

Aspendell South Fork Volunteer Fire Department

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

SPRING NEWSLETTER – June 2015

After some late "winter" weather that brought rain and snow to the Sierra, we are preparing for the summer fire season. We want to report on those efforts and, once again, thank you for your support and encourage those who have yet to do so, to participate.

ASFVFD Training

Training of both full and part time volunteers has (re-) commenced. Four full time resident volunteers have completed classroom and basic field fire fighting training. Three additional volunteer "observers" (two are full time residents and one is a part time resident) are working toward their "operational" status. Our crew is meeting 2x monthly during the summer months; training and will continue through the winter.

The "Round" (Swall Meadows) Fire

Words cannot begin to communicate the devastation and tragic loss of homes in Swall Meadows and Paradise as the result of the February 6, 2015 "Round Valley" Fire. Official, local and pictorial links to articles and reports are posted at www.asfra.net. The Aspendell and South Fork communities are encouraged to contribute to one or more causes supporting the victims of this disaster including one administered by the Bishop Chamber of Commerce. Again, see the www.asfra.net site for more details.

Fire House Security

While we are pleased to advise that we have recovered several costly fittings that were removed from the firehouse (they were found by a hiker partially buried near the winter locked gate), other items such as a recently purchased Sears battery charger and other small items have continued to go missing. Out of concern with these continued problems and the security of both past and future equipment purchases, the Board decided to restrict access to the firehouse and one of our volunteers has changed the lock. New numbered keys stamped "Do Not Duplicate" have been issued to both AMWC and ASFVFD volunteers. Plans for the continued unfettered housing and sharing of the used books at the firehouse are in development. We regret this temporary inconvenience.

Caretaker Apartment

After more than two years of discussion, the ASFVFD and AMWC Boards of Directors unanimously voted their support of a proposed project to remodel the un-used apparatus bay at the Aspendell firehouse to create a caretaker's studio apartment. Permit applications have been filed with Inyo County in furtherance of this proposal.

Providing a living environment for a caretaker will result in the improved care and maintenance of the Aspendell fire station and associated fire apparatus and equipment. In turn, this will result in the improved safety and security and enhance emergency response. If you know of anyone interested in such an opportunity, please let us know. Ideally, this individual will have fire-fighting experience, first aid training and will assist our volunteers and the community. *Financial contributions for this capital project are especially needed.*

Fire Extinguishers

The ASFVFD has installed a commercial grade fire extinguisher outside the firehouse inside an all-weather cabinet. To access it, the safety glass cover must be shattered with the tool provided for that purpose. All homes should have several fire extinguishers maintained in working order and replaced after use or loss of pressure.

Improper Ash/Coal Disposal Continues to be a Problem in Aspendell

To be safe, simply treat all ashes and coals as hot, even when you think they have had time enough to cool. To properly dispose of ashes or coals, fire officials recommend the following: If possible, allow ashes and coals to cool for several days in the area where you had the fire. 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 members, friends or others who may use your home.

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.asfra.net site for a notice suitable for printing and posting in your home for the benefit of visitors using your home.

Finances

Our Fall/Winter campaign significantly improved our financial situation and participation has passed the 50% mark of all property owners with or without homes. With your help we have purchased fire fighting equipment (\$3000), hosted State approved training (\$750), paid annual liability/auto insurance premiums (\$2800) and have funds remaining for rent (\$3600), utilities (\$400) and quarterly workers compensation insurance (\$5200) through the coming fiscal year. We do not have the funds needed to buy equipment and materials needed to equip additional volunteers, establish a needed communication link with South Fork volunteers (a telephone line and siren) or to build the proposed caretaker apartment.

Please Support Our Efforts: It is important for all residents 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 (which are a charitable tax-exempt donation) 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.

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 would be willing to help to set-up/oversee such an event, please let us know at asfra@asfra.net.

With best wishes to you and yours, the Aspendell South Fork Volunteer Fire Department

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Supporting Member 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!!!

\$50___ \$100___ \$200___ \$500___ Other \$_____ Caretaker Apt. Project \$_____

Name: _____ Address: _____

Aspendell – South Fork Address: _____