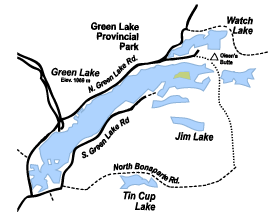




WATCH LAKE – NORTH GREEN LAKE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

5771 Green Lake North Road
70 Mile House, BC, V0K 2K1

www.wlmgfiredept.org



2016 Annual General Meeting
1:00 p.m., Saturday, July 15th, 2017
Watch Lake Community Hall

Newsletter - Spring / Summer 2017

Fires

Well it had to happen sometime. Sooner or later our firefighters would respond to a real fire. Sooner or later the fire would be at a property with unpaid fire dues. In the 2016 it happened twice. In March and again in December neighbours called 911 to report fully engulfed structure fires. In both cases it was far too late to save the buildings, but it took considerable time and effort to extinguish the fires to protect adjoining property and buildings.

Since the annual fire dues were not paid on either of these properties, the department was under no obligation to attend. (*Bylaw, part 13, number 74: Nothing in these Bylaws will require the Department to respond to the Call-Out of a non-member.*) However, in both cases 911 dispatch relayed a non-existent address and there was no way to tell if the property owner was a member in good standing or not. As the first fire trucks approached the approximate areas, it became obvious where the fires were and that there was an immediate need to keep the fires from spreading. With so much forest and grassland surrounding our area, the department takes every precaution to prevent the type of disaster that struck Fort McMurray last year. The efforts to quell the December fire were compounded by a damaged and burning gas meter that could neither be extinguished nor shut off. Several firefighters had to remain at the scene until gas company employees arrived to dig out the service line and turn off the main control valve.

It is unfair for the rest of the property owners in the community who pay their annual dues to have to bear the cost of fighting fires on unpaid properties, consequently, the owners of the properties upon which these fires started were billed for the number of hours spent on each call out times the numbers of firefighters on scene and the pieces of apparatus required. (\$5960.99 and \$3355.28 respectively) These fees for service have not been paid and the department has initiated legal action to secure payment.

A considerable amount of water was used in both fires and once again the dry hydrant at Access 14 was used to pump the water from the lake. This hydrant and the one at Access 20 have been tested at the coldest of winter temperatures and both provide an endless supply of water to be pumped into the tenders for transport to a fire scene. The three tenders, up to 2,200 gallons in size, can be filled in three and a half minutes and will then work in a pumper to pond rotation to provide a constant source of water at a fire. Several times in the past year we were called upon to supply water to fires in Lone Butte as a part of our mutual aid agreement with that department. We have a similar agreement with South Green Lake VFD and they are currently working on the installation of dry hydrants on their side of the lake.

Equipment

With the purchase of the multi-purpose ETV last year we reached a plateau with the apparatus required to provide full, reliable fire protection for the community. Without the support of the 80+% of the property owners who pay their annual fire dues this would never have been possible. From the newest engine to the oldest tender (now used primarily as a spare) all of the vehicles are in excellent running condition and should serve reliably for several years. Emergency vehicles in a small community like ours see limited service and seldom wear out. Unfortunately, the pumpers “age-out” and reach an age where they will no longer be

certified by the insurance underwriters. When that time comes, it will be back to fund raising to find enough money for the purchase of suitable replacements.



Recycling

The collection and recycling of refundable cans and bottles has developed into a venture we never expected. In the past year, recycling alone has paid for the storage unit at Hall #1 and provided enough revenue to have the wiring connected and a heater installed. This summer we plan to add some metal siding to improve the appearance of the structure. We will never equal the collection enjoyed by the South Side, but, at peak party times during the summer, there were so many cans and bottles that there was no room for storage of department equipment.



What began with a couple of firefighters taking in the occasional bag of empties dropped off at Hall #2 during the summer has now mushroomed into a year-round activity involving firefighters and board members sorting and delivering refundables to recycling centres. Firefighters Donna Theissen and Gord Silljer gave the collection a tremendous boost by collecting and delivering empties to the Hall from the Watch Lake Dump. Former firefighter, now director, Ken Brennan, has taken on the task of coordinating the project. As of May 1st, Central Cariboo Disposals will be managing the dump and they have given us their approval to continue picking up empties from the designated container. Our thanks to them and to everyone in the community for helping out with this project. Instead of throwing empties in the garbage you can become a part of the project by taking your recyclables in to Gold Trail Recycling Centre in 100 Mile and ask them to credit the WL – N.GL VFD.

Collection of Fire Dues

To date 81% of the property owners in our fire protection area have paid their fire dues for 2017 and can honestly inform their insurance brokers that they have a responding fire service. A recent address survey revealed an additional 31 new or previously unlisted properties the owners of which say they will be paying or have yet to be found and informed of their lack of coverage. The addition of these properties to our list drops the paid percentage to 80%. If we could encourage a good portion of the 20% unpaid property owners to add their support to the department, we forestall a rate increase for a few more years. We currently enjoy a rate far lower than the taxed rate charged by CRD departments and hope to keep our annual dues affordable for years to come.

Director Bill Thomas has taken on the onerous task of knocking on doors to remind residents that they are in arrears. He finds that most people are friendly. There are, however, a few that are less than welcoming and would prefer to take the chance that their insurance coverage will be in effect if there is no responding fire service. Bill asks that everyone display their decal to save him bothering people who have already paid for the current year. Members of the department also find it rewarding to see community support in the decals on your address plaques. This is your fire department - show your support.

Annual General Meeting (2016)

Immediately following last year's Annual General Meeting held in February 2016 the Board of Directors decided to have future AGMs during the summer months in order to encourage more property owners to attend and participate. At that time July 8th was chosen as a suitable date and the following Newsletters announced that date. Unfortunately, we failed to take into consideration that the second Saturday in July is traditionally Gymkhana day. Therefore, we had to move the date by one week to **Saturday, July 15th at 1:00 p.m. at the Watch Lake Community Hall.**

The Board of Directors can use your input. We hear so little from the community that we can only assume we are running the department to your satisfaction. Most of our current activities can be followed on the web site and if you have any concerns, please attend the AGM or send us an email. There may not be any issues at the meeting that require a vote, however, if there are and you cannot attend but would like your say recorded, fill out the proxy on the back page and give it to someone who will be there.

Recruitment

As we have mentioned in past newsletters, we have a very healthy looking number of firefighters on our roster, 30 members in all. Some of these members are part-time residents and some are away for a month or so during the winter months. Thanks to having a large roster, however, there is never a shortage of trained personnel to respond to any emergency call-out. Unfortunately, we are all getting older and some of the active members would like to retire. Whether full or part-time resident, if you can spare part of one evening per week for training and practice, please come out and sign-up, make new friends, learn new skills, and become an integral contributor to the safety of your community. Hopefully, at some time in the near future, we will be able to re-establish the medical first responder service. Here too we need recruits who are capable and willing to take the training. We cannot offer this service to the community until we can be sure of 24/7 coverage.



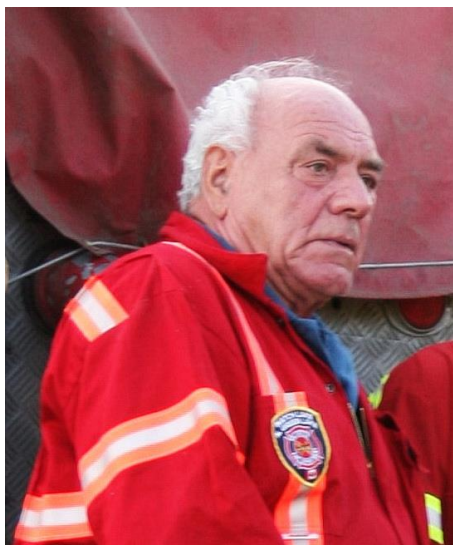
Sad News

Our community was saddened with the recent passing of two long-time residents who have had a significant influence on the growth of our fire department, Ivan Nilsen and Tony Carniel.

Ivan passed away in hospital on March 17 at the age of 87. He and his wife Karin have had a cabin at Green Lake since the early 1970s. Ivan loved hunting and fishing in this area and enjoyed many hours on the water in his home-built pontoon boats, Kontiki I and Kontiki II. The Nilsens were great supporters of the fire department and had a continuing interest in the department's activities. Through Ivan's encouragement his long-time friends and neighbours in Cloverdale, George and Kathy Wilson moved to Green Lake and both George and Kathy soon became very active members of the department.



Ivan and the late Acting Fire Chief, George Wilson



At the age of 82 Tony passed away in Kamloops Hospital on April 3 after sustaining serious injuries in an accident at his home. Tony had a house at Green Lake since 1973. Tony will long be remembered by everyone who knew him for his robust lifestyle and boundless enthusiasm for any job to help a neighbour. He loved falling trees for firewood – there were none too big. Tony was a proud, active and valued firefighter until he retired from the department three years ago.

Local memorial services will be held for Ivan and Tony at dates to be announced by their families.

Annual Garage and Bake Sale

The Auxiliary is currently hard at work baking pies and collecting merchandise for the annual garage and bake sale on **Saturday, May 20th**. Their hard work has provided funding for several otherwise unaffordable projects for the department. Please stop by on Saturday morning, buy a pie, find a treasure and enjoy a breakfast sandwich.

Summer Safety

Enjoy the many activities our area has to offer over the coming summer months, but please work and play safely. Whether burning slash or enjoying a campfire, always be aware of the current burning restrictions. Camp fires are a big part of our summer activities, but remember there are certain provincial rules that campers need to follow. Failure to comply with these rules could result in a \$345 fine. An additional \$345 fine would be levied for campfires being lit during a ban.

- Campfires are prohibited in an area which has fire restrictions or bans. It is the campers' responsibility to find out what areas have campfire prohibitions and restrictions.
- Campfires require a fireguard, this means scraping down the dirt one metre in circumference around the fire and removing flammable items, such as twigs, leaves, needles etc...
- Campers must have at least 8 litres of water and/or a shovel to properly extinguish the fire.
- Fires are not to be larger than 0.5 metres by 0.5 metres or approximately 19 inches by 19 inches.
- Campfires are never to be left unattended.
- When leaving the campfire, it must be properly extinguished so ashes are cool to touch.

Your firefighters would rather see you enjoying the summer than dumping water on the smoldering remains of your property.

President, WL – N.GL VFD

Notice of Annual General Meeting

Saturday, July 15th at 1:00 p.m. – Watch Lake Community Hall

Proposed Agenda:

President's Introduction
Secretary's Report
Treasurer's Report
Fire Chief's Report
Auxiliary Report
Tax / Fire Dues Issues
Election of Officers
New Business



Proxy

No: ____

I, (print): _____

of local area address: _____,

as a fire dues paid member of the
Watch Lake – North Green Lake
Volunteer Fire Department (Society)
give my proxy to:

(print) _____

to vote on motions and resolutions raised
at the Annual General Meeting of the
Watch Lake – North Green Lake
Volunteer Fire Dept. (Society)
to be held on Saturday, July 15, 2017*
at the Watch Lake Community Hall.

Signed: _____

**valid only on date shown above*