Donations to Life Support garner a new ladder truck for Kittitas Co. Fire District 7

CLE ELUM—On the rainy Sunday, Sept. 22, at 2:30 p.m., Kittitas County Fire District 7 dedicated a new aerial ladder truck underwritten by Life Support donors Roger and Cindy Jobs, Suncadia, the Puget Sound Energy Foundation, the Hermanson Company, Swiftwater Cellular, Unionville Ranch, and J&D’s Hydraulics & Repair—Life Support hosted the ceremony. Cheri Marusa, the nonprofit’s founder and president, had this to say: “This is another critical need fulfilled and another lifesaving solution provided by our donors. “Can you imagine how long it would take for a ladder truck to respond from King County or Ellensburg? Unacceptable.”

Kittitas Fire Marshal Patrick Nicholson said District 7’s old ladder truck, retired due to mechanical issues, was the only one in the Upper County. “There was an urgent need for an aerial apparatus in the Upper County where there are numerous structures that are multiple stories in height. Ground ladders can be used for the urgency cases and/or roofs of many of them. “Without this new resource firefighters would have had to engage in low-frequency, high-risk activities, placing themselves at greater risk.”

Firefighter/EMT and former district mechanic Tony Ditsworth said: “The old ladder truck had some issues. It failed its last Underwriter Lab tests in 2018 and this year. Repair costs exceeded what the truck was worth.”

“The new truck is from South County Fire in South Snohomish County. It’s a 3000 with under 25,000 miles on it, so we should easily get ten to 15 years out of it.”

The truck is a monster weighing nearly 37 tons, approximately the weight of 19 JEEP Wranglers. The ladder measures 100-feet fully extended. The truck can pump 1,000 gallons-plus per minute.

Milestone in history, stakeholders weigh in—Sunday’s dedication offered several stakeholders in attendance the opportunity to speak. Following are quotes from a few of those who made comments.

John Sinclair—KCFD7 Interim Fire Chief “The generosity of this community and others is incredible. District 7 is going through a difficult financial period after the levy failed. To have people recognize the need and willing to donate their own funds—that’s amazing to me.”

Donor: Puget Sound Energy Foundation Speaking for the foundation, Adam Crawford had this to say: “There was an immediate need for an aerial ladder truck here in the area as the prior truck had been decommissioned. Our focus for a long time has been this area, in particular, so the ladder truck harmonized with our goals.”

REGIONAL NEWS

LIFE SUPPORT DONORS christen the new ladder truck in front of Station 73 located on Golf Course Road, I-90 Exit 78. Instead of champagne, they each were given a bottle of water to splash on the truck while Interim Chief John Sinclair unveiled the names of the donors appearing on the side of the truck.

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