

News From The Ellsburg Volunteer Fire Department 2017.09.07

Our September meeting took place on September 7, 2017 at the Bass Lake Firehall. Our department responded to two calls in August. One was for a car that ran off of the highway at mile marker 46, and the other was a mutual aid for a cabin which burned in Canyon. Thankfully, no one was injured in either of these events, but the cabin was a total loss. We battled that blaze all night long. What a welcome sight, just after sunrise, to see Deb Feth drive up with food from the Wilbert! Nothing ever tasted as good as those egg, ham, and cheese sandwiches and hot coffee! THANK-YOU so much to the Wilbert for your generosity and support, and to Deb for bringing the goodies to us!

We have now installed 110 smoke detectors in our community! We still have several people on our list to install. It is not too late to get on our list. Please call me at 218-591-9228 if you want our department to install some smoke detectors. They are free, compliments of the Red Cross. The only stipulation is that our department must install them. Take a look at the placement of your smoke detectors. Many people have them installed on the wall near the ceiling. This is not a good placement. As smoke travels up a wall, it curves toward the middle of the ceiling. Because of this, the smoke may bypass your detector. Smoke detectors should be mounted on the ceiling towards the center. The heating season is upon us. Don't forget to check your carbon monoxide monitors before firing up your furnace. Carbon monoxide monitors should be mounted on the wall about 2 feet off of the floor. Carbon monoxide is called "the silent killer" because it cannot be seen or smelled. If your CO monitor is mounted high on the wall, above your head, you could be rendered unconscious before the detector picks up the presence of this gas.

In August, two new members, Loren D. and Loren M. Mesedahl joined our department. In September, Shannon Keough joined our department. We are loving this trend of monthly new members! Thank - you to these members for giving of themselves to serve their community! All three responded to that cabin fire and were a great asset! They had a true "trial by fire"! Our department has been doing a lot of training this past month. Training is necessary for new members as well as the seasoned members. It is always good to review the skills, so that when the adrenaline starts pumping you know what to do. We have been training with our new engine, E11. We have been cleaning and rolling hoses. We have trained with pumping water out of a lake, into the engine, and out on a fire. The St. Louis County Rescue Squad trained with our department on water rescue skills. Several of our members have been re-certifying their EMR licenses by demonstrating their skills and learning new ones under the direction of Diana Klakowski from the Hibbing Community College. Re-certification of these licenses must take place every two years. Now we have our new members who will begin their firefighter and medical responder training. This is a big commitment on top of daily work schedules and family responsibilities and we appreciate their efforts to take this on.

On September 14, members of our department attended a program sponsored by the LifeLink III medical helicopter base at the Hibbing airport. Several departments attended this event. After a tour of the facilities and helicopter, we enjoyed a delicious meal. Dr. Delp from the St. Luke's ER gave us a presentation about toxicology. We constantly hear about the opioid crisis. There were 50 deaths from opioid overdoses in MN in 2000. In 2016, there were 400. MN has one of the lowest prescription rates of opioids in the US. Many opioid users started out with a prescription and then became hooked on them. Marijuana is also a "gateway" drug. Users will start to use marijuana for recreational reasons, thinking it is relatively harmless. After the legalization of marijuana in Colorado, ER visits of those less than 20 years old quadrupled because of drug use. The THC compound in marijuana is responsible for giving the user that "high". In pure marijuana, this compound binds to the brain transmitters intermittently. In synthetic marijuana, this compound is manufactured and stays attached to the brain transmitters which causes an overstimulation of these transmitters. Since the Duluth drug shop Last Place On Earth closed, the ER admissions for synthetic drug use fell 90%. When heroin was first introduced in MN, it was very pure to attract buyers. However, pure drugs are expensive. A dealer will mix these drugs with synthetic compounds to "water it down" and cut the cost for the dealer. However, the user still pays a high price but may not know what

compounds are mixed in, and finds that more and more of the drug is needed to get that high. Krokodil is more addictive than heroin, cheaper than opioids, and the high is 10 times stronger than if morphine is used. Addicts can cook it at home using codeine, lighter fluid, iodine, phosphorus from matchstick heads, and other chemicals. These toxins are then injected which damages the blood vessels, muscles, bone, cartilage, thyroid, brain, and organs. Krokodil gets its name because it causes the skin to become green, scaly, and gangrenous at the injection site. Carfentanil has caused 11 deaths in MN so far. It is actually used as an elephant tranquilizer, and is 10,000 times more potent than morphine. An extremely small amount is needed for a high. It comes as a white powder. This is dangerous for responders because this powder can be on the victim and then get on a responders clothing or skin and be absorbed through the skin with sometimes fatal consequences. Children have overdosed by hugging a user relative and absorbing the powder through their clothes and skin. The party drugs, such as Molly, Ecstasy, Eve, and others, are psychoactive drugs that are popularly used at outdoor concerts or parties because they produce feelings of communion or oneness. This "warm feeling" causes the user to drink more to cool down. Depending on how much drug is taken, the user's temperature can rise to 105-109 degrees which is fatal. Our responders and residents need to be aware that drug use occurs in our community and learn to protect themselves.

Dr. Grande from the University of MN gave us a presentation on strokes. 800,000 strokes occur every year in the US. The average age of stroke victims is 70. The risk doubles every decade after age 55. There are 2 types of strokes, hemorrhagic and ischemic. In a hemorrhagic stroke, a vessel in the brain breaks and causes bleeding into the brain. This bleeding puts pressure on the brain tissue and can cause brain injury and death. The treatment goal here is to stop this bleeding as quickly as possible. Through catheterization, a doctor can clip, coil, stent, glue, or divert the flow of blood. A person experiencing a hemorrhagic stroke may complain of a severe headache or suddenly become unconscious. In an ischemic stroke, a blood clot is blocking a vessel in the brain. This blockage prevents blood flow to the brain tissue past the blockage. Lack of blood flow means lack of oxygen and leads to tissue death. The treatment goal here is to remove the clot as quickly as possible using medication and mechanical retrieval via catheterization. A person experiencing an ischemic stroke is usually awake and alert but can't move a part of the body or speak clearly. Signs to look for are an uneven smile, one arm or leg weaker than the other, or slurred speech. Many times, the victim does not realize that a stroke is happening and does not want to bother anyone about what seems like a minor problem. Some even go to bed hoping to "sleep it off". However, time is brain! Earlier intervention means a better outcome and the possibility of regaining full use of an affected limb or regaining speech. It is important to know when the symptoms started and get to the hospital as soon as possible. Not all hospitals have the advanced capabilities to take care of a stroke. We are lucky that both St. Luke's and Essentia Health in Duluth have these capabilities. The treatment depends on how long ago the symptoms started. Brain tissue may not be salvageable after 6 hours. It is important that our responders recognize the symptoms of a stroke. Everyone should know these symptoms so that care can be given as soon as possible! If you think someone is having a stroke, call 911 immediately. Time is brain!

IS IT A STROKE? CALL 911.

Any **ONE** of these signs could mean a **STROKE**:

F	A	S	T
FACE	ARM	SPEECH	TIME
Look for an uneven smile	Check if one arm is weak	Listen for slurred speech	Call 911 right away

Stroke Reminder!



Water Rescue Training



Firefighting