

# THE MONITOR

## News from West Pierce Fire & Rescue

*Proudly serving the communities of Lakewood, University Place and Steilacoom*







## Letter from the Chief

September 11, 2001 was a beautiful Tuesday morning in New York City. All of that changed at 8:46 a.m., when American Airlines Flight 11 was hijacked and flown into the north tower of the World Trade Center. By the end of the day, four airplanes were crashed, the twin towers were destroyed and the Pentagon was in flames.

As a result, nearly 3,000 lives were lost, including 343 New York City firefighters, 23 New York City police officers, 37 Port Authority police officers, 55 military personnel at the Pentagon and over 2,500 innocent civilians. It was a day that changed thousands of lives, galvanized a country and turned ordinary citizens into heroes.

Immediately following the attacks, first responders, military personnel and civilian volunteers responded to the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and the crash site in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Each one of them placed their life on the line so they might save others.

It was a tragic day in our nation's history to say the least. From the moment American Airlines Flight 11 was flown into the north tower of the World Trade Center, our country was changed forever. Over the passing days, weeks and months our country was strengthened and unified by a single vision to never forget the events of that day. That commitment has not weakened over time.

After 20 years, the events of September 11 are slowly becoming just another point of historical reference, but for the family and friends of the nearly 3,000 victims in those terrorist attacks, the events of that day are not just a footnote in history; they are as poignant today as they were on that tragic day.

The effects of the 9/11 attacks are not behind us. Thousands continue to mourn the loss of their loved ones, children have become adults without ever knowing their parents and thousands of people continue to suffer from illnesses related to their exposure to debris from the World Trade Center towers.

So when we speak about remembering the events of that day, it is also important to remember the people. Not just those we lost, but those who still suffer and those who have given so much to help us recover.

You will notice this edition of The Monitor is dedicated to the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. Throughout the publication, you will find first-hand accounts of how we as an organization brought back a piece of history to our community.

Our 9/11 Reflection Park is not only a beautiful way to remember those lost, but to honor their memory and sacrifice. Thank you for taking the time to read this very special edition, as it shares much of what is very important to us as a fire service organization.

Jim Sharp  
Fire Chief



# Building the 9/11 Reflection Park at West Pierce Fire & Rescue

West Pierce Fire & Rescue has a piece of steel from the World Trade Center proudly displayed in the center of the 9/11 Reflection Park, located in front of Station 31 in University Place. This artifact symbolizes and honors those lost on September 11, 2001 and has been a part of the community since 2012.

The Port Authority distributed more than 2,600 pieces of steel and other items to communities in all 50 states and 10 foreign nations between 2010-2016. These items help preserve the memory, heroism and sacrifice of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

When the opportunity to acquire the steel presented itself in 2011, WPFR jumped at the chance to be a recipient. By September 11th of following year, the steel had been brought back to its new home by WPFR firefighters and the 9/11 Reflection Park was not only a vision, but a reality.

Five WPFR firefighters drove to New York to pick up the steel and created a journey of memories along the way. They brought it to WPFR's headquarters station in University Place, where it needed a way to be displayed and enjoyed by the community.

Upon their return, the 9/11 Reflection Park committee began and was comprised of WPFR employees, local business owners and community members. This community park moved forward with the intent of breaking ground on July 4 and dedicated on September 11, 2012. With a lot of selfless hard work, volunteers and community support, the project moved at lightning speed and was completed on time, in just a few short months.

When walking through the 9/11 Reflection Park, many items are eye catching because of their uniqueness and beauty. However, nearly every piece of the park has symbolism embedded into it to showcase the profound meaning of that tragic day. (See page 6 for some of the details that can be seen within the park.)

The 9/11 Reflection Park was funded purely by donations. From cash donations to buying personalized brick pavers, challenge coins and t-shirts, to in-kind donations made from local businesses and community members, this project was one shared by the entire community. Without their unwavering support, this park would not be the symbolic piece of history it is today.

Volunteers spent countless hours designing and building the park, while local elementary students visited to draw messages of thanks and hope in sidewalk chalk just prior to the dedication ceremony. The vision of the 9/11 Reflection Park is much more than a fire service commemoration, but one the entire community worked together to make a reality.





A photograph of a red fire truck with the number 598C on its side. Several children are standing in front of the truck, and a police officer in a blue uniform is talking to them. The scene is outdoors on a sunny day with a blue sky and some clouds.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### 9/11 REMEMBRANCE CEREMONIES

Please join us in honoring those lost during the 9/11 attacks. Two ceremonies will be held in our communities to honor the memory of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice.

*When: September 10 at 12:30 p.m.*

*Where: Lakewood City Hall; 6000 Main Street, Lakewood*

*When: September 11 at 9 a.m.*

*Where: 9/11 Reflection Park at Station 31; 3631 Drexler Dr W, University Place*

### FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

This year's Fire Prevention Week theme is "**Learn the Sounds of Fire Safety**," which educates the community about the sounds smoke and carbon monoxide alarms make, which can save your life.

*When: October 3-9*

### TRUCK & TRACTOR DAY

Join us at the City of Lakewood's Truck & Tractor Day for free hayrides, hard hats, and pumpkins (while supplies last). Children can climb on dozens of giant trucks (including our fire engine!) and tractors, sit in the driver's seat and honk the horn. Make this favorite fall festival a family tradition!

*When: October 9 from 12 - 3 p.m.*

*Where: Fort Steilacoom Park, Lakewood*

### FALL SAFETY DAY

Join us for Fall Safety Day where there will be activities for families, great safety information and of course, free pumpkins for each child!

*When: October 23 from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.*

*Where: Station 21; 5000 Steilacoom Blvd SW, Lakewood*

### SANTA AT THE STATION

Santa is coming to town! Details will be posted at [www.westpierce.org/santa](http://www.westpierce.org/santa) as they become available.

*When: December 1 from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.*

*Where: Station 21; 5000 Steilacoom Blvd SW, Lakewood*

*When: December 8 from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.*

*Where: Station 31; 3631 Drexler Drive W, University Place*

### CERT CLASSES - 2022 schedule coming soon!

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) classes teach residents how to help themselves in the first few hours or days following a disaster, before emergency responders are able to reach them to render professional help. Visit our website for more information and the 2022 schedule as it becomes available.



## GUIDE TO SERVICES

### PRESCHOOL & DAYCARE EDUCATION



Two fire safety curriculum are available for preschools and daycares to use in the classroom at no cost.

Teachers conduct several lessons of the curriculum and WPFR personnel come in to teach the final lesson so small children learn firefighters are their friends.

### CUSTOM-FIT HELMETS & LIFE JACKETS



Fittings are scheduled by appointment and the wearer must be present in order to purchase. Please call to schedule an appointment.

Bicycle helmets are available for \$7, multi-sport helmets for \$10 and life jackets for \$14; cash only, please.

### CAR SEAT INSTALLATIONS & CHECKS



Did you know that 80% of children are improperly restrained in vehicles?

Residents within West Pierce may call to schedule an appointment with a certified Child Passenger Safety Technician to have their car seat installed or checked for proper installation.

### VIRTUAL CLASSROOM



Looking for a fun, interactive way to learn more about safety?

Geared towards students in Kindergarten through 5th grade, WPFR's virtual classroom is filled with fun educational safety lessons. Visit our website to take a look around!

## CONNECT WITH US



**FACEBOOK**  
**/westpierce**

Follow us on Facebook to see what's happening in our community. Facebook is where we share safety tips, showcase community partnerships, advertise for events and classes, and much more.



**TWITTER**  
**@westpierce**

Follow us on Twitter for real time updates during large incidents. Twitter is our direct link to the local media, so it can be delivered to your feed instantly.



**INSTAGRAM**  
**@westpiercefir**

Follow us on Instagram to see all things West Pierce. From incidents to safety tips to behind the scenes, our Instagram feed and stories have a little bit of everything.

**3631 DREXLER DRIVE W**  
**UNIVERSITY PLACE, WA 98466**

**253.564.1623**  
**www.westpierce.org**





# SYMBOLISM WITHIN WEST PIERCE FIRE & RESCUE'S 9/11 REFLECTION PARK

nearly  
**3,000**

lives lost in the 9/11  
attacks, which are  
listed on the Flag of  
Honor.

**403**

grooves in the  
"Weeping Wall"  
water feature,  
representing the  
fallen firefighters,  
paramedics and  
police officers.

**343**

names of fallen  
firefighters, which  
are listed on the  
backs of the  
benches surrounding  
the steel.

**60**

names of fallen  
police officers, which  
are listed under a  
trellis made of retired  
fire service ladders.

**5**

slats etched  
in the ground  
surrounding the steel,  
representing the  
Pentagon.

**3**

crests displayed  
in the pedestal of  
the flag pavilion,  
recognizing the  
agencies most  
directly affected:  
FDNY, NYPD, and  
Port Authority of New  
York and New Jersey.

**2**

concrete "towers"  
sit below the steel,  
representing the twin  
towers, creating the  
centerpiece of the  
park.





## Firefighters Travel to New York to Bring History to West Pierce Community

Upon acquiring a piece of steel from the World Trade Center, five West Pierce Fire & Rescue firefighters took it upon themselves to bring this piece of history back to the community, where it would be proudly displayed in the center of the 9/11 Reflection Park.

In September 2011, Firefighters Greg Reimann, Tyler Newton, Ken VonStein, Jason Carr and Chad Walker set out to New York to bring back the steel. Being towed behind the vehicle was a trailer with a sign commemorating this piece of history, so it was proudly displayed all the way across the country.

While in New York, they met with other WPFR firefighters who traveled to attend memorial services and remembrance events in honor of the anniversary of the attacks. The group also visited fire stations and memorial sites in the area, paying their respects to those lost and honoring their memory.

When the attacks on 9/11 are mentioned, “heroism” is a term often used. The actions of first responders and the military come to mind, but it was not limited to them. Heroes were seen everywhere that day; cab drivers, business owners, bus drivers, teachers, doctors, nurses, airline pilots, and passengers.

These were average people with no expectation they would become someone’s hero by the end of the day.

As we remember and reflect on the events of 9/11, it is important to acknowledge all of the heroic acts that took place across the country. The first responders in New York City saved thousands of lives that day, but it was average citizens who saved the nation.

Displaying a piece of the twin towers in the West Pierce community is a reminder of not only those lost that day, but the heroism of so many. WPFR is thankful to the firefighters who traveled to New York, attended memorial services and events, and ultimately represented the entire department from the opposite coast.

The piece of history now on display in the 9/11 Reflection Park was not acquired without the hard work of selfless people. WPFR is proud to have so many employees and community members step in to make this piece of steel what it is – a symbol of heroism.



# Working Smoke Alarms **SAVE LIVES**

WEST PIERCE FIRE & RESCUE  
3631 Drexler Drive West  
University Place, WA 98466

PRSR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
SEATTLE, WA  
PERMIT NO. 1  
ECRWSS

West Pierce Fire & Rescue's free smoke alarm program is available to ***all*** residents in Lakewood and University Place. Appointments take approximately 15 minutes and WPFR personnel will install or replace any alarms your home may need to ensure they are working properly.



***Do you have smoke alarms in and outside every sleeping area?***



***Are your smoke alarms working properly?***



***Have you replaced your smoke alarms within the last ten years?***

If you answered 'no' to any of the questions above, please call 253.983.4583 or [visit our website](#) today to schedule an appointment!

## 9/11 Remembrance **CEREMONIES**

Twenty years ago, America suffered the tragic terrorist attacks of 9/11. Each year, West Pierce Fire & Rescue is dedicated to honoring those lost on that day.

This year, two ceremonies will be held within the community to honor the memory of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice. Please join us.

**September 10 at 12:30 p.m.**

Lakewood City Hall  
6000 Main Street, Lakewood

**September 11 at 9:00 a.m.**

9/11 Reflection Park at Station 31  
3631 Drexler Dr W, University Place

## Thank you, Retirees!

Since our last publication, seven members of West Pierce Fire & Rescue with 176 years of combined service and valuable experience have moved on to their next chapter - *retirement*.

While it is difficult to see anyone leave the organization, WPFR strongly endorses succession. We encourage good leaders to share their knowledge and strive to develop others into future leaders. We know that each and every one was a leader, either by rank or experience in their craft, and the seeds of excellence were sown.

Congratulations and thank you, West Pierce employees, on a job well done!



**Greg Langlow**  
Firefighter/Engineer  
1989 - 2021



**Murray MacDonald**  
Firefighter/Paramedic  
1991 - 2021



**Bill Barber**  
Battalion Chief  
1992 - 2021



**Karl Hospenthal**  
Captain  
1993 - 2021



**Troy Gardner**  
Captain  
1995 - 2021



**Larry Huffman**  
Chaplain  
2005 - 2021



**Dianne Huffman**  
Chaplain  
2005 - 2021