

THE GAZETTE



Celebrating 75 years of service to the community.

News and information for the communities we serve

FALL 2015



SVFD TURNS 75!

Since 1940, Spokane Valley Fire Department has proudly served the residents and businesses of our community. We provide fire, emergency medical and prevention services to more than 125,000 citizens over a 75 square mile area including:

- City of Liberty Lake
- City of Millwood
- City of Spokane Valley
- Otis Orchards
- Pasadena Park
- Parts of unincorporated Spokane County including the area around Liberty Lake

WE'RE YOUR FIRE DEPARTMENT!

» A Message from your Fire Chief, Bryan Collins

VOTERS RENEW M&O LEVY

On behalf of the Spokane Valley Fire Department Board of Commissioners and all the employees of the department, I would like to extend our sincere gratitude for your support of our recent Maintenance and Operations levy. With 72 percent voter approval, we will continue to provide the communities we serve with excellent fire, emergency medical and prevention services in the years to come.

During this four year levy cycle, we will invest in the replacement of some of our fleet including several new Engines and an Aerial Ladder Truck that have reached their end of serviceable life. We will continue to invest in our Capital Facilities plan by maintaining and refurbishing facilities that are in need of repair, along with the relocation of Station 3 to a more preferred response location in Liberty Lake.



As we move forward, please be assured that your Fire Department and its governing Board are mindful of our public's trust and support. Improvements and new services are added only after careful and critical thought and consideration. At the end of the day, everything we do is in support of providing outstanding services to the citizens that we serve.

Again, we sincerely thank you for your support!

~Warm regards, Chief Bryan Collins

DID YOU KNOW?

Potting soil is flammable!

Many fires in our community are started by cigarettes discarded and placed in potted plants.



SAVE THE DATE

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCT. 10 – ANNUAL SVFD OPEN HOUSE | 10AM-4PM

- 10:30 am High Ropes Rescue Demonstration
- 11:00 am Motor Vehicle Accident Rescue Demonstration
- 12:00 pm Northwest Med Star Helicopter Lands
- 12:30 pm "Pit Crew" CPR Demonstration
- 1:30 pm Mako the Arson Dog – his final public appearance
- TBA Northwest Med Star Helicopter Takes Off
- 3:00 pm Meet and Greet

OCT. 4-10 – NATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

Attention is focused on promoting fire safety and prevention. In addition to the Annual SVFD Open House, we'll be in elementary schools all month talking with students about fire safety at home and the importance of working smoke alarms.

CPR CLASSES – SECOND SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH

SVFD offers free CPR training for friends and families. We train community members to administer infant, child and adult CPR using the most current guidelines. » TO REGISTER, CALL 928-1700.

AUTO AID LAUNCHED

Early on the morning of August 6, the Spokane Valley Fire Department (SVFD) and the City of Spokane Fire Department (SFD) officially launched "automatic aid," according to reciprocal operating agreements announced on June 15. Automatic aid means the highest level of customer service through faster emergency response from the closest and most appropriate fire service resource, regardless of boundaries.

Continued on reverse »



2015 ANNUAL SPOKANE VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

OPEN HOUSE

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10 ★ 10AM-4PM ★ 2411 N. PIONEER LANE

JOIN US FOR A DAY OF FREE FAMILY FUN!

- Take pictures in fire gear and on trucks
- Squirt a live fire hose
- Try the Kids Firefighter Combat Challenge Course
- Enjoy hot dogs and beverages
- Learn about fire safety and prevention
- Watch live demonstrations by firefighters



MEET MAKO THE ARSON DOG IN HIS FINAL PUBLIC APPEARANCE!

The SVFD Gazette is published bi-annually for the community we serve by the Community Affairs Office. For more information, call 892-4155 or visit www.spokanevalleyfire.com.

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SUMMER WILDFIRE SEASON WORST IN STATE HISTORY

With wildfires still burning across parts of our state, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is already reporting that 2015 has been the worst wildfire season on record. The lives of three firefighters were lost, more homes were destroyed than ever before, and the amount of acreage burned surpassed the million acre mark for the first time. Throughout the summer, SVFD has mobilized resources to support regional and statewide



SVFD firefighters (l-r) Paul Kimball, Abe Nisbet and Marc Lange on Brush Truck 10 worked alongside Army National Guard personnel securing the fire line along the top of Cooper Ridge to protect Chelan in late August.

wildland firefighting efforts. A department brush truck was deployed for most of the fire season and the Communications Trailer was out even longer. Each apparatus was out so long that fresh crews were rotated in while the apparatus stayed on their respective fires.

“The SVFD Communications Trailer is a crucial element allowing us to communicate amongst crews on the fire lines and with the command post,” explained Doug Bleeker, Spokane County Fire District 9 Assistant Fire Chief and Type III Incident Commander. “SVFD’s Communications Trailer is staffed with capable personnel who are very customer service oriented.”

This year, as in years past, SVFD has been able to play a key role in supporting regional and statewide wildland firefighting activities all while carefully maintaining the staffing and resource levels required to meet the needs of our local community.

Meet your Fire Commissioners <<

MIKE PEARSON, BOARD CHAIR

Mike Pearson has a passion for public service. After 31 years in public education, Pearson retired as the superintendent of Central Valley School District and began considering his options to continue serving his community.

“I noticed a vacancy on the SVFD Board of Fire Commissioners and decided to apply,” he smiled. “I’ve found my second passion, serving the greater Spokane Valley community through the fire service.”

Pearson was one of five applicants for the vacant position. In December 2012 he was sworn in as a Fire Commissioner, and the following year he was elected by SVFD voters to fill the final two years of the unexpired term. Pearson is now running for re-election to the Fire Commission and is currently serving as Board Chair. He sits on several SVFD committees and is active in the Spokane County Fire Commissioners Association.

“SVFD is a strong organization,” Pearson explained. “Financially, using the tools of technology, our budgets are monitored carefully and there is no bond indebtedness. We’re a progressive organization where training is a priority, and most importantly, our crews provide professional, compassionate service to our community every day.”

Pearson is excited about what’s next for SVFD - a relocated fire station in Liberty Lake, the growth of community paramedicine and progressive new programs to better serve the most vulnerable citizens in our community.

When not working on SVFD business, Pearson keeps busy with his five children, six grandchildren and hobbies including traveling, woodworking and riding his motorcycle. He was born in Montana, raised in Newport, WA and for the past 38 years has made Spokane Valley his home.



Auto Aid - Continued

“I’ve seen how automatic aid can work to improve response and deliver critical resource depth in times of real disaster,” said SVFD Chief Bryan Collins, referring to his previous fire service experience in California. “Automatic aid means that when large events are escalating and requiring more resources, other departments are automatically dispatched to continue providing timely response to ongoing emergencies across our community.”

The new agreements build on the incremental steps already taken with auto aid agreements in the event of water rescue between SFD and SVFD, and full borderless automatic aid that has been in place between Spokane County Fire District #8

and SVFD for more than a year.

“Mutual aid” has been in place for many years in the Spokane region. This means that if requested, neighboring fire department resources will respond. Automatic aid eliminates the need to ask. Instead, the closest, most appropriate resources are dispatched to respond to the emergency, regardless of borders.

There is no financial cost associated with the automatic aid agreements. The services provided by each agency are provided at no cost to either agency. The agreements affect operational response only with local control remaining in the hands of the officials elected to serve and represent their respective communities.

ARSON DOG MAKO RETIRES

It’s been five years since Mako, a black English Labrador, was put into service as the SVFD Arson Dog. Together with his handler, Assistant Fire Marshal Rick Freier, this team helped investigate 187 fire scenes. They were considered a regional resource and played a



key role in solving arson investigations for more than 25 agencies throughout Eastern Washington and North Idaho.

Mako and Freier also visited many classrooms and made countless public appearances, educating more than 14,000 students and adults about fire safety and prevention.

Freier returned to work as a firefighter at South Valley Station 9 in July. The move coincided with Mako’s retirement from service. Mako was paid for by State Farm Insurance, which requires that arson dogs work for no more than five years. At this time, SVFD does not plan to pursue another arson dog.

Now six years old, Mako continues to live with Freier and his family. The pair will perform their final public demonstration during the **Annual SVFD Open House on October 10.**

SVFD MOBILIZES FOR EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS

During the height of the summer heat wave, SVFD partnered with Greater Spokane Valley Meals on Wheels to provide a prioritized list of their most vulnerable senior citizens. SVFD volunteers conducted welfare checks on about 200 senior citizens, handing out cold bottled water as they checked for signs of heat-related symptoms. In some cases, our volunteers handed out fans, instructions for how to use air conditioners and encouraged overheated seniors to get to a cool public place with a free bus pass provided by Spokane Transit. The team narrowed the list to about 15 seniors for ongoing checks during the extreme heat. We are continuing this partnership as we prepare for the cold weather ahead.

SAFETY TIPS

- Check on your neighbors
- Have a plan for power outages
- Keep portable heaters away from flammable materials



NEW FACES @ SVFD

TIM O'BRIEN

Deputy Chief – Operations

Oversees operation of all fire suppression, technical rescue, training and emergency medical services



GREG ROGERS

Fire Marshal – Prevention

Responsible for fire investigation, code enforcement, new construction and public education



MELANIE ROSE, APR

Community Affairs Officer

Directs public information, media services, governmental affairs and public relations

WE ARE GEARING UP for a new recruit academy of entry-level firefighters early in 2016. Interested? Visit our website for the minimum qualifications and application process.

Apply at www.publicsafetytesting.com.

