

Big Sur Volunteer Fire Brigade Fire Brigade News – July 2017

For some of us the summer is quickly going by, normally I would think slow down! The year is going much to fast! I have already done our August training calendar and soon enough, I know not soon enough for some people, but it will be September before we know it and of course with the PC bridge still on track, its completion.

We had our last Unified Command meeting; with the road open south through Paul's slide there was no longer a need for us to continue to have them. Individual concerns can be directed to the appropriate agencies. We are still continuing with our Cal Trans conference calls, although we agreed that every other week would be sufficient. The Chamber of Commerce will lead those calls from now on.

The trail seems to be getting regular use, and when I am on the south side I see folks walking along the road looking like they are coming and going from Nepenthe. I heard there was a 15 minute wait for lunch recently!

While our calls have picked up, 12 in June, we would normally have about 30. For some reason, the ones we are getting on the north side, which are most of the calls, have been pretty serious. The most recent accident just north of Molera was another one that required a helicopter. The last I heard sadly the patient was on life support. The morning after that incident I got a call from Marcus who said on her way to town his wife Heather saw a dog hanging around the area of the accident. She figured, correctly, that the dog was probably in the vehicle. Marcus was going to call SPCA and Animal Control and SO Jesse, I called Don Smythe to see if he was in the area, also texted CHP and Matt to see if they were in the area, Matt suggested calling his wife Jackie who worked for a vet, Don radioed State Parks as well. Next thing I hear is that Parks is enroute to Molera for a dog wandering around. Then I hear the good news that Heather, son Mason, and Ruby from Fernwood have been able to befriend the dog and it is safely on its way to a vet in town to be checked out. I get a call from Fire Comm a short time later asking me to call a Cal Fire BC I know, a retired CF guy called him because his wife was good friends with the wife of the victim and they were trying to also locate the dog. It does take a village sometimes!

We have received some new rescue and fire equipment from grant funds and have been doing some extra training with it. This weekend on Saturday we had a rescue training followed up by our usual fire training on Sunday. We went to Rancho Rico for our Sunday training, starting with area orientation of the ranch with Heather, located water storage, hydrants, roads and will re-do the mapping. 3 hours later we had a great structure protection drill and are treated to a delicious spaghetti lunch and cappuccinos from Heather and Sidney! What a treat!

Little did we know what the rest of the day was going to bring, if we had some of us might have had a second, (or third) helping. By the time we get everything put back into operational shape and start to head home the pager goes off for a cliff rescue at Hurricane Pt. 5 people from Fresno thought it would be a good idea to hike down the trail, into the fog, down Hurricane Pt. Jesse (SO) is conveniently near that location and with the help of 4 State Park rangers heads down the trail to find out what the situation is. We arrive on scene a short while later with a total of 7 Brigade members, followed by 2 members from Mid Coast, 3 FF in an engine from Cal Fire, an ambulance from town with 2, a ladder truck with 3 more from CF, a BC from Cal Fire 3 more SO rescue team members with 5 more showing up awhile later. A CF helo was initially started then cancelled. Wonder of wonders, while it was quite foggy up there, there was no wind, nice! We ended up with 20 responders over the side that safely got the 5 Fresno folks to the top, 3 hiked up and 2 had to initially be brought up part way by ropes then hiked out. I never bothered to ask them why they thought it was a good idea to go down the trail.

So due to the busy last few days I am now late with my article and need to send it in as is!!

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Chief