

Fire Marshal looks back at career

Soon-to-be-ex can be a positive phrase. From Fire Marshal **Rich Drago**'s point of view, it's definitely positive. Drago retires this month after more than 40 years with Pullman Fire Department and recounts here some of the experiences of his early days of service, the old fire house, and memorable fire events.

"I walked into Station Two on October 1, 1973, and met everyone on B Shift, the captain and two firefighters. It was my very first day of work and I was assigned to clean the bathroom. I'm proud to say the department has come a long ways since that day. "B" shift consisted of one-third of the total paid fire personnel: the chief, three captains and six firefighters. Before I got the job in Pullman I tested for the Sacramento Fire Department, which had one opening and a couple hundred people applying. I tested for the position at Pullman City Hall with nine other people, three testing for the FD and six testing for the PD. The same test was administered to us all. I tied for top spot with a home town person who declined the position and later became chief of the WSU Fire Department.

"I began my career at Station Two, manned by paid personnel. The 30 or so volunteers worked out of the downtown station, where the library now stands. The downtown station was an addition to the old City Hall located on the northwest corner of Olsen and Kamiaken Streets. It consisted of four apparatus bays, a very small lobby, and two cubbyholes that doubled as offices. The second floor had six or seven bedrooms, a large bathroom/shower area, a kitchen and large gathering room. Eventually paid staff was moved to the downtown station with four reserves and the volunteers moved to Station Two.

"As I said, there were three captains, six firefighters/basic EMTs and we only could do CPR. There were no IVs, no latex gloves, no eye protection, splash protection or anything else that department personnel wear now. We drove a Cadillac hearse with those great big fins, with a small opening between the driver and patient compartment to talk through. When we received the first box-style ambulance, everyone was excited for all the extra room. When we moved all the supplies from the Cadillac to the new ambulance, we still had several empty cabinets left over.



"I learned everything on my first fire engine, a 70s era Mack pumper. It was a great pumper that was fun to shift through the gears and belch out big, black clouds of smoke. Last year during the project to extend the apparatus bays at Station Two, I met a Bovill [Ida] Fire Department firefighter and found out that the Mack is still in use there.

"I was promoted to the fire prevention officer position in 1991. My first night as lead fire investigator was when the Adams Mall was set on fire with a Molotov cocktail. Just a short time later, the old Pullman Hotel burned down. I never found the arsonist for the Adams Mall fire, but determined, with the help of the deputy state fire marshal, that the Pullman Hotel fire was caused by undersized wiring to a lamp. Some other fires I remember and/or investigated include the Corner Drug fire (power cord to a receiver), the pea silo on North Grand (undetermined), Afa Paint/Paradise Diapers fire (suicide/murder arson), a meth lab in a trailer (chemical reaction), and of course, the series of arson fires over

several years that ended with The Grove fire. Catching that arsonist allowed Pullman Fire, Pullman Police and WSU Police to close more than 21 arson cases.

"One of the funniest fire investigations was a vehicle fire. The fire was caught really early in the process and only burned up the seat and melted the dash. The doors were locked and had to be pried open to extinguish the fire. It was a sunny, hot day and not a breeze. During the investigation I noticed a prism hanging from the mirror and that it was focusing the sunlight like a magnifying glass. After several interviews of the owners the only possible explanation I could find for the fire was the prism. The owners had received it from their insurance company and hung it on the mirror just a couple of days before the fire. The most interesting part was that the story was picked up and published by the Reader's Digest®.

"I love to ride motorcycles. About every three years I go to Sturgis and during the in-between years I go to other rallies. I've ridden with employees from city fire, police, transit, building and maintenance departments, and I plan to continue to ride with them and with whoever else wants to throw a leg over and go. In May 2016, I plan to take off with another city employee (perhaps retired also) and head to Key West, Fla. For roughly 7,800 miles of camping, fun, and not having to worry about all those emails at the office!

"I have worked with almost everyone in the city of Pullman and have enjoyed them all from the mayor down. I have worked under six fire chiefs in my 43 years with the Pullman Fire Department. Chief **Pat Wilkins** hired me to work with the department, which consisted of 10 paid fire department personnel. Now I am retiring under Chief **Mike Heston** with a force of more than 30 fire personnel including the assistant chief, training chief, fire marshal, deputy fire marshal, captains, lieutenants, firefighters, paramedics and office personnel. There have been many people through the Pullman Fire Department that have gone on to other departments and jobs. A few of us have stayed here in Pullman because it's a great place to live and raise a family. My wife, **Loretta**, was one of the first two women employed by Pullman Fire Department. So I owe the department a thank you for my wife and a great career."

ACTIVE ADULTS

Valentine's Dinner and Dance

Join your friends at the Pullman Senior Center in city hall for this annual, dressy affair, enjoying a delicious catered meal by Wayback Café and DJ **Jerry Unruh's** sweet dance music. Hillyard Senior Center members will be joining us for an evening packed with loads of fun. See the February Senior Newsletter or call **Steve** at 338-3307 for the dinner menu. Home pickup begins at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 10. Event runs from 5:30-8 p.m. Register by Feb. 5. *Fee: \$18, which includes meal and transportation. No refunds after Feb. 5 as meal is pre-purchased.

Spokane INB Theatre Presents 'The Illusionists'

Having shattered box office records around the world, this live show will captivate you with death-defying stunts and hilarious magic tricks. This unique event features five of the most incredible illusionists on earth today. We will have lunch before the show at Chili's. Home pickup begins at 7:30 a.m. on Sunday, Feb. 14. We leave city hall at 8:30 a.m. and return about 5:30 p.m. Register by Feb. 1. *Fee: \$62, which includes admission, escort and transportation. Meal cost is not included. No refunds—tickets are pre-purchased.

Wii Bowling Challenge at Bishop Place

We will be visiting our friends at Pullman's Bishop Place for another Wii Bowling event from 2-4 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 18. Four Wii games will be set-up for our action-packed bowling event. Refreshments will be served afterwards. Great

fun for all. Spectators are encouraged to attend. Sign up at Senior Center by Feb. 12. Free.

Clearwater Casino

Get out of the house for some fun! Join us for a trip to the Lewiston Clearwater Casino and lunch. We are not responsible for any losses incurred! Home pickup begins at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 23. We leave city hall at 9 a.m. and return about 4 p.m. Register by Feb. 19. *Fee: \$7, which includes escort and transportation. Meal cost is not included.

AARP Tax-Aide

Back again this year, Tax-Aide provides help for seniors to prepare their income tax and get the deductions and credits they deserve. For more information contact **Randy Baukol** at 208-882-5406. Approximate dates for this free service are Feb. 4 - Apr. 14, from 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m. every Thursday at the senior center. Services are on a first-come, first-served basis.

**All registrants who live outside Pullman city limits will be charges an additional \$2.*

NOTE: Many of these trips are listed in the 2016 Winter/Spring Parks & Recreation brochure and may fill up due to pre-registration. Call for info at 338-3307 or 338-3227. The Senior Center will be closed Feb. 15 for the President's Day holiday.

Plan for ice and snow on Pullman streets

There may be more winter weather to come. For your information, the city's plan to mobilize staff and resources to keep winter drivers safe on Pullman streets is posted on the city Web site home page www.pullman-wa.gov under Announcements.

Clearing Sidewalks

For the health and safety of all residents, the city of Pullman requires residents or property owners to remove snow and ice from sidewalks adjacent to their properties. It is unlawful to permit any accumulation of snow or ice on a public sidewalk adjacent to your property. Snow or ice must be removed within eight hours of daylight after such snow or ice has fallen or accumulated on the sidewalk. To report an unsafe pedestrian clearance, call Community Service Representative **Steve Murphy**, at 338-3300 or Parks and Recreation Administrative Assistant **Merlene Greenway**, at 338-3228. Thank you for your cooperation.

Leap into your library

The number 29 plays big this month because this is a leap year. Yes, there's an extra day this month. So, what are your plans with these precious extra hours? If you need inspiration, just head to the library. What would you like to do? Start a new hobby? Learn a new language? Attend a fun program? Meet other folks in the community? Download some great books to listen to or read? Find the perfect DVD? Buy a great book from the Friends' sale? Use the internet or Wi-Fi? You can do all of these and more at Neill Public Library—your library. So, with an extra day this month, we hope to see you even more often! Let us know how we can be of help to you.

Adult Programs

- **English Conversation Club.** Join other adults to practice your English language skills through basic conversation from 5:30—6:30 p.m. on Mondays in the Young meeting room and from 5:30-7 p.m. on Wednesdays in the Hecht meeting room. Monday, Feb. 16 meeting is cancelled. For more information Contact **Louise Davison** (208) 310-0962 or imdavison66@gmail.com
- **Grand Avenue Book Club** meets at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 3 in the Hecht meeting room to discuss *Catherine the Great: Portrait of a Woman* by **Robert Massie**. For more information contact **Rezina** or **Michelle** at 334-3595.
- **Good Yarns** knit and crochet group meets from 1-2:30 p.m. every Friday in the Hecht meeting room. Join fellow fiber enthusiasts to work on your projects, share tips, and get new ideas. All skill levels are welcome. For more information, call 334-3595.
- **Sew Happy** hand and machine sewing club meets 10-11:30 a.m. every Tuesday in the Hecht meeting room. All skill levels are welcome. Some machines are available or bring your own. For more information contact **Linhda** at 332-5340 or linhdasagen@yahoo.com.

Children's Programs

For information contact **Kathleen Ahern** at kathleen@neill-lib.org 338-3258.

- **Mother Goose Time** (newborns-24 months) meets from 9:30-10 a.m. on Wednesdays or Thursdays. Enjoy this language enrichment program that features songs, rhymes, movement activities and great books. Pre-registration is not required. Call 338-3258 for weekly scheduling.
- **Time For Twos Story Time** (2-3 years) from 10:30-11 a.m. on Wednesdays. Enjoy fun books, songs, rhymes, flannel board stories, movement activities and more. Pre-registration is not required.
- **Preschool Story Time** (3-5 years) from 10:30-11 a.m. on Thursdays. Enjoy wonderful books, stories, puppets, songs, rhymes, flannel board stories, movement activities and more. Pre-registration is not required.
- **Lego® Time!** (ages 5 and older) from 3:30-4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 2. Drop in and join your friends for Lego® Time! Imagine, build, create! Thousands of Legos await you. Pre-registration is not required.



Library Hours

Mon • 1-7 p.m.
 Tue • 10 a.m.-7 p.m.
 Wed & Thu • 9 a.m.-6 p.m.
 Fri & Sat • 1-5 p.m.
 Neill Public Library
 210 N. Grand Ave
www.neill-lib.org
 334-3595

Warning: Deer Crossing

With low visibility during early morning and evening commute hours, the potential for vehicle/deer collisions is still high. Pullman public works studied reported accidents along Davis Way and found that the overwhelming majority occurred within a 1-mile stretch of Davis Way, west from Olsen Street past Cory Lane. Warning signs are posted, so when you are out there driving, don't ignore them.

PARKS & RECREATION

Manners 101: Etiquette & Social Skills for Life!

In this fast-paced and fun skill-building class, youth will be taught manners and skills for various social situations. Burping? Wearing hats in restaurants? Elbows on the table? No! No! No! Learn how to set tables, use utensils in formal settings, follow social rules, navigate ordering at restaurants, and much more. This class includes a snack with full-table settings. Everyone will have a blast and learn life skills at the same time. Youth ages 7-12 are welcome to join instructor **Judi Dunn Gray** for this class from 12:30-3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 17. *Fee: \$25.

Home Winemaking

Let master winemaker **Stuart Scott** take the mystery out of home winemaking. Upon signup, you will receive a 16-page outline, "Home Winemaking on a Shoe String", a simple, clear explanation of winemaking. The class emphasizes how to adapt common household items to meet your equipment needs. Ask questions and get answers that really work for you about the text, equipment, or winemaking in

general. Two classes will be offered from 6:30-9:30 p.m. on Wednesdays, Feb. 3 and March 9. *Fee: \$33 per class.

Adult Volleyball League

Bump! Set! Spike! Get your team together and join this exciting coed league designed for all levels of play. Participants register as a team. Team manager packets are available at the Pioneer Center or online at pullmanparksandrec.com. Registration accepted from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Pioneer Center Feb. 8-12. All games will be played at Sunnyside Elementary School Gym on Monday and Wednesday evenings from approximately Feb. 29-April 27. Team Fee: \$250.

Yeast Bread 101

If you've never made yeast breads before, or have attempted it and not been happy with your results, this is the class for you! A fresh, warm loaf of homemade bread is hard to beat, and easy to make. A little knowledge goes a long way. In the class, we will demonstrate both basic white and basic wheat breads at all stages of mixing, rising, proofing, and baking. We will discuss some of the basic science and methods behind a

great, consistent, and reliable loaf of bread. There will be baked samples of each bread to try and recipes and variations to take home. **Mayalisa Bordenkircher** will lead this class from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 16. *Fee: \$15.

New! Fun with Flatbreads

Gear up for your busy spring season with this flatbreads class. We will review bread-baking basics from the Bread 101 class. For those who missed it, the class handout will be available. Spring sports and activities mean busy weeknights and weekends. Tired of calling out for pizza again? In this class, we will make both white and whole wheat pita bread and talk about ways to use it for quick and easy mealtimes, as well as making pizza crust and our own homemade frozen pizzas. **Mayalisa Bordenkircher** will lead this class from 2-4 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 28. *Fee: \$15.

**All registrants who live outside Pullman city limits will be charged an additional \$2.*

For more information or to register, go to www.pullmanparksandrec.com or call 338-3227.

Directory of City Officials

Elected Officials

Glenn A. Johnson.....Mayor
 Jeff Hawbaker.....Councilmember
 Fritz Hughes.....Councilmember
 Eileen Macoll.....Councilmember
 Ann Parks.....Councilmember
 Al Sorensen.....Councilmember
 Nathan Weller.....Councilmember
 Pat Wright.....Councilmember

Administration

Mark Workman City Supervisor
 Joanna Bailey Library Services Dir.
 Wayne Brannock ...IS Manager
 Kurt Dahmen Recreation Mgr.
 Alan Davis Parks Manager
 Pete Dickinson Planning Director
 Kevin Gardes Public Works Dir.
 Mike Heston Fire Chief
 Leann Hubbard Finance Director
 Gary Jenkins Chief of Police
 Laura McAloon City Attorney
 Karen Sires Human Res. Mgr.

Phone: 338-3208 • Fax: 334-2751
 Police Nonemergency Services: 334-0802
 Web address: www.pullman-wa.gov

PAFC Family fun programs

- 6-9 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 7
 In service
- 5:30-9 p.m. Friday, Feb. 12
 SRS Swim Meet
- 6-7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 12
 Fitness Room Orientation
- 4-7 p.m. Monday, Feb. 15
 Mon/Wed Swim Lessons
- 4-7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 16
 Tues/Thurs Swim Lessons
- 6-8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 19
 Wibit Time
- 6-7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 26
 Fitness Room Orientation
- Water Exercise (WEX) from 10-11 a.m. on Mon/Wed/Fri and 8-9 a.m. on Tues/Thurs. Free with PAFC Annual Memberships Fitness punch cards accepted. Drop-In Fee: \$6.
- Warm Water Fitness from 11-noon on Mon/Wed/Fri. Fee: member drop-in \$4.50 and non-member \$6.

Fitness Room Orientation

Feeling overwhelmed or intimidated? Tour our fitness room with our trainer **Aletha**. She will give a tutorial on all the equipment, go over safety guidelines, and answer any questions you may have. Come in comfortable clothes and tennis shoes and bring a pen and notebook. These clinics are for all new members and participants ages 14-17. Those aged 14 are required to attend the orientation with an adult supervisor to be allowed to use the room. After the orientation, they must have adult supervision to use the room. Those ages 15-17, with a parental consent form, should take this class to be able to use the Fitness Room independently. All current members are eligible to register.

Pullman Aquatic and Fitness Center
 500 NW Larry Street
 338-3290 • www.pullmanparksandrec.com