



# PELLATT UNITED FIREFIGHTERS

May, 2026 Newsletter

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**Please Note: There will be no printed newsletter this year**

## Fire Chief's Report

By Chief Barry Bennett

Well folks, 2026 is here, and another summer season is fast approaching. As of the of this writing there is plenty of ice still on the lakes, but the snow is going away nicely.

After a very busy spring in 2025, this past winter we had the usual amount of call outs for the Fire Department. There were medical assist calls, a couple of snowmobile incidents, motor vehicle incidents due to icy roads, etc., but no structure fires, which is good.

All our hall renovations are completed now, and we all should be very proud as we have one of the nicest halls in Northwestern Ontario.

The Ontario Fire Marshall's Office has provided us with new and improved equipment.

We received new turn out gear for all department members. A new battery-operated fan blows smoke out of a structure and fresh air in. We are expecting new self-contained breathing apparatus that allows 1 hour of use per air tank, compared to our old SCBA that provided only 30 minutes.

All this new equipment from the OFM is greatly appreciated, as it would be very costly if PUFF had to purchase it. This is a benefit to being one of the Northern Fire Protection teams that are under the umbrella of the Ontario Fire Marshall's Office.

Training practices have been well attended and on-going throughout the winter. We have several new team members and are working hard to get all our new guys certified.

In closing, let's all be careful and safe. Last spring was crappy, as we all know. We were all very lucky, as wildfire conditions were extreme right from when ice went off the lake until the end of June.

I also want to give thanks to the Board of Directors for their time and effort and to all the great volunteers we have who assisted with running events at the hall.

I especially want to thank the Fire and Emergency Response Team for their time, dedication, and commitment as volunteers to PUFF. There are a lot of meetings, practices, special training, and callouts. Team members spend a lot of time away from their families to keep us all safe. I am proud of them all.

Let the warm season begin! Have a healthy and safe year.

Barry Bennett  
PUFF Fire Chief

**911**

KNOW YOUR 911 NUMBER.  
TO AVOID CONFUSION,  
PLEASE REMOVE OLD  
PROPERTY DESIGNATIONS,  
AND WHEN CALLING FOR  
EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE  
USE YOUR BLUE AND  
WHITE 911 NUMBER.



## Pancake Breakfast

Sunday, May 17, 2026, 9 a.m. until noon.

Buffet style, adults \$13/children 6 to 10 \$8

Pancakes, sausage, wild blueberry sauce, strawberry sauce, syrup, coffee, tea, juice.

Two raffles: a piece of Melissa Jean art and a cribbage table crafted by Claude Beaudry.

Cash or Square Reader payments accepted.

**VOLUNTEERS  
ALWAYS WELCOME!**

Email: [pellattfire@gmail.com](mailto:pellattfire@gmail.com)

## Board Chairperson's Report

Last year's extremely dry spring conditions created the busiest fire season PUFF has had in over two decades. The fire on Indian Island in Laclu was particularly devastating, but there were nearly twenty other smaller fires that could have had very serious consequences if not for the prompt reaction from the PUFF Fire and Emergency Team.

The incredible commitment of Fire and Emergency Team members under the leadership of Fire Chief Barry Bennett and Deputy Chief Todd Burkart cannot be overstated. These men and women put in countless hours training to keep us all safe and responding to emergencies at all hours of the day or night, often under extremely difficult circumstances. We owe them a huge debt of gratitude.

Due to the large number of prolonged incidents last year many team members lost literally weeks of personal work time. This brought into sharp focus the question of compensation for team members, an issue we have been considering for some time. Working with our funding body, the Pellatt Pelican Umbach and Gidley (PPUG) Local Services Board, the PUFF Board has crafted a remuneration policy that brings our practice into alignment with adjacent fire and emergency departments. From January 2026 PUFF Fire and Emergency Team members will be nominally compensated for department related work, including response to calls and training activities. This remuneration program is funded by an increase in the tax levy of approximately \$36 per residence, which you will see reflected in your tax assessment this year. (This policy is posted on the PUFF website, <https://puffire.com>).

Due to the dedicated work of volunteer organizers, consistent enthusiastic support and participation from the community, and generous donations from local full-time and seasonal residents, our fundraising continues to offset running costs. Our annual Laclu Poker Derby (thanks to Cam Hagen) and Family Fishing Tournament (thanks to Kerry Livingstone) were very successful, as was our always popular Fall Supper (thanks to the whole local Mennonite community). The annual May long weekend Pancake Breakfast (we hope to see you there!), the Symphony Event, the August long weekend Bingo and Regatta Concession (thanks Linda and Brad Stevens), and the Terry Furgala Bass Fishing Tournament (Cam Hagen again), and monthly coffee shops (Janet Spencer), all contribute to our revenues and help keep our tax bill low. Thanks to all the organizers and volunteers.

With generous support from the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC), we have been able to do many upgrades to the fire hall and community centre over the last five years. The entire building is now heated and cooled with air source heat pumps, reducing our running costs.

Modifications and improvements in the Pellatt Community Centre, including the creation of a regulation size pickle ball court, have greatly increased use of the facility, and our revenues (inspired and managed by Wanda and Gil Desroches). The court is



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heavily subscribed, in use seven days a week. (During the summer months there are lots of play slots available. If you would like information on how to book time, please email [pellattfire@gmail.com](mailto:pellattfire@gmail.com).) The community centre is available for rent for events, including weddings, parties, and celebrations of life.

The PUFF Board recognizes the funding challenges that may arise in the future, including building repairs and vehicle replacement, and is creating a substantial Capital Reserve Fund to address these contingencies. We are also considering applying for another NOHFC grant to fund a solar panel electricity offset for the community centre, to further reduce our running costs.



Finally, thanks to the PUFF Board for their hard work year-round. Again, we thank all residents for your generous support of this vital service and the infrastructure that helps make this community so vibrant.

Have a happy and safe year!

Mark Simkin  
PUFF Board Chairperson

