

**Big Sur Volunteer Fire Brigade**  
**Fire Brigade News**  
**May 2017**

We completed our FF 1 class this last Sunday! Everyone did such a great job and hung in there over the months in spite of the bridge challenges. We will now have four new members with another 6 members upgrading from a VFF to the FF 1.

Congratulations to the 4 new members, Wendy Waters, Luke Perkins, Shane Prince and Aldo Resindez, if you see them around Big Sur or on the trail be sure and congratulate them! The existing members that upgraded and/or took the class for the first time are; Chris Bangham, Jim Betts, Thomas Leahy, Rayner Marx, Trey Kropp, Fabian Perez. We also had a FF from Gonzales fire and one from the MPC Fire Academy complete the class, so a dozen all together.

Thank you so much to our Captain Matt Harris for organizing and teaching the majority of the class and to "Smitty" Chris Smith our great instructor from town. This class was almost completely paid for by a FEMA grant. While our wildland fire training at Hunter Liggett was cancelled, too wet to burn, we may yet go over in July to get some live fire experience for the new members.

It is still very quiet down here as far as our incidents, as you can see by my report only 4 calls for the month of April. I thought for sure when they opened some of the campsites at Pfeiffer we would get a call, nothing yet! We shall see what Memorial Day weekend brings. In spite of the trails being officially closed, I still see hikers on Buzzard Roost when I go up and down our road. All of these folks present an opportunity for a medical or rescue! There is still a lot of vehicle traffic coming down the coast in spite of the closure.

The Marathon went off very well in our area; the new turnaround for the busses at the State Park entrance went very smoothly, we had 6 people there at the crack of dawn helping to manage that. We had only one minor medical and that was up by Hurricane point as the last few hundred runner/walkers were headed north. That is really quite remarkable considering the thousands of runners. Hopefully next year it will be back to normal. Thanks in particular to the Brigade members, Jon Knight, Marcus Foster, Chris Bangham, and "non" member but a huge helper, Janet Hardisty for hiking over the trail to help too!

Thanks to CalTrans for all the mowing/weed whacking they have been doing alongside the road, it not only looks nice, it is much more fire safe! The hills have already turned brown, the almost constant wind and that week of hot weather was all it took. Vegetation fires have already started around the state. The grasses around here are quite tall with all that rain. We have already weed whacked several times as the grass has grown back. It's never too late to do your clearing, just remember not to do it in the heat of the day.

We are still having our Incident Command meetings for the "Bridge Incident". We are now meeting every other week with a conference call only with CalTrans in between. As everyone probably has heard Mud CK. came down with approximately 40 acres of land into the ocean. Very impressive! At this time there is no plan for what to do there. It also took out the phone line down south so there is no 805 phone service from Mill Ck south. I have been working with AT&T to come up with an interim plan, possibly moving the AT&T van we have had at the fire house down there somewhere. We now will have Cambria ambulance and Cal Fire come up to handle all the calls south of Mud Ck., they have done this in the past. The work at Paul's slide has stopped for the moment but the crossings have still continued as long as it is safe.

We talked about the trail some more and the possible impact of having some public use it. It remains to be seen how many people would want to cross and how often it will be used. Discussions are ongoing about a shuttle service taking tourists to the bottom of the trail so they can hike up and support the businesses on the south side. It is hard to believe but the year is almost half over, September will be here before we know it and with that hopefully the opening of the highway.

Martha Karstens  
Chief