FIRE NORTH WHATCOM RESCUE

The Responder

Volume 10, Issue
October, 2017

"Providing Quality Service for a Safe Community"

Feature Stories

- Member Profile
- Fire Prevention
- Attitude
- Pumpkin Party
- 9-11 Memorial

2017 STATISTICS

Sept 1 — Sept 30

District Average Response Time:

9 min. 04 sec.

Responses by Type:

Fire: 20
EMS: 239
Other: 144

Total: 403

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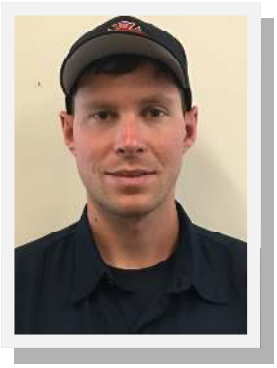
Proudly serving the communities of Blaine, Birch Bay, Custer, Laurel and the unincorporated areas of Lynden & Bellingham

Member Profile



by Recruit FF Sean Roberts

Being tasked with writing an autobiographical profile, I have to start at the source: my parents. My mother has always been someone who cares deeply about community. She taught creative writing and English for many years at many different levels, and now is a passionate, full-time volunteer who works on an international scale. My father, among many other things, is an endurance cyclist who pushes himself beyond a normal human's capacity. He is an active member of the Seattle International Randonneurs, a group of humans that can be fairly described as gluttons for pain.

Between the two, my parents have consistently motivated my older sister and me to be active in our respective communities and to never back down from challenges. I have been involved with one team or another for most of my life, playing any sport I can to fill my life with competition, teamwork, and physical challenge.

My route to the fire service, at least on paper, seems unusual to some. I first moved to Bellingham in 2010 to attend Western Washington University where I graduated with my degree in Environmental Education through WWU's Huxley College of the Environment. My initial step towards becoming a firefighter was when I took a Wilderness First Responder course that was held on campus. I became infatuated with wilderness EMS and decided that I was going to pair both emergency medical training with education, all in the backcountry setting.

After graduating from college, I enrolled in a Remote

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Visit http://www.nfpa.org/fpw

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

Member Profile cont.

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Emergency Medical Technician program through Remote Medical International. Located in Leavenworth, WA, on a beautiful campus, I was thrust fully into the world of EMS. Within our first week on campus, we were involved in a hospital rotation at Skagit Valley Regional, where I saw firefighters/EMTs bringing in the sick and injured from the field. The first critical call I saw was a woman who had been involved in a rollover motor vehicle accident. The fire department had extricated her and a team of firefighter/EMTs and paramedics worked in conjunction to minimize the life threat and the pain this young woman was experiencing. There are very few transformative moments in our lives, and for me, this was one.

I immediately knew I found my passion; responding to emergencies with a team of highly trained individuals that work seamlessly together to solve problems and mitigate disasters. After graduating from Remote Medical International, I flew with my parents to Spain and hiked the Camino del Santiago "Primitivo" route. We walked 330 kilometers through backroads, winding gravel paths, through herds of cattle and wild horses. Backpacking has always promoted a state of meditation for me; it is how I resolve the accumulation of stress we all encounter, and it is how I re-center myself.

During my walk, I reaffirmed that pursuing EMS was what I had to do. My mind being set, I arrived back to Bellingham looking to get involved. I found part time work at a private ambulance company in town. I spent my free time involved as a volunteer educator for multiple programs. As soon as the opportunity presented itself, I jumped on full time as an EMT, working 24 hour shifts with 48 hours off. While being grateful for the chance to drive an ambulance, train on skills, and work with other EMT's, I found myself looking for opportunities to expand my skill set.

I applied to a private ambulance company that is based out of the city of Everett, that has Advanced Life Service capabilities, and that runs 911 calls with the Everett Fire Department. This was a considerable leap in the physical and mental demands of the job; moving from a mainly inter-facility service to a busy, interurban EMS system was an eye opener. This was also the first time that I had the opportunity to work closely with a fire department, responding to car accidents on I-5, sick patients in low-income housing, or active shooter scenes.

It was this point in my life that I realized how skilled firefighters are and how challenging it is to find career work. I pursued every avenue of education I could to better my chances of getting the dream job, from paramedic school to becoming a rope rescue technician. The opportunity to join North Whatcom Fire and Rescue is the single-most important event in my life. There are no series of words capable of describing how excited and honored I am to have been invited to join such a quality team at North Whatcom Fire and Rescue.

I am currently attending the 12 week Fire Training Academy, a renowned program that exposes recruits to the most live fire training in the country. At Academy, we are manipulating 35-foot ladders, cutting roofs at a steep angle, working in extremely hot environments and squeezing through tight openings. We are drilling from 5:00AM to 5:00PM, Monday through Thursday, learning and honing skills to bring back to North Whatcom Fire and Rescue. The physical challenge, the mental stamina necessary, and the full commitment required to training is exactly what I hoped for. I have never been happier.

I look forward to getting on the line with my sisters and brothers at North Whatcom Fire and Rescue. I look forward to finding opportunities as an educator to spread knowledge, such as a CPR or home care, to those in my community. You can find me on my bicycle, riding around Lake Whatcom, at Vital climbing gym, on Mt. Baker in the backcountry, or at Downtown Sounds, celebrating life in the best place on earth.

Attitude—Difference between Success and Failure

by The Company Officer

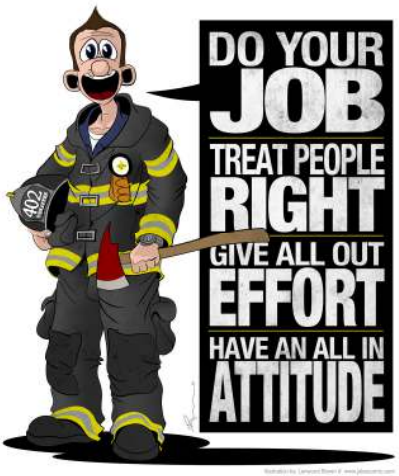
History's greatest achievements have been made by individuals who excelled only slightly over the masses of other individuals in their respective fields. I am reminded of this when you look at athletes. Most have significant levels of talent. The same is true for the fire service. Most of our personnel have strong predicated skills, abilities and knowledge. So what puts the people excelling in front of the others? Most times that small difference is ***attitude***. Over the years I have had the opportunity to spend time with many different fire departments. The difference was captured by the late Ralph Jackman, Fire Chief in Vergennes, Vermont. In a conversation standing in the apparatus bay of the Vergennes Fire Department he commented that his department did not have the greatest equipment or the fanciest of fire apparatus. In fact he stated the sometimes struggle with the financial end of keeping up. He did quickly point out that that his personnel had passion, desire and the right ***attitude*** to serve, which was the critical factor in the success of the organization. He went on to further reiterate the importance of having a positive attitude and what that brings to the formula of success. He stated, "Give me someone who has a good attitude and I can work with them on the other things."

Certainly aptitude is important to our success in life or the success of an organization. Yet anyone who has been around the fire service for more than a few days knows success or failure is precipitated more by mental attitude than by mere mental capacities. We have to recognize the true importance of the total equation I.Q. (Intelligence Quotient) + A.Q. (Attitude Quotient) = Success or Failure. We have all witnessed individuals whose I.Q. was extremely high and their performance was low and the opposite of low I.Q and high performance. The difference in each of these formulas is the attitude quotient. There is very little difference in people, but that little difference, Â ***attitude***, makes a big difference.

So how do we become successful organizations excelling in all aspects? First we must have talented personnel in place. We must foster positive attitudes. This fostering is critical and it is not just the responsibility of the Fire Chief. Sure it may begin there but the critical dimension is within the officers, especially company officers. It is paramount that officers maintain a strong -positive attitude. The true leaders and trainers of today's fire service are the company officers. In many organizations it is glaringly apparent that the company officers don't possess the correct attitudes. This is a serious issue because they begin to affect the troops as their leadership is mostly what these individuals see. Just like cancer growing, attitudes spreads very quickly whether it is positive or negative.

Some Individuals would look at a pile of rubble and say what a mess, while others will look at the same pile and say what an opportunity. Which one of these individuals would you want leading the fire department in your community? Most would say the one who has a vision of what that mess could be. This is an excellent example of a positive attitude.

With all this said, how is your attitude? Before you answer, what would others say if they had this opportunity to answer? I encourage you to take a true examination here. As a chief officer, I hope my personnel have excellent minds and outstanding attitudes. But if I have to choose an either-or situation, without hesitation I would want their A.Q. (attitude) to be high!



Events to Celebrate October Birthdays

5—Kris Parks
8—Shaun Ward
10—David Hancock
10—Brandon Visser
13—Chet Renskers
24—Dalton King

Pumpkin Party
Mon. Oct. 30
Britton Loop St. 12

Fire Commissioner Meetings
NWFR
Thurs. October 19
9408 Odell St 61 Blaine — 7:00 p.m.

District 4
Wed. October 11
4142 Britton Loop St 12
Bellingham —12:00 p.m.

4142 Britton Loop Rd.
Bellingham, WA 98226

Providing quality service for a safe community

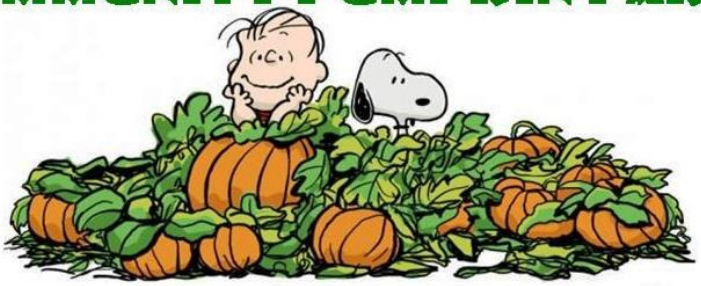
Free Friends and Family CPR Classes

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 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

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

COMMUNITY PUMPKIN PARTY



Monday, October 30, 2017 6-8pm
Where: Fire District 4, Station 12 (4142 Britton Loop, Bellingham)
Cost: FREE

Bring the whole family to carve pumpkins, play games, and have fun! Carving equipment will be provided. Limited pumpkins available on a first come, first serve basis.

9-11 Peace Arch Memorial Ceremony

On Monday, September 11, 2017, motorcycle enthusiasts, first responders, Border, Custom and VIP guests converged at the Peace Arch Park to honor those who lost their lives in the horrific attacks in 2001. This is the sixteenth anniversary of the 9-11 attacks. The ceremony at the border began at 10:00 am followed by a special BBQ luncheon, with donation proceeds benefiting Behind the Badge Foundation and the Honour House Society.

Four guests of honor from New York attended the event to represent their fallen comrades and all those who perished on September 11, 2001. The group arrived a few days prior to the event and received extensive tours on both sides of the border.
Others in attendance included members of the Blaine City Council, including the City Manger David Wilbrecht, Whatcom County Sheriff Bill Elfo, Vancouver, B.C. Police Superintendent Mike Porteous and Washington State Senator Doug Ericksen.