

# THE SIREN



Presented By

## Sisters-Camp Sherman Fire District

January 2010

### CHIEF'S CORNER

-Fire Chief, Taylor Robertson

Welcome to the January 2010 edition of the Siren.

Happy New Year! I hope your holiday season was outstanding.

As we begin the New Year, it is customary for me to discuss what we are planning for 2010. We are still trying to finish up the loose ends on the construction project. This has been a good exercise in patience and diplomacy for all of us as we move a full six months beyond the one-year repair and warranty period. My hope is that we are able to finish the remaining issues (ADA counter height, apparatus bay roof, bay infrared heating, and vinyl floors) shortly.

We will be working on a new Department Deployment Plan in the first half of this year. This "Standards of Cover" document is part of the NFPA standards for fire departments and will be an excellent tool for our use. The Standards of Cover establishes acceptable levels of risk for the department based on staffing, response times, and other factors. This document will allow the District Board to set policy regarding expected response times and levels, and will allow us to better evaluate our operational effectiveness. Finally, the standards of cover will be an excellent tool for our department insurance rating (ISO) because the ISO is moving to use of the standards of cover document as an alternative to the old rating schedule.

We are still planning to do an analysis of our current ambulance billing and look for any efficiency we can find. The CEO of Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue, Alec Jensen has volunteered to come over early this year to assist with that review and analysis.

Unfortunately, I have bad news regarding the Hoodoo Repeater. The BLM repeater we have been working with is not dependable and we have decided to look at other options for radio communication on the West side of the pass. One option we are exploring is using the existing repeater site at the Hoodoo ski bowl and possibly moving the 5 Mile repeater to that location. We will be working with ODOT, Black Butte Ranch Fire, and the other stakeholders to find ways to make this happen. Stay tuned (as I have said too many times over the past 3 years).

As always, my door is open and I look forward to seeing you.

### ASSOCIATION NEWS

-President, Jeff Liming

On behalf of your Sisters – Camp Sherman Fire and Ambulance Association Board of Directors I would like to wish all of you a Happy New Year! We have had a wonderful 2009 and I look forward to a productive and enjoyable 2010 with all Association members and friends in 2010.

I am so pleased to report that we had a record community toy drive this year and that we also provided a record community Christmas Day dinner. Many thanks to Dave Wheeler for his organizational skills and hard work in making our toy collection and distribution such a success. Dave tells me that we were able to include nearly 300 children in our program this year and that all were provided for. With the tremendous support of our community and Association volunteers this project was a success! Thanks also to Rita Hodge and her staff for providing for such a successful Community Christmas Dinner! Our cooking group did a wonderful job at the Community Church and the fire hall community room was decorated beautifully. To all of you that provided time and talent to these events, thank you! Let's do it all again next year!

We have received over three thousand dollars this Christmas season in the form of donations. Some of that money was used this year for gifts and some will be kept in reserve for next year. At this time we have nearly four thousand dollars in our holiday fund for next year. We will need to keep a fund raiser in mind to resupply our funds for our variety of events but especially for next Christmas.

Thank you again for your support of our Association Christmas community toy and dinner. We could not do it without you and the interest and drive you bring to these events!

Look for ballots soon to vote for your Association/ Department choices for FF, EMT, volunteer, rookie, student and fitness member of the year! Nominations are being made through a committee this year and will be presented to department members in January.

Happy New Year!

## CHAPLAIN'S CHAT

-Chaplain Hayes

HAPPY NEW YEAR and DECADE

There's something about this New Year that seems extra special. Perhaps it's the shift from saying *two thousand and something* to the new decade being *twenty-ten*. It sounds so futuristic, doesn't it? Maybe it's just wishful thinking that this year has to be better than "oh-nine" ~ which to me always

sounded a bit like "oh my!" or even "uh oh".

Have you begun to think about how this year can be special for you? While I'm not a fan of making New Year's resolutions (which statistically have a huge failure rate), I do encourage and practice the notion of regularly assessing one's life and making desired change. If it helps you make a new beginning because it's a new year and a new calendar (or even a new decade), then by all means take advantage of the timing and bring your actions into alignment with your beliefs. Happy Two-Zero-One-Zero !!

## FIRE PREVENTION

-Captain Wheeler

Thank you to all who helped with the Spirit of Christmas Tree program this year. We were able to provide gifts for approximately 290 kids in our community, which is actually a decrease compared to last year. A special thanks to our shoppers who bought presents for approximately 60 kids in the last two days before we handed out presents. Nothing like adding a little more stress for the holiday season! Also, a big thank you to the

volunteers and staff that helped transport bags to the elementary school and hand them out on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Thank you for all you have done for the kids in our community!

Let's all set a good example and remind folks to dispose of their Christmas tree promptly and properly after the holidays.

As always, please call or stop by. Happy New Year!



## EQUIPMENT NEWS

-Captain Lovegren

We went through our first serious cold spell with relatively few problems. A lot of the diesel owners in the area were not so lucky with fuel gelling in the fuel lines and causing stalled or disabled vehicles.

All the department diesel vehicles have received the manufacturer's recommended amount of fuel additive. The additive will lower the temperature of fuel gelling and remove any water that might be in the tanks or fuel lines. This will help prevent any fuel related problems through the winter.

Diesel fuel purchased through Pacific Pride has a protection rating down to zero degrees through the winter months. This protection should be ample for much of the winter. When temperatures are forecasted for near or below zero degrees additional protection needs to be added to the diesel fuel in department vehicles used on a regular basis. This would include

vehicles that were pretreated and would have used the treated fuel through normal use. Vehicles in this category would be 770, 771, 772, 721, 744, 740 and the service truck. The service truck also needs fuel additive added each time the diesel tank for refueling is filled. This will make sure the sub-stations vehicles stay topped off with treated fuel also.

I know this sounds like a broken record, but we must remember to drain the pumps and the hose pre-connect lines on the engines after use. With the very low temperatures we are experiencing, the lines and pumps could freeze en route to an emergency. Damage could occur to the equipment and the engine could be inoperable on scene allowing the fire to escalate while waiting for another engine. Bend Fire had this happen on a fire when the temperatures dropped below zero. Several of the attack lines were frozen-shut on arrival and really slowed their response to putting out the fire.

I hope you all have a Happy New Year!

## COMMUNICATIONS

-Captain Brown

(Heavy sigh!) The Santiam repeater has officially passed over the Great Divide to that happy place for all expired electronic equipment. After the last repair and reinstallation of the repeater, it was working well. Then, in what seems to be

inevitable, it stopped working. No obvious reason such as loss of power or bad connections, it just stopped again. Marc Kashmitter from the Oregon Department of Forestry, who has been helping with this project, went to the site to test the equipment and pronounced it not repairable. We are checking into the cost of a new repeater for this location. As always, we will keep you updated on the progress.

## RESPONSE

-Captain Brown

As I write the article for the Siren, we have totaled over 960 calls for service for 2009. I was hoping to reach the 1000 mark (kind of morbid thinking), but it looks like we won't quite make it. This is still a marked increase over last year; good for us and also a reminder of the continued and increasing service we provide for our community. We have had some calls with outcomes that are rather tragic. The calls around Christmas that ended in sorrow for families were a reminder to me to cherish those around you and every moment you have with them. A special thank you to our chaplains for their special service and caring for people in general.

As we enter the New Year, check your approach to personal safety before you respond. Remember, you are responsible for your safety...and for those around you. If we all have a proactive and positive attitude, safety will be first and we can do a better job of helping those in need. "Everyone goes home" reminds us that we always need to be a part of the solution, not a contributor to the problem.

One last New Year reminder...our department has adopted a seat belt policy and everyone should have signed the agreement to use seatbelts every time. This needs to be the first safety item you "engage" when responding. It always makes me feel better on calls when the seatbelt check is "sounded" before rolling the apparatus, and everyone responds that seatbelts are in place!

## SCBA

-Captain Brown

Firemedic Crawford has had some difficulties with the calibration of the test equipment and some of the SCBA. There was a failure of one of the hoses that connects the testing apparatus to the SCBAs. After some frustration (lightly put) and several telephone calls to the manufacturer, the parts are being replaced and we should be back on track with the face piece testing soon. You should expect to be contacted to have your mask tested for proper flow shortly.

Nearly everyone has been fit tested for 2009. If you haven't, please contact me to set up a time that works for you. This is an OSHA requirement and also a good thing to ensure that you are protected in hazardous environments.

Please remember to attach a repair form when a SCBA is removed from service for repairs. We will be working on a system to ensure that the notification is done easily and accurately. This will help the turnaround on repair of equipment.

## FACILITIES

-Captain Brown

Happy New Year! I hope 2010 starts with everyone and their families in good health and looking forward to a great year. This last year has been busy with the finalization of the Station 701 construction project and it is mostly done. There are a few issues with some warranty items and corrections that are really pretty minor and should be complete in short order this year. All in all, the project has gone well. I continue to hear positive comments from the public regarding the facility and our personnel. Everyone is doing a great job, thanks!

I realize there are a few projects at the substations that need attention and we will be concentrating on them the first

part of the new year. There are also some maintenance items that will be completed this summer by our summer employees. If you notice repair projects or concerns, let me know right away and we will get them on the list or immediately repaired depending on the severity of the situation. Thanks again for your diligence with keeping the stations closed and weather tight. This was especially helpful during the cold snap at the end of the year.

One last item: if you think of any facility upgrades or needs for 2010, contact me or one of the Chiefs so we can discuss them and budget for them as necessary. Planning is important with tight budgets.

Thanks ever so much and hoping a Happy New Year for everyone! See you soon!

## CHAPLAIN'S CHAT

-Chaplain Gerke

Have you ever (and who hasn't?) found yourself wishing that something had not happened to you? Do you have regrets that a relationship has ended? Have you had a bad experience that hurt you? You can bring to mind your own regrets about what has happened to you in your life, and maybe you feel you haven't done anything to deserve those bad things. On the other hand, we've all also had great and wonderful things happen to us, often when we haven't done anything to deserve them. But consider this: everything that happens in your life has a purpose. Everything has been part of a process of molding you into a finished product. Every experience is like a thread, and all those threads have been and are making a pattern, a whole cloth that defines who you are and why you live, what your purpose in life is.

As an example, who is better able to help an alcoholic overcome that addiction than a recovering alcoholic? Lots of bad threads in that life, but now the purpose is clear. Although life seems so totally random at times, there really is a design to it, but often we can't see what the end results will look like. My point? Accept the bad along with the good that happens to you and you may be grateful for it, because it has an ultimate purpose. Remember Lou Holz's statement about how life is 10% of what happens to us and 90% about how we react to it. As always, you are in my prayers. Have a great new year and new decade!

*Please wish the following people a Happy January Birthday...*

- |                  |      |                   |      |
|------------------|------|-------------------|------|
| • Rob Harrison   | 1/14 | • Lee Pyke        | 1/24 |
| • Karen Sheldahl | 1/19 | • Dave Wellington | 1/25 |
| • John Nitcher   | 1/21 |                   |      |



# FIRE FITNESS

-Fire Medic Storton

## Motivation and Moving Forward

Perhaps it is due to the holiday's caloric excess. Perhaps it is due to so much going on during the holidays. Or, perhaps it is because we have gotten out of the habit. Whatever the reason, most of us have let ourselves go and therefore we tend to look at Jan 1<sup>st</sup> as the time to get back into shape and eat better. Jan 1<sup>st</sup> represents renewal, a fresh start, a clean slate. Unfortunately and statistically, mid February usually represents the end of good intentions. Unfortunately we can't afford the excuses if we are involved in the emergency response business. So let's look at strategies to renew our fitness and wellness program started and most importantly, to keep it going all the way through 2010.

**Pay yourself first:** When discussing retirement with a financial planner he usually hears "pay yourself first." I suggest you all use the same theory when it comes to your fitness. If you place your fitness at the top of your to do list, you will see greater energy, productivity and quality of life. Studies, personal experience and anecdotal experience prove this. Find out for yourself.

**Annual Physical:** We spend a lot of time and energy with fire prevention and vehicle maintenance. Why aren't we doing this with ourselves? Especially since we are a part of a group that has a greater rate of heart attacks and cancer, we need to conduct ongoing maintenance and annual testing on our most important equipment... us. We know they're quick, easy, inexpensive and potentially life saving. What are you waiting for?

**Short term and long term plan:** Short term fitness plans are easy. "I'm going to workout everyday this week." The problem is short term plans run out too soon. I suggest you spend at least 5 minutes or more to set a goal for your fitness plan and strategy for the entire year. The more detailed the better, but put some thought into it. How will you know how to get there if you don't know where you are going?

**Pick an event/partner:** A great way to plan out farther is to pick an event as a fitness goal. There are easy 5k walks to marathons. The event can be a sanctioned event that benefits a good cause or it can be something you concoct on your own to benefit you. Pick it, plan it and do it. One step further, get a partner so you will keep each other on track.

**Tell others your plan:** This is the old "Now I have to, because I told them I would" trick. It works. For some reason and for some people, it's easier to let yourself down than it is to let others down. So tell others your plan and don't let them down.

**Make it easy to workout:** Have your workout clothes laid out when you wake up. Have your work clothes and shower stuff ready so you can go to work after working out. Get your

food packed the night before. It's like preplanning for a motivational low and giving your future self every chance to just go anyway.

**Make it easy to eat well:** The above works really well for eating well too. Buy all the stuff you know you should be eating from the store and put them in pre-packed baggies. Stick carrots and apples in your lunch along with the potato chips. Measure the portion you want to eat and pre-doggie-bag your leftovers so you won't over eat. The trick is to outsmart your bad habits and move your life in the direction you truly want it to go.

**Remember your reasons for getting fit and healthy:** Are you a few pounds overweight? Are you flabby? Are you tired of feeling stiff and inflexible? Would you like to get in shape for some event or activity? Do you want to look sexy for your spouse again? Do you want to chase your kids or grandkids? Whatever your reason, write it down. Take a picture of yourself. Find a way to keep your motivational fire burning and don't let it fade.

**Workout opportunities and fitness accumulation:** Yes, I know you are busy and tired. You have kids or you work 25 hours a day. There are still times for micro investments into your fitness. Do you watch T.V.? How about doing sit-ups, pushups and lunges during commercials? How about stretching while watching your program. Try hallway lunges in your house while getting chores done. If your legs hurt, work your arms. If your arms hurt, work your abs. Park farther away so you have to walk more. There are myriad opportunities throughout the day to get fit. Did you know that working out for 10 minutes 4 times during the day gives you the same benefit as working out for 40 minutes straight? Fitness accumulation is real and kills the "I'm too busy" excuse.

**Responsibility:** Still not convinced? Need a bigger push? Please allow me to be direct. Your responsibility to yourself notwithstanding, you have a responsibility to your family, to your fellow firefighters/ EMS and you have a responsibility to the district that you serve. We are tactical athletes. Our job responsibility requires it. The demands of the job don't care if you are a volunteer, how much you get paid or if you spend most of your time pushing paper. Do you ever see out of shape SWAT officers? How about obese soldiers on the front line? It doesn't work. Below is an excerpt of a letter from a fire chief on fitness and responsibility that I feel is worth reading:

### **If you choose Firefighting, you lose the right to be Unfit!**

*By: Chief John Kachanuk, Havana Fire Department*

Has anyone noticed the growing number of firefighters dying in the line of duty due to heart failure? This isn't just due to stress; it's due to poor fitness. How many of our comrades must fall before we consider this an epidemic?

As chief, I viewed my department as a "do-everything" department, that given any task my firefighters would not have

## FIRE FITNESS cont.

-Fire Medic Storton

a problem rising to the occasion. At any given call, each member would be fit enough and able to do their jobs and then go home. I thought that heart problems were a problem for other departments, not mine.

In December, my training officer informed me that six of the 19 members of my department failed our annual fitness test and under our current guidelines they could no longer wear a breathing apparatus. All six are what I considered to be my high percentage guys, and not one was over the age of 42. They have the highest turnout rate of all the members. So the core of my department just crashed. I could no longer rely on the fact that these guys can do it all at a fire scene. It is a hard thing to face knowing if the tones went off and they showed up, all they could do is watch.

I addressed the members at our next regular meeting. I told them that things had to change, because our department was no longer of the caliber it should be. It was not because we didn't train or because we did not have the equipment, but because we were on the verge of being another death notification from the United States Fire Administration. Interestingly enough, **the State Police have a motto: If you choose law enforcement, you lose the right to be unfit. As**

**firefighters, I feel we should adopt that same motto and tolerate nothing less.**

It's time. We need you. We depend on you and so does your family. Happy New Year! Happy New You!

Ready. Set. Get going.

