



FIRE DEPARTMENT
NEWS RELEASE
EASTSIDE FIRE & RESCUE

Proudly Serving – Carnation, Issaquah, North Bend,
Sammamish, Preston, May Valley, Tiger Mt. and Wilderness Rim

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EASTSIDE FIRE & RESCUE - 2009 ANNUAL AWARD RECIPIENTS

Issaquah, WA – Eastside Fire & Rescue (EF&R) held their annual Partners Banquet and Awards on February 18 at the Issaquah Pickering Barn. The evening was a celebration in commitment to the Agency and a time to recognize members who truly stood out in 2009. These awards are given annually and are based on a formal nomination process.

Volunteer of the Year – Firefighter Jona Gummere is one of several volunteers who helped her community by answering the emergency call. Jona volunteers out of Station 79, which serves the Lake McDonald and Maple Hills areas. Beyond service to her immediate community, she serves as a trainer and assistant in the training process for our emergency medical technicians. Overall Jona served 562 hours in 2009 and met all requirements of the rigorous volunteer program guidelines. In addition to emergency calls and participation in annual training, Jona and other members of Station 79 have been very involved in their community by hosting an annual Halloween Open House, the Easter Egg Hunt at the Maple Hills Park, Breakfast with Santa, and working with local neighbors and clergy to raise donations for food and clothing during the year. Jona is an exceptional volunteer and asset to her community and has served our Agency for the last five years.

Deputy Chief John Murphy Wellness Award – Firefighter Jenny Oltmann has been with the Agency, first serving as a volunteer and eventually becoming a career firefighter in 1994. Jenny has consistently been a front runner in the education and motivation of our Agency in fitness and wellness arena. Her “Dinner and a Workout” daily emails emphasize the need to be constantly aware of our health. She continually challenges our members to participate, often offering

friendly competition between crews and support personnel. Jenny is also the first one to practice what she preaches by keeping herself healthy and fit. Her energy to keep our members moving no matter the age or position in the Agency has been contagious. Her daily encouragement has been responsible for changing the behaviors of several in the Agency.

Deputy Chief Jon Fallstrom Commitment Award – Firefighter Scott Percival is another long-time firefighter with the Agency and was hired in the winter of 1991. Scott’s contributions include researching for a new medical plan which helped to save employees from layoffs. The immense task was done predominantly off-duty, sacrificing family time for the betterment of our organization. During the last year, Scott has been deeply involved in addressing the challenges, both financially and operationally, that have faced the Agency. Through many hours of dedication and commitment to identifying and researching possible solutions, he was instrumental in helping solve difficult issues. He spent a tremendous amount of time at great sacrifice to himself and his family, and calmly helped to negotiate a reasonable solution that benefitted all parties and Agency as a whole. Although many people were involved in the overall process, Scott’s tireless commitment has earned him this nomination.

Volunteer Battalion Chief John Waltosz Award – Executive Administrative Assistant Debbie Gober-Beneze is willing to place the “good of the Agency” above her personal feelings. She is not afraid to speak her mind, making recommendations or disagreeing with the majority to make the Agency a better place. Few have the dedication, inspiration, and insight she does. She has been a mentor to many and continues to keep us moving forward. Debbie has been with EF&R since October of 2004.

Turnout Time Award – “A” Shift, Station 73 is located in the Issaquah Highlands and serves as the home station for our primary Ladder Company. Lieutenant Justin Walker, Firefighters Jason Lee, Michael Enselman, and Travis Jumper are recognized for posting the best individual company turnout time in 2009. The turnout time is the time measurement between the moment the alarm bells ring until the emergency response unit is moving toward the emergency. The award represents a great deal of effort on the part of the crew, and an improved level of service for our citizens.

Each of the recipients is truly deserving of these awards, demonstrating their commitment to the Agency and to the community they serve. (photos included)



FF Jona Gummere



FF Jenny Oltmann



FF Scott Percival



Station 73 Crew Receives Award for Turnout Times