



A rainbow over Jerry Severson's shop, taken from the Station One, the day of Jerry's memorial service! Photo courtesy of Janice Marker.

MESSAGE FROM CHIEF BERG

Now that fall is here, with our trees changing colors, we start heating our house with auxiliary heat, woodstoves, fireplaces, etc. I encourage you all to make sure your chimneys are cleaned! I also encourage you to make sure your smoke detectors and CO detectors are in good working order. Smoke detectors have proven to save lives.

As our county and state adapt to the new electric world, here at Big Lake Fire we are engaging in new electric car fire training including the use of blankets. These blankets are used to limit the oxygen that fuels the fire. There is not a great chance we will be able to put out the fire but limiting the damaging exposures is our goal. When trying to put out an "EV" car fire, the runoff water becomes toxic. One thing our community

may not realize, is the sheer amount of chemicals that come off burning lithium batteries. At this time, we feel the best practice in an EV fire, will be to pull the vehicle away from any other hazard, if possible. We will then cover it and limit its oxygen. As many of our roads around the lake are higher in elevation, the runoff would be detrimental to our beautiful lake. We need to be mindful of how these batteries work and the precautions that can be taken to reduce hazards. Most of these types of fires have occurred while charging batteries. We do feel that as we get farther along in the EV world, they will get a handle on temperatures of the battery charger and create better charging systems.

Sincerely, Chief Berg

PANCAKE FEED

The Big Lake Firefighter's Auxiliary Pancake Feed was a HUGE success. We appreciate all those that attended, those that donated raffle items and especially Mr. T's Café who sponsored the event. The Auxiliary will be purchasing equipment for the firefighters with the proceeds.



FIREWORKS SHOW

We are so blessed to have such amazing support of our community, and we cannot thank you enough. Our 60th annual fireworks fundraiser was a huge success! Thank you to our local businesses for sponsoring our event. Thank you to our residents and community members for your donations. We would also like to thank Western Display for the spectacular fireworks show and special finale.

The Association has already been putting your contributions to work prioritizing safety and quality service. Our jaws of life have been aging for some time and we now have the funds to purchase new battery-operated equipment. This equipment is faster and stronger which is essential for life saving when minutes count. We are currently

narrowing down our options making sure we make the best choice for our district. We have ordered new hoses and equipment to outfit the new water tender so it can be placed in service as soon as possible. We have also been able to order a new tablet for our ladder truck which stopped working. These are essential for documenting emergency medical care as well as coordinating fire and rescue operations. Thank you again for your unwavering support!



FIRE SAFETY WEEK

Fire Safety Day is a favorite day of the year for both the firefighters and the kids from Big Lake Elementary. This year the kids learned about smoke alarms and how important it is to have working ones in

your home. We were also lucky enough to get fire extinguishers donated to teach the older kids how to put out a fire! If you have kids that attended, please ask them about their experience. Special thanks to Firefighter Dennis Spinnie for always organizing this event! Also, a quick reminder – Did you check your smoke alarm batteries when the time changed on November 3rd?

We also want to give a shout out to Carol Lawson, insurance agent for State Farm, for donating fire safety supplies for the fire department to hand out to the kids this year. Her donation is much appreciated!

LEVY PASSED

Many thanks to those who voted YES to support the levy! The funds generated from the increase will enable the District to upgrade equipment (like radios), make capital purchases (like new apparatus) and will help with the day-to-day operations of the department. Our most critical need was to replace our 20-year-old tender and our 38-year-old engine. The commissioners have been hard at work to acquire these items and were able to get a new tender this summer. It has already responded to numerous calls and is an amazing vehicle to add to our fleet. The commissioners were also able to order a new fire engine with an expected delivery date of July 2027!

SEPTEMBER 11TH PARADE

Over 30 fire apparatuses attended the September 11th parade this year. We feel honored that so many fire districts from all over Skagit County converge in Big Lake to honor those that lost their lives on that awful day 23 years ago. Thank you to those that met us roadside to watch the parade and support the fire service.



ARDELL MCCOMBS

This summer, we lost one of Big Lake Fire's retired members. ArdeLL McCombs gave the Big Lake community 25 years of community service. He was instrumental in several roles. He was a firefighter, officer and commissioner. His most valuable accomplishment to the community was the planning and building of the Erlich Station (Station 2). ArdeLL worked on this project for over 10 years, taking it from the planning stage for future growth to the final stage of the grand opening of the station.

This station protects the south end of Big Lake and the Lake Cavanaugh Road. It also provides mutual aid to our partners in Lake Cavanaugh and Lake McMurray. This facility is equipped with one fire engine, a jaws of life, a brush truck and a hazmat shower.

Thank you, ArdeLL, for your dedication and service. You will be missed.

FIRE ACADEMY

Shawn Day, Ki Lindbloom, Rene Ochoa and Brandon Nelson started the South Skagit Recruit Academy this past September and will finish up in December. Upon completion of the academy, they will have spent over 200 hours learning how to be a firefighter including the use of fire hose and ladders as well as forcible entry and search and rescue.



TRAINING FIRE

Earlier this month, the firefighters had an amazing opportunity to have a training house fire. This was an all-day event, and included over 60 firefighters from Big Lake Fire, Lake Cavanaugh Fire, Conway Fire, Mount Vernon Fire, Lake McMurray Fire and Fire District 8. This type of training is invaluable to prepare for real emergencies. They work at reading fire behavior, hose handling, ventilation and fire extinguishment.

FIRE FIGHTER STAIRCLIMB

We had 8 firefighters participate in the annual firefighter stairclimb in Seattle this year. This crew of volunteer firefighters climbed 69 flights of stairs at the Columbia Tower in full gear including masks, with firefighters from all over the world! Their gear adds 50-70 pounds that they carry. This event raises money for The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society to fight cancer. This year the team raised \$8,312. Thanks to all who gave your support!



JERRY SEVERSON

We lost a beloved community member last month, Jerry Severson. He was involved in so many projects that benefited the fire department including raising over \$100,000.00 the last 20 years (going door to door in his neighborhood). He was instrumental in

getting a jaws of life at both ends of our District. He was a gem of a human being and will be missed by many!

REHAB CREW

Did you know we have a rehab crew?

Our rehab crew are retired volunteer firefighters that do:

- Traffic Control
- Air Support (filling air bottles that are used at fire scenes)
- Food Support at large scale events and/or disasters
- Facility Maintenance
- Apparatus Maintenance
- Rehab crews during fires and other events.

This crew is vital support to our operation. Most of them are retired (from their paying job), which gives us more opportunity to use them when needed.

If you have interest and have time on your hands, give us a call for more information!

Thank you to Phill, Chuck, Bill, Dennis and Bob! We appreciate all you do for our community and our fire department!

NEW TENDER

Due to your gracious support of the fire levy, we were able to purchase the first of two needed trucks. This stock version became available with great timing as we were able to resell our outdated one, reducing the cost.



Approximately half of our community does not have hydrants, resulting in the need for a water tender. This new truck will have more ground clearance for driveways, 300 plus more horsepower for the hills (our prior one could only go 15 mph up Amick Road with a full tank), the same amount of water but a larger fire pump and is 21 years newer. Our new tender also has more safety devices for the volunteers like ABS brakes and traction control for wet slippery roads. This tender also has a deck gun on top which is used to knock down larger fires.



HALLOWEEN

This year, the crew handed out candy for the Harvest Festival at Big Lake Elementary and also gave out apple cider (courtesy of Cedardale Orchards), candy, donuts and coffee in the Nookachamps Development on Halloween night! Both fun nights for all!

CHRISTMAS PARADE / DECEMBER 8TH AT 5:30 PM

The parade will start at Station 1 and head south on West Big Lake Blvd going around the lake including Lakeview Blvd and the Nookachamps Development.

Bring your lawn chairs, blankets, hot chocolate and come see Santa! We will be collecting non-perishable food items for the Clear Lake Food Bank.

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