

Aspendell South Fork Volunteer Fire Department

Tax ID #61-1730953, a 501(c)(3) tax exempt charitable non-profit organization

www.asfvfd.org

FALL NEWSLETTER – October 2015

Fall color is in full swing in the Bishop Creek drainage, hastened by very dry conditions. As we await what we hope will be a wet winter, we want to report to you on ongoing ASVFVD activities, thank **you** for your support, and request that **your support continue**.

ASVFVD Firefighter Training:

Training of our full and part time volunteers every two weeks continues, and we expect it to do so through the winter months. In response to new California Health and Safety Code requirements, our volunteers plan to complete CPR/AED and basic First Aid training as soon as possible. Of course, we all benefit from such training, and we encourage everyone to take these courses when and where it is convenient for you. We are also working with several highly experienced and recently retired firefighters, including those from the Carpinteria-Summerland Fire Protection District, to formulate plans for spring training programs, including safe vehicle use and basic wildland firefighting.

USFS/BLM Fire Clearance Planning:

Several ASVFVD Board members met with USFS and BLM personnel who are working on a fire protection clearance plan that includes the Bishop Creek drainage. This plan has been in the works for some time, but active fires and other responsibilities have delayed steps to implement it. The USFS/BLM staff hopes to begin a public participation process in the near future to solicit input on the clearance proposal. The requisite environmental analysis process (NEPA) has already begun via appropriate biological, archaeological, etc. surveys of a large area that encompasses the specific areas in the drainage, including areas around South Fork and Aspendell, where fire clearance activities may take place. The ASVFVD Board members reviewed very tentative plans that USFS/BLM shared and provided some preliminary recommendations.

Caretaker apartment status:

Inyo County Planning Commission unanimously approved a conditional use permit and issued a building permit for the modifications of the firehouse in Aspendell to accommodate an ASVFVD caretaker. With funds generously provided by the South Fork/Aspendell community to-date, windows have been ordered and construction is expected to begin in the next month or so. Since most of the work necessary is indoors, we expect to be able to take advantage of reduced labor rates for skilled workers otherwise "down for the winter". Our hope is to make significant progress on the reconstruction through the winter, but we will need your financial assistance to cover all costs.

Proper Ash/Coal Disposal:

The days are getting shorter and the nights cooler, so it is a good time to remind residents and visitors alike about proper disposal of ashes and coals. To be safe, simply treat all ashes and coals as hot, even when you think that they have had enough time to cool. To properly dispose of ashes or coals, fire officials recommend the following: If possible, allow ashes and coals to cool in the area where you had the fire for several days. Barbeques and fireplaces are designed to contain their heat safely. When it is time to dispose of the ashes, transfer them to a metal container and wet them down. Keep the metal container outside your home and away from any combustibles. DO NOT place any other combustibles in the metal container. DO NOT use a combustible container.

Please be sure to convey this information to family, friends or others who may use your home.

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Experience with an Aspendell house fire some years ago shows that many are simply unaware of the need for these straightforward precautions. Please see the www.asfvfd.org site for a notice suitable for printing and posting in your home for the benefit of visitors using your home.

Finances:

Your response to our requests for financial support has been extraordinary, and is much appreciated. You make our efforts possible. In addition to ongoing costs for rent, utilities, insurance and vehicle maintenance, we need your support to fund the completion of the caretaker apartment modification, training and additional equipment. Our year round firefighter roster (covered by workers compensation insurance) now has five (5) year round resident members and six (6) in the summer. Two (2) more year round resident-recruits are presently participating in fire drills (as observers) while they are reviewing requisite training materials and hopefully will soon be added to our roster.

Please Support Our Efforts: It is important for all residents/property owners to understand that *we are completely independent* from and *do not receive any financial support from taxes or fees from any other organization or public agency*. We have attached a supporting membership donor stub and enclosed an envelope to simplify the donation process. Checks can be made out to the ASFVFD and mailed to us at 111 Columbine Drive, Bishop, CA 93514. We offer our most sincere thanks in advance.

We'd like to express those thanks publicly; if you are willing to be identified as a contributor, please initial the "yes" blank on the donation form. Otherwise, please initial the "no" blank.

Volunteers Still Needed: In closing, we also need other assistance. As we said in our prior newsletters, if you have skills you would like to offer, please let us know. We still need volunteer firefighters, particularly in the South Fork area, but we also need volunteers engaged in fundraising activities, grant solicitations, web page design and in building/equipment maintenance and repair. If you have ideas for fundraisers or especially willing to help to set-up/oversee such an event, please email us at: asfvfd@asfvfd.org

With best wishes to you and yours, the ASFVFD Board of Directors: Secretary, Joanne Schneider, Treasurer, Mike Johnston, Vice President, Michael McBeth, President, Roy Harthorn & Past President, Joe Hart and of course our indispensable families and dedicated volunteer fire fighters!

***** detach here *****

Donations: Checks can be made out to the **Aspendell South Fork Volunteer Fire Department** and sent to us at 111 Columbine Drive, Bishop, CA 93514. A self-addressed stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Thank you!!!

\$75___ \$100___ \$200___ \$500___ Other \$_____ Caretaker Apt. Project \$_____

Name: _____ Address: _____

Aspendell – South Fork Address: _____

I am willing to be listed as a contributor to the ASFVFD in mailings to the community: **Yes** _____ **No** _____
(the amount of your contribution will not be identified) (initial either yes or no)