

THE DISTRICT 6 DISPATCH

A public service newsletter from Okanogan County Fire District 6
“Serving the upper Methow Valley from Gold Creek to Lost River”

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Darold Brandenburg

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Climbing for a Cause

On Sunday, March 7, 2010 three volunteer fire fighters from Okanogan County District 6 joined more than 1,500 firefighters from 250 departments across the Pacific Northwest and beyond to compete in a timed race to the top of the Columbia tower in downtown Seattle.

Firefighters Mark Crum, Kelsey McLean, and Jeremiah Fosness donned full turnout gear and self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), to participate in a unique event that is the largest individual firefighter competition in the world.

At 788 feet of vertical elevation, the Columbia Center in downtown Seattle stands as the second

tallest building west of the Mississippi. It takes 69 flights of stairs and 1,311 steps to reach the highly acclaimed observa-



Columbia Center

701 Fifth Ave Seattle, WA

tion deck overlooking the city.

The Scott Firefighter

Stair climb supports the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, raising money through sponsorships, individuals, and department fundraising. Each firefighter individually raised a minimum of \$75.00 in donations to support the cause.

From this event Mark, Kelsey, and Jeremiah took with them a true feeling of humility and respect; for the steps they had to take and the lives they helped.

If you are interested in supporting the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society please visit their website at www.leukemia-lymphoma.org

Two OCFD6 Firefighters Graduate

This year’s graduating class from Liberty Bell Jr./Sr. High School included two OCFD6 volunteer firefighters, Kelsey McLean (Parents: Kit McLean and Hank Cramer) and Willie Devin (Parents: Steve and Kristen Devin).

Kelsey and Willie’s post high school plans include firefighting. Kelsey will attend the state fire academy in North Bend, WA during the winter of 2011 and Willie is enrolled in a resident firefighter program through

Central Oregon Community College in Bend, OR.

OCFD6 wishes both of these graduates the best of luck in their new endeavors and thanks them for their community service.

Training Highlights

What do firefighters do when they aren't responding to calls? If you are a volunteer with OCFD6 you attend training.

Between mid September and mid December 9 new recruits and 4 experienced volunteers attended OCFD6's second recruit school. During the recruit school, lead instructor John Owen taught participants skills and procedures in accordance with the latest edition of the Firefighter 1 curriculum. Four of the firefighters have started the testing process to complete their Firefighter 1 certification.

In February, Division Chiefs Ot-

tis Buzzard and Brian McAuliffe attended a two day S-200 class and are currently working on their Incident Commander Type 4 task books. Brian Colin, Tim Priest, Jeremiah Fosness, and Jesse Fuller sacrificed back to back weekends to attend an S-290 class (Intermediate Wildland Fire Behavior). This class helped them better understand how the weather influences wildland fire behavior.

Late last summer, Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation donated a house that was slated for demolition to Fire District 6. District personnel built several props inside the structure and used it for

various trainings until this spring. On May 1st, District 6 firefighters spent the day using the house to conduct orientation burns and live fire scenarios before finally allowing the structure to burn to the ground in a controlled manner.

By continuing to train and pursue certifications, our local firefighters are broadening their knowledge base so that they can better serve your fire district.

Helping Young Drivers Make the Right Choice

On April 8th the 7th-12th grade students of Liberty Bell Jr./Sr. High School participated in a mock crash.

This event, held about every four years, consisted of three parts: prevention speaker/crash survivor Leah Beetchenow, a simulation of what would happen on a real accident scene, and a mock memorial service for two of their schoolmates

who were "killed" in the crash.

OCFD6 organized the event that included participants from Aero Methow, Winthrop Marshal's Office, Twisp Police Dept., Okanogan County Sheriff's Office, Washington State Patrol, Methow Valley School Dist., Port's Towing, Okanogan Behavioral Health, Precht's Funeral Home, Winthrop Kiwanis Club, and

Liberty Bell Key Club.

The timing of this exercise, two days before Prom, was a preemptive move to show students the potential consequences of impaired driving.

This event is a lot of work, however, the local responders feel that if it deters one young driver from getting behind the wheel while impaired, it's worth it.

Are You Prepared for "Just Such an Emergency"?

The Methow Valley's Community Preparedness Council (CPC) is partnering with OCFD6 and other local first responder agencies to hold a neighborhood preparedness fair and bar-b-que on August 21st, from 9 am to 3 pm, at the Community Center in Twisp. The event boasts food, music, activities for the kids, prizes,

and presentations from our local emergency responders.

This event will also introduce the "Map Your Neighborhood" program to the citizens of the Methow Valley. This program is designed to match citizens with specialized needs with those citizens that have

specialized skills and equipment. The theory being that in a prolonged or widespread emergency neighbors can help one another and ease the burden to emergency response organizations. For more information on the CPC and the neighborhood fair, go to: www.mvcommunitypreparedness.org

Volunteer Spotlight

Meet Mark Crum, who volunteers for OCFD6 out of the Winthrop station. Mark is a firefighter/engineer, a vehicle extrication instructor, and a state certified structural Fire Fighter 1.

Mark moved to the Valley 4 years ago with his wife Sara, whose parents are John and Agnes Almquist, and their then 6 month old daughter Macey. Macey is now 5 and has a brother Arlen, 3.



Firefighter I Mark Crum

Until a year ago, Mark was the Customer Service Manager for ABS Business Data, a software company in Monroe, WA. Now, Mark works for the Okanogan County Electric Co-op as both an IT Specialist and an Apprentice Meterman.

When asked what he enjoys most about being a volunteer firefighter he replied "I enjoy helping others and being part of a team. Plus my son thinks I'm pretty cool, but I'm sure

that will change, as he's only 3."

Mark was one of the three OCFD6 fire fighters to compete in the Scott Firefighter Stair Climb. He said that the Stair Climb was "physically the hardest thing I've ever done. My legs and back were prepared, but my lungs weren't."

If you happen to run into Mark while he's working out at Winthrop Fitness, dropping off or picking up his kids at Little Star, or out supporting a local fundraising event (usually the ones that offer food), be sure to introduce yourself and thank Mark for all he does for our community.

Helping Our School Bus Drivers Prepare for the Worst

On Friday March 12th, while the students of the Methow Valley had the day off because of Parent/Teacher conferences, their school bus drivers were learning what to do in case their bus was involved in an accident.

OCFD6 personnel provided the drivers with a classroom presentation and a parking lot demonstra-

tion, complete with injured students and responders from OCFD6 and Aero Methow.

According to OCFD6 Division Chief Ottis Buzzard, "the two main objectives of the day's training were to show the drivers why it's so important to have certain tasks completed by the time we (responders) arrive on scene and why it's so im-

portant for them to know their policies and procedures and to be able to perform them during stressful situations."

The drivers all agreed that they hope to never have to use what they learned in their training, but they feel better prepared should they ever have to.

Another Car Seat Recycle Event in the Works

Last year's car seat recycle event was so successful that the Methow Valley Child Passenger Safety Team (MVCPST) is planning another event in September. The final details are still being ironed out, but you can be sure that the word will get out with time to spare before the event.

Of the 43 seats collected in Okanogan County during last year's event, 27 were from the Methow Valley. Child Passenger Safety Techs Theresa Remsberg (Aero Methow) and Brian McAuliffe (OCFD6) also performed 14 car seat checks and distributed 5 new seats. This event also yielded enough us-

able fabric for Aero Methow's Becky Taylor to sew 5 diaper bags. These bags are being distributed through Room One.

For car seat checks or child passenger safety information, call Theresa at 997-4013 or Brian at 996-2227.

**A PUBLIC SERVICE NEWSLETTER FROM
OKANOGAN COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 6**

P.O. Box 895
Winthrop, WA 98862
Phone: 996-2227 Fax: 996-8039

Brian McAuliffe, Editor
Phone: 996-2227
Email: bmcauliffe@okanogancountyfd6.com

*We're on the web at
www.okanogancountyfd6.com*



Okanogan County Fire District 6 Receives \$54,000 Grant

Recently, OCFD6 was notified that they have been awarded an Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) from FEMA. The AFG program is designed to help firefighters and other emergency responders obtain the critical equipment, training, and resources they need to protect the public and themselves during emergency response situations.

In accordance with AFG policy and the grant application, the \$54,000.00 that OCFD6 has been awarded will be spent on a new Cascade System fill station for refilling self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) air bottles, and the necessary equipment for performing maintenance on our SCBAs. OCFD6, Division Chiefs Cody Acord and Ottis Buzzard are manufacturer certified SCBA technicians,

but lacked the proper equipment to complete all but the very basic of repairs. As a result of this grant, when one of OCFD6's 28 SCBAs is taken out of service for maintenance, it will no longer need to go to Spokane to be repaired. The new Cascade System fill station will replace the existing fill station that, although it is capable of refilling the high pressure SCBA air bottles OCFD6 currently uses, was originally designed to be used with the low pressure SCBAs that were used until about a year and a half ago. The 28 high pressure SCBAs and spare bottles were purchased through a previous AFG grant.

Since 2004 OCFD6 has been the recipient of over \$351,000 from the AFG program, plus grants and donations from other sources. Over

time, equipment needs to be updated or replaced, standards change, and new technologies become available. Without government programs like AFG, rural fire districts like OCFD6 would be forced to pursue other funding avenues in order to ensure the safety of our responders and the public they serve.

Anyone wanting more information about FEMA's AFG program, can find it on the web at: www.afggrants.com/fema-afg-grant/.html