

News from the Ellsburg Volunteer Fire Department 2017.03.01

Our March meeting took place on March 1, 2017 at 7pm at the Bass Lake Firehall. We continue to work on filing paperwork in an attempt to qualify for a grant. Our blue crew cab pickup that was on loan from the DNR needed a new radiator which our department installed and paid for. The DNR suggested that we purchase it at a reduced price. We decided to purchase it since we did not have a rescue vehicle in the Bass Lake Firehall. This truck can hold most of our rescue equipment, but it is not large enough to also hold our grass and wildland fire equipment like our old rescue rig did. We need another vehicle to be our designated grass and wildfire rig. There have already been a few grass fires in our county this month, so obtaining a vehicle is a high priority. We continue to search for suitable vehicles. We can not afford new vehicles so we look at used DNR vehicles or vehicles that other fire departments are giving up. If anyone has any leads, please contact a member of our department. Our old rescue vehicle, which was on loan from the DNR for the last 29 years, was stripped down on March 8. It must be returned to the DNR. Meanwhile, plans continue to be drawn up for the Freightliner's conversion to a tanker. If you enjoy working on trucks, please join us!

We would like to thank the residents of Ellsburg township who voted to increase the budget of our department at the township meeting. The residents of this township can count on the EVFD to respond to fire and medical emergencies. If we had to shut down because of lack of funding, the consequences would be disastrous for our residents. We were paged to respond to 21 calls in 2016. I am proud to say that we responded to each call. 100% response! Not every volunteer fire department can match this record. We are prepared, and we take our duties seriously. There are 25 members with various skills on our roster. We wish to congratulate Beth Iallonardo, one of our members, on her election to Township supervisor!

Several of our members attended Pipeline training on March 6. This taught us how to recognize a break in a pipeline, what resources to contact, and how to evacuate an area. There is a natural gas pipeline that runs along Hwy 7 that could impact our township. On March 15, we practiced driving, running the pumps, hooking up hoses, and discharging water from our Engine 1. You do not need to be a fireman to run the engine, but the fireman on the other end of that hose sure depends on you to provide him with water. On February 22, our department hosted the St. Louis County Rescue Squad for training. Members of neighboring medical departments also attended. Our training focused on dealing with an active shooter scenario, treating respiratory conditions resulting from a gunshot wound to the chest, using webbing techniques to rescue and move a downed victim, correctly placing a tourniquet, and staunching the blood loss in an arterial wound. It was excellent training that is very important in our area where there are so many hunters. An adult human has, on average, about 5 liters of blood. The amount of blood depends on body size. Shock can occur after the loss of 1 liter of blood. Hemorrhaging for 3 minutes will result in the loss of brain perfusion. Death occurs after about 5 minutes of blood loss from a severed major artery. Stopping hemorrhage is vital. In our training, we practiced packing hemostatic dressings into large beef roasts to simulate an injury to the femoral artery. Our actions were timed to make sure that we could stop blood loss quickly. We practiced applying tourniquets on each other. We even learned how to apply tourniquets on one of our own arms in 15 seconds using just one hand. 5 minutes is not enough time for help to arrive if you suffer a gunshot or other penetrating wound. These wounds can result from hunting, boating, snowmobiling, 4-wheeling, chopping wood, falls, and other accidents. The Rescue Squad advises people engaging in such activities to carry a tourniquet and some bandaging in case of an accident. Interested? Our department can help you obtain the necessary equipment and show you how to use it. Contact us!

The Red Cross is promoting a Home Fire Campaign. Their focus is on reducing the number of deaths resulting from house fires. They will provide free smoke detectors to members of our township who need them. They will also replace any smoke alarms that are older than 5 years. Fire standards dictate that a smoke alarm be placed in every bedroom and every hallway on every level of your home. The only stipulation is that the fire department must install the smoke detectors. Do you have enough smoke detectors in your house? Are they up to date? Have you checked them recently? Do you want to take advantage of this program? If you need 1 or 10, please contact me at

218-591-9228, or the Red Cross at 612-460-3674 (mention you are an Ellsburg resident), or go to www.getasmokealarm.org.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, April 5, at 7pm at the Bass Lake Firehall on Mink Road. Please join us!

Heidi Yokel
Secretary, EVFD