



# **THE VOLUNTEER**

The Volunteer Firefighters'  
Association of BC

Issue 3  
November 2025

# LOGAN LAKE SPRING SEMINAR

HANDS-ON FIREFIGHTER  
TRAINING WEEKEND

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Logan Lake, BC

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  - Vehicle Fires
  - Auto Extrication
  - Forcible Entry
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# THE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS FOUNDATION FUND

This Foundation Fund was established to help Firefighters or their families when the need arises. It has been used in the past in the case of death in the family, severe illness, a need to travel for health care and so on. The fund is maintained through a portion of the Association membership fee.

Claims are made through your local Fire Chief who can contact

**PRESIDENT:** Dustin Curry  
[president@vfabc.ca](mailto:president@vfabc.ca)

and/or

**EXECUTIVEDIRECTOR:** Bob Graham  
[executivedirector@vfabc.ca](mailto:executivedirector@vfabc.ca)

## Applications are being accepted for a vacant Director position In the Lower Mainland

Should be an active member of a fire department in good standing with the Association. Interested in promoting the volunteer fire service. Willing to be involved to improve, support and maintain the Association. Also be willing to sit on committees that may be struck by the Association, Provincial Government or any other agency that would involve the Association. Attend Association meetings, communicate with members of the Association and member fire departments. Promote the association to volunteer fire departments throughout the region. If interested please contact our President Dustin Curry: [president@vfabc.ca](mailto:president@vfabc.ca)



### VFABC Spring Seminar - Logan Lake 2026

**November 12 at 4:52 PM** ·

We are grateful to YRB Nicola for the donation of a seacan for use at Spring Seminar! Thank you for your support!

170 days until the Logan Lake Spring Seminar begins!



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*-Ed Bartley*



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## HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

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And

To the Volunteer Firefighters Association of BC

### THE FOUNDING EXECUTIVE

President: Wes Gillis – Sullivan

Vice President: Pat Clackson- North Cowichan

Secretary/Treasurer: James Urquart – Cloverdale

Director: Don Grant – Sullivan

Director: Merle Hiltz – Sullivan

Director: Allan Clegg – Cloverdale

### AWARDED BY THE EXECUTIVE

Ed McIntyre – Pritchard

Doug Wade – Director, Langley

Garry Ruston – Director, Blackpool

Bill Ridley – Sec./Treas., Spences Bridge

Rick Starke - Director, Duncan

Terry Murphy – President, Cariboo

Don Gillespie – Director, Revelstoke

Pat Shirley – Member, Salmon Arm

Jim Nelson – President, Warfield

Mac Gregory – Executive Director, Castlegar

Bob Haddow – President, OK Falls




**Petition asking the Federal Government to Establish a National Fire Administration**  
**Sign now to help make it happen!**  
**Pétition demandant au gouvernement fédéral de créer une Administration nationale des incendies**  
**Veuillez signer dès maintenant afin que cela puisse se réaliser, s'il vous plaît!**




**20th and Church - Golden Hydrant**

*Photo: Chris Carlsson*

**The Fire Hydrant that Saved San Francisco**

20th and Church Streets. A great place to visit, if only because it's right across the street from the stunningly scenic southwest corner of Dolores Park. After you pay your respects to the golden hydrant, why not stretch out on the grass and unleash a geyser of champagne in its honor?

The golden **fire hydrant** at 20th and Church Streets isn't really gold-- it's only painted gold. Why a golden fire hydrant, wonder passersby and their dogs. Is it used by kinky Castro residents who break it open to let loose a thunderous "golden shower" on hot days? Wrong. Every year, earthquake survivor Les Bulloch puts a coat of gold paint on the hydrant -- the only one that still functioned after the 1906 quake. This very special hydrant was responsible for saving the houses between 20th and 22nd Streets from the Great Fire.

*--Dr. Weirde*

Put a **FREEZE** on Winter Holiday Fires

**Did you know?**



A heat source too close to the Christmas tree causes **1 in every 4** winter fires.

**As you deck the halls this season, be fire smart.**



Read manufacturer's instructions for the number of light strands to connect.



Make sure your tree is **at least 3 feet away** from heat sources like fireplaces, radiators and space heaters.





In November, Roberts Creek Fire welcomed Chad Guenter of Project All In to discuss a novel means of starting the conversation when an individual needs support.

Chad, who served 10 years as a member of Canmore Fire Department and 5 years as an industrial and wildland firefighter founded Project All In.

The intent is to start conversations about mental wellness between first responders.

Project All In Foundation and “the coin” was created to help the first responder community start conversations about their mental wellness, help debrief calls and ultimately to aid in suicide prevention.

One of the biggest hurdles in getting help is finding the best way to ask for it.

We decided to create the All In Coin as a tactical tool to help make “the ask” easier and act as a reminder that you’re not alone on the pathway to help.

From the Project All In website:

How it works.

Members who have the All In coin can simply slide it forward towards another member and the conversation is initiated. The recipient of the coin slide can be an active listener or start the conversation if need be. The coin can also be presented to a friend or family member.

The current PAI SOG reads:

1. Members of the participating agency will be given the All Inn Coin. Can be used at any time you feel it’s necessary.
2. It will be taken seriously and is NOT to be used for beer currency ( quite often agencies do this - a fun way to use the coin but drinking can be a vice for some!)
3. It represents understanding and non-judgement.
4. It’s to be used whenever we feel a struggle to open a conversation about seeking help. Regardless if the help needs stem from work or a personal matter.
5. To be slid across a table towards a member, recognition of full attention is understood between both parties.
6. What can I do? As the recipient, you are encouraged to start the conversation you can ask ie:
  - On a scale of 1-10 where are you at?... (1 being on the low end - 10 being suicidal)
  - What conditions have you been facing?
  - What have your actions been recently?
  - Do you need to go see a Dr? Would it help if I come with you?
  - Do you just need me to listen?
  - Do you feel suicidal? Have you thought about it? Do you have a plan? Do you have the means to carry out the plan?Have you had any thoughts of hurting yourself or others?
7. The coin does not have to be carried at all times. A photo texted will suffice to achieve point #4.
8. Coin carriers should have the local suicide prevention support line, peer support and/or other crisis resource management numbers close at hand, (ie: Text 686868).
9. Integrity & Honour. Full confidentiality must be adhered to between users of the program UNLESS there is serious potential for someone to harm themselves.
10. Or the coin doesn’t have to be presented to anyone - it can also act as a “check in” for yourself. Blue side up “tough day - but I’m good (go to the gym, go for a hike, bike ride, see a friend or write a journal)” Red side up “I need to talk to someone or I need to do what I normally do (that’s healthy) to help support myself during this time.”

The “Coin” can help those who find it difficult to open the conversation.



A follow up event will be held in xwesam-Roberts Creek in January 24th when all other first responders and front line workers will be welcomed.

“Having the coin in your pocket is a reminder that you can seek help, that there is support around you and that you don’t need to suffer alone. After all, we are all in this together.”

-Chad Guenter, Firefighter and All In Coin Founder.



As you know, lithium-ion batteries are prevalent in tech and mobility devices, tools, and household appliances. With the increasing prevalence of these batteries, related fires are becoming more common, and we know they pose unique safety risks and suppression challenges.

To support fire services and community education efforts, the Office of the Fire Commissioner is excited to share a new [lithium-ion battery safety social media toolkit](#), now available on our website.

This toolkit includes ready-to-use graphics, safety messaging and additional educational resources.

While designed to for fire services, the toolkit is a valuable resource for anyone interested in promoting fire safety. We encourage you to share it, and any of our [fire safety toolkits](#), within your networks and use them to support your own fire prevention education initiatives.

Thank you,

**Jenna Saffin MScComm, BA&Sc (she/her)** | Fire Services Training Specialist

Office of the Fire Commissioner | Public Safety & Solicitor General |

- Lithium-ion batteries are used to power many household devices, including phones, laptops, other electronics, tools, smoke alarms, children’s toys, e-cigarettes and micromobility devices like scooters and e-bikes. They store large amounts of energy in a small space and can overheat, catch fire or explode if overcharged, damaged or used improperly.
- When purchasing devices, look for those that are listed by a qualified testing laboratory. Purchase replacement batteries from the manufacturer or original product retailer.
- Charge devices using the cord they came with, and if you need to replace a charger look for one with a Canadian certification mark.
- Keep lithium-ion batteries at room temperature and don’t use them in damp or humid conditions. Do not keep batteries in direct sunlight or hot vehicles.
- Avoid bending, crushing or dropping lithium-ion battery devices to help reduce fire risk.
- If you notice any problems or changes in a lithium-ion battery, move it outside and away from anything that can catch fire (if safe to do so). Call the battery manufacturer or your local fire department’s non-emergency number.
- Always dispose of lithium-ion batteries safely – recycling them is the best option. Never put lithium-ion batteries in the garbage.



## Benefits for Firefighters Protect Your Volunteers & Staff

Supporting your recruitment drive  
with solutions that fit your budget



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- You can add **Visioncare** for glasses, contacts and laser and eye exams are already included
- **Dental** coverage includes Basic for routine and preventative services; you chose the copay, and limits and whether to add Major Restorative coverage for crowns and bridges

### For your Career members:

- You can have more enhanced coverage if desired to include member and family, higher copay and limits, and include Life and AD&D protection

### For Both:

- Consider adding a flexible **Health Spending Account** offering an annual allocation of funds for the member and family to spend on a wide-array of health and dental expenses

*\* Attract and retain productive members \* enhance satisfaction \* boost wellness \* appeal to differing demographics \* protect your full-time staff \* reward loyalty by increasing coverage \* save time with easy administration \* count on responsive service from your local benefits team...*

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# Fire moves... so should your hydrant

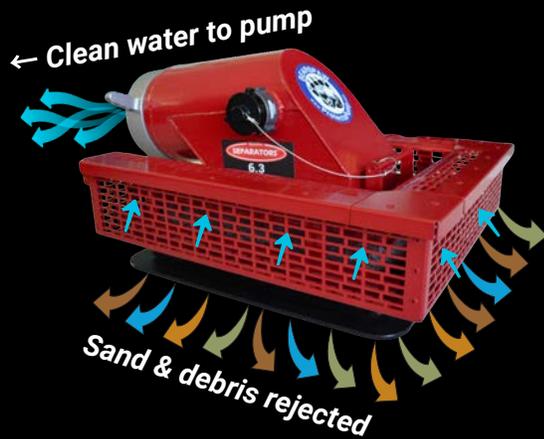


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**Within Minutes your firefighter has instant access to  
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When the alarm sounds, your firefighters jump into action uncertain what awaits each and every one of them. Most of the time, it is a quick solution to an easy problem. However, what happens when the complexity of the call becomes a hindrance to your firefighter's psychological wellbeing and now he/she needs immediate help? The answer is the VFIS of Canada Member & Family Assistance Program (MFAP) through Homewood Health. Your firefighter can access immediate support, without hesitation, in order to resolve the potential issue with help of Homewood's experienced, professional counsellors.

**GIVING YOUR FIREFIGHTERS THE PEACE OF MIND KNOWING THAT YOU CARE.**

**This is your newsletter**

Items of interest, training or social activities, photos, events of interest, buy or sell equipment or items to be repurposed.



**Sean Wood ·  
· August 3 ·**

When Wildfire V71145 broke out on Vancouver Island, the wildfire pros stepped up — and so did our local volunteer firefighters and SAR teams, risking everything to protect homes, forests, and lives. These are the same volunteers who leave their jobs, their families, and their beds — year-round, without hesitation — to answer the call.

The federal government recently doubled the Volunteer Firefighter and Search & Rescue Tax Credit from \$3,000 to \$6,000.

👉 We're asking the Province of British Columbia to at least match that increase.

Because bravery deserves more than applause — it deserves action. We know BC truly values rural resilience and community protection, and this is a clear and overdue step.

📣 Tag your MLA. Share this post. Let's get it done.

**#SupportBCVolunteers**

**David Eby Brenda Bailey Josie Osborne Stephanie Higginson, MLA for Ladysmith-Oceanside Kelly Greene**

**BC New Democrat Caucus BC NDP Conservative Party of BC BC Green Party**

**CHEK News PQB News Global BC CBC Victoria CBC Vancouver**

(photo: BC Wildfire Service)



From the Okanagan region

Keremeos Fire Chief Jordy Bosshca retired in Aug. after 37 years of service, 27 of those as Chief. Okanagan Falls Fire Chief Fred Dobransky retired in Oct.



Both departments will see Tony Ianella, RDOS Protective services coordinator step in as Sub Regional Fire Chief.

A photo of the nearly completed Princeton Volunteer Fire Departments nearly completed fire hall. Grand opening announcements to follow.





<b>2025 Fire Department Members</b>		
108 Mile VFD 150 Mile VFD Barlow VFD Blackpool VFD Bouchie Lake VFD Bowen Island VFD Braylorne FPF Buckhorn FD Burton VFD Canyon Lister VFD Chase FR Cowichan Bay FR Dashwood FD Deep Bay FPD Deka Lake VFD District of Taylor VFD East Sooke VFD Edgewood FD Elkford VFD Errington VFD Fauquier VFD Ferndale Tabor VFD Forest Grove VFD Gibsons and District VFD Gilles Bay VFD Halfmoon Bay VFD Hornby Island VFA Horsefly VFD Houston VFD Interlakes VFD	Keromeos and District VFD Kersly VFD, Kimberly VFD Kootenay Boundary FR Lac La Hache VFD Ladysmith FD Lake Country VFA Lake Cowichan VFD Little Fort VFD Logan Lake VFA Lone Butte VFD Loon Lake VFD McBride FD McLure VFD Miocene VFD Nakusp and District VFD Nanoose Bay VFD Okanagan Falls VFD Oliver VFA Ootischenia FD Otter Point VFD Oyster River FR Panorama VFD Passmore VFD Pavilion VFD Pender Harbour VFD Pender Island FD Pritchard VFD Radium Hot Springs VFD Red Rock Stoner VFD	Roberts Creek VFD Robson VFD Salmon Arm VFD Salmon Valley VFD Savona VFD Sechelt FD Shawnigan Lake VFD Ships Point VFD Sherley VFD Sidney FD South Green Lake VFD Tarrys FR, Ten Mile VFD Tobian VFD Toms Lake and District VFD Ucluelet VFD Union Bay VFA Valemont VFD Van Anda VFD Vanderhoof VR Vavenby VFD West Fraser VFD Willowbrook VFD Whistler VFD White Lake VFD Wildwood VFD Willowbrook VFD
<i>Associate Members</i>		
Dynamic Rescue Systems Inc. Provident-Michael Crowe WFR Wholesale Fire & Rescue Ltd.	Irwin Air ResQtech Systems Inc.	KGC Fire Rescue Inc. Rocky Mountain Phoenix
<i>Individual Members</i>		
Bob Claus Mac Gregory	Bob Dubbert (Firefighters Without Borders) Jake Jacobson (Wildwood Resources)	Scott Porritt



Okanagan Falls Volunteer Fire Department · Follow  
**October 7, 2021** ·  
 It is with sadness the Okanagan Falls Fire Department announces the Line of Duty Death passing of Firefighter Captain Robert Somerville, as a result of a work-related illness. Our sincerest condolences go out to his family and friends. Captain Somerville was an active member of the department serving his community for more than 26 years.

Okanagan Falls Volunteer Fire Department  
**October 15** ·  
 It is with heartfelt sadness that we share the passing of Peter Maliepaard, beloved community member of Okanagan Falls, who left this world peacefully on October 12, 2025, one day after celebrating his 71st birthday surrounded by family and friends.





July 23, 2025

# Office of the Fire Commissioner Bulletin

## Update on Fire Inspector and Investigator Training Requirements

The Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC) continues to advance the development of the fire inspector and fire investigator training courses to ensure they deliver high-quality curricula that effectively meet the established learning objectives.

The updated timeline for these courses and the requirement to meet the Fire Safety Act Fire Inspector Training Standard and the Fire Safety Act Fire Investigator Training Standard is:

- **Training curricula release:** December 15, 2025
- **Training standards compliance deadline:** September 30, 2026

Local authorities will have until September 30, 2026, to ensure that all currently designated fire inspectors and investigators — as well as those who will be designated in the future — meet the required training standards. This timeline provides sufficient time for training delivery and compliance across all jurisdictions.

Once the fire inspector and fire investigator courses are released on December 15, 2025, individuals will have more than nine months to complete them to ensure that they meet the training standards. These self-paced online courses are designed to take approximately eight hours each to complete and will be available at no cost.

As a reminder, the Fire Safety Act came into force August 1, 2024, with a one-year transition period ending July 31, 2025, for designated fire inspectors and investigators to meet the new training standards. Fire inspectors and investigators can continue to be designated while the training is being developed, and individuals can confirm they meet the training standards through the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR).

The following resources are available and can be accessed here: [Fire Safety Act reference documents - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#) :

- Fire Safety Act Inspector Standard
- Fire Safety Act Investigator Standard
- PLARs for both standards
- Fire Safety Act Questions & Answers

In the interim, the OFC remains available to assist all local authorities with fire inspections and investigations. For information on technical support, visit: [Request technical assistance or fire investigation support - Province of British Columbia](#)

Regional districts may continue to request fire inspection and investigation support from the OFC by following the procedures outlined in the [Regional Districts Fire Investigations and Inspections – Procedures](#) document. This process remains unchanged.

For any questions or assistance, please contact your Fire Service Advisor, or email [OFC@gov.bc.ca](mailto:OFC@gov.bc.ca).



East Wellington VFD annual Guy Fawkes bonfire which they did on November 1st. No exact count of pallets but it was at 1200. The bonfire and fireworks display were appreciated by the community and we'll attended as the weather was perfect that night. There was hot chocolate and hot dogs by donation with proceeds going to next year's fireworks. This event is held right behind the firehall so as you can imagine, parking is limited. A big thank you to Janie's Got A Bus for providing shuttle service to and from the parking at a nearby elementary school.

Cheers,

Geoff Gowans  
North Island Director



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## Office of the Fire Commissioner Headquarters



### Get in touch if you need assistance with:

- Fire prevention information and public education
- Training standards
- Fire codes
- Fire incident reporting
- Awards and recognition

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## Oak Bay News

### Colwood firefighter hangs up helmet after 35 years, but keeps Santa suit on Published 5:20 am Tuesday, November 18, 2025 By Ben Fenlon

September 1990, he donned a helmet for the first time and never looked back. Along with the lifelong friendships he has made, he plans to continue in his role as director of the Colwood Firefighters Museum and stay active at community events, including the annual Colwood Christmas Light Up, where he has played a key role since 1990. Singled out early on for his “funny English accent,” Hamblin has spent more than three decades swapping his firefighter’s helmet for a red felt cap with a white fur trim, delighting generations of Colwood kids as Santa Claus. A tradition that stretches so far back, he even remembers bouncing some of the current Colwood firefighters on his knee when they were “babes in arms.” “Oh, the reindeer won’t let me quit,” he says with a smile.



Tim Hamblin with his retirement helmet, given to him after 35 years as a volunteer firefighter with Colwood Fire. (Ben Fenlon/Goldstream Gazette)



<b>Volunteer Firefighters Association of BC</b>	
<b>Directors</b>	
<p><b>President</b> Dustin Curry president@vfabc.ca</p> <p><b>North Vancouver Island</b> Geoff Gowans north.island@vfabc.ca</p> <p><b>South Vancouver Island (Vice-President)</b> Mike Dunn south.island@vfabc.ca</p> <p><b>Coast Corridor</b> Pat Higgins coast.corridor@vfabc.ca</p> <p><b>Lower Mainland</b> Vacant lower.mainland@vfabc.ca</p> <p><b>Okanagan-Similkameen</b> Ash Regner okanagan.similkameen@vfabc.ca</p> <p><b>Thomson.Okanagan</b> Jeff Camara Thompson.okanagan@vfabc.com</p>	<p><b>Executive Director</b> Bob Graham executivedirector@vfabc.ca</p> <p><b>West Kootenay</b> Rebecca Brohman west.kootenay@vfabc.ca</p> <p><b>East Kootenay</b> Lydon Simmons east.kootenay@vfabc.ca</p> <p><b>Cariboo</b> Jon Grieve cariboo@vfabc.ca</p> <p><b>Northwest</b> Justin Lamarcche northwest@vfabc.ca</p> <p><b>Northeast</b> Dustin Curry northeast@vfabc.ca</p>

### THE VOLUNTEER

“THE VOLUNTEER” is the official newsletter of the Volunteer firefighters’ Association of British Columbia. The Volunteer is published three times a year. February, June and October. Editorial Deadlines are: February 15, June 15 and October 15. The newsletter is distributed throughout the province of BC. Copies are distributed to manufacturers across Canada. About 600 newsletters are distributed for each issue. Non-members may be sent a copy of the newsletter for information purposes.

#### Advertisements

The advertisement rates for non-members are:

\$100.00 per page	\$50.00 per half page
\$25.00 per quarter page	\$10.00 per business card size

We also have a shared mailing program under which inserts are included with the newsletter at a cost of \$100.00 per page or \$175.00 for 2 or 3 pages. For heavy pamphlet types of inserts rates are negotiable. Advertisements for Member Halls are free. Advertisements for non-members is double those shown above. The Volunteer is printed in black and white on 8 x 11 pages. Please allow for margins of 1.2 cm. It is best to send camera ready material or an e-mail attachment. The Volunteer welcomes submissions. Letters to the Editor or articles of interest to the fire service in general. These may be e-mailed to [lloyd\\_delves@telus.net](mailto:lloyd_delves@telus.net) and/or mail/courier if needed to:

Lloyd Delves, 73-27111 0 Ave, Aldergrove, BC, V4W 2T2

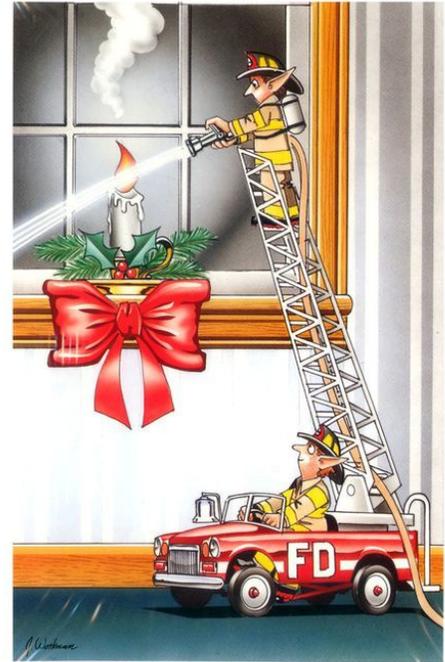
Opinions expressed in the newsletter are not necessarily those of the Volunteer Firefighters’ Association of BC.



**THANK YOU, CURT AND STAFF. BUT, ESPECIALLY THE VOLUNTEERS FOR MAKING THIS A HOME AWAY FROM HOME**



[www.honourhouse.ca](http://www.honourhouse.ca)  
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THE NEUROMUSCULAR COMMUNITY IN CANADA NEEDS YOU

# Help #FillTheBoot



For more than 70 years, Fire Fighters across Canada have partnered with Muscular Dystrophy Canada, ensuring Canadians impacted by neuromuscular disorders receive the support they need.

In 2025, your partnership matters more than ever. Together, we can ensure life-changing treatments, essential services, mobility supports, and groundbreaking neuromuscular research continue to bring hope and progress to thousands of individuals and families across Canada.

This year, we are proud to share Muscular Dystrophy Canada's new website [muscle.ca](https://muscle.ca), which includes a dedicated Fire Fighter partner section designed to honour and support our most valued partners. Visit the Fire Fighter page for tools, resources, impact stories, and everything you need to make your #FillTheBoot efforts even more successful.

**Keep the tradition of helping to Fill The Boot alive!**

Emma Wagner, Community Fundraising Officer  
Tel. 604-360-6237 | 1-800-567-2873 | [Emma.wagner@muscle.ca](mailto:Emma.wagner@muscle.ca)

