



# Camas-Washougal Fire Department Newsletter

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***Our Mission:***  
***To provide the highest quality service to our community through the protection and preservation of life and property***



## Camas EMS Levy Passing

As of the latest election tally by the Clark County Elections Office, the Camas EMS Levy appears to be passing with a 54.5% approval rate. Recent changes by the state legislature requires only a simple majority for EMS levies. The Camas-Washougal Fire Department and the City of Camas greatly appreciate the support of the voters! This levy renewal increased the rate to 46 cents/thousand of assessed valuation. The owner of a \$300,000 home would see a \$33 annual increase. If the levy had simply kept up with the cost of inflation since its inception in 1979, it would need to be over 70 cents/thousand today. The fact that the levy has managed to stay far below this (and still below other agencies in Clark County) is a testament to the value our citizens get for what has been recognized as one of the top performing ambulance services in the United States and Canada. If the levy had failed, the ambulance service as we currently know it would likely have ceased operation by the first of the year, with no suitable alternate providers available to continue responding to our citizen's needs. Thank you again to the voters for continuing to support our service for the past 34 years!

## New SAFER Hires

During the month of July, the Camas-Washougal Fire Department conducted a lengthy and exhaustive process to recruit three new personnel to hire under the federal SAFER grant the department received. Over 200 applications were submitted. Written, physical agility testing, and oral interviews were administered by Camas-Washougal paid and volunteer staff. Four of the top scoring personnel were interviewed by the fire chief. Conditional offers of employment have been made to three of the finalists. Eric Bridges is a paramedic and division chief with North Country EMS in Yacolt. Katie Linton is an EMT who has most recently worked as a veterinarian and volunteer firefighter in Oregon. Matt Baldwin is a volunteer firefighter and EMT with the Camas-Washougal Fire Department and has most recently worked for the Camas School District. We are very excited at the prospect of having these personnel join the department! It is hoped that all three will be officially on the job by the end of August.

## Regional Fire Authority

The Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee recently held their third official meeting on August 2 at the Camas Council Chambers. Most of this meeting was spent in discussion with representatives of the Riverside Fire Authority in Centralia. Riverside officials made the drive to Camas to discuss the success of their RFA and to answer questions and offer advice. Of interest to everyone in attendance was the fact that the Riverside RFA was comprised of two departments of almost identical makeup to Camas and Washougal. Centralia was an all paid department while Lewis County 12 had a very small paid staff and a large volunteer organization. The next RFA meeting is scheduled for September 25 at 5:30 pm. The location will be announced soon.



*L-R: Camas-Washougal and ECFR personnel conduct rescue training, Firefighter Michael Coyle drives the antique fire truck in the Camas Days parade, Fire Chief Nick Swinhart and Police Chief Mitch Lackey before the Camas Days kid's parade*