took place. What an adventure!



After three years of hotels, trade shows, and never-ending sales cycles, I found myself ready for another challenge. River life was looking good again. I headed back to Leavenworth to dry the moss off my back and fill my lungs with fresh mountain air. Kayaking (and occasionally swimming!) the cascading rapids of Icicle Creek cleared out the Seattle gloom via Class V therapy. I thought there was something bigger out there for me and my career trajectory. And then I started to smell... smoke?

On a hot summer afternoon in late August, the only relief from the 100-degree temperature pushed both locals and tourists alike to the cool waters of the Wenatchee River that meanders through
continued on pg. 2

Member Bio Cont.

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

continued from pg. 1
downtown Leavenworth. The bustling Bavarian village was in full summer-tourism mode when a plume of dark smoke wafted out of the pine-laden foothills just outside of town. I watched in horror and awe as helicopters and hand crews raced to contest the rapidly moving flame front. Over 100 homes were evacuated, strike teams were assembled, and air tankers dropped retardant on the thin swaths of land that separated homes from the growing 400-acre fire. In the coming days, tourists retreated and firefighters arrived from all over the state.



At age 27, my interest had suddenly become sparked by fire.

When the smoke cleared, I enrolled in the local volunteer fire academy and fell in love with the profession. I became an EMT and was elected Vice President of the Volunteer Firefighters Association, where we successfully passed a fire levy the following summer. I was hired on as a seasonal firefighter/EMT, where I kept busy with project work: completing fire inspections, testing hydrants, and offering fire-wise home assessments to homeowners in the wild-land/urban interface. A variety of calls lit up our pagers: brush fires, water rescues, medical calls, and back-country traumas. Wintertime in the mountains brought a whole new set of seasonal emergencies for which to prepare. I shifted back to volunteer status for the winters, where I worked for Stevens Pass (free snowboarding!) and went back to school to pursue a degree in Fire Science. Volunteering at an outdoor preschool kept me busy and laugh-

ing. My summers as a raft guide and whitewater kayaker gave me knowledge of the local waterways and plenty of throw bag experience. I enjoyed using these skills as a rescue swimmer for the Chelan County Sheriff's Office.

I began testing and searching for a full-time career opportunity in a community like Leavenworth that values healthy lifestyles and outdoor recreation. I am beyond grateful for the opportunity to work for North Whatcom Fire and Rescue. I look forward to building a community in Bellingham and working hard to earn the badge every day. I'm also looking forward to the challenges ahead, and I am thankful for the opportunity to serve the citizens of North Whatcom County.



Reputation Part I



By
Ray Gayle

Got Ink? In the fire service, your reputation can precede you.

During my first shift at the Redlands (Calif.) Fire Department, my captain, Rick Lynski, sat me down for "the talk." You know the one: You sit down and the captain tells you

how things will be done while you nod your head up and down with that dumb look on your face, agreeing to whatever they have to say. I had a few of these talks with some of my previous captains, but this particular talk stood out because Captain Lynski asked me if I knew what a tattoo was. "Of course," I said, nodding. Then he asked me if I knew what a "fire department tattoo" was. I didn't know what he was talking about and began to imagine a number of bad scenarios as I

answered, "No, sir."

Captain Lynski explained that in the fire service, we begin receiving "tattoos" our first day on the job that often follow us throughout our careers. He said these tattoos are like real tattoos in that there are good ones and bad ones, and they are very easy to get but difficult to get rid of. Some are earned and some are not, but no matter what, they *continued on pg. 3*



Reputation cont.

continued from pg. 2

belong to us. In other words, we begin building our reputation in the workplace immediately, and despite how we might grow and change, it's very difficult to change others' perception of us. Captain Lynski's explanation continued until he asked me what kind of tattoos I intended on earning. Of course I responded by saying I intended on gathering only good tattoos, but saying you will earn only good tattoos is very different from actually doing it.

Collecting Tattoos

I have gathered my own tattoos, both good and bad, and I've witnessed fellow firefighters either struggle in leadership roles or excel based on what kind of "ink" they've received. I know one individual who has a very difficult time leading his company because he has a history of disrespecting his employees. In other words, he doesn't indicate to people how

important they are to the organization; instead, he talks down to them. But this lack of respect didn't surface when he became a company officer; he behaved this way as a firefighter and it festered as a company officer. This particular tattoo made his job extremely difficult because when you don't respect people, they don't respect you. But without respect, how can you lead people? Guess what, you can't.

Although you collect these little gems throughout your career, the first tattoos are often the most painful and permanent, because you must live with them the longest, and they can take on a life of their own. I have also witnessed the long-term effects these tattoos have on members in the firehouse. One firefighter collected so many bad tattoos the first two years on the job that it's impossible for him to get promoted. Do you know people in your organization who have acquired a few bad tat-

toos in a non-supervisory position? When these individuals got promoted (and trust me, they get promoted) how effective were they? Did their past follow them and make their new role as a supervisor more difficult? The tattooed supervisors I've observed were constantly challenged because they have a difficult time finding people who want to work with them. They also have a tremendous lack of respect from their personnel, peers and supervisors.

Every supervisor, no matter their rank, must deal with their reputation and history. People don't forget your past actions just because you wear a different badge.

Yes or No?

-----> to be continued...

Watch for part II in the June edition.



Events to Celebrate May Birthdays

- 2 — Mike Peetom
- 25 — Melissa Van Cleve
- 31 — Noah Silverman



Board Meetings may be conducted via Zoom Meeting

NWFR

Thurs. May 21
9408 Odell St 61
Blaine — 1:00 p.m.

District 4

Wed. May 18
4142 Britton Loop St 12
Bellingham — 12:00 p.m.

NWFR Appoints Permanent Fire Chief

During a recent NWFR Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting held via Zoom Meeting on Thursday, April 16, 2020, a resolution was passed appointing Acting Chief Van der Veen as the permanent fire chief.

Chief Van der Veen has been the acting chief since November, 2019 and a NWFR member since 2007.



CONGRATULATIONS CHIEF !



4142 Britton Loop Rd.
Bellingham, WA 98226

Providing quality service for
a safe community



CPR / AED Classes 2020

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 SAVEJY OF
EVERYONE IN OUR
COMMUNITY, ALL CPR
CLASSES HAVE BEEN
CANCELLED UNTIL
FURUTHER NOTICE.

WE APOLOGIZE FOR
ANY INCONVENIENCE

NWFR Celebrates Nine Year Old's Birthday

Braylon Pritchett celebrated his golden birthday (nine years old) on Thursday, April 9. According to his sister, Braylon has been infatuated with everything to do with the fire service from a very early age.

With the Stay Home, Stay Healthy initiative, Braylon's sister Madyson reached out to fire districts in Whatcom County in an effort to make his birthday special.

North Whatcom Fire and Rescue was pleased to be a part of this celebration.



Sappy
"Golden" Birthday
Braylon!

Healthy Banana Oatmeal Pancakes (made right in the blender!)



Courtesy of ambitious kitchen

Ingredients

2 medium ripe bananas
2 eggs
1/2 cup unsweetened almond milk
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1 1/2 cups old fashioned rolled oats, gluten free if desired
2 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
1/4 tsp. salt
olive or coconut oil, for cooking

Instructions:

1. Making this banana oatmeal pancake is easier than you think. Just place all ingredients into a blender and blend until smooth, about 1 minute. Let the batter sit for 2 minutes in the blender while you heat your pan.

2. Add olive or coconut oil to a griddle or large nonstick pan and place over medium heat. Add pancake batter 1/3 cup at a time. Cook for 2-3 minutes or until golden brown and tiny bubbles appear around the edges. Flip and cook 2 minutes more.

3. Serve pancakes with fresh fruit and a drizzle of pure maple syrup. Enjoy!
How to keep pancakes warm

You can absolutely make these pancakes ahead of time and keep them warm in the oven. Simply place oven at 200 degrees F, then add pancakes to a platter or oven-safe plate and place in the oven until ready to serve.

How to freeze pancakes
If you really want to make your pancakes ahead of time and serve them at a later date, you can place the pancakes on a baking sheet so they aren't touching and place in the freezer for 30 minutes, then place them in freezer safe containers and freeze for up to 3 months. Once ready to reheat, simply add pancakes to a plate and microwave for 30-60 seconds or until warm.