



MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

As many of you have your yards on your mind during this long wet cold spring, I would like the opportunity to talk a little about wildland fire season. As you clean up your yards this spring, you should think about creating a 5-foot clearance of noncombustible materials around your house including woodpiles, sheds and landscaping. This wet spring has the potential to increase the fire danger as the heavy brush being created now quickly turns into fire fuel when the summer heats up.

Big Lake Fire has been working diligently to increase our brush fire capabilities. We have been the recipient of two surplus brush trucks that we have been getting ready with grant monies from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Our crews have also been doing increased training, side by side with DNR crews. As our

climate changes, we are also seeing more need to be able to interface with local agencies and neighboring departments for brush/wildland fires.

The Helitac crew is scheduled to be in place in our station around the middle of June. They are on duty 7 days a week, 12 hours a day with a crew of roughly 7. These crews are away from home and away from their families for long periods of time so please stop in and shake their hand and give them a big thank you.

Thank you for your continued support.

Chief Berg



PINNING CEREMONY

On May 1st, we held a long-awaited pinning ceremony for our firefighters. The following people were pinned with their firefighter badge:

Tanner Braman
Braden Cote
Joe Fleming
Christina Goodin
Michael Keith
Mark Redis
Chuck Royal
Israel Villalon

The following firefighters were promoted:

Phill Zimmerman – Station Captain
Dalton Berg – Lieutenant
Jeff Olson – Captain
Richard Canapo – Captain
Earl Klinefelter – Battalion Chief

Our newest Commissioner, Brian McMahan, was also pinned.

Congratulations to everyone!

COMMISSIONER BRIAN MCMAHAN

Brian was elected to be our commissioner at Big Lake Fire effective on January 1, 2022. He has lived at Big Lake and started as a volunteer firefighter at Big Lake Fire in 2017. He wanted to give back to his community. With 38 years of fire service experience, he felt it was important to be involved. He has over 15 years of elected experience as a fire and sewer district commissioner with different agencies in Washington. His experience has brought down costs, expanded opportunities and created partnerships for the betterment of the citizens.

Brian has an A.A. Degree in Fire Command Administration and a B.S. Degree in Fire Science as well as a certificate in Municipal Management. He serves as a representative to the Skagit County LEOFF I Board. He has served as the President of the Washington State Firefighters Association, CEO of the Washington State Firefighters Training and Education Fund, Board member of the National Association of Elected Fire Officials and is a lifetime member of the Washington State and Snohomish-Island County Fire Commissioners Association.

Brian is married to Diane McMahan, who gives so much to the Big Lake community by way of organizing, volunteering and coordinating efforts to get people together and healthy commitments. They both enjoy gardening, walking, volunteering and are foster parents. They both share a passion for helping others. Together they share a home with a cat and two dogs.



FIREFIGHTER SPOTLIGHT

Earl Klinefelter has lived in Skagit County since 1968. He spent 24 years working in agriculture before joining Skagit County EMS in 1997. His EMS journey actually started in 1977 when he got his EMT certification at Whidbey Island General Hospital. He began his volunteer firefighter career in 1984 with the La Conner Fire Department. Lucky for us, he moved to Big Lake and has volunteered with Big Lake Fire since April of 2001. He is an Incident Management Leader for wildland firefighting and

continues to be very active in local wildland firefighting incidents. He loves serving his community and mentoring people in fire and EMS. Congratulations to Earl on his recent promotion to Battalion Chief.

NOOKACHAMPS DEVELOPMENT

The homeowners of the Northeast, rear back corner of the Nookachamps Development have requested to join the Big Lake Fire Department service area. Currently, they are in the Clear Lake Fire Department service area but the Big Lake Fire Department has been the responding agency (along with a paramedic unit if needed). The Big Lake Fire Department is meeting with the Clear Lake Fire Department to come up with an agreeable solution to provide service to this area. In the meantime, Big Lake Fire will still respond to this area when called as the safety of those residence are still a top priority for us.



GARAGE SALE

On May 14th, we held our first ever garage/yard sale. This event allowed the fire department to surplus over 50 years' worth of items and allowed us to get all four of our stations cleaned up. Over 12 additional community members sold their stuff at the sale as well. The event was very well attended and grossed just over \$3,500 with the funds going towards the purchase of a new fire engine.



2022 FIREWORKS SHOW

The Firefighter's Association is ramping up and getting ready to bring you the 58th annual fireworks show. This year, like many other things in our life, we have seen an increase in the cost of fireworks. The Firefighter's Association, for the first time in 58 years, had to pay a down payment to reserve fireworks for our show. Also, this year, there was a 25% increase in the cost of the fireworks due to shortages of some of the materials that create the fireworks.

We will be soon, on Tuesday evenings, coming around to Big Lake to collect donations. If we miss you, please track us down at Station One on any given Tuesday evening. We want to make this once again the best show ever. Proceeds from every fireworks show go to help the Fire District extend their resources by helping to provide funds to purchase necessary equipment and/or providing necessary training. Every dollar helps and we will use your donations wisely.

The 58th Annual Fireworks T-shirts will soon be available at the BLG (Big Lake Grocery) for \$20.00 each. Stop by and get yours before they are gone!

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