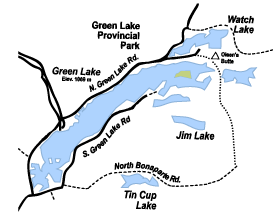




WATCH LAKE – NORTH GREEN LAKE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT



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

www.wlmgfiredept.org

Spring/Summer Newsletter 2018



After what has seemed like an extra long winter, summer appears to be on the way. The ice left the lake on April 29th and in many of the areas where the forest was destroyed by last year's wildfire a blanket of lush, green grass is covering the previously scorched earth with a promise of renewal. As we prepare for all the great activities summer has to offer, we must be mindful of some of the lessons learned from the devastation of the Elephant Hill Wildfire. Long range forecasts predict another hot dry summer and there is still an abundance of fuel surrounding us. Wildfire experts are saying there is a high probability of more fires this year. Our firefighters worked tirelessly during last summer's evacuation to FireSmart all of our properties, but they had only enough time to do the minimum to protect our homes. We must all do our part to ensure that we have done everything possible to prepare our properties should another wildfire threaten the community.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, the hard work and dedication on the part of the firefighters and the endless hours put in to maintain and operate this department have not gone unnoticed. Many donations came in from grateful residents and from other local community groups. In addition, we have now received payment from BC Wildfire for the hours of service put in during the evacuation. We are all indeed grateful. This extra income will allow us to begin an update to the vehicles and to equip the firefighters with the necessary safety gear for wildfire suppression.

We have already been able to purchase a new (to us) tender to replace the aging T11. When the outfitting is complete, this vehicle will be rated by Forestry as an engine rather than a pumper and will be eligible for a higher rate of payment if called upon to provide wildfire suppression service outside of our service area. Alan Boyd has spent several hours extending the rear bumper of this truck to provide space for the pumps. The two high velocity pumps will enable the firefighters to rapidly fill the tank from any water source and then equally as rapidly supply water to the pumps. Tool and equipment cabinets will be added along the sides. Emergency lights and siren are also ready to be installed. The addition of this unit will give us three tenders ready to transport water to a fire scene.



Goodbye old faithful.

Our Pumpers are in excellent condition, however, in about three years they will have reached their maximum acceptable age for rating by the Underwriters. Engine 21 is in excellent condition and will pass the necessary testing to keep it in the fleet as a backup vehicle for many years. We have enough funding from the compensation for the department's wildfire services to begin saving for a replacement for Engine 11, Hopefully, when the time comes, we will have enough money set aside to allow us to purchase a newer vehicle that will give us service for at least ten years.

After eight years in the planning we should finally be able to complete Hall #2 with the drilling of a well and the installation of plumbing. Land clearing has begun on the property there, primarily to make room for the well and septic system, but clearing away the surrounding trees is also a good FireSmart example. Another part of our FireSmart program is the installation of a 300 gallon reserve water tank to feed a roof-top sprinkler should we experience another wildfire threat.



As the Wildfire turned and began to approach Watch Lake our firefighters were directed by BC Wildfire to begin suppression activities in the Little Green Lake/Olsen's Flats area. This was the only live-fire action our crew experienced during the summer. Fortunately for the community they were there and assisted in stopping the advancing fire at the Little Green/Pressy Lake Forestry Road. This was a good learning experience. Although our firefighters are fully equipped for fighting structure and vehicle fires, it became obvious that they should have more appropriate personal protective equipment for wildfire action.

We have now been able to outfit twenty of the first line members with the necessary basic wildfire gear. Some of this gear included:

- Hard hat complete with earmuffs and visor
- Safety glasses
- Helmet LED light
- Hotspot detectors

Volunteers

As mentioned in our past newsletter, our community can be very proud of the fire department we have built over the past 50 years. We have managed to budget carefully enough to continually update the equipment and training necessary to meet government standards, however, we are rapidly approaching a crisis in firefighter membership. We need new volunteers! On paper our roster shows good numbers, but we are all getting older and several members will be retiring this year. Membership is open to men and women over 19 years of age, who are willing to spare a couple of hours each week to attend practice and training sessions. Meet some great people, learn new skills, get to wear really attractive bunker gear and, best of all, become a part of the betterment of your community.

A Reserve Firefighter Division is currently being created to encourage part-time residents to become involved. Reserve members will be expected to attend training sessions whenever they are at their residences here and be available for call-outs.. They will be equipped with all of the necessary personal protective equipment including radios or pagers, but they will not be involved in front-line firefighting. Some typical duties will involve assisting the pump crew at the dry hydrants and other water sources, and helping the firefighters re-store the vehicles after an incident.

For more information and application forms for either Regular or Reserve Divisions contact:

Fire Chief, Andy Palaniak: phone - 250-456-7460 email - wlnglvfd@gmail.com
Deputy Fire Chief, Mark Bulman: phone - 250-456-2151 email - dragnmit@bcinternet.net

FireSmart

Check fire restrictions before lighting a campfire and, above all, participate in the FireSmart program. Booklets are available at either fire Hall or from the government web site at:

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/forestry/wildfire-management/prevention/prevention-home-community/bcws_homeowner_firesmart_manual.pdf

More information will be also provided at the Annual General Meeting. Answer the questions in the *Assess Your Risk From Wildfire* pages and find your *Home and Yard Hazard Score*. Are you really prepared for a repeat of last summer?

Garage and Bake Sale

This year's garage and bake sale was a tremendous success. The Auxiliary assembled a great variety of garage sale treasures that quickly found new homes, the baked goods sold out very quickly and the breakfast sandwiches were all gone by noon. The good weather brought out a record number of visitors and everyone appeared to have an enjoyable visit with friends and neighbours.

Please enjoy all of the wonderful summer activities our lake has to offer - safely.



President, WL – N.G.L VFD

PS. At the time of writing, a wildfire has started in the Vidette area on the border of last year's Elephant Hill Wildfire, there is smoke in the air and there are still a few residents who haven't paid their fire dues.

The Annual General Meeting will be held on **Saturday, July 21st at Hall #1, Watch Lake, at 10:00 a.m.**

Director Bob Nathane has done a lot of work to establish a good web presence for us. Learn more about your fire department and the firefighters at the web site: <http://www.wlnglfireddept.org>

Check the latest department events and fire related news on our Facebook page:

If you cannot attend the Annual General Meeting on July 21st in person, please forward this proxy to a paid-up member of your choosing who will be attending and can vote for you.



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 21, 2018*
at Hall #1.

Signed: _____

**valid only on date shown above*