

Our CRESTON Fire Rescue Service

ILC – February 2021

Over the years, I have written a few “I Love Creston” articles on Creston Fire Rescue. I wrote one of my first articles about the service in October 2015 (it was my 69th article). Now, I am writing my 119th article, and I would like to update you with the changes and many improvements we have seen with this very important service!

Did you know that the Creston Fire Department is over 100 years old? The Village of Creston established, by a motion of committee, to form a Fire Department on February 21, 1899. A motion was also made to appoint Mr. Joseph Wilson as the first Fire Chief of the department, and a proposed list of 29 names of volunteers was also suggested. 102 years later, there has been a lot of change to the Fire Service but the level of dedication of our Creston Fire Rescue volunteers has remained strong. Currently in the process of being updated, the history of the Creston Fire Department is chronicled on our website – www.creston.ca/2192/Our-History.

One of the challenges that is faced by all municipalities, but especially in smaller municipalities with volunteer fire departments, is being able to respond to emergencies as quickly as possible, and with the appropriate number of emergency responders per incident. In areas that have career fire departments, those emergency responders are readily available. In areas where the emergency responders are primarily volunteers, the challenges of having the people, the majority of whom are working, to respond in a timely fashion, can be huge. In 2014, the Town of Creston began our firefighter Work Experience Program (WEP) which helps to alleviate some of the issues that come along with responding to emergencies, while simultaneously providing valuable on the job training and experience in the fire service. Now in our 6th year of operation, the Town of Creston and Creston Fire Rescue have provided opportunities and experiences for over 30 qualified firefighters, who in turn have provided us with a year’s employment, the ability to provide invaluable emergency response services (including medical first response), and countless hours of community volunteer work. The annual Creston Fire Rescue “Fire Truck Christmas Carolling”, “Halloween Safety Stop” and “Hot Summer Nights” are just a few examples of positive and awesome community events that would not be possible without the efforts of these individuals along with our community volunteers.

All of our volunteers undertake extensive, weekly training which ensures that they are well prepared to respond to emergencies – not only for the Town of Creston, but also for the entire Creston Valley. Over the years, Creston Fire Rescue has expanded operations to provide service to other areas of the Creston Valley through automatic aid agreements with Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) regions of Erickson, Wynndel / Lakeview, West Creston and Canyon-Lister. By providing a central management system, our efficiencies have greatly improved and all of our volunteers have greater resources and training available. The Creston Valley Fire Training Centre located on Davis Road next to Pine Profiles, is one such example of a shared resource that provides valuable training capabilities for our Creston Valley Fire Departments. Although they have been impacted in their ability to provide in-person training due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, our fire departments continue to be resilient and creative, connecting virtually as much as possible. Creston Fire Rescue is always looking for new people to join their dynamic team. If you are interested in applying to be a part of this challenging and rewarding experience, contact them through our website, www.creston.ca and click on the button to “Join Creston Fire & Rescue”.

Now, more than ever, it is important to recognize the sacrifices that all of our emergency responders and their families make to protect our community. On behalf of myself, Town Council and the Creston Valley, THANK YOU to our Creston Valley Fire Departments for all that you continue to do for all of us. The spirit and positivity that you demonstrate provides such reassurance, especially during these uncertain times!

Do not hesitate to contact me by:

Visiting me at my office in Town Hall

Email me at ron.toyota@creston.ca

Call me at 250 428 2214 (extension 111)

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