

Aeneas Valley Fire District Newsletter

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

This year has been the polar opposite of last year. We didn't have any significant wildfires in the valley and total call volume was way down. We did spend a lot of time, money and effort upgrading our vehicles, capabilities and even district size. The major changes are listed below.

2016 Year end stats: Personnel: We have 28 firefighters, 4 of those being trained EMTs. **Vehicles:** Our active vehicle inventory is 14 vehicles (5 wildland engines, 1 rescue/wildland/structure engine, 4 structure engines, 3 water tenders and 1 emergency aid unit). **Responses (through Dec 2):** FD 16 made 43 responses to 41 callouts involving 130 vehicles (33 FD16 and 97 private) and 194 FD16 personnel with another 48 standing by. Types of calls were: 23 Medical, 4 structure fires, 1 vehicle accidents, 12 wildland fires, 1 Other and 1 false alarm. Some callouts involved multiple incident types (i.e. structure and wildland fire with medical, wildland fire and other rescue etc.). One death occurred as the result of an auto accident. **Financial:** Income for 2016 (Jan-Nov) (some amounts were listed for 2015 but received this year) was \$165,832 (taxes = \$48,814, grants = \$69,428, fee for service = \$47,270, donations = \$125). Total spending (Jan-Dec) = \$253,509.

Annexation: approximately 7 square miles was annexed into the district in the Lyman Lake/Warwick Rd area of the Valley. Because the petition was signed by over 60% of the registered voters it did not have to be approved in a general election. The increase in tax revenue to the district will be \$9,928 in 2017. The blue dashed lines represent the new boundaries on that end of the fire district.



Equipment Upgrades:

Communications - We installed a FD 16 radio repeater within the valley. It's exceeded our expectations on extending radio coverage. We now operate with 2 tactical channels (for on scene incident management) and a command channel (repeater) for coordinating actions valley wide.

Structure engine - A significant capability upgrade was the purchase of a 1992 International cold weather 4x4 structure engine. It expands our ability to respond during freezing weather in a vehicle built for such weather in places our rear wheel drive structure engines cannot.





Rescue vehicle – This 2005 Kodiak is a replacement vehicle for our current 1-ton rescue vehicle as well as being capable of fighting both wildland and structure fires with its 4x4 drive and 500 gallons of water. We added a service box purchased from FD 4 to support its multi-function role.

2009 Freightliner 6x6 truck tractor. We picked up a similar Freightliner (rear wheel drive only) two years back and turned it into a water tender. The new Freightliner, when completed,



Future Tactical Tender > This vehicle was picked up just weeks ago. It is a Freightliner, when completed, will have a 3,000 gallon tank and the ability to actually fight fire when it arrives on scene. Key to this ability will be the addition of a monitor (water cannon) controlled from inside the cab. It should look very similar to the previously renovated Freightliner (see picture on left). The plan is for this one truck to replace two old military vehicles (a 5-ton water tender and a 2 ½ ton brush truck).



Emergency Medical Support: This year has seen a decrease in the time it can take to get an injured or ill patient to medical care facility. Three things made this possible. **1)** Lifeline Ambulance contracted with the Tonasket EMS district to provide advanced life support services for that area. This meant 24/7 full time staffing of trained medics, which typically cut response times to Aeneas Valley by 5 – 10 minutes. **2)** Northwest MedStar integrated into the Life Flight network (a not-for-profit group). With helicopters/crews stationed in Brewster and Spokane they can get here in a shorter amount of time. A big change is that now FD 16 personnel can now get a chopper enroute if it's deemed medically necessary, even before Tonasket EMS arrives on scene. **3)** FD 16 personnel train with both Tonasket EMS and Life Flight to support them on scene. This makes it a coordinated team action that usually gets the patient on the way to appropriate medical care quicker than in the past. For Life Flight we can set up and mark a landing zone near the incident for faster pickup.

Life Flight network membership: Air Ambulance service costs run in the multiple thousands of dollars. You may find your medical insurance doesn't cover the entire cost. With a Life Flight membership they will handle the insurance billing and cover any shortfall in payment. Their coverage area is large (4 states) and the price is very reasonable (currently \$60 per year). Go to lifeflight.org on the web for more details.

This completes our thirteenth newsletter. We solicit your comments and questions, which can be mailed to "Okanogan FPD 16, PO Box 645, Tonasket WA 98855-0645". This newsletter will only be published via email, bulletin board and web site (aeneasvalleyfire.com). A small number of paper copies are available at the monthly commissioners meetings.