

**Big Sur Volunteer Fire Brigade**  
**Fire Brigade News – October 2015**

Our annual Big Sur River Run is coming up, our 35<sup>th</sup>!! No rain is in sight so it looks like the event will be having nice weather. Hopefully we will have a lot of runners!

The Fire Brigade is hosting an El Nino meeting on the 30<sup>th</sup> with all the agencies that could be involved if we have any problems due to a wet winter. We will review past history and the problems we had with El Ninos we have had and try to preplan for what may come. If I think the roads may close I will try to get a PG&E and AT&T truck staged here, SO has promised a Humvee for our use! There is already sand at the Pfeiffer turn out and we will bring down sand bags soon. The USFS will have them as well as at the MAF. The County will be dropping off pre-filled sand bags, please share with your neighbors. I attended a 4 hour El Nino meeting in town and basically came out with the information that for us in our central California location, we may get a lot of rain or we may not. It appears southern California will get slammed. It's probably a little early but it might not be bad to remember to stock up on whatever basics are important to you. It is also good to make sure your propane tanks have been topped off. I want to again mention that if you haven't already done it, it would be good to sign up your cell phone numbers with [Alertmonterey.org](http://Alertmonterey.org) to receive any warnings for your area.

I just went to the Post Office and the new striping was going in and they were getting ready to fill what I refer to as Krakatoa, the pot hole out front, exciting stuff! Now if we could just find a parking spot!! I am in the process with the help of Supervisor Potter's office, of getting the berm out front of the Post Office painted red to prevent people from parking there. Andrew is sooo happy!!

I am sure almost everyone was affected by our recent phone, cell phone and T1 line outages. Monday night we were no longer able to make or receive calls from town. Trey called me to check on our Fire Comm repeater as it is run on a T1 line. We discovered it was down also. I made arrangements with Fire Comm to call me on my cell phone if there were any incidents. Apparently Verizon went down right away but AT&T cell service lasted until Tuesday afternoon. At that point no one, to my knowledge, was able to make a 911 call. Early Tuesday morning we got word of a medical at Ventana and I was able to call our Brigade members to respond on the radio. I had notified all Brigade members to monitor our Brigade frequency if we had any incidents. I was still able to use my cell phone as it is tied into a microcell at my house to my Exceed internet. That was extremely fortunate! We sent out Chris Bangham to check the CHP call boxes and pay phones, none of them worked either. I checked with John Handy and the 805 area code was still working so that was something. Fortunately our Brigade frequency worked as it is up at Little River not at the Post Ranch.

AMR was not able to dispatch or call their ambulance so I had it worked out to call them as the 667 numbers worked. We were able to talk to State Parks and USFS as they both have Brigade. CHP was still working, SO was not. Don Smythe was able to get out with all the radios in his truck so if a deputy was needed his office would contact CHP and they would contact him. Kirk Gafill went around to all the resorts and gave them a temporary emergency number to call AMR. All sort of convoluted but it worked! Quite the eye opener, as long as I have been in Big Sur I don't remember being so cut off. We came back online on Wednesday afternoon, all this havoc created by a rodent!! A gopher to be exact we think. We saw a picture of the line it chewed through; it must have had quite the set of choppers! (and an update, again two weeks later the T1 lines and repeater were down for a time, I'm not quite sure, perhaps a buddy of the gopher got locked inside the line during repairs).....

We worked the Marathon/half marathon on the Old Coast road in September, they had a good run, about 300 runners, and we had no medical problems at all. What a grueling run! From Molera out to Bixby, part way back, then back to Bixby and then all the way back, lots of hills! The weather somewhat cooperated, it wasn't too hot fortunately.

Our First Responder class is finally finished and we had 7 people complete it, congratulations to:

Marcus Foster, John Coombs, Jeff Carmichael, Trey Kropp, all Brigade members and Bree Harlan, Fabian Perez, and Aldo Resendiz who are in the process of joining.

Martha Karstens  
Chief