



Dear Islanders,

January 2015

I just wanted to take a moment to bring everyone up to date on our activities these past few months.

It's been a very mild, if wet winter, so far on the island with no calls out for fire incidents. We did have one medical response this month which ended without complication but was a reminder that we need more trained first responders. Many islanders take winter holidays and that can leave us exposed and fragile. I am very happy to tell you that one of our most experienced first responders has just returned to the department; we welcome back Wendy Eden and all the skill she brings with her.

We are always looking for new fire department members who are willing to take the first responder medical training. That course will be offered on the island from Feb. 10th to Feb. 13th inclusive. Gerry Kristianson will be delivering the training. There is no cost to you but you do need to let Gerry know if you are interested ASAP. If you are considering joining the PIVFD even on a "casual" basis, we could use your help. Everyone is invited to attend any of our practices to audit the sessions. If after a few visits, you think you would like to join that would be just wonderful. If you don't think the fit is right for you, nothing is lost - we always have coffee and Julie Spencer's delicious snacks on hand on Saturdays. We are practising 4 times per month – alternating Thursdays from 4-6pm and Saturdays 9-11am. The goal is for firefighters to make 2 of those 4 practices each month.

Pauline and I will be away in February and as you all know, Deputy Chief Kelly Stevenson is also away. Bob Snelling (a previous Fire Chief for 3 years on the island) has offered to stand in as acting Chief for the month. He has been on the PIVFD for many years and has a wealth of experience. No one has shown more commitment to improving this department than Bob. He had a brief and well deserved break from his duties but he has now returned refreshed and re-invigorated. Welcome back Bob!

Also joining this past month: Philippa White (Philippa was a fire fighter for many years when John Currie was Chief), Guy Plante and Garth Irvine. Each of these islanders will bring something new and unique to our department and we welcome their participation. I have often said that as individuals, we might be somewhat challenged, but together, we are unbeatable. So welcome to the team Philippa, Guy and Garth.

Thanks to the generous donations of many islanders, we are in the process of acquiring more SCBA air cylinders and face masks. We are using the SCBA at most of our practices and with some additional training, I think we will be proficient soon – this equipment enables front line firefighters to stay safe. Our thanks again to those who so kindly donated.

The fire hall is looking great, both inside and outside. So many people contributed that it is impossible for me to thank you all individually but I know how hard you worked and your selfless efforts are appreciated by all islanders. In the spring we will try to put in some plants and more split rails and hopefully have a bench up on the flag pole hill. A beautiful office desk was donated by my work associates (thank you Excel Adjustco) making the Chief's office a more functional space.

The PIA has introduced a forest management plan which dovetails nicely with the PIVFD mandate to FireSmart our island and to minimize the risk of wildfires. I urge each of you to read the PIA proposals and to do what you can to help us reduce the risk of forest fire on our beautiful little island. This spring,

PIVFD will introduce a Fire Prevention program which promises to be both comprehensive and pragmatic. With that subject in mind, please watch this short video and see how a simple thing like closing a door is so important and what you choose for your next furniture purchase.

<http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/video/house-fire-survival-tips-28484068>

And finally, every fire department needs a mascot. More often than not, that mascot is a Dalmatian. Piers Islanders are known for their ingenuity... Cosmo will stand as our newest member!

Steve Cruise

