

NEWS FROM THE ELLSBURG VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT 20181107

Our November meeting was held on November 7, 2018, at 6:30pm at the Bass Lake Firehall. We discussed the four calls that we responded to in October, as well as the two calls that we responded to in November before our meeting. We made sure that our medical bags were stocked with what we might need in case of an accident during hunting season. The snowmobile has to be checked over to make sure that it is ready for the snow season. The wheels on our rescue sled need to be replaced with skis. Cold weather gear and blankets will be stocked up in our vehicles. The hoses used at our last fire were washed and hung up to dry, and now need to be rolled and stored. The oil needs to be changed in various pump motors. The FEMA grant and the washer-extractor grant were both written and submitted. Our new security system is in place. We will be attending trauma and hemorrhage training in Meadowlands in November. Our next meeting will be on December 5, 2018, at 6:30pm at the Bass Lake Firehall on Mink Road. Everyone is invited.

Do you remember the song from the 70's by Sister Sledge entitled "We Are Family"? That song went through my head while we were battling a fire in November. As I looked around me, I saw our father and son firefighter team, Loren and Loren Mesedahl, manning the hoses. Joe Keough was our incident commander, and his sister Shannon Keough provided medical care and helped refill our tanker. Our department has several husband and wife members: Jeff and Shauna Dulinski, Bill and Sharron McKechnie, Loren and Laurie Mesedahl, and Justus and Calla Peterson. We really are "family" as we work together at a fire or medical emergency. Just like a family, we may squabble and disagree, but we always come together with the goal of protecting and helping the residents and visitors of our township. The people that we serve expect integrity from the members of our department, and we won't disappoint them. We are family!

Our department has presented fire safety to five Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) classes at the Southridge School. What fun we have had! We spend about a half hour with the parents talking about smoke detectors, carbon monoxide alarms, making fire escape plans from each room of the house, inspecting the house inside and outside for fire risks, and holding family fire drills. Then we spend about 20 minutes with the children. This is the real fun part! We talk about fire, crawl under smoke, feel doors for heat, practice stop, drop, and roll, and dress a firefighter in his gear. The kids all seem to enjoy it until our firefighter puts his SCBA mask on. This scares children. We do this several times to show that he is still that nice guy under that mask. Still, several children cried or ran to hide behind their parents. We want children to understand why a firefighter must wear a mask. Many parents at these classes were surprised at their children's reactions to our firefighter. Too often, in real house fires, children perish because they hide from the fire and firefighters under beds or behind furniture. We teach the children not to hide. This is why it is so important for parents to practice fire drills with their children monthly. If they practice how to get out of each room, how to react to a smoke or carbon monoxide alarm, how to feel a door and react if it is hot, where the family meeting place is outside, and that a firefighter in gear is not to be feared, their chances of survival are greater when a fire happens. Please talk with your children and grandchildren. Please practice.

The holiday season is here! Time for families to gather around! Statistically, the number of fires doubles over the holidays. Cooking is the biggest cause of fire. Leaving cooking food unattended is the reason. Stay in the kitchen, and keep children out of the kitchen. Deep-fry your turkey on a level surface outside at least 10 feet away from the house. Never leave burning candles unattended, and make sure there is nothing flammable around them. This includes children! It only takes 30 seconds for a dry Christmas tree to ignite an entire room, but a well-watered tree is hard to ignite. All live trees should be removed from the home within four weeks. Inspect your lights for cracked wires and fraying. Don't plug more than three strings of lights together. Avoid nailing or stapling lights outside as this can damage the wires. Be careful of squirrels that like to chew wires! Keep matches and fireworks out of the hands of children. Leave the fireworks show for the professionals. There is just too much risk - both fire and medical - involved in setting off your own fireworks. Chimney fires can be avoided by having your chimney inspected and cleaned before using the fireplace. In this age of

electronics, be careful of how many devices are being charged per outlet. This is especially important in older houses where the electrical system may not be able to handle a house full of family and electronics.

With the cold weather comes the risk of frostbite. Bundling up to go outside must include hats, coats, mittens, and boots. Children are much more susceptible than adults. Watch them carefully, especially if they get wet in the snow. Frostnip occurs when the skin becomes red and irritated. Cold skin becomes numb. It can be reversed by warming the area. If frostnip is allowed to progress, the numb skin will feel warm and become blanched. This is getting serious now, and is the start of frostbite. Numbness returns with frostbite, as well as fluid filled blisters. These blisters may take 24 hours to develop after rewarming. As the tissue dies, the skin turns black and hard. Amputation may be necessary to prevent infection and death. Enjoy the winter fun activities, but be careful and sensible, and bundle up against the weather!

Our family wishes your family a happy and safe holiday! If you need us, call 911. We will be there!



Loren & Loren Mesedahl



Shannon and Joe Keogh



ECFE Class: Roll away from fire!



Don't fear a firefighter in gear!