

News From The Ellsburg Volunteer Fire Department – April, 2016

Our April meeting took place on April 6, 2016 at 7pm. The renovations of the Melrude firehall are almost completed. There is just a little painting and the trim between the wall and the floor to finish. Lee Voight has been working hard painting the floor and parking guidelines in the hall. He has also donated a desk for us to use there. Thank-you so much for your help, Lee! We may plan an open house so that we can show off this renovated hall to the community. Since the snow has melted, the skis were taken off of the Orion sled and replaced with wheels. Our trucks were taken in for service and inspections. Supplies are always being checked and ordered as needed. Check lists are being developed to ensure that our equipment functions as we need it to when we need it to. Our computer developed a virus, so we must remedy that also. Wildland fire season is here. Everyone needs to have wildland fire gear. We are looking at a grant from the DNR to help us with this purchase.

Firefighter I and II classes have been completed. Written exams were taken. The practical exam will take place at the Bass Lake Firehall on May 7, 2016 beginning at 8am. Good luck to all the firefighter candidates! We thank you for your commitment to attend these classes 2 and 3 times a week since last November and studying and training to become a volunteer firefighter for this community. Yet the classes and training never ends. Pipeline safety training was held at the Coates Hotel in Virginia on March 23. ARMER Radio training was held on March 31 in the Mountain Iron Community Center. St. Luke's sponsored an EMS conference on April 19 at the DECC focusing on stroke, STEMI, and cardiac care. The DNR held wildland fire training on April 20 at OSL. The Virginia Fire Department holds one firefighting and one EMS training session each month that we are invited to attend. There will be Drivers Training in May. A Live Burn firefighter training will take place on May 21 in Central Lakes. We train often and we train like its real, so that when the time comes we are ready to face the challenge.

That challenge was presented to us on April 3 when a car rolled over several times on Highway 53 and landed in the median. It was an horrific accident with some victims trapped in their vehicle and others thrown from the vehicle. The victims included family pets. It was an emotionally draining and physically challenging call for the responders . I am proud to say that our department rose to the challenge. This is what we have prepared for. This is what we have trained for. There were about 45 people who responded to this incident. These responders came from the Ellsburg VFD, Cotton VFD, St. Louis County Rescue Squad, Virginia ambulance, Eveleth Ambulance, LifeLink helicopter, medical examiners office, Armory Shell, and State and County troopers, as well as some bystanders. The incident commander of this call was our Chief Jeff Dulinski. Under Jeff's strong leadership, all the responsibilities of medical care, extrication, traffic control, landing the helicopter on the highway, preserving the scene for investigation, and clean-up were coordinated. Good job, Jeff! Two days later, Jeff organized a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) to allow the responders to get together and talk about their feelings, concerns, and lessons learned from this incident. Always learning. Always training. Always ready. Were you one of the people driving by and taking pictures of this accident ? Taking pictures at an accident scene can violate a person's privacy rights. Pictures taken with a cell phone can result in the cell phone being confiscated because the pictures are encrypted in the phone. Pictures taken with a digital camera can result in the SD card being confiscated but the camera will be returned to you.

Heidi Yokel
Secretary
EVFD