

Fire Brigade News

We are planning on having our annual Bal Masque Halloween party as usual at Nepenthe on October 31st. **However....** Due to the imminent road work at Rocky Creek with probable road closures, anyone from north of the closure will need to be through there before the night closing. At this time I don't have that information on what time that will be, most likely 9:00 PM. This will put a damper on our event which is one of our major fundraisers. By the time the Round Up is out these decisions will have been made. It is possible Cal Trans will not close the road that night so we can have our event. Stay tuned!

You would think that with Labor Day over with we might get to reclaim Big Sur for ourselves..... Judging from our call volume and the traffic still on the highway, it just isn't happening! It is still difficult to get a parking place to pick up my mail. I know it is good for business, and a huge summer it has been for the businesses, but maybe just a little break (a little rain?) would be nice. We are hearing about maybe an El Niño weather pattern for this winter, some are saying a mild one, or possibly moderate to heavy.

The Brigade has been busy, in addition to the usual accidents and medical calls; we had two veg fires over the last month. One at 04:30 down at Pfeiffer State Park was in and around the bases of 4 or 5 massive redwood trees. The fire was climbing up towards the branches, about 30 feet high when we arrived on scene. My biggest concern was not to let it get into the branches and have it go up like a chimney and spread to all the other trees. Fortunately we were able to prevent that from happening. USFS E18 responded along with Cal Fire apparatus. We released the Cal Fire engines early on with USFS staying to complete the mop up.

Our next fire was just a couple days ago on the El Sur Ranch off the Old Coast Road; apparently a down power line was the cause. The Fire Brigade responded with two engines, two tenders and me. USFS E18 and BC12 were already on scene upon my arrival and had done a great job in knocking it down and preventing the spread which would have gone up to our repeater towers. Cal Fire had their air attack overhead very quickly and was able to drop fire retardant to prevent further spreading. There was a great pic on the front page of the Herald, if you look closely that is our water tender behind the green USFS engine☺ It ended up being three to four acres burned.

We had an excellent auto extrication class on Saturday at the firehouse. Ten Brigade members spent a very hot day in full turnouts cutting up a variety of vehicles. They learned the correct way to approach and cut into a car, many of the hazards to look out for during extrication, and some things to be aware of with the newer hybrid models. While fortunately we do not have very many times we need to deploy our "Jaws" we want to be prepared when we do need to.

Fire Brigade and CERT members have been taking a combination T22 (First Aid) class, FR (First Responder) and EMT recert. We have had a good turn out from the CERT members and Tracy teaches an exciting class. I am happy to see such interest with all the CERT members!

Frank and I attended a meeting with other emergency responder agencies to discuss how to handle emergencies while the road will be closed completely at night in the times ahead. We went through this last year so have some recent experience in handling emergency response. We will be able to let the contractor know ahead of time if he needs to be prepared for a variety of scenarios from walking patients through to moving their equipment to allow a full fire response through. We will again be covering extra territory responding up to Rocky Creek which is usually Mid Coast's area. We had to walk patients and/or roll them on the gurney three times during last year's closure. An ambulance met us on the other side each time. We will continue to plan to make sure we are prepared as best we can be.

Martha Karstens
Chief