

Aeneas Valley Fire District Newsletter

May 2009

This newsletter is an unofficial publication whose intent is to communicate with and inform the public on items of general interest. Every effort is made to insure the accuracy of the content, but if discrepancies occur between official paperwork and this newsletter then use the official source first.

The Washington Surveying and Rating Bureau (WSRB) has given part of our district a rating of nine. The WSRB is an independent source of underwriting information for the property insurance industry in the state of Washington. They have changed their rating for a large portion of our district from a ten to a nine. If you live within five road miles of 461 Cape Labelle this could mean a discount on your home insurance. Contact your insurance agent for more information. OCFPD 16 is looking to expand this area by storing an engine somewhere on the valley floor and is seeking space in a warm garage. If you could provide such a space please contact the district.

District status entering 2009 fire season: We are entering the coming fire season with 22 active firefighters (up from 19 ending 2008). As for vehicles we have 3 wildland engines (up 1 from 2008)), 1 structural engine, 2 district owned water tenders (up 2, see “**more equipment**”) and 1 contract water tender. We should be adding one more 1500 gallon contract tender shortly. This will give us 8700 gallons of “mobile water”, not counting what the fire engines carry. Besides vehicle based water we will be creating stationary water caches that should give us about 6300 gallons of emergency water. The equipment and water supplies will be spread around the district for maximum effectiveness.

More equipment: Chelan District 9 has donated a Cascade air system to our district. This comes in its own $\frac{3}{4}$ ton van and will allow us to recharge air bottles for our breathing apparatus on scene. It's important because presently the time we can spend “in the smoke” is limited. They also made a very generous offer to sell the district a surplus 6x6 5-ton 3,000 gallon water tender (pictured here) in excellent condition. This offer was accepted by the commissioners at the May 11 public work session. In related news a 1200 gallon fuel truck that was donated to us by DNR last year was just converted to a water tender and brought online within the last few days. There is still some finish work to do but it is loaded with water and ready to roll now.



Heads up: Fire season has started. Aeneas Valley could right now sustain a running fire. Don't be fooled by the recent light rains/snow we have had. It takes less than a day for the grass to be burnable again. It is DNR's practice to bill the responsible parties for the cost of putting out a fire. While most don't get as big as last year's Cayuse fire (it cost millions) they very quickly get into the thousands of dollars range. So, do you have that much discretionary income?

Grant activity: We are close to wrapping up activity on the 2008 AFG grant awarded last year. Purchase has been completed on our list of requested items. Through careful shopping we ended up

with unspent money on the grant, which we are now allowed to spend as we see fit. It will go for extra vehicle radios, fittings for a new type 4 wildland engine, radio packs and web gear for our firefighters and a drop tank (foldable water tank). We also just submitted two 2009 grant requests for 1) new structural and wildland protective clothing and gear for our firefighters (\$63,500), and 2) a new fully equipped 3,000 gallon water tender (\$166,500). Being as how our share would only be 5% of the costs these are very competitive grants. Decisions are expected later this year.

Fire training this spring: Our district bi-weekly training sessions have switched from structural to wildland. DNR sanctioned classroom training covered; 40 hours redcard instruction for 6 new firefighters (FF2's); 32 hours for 4 FF1's going for engine/crew boss; and an 8 hour yearly refresher for all red card holders. This puts us on par, in level of training, with many other Okanogan districts that have been in existence decades longer and have more volunteers.

Fire district land purchase: The fire district is in the process of purchasing land for a possible future fire station. Stay tuned for more information on this.

Annexation activity: Some valley residents have been working on getting additional land annexed into our fire district. The final boundaries have not been determined yet. The district would probably not realize any significant tax benefit for several years. More importantly though we would be able to make a better case for obtaining grants that could benefit us more than the increased tax income. Assuming no snags, the annexation would go through this year.

District 16 is seeking frontline firefighters. As we gear up for another fire season we are seeking applicants to train and work as firefighters in the valley. If you are interested in volunteering for the district please contact Tim Kenyon at 486-1229 or write to PO Box 645 Tonasket, WA 98855 for an employment application.

Firefighters complete CPR/AED training. In February our firefighters completed one of two day long classes in CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer and the Healthcare Provider and earned their Red Cross certification. A Bloodborne Pathogen class was also held and the district plans to continue with Red Cross Emergency Response training. This is a benefit to our area as emergency medical response time can be long.

Plans are in the works for a fire department day. We are planning a day this summer to have department equipment and personnel available to the public. This will be an opportunity for anyone interested to come and check out the vehicles, ask questions and socialize. We will keep you posted when a date and location are decided upon.

That completes our fourth newsletter. We're still looking forward to your comments and questions. To subscribe, ask questions or make comments please send an email to "avfdnews@amerion.com". Questions can also be mailed to "Okanogan FPD 16, PO Box 645, Tonasket WA 98855-0645". Remember, you probably won't get answers to your questions or concerns if you don't ask! Sorry but this newsletter will only be distributed via email or bulletin board as it's not a funded activity. A small number of paper copies are available at the fire commissioners meetings. A private website with meeting minutes and newsletters is at www.aeneasvalleywa.org. Click on "Fire District Info"