

Fire Brigade News

That was quite the storm we had! That was exactly what the folks at the weather meeting said could happen, mild El Nino but could come all at once. I had about 11 inches out of the whole storm and heard others with as much as 14. And half of it on one day. I thought that we might have more problems but the Sunday storm turned out to be a little milder than predicted. I did see that a few people were using the sand and sandbags that we have at the bottom of Pfeiffer ridge. The river was declared at flood stage at one point but it still had a couple more feet to go. I took a video with my cell phone and emailed it to the water resources so they could see what it looked like at 10 ½ feet. There were some very large trees floating down, more than I usually see. Safe to say fire season is really over!

And burn season has begun! The permit process is going pretty well, I have issued about 65 of them. Some of the ones sent electronically have had problems but we have figured it out. So don't forget if you plan on having your "back yard" burn you must get a permit. You can get one from our web site at www.bigsurfire.org or mail us at P.O. Box 520 for one. Also new this year are the different burn zones. I did not know about them until I called in on December 1 to see what the burn status was. There are five different zones in Monterey County. I hope by having sort of "our own" zone we may have more burn days. I have been in touch with the air resources to determine exactly what zone we are in, I am still sorting that out but it would appear that most of the Fire Brigade's area is zone 32; however, part of clear ridge may be in zone 32 and the other part in zone 31. I will adjust the message on the Fire Brigade phone when I find out. It involves looking at a Google earth map with the different zones. Don't forget that you are responsible for calling the burn # (800-225-2876 or CALBURN) for the daily burn status, then calling the Fire Brigade to let us know if you are burning.

We had our annual dinner this month and it was again hosted by Nepenthe. Just a lovely evening, and the rain pretty much held off for us. It was a hard decision this year for the volunteer awards, sometimes it is a "no brainer" as they say, but this year we had several great members, all deserving the award, and we had to pick just one! Alberto Palafox was chosen this year for the volunteer of the year award. He has just been doing such a great job, balancing his family, work, school and the Fire Brigade. He, along with 11 other members just completed the three day rescue training. We also usually award an engine company for special recognition but this year all engine companies were outstanding so "Company 78" all engine crews received acknowledgement. The Chiefs award was started so it could be awarded to Officers or non FF/medical personnel. Board members and dispatchers have received it in the past. This year John Handy was presented the Chiefs award for so many things. John is a FF and a Board member, he was instrumental in having the south coast receive a grant for clearing, he has started the Fire Brigade merchandise program selling Brigade logoed items including the cutest baby "onesie". John also just completed the three day rescue training. This was the fifteenth year for this award. All and all another wonderful evening, and huge thank yous to Kirk, Holly and Nepenthe!!

We have had great success with our quilt raffle, as of today only twelve tickets left to sell out of 500! This has raised about \$10,000 towards a new water tender. So if you want a chance to win one gorgeous quilt better call Jaci directly to see if there are any tickets left.

Time to go and get ready for Santa to deliver gifts now.....
Wishing everyone a safe and Happy New Year!!

Martha Karstens
Chief