

Our May meeting took place on May 3, 2017 at 7pm at the Bass Lake Firehall. We have received several requests for installation of smoke detectors through the Red Cross Smoke Detector program. This program provides free smoke detectors for the residents and cabin owners that live in the area that the Ellsburg Volunteer Fire Department is responsible for. If you are interested in taking advantage of this program, please call Heidi at 218-591-9228. There are also "shaking" smoke detectors available for those with hearing disabilities. The stipulation is that our fire department must install the smoke detectors.

The Melrude July 4th parade and picnic will be held on Saturday, July 1, 2017 from 12 - 2pm in the park by the townhall and firehall in downtown Melrude. Our department will be participating in the parade and activities. The trucks need to be washed. Candy needs to be bought. Free giveaways need to be assembled. Auction items need to be collected. Should we rent a dunk tank and put our chief, Jeff Dulinski, in the target seat? Would people buy tickets to dunk him? We would like to invite neighboring fire departments to come and participate in "friendly firemen games" . Call Heidi if you are interested. Please come to the parade and picnic to enjoy the fun activities and support your fire department!

On May 6, 2017 our department participated in the Emergency Vehicle Driving for Fire and EMS Personnel training. This was taught by John Olsen from the fire program at Mesabi Range Community College. The training was held at OSL in Cotton. We had several hours of classroom time where we learned about Minnesota Emergency Driving Statutes and safe emergency vehicle operations. We discussed safe driving speeds, when to use sirens and lights, how to use your vehicle as a block for an emergency scene, and many other aspects of driving these large, heavy, water - filled vehicles. As in other driving courses, we saw pictures and watched videos of accidents involving emergency vehicles so that we could critique what happened and learn from the mistakes. Then it was out to the parking lot for the "road test". Our department brought our Engine 1, Tanker 1, and Freightliner to test with. There were cones set up to mimic traffic lanes and driveways. We had to negotiate our vehicles through these cones forwards, backwards, and in a serpentine manner without running over cones. I am happy to report that the Ellsburg members who attended all passed the test!

A favorite activity on these summer nights is to have a campfire for warmth, bug protection, story time, and tasty s'mores. Campfire accidents are responsible for thousands of emergency room visits and property damages each year. The DNR, NFPA, and Smokey the Bear have issued some guidelines to ensure that your campfire remains an enjoyable event. Check if there are burning restrictions before starting your campfire. Choose a spot that is at least 25 feet away from structures, trees, low branches, shrubs, dry grass, or logs. Monitor the wind direction and avoid windy, dry days. Use a metal fire ring or circle the pit with rocks. Clear a 5 foot area around the pit down to the soil. Store extra wood upwind away from the campfire. Do not use gasoline or flammable or combustible liquids to start your fire. Do not discard the match used to light the fire until it is cold. The DNR recommends that campfires be 3 feet or less in diameter and no more than 3 feet in height. Always supervise your campfire since it can grow quickly. Make sure you have a hose, bucket of water, or shovel and dirt or sand near the fire to help control the fire and put it out as necessary. To extinguish your campfire, pour gallons of water on it and stir it around until no more sparks can be seen. Ashes can remain very hot for days even under the water and ash mud. Never let children or pets play or stand too close to the fire. Be careful not to shake a roasting marshmallow as it can turn into a flaming missile. Hot metal or wood skewers can cause burns. Burns must be treated immediately by cooling the burn with cool water for 5 minutes and covering it with a clean cloth. Remember to cover your face and stop, drop, and roll if your clothes catch fire. Roll over and over or back and forth until the fire is out. Call 911 even if you think the burn is just a small one. Tissue can continue to burn and be damaged even after the fire is out. This department carries special dressings made for burns. Play it safe! Follow these recommendations and your campfire will be a fun and cherished memory.

Heidi Yokel
Secretary, EVFD

