

Big Sur Volunteer Fire Brigade Fire Brigade News – April 2016

By the time you are reading this burn season will have ended, no more back yard burning for the year! I hope everyone got a lot accomplished! And it looks like the rain may not quite be over, about .64 so far today as I type and I see more predicted for next week, I really hope so because El Nino was certainly a bust! The rain we did have today was just enough to make the T-1 lines go down yet again; I was not able to determine if we could still call out to town or if our dispatch was affected. I am trying to work on this with help from Kathleen Lee at Supervisor Potter's office and AT&T without much success so far.

I am busy getting everything ready for the upcoming Marathon, the Round Up due date is that Sunday so I may or may not have an up to date report. It depends on how busy it is and how long we are out on the course whether I will have time to add anything on to my report. All the Brigade and CERT members get their assignments, paper work, wrist bands and T shirts for each location they are staffing. They all need to get their pre-race instructions for their assignments, some years they are in the same location so that makes life a little easier. There aren't as many pre-race meetings this year either, and/or I just am not able to make it to them being so busy.

Well the Marathon went pretty smoothly, only minor injuries. So I am back in time to write a little more..... The wind was pretty fierce, we always end up at Hurricane Pt. and stage there awhile, and the runners looked pretty miserable coming up the hill. We checked the wind speed, 22 to 24 sustained winds with gusts up to 32, brutal! (That afternoon we had to fly out a motorcycle patient and Cal Star said they were bouncing around up at the higher altitudes.) So another Marathon over with, I do a follow up report and am done for the year.

I signed up to volunteer to help with the first Monterey County Active Shooter Drill which is being held at the old Fort Ord this same weekend as the Marathon. Between the two events I will be glad when the weekend is over! More to follow on both of these next month, unless I am able to get to it before the Round Up deadline.

As mentioned above I have the time to add a little more to my article, this drill I attended had fire, law and medical participate. We got out there at 06:30 and it lasted until about 4:00. It was a "shooter" in buildings out at the old Fort Ord. Law would go in first and secure the scene to make it safe for fire and medical to go in and attend to the "victims". There were about 150 volunteers all made up and doing role playing. There were almost 300 people there total with almost every department in the County taking part. A great training for what has unfortunately become a common occurrence.

Has everyone noticed the huge improvement in parking at the Post Office? Kurt has hired Chris to be the "parking attendant/security" and to make sure anyone that needs to go to the Post Office has a parking space. I applaud Kurt for taking the initiative in doing this. Another improvement is that the berm alongside the highway has now been painted red and marked "Fire Lane No Parking". This should prevent people from

parking alongside the berm and making it difficult if not impossible to back out from the Post Office. I used to dread going to the PO but now it is almost a pleasure!

At the last BSMACC there was a huge crowd in attendance, most to have the discussion regarding the millions of people that are coming to Big Sur, the problems they cause and possible solutions. The South coast folks gave a well thought out presentation listing all the problems they encounter and even had logs they had compiled on the campers/campfires that they see on a daily basis up on Nacimiento and the South Coast Ridge Road. The issues at Pfeiffer beach were mentioned, along with the back country overuse and abuse, and the parking along the highway by the MAF and JPB. The problem seems to be there is not enough money available to hire the resources necessary to alleviate all the issues. You would have to have someone posted at Bixby for example all day long to prevent people from parking in front of the no parking signs. Suggestions were made to limit the use of the forest, possibly making south coast ridge a walk or bike in camping area only. The easy driving access that is currently in place allows too many people in the fragile fire prone areas. Many people thought it was a great idea if you couldn't manage the forest to shut it down.

I was told that the Cal Fire fire inspections would be starting again in the next few months. I don't know at this time where they will start from, maybe pick up where they left off? I'll keep everyone posted.

Our annual Muster/BBQ will be on June 11th this year. As anyone knows who has been there, you will have the best BBQ ever!! Mark your calendars!!

Martha Karstens
Chief