



Spring 2011



San Luis Obispo Unit Spring 2011

CALFIRE/San Luis Obispo County Fire

Issue No. 4

Message from Acting Chief Lewin

While we have fire season and training season, we also have budget season. We are currently in the middle of the budget season and anyone following the news knows that this budget season is more severe than ever before. From Washington DC to the small communities in our County, budgets are shrinking. And while they shrink, demand for service is still increasing. In the past public safety agencies have been protected from making deep cuts, but now we are also being asked to make those difficult cuts.

Our Unit has always done a great job at being very efficient. Less than 7% of our personnel are in administrative and support positions. It is common for Departments like ours to be in the 15 to 20% range. How do we do this? We do it because we ask a lot of our administrative and support personnel. We do it because we depend on people in operations to be called upon to do purchasing, write grants, manage schedules, contribute to committees, sit on interview panels, give public presentations and much more. Because we do not have any extra, it means that when we are asked to look at cuts, those cuts will need to come from operations. Therefore, the cuts we make will have an impact on what we do.

My position on where to make recommendations on budget cuts is to protect equipment purchases and maintain essential training. We need reliable equipment and quality training to do our jobs and fulfill our mission. If we do not know how to do our jobs well or have the equipment to do the job right, we are ineffective. I would rather see a smaller Department that is effective than a large one ill equipped or poorly trained.

So while we go through this budget season I assure you we are doing all we can to keep our Department strong and find those reductions that do not affect our mission of protecting life, property and natural resources.

That is what we do. That is who we are.

Inside this issue:

<i>Battalions 1, 2</i>	2, 3
<i>Battalions 6</i>	4
<i>Special Recognition</i>	5
<i>Facebook</i>	6, 7
<i>Kudo's</i>	8
<i>Relay for Life</i>	9
<i>Story from the Vault</i>	10,11
<i>Physical Fitness</i>	12,13
<i>Retirees</i>	14
<i>Benevolent Associa-</i>	15

Please keep submitting your articles for future publications!

Next publication will be "Summer 2011"

Articles due by

June 1, 2011

THANK YOU!

Battalion 1 - 3411 ~ Phill Veneris

Station 10 – Personnel and Region Staff have been busy on projects including replacing gas and water lines from the street to the station with help from South County Shop HFEOs. A kitchen remodel is also underway, adding more fun to the shift.

A new SFM assigned to SLO County has reinvigorated the Hearst Castle State Park inspection program, so in between pounding hammers and digging trenches the crew has been busy inspecting state buildings.

Station 11 – Personnel have been busy as the station replacement project moves forward and paperwork continues with the unit forester and the region engineer. The Cooperative Agreement with Cayucos FD for Amador Fire Protection is working well resulting in good interagency relationships. The SCBA 'Head' has returned and staff has started annual SCBA testing. As the units Hired Equipment Coordinator this is now their busy season with nearly 1000 contracts to validate before fire season begins, so be ready for a busy signal if you call St 11.

Station 12 – The crew has been helping the HFEOs on engine maintenance in addition to pump testing engines as they come in. Several small projects around the complex have been completed, as well as a lot of training.

Station 14 – St 11 and 14 staff are in the initial stages of several projects including upgrades to the apparatus barn which will significantly improve its appearance and safety. This project could not take place without the support of Retired BC Giubbini.

Station 15 – Late winter is budget time and staff has been working on preparing a new budget for the LOCSD, as well as making final purchases. Several meetings have been held with US Fish and Wildlife Service staff to start implementing hazard abatement projects identified in the Los Osos Community

Battalion 2 - 3412 ~ Bill Fisher

On January 7, 2011 at approx 9pm ME 20-responded to a PSA for a dog in a hole in the west Nipomo area. When they arrived at scene they realized they had a full blown confined space rescue for a 190 lb mastiff that fell into a 20ft deep well in a backyard that gave way due to the rains. Station 20 personnel along with R21 and TRT were able to send a rescuer down the narrow hole (3 ft diameter) using an A-frame ladder set-up with a 4:1 rope system. "Cedric" the mastiff was lifted safely with a harness from the pit to an applause of neighbors and friends. Live coverage was also shot by news channels. The dog is doing great and luckily suffered no injuries from the fall. Great job from all involved with the rescue.



2 new Company 20 members on the PCF company

Update on Lauri Coalwell, doing great and happy to be getting her life back to normal and spending time with her family. Trajan had his first birthday party in January with friends and family in attendance. Congratulations Garon and Lauri!

Battalion 3 - 3413 ~ Steve Crawford

Company 30 Confined Space Rescue Training February 28, 2011



Battalion 4— 3414 ~Tim Eckles

- John Montgomery received the Mason's Firefighter of the Year Award - March 12, 2011 (see Special Recognition page)
- FAE Kevin McLean is back in "full-service" after physical fitness injury suffered between week 2 & 3 of AHC Post. Kevin has been selected to attend POST at Cal Fire Academy in Lone winter 2011 and most recently was appointed to Fire Captain, Limited Term. Also, for those of you who don't know, Kevin is engaged to be married later this year! CONGRATULATIONS Kevin!
- NEW E-40 is in "full service" and operating well; thanks to the Equipment Committee, NC Shop and Robert Gorman for the In-Service work.
- NEW Station 43 is waiting for "ground breaking" ~ set to happen April 20, 2011.
- Solar Power Plants on the Carissa Plains should bring 24/7 staffing for Area 42.
- Wildflowers should be on full display in the East County beginning late March - April.

Battalion 6 - 3416 ~ Steve Reeder

Station 62

The apparatus bay addition is progressing on schedule. All of the cement work is completed and the exterior walls are framed. We will be moving all equipment out of the apparatus bay as the existing roof is removed and re-framed to the new exterior walls.

Approximately 25 personnel from Company 62 and Company 64 participated in high-rise training at the Avila Beach Inn on Saturday, February 26. Subjects covered were alarm panels, elevator controls, utilities and building orientation. We finished off the training with scenarios that included search and rescue various hose evolutions.



We were busy on Friday, March 11 with the tsunami warning and response. All beaches, piers, the downtown area of Avila Beach, boats in the harbor and the RV area were evacuated and all displaced citizens were sent to the PG&E Visitors Center. Reverse 9-1-1 was utilized to make evacuation notices and worked very well. CAL FIRE resources that were staffed and available for any emergency need included 3 fire engines, 1 breathing support, 2 boats and 2 overhead.

Station 63

Local firefighters competing in CrossFit Games Sectional Open

Being fit is very important for a firefighter and some of our very own CALFIRE firefighters and Paid Call firefighters will be competing in the largest World Wide Fitness competition ever. Bill Grundler, Josh Snider, Stephen Martin, and Jamie Samano will be competing for a birth to the CrossFit Games.

The 2011 CrossFit GAMES is a worldwide event to find the fittest man and woman on the planet. This is the 5th year of the competition and since CrossFit has gone into a contract with Reebok, this year's winner will not only get the title of the Fittest Man or Woman on the Planet, but will also win \$250,000.00. The criteria for being fit is to be strong, powerful, fast, flexible, coordinated, and have endurance, stamina, balance, agility and accuracy. If one meets the criteria in all of these areas then they are the most well rounded athlete and considered fit for any job related, sport related, or life related task.

The event has 2 qualifying steps prior to making it to the actual CrossFit Games. The first step is the CrossFit Games Sectional Open. This is a 6 week worldwide competition in which each person competing will perform 1 workout each week. The Sectional Event starts March 19, 2011 and will end April 23, 2011. Battalion 6 wishes all CAL FIRE competitors well!

Station 64

We have just completed recruitment for Reserve firefighters. We held interviews for 11 applicants and sent conditional offer letters to 4 candidates. All 20 positions will be filled on Company 64.

We hire 25 lifeguards each season to provide beach safety in the City of Pismo Beach. We conducted qualifying swim tests and interviews in March for returning lifeguards and new hires. Lifeguards will staff the towers from Memorial Day through Labor Day. We concluded with Rescue Water Craft training for boat qualified lifeguards.

Pismo Beach Firefighter and Lifeguard of the Year 2011

Pismo Beach Fire Captain Denny O'Neil receives the **Firefighter of the Year** award from Pismo Beach City Mayor Shelly Higginbotham at the City Council Meeting on February 1, 2011 ~ Congratulations Denny!



At the same City Council Meeting, Lifeguard Renee Roy receives the **Lifeguard of the Year** award from Mayor Shelly Higginbotham ~ Congratulations Renee!



Special Recognition...

December 19, 2010

Masonic Center
San Luis Obispo

2011 Firefighter's Appreciation Dinner



I am nominating CDF/San Luis Obispo Fire Captain John Montgomery for recognition at the 2007 Masonic Firefighter's Appreciation Dinner.

Captain Montgomery has over 32 years of public service as an employee of the California Department of Forestry and San Luis Obispo County Fire. He is currently the Station Captain at the Cal Fire La Panza Station #41 in eastern San Luis Obispo County. From 2005 – 2009, he coordinated the construction of the Fire Station #42 project and in-service build up and outfitting of Engine 42.

John is a member of the CDF/San Luis Obispo County Fire Equipment Committee. His knowledge and experience has contributed to design of emergency service equipment throughout San Luis Obispo County.

John's previous experience includes various Station and Administrative assignments within the CDF and San Luis Obispo County Fire organization. He has worked as a Fire Crew Supervisor at both the Cuesta and Los Robles Fire Crew Camps. He is a qualified Food Unit Leader providing support services to thousands of firefighters throughout California. John became a qualified Air Tactical Supervisor during his assignment at Paso Robles Air Attack Base. He maintains his Air Support qualifications and travels throughout the nation to support air operations.



While raising his family in northern San Luis Obispo County John was successful as a Softball Coach. His accomplishments coaching athletes was an extension of his personal and professional abilities within the Fire Service.

John Montgomery continues his excellent work and public service ethics as he mentors our new employees. He remains an example for other Fire Service employees to aspire.

Sincerely,

TIM ECKLES
CDF/SLO Battalion Chief 3414



Do You Facebook? Submitted by Phill Veneris

The Dos and Don'ts of Social Networking Sites for Fire Fighters

By Dawniell Zavala of Mastagni, Holstedt, Amick, Miller and Johnsen

It seems like just about everyone these days has a profile on Facebook, a MySpace page, or uses Twitter. The “blogosphere” has become an accepted source of public information. Even respected online news sources permit readers to post comments and letters in response to published pieces, and countless other websites provide electronic forums on every topic imaginable, open to and accessible by the general public. As interpersonal interaction increasingly takes place in a virtual society, it is easy to blur the lines between behaviors we immediately recognize as questionable or inappropriate in the real world and those we feel comfortable with engaging in online. The detachment and semi-anonymity inherent in online interaction tend to empower our ids to the point where we feel comfortable taking risks on the internet that we wouldn't dream of taking in real life.

While it's tempting to utilize the internet to create a bolder, edgier, more exciting persona for ourselves or to publicize our activities to a select group of friends, it is extremely important for fire fighters to consider the impact their online activities – and even the online activities of others – may have on a fire fighter's professional reputation and on the public's perception of his or her agency and fellow fire fighters. Although fire fighters, just as civilians, are entitled to First Amendment protections, fire fighters must strive to maintain an aura of professionalism online to a greater extent than the average citizen. Moreover, while many online forums and social networking sites are password protected or require users to be “friends” with an individual before a profile may be accessed, these minimal protections are insufficient to ensure a fire fighter's online posted information will remain private.

So with this in mind, what types of activities on social networking sites should officers refrain from? And what should a fire fighter do if they know or suspect that someone else has publicized unflattering information about them online?

First, the DON'TS of social networking sites for fire fighters:

- DON'T expect that anything you post online will remain private, even if the sites at which the items are posted provide some privacy measures.
- DON'T post photographs of yourself in uniform or allow others to post them.
- DON'T otherwise identify yourself as a fire fighter in your online profile.
- DON'T post information regarding activities you or others have engaged in – even if they occurred off-duty – that are likely to degrade public opinion of your agency or fellow fire fighters.
- DON'T join networks or groups on social networking sites that may be perceived as racist, sexist, or that affiliation with may otherwise suggest improper bias against specific members of the public or protected groups.

- DON'T badmouth your agency, your superiors, or your peers online. Although criticism against certain employment *policies* are constitutionally protected, it is best to refrain from mentioning your employer altogether, since such comments can easily be taken out of context or misconstrued.
- DON'T allow other individuals to post offensive content to your profile, blog, or website.
- DON'T discuss or post photos of sensitive matters that you know of or have access to because of your position (e.g., ongoing investigations, crime scene photos, etc.).

Now, the DOS:

- DO think twice about the activity you engage in online!
- DO act as though everything you post can be seen by your employer or coworkers and may potentially form the basis of a disciplinary action against you.
- DO use common sense! Items or comments that may embarrass you, your fellow officers or your department, or that can later be used to impeach your character should not be posted online.
- DO maximize your profile's privacy settings on social networking sites.
- DO be conscientious about who you "friend" or allow to access your profile, blog, website, etc. Remember that some social networking sites permit "friends of friends" to view and access information their contacts have commented on or have been tagged in. This means your content may be viewed by unintended parties, even if you did not personally grant them access.
- DO "untag" yourself in unflattering photos posted by others, or ask posters to remove the photos altogether.
- DO delete entries or comments posted to your profile, blog or website by others that are inappropriate or that you would not want your employer or members of the general public to read.

In summary, bear in mind that postings by or about you on the internet will not remain off-limits to your employer for disciplinary purposes. While fire fighters do have free speech protections, these protections are somewhat limited because fire fighters hold a powerful public position. Any activity, whether it takes place on-duty or off, can justify discipline if it undermines the perceived integrity of a fire fighter or his or her employer. Even private activities seemingly unrelated to your employment can provide a basis for discipline if they undermine the mission of the employer or bring the professionalism of its employees into serious dispute.

The image shows the Facebook logo, which consists of the word "facebook" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font, centered within a solid blue rectangular background.

Kudos and Congratulations!

CONGRATULATIONS TO SLU NEW LIMITED TERM

FIRE CAPTAINS!

- JEREMY HEINBACH
- ZACHARY NICHOLS
- BRETT WALKER
 - FRANK PAZ
- KEVIN MCLEAN
- NICOLAS GELOS

Also promoting to other Units are:

- CHAD MITCHELL (TUU)
- TIM BERGET (BEU)

New Permanent FAE's

(as of 5/2/11)

GEORGE HUANG
AMBER HENDERSON
BRANDON RAMLER
MICHELLE CRAMER
MICHAEL ROE
PATRICK HIBBARD



FAE LT's ~ Summer 2011

MISTY BLAKE
JAMIE SAMANO
STEPHANIE DININNI
TRAVIS ROBERTSON
RUBEN ANAYA
RANDY IBAY
JASON VESTERFELT
STEVE MARTIN
ROGER RINEHART
MARCUS DUNLAP
RICHARD LANCASTER
BEN GRAVES
PETER CAMPBELL
JOHN BYRNE
MORGAN PARTRIDGE
JOE HATCH

Sent: Wednesday, January 26, 2011

Subject: PCF Firefighter Dan Sutton

Dan Sutton, received an award for excellence for people under 40 years old. Dan is well deserving of this award and we are so lucky to have this community leader as part of our Department. ~ Bravo Dan!

Thank you to Fire Capt. Kirk Gramberg, Engineer George Huang and Fire Inspector Clint Bullard for representing our Department so well in the Atascadero News January 28, 2011 article about the new Creston Station.

http://www.atascaderonews.com/v2_news_articles.php?heading=0&story_id=3492&page=72

Sent: Monday, February 14, 2011

I received the email below from SLO City Fire Chief Charlie Hines. I want to extend my appreciation to all of you for your daily efforts at working so well with out allied agencies. This is an example of the on the ground cooperation that is so important in meeting the mission of protecting life, property and natural resources, regardless of jurisdiction.

Most Appreciatively,

Robert Lewin, Acting Chief

From: Hines, Charlie [mailto:chines@slocity.org]

Sent: Monday, February 14, 2011

Hi Rob,

As you know we recently had a fatality structure fire in the city. Upon arrival, I was assigned to a division & had the opportunity to work with the crews from Station 21. I assigned them to some firefighting & very labor intensive overhaul. I found them to have a positive attitude & eager to engage in operations. This was my first opportunity to work (first hand) with your professional crews & paid call personnel. They made a good first impression. In addition, Battalion Chief Chad Zrelak conducted the investigation. The report was sitting on my desk Monday morning. In 35 years I have never received a report (from a fatality fire) this quick. As I read it, I found it to be accurate, thorough & overall, very professional.

Thank you,

Charlie

"Relay for Life" ~ CAL FIRE /SLO County Fire Team



Corrin Clark in the ECC is spearheading a committee to put together a CAL FIRE/SLO County Fire RELAY FOR LIFE Team this year... More to come...



French Hospital Medical Center
A member of CHW

January 18, 2011



Thank you for your efforts in helping obtain the generous gift of \$1,214.51 to the French Hospital Medical Center Foundation from the CAL FIRE fundraising event "Cares Enough to Wear Pink Campaign". This donation will help support the Hearst Cancer Resource Center (HCRC) at French Hospital Medical Center.

We are so inspired by the many employees who participated in this voluntary fundraiser and, thus made this very generous donation possible. Please convey our sincerest gratitude to the entire San Luis Obispo CAL FIRE Unit for making such a difference in the lives of so many cancer patients.

As you know, the HCRC provides supportive and educational services necessary for cancer patients to understand their disease, tolerate treatment, and maintain dignity and quality of life throughout all aspects of their cancer experience.

Since opening in 2008, the HCRC has experienced more than 17,000 visits and contacts from cancer patients and family members, as well as many cancer support organizations, free of charge. Without your support, the HCRC could not provide such comprehensive programs and services to our community.

Thank you again on behalf of the Foundation Board of Directors and the many cancer patients in our community who will benefit from your support. We consider ourselves most fortunate to be the recipients of your kindness and generosity.

In gratitude,

Alan Iftiniuk
President and CEO

1911 Johnson Avenue
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
805-543-5353 Telephone
805-543-5708 Fax

www.frenchmedica

GOOD NEWS FROM THE CLEVELANDS!

Shari completed her 25 radiation treatments plus the additional 5 the Doctor did on the scar line only. Hopefully all that is left is medication to be taken for 5 years and regular check-ups. During this time Shari has kept very high spirits and that can-do attitude.

Since her cancer was discovered during Breast Cancer Awareness month it is only fitting that Shari wants to compete in the 24 Hour Relay for Life. We have formed a team **The Cleveland Cure**. We are now asking our friends and family to support this cause. Our Relay for Life will be on May 14-15, 2011 at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. Shari and her friends will walk during the day, then several friends and myself will take the 10pm to 7am shift. If you would like to walk with Shari please feel free to sign up.

If you would like to make a tax deductible donation please follow the link below. If you have a business and donate \$500.00 or more your business name will be put on the relay T-shirts.

If you have questions please send them to our home email at erclave@msn.com.

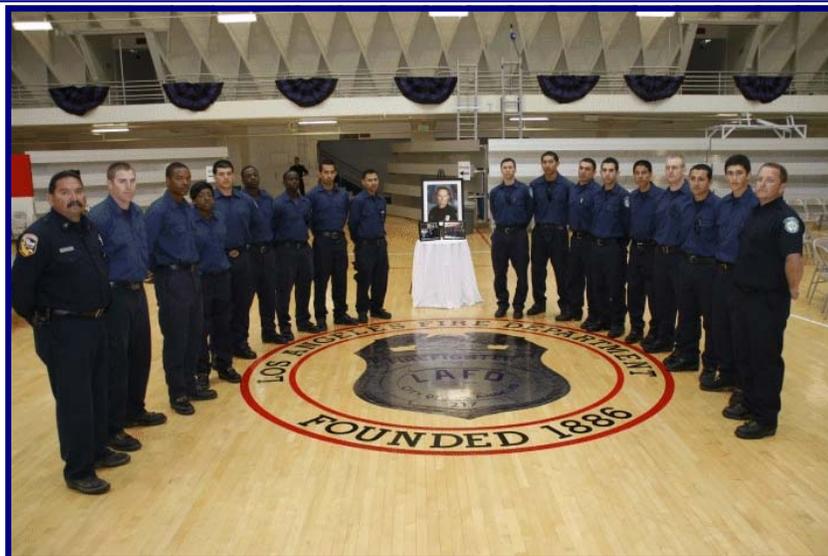
Thank you all for your support for this very worthwhile cause.

Eric Cleveland

http://main.acsevents.org/site/TR?pg=team&fr_id=28879&team_id=844358



Los Angeles Satellite and Camarillo Corps members at the Memorial in March 2011 for fallen Los Angeles City Fire Department, Firefighter Glenn Allen. The Corpsmembers are a youth development program and have most recently been assisting CAL FIRE Ventura Camp.



The 1926 Tank Farm Fire

One of the most incredible disasters in San Luis Obispo's history occurred during the second week of April, 1926. Large damaging fires in tank farms were fairly common across the country, especially in Texas and Oklahoma where lightning storms were frequent. The Union Oil tank farm, just south of San Luis Obispo City was one of, if not the, largest petroleum storage facilities in the country, with a capacity of around six million barrels. All oil from the San Joaquin and Kern County fields was pumped into the tank farm. From there, the oil was pumped into the Union Oil tanks at Avila where it was transferred to tankers and transported to refineries. As a reference, the tank farm was located on both the north and south sides of Tank Farm Road. On the south side were six large concrete underground reservoirs with floating wood lids. Four of these had a capacity of 750,000 barrels and two held 1,250,000 barrels. To give an idea of the size of these underground tanks, the largest ones were over six hundred feet in diameter and twenty some feet deep. Also on the south side of the road was the main pump house and most of the accessory buildings. North of Tank Farm Road were nineteen steel above ground tanks, all with 55,000 barrel capacities. When the fire started, all of the tanks were full, either with crude or heavy fuel oil.

It all began on Wednesday April 7th. San Luis Obispo County was experiencing a late season storm with heavy rain and thunderstorms. At 8:45 in the morning lightning struck on, or near, one of the large reservoirs causing a fire and huge explosion. Dozens of downtown businesses and homes had the windows blown out. Merchandise was scattered off shelves. Several late sleepers were literally knocked out of bed by the explosion. Within minutes all four of the 750,000 barrel reservoirs were on fire. Soon San Luis Obispo was covered by a thick cloud of black smoke and the rain drops were black with soot from the fire.

In 1926 there was no CDF and no county fire department. The county's few seasonal paid fire wardens and patrolmen would not be back on the payroll till June. The county's one firetruck was not really a firetruck at all, but a Ford roadster with a delivery body and a few handtools and extinguishers. There was no one to operate it anyway. San Luis Obispo City had a modest fire department but the fire was outside the city limits and the department deployed its forces within the city to deal with their own problems.

The first emergency action was taken by the Union Oil Company. Within a few hours, all available employees were called into service and around a hundred laborers were hired, issued slickers, and put to work. Emergency tasks included building sheet iron barriers to deflect the heat from the other containers and digging trenches to divert and contain spilled oil. The company had some "foamite" on hand and pumped it into the unburned tanks to prevent them from catching on fire. Respirators and additional "foamite" were ordered from the Los Angeles warehouse. Experts in all aspects of the petroleum industry from Union Oil as well as other companies were summoned. Oil tankers were dispatched to Avila, including the Union Oil flagship S.S. Montebello. (The Montebello was sunk by a Japanese submarine on December 23, 1941 just off the coast of Cambria.) The plan was to pump the unburned oil into the tanks at Avila. If the Avila tanks filled before the arrival of the tankers, the excess oil would be pumped into the ocean!

All the San Luis Obispo City cops were put on duty as well as all available state traffic officers and sheriff's deputies. Law enforcement set up perimeter and traffic control operations as well as patrol within and outside the city limits. Local civic organizations rendered logistical assistance including the Boy Scouts, Salvation Army, American Legion, Red Cross, Chamber of Commerce, and the Kiwanis Club.

It was late night on the 7th. The Seeber family was in their home just south of the tank farm. William Seeber, 56 years old, was a poultry man and usually in bed by 8:00 but with all the excitement, he could not sleep. His 82 year old father Alfonzo also was awake. William's daughter Doris Seeber was also home, accompanied by her friend Roy Van. From their house the roar of the fire was deafening. The smell and noise of the fire gave William a sickening feeling in his stomach. Just six months earlier his wife Eloise died from burns received after her dress caught on fire from an outdoor incinerator.

Shortly after midnight, Roy and Doris stepped outside for some fresh air and a look see. Just then, another of the large reservoirs exploded followed immediately by the formation of a fire filled whirlwind. The whirlwind headed straight for the Seeber house and Roy and Doris ran for their lives. The eddying wind went right through the house and completely demolished it. William and Alfonzo were instantly killed as were all of their livestock and most of three thousand chickens. Van and Miss Seeber had take refuge and were unharmed although she received emotional trauma from which she never fully recovered. The whirlwind continued across Edna Road, causing damage to several other homes and agricultural buildings as well as killing livestock along the way. Roy Van's car was found the next day several hundred feet from where it had been parked, a burned and twisted wreck.

At the very same time as the Seebers were going through their hell, three men were in the Union Oil warehouse, right next to the burning reservoirs. They were: Dr. H.A. Gallup, and Union Oil managers Lafe Todd and William Groundwater. Gallup was a local physician on contract with the company. They were making contingency plans for the next day. Around one in the morning the men noticed burning oil spilling over one of the large reservoirs. The flow of oil was heading right for the warehouse. The men ran for their cars to make an escape from the fire coming towards them. Dr. Gallup' car wouldn't start and the oil fire reached it just as he jumped out a made a run for it. The car was burnt to a crisp. The other two picked up Gallup in their car and they just barely made it up to Tank Farm Road as the oil slowed down and stopped at a berm in the road. The wooden warehouse literally blew up as stored drums of gasoline and other flammables caught fire and exploded.

Sunrise Thursday morning brought in a grim sight and a bad situation. By now all six of the large reservoirs were ablaze, as well as the main pump house. Several of the smaller steel tanks across the road had also caught fire. Huge iron sheets put up to reflect the heat were twisted and melted. The explosions and whirlwinds spewed timbers and debris for miles. Burning boards and timbers from the tank lids landed clear up on Johnson Avenue near the General Hospital and as far as Orcutt Road. Some of these timbers still remain on the Perozzi ranch off Orcutt Road. Steam pressure from boiling water in the bottom of the tanks and reservoirs was pushing hundreds of thousands of barrels over the sides. This oil, most of it on fire, was spreading itself over the landscape to the south and into the creeks. The several small creeks in the area all flow into San Luis Creek which empties into Avila Bay. There were reports of burning oil in the creek clear to Avila. Most of the residents living to the south between Edna

Road and the state highway (now South Higuera Street) abandoned their homes. Around five hundred men were at work with hand tools and heavy equipment damming creeks and constructing berms and diversion ditches in an effort to contain the spilled oil.

To add to Union Oil's woes, a lightning strike set their tank farm in Brea afire on Thursday morning. Although smaller than the San Luis Obispo facility, this incident did much more damage to dwellings and other non-company property. Dynamite was used to blast firebreaks around a two mile radius of the tank farm to check the spread of fire into Brea and Fullerton. The emergency workers were handicapped by the lack of equipment and supplies as most all had been shipped north to San Luis Obispo.

To the north, a southerly wind had been pushing the smoke, soot, and oil particles into San Luis Obispo, over the Cuesta Grade, and as far as Santa Margarita and the Parkhill District. The Daily Telegram reported that three thousand sheep belonging to the Santa Margarita Land and Cattle Company had turned black from the oily soot. My grandfather remembered loading the family into an open Model T Ford and driving into San Luis Obispo from Atascadero to get a look at the fire. By the time they got there, everyone was covered with oil. The smoke from the fire could be seen from as far away as Fresno.

By Friday all but five of the steel tanks had caught fire. The storm had passed through, stopping the rain and changing the wind direction to northwesterly. This wind shift kept the remaining five tanks from igniting. On Saturday the five tanks were still untouched by fire and most of the oil had burned out of the other containers. The tank farm was nearly a total loss. Other than the five small tanks, only a couple of small metal accessory buildings remained standing.

The San Luis Obispo tank farm fire was, at the time, the largest oil fire in the history of the world. Damage from the fire to Union Oil's property exceeded \$15,000,000, most of which was from loss of the crude oil. And that was when oil was around two bucks a barrel! It was one of the largest property loss disasters in California, second only to the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire.

Six private residences were totally destroyed, either by fire or cyclonic wind. Dozens of barns and outbuildings were destroyed or damaged. Around one thousand acres of agricultural land had been scorched barren by the burning oil, destroying hundreds of acres of crops and scores of livestock. Several bridges were burned south of the tank farm. Remarkably, there were few human casualties. Other than the Seeber Family tragically reported by emergency workers and citizens, there were only minor cuts and burns



Picture of Tank Farm fire was taken on April 7, 1926 by Aston Photography in San Luis Obispo. The black and white photo was hand tinted in their studio.

Aftermath

Oil industry experts from around the globe convened and studied the incident in an effort to prevent such a large scale catastrophe from occurring in the future. Several new industry standards were adopted which included larger separation distance between storage tanks, elimination of floating wooden lids, better lightning protection, larger capacity spill containment around tanks, and more sophisticated extinguishing systems.

Workers spent months after the last smoke had disappeared performing clean-up work in the fields and creeks. Even back then there was much concern voiced over the short and long term environmental effects of the spilled oil. In addition to the oil which spilled into the fields and creeks, overflow from the Avila tank farm was piped into the ocean. This oil washed up on the beaches of Avila and Pismo. Even though this had been part of a publicized plan by the company, they later said that the overflow of oil into the sea was unintentional. This caused much consternation and debate in the opinion pages of newspapers across the country. Officials in both Avila and Pismo were set to soak the beaches with gasoline and burn the oil off, until someone convinced them that maybe that wasn't a good idea. There was also much concern over the effects on the local trout, steelhead, salmon, abalone, and Pismo clam populations. The headline in the Daily Telegram on April 16, 1926 tried to put the issue to rest by proclaiming: "PISMO CLAMS UNINJURED" The County Land Commissioner assured the ranchers and farmers in the affected area that the burning oil had not caused significant damage to the soil, although he said that where unburned oil had soaked into the ground, it might take a few years for the land to reach optimum production.

The tank farm was never totally rebuilt. A new boiler plant was constructed to get the pumps operational again so the oil in the surviving tanks could be transferred. The large concrete reservoirs were all severely cracked from the heat of the fire and not repairable.

Today there is little left to give the casual passerby a clue as to what once stood there. The land to the north of Tank Farm Road sits bare, a financial challenge to any developer who would be dealt a massive soil clean-up requirement. The area to the south has been leased for cattle grazing for decades, but has remained undeveloped. The large circles of the huge abandoned reservoirs are easily seen from the air, and if you drive slowly along Tank Farm Road you can see the circular berms surrounding them.

Physical Fitness Cadre is Here to Assist YOU!

Submitted by Bill Grundler

Functional Movement Means Fire Ground Strength

Fire ground operations require the body to be doing many things. As a firefighter, you are lifting, supporting, reaching, pulling, pushing, jumping, climbing, running, hiking, and crawling. All of these movements may seem simple when you think about it but they are all actually very complex requiring multiple joints and muscle systems being operated all at the same time to get work done.

It would make sense that a stronger firefighter would be a much more effective firefighter than one that wasn't. But when many attempt to get stronger for the job, they fall into a false impression that isolated muscle work is going to aid them in the ability to perform these complex fire ground movements more efficiently. Some examples of "Isolated Movements" are curls, crunches, deltoid raises, shrugs, tricep-extensions, dumbbell flys, the Pec-dec, leg extension, etc. These movements are working the one single muscle group that is involved with that movement. But do we ever really do these single muscle movements in real life? When on the fire ground are you going to do a single "curl" or "leg-extension"? If you are lying on your back are you only going to sit up part way with your upper abs? If your partner goes down on a fire, are you going to be able to pick them up without using your back? Not at all!

The movements used on the fire ground start at our core (our hips) and move out to our extremities. They will be using many different muscles used in unison to get the work done. So if this is how our body works, doesn't it make sense to train our bodies this way? This means we should be doing movements in the weight room that will mimic the movements we will do out in the real world.

Movements that resemble those from real life are called FUNCTIONAL MOVEMENTS. Some examples of these movements are Squats, Dead Lifts, Push Presses, Pull-ups, Power Cleans and Burpees. But, I know that if I were to ask the majority of firefighters out there how many of them actually have Dead Lifts in their routine, the common answer would be "NOT ME!". When asked why not, the answers usually sit somewhere in the area of "I DONT WANT TO HURT MY BACK", or "I MIGHT HURT SOMETHING IF I TRY TO LIFT SOMETHING HEAVY."

Here are the quantifications for a Functional Movement: 1) Movements that are innate to our body (meaning we were made to move this way) and are "Safe"; 2) Movements that mimic those in everyday life, and 3) Movements that use many muscles and many joints all at the same time. Lets look at each of these:

Our legs bend certain ways, our shoulders rotate certain directions, and we are made to bend over. We have joints that allow flexion in some directions and made to stop on the other direction. If we do not use the full range of these movements then we are actually shorting our ability and strength.

Squatting has always been a big topic of debate. Is it SAFE to squat all the way past 90 degrees? Of course it is! Do we all have the Flexibility or Strength to do it? No. But that does not mean that it isn't SAFE. Usually the problem is that it hurts because the person is moving incorrectly when they squat. There are 2 joints used when squatting: the hips and the knees. The hips are the largest and strongest joint in the body. It should take the majority of weight and tension in a squat, not the knees. But to do this you must keep the weight on your heels and move your butt back rather than moving it down. If your knees come out past your toes then the tension is on your knees and not your hips. If you move correctly, then you are moving SAFELY and pain-free.

When you do crunches or curls, are you mimicking movements that you do each and everyday in your life, and more importantly, each and everyday in your job? Not really. These are actually Bodybuilding exercises made to make small changes in a particular muscle so that they look a certain way on stage. But these really aren't made to help you be a better firefighter.

However, whether you are picking up hose, picking up a downed firefighter or doing Dead Lifts in your station gym, you are doing the exact same movement. A Dead Lift is an example of a FUNCTIONAL MOVEMENT.

Another example of this type of movement is the Clean and Jerk. This is a movement in which you are taking something from the ground and putting it up overhead. How many times have you done this in your job as a firefighter? I would venture to say many, many times! Because these moves are done almost daily in life and in our job, it would make sense to train these types of movements and become as strong and efficient as possible. Here is where we will protect our bodies and decrease the number of injuries on the job.

Finally, FUNCTIONAL MOVEMENTS are not single muscle movements. They use multiple joints, multiple muscle systems and move in multiple planes. This basically means your body is working as a whole unit. The more we train our bodies as a unit, the more efficient it becomes. Training our body in segments only serves as a disconnect between our muscles and our movement. Obviously, if we can improve our movement training this way, then we will also have improvements in coordination, agility, flexibility and balance; all which are important characteristics of a firefighter. For those of you who are wanting to lose a little weight, the other added benefit is that the more muscles you use at one time, the more calories are burned.

Since most of us don't move the way we did when we were younger, we actually have to relearn ourselves how to move correctly. This also means that there may be some learning how to do movements like the Dead Lifts, or the Clean and Jerk and the Squat. But once you learn how to do them, you can then start to integrate them into your workout routine and start to feel the benefits in both your job and your life.

If you have any questions or would like any more information about these types of movements, using them in your training and how to actually do these moves, contact your Physical Training Coordinator or members of the PT Cadre.

Proper Lifting Technique Examples



Physical Fitness at the Company Officers Academy ~ February 2011



HOTLINE

The Safety Messages "HOTLINE" are available on the CAL FIRE Website ~ calfireslo.org ~ Chief Harness has been producing these articles on a regular basis ~ Check it out!

Retiree Happenings...

TO ALL CAL FIRE EMPLOYEES

Cal Fire has a 25-Year Club which has a meeting each year (usually in April/May) in different areas of California. This year it is in Angels Camp on June 11, 2011. There is usually an afternoon social gathering, a dinner, club business and then presentations of Rocking Chairs, to the new 25-year club members. Your 25 years of service does not have to be totally with Cal Fire.

THE MISSION:

The mission of the CDF 25-Year Club which began in 1958, is dedicated to the well being and the dissemination of information to all members and their spouses, who have achieved 25 years of service to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. Encouraging a fellowship amongst Active and Retired personnel and the entire "Fire Service Family" from all walks of life.

If you are going to reach your 25-years of state service this year and are interested in becoming a member of the 25-year Club and receiving your rocking chair or would like to have your name on the mailing list for future club meeting, please contact one of the board members with your home address. If you have any questions, please e-mail Karen Harper at pandigram@sbcglobal.net

BOARD MEMBERS:

Bob Monsen - 2011 President - ranger@goldrush.com

Dan Turner - Junior Past President - dt5314@gmail.com

Karen Harper - Secretary-Treasurer - pandigram@sbcglobal.net

Larry German - Board of Directors - lpdgerman@yahoo.com

Brian Kornegay - Board of Directors - oneputt@pacific.net

Dennis O'Brien - Board of Directors - cdf_dobrien@yahoo.com

George Morris - Board of Directors - georgebtu@sbcglobal.net

Muffy Banks - Historian - hudmuffy@sbcglobal.net

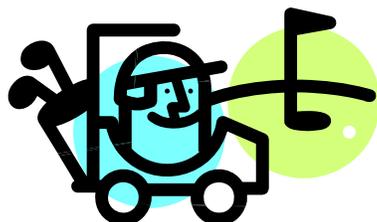


The Golf Tourney and Wagon Train events will coincide with all meetings.

Wagon Train will arrive on Monday June 6 and stay through Sunday June 12, 2011

If you have an RV and would like to join the Wagon Train contact Dennis O'Brien at cdf_dobrien@yahoo.com

Golf Tourney will be at Greenhorn Golf Club in Angels Camp on June 8th and 9th, 2011



If you would like play in the golf tournament, please contact Eric Sargent at elsargent1344@att.net

SLO County Benevolent Association Happenings...

The CAL FIRE/San Luis Obispo County Firefighters Benevolent Association is again beginning a telemarketing fundraiser to raise funds for our operational needs. This year the magic show to be presented on September 25, 2011 at the San Luis Vets Hall.

The way the fundraiser works is:

The telemarketing company will contact people throughout the county and explain the fundraiser. People are offered an opportunity to purchase tickets to go to the Magic Show or they can just give a donation to our organization. Businesses are given the opportunity to purchase advertising that will be included in a program that is given out during the event.

Once someone has committed to a donation, the telemarketer will give the person a date for pick up of the money and delivery of a receipt and/or tickets. The telemarketer will ask if the donor will place the money under their door mat in case the person is not at home when the pickup is made.

If the donor does not want to have someone come to their house, the telemarketer will mail an invoice and return envelope to the donor if they are requested to. The donors are told to contact any CAL FIRE/SLO County Fire stations to confirm that it is a valid fundraiser.

The presentation is supposed to be a polite, positive phone call that is not intended to intimidate anybody.

This fundraiser historically brings in over \$10,000 per year for us. To make it work we have to make sure that all CAL FIRE /SLO County employee and volunteers know about the program in case they are asked to verify it by a member of the public. Here is some other information you may be asked:

We receive 20% of all donations. The telemarketer keeps the rest and pays all the bills including personnel costs.

This telemarketer, Pastel Productions, is the same company that we have used for several years and is also used by several other local agency fire departments and police departments.

Funds received in this fundraiser are used by our organization for the benefit of firefighters, firefighter's families, and those affected by incidents that we may have responded to. Additionally, funds are used to support Operation Santa Claus that we, along with County Child Protective Services, provide every year to collect toys and gifts for children under the supervision of the County.

If someone calls with a complaint about the fundraiser, please take down their Name, Address, phone number and complaint. Then relay that information to me as soon as possible. I will call back the person as soon as I get the information to deal with the complaint. In the past we have had very few complaints other than the fact that it is a telemarketing event. But we want to respond very quickly to any possible problems that may come up. We take great strides to protect the good name of our Department and Association.

I will supply more information as time goes on. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me.

Danny Richard, President

SLO County FF Benevolent Association

(805) 610-9447

Benevolent Fund Fundraiser

The Benevolent Association is selling Challenge Coins for \$10.00. Proceeds go directly to the CDF/SLO County Firefighter Benevolent Association.

Please contact Danny Richard at danny.richard@fire.ca.gov

or

Jason Potts at Jason.potts@fire.ca.gov



Website Information:

www.calfireslo.org

New link added to the CALFIRE "are you ready" website. This site gives the public detailed information for them to prepare for the upcoming fire season.

Fire Safe Council

Chipping programs planned throughout the county, check their website for updates...

WWW.FSCSLO.ORG

Please submit your articles, information, pictures, etc., to:

Naomi McCormack
635 North Santa Rosa Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405
Email: Naomi.mccormack@fire.ca.gov

Please submit your Summer 2011 articles to me for publication by June 1, 2011 ~ Thank you!

MISSION STATEMENT

To serve and safeguard the people and protect the property and resources of San Luis Obispo County through education preparedness and emergency response.

Vision

The San Luis Obispo County Fire Department will exceed expectations and maintain the highest standards of preparedness, training, and emergency response.

Core Values

Integrity, Competence, Teamwork, Courage, Commitment

The San Luis Obispo County Benevolent Association provides assistance to employees and their families during times of financial need. Many families have benefited from their generosity. If you would like to make a donation to the Association, checks can be mailed to:

San Luis Obispo County Benevolent Association

Post Office Box 3095

Paso Robles, CA 93447

The Benevolent Association is selling Challenge Coins for \$10.00 (See full details on page 15)

Proceeds go directly to the CDF/SLO County Firefighter Benevolent Association.