

Our April meeting took place on April 6. Our May meeting will take place on Wednesday, May 4, 2022, at 6:30pm at the Bass Lake Firehall on Mink Road. All are welcome to attend. We had special guests at our last meeting. John Upton is a new Ellsburg Township supervisor. John and his wife, Stephanie, attended our meeting so that John could get a feel of what we are all about. Thank you for your interest John and Stephanie!

We want to congratulate members Tim Linder, Tom Slatten, and Chris Morinville for successfully completing the course and passing the EMR certification exam. We now have 14 EMR's that are available to respond to your medical emergency. Thank you, Tim, Tom, and Chris for taking the time and making the effort to get trained.

A big thank you also goes to Bruce Degan for donating his time to construct a beautifully framed-in, sliding partition window in our firehall. This window, when closed, keeps the vehicle fumes out of our meeting room. This is very important for our health.

The annual Melrude July 4th Parade and Picnic will be celebrated on Saturday, July 2, from 12-2pm. There are no bridges out this year (at least as of this writing) so we can have the full parade. We plan to drive some of our vehicles in the parade and throw candy. There is plenty of time for you to plan a float or entry for the parade. It is free to participate! We usually have people with their cars or other vehicles. There have also been pirate ship and Noah's Ark floats, people walking with dressed up animals, children riding decorated bikes, and families singing and dancing. Let's be creative! The parade will start at noon, followed by a free picnic, free games, and raffles. The raffles will include big ticket items like a kayak and stand-up paddle board, and themed basket raffles. The drawing of the raffles will begin at 2pm. The Melrude Community Club and our fire department work together to put on this event, and share in the profits. This is the big fundraiser of the year for both the Community Club and our fire department. We hope everyone will mark their calendars and join us for this fun community event!

Spring is finally here! We held a work night to get our vehicles ready for the dry season. Wildfires can start as soon as the snow leaves. The snowmobile is off of the trailer and put away for the summer. The side-by-side is on the trailer. It has a water tank that was filled, and hoses and nozzles in its bed so that it is ready for wildland firefighting. Our blue Rescue 4 and our Rescue 5 also have water tanks that were filled and reels of firehose, so they are now ready to fight wildland fires. The skis were taken off of our Rescue Sled, and wheels put back on. Every wildland firefighter has checked to make sure that they have the proper type of helmet, goggles, gloves, fireproof shirt and pants, and boots. This gear is different than the type of gear worn for fighting a structure fire. It is lighter in weight because it is warmer weather, yet we must still be protected from the fire.

Last year, there was a drought and persistent high winds throughout the spring, summer, and fall. This made the fire danger very high for most of those seasons. Please be very careful with campfires, brush burning, and even grilling. Always have a bucket of water or hose nearby. Sparks from lawnmowers, ATV's, dirt bikes, vehicles, and trains frequently start a grass fire when conditions are dry. Lightning and downed power lines can start wildland fires. It doesn't take long for a wildfire to get out of control. Once it gets established, it can spread rapidly. If you see or smell smoke, or see flames, please call 911 immediately so we can begin to mobilize. We must all work together to protect our township from a devastating wildfire.

Continue to work on protecting your property from wildfires. Remove that underbrush that would make such good tinder. Clear out around your house. Prepare an evacuation kit. This kit would be useful in the event of fire, tornado, chemical spill from the train, or any other disaster. Scan valuable documents such as your will, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, passports, social security cards, immunization records, bank account numbers, credit card account numbers and companies, family records such as birth, marriage, and death certificates. Scan them securely online so they can't be ruined and store them in the cloud so you can retrieve them when needed. Take short videos to catalog valuables such as vehicles, computers, furniture and artwork for insurance purposes. Get a plastic storage container to keep needed supplies in. These supplies should include a wrench to turn

off gas and water lines, pliers, hammer, screwdriver, duct tape, matches, fire extinguisher, manual can opener, utility knife, battery operated radio, battery operated flashlight, extra batteries, cups, plates, utensils, toilet paper, soap, feminine supplies, whistles, plastic garbage bags and ties, plastic bucket with a lid, chlorine bleach, antibiotic towelettes, antibiotic ointment, dressings and bandages in different sizes, prescription medications, glucose and blood pressure monitoring equipment and supplies, non-prescription drugs such as aspirin, ibuprofen, acetaminophen, anti-diarrheal, and antacids, and an eye wash solution. Pack sunscreen and bug spray. Your kit should also include a three-day supply of non-perishable food for each person, and 1 gallon of water per person, per day, for at least three days. Pack changes of clothing, boots, jackets, rain gear, blankets and sleeping bags, and a waterproof tarp and tent. It is also a good idea to pack face masks or coverings for smoke-filled areas. Do not forget supplies for your animals such as food, water, leashes, and things for waste disposal. Pick two emergency meeting places. One of these should be near your home in case of fire, and the other outside your township in case of a disaster where you cannot return home for a while. Pick one out-of-state and one local family member or friend to call if separated during a disaster. Find the safe spots in your home for tornadoes. Draw a floor plan of your home with two escape routes from each room. Share these plans and practice them with all members of the household.

May brings the long-awaited fishing opener! Be prepared so that you can have a safe and enjoyable fishing season. Always wear a life jacket when you are on a boat. Make sure that everyone does, especially the children and elderly. Do not risk drowning! Boats rock, and it is easy to lose your balance. If you fall in, you won't be able to reach it, and it is almost impossible to put a lifejacket on when you are in the water. The water is still very cold, and hypothermia can set in quickly in water that is less than 80 degrees. Your ability to think slows down. You will have trouble moving your limbs. The shock of hitting the cold water will make you inhale involuntarily, which can result in inhaling water into your lungs and drowning. You will become confused, exhausted, and drowsy. Your speech will become slurred. You will shiver uncontrollably. You will drown. All of these effects of hypothermia will make it difficult for you to get yourself out of the water. So another person on the boat will jump in to help you. Now there will be two victims. Really, it is much easier to just wear a lifejacket. You could still fall overboard, but at least your fishing companions will have something to grab you with and you won't drown. Stock your boat with a blanket or two. Once out of the water, remove any wet clothing and wrap the person in a blanket which covers their head and neck also. Get them to shore and warm them up in a car. If symptoms persist and the victim gets drowsier, get medical help. Unconsciousness and cardiac arrest can happen.

One common injury when fishing is getting hooked. A fish hook is often dirty from bacteria in the water and in the fish. This can cause a skin infection which is recognized by swelling, redness, pain, or blisters in the area that was hooked. If untreated, this infection can lead to tissue necrosis resulting in the amputation of a finger, toe, or limb, or even sepsis, which can be fatal. Disinfect the site of puncture immediately after getting the hook out, and watch for signs of inflammation. Carry a first-aid kit on your boat. Get a tetanus shot if it has been more than five years since your last one. A fish hook can cause serious injury if it becomes imbedded near an eye, nose, in or around the mouth, or in the genital area. A hook can also injure blood vessels, nerves, tendons, ligaments, joints, or bones. A fish hook injury that is on the face or genitals, that creates a wound that won't stop bleeding or that needs stitches, or where the barb cannot be easily removed, requires immediate medical attention. Learn how to safely remove an imbedded fish hook. If the barb has not entered the skin, pull the tip of the hook back out. If the barb is imbedded, try the string pull method. Do not remove a fish hook that is imbedded on the face or genitals or is in a joint, bone, or muscle. Call 911. We will be there to help!