

## **PIVFD 2024 Chiefs Report**

On Piers Island, we are truly fortunate to have a strong spirit of volunteerism and a dedicated team that stands ready to spring into action at a moment's notice, day or night.

Week after week, our PIVFD team diligently trains, preparing themselves for any scenario that may arise. Over the past year, the PIVFD has responded to a wide spectrum of emergencies, from medical crises to natural disasters like lightning strikes and downed power lines.

Moreover, through the tireless efforts of our FireSmart team, we have maintained a strong commitment to wildfire prevention and preparedness by educating islanders about their crucial role in safeguarding their homes and our island community.

Our team's unwavering commitment to training, preparedness, and community education has enabled us to maintain a high level of readiness, ensuring that we are equipped to respond swiftly and effectively to emergencies.

### **The Team**

The PIVFD is composed of a dedicated team of 20 Firefighters and First Responders. Our efforts are supported by a team of volunteers who work tirelessly behind the scenes, ensuring that our operations run smoothly and safely.

This year, we were excited to have Firefighter Martin Hogan also become a licensed First Responder. Becoming a First Responder requires countless hours of study and training, and it is no easy feat. We commend Martin for his commitment to serving our community.

Additionally, Burke Stancill, was appointed as a PIVFD Captain, joining Derek Morrison and Sandy Brunham on the department's leadership team.

### **Training**

Our dedicated First Responder members have risen to meet new provincial training standards, undergoing rigorous instruction to enhance their life-saving skills. The scope of practice for First Responders was expanded by the BC government, giving them the ability to deliver more critical interventions to patients, especially in rural areas where BC Ambulance service response times may be delayed.

This expansion of roles required extensive training and examinations to qualify with the licensing requirements. Failure to complete these endorsements would result in the loss of an individual First Responder's license.

Our First Responder team of 10 has worked tirelessly over the last six months, led by Captain Brunham, to complete all the necessary training and exams for these endorsements. Some of

these new techniques, such as wound packing and the use of pelvic binders, can significantly impact the outcome for trauma patients.

All team members deserve congratulations for their hard work and commitment to providing quality medical care to anyone in need.

Other training highlights include:

- Firefighter orientation session at BC Wildfire Services South Island Headquarters
- Guest Instructor Graham Gilley conducted the Bernice Archibald Heart-to-Heart CPR Clinic, attended by over 40 islanders
- Firefighter training on the new provincial guidelines issued by the Office of the Fire Commissioner
- Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) fire training for firefighters, resulting in their S-100 Wildfire Training Certification.

A reminder, anyone requiring medical assistance should never hesitate to call 911 to activate our first responders and firefighter teams. We are here to help.

## **Equipment**

Equipment plays a vital role in enhancing our firefighting capabilities. This year, we were fortunate to secure a new, much safer training platform for the lower reservoir through the generous donation from Mona Rosenberg. The new training platform provides Firefighters with a safe access point to draw water from the reservoir in the event of an emergency.

## **Fire Prevention**

As islanders, our single greatest opportunity to prevent a disastrous wildfire is implementing a community fire prevention plan. On Piers, we are fortunate to have been provincial leaders in the adoption of the Neighbourhood FireSmart program.

Developed to promote wildfire prevention and education, Piers Island has been recognized as a FireSmart Community since 2016. It cannot be emphasized enough what a significant accomplishment this is.

In 2024, we were once again recognized for our efforts and received a \$750 grant to continue promoting wildfire prevention and education.

A big thank you to the team of Pauline Olesen, Gloria Morson, and Carol Fevang for promoting FireSmart's science-based programs that all property owners can adopt to ensure our properties are less susceptible to the risk of extreme damage from wildfire.

If you have not already had a FireSmart assessment done at your residence, I encourage you to do so by reaching out to Pauline or any member of the PIVFD.

### **Gratitude**

On a personal note, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the community, the Trustees, and especially to the members of the PIVFD for the well wishes and support during my medical leave.

A huge thanks to Derek, Burke, Sandy, Steve, and Pauline, who stepped up and stepped in while I was away. Kerry and I are forever grateful for everything you did.

John Hall  
Chief, Piers Island Fire Department