

Smokescreen

October 2011

A Newsletter Publication of Missoula Rural Fire District

NATIONAL BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH



Local 2457 supports
breast cancer awareness in October.

See inside for details!

Missoula Rural Fire District
2521 South Ave W
Missoula, MT 59804
www.mrfdfire.org

October 2011



SMOKESCREEN



October 2011

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

By District Fire Chief Bill Colwell

The West Riverside fire was a significant challenge for MRFD and for all of the area agencies and partners who were part of that suppression effort.

One of the things that came out of that, however, was a very good understanding of our working relationship with our partners and surrounding agencies, and how effective that it really is. The purpose



of this article is to truly applaud and congratulate all the people who participated in the suppression of that fire and thank all the members of MRFD and the agencies that we participate with and cooperate with for their efforts: not only on the suppression in the attack of this fire, but also for their efforts in training in the cooperative spirit that helps us work so effectively in this community.

A significant part of that fire that I want to visit about is the initial attack operation and the first hours of the fire as it came together, and the importance of those first few hours in the long-term outcome of that fire. The Mark Grant overhead team came in from northern Idaho to the command that fire; they are a Type II management team. They repeatedly, in planning meetings and strategy meetings, talked about the fact that the initial attack by local government and local resources had established the foundation for an effective transition for them and for the basis for a good outcome for the fire. The initial attack was conducted truly by three agencies that were automatically dispatched for mutual aid: MRFD Station 4, East Missoula, and it happened that there was a DNRC engine filling with fuel at Town Pump. The DNRC engine and the engine from Station 4 responded parallel and almost arrived simultaneously. Both engine officers announced command, and then unified and went to work immediately: Missoula Rural Fire doing structure protection and DNRC doing fire suppression by advancing on the hill. The work that was done from then on included: East Missoula, Clinton, Frenchtown, Missoula City, and also Florence Fire who helped to take care of some of the other responses for MRFD. The partnership that exists between all of these organizations, and the amount of communications and things that went on, provided the ability for all of those units to be effective in establishing goals, communicating with each other, and performing their duties.

Continued next page....

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- Oct 8 Brandon Penrose
- Oct 9 Dodd McDermott
- Oct 15 Keith Lerback
- Oct 17 Creighton Sayles
- Oct 20 Jason Butler
- Oct 21 Matt Bolton
- Oct 27 Lucy Deaton
- Oct 27 Niqole Roybal
- Oct 29 Tim Murphy
- Oct 31 Blake Hance

Happy Birthday!

ATTENTION VOLUNTEERS!

Each Volunteer and Resident must have their completed report turned in by the 10th of each month, to ensure that they have no lapse in their worker's compensation coverage.

The primary purpose for the time record is to record your shift time.

Please note that the section for "training" hours refers to the training activities hosted by the training division.

If you respond to an incident in addition to your normal volunteer shift, please also record that under "incidents" on your time record.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF — CONTINUED

I talked about the agencies to this point. But in truth, the true response in doing the job comes down to each individual firefighter, each individual fire officer, each individual person who puts themselves out there in that situation to help the public to take care of this emergency. The preparation and the training that those people take is what helps them to work together effectively: so that the communication can happen, and so the suppression efforts can happen in the safe and efficient manner.



One of the things that was very impressive about this fire as it increased in size (and it was impressive in how it increased), but one of the primary things that we managed to achieve was safety. As this fire progressed, there were over 700 firefighters that participated in the containment effort. As of the writing of this article, to my knowledge there were only three injuries of significance on this fire and those certainly are survivable incidents: one was a severely sprained knee, one was a broken wrist, and the other was a fairly severe sprained ankle. However, in the kind of terrain that the firefighters were working, the rough roads, the narrow accesses, the access to Highway 200 and that number of vehicles coming and going, that is a significant safety record in itself.



The management team that came in to help manage this fire had a lot of experience, and that experience included working effectively with the community and with the media. I was very impressed with the management of the media and the ability that they had to go to the citizens to effectively communicate twice-daily with the citizenry. Regarding the local fire departments: the ability to have the incident action plans electronically distributed to the local fire departments, so that all firefighters in the community knew what the action plans were and what the fire behavior anticipations for the given day were, was a very effective tool in my mind, and a very effective means of helping the community feel at ease and more comfortable with the activities that were going on up on the hill.

So with that, I hope that the District is experiencing a quiet October as we come out of a busy September. I particularly want to thank the people from MRFD who stood up and worked shifts at work, would catch a few hours of sleep, and then go back out on the fire suppression effort on an engine or a water tender. That contribution to help the extended attack is well recognized and very much appreciated.

OPERATIONS REPORT

By Assistant Chief Brent L. Christopherson

The Missoula Rural Fire District is continuing to look at upgrading our current apparatus. The Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program is one such way that we can attempt to do that.

Through the assistance of Deputy Chief Finlay, Resource Manager Gieser, Office Manager Golden and Captain Paulsen, we will attempt to be awarded monies

for a Tanker/Tender this year. This piece of apparatus would be used at Station #2 to replace our aging 1973 Tender, which is currently still in service.



We have been successful in several of our grants in the past, and missed a few as well. The motto here is we have to at least try. We will continue to try and do what we can while these types of grants are available, so that we are able to keep our firefighters and citizens safe. We certainly appreciate all that each of you do to help keep our equipment in good working order. Special kudos goes out to Resource Manager Gieser in this regard, and also to those of you who use the equipment each day and help keep it in good working order to be able to be used at a moment's notice. Keep up the good work everyone and thanks to each of you that help our citizens each and every day live in a safer place.

Child Safety Seat Checkup Events

WHEN: Friday, Oct. 7th and Saturday, Nov 12th
10:00 a.m. — 2:00 p.m.

Appointment is Required!

WHERE: MRFD Station #1
2521 South Ave West



If you, or someone you know, would like to have help in getting a child's car seat or booster seat inspected/installed, please contact Station 1 at 549-6172 to schedule a free appointment!

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Also, for those of you that may be unaware, the pink shirts that we will be wearing on duty are being made and are looking good! We are Tough Enough to Wear Pink...right?

Anyway, our goal is to sell as many of these shirts as we possibly can. We have 500 of them on the way, and hopefully we will need to order more! "Care Enough to Wear Pink" shirts will sell for \$15 a piece, and all of the proceeds will go to the Tough Enough to Wear Pink Foundation. If you, or someone you know, would like to purchase a shirt, please contact a member of the Station 1 engine crew for details.

Thanks,

The "Care Enough to Wear Pink" Committee
IAFF Local 2457
Missoula Rural Fire District



Save the Date!

**MRFD Annual
Christmas Party!**

Saturday, Dec. 3rd

Invitations to follow!

BOT MEETINGS

The following is not a complete record. Contact Heidi at Station 1 if you would like a complete copy of meeting minutes.

BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEETING, AUG 9, 2011

LOCAL 2457: *Engineer Pete Giardino reported:* The annual "Fill the Boot" fund raiser will take place on September 3rd. This will be a joint venture of the Local 2457 and the Volunteers Association; our member Jason Butler is the lead in getting the permits and in organizing the details. We are looking to do a station in Lolo at Harvest Foods, in Bonner at the Town Pump, and possibly in Missoula on Clements Road near Dale's Dairy.

STAFF REPORTS: *Office Manager Dale Golden reported:* Starting in September, the Smokescreen is going digital. Our retired members will continue to receive a hard-copy in the mail, but our career firefighters and volunteers will access it on the internet on our website. The exception to this will be for invitations to events such as the awards banquet, where we will mail out an invitation to request an RSVP. We estimate that we will save several hundred dollars a year in postage. Of course, Heidi always has extra copies in the front office for anyone wanting a hardcopy.

Assistant Chief Brent Christopherson reported: This October at the upcoming Career Chiefs meeting, we will be having Jeff Johnson come in to talk about rural Fire Authority agreements and his experience with those. He is now retired, but he is part of the IFC and quite involved in that endeavor. The career chiefs from around the state want to hear from him, with the goal of partnering with the career firefighters from around the state and developing a committee to work on this before the next legislature.

NEW BUSINESS: *50th Anniversary Picnic Celebration:* Office Manager Dale Golden said that she met with Paul Finlay, Marvin Hess and Greg Orr and they have agreed to have the picnic on a Saturday at 2pm, in the middle of October. There will be burgers, hotdogs, chips, and everyone brings a salad. We will have games and volleyball nets set up, and we will have prizes and T-shirts to handout. OM Golden gave the board members a copy of the invitation for the picnic. Invitations will be mailed out soon with the date and the RSVP information so that people can provide us with the T-shirt sizes. This will be for the kids too, as this is a family event. We are planning games and door prizes, and weather permitting we will also have water sports. We are combining expenses in a cooperative effort between the Local 2457, the Volunteers Association, and MRFD. Chair Hanson said that this picnic idea has brought back some memories, and she and Secretary Larry Hanson shared about a time when she used the fire hose on a barrel in a competition against the local National Guard unit. She also remembers when we used to do Jello eggs for an egg toss. She offered to help with game ideas and prizes.

Missoula Rural Fire District

Is Celebrating 50 Years of Service in our Community!

You are invited to join us for an afternoon of fun, food, reminiscing, and games.



**Saturday, October 15th at 2:00 PM.
Station 1, 2521 South Avenue West**

Picnic lunch of burgers and hotdogs will be served!

Please bring a favorite salad to share!

Volley Ball and water games (weather permitting), prizes and t-shirts!
Bring your family and come join in the fun!

RSVP by Friday, October 7 to Heidi at Station 1, by mail to: 2521 South Avenue West, Missoula, MT 59804 or call 549-6172.

_____ Number attending (including kids)

T-shirt size: _____ Adults

_____ Kids