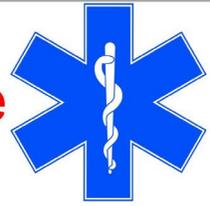




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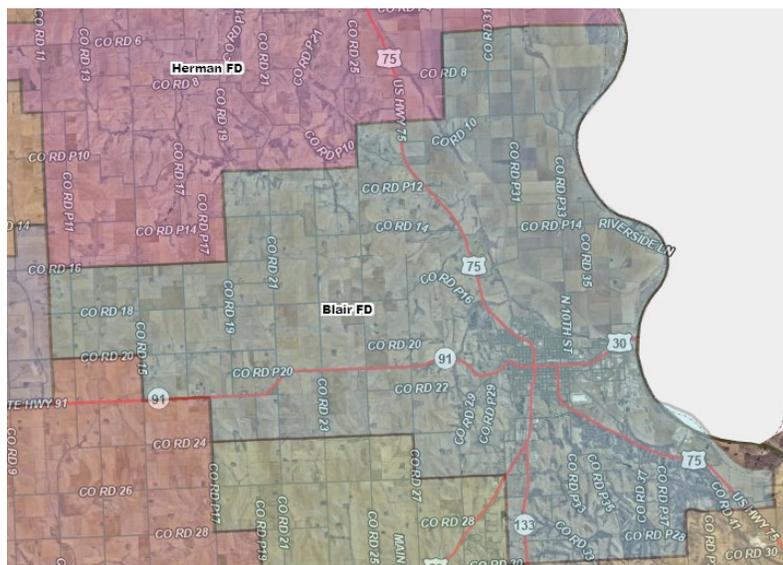
Blair Volunteer Fire & Rescue End of Year Report

Blair, Nebraska – The Blair Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department is honored to serve as a steadfast cornerstone of public safety for the City of Blair and the surrounding communities. With a dedicated team of highly trained volunteers, our department provides 24/7 fire suppression, emergency medical services, rescue operations, and public outreach across a service area of roughly 100 square miles.

Each year, we proudly protect a growing population of approximately 10,000 residents. Our members respond to a diverse range of incidents, including structure fires, wildland and grass fires, emergency medical calls, motor vehicle accidents, technical rescues, and hazardous materials situations. No matter the time of day or circumstance, our volunteers stand ready to answer the call.

Beyond emergency response, we are committed to being an active, trusted, and visible presence within our community. This includes public education programming, youth engagement and mentorship, station tours, safety demonstrations, and participation in Blair’s longstanding events and traditions. We believe community connection is a vital part of public safety, and we work hard to build relationships that strengthen resilience and preparedness across all ages.

As you review this End-of-Year Report, we hope it provides a clear and transparent look at our call volume, operations, initiatives, accomplishments, and areas of growth. A map of our service district is included below for reference.





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Department Composition



The Blair Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department is proud to be staffed entirely by volunteers—46 dedicated individuals who commit their time, skills, and energy to serving our community. Our personnel are organized into several categories based on certification, level of involvement, and training status.

Active-Duty Volunteers – 33 Members

These members respond to emergencies, participate in training, and support daily operations.

- 9 Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs)
- 6 EMT-IVs
- 1 Advanced EMT
- 1 Registered Nurse
- 16 Firefighters

Lifetime Volunteers – 8 Members

These long-serving members continue to support the department through their experience, mentorship, and operational assistance.

- 3 Firefighter/EMTs
- 5 Firefighters

Medical Leave – 2 Members

Cadet Program – 8 Participants

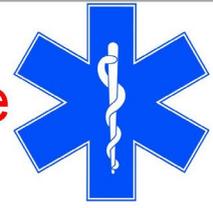
Our Cadet Program serves as a key pathway for the next generation of responders.

- 3 Senior Cadets (active responders)
- 5 Cadets (in training, non-responders)



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We are also proud to report strong progress in training, 9 volunteers are currently enrolled in EMT certification courses, strengthening our medical response capabilities for the coming year. Additionally, the second half of the year brought renewed momentum with 10 new probationary members who are actively training and preparing to take on full operational roles.

1,420 Total Calls for Service - 1,090 Medical & 330 Fire Related

BVFD Members	Rescue	Fire	Total	BVFD Members	Rescue	Fire	Total
DAVE ATEN - 41	284	117	401	DALE OLSON - 47	0	0	0
RANDY BACKMAN - 54	3	0	3	DEREK PAPER - 23	290	123	413
BRICE BECKMAN - 44	0	0	0	MATT PERSONS - 66	75	20	95
JOHN BELSKY - 11	42	49	91	JIM POUNDS - 72	11	0	11
ANTHONY BORDERS - 43	268	77	345	SKYLER PUFFER - 15	135	60	195
ERNIE BRENNIS - 04	0	0	0	CARL RENNERFELDT - 20	104	41	145
MIKE BUTTERY - 32	42	28	70	JACOB ROGGE - 45	46	41	87
AMIE CLAUSEN - 70	121	23	144	STEVE ROUNDS - 26	1	0	1
CLINT CLAUSEN - 63	0	0	0	TRE MURRAY - 05	65	34	99
JAKE DUNN - 49	525	179	704	LOGAN THALLAS - 21	160	65	225
TY HERNES - 02	339	84	423	JERRY WEST - 34	52	58	110
CHRIS HONKE - 38	3	1	4	SHANE SAVOLD - 08	78	31	109
BOB HORST - 50	267	14	281	BLAKE GUTSCHOW - 30	108	44	152
STEVE HOWARD - 25	245	50	295	LANDON HOLTZ - SC2	305	107	329
BRENDA JENNY - 64	29	27	56	EMMETT MCINTOSH - SC3	250	98	293
LOREN JONES - 39	278	104	382	CHASITY HAHN - SC1	254	105	249
LUKE JONES - 40	130	92	222	KYLE HERBER	0	0	0
JOE LEONARD - 55	209	146	355	BRIAN KELLER	77	22	16
JOE MAGUIRE - 01	124	66	190	JORDAN CLAUSEN - 62	24	5	29
DAVID MCINTOSH - 35	350	127	477	ISAAC OPETAIA - 59	6	4	10
HOWARD MCMANIGAL - 22	63	14	77	BRYAN THOMAS - 19	16	2	18
HENRY NEEF - 18	0	0	0	KALEB NICHOLSON - 37	13	5	18
KENT NICHOLSON - 57	0	0	0	JUSTIN SMITH - 48	39	17	56
CHRIS OLSON - 07	7	9	16	GABE STOCK - 67	49	15	64



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Apparatus & Equipment



Ambulances 811 & 810 Responding to a call



North Station located at 19th and Nebraska Streets

To ensure a high level of service and reliable emergency response, the Blair Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department maintains a diverse and capable fleet of apparatus. Our equipment is strategically selected to meet the wide-ranging needs of the community and allows us to respond effectively to incidents of all types.

The department's current fleet includes:

2 ALS-Capable Ambulances, 2 Brush Trucks, 2 Engines, 2 Tankers, 1 Aerial Ladder Truck, 1 Utility/Rescue Truck, 2 Fire Command Cars, 1 UTV, and 1 Rescue Boat.

While no new apparatus were placed into service during the 2025 calendar year, significant progress was made toward future fleet replacement and modernization. We are currently in the process of building a replacement ALS-capable ambulance, a 2027 Road Rescue unit, which is projected to arrive in spring 2027. This ambulance will replace our current Road Rescue Ambulance 810 and will further strengthen our emergency medical service capabilities.

Additionally, the department is actively working on the build of a replacement City engine, which will be a 2027 Pierce Engine equipped with a 1,000-gallon water tank and a 2,000-gallon-per-minute pump. This apparatus will enhance fire suppression capabilities within the city and surrounding response areas.

This fleet enables BVFD to respond efficiently to medical emergencies, structure fires, wildland and grass fires, vehicle accidents, technical rescues, and water-related incidents.



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Long-term apparatus planning and replacement remain a critical focus to ensure continued reliability and operational readiness.

In addition to apparatus readiness, ongoing equipment upgrades play a vital role in responder safety and operational effectiveness. Thanks to the generous support of our community, the department was able to procure and deploy several key tools and technologies during the year, including:

- **AccuVein devices**, enhancing IV access during EMS calls
- **Upgraded ZOLL AED/monitor units**, critical for advanced patient care during medical emergencies
- **PS Trax**, improving inventory control, asset management, and fleet maintenance tracking
- **Portable suction units**, a crucial tool for emergency medical response
- **New Edraulic extrication tools**, increasing power, reliability, and safety during vehicle rescue operations
- **MSA Altair 4-Gas monitors** and **MSA single-gas monitors**, replacing aging detection equipment and improving response to hazardous atmospheres such as gas leaks, carbon monoxide incidents, and anhydrous-related calls
- **New AEDs installed in all fire apparatus**, expanding life-saving capabilities across the fleet
- **Hypersight thermal imaging cameras** on brush trucks, allowing operators to safely navigate and operate in smoky or low-visibility conditions

These additions significantly enhance both responder safety and scene effectiveness. They reflect the continued trust, investment, and support of the Blair community in its emergency services. The Blair Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department remains committed to maintaining modern, reliable equipment so our volunteers can serve safely, efficiently, and effectively—today and into the future.



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Call Volume



Over the past five years, the Blair Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department has experienced a steady and significant rise in calls for service. This trend reflects both the growth of our community and the increasing reliance on our department's emergency medical and fire protection capabilities.

2025 – 1,420 calls

2024 – 1,315 calls

2023 – 1,119 calls

2022 – 1,142 calls

2021 – 1,050 calls

2020 – 882 calls

Calendar year 2025 was another record-setting year for BVFD. We closed the year with 1,420 total calls for service, surpassing last year's high-water mark by 105 calls. These calls included 1,090 medical-related incidents and 330 fire-related incidents,



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demonstrating the broad range of emergencies our volunteers are prepared to handle at any moment.

In total, these incidents accounted for over 968 hours of on-scene response time alone. When paired with the countless hours spent training, maintaining equipment, conducting inspections, participating in community events, and completing administrative duties, it becomes clear just how busy our volunteers have been this year.

It is important to remember that every single member of BVFD is a volunteer. These men and women routinely step away from work, family, sleep, holidays, and daily life to serve their community—often at a moment's notice. Their commitment is remarkable, and the call volume numbers reflect not only the needs of the community but the dedication of the people who answer those needs.



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Community Engagement



One of the most cherished traditions within BVFD is our long-standing Fire Prevention Program. For more than four decades, Steve Howard has been a cornerstone of this initiative. Now in his 44th year of involvement—and leading the program since 1990—Steve has taught several generations of Blair residents about fire prevention and safety. Many children proudly share that Steve taught their parents, grandparents, and possibly even great-grandparents.

This year, our Fire Prevention team reached over 700 children across the Blair area, providing engaging, age-appropriate education about avoiding hazards, creating fire escape plans, and understanding emergency response. We are deeply grateful for the dedication of Steve and the entire Fire Prevention team; their work shapes safer futures for every family in our community.



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As we reflect on an exceptionally active year, we recognize that none of this would be possible without the extraordinary volunteers who make up the Blair Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department. Below you will find a detailed breakdown of calls for service responded to by each member from January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025.

With an average call length of 40 minutes and 54 seconds, plus the cleanup, reporting, and equipment reset that follow every incident, these response numbers represent a staggering amount of time given selflessly to the community. This report stands as a testament to their dedication, resilience, and unwavering commitment to the people of Blair.

We are profoundly grateful for everything our volunteers do—often without recognition, but always with heart.



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Mutual Aid & Regional Cooperation



Several area departments at a training burn in May 2025

We are extremely thankful for the continued partnership and support of our neighboring fire departments. In the world of emergency services, mutual aid is not just a resource—it is a lifeline. When large-scale emergencies, overlapping incidents, or complex situations arise, the ability to rely on well-trained and responsive neighboring departments is critical to keeping our communities safe.

Whether it's a structure fire requiring additional manpower, a medical event demanding multiple EMS units, or a weather-related disaster affecting a wide area, our mutual aid system ensures that no call goes unanswered. This network of shared readiness enhances response times, improves operational effectiveness, and strengthens the level of protection provided to residents across our region.

We extend our sincere appreciation to **Kennard Volunteer Fire & Rescue, Fort Calhoun Volunteer Fire & Rescue, Arlington Volunteer Fire & Rescue, and Herman Volunteer Fire & Rescue** for their continued collaboration, professionalism, and teamwork. These departments—and others throughout the region—have stood beside us during some of our busiest and most challenging moments. We are also deeply grateful for our outstanding law enforcement partners, the **Blair Police Department** and the **Washington County Sheriff's**



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Department, whose cooperation and dedication play a vital role in ensuring effective, coordinated emergency responses throughout our community.

In return, the Blair Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department is proud to provide mutual aid whenever called upon. Together, we form a unified emergency response network far stronger than any single department could be on its own. This spirit of cooperation remains one of the greatest strengths of emergency services in our region and an essential component of the safety and resilience of our community.



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Volunteer Recruitment & Closing



Like many fire departments across the country, the Blair Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department relies entirely on dedicated volunteers to fulfill our mission of protecting lives and property. We encourage anyone living within our fire district who has a passion for service and a willingness to learn to consider joining our team. Recruitment and retention remain top priorities, and we are grateful for the ongoing support and collaboration of the Blair City Council & Rural Board in helping us strengthen and sustain our volunteer force. The application process is designed to ensure new members are prepared for the responsibilities of serving our community and typically takes about one month from start to finish. The process includes:

1. Completing an application (available at North Station Monday–Friday or at either station on Thursdays after 6 PM)
2. Medical physical



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3. Background check
4. Physical agility test
5. Final approval by City Council
6. This process typically takes about one month from start to finish

As we close the book on 2025 and look forward to 2026, the Blair Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department remains steadfast in our commitment to improving services, engaging with our community, and supporting one another through the challenges and triumphs ahead.

We are deeply grateful for the trust, support, and encouragement of the residents of Blair. It is your confidence in our department that allows our volunteers to serve with pride, professionalism, and heart. Thank you for standing with us—together, we continue to make Blair a safer, stronger community.