

# Lynden Fire Department

## 2023 Annual Report



Live Fire Training Benson Road – April 2023



# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

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# VISION & VALUES

***Our Vision: Cultivating Exceptional Service for Our Extraordinary Community***

***We Value: Communication – Teamwork – Community – Excellence – Integrity***





# ***LYNDEN FIRE DEPARTMENT CURRENT ROSTER***

## **Full-time Personnel**

Fire Chief Mark Billmire  
Assistant Chief Kristie Watson  
Support Services Manager Kinsey DeHaan  
Lieutenant Chad Baar  
Lieutenant Branden Brink  
Lieutenant Michael Whittley  
FF/EMT Kevin DeBoer  
FF/EMT Tim Chartier  
FF/EMT Marc Davis  
FF/EMT Caleb Monroe  
FF/EMT Trent Martenson  
FF/EMT Payton Peterson-Scotter  
FF/EMT Jared Masters  
FF/EMT Anthony Taylor  
FF/EMT Jordan Hastings  
FF/EMT Kerri Jenkins

## **Part-time Personnel**

FF/EMT Brittney Biondolillo  
FF/EMT Zach Bunch  
FF/EMT Jordan Lee

## **Volunteer Personnel**

FF/EMT Michael Maglione

## **Chaplain**

Will Rosado



### **From Chief Billmire ...**

2023 saw the return of what might be considered a routine year for LFD, with a slight increase in call volume and fewer structure fires than previous years. The big change was adding Medic-75 to our station and providing a much quicker ALS response to local calls.

Throughout the year we continued to provide station tours to local schools, teach community CPR and fire extinguisher classes, brought the Kid's Safety House to add to our community education program, and Kinsey is now certified to conduct child car seat checks. We started and ended the year fully staffed from both a Firefighter and Administrative standpoint – a trend I hope will continue.

2023 was the busiest year on record, topping 2022's previous record of 2,345 with 2,407 total calls for the year, and we continue to beat the odds for overlapping calls at 28%. The number of structure fires was down, with most of the more significant ones being out in the county, and LFD units responding as automatic aid for NWFR.

AC Watson put together a couple of training exercises that allowed personnel to practice some important skills related to live fire training and SCBA air management. The City donated a structure on Benson Road that we used for live fire training, giving crews multiple chances to experience fire conditions in a controlled environment. Crews from North Whatcom Fire and Rescue also participated.

Looking forward to 2024, I anticipate the City opening a recruitment process to select my replacement, as I have set an October 4<sup>th</sup> retirement date. Construction of our new Quint will begin this year, which will include a couple of site visits based on certain benchmarks, and we should take delivery in early 2025. I am hoping to close out my tenure with LFD by completing some neglected housekeeping to include finishing off a couple of much need policies with the hope of leaving the new Fire Chief with a fairly clean slate, and no major issues to contend with.

Stay safe!

MB

## COMMUNITY EVENTS & EDUCATION



Station tours continue to be a big part of our interaction with local schools and daycares, allowing us to provide fire education to the kids. These visits are a great opportunity for Firefighters to interact with the kids and pass along important tips for fire and life safety to the parents that usually attend. Crews also visit the school campuses to interact and pass along fire safety information.

LFD members were challenged to a chess dual by the Lynden Middle School students, lots of chess was played, lots of talking smack, and tons of fun. Many thanks to Gina in Finance for setting it up.



The Chief Spinner Memorial Firefighter Challenge was held in July, this annual event is a great fundraiser for the LFD Firefighters' Association with proceeds helping to fund the May Volunteer Retiree Dinner and the benevolent fund.



## ***FIRE INCIDENTS***



On March 8th, crews responded to a barn fire on Central Road out in the County, the fire was quickly extinguished and overhaul completed. The barn and contents were a total loss, but all the animals escaped safely.

On March 10<sup>th</sup>, crews responded to a detached garage fire at 1867 Kok Road, the tenant had been burning tree branches too close to the fiberglass siding on the south side of the structure. The garage and all its contents were a total loss.



In September, crews responded to a residential structure fire on James Circle. The fire started on the rear deck when the tenant attempted to start a propane fireplace. The connection to the tank was loose and the escaping gas ignited, catching a nearby tree on fire which then spread to the house. The fire drew numerous onlookers with one person tripping over a fire hose and needing medical attention.

## ***EMS & RESCUE INCIDENTS***



MVA's are a common occurrence on Lynden Streets, this glancing head-on in January resulted in one patient being transported to the hospital.

This accident happened on July 4<sup>th</sup> and resulted in a local teen being seriously injured.



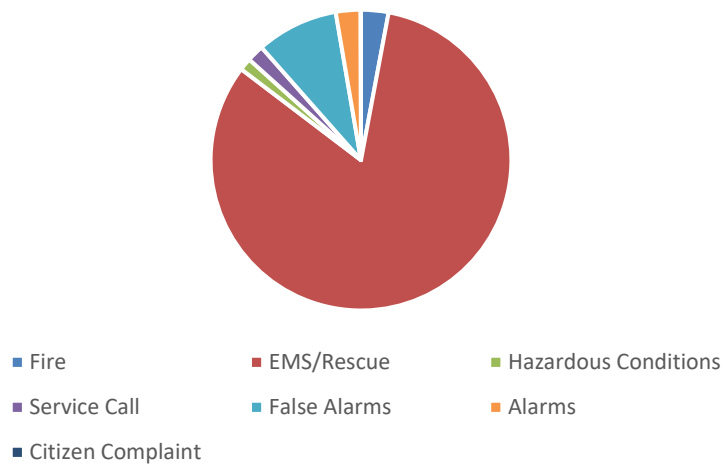
Crews were dispatched to West Pole Road to assist NWFR on this MVA involving a WTA bus and vehicle that collided and then crashed into the Hinotes gas station on the corner. E75 assisted with scene and traffic control.



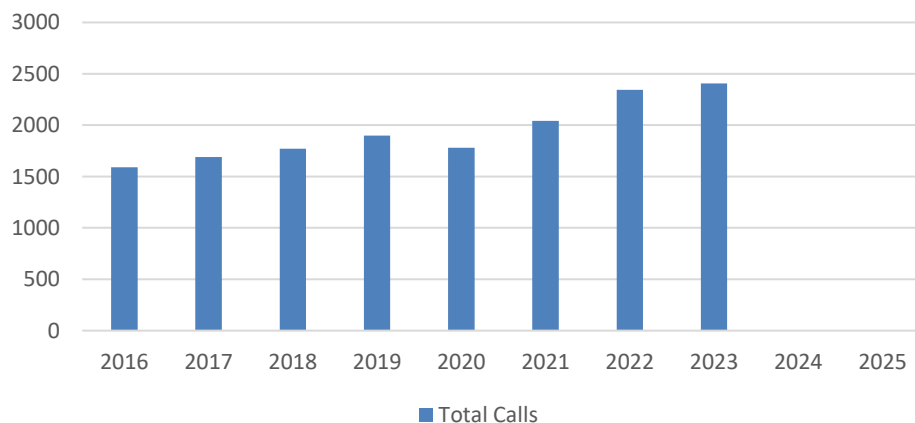
# INCIDENT COUNT

Incident Type	Count
Fire	71
EMS/Rescue	1983
Hazardous Conditions	32
Service Calls	44
False Alarms/Cancelled	212
Alarms	63
Citizen Complaint	1
Total	2407

Chart Title



Total Calls



## ***SPRING RETIREE DINNER***



In May of 2023 we continued our annual tradition of honoring our retired volunteers by hosting a spring dinner. We had a good turn-out, but the unfortunate loss of more retirees was noted.



Rose catered the food and LFD members assisted with setting up the table and chairs as well as serving the food. Kinsey had a cake made to celebrate the retiree's contributions.



A video was put together using photos and newspaper clippings from the early days, progressing up through the years to 2023.

# **TRAINING**

## **Letter from Assistant Chief Watson:**

Chief. I have completed an audit of Quarterly Training for 2023. While 2023 was a year of learning, I am happy to report that we have 95%-member completion from all 4 quarters. Quarter 1 results were not readily available since I came in very late in 2022 and assignment as well as accountability for that training was minimal.

However, in Quarter 2 we rebounded and completed approximately 23 hours of training per employee. This quarter included our Live Burn on Benson Road as well as EVIP (Emergency Vehicle Incident Prevention Program) recertification and Leadership training topics regarding training safety and After-Action Reviews.

Quarter 3 rolled in with a plan to complete Auto Extrication training, but we pushed that to Quarter 4 due to a lack of vehicles. We did complete Fire Investigation training as well as digging into the National Fallen Firefighters curriculum Courage to Be Safe & Leadership, Accountability, Culture and Knowledge. This was also the start of review of Community Risk Reduction program and began learning about national standards for this program. All employees completed 11 hours of training each.

Quarter 4 is where we found our groove and completed 16 hours per employee. This included the Auto Extrication training (scenarios developed by C. Baar) and an Air Management drill that was attended by 99% of our members. We also completed training involving identifying child abuse as well as counseling on Access to Lethal means – both topics suggested by yourself. Our Community Risk Reduction education continued learning about fire & burn prevention and appropriate ways to address that topic when dealing with the public. Members were encouraged to update their resume and present 5-year goals to me which in turn I provided some feedback as well as class suggestions and opportunities.

As far as 2024 goals – Revamp how OTEP training is completed. I would love to have some physicians, NP, DOs, etc... come in and speak on the topics that members are evaluated on, perhaps even creating the scenarios. I am also committed to completing at least ladder management, hose management and forcible entry training on our training grounds, in small bites so everyone can participate without compromising their time off. Finally, I want to make sure we involve everyone in training – part-time, floater, volunteer, administration.

Thank you for allowing me to explore training options and how to improve the exceptional services we provide our community.



## ***TRAINING – CONT.***



Live fire training is one of the most realistic and valuable types of training for firefighters. In April, LFD was able to get an entire days' worth in a structure on Benson Road donated by the City. Crews were able to get multiple evolutions being exposed to real fire conditions in a safe, controlled setting. NWFR sent three of their crews to run through a couple of times each crew. AC Watson organized the prepping of the building, designed each of the three scenarios, planned the logistics for crew rotations, hydration and food intake, and orchestrated the all-day event through final burn.



In October, each shift was given a donated vehicle to practice extrication skills, the battery powered tools we purchased a couple years back were put to the test. This photo shows the end result after a few hours of cutting door posts and rolling dashboards.

## ***TRAINING – CONT.***



In November, AC Watson put together an air management drill that members completed while in turnouts, wearing an SCBA, and on air. The goal of the drill was to determine how long each member could last on one bottle of air while performing high intensity tasks similar to those encountered at a real fire.



Last January crews conducted pump relay training with Whatcom County District-1, this type of joint training is invaluable and allows departments to learn the capabilities of our mutual aid partners.



## WHAT'S NEW



February 1<sup>st</sup> of 2023 was the start date for Medic-75, this is the 5<sup>th</sup> Paramedic unit in Whatcom County and responds out of station 75. The importance of having an ALS unit responding within the City limits of Lynden, instead of 15-minutes away, cannot be overstated, the proper equation is time = heart muscle and brain cells. The sooner patients with time sensitivity emergencies can receive advanced care, the better their outcome. Our community is very fortunate to have them here.



In April, LFD partnered with the Lynden Garden Club to establish two planter boxes in the front of the station to grow herbs and vegetables. This partnership has grown into multiple friendships and we want to pass along our thanks to Mary Lou and her friends.



## ***HOLIDAY DINNER & ANNUAL AWARDS***



LFD closed out 2023 by getting back to our regular annual activities like decorating E-7502 for the Lighted Christmas parade and getting together with our families to celebrate the holiday season. This year LFD E7502 took home best fire engine award for the parade, thanks to the efforts of those who helped hang the lights and eat pizza.

2023 saw the return of the FF Association's Pasta Feed, this event is a fundraiser for their benevolent fund. The event is well timed being just prior to the start of the Lighted Christmas Parade and had a good turnout.

During our Holiday Dinner, annual awards were handed out, with Jordan Hastings being selected by his peers – again – for Firefighter of the year and Brittney Biondolillo receiving the Fire Chief's Appreciation award for her continued dedication to LFD.



## ***IN CLOSING***

As 2024 begins, I would be remiss for not recognizing the support we received throughout 2023 from Mayor Korthuis, City Council, and City Administrator Williams.

My thanks to all LFD members for continuing to provide exceptional service to our extraordinary community!

## ***LOOKING AHEAD***



**Fall 2024**



**Spring 2025**