

# MID-COAST FIRE BRIGADE NEWSLETTER

## DECEMBER 2006

### FROM THE CHIEF

It's hard to believe the end of the year is so close at hand. There is so much news to tell you about, it's hard to know where to begin, but begin I will.

### OUR VOLUNTEERS

We are very pleased to introduce our newest volunteer firefighters, Mary Viergee, Tony Montenegro, Brent Bispo, and Kerri Frangioso. Our new volunteers have completed over 120 hours of training just to start, which included Monterey County Medical First Responder, American Heart Healthcare Provider CPR and AED, Hazardous Materials First Responder and Vehicle Extrication training. This is in addition to the training they attend twice a month to learn firefighting skills.

Along with our new volunteers we have longtime firefighters Scott Bogen, Scott Rainer, Richard Gorton, Norm Cotton, Jake Goetz and myself.

We are very fortunate in our community to have a very dedicated group of individuals who give unselfishly of themselves and of their time, for without them, we would cease to exist. I am very proud of the dedication they continue to show and feel privileged to be a part of this organization. I would also like to thank the significant others of our volunteers, for they give unselfishly as well, missing many family meals, family celebrations and Holidays, it is to you that I am also very grateful.

### UPDATE ON OUR EQUIPMENT

In last years newsletter we announced that we had received a grant from FEMA's Assistance To Firefighters Grant Program. The Brigade was awarded a \$250,000 grant to purchase a new engine. The grant was specific on the type of engine we could obtain and in November of 2005 we awarded the contract to Boise Mobile Equipment to build our new Urban/Interface engine. In May of this year Jake, Norm and myself flew to Boise Idaho to take delivery of our new engine. We drove for three solid days, taking a very indirect route home, but putting the new engine through its paces on the way. We were more than pleased with its performance and the quality of workmanship. The new engine was put into service and went on its first call on July 20<sup>th</sup>.

We are also pleased to announce that in 2005 we received a matching grant award from the Monterey County Regional Parks District. In January of this year we were able to put our new squad into service. The Parks District has also donated a wheeled carrier for our stokes basket. A stokes basket is a plastic basket used in conjunction with a backboard to carry and/or transport patients. This new device will help greatly when removing patients from the back county hiking trails.

We are also pleased to announce the award of a grant from the Office Of Traffic Safety (OTS) in the amount of \$35,000. This grant was awarded to purchase the "Jaws Of Life." Countless times we

### EQUIPMENT UPDATE CONTINUED:

have had to call on our neighbors in Carmel Highlands to assist us in extricating victims of motor vehicle traffic accidents. Requesting assistance means a delay in rescuing the victims. This new tool and the training we received will enable us to provide better service to the citizens of our community.

With new equipment comes a sense of comfort in knowing that our equipment is now reliable. We have also found a sense of pride that our Brigade has not felt before. To all that made the decisions to award our Brigade these grants we are eternally grateful.

### FIRE STATION PROGRESS UPDATE

Progress although slowing down right now has continued to occur at the fire station site. We have finished the backfill and compaction around the fire station, installed the water heater and now have running hot and cold water, the septic tank is installed and I am happy to announce that we now have inside plumbing, gas lines have been installed, plumbing to the upstairs kitchen has been completed, the upstairs bathrooms have been framed in and are awaiting plumbing, and fire sprinklers have been installed. The downstairs bathroom can now be tiled and completed.

There are many people in the community to thank for the progress we have made on the fire station. A very generous community member who wishes to remain anonymous for donating a generator to run the fire station when the power is out, Scott Eagle from Cachagua for electrical work, Brian Patch and Steve Goetz for the installation of the septic system, Mike Stephens for the plumbing (without you we wouldn't be able to flush), Steve Goetz for framing, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection for sending the hand crews to clear brush, help with the backfill, dig trenches and assist in whatever way possible to help us achieve our goal, and last but certainly not least to all who donated last year to allow us the funds to progress.

Additionally I would like to thank the Brigade members for helping every chance they have at the station site, from cleaning up around the outside to raking and filling ditches, your Brigade members have rolled up their sleeves and they are the reason the station is being completed. A special thank you to Norm Cotton for moving a lot of dirt, Scott Rainer for running the tamper during the tedious job of compaction and backfilling, Brent Bispo for building and moving a lot of stuff as well as his framing and drywall skills and for the tile work in the bathroom. Last but not least a special thank you to Jake Goetz for being the plumber, electrician, carpenter, landscaper and all around project guru. He is truly the reason we have made so much progress by giving up almost every day he has off to work at the fire station and putting in more time than any other. From all of us a very heartfelt thank you Jake!

## **BACKYARD BURNING**

Backyard burn season is in effect from December 1, 2006 through April 30, 2007. Although a permit is not required, it is your responsibility to ensure that you are burning in a safe manner. The law clearly states that if a burn escapes, you can be held liable for the damage and suppression costs which quickly add up into the millions of dollars. Please make sure that you burn in piles no larger than 4' x 4' x 4'. A line to bare soil must be cut a minimum of 18 inches wide around each pile. Water must be readily available at the burn site (this means a changed hose) and someone must be in attendance at all times. Before you burn you must call the Air Pollution district to see if it is a permissive burn day. They can be reached at 1-800-225-BURN. The burn status is update daily by 4 p.m. with information about the next days burn status. If you are caught burning on a non-burn day you could face **LARGE** fines. Burn between the hours of 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. Do not add anything to the burn pile after 3pm. Burn only naturally growing vegetation that has been dried. Burning of household trash, rubbish, waste, garbage or left over construction lumber of ant type is now illegal in Monterey County. Last please call the Fire Brigade at 625-8175 and leave your name, telephone number where you can be reached and the address of the location of the burn. This helps us greatly when we are dispatched to a fire at a location we know a burn is occurring.

## **CLEAR ALL FLAMMABLE VEGETATION AROUND YOUR HOME**

In the event of a fire in the community you can help us to help you by clearing around your home and providing the defensible space that firefighters will need to save your home in a fire. In January of 2006 a new law went into effect requiring a minimum of 100-foot clearance around your home. Inspections will begin by spring this year for compliance. Enforcement can mean that the State can impose hefty fines for lack of compliance that can be assessed on your property tax bill. Insurance companies are also calling to ask us if clearance has been done and if addresses are posted, which for some have meant ***cancellation of their insurance policy***. We will be honest when the call is received. Time and time again on countless fires that occur throughout the state, homes that have defensible space have been saved while others will burn to the ground. No fire department, volunteer or professional can provide a fire engine at every home in the event of a fire. They will make a stand and defend the ones that are defensible and that means the ones that have the proper clearance. Clear **all** flammable vegetation around your home a minimum of 100 feet, or to your property line. Replant with fire resistive native vegetation for erosion control. Limb trees 6-8' from the ground and keep your roof and gutters free from pine needles and leaves. Keep woodpiles a minimum of 30' from your home during the summer months. If you are unsure what needs to be done, please call the Brigade and arrange for the Chief to visit your home.

## **'PLEASE DONATE'**

Please send yearly donations. Without your donations the Fire Brigade cannot exist. We currently receive \$28,000 dollars a year from Proposition 172 funds. Currently the Brigade is paying \$12,000 a year for Workers Compensation Insurance and we anticipate those rates to dramatically increase over the next year. We must also carry liability insurance on all our fire apparatus at a cost of \$6,000 per year. This is liability only, with new equipment the cost of compensation and collision would triple our current costs. Next we must carry liability insurance on our property at a cost of \$2,000 per year as well as course of construction insurance at a cost of approximately \$3,000 per year for a total cost of yearly mandatory expenses of \$23,000. These figures do not include maintenance on the equipment, fuel for the apparatus \$1,000 per year, medical supplies \$1,000 per year, equipment replacement such as radios, protective clothing for the firefighters, lost or damaged equipment on calls generally \$5,000 per year, nor does this cover training expenses or allow saving any money for the fire station.

We beg you to donate yearly to the Fire Brigade to continue to have the services available to you that you have become accustomed to having. We have an estimated 469 residences in our area and currently receive donations from only 70 families. We would like to suggest a yearly donation amount of \$200.00 per family, which works out to \$16.67 per month. If you cannot afford \$200.00 please do not let that stop you from donating, any amount will definitely help to continue to assure that this community has life and fire protection. Donations can be sent to:

Mid Coast Fire Brigade  
Palo Colorado Road  
Carmel, CA 93923.

## **FIRE PROTECTION CLASS RATING**

Recently we have received numerous phone calls from insurance companies checking on our fire protection class rating. The information that was passed on to me when I took over as Chief was that our Brigade had a Class Rating of 9. I have recently found out that this is not true. Our Brigade is unrated. What does this mean to you?? Either cancellation of your homeowner's insurance or extremely increased rates. In checking with ISO that provides the ratings, there must be a few items in place before they can rate our Brigade, newer equipment (which we now have) and a fire station. Until the fire station is complete (occupancy certificate) we cannot be rated. We estimate that we are approximately \$20,000 dollars from achieving this goal. Please donate to the Brigade!!! The Brigade is a non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization. Not only will you be helping yourself in lowering the cost of your insurance, you will be helping the community. We are closer than ever to achieving this goal, and your Brigade members have been working hard to ensure that this dream is a reality. Please send in your donation, every dollar helps and each dollar adds up. Whether you are a homeowner or renter, each donation is extremely important.

Mid-Coast Fire Brigade  
Palo Colorado Road  
Carmel, CA 93923

Board Members:

Cheryl Goetz – President

Jake Goetz – Vice President

Scott Bogen – Secretary

Scott Rainer – Treasurer

John Haines – Member

Pam Peck – Member

Kira Godbe – Member

**VISIT US AT OUR WEBSITE**

**[WWW.MIDCOASTFIREBRIGADE.ORG](http://WWW.MIDCOASTFIREBRIGADE.ORG)**