

## **Big Sur Volunteer Fire Brigade Fire Brigade News – September 2014**

Wasn't that just the loveliest rain!! I had .20 inches, it woke me up in the early morning hours so I had to get up and go stand outside in it. It seems like it has been such a long time since we have had any rain. I hear there is a slight chance for tomorrow morning, even a little drizzle would be a welcome change.

As everyone knows it has been an extraordinarily dry year. I watch all the fires that have started across the state and feel so badly for all those that have lost their homes. It is interesting how with some of them it is quickly determined what the cause was; we are still waiting for that information for the Pfeiffer fire. All we can do is stay prepared, be vigilant and hope for early rains.

We did have a small veg fire inside the Pfeiffer Park this month. It was early in the morning when we got called out. Upon arrival there were a number of campers with tubs, buckets and other things that they had used to form a bucket brigade from the closest bathroom where water was and the fire. They and the camp host did a good job in preventing the spread of the fire; it would have gone right up the hill towards MAF. There was still a log about 12 feet long actively burning upon arrival. The cause is undetermined, there was no reason for this fire to have started, a cigarette perhaps?

We also really dodged a bullet with a fire a transient started on the Packard property. It was discovered after the fact and had burned up the redwood trees. The transient himself apparently put out the fire that seemed to have started from his campfire. It would have burned up the hill into Coastlands and Nepenthe. If you see anything even remotely suspicious please call me! Things like the same vehicle parked in the same spot along the road every night is a red flag. I guess there was someone with a BBQ fire at the turn out near Grimes selling hot dogs last weekend, not only was the fire illegal, it is illegal to sell anything along the highway.

Thanks to Cal Trans for putting up a berm in a trouble area near Buzzard's Roost where people were starting to drive in deep in their cars and park and camp overnight. This was another location just ripe for a fire to start.

This weekend is when the annual Marathon/half marathon on the Old Coast road is happening. We provide first aid and communications for the event. October is as always a busy month, I can't believe I am already planning for the Bal Masque. We also have the Jade festival and the River Run.

Our call numbers are also way up, now some of them are for alarms that are malfunctioning, but we are busy. Last year at this time we had 154, this year we are at 199.

We also made it through the Best Buddies bicycle event without any incidents, I am seeing more and more bicycle groups coming down the coast. The Central Coast bicycle event came through with 80 plus riders, and just on the way home the other day there was large group with the word "Fireflies" on their jerseys. Amazingly enough we rarely have accidents with vehicles vs bicyclists. The new law has gone into effect that requires drivers to keep at least three feet distance between you and the bicyclist if you are passing. That was difficult to achieve with the one I saw riding with one hand while trying to film the coast as he rode along with the other, he was all over the road.

We would like to sincerely thank the Marathon Board for awarding the Fire Brigade our grant this year. We will be using it to purchase a new air station which will be used to fill our SCBAs.

Martha Karstens  
Chief