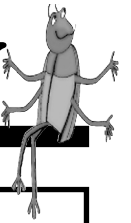


THE FIREFLY



Continued from page 3

While we have the luxury of time right now, we should use it to our advantage. Mitigation work can be physically demanding on anyone. If we do a little at a time, it can be manageable for most people. I would recommend starting by limbing up all the trees on the high threat side and working your way around the rest of the property. That way, the greatest return can be achieved with your efforts. You should limb your trees up at least 6' or as high as you can reach, whichever is greater. The drought has changed the burning characteristics of our vegetation significantly. In the past two years, we have seen fire climbing vegetation higher, faster and in places we normally don't see it going.

After the limbing process is completed, start looking at the tree health. If you have beetle trees (mountain pine beetle or Ips beetle specifically), those should be cut and removed immediately. The Colorado State Forest Service along with other

professional foresters in the local area can assist you in identifying these types of pests. There are a few types of spore and fungus diseases found locally in the vegetation. The trees should be examined for these as well. There may be treatments available for those diseases other than removal of the trees but you must catch the disease in its early stages. Finally, examine your property for under developed trees. Remember, there are only so many nutrients in the ground that all vegetation must use to live on. The less dilution or sharing of these nutrients among the vegetation will allow stronger, healthier species to develop. Thin out those weak trees. For example, if there are 5 trees in close proximity to each other, 1 of which is 12" in diameter and the rest under 4" or 5", remove all the smaller trees and allow the larger trees to grow stronger. This will significantly reduce the fire threat along with making the forest healthier.

Last but not least, design the firescape to look natural. I have done this for years with my fire mitigation business. To take a tape measure and mark off trees based on distance is not a natural event in the forest. If you look at the forest as a whole, you will see natural mosaics across the canopy. This was what happened when the last fire moved through. Some areas will clean themselves out completely while others remain untouched. This happened at the Hayman Fire last summer. So, design your vegetation to provide your property with natural beauty and fire protection.

Bob Aussprung has been in the fire service for 14 years fighting wildland fires for 22 seasons. Bob is President of Evergreen Firescapes, a fire mitigation company and a helicopter pilot for Aerial Horizons, Inc. He has been a volunteer with Foothills Fire for five years.

Foothills Fire and Rescue

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THE FIREFLY



A Publication for the Community by Foothills Fire and Rescue

April 2003

The Secondary Accident

By Captain Ken Spencer

All too often a minor accident without injuries develops into a major accident with major injuries. Many of these accidents result in fatalities. Here's what you can do to avoid becoming an undesirable statistic.

- When fire, law enforcement and medical vehicles are approaching, pull to the side of the interstate or roadway and proceed with caution after the emergency vehicles pass. There could very well be an accident ahead.
- When approaching an accident scene, slow down. Conditions that caused the accident may still exist. Secondary accidents have often been caused by vehicles running into the very animals or black ice that caused the original accident.
- Focus on maintaining control of the vehicle and don't be distracted by the accident scene. Quite often someone's inattention in front of you, slowing down or stopping, can cause you to collide with them.
- Maneuver your vehicle slowly and safely through or around the accident scene being extremely careful to avoid injured individuals who may be incapacitated as a result of the accident. Two years

ago, a victim on interstate 70 at the Lookout Mountain exit was hit an estimated 12 times by passing vehicles before State Patrol and Foothills Fire were able to close down traffic on interstate 70.

- Don't pass on the shoulder to get around an accident scene unless advised by law enforcement or fire fighters. This caused two fatalities and major injury to a Foothills Fire Fighter a few years ago.
- When signaled to stop, do so immediately. Two months ago, a vehicle by passed Fire Fighters and a fire truck blocking I-70 causing a medical helicopter to abort its landing at the last minute on interstate 70. A collision with a medical evacuation aircraft can cause serious injury and fatalities.

Automobile accidents caused by distracted drivers tends to be the result of drivers looking at other crashes. A study based on data collected on more than 2700 crashes in a six month period last year indicated that rubbernecking was responsible for the largest number of accidents reported (16%).

Pancake Breakfast

Mark your calendars...the annual pancake breakfast will be Sunday, **June 1, 2003.**

See you there!

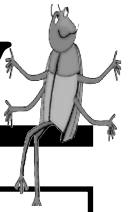
Grant Writers Needed

There are many grants offered by public and private agencies that would benefit the Foothills Fire & Rescue. For example, in 2002, we received \$177,000.00 as a grant to replace our entire SCBA (airpack) equipment. This new equipment will be safer for our volunteers as it improves our ability to communicate and involves lighter equipment which decreases fatigue.

However, we need your help in accessing additional grants that may be available. If you have the time, inclination and/or expertise, we need help from the community in applying for and writing grants. Contact **Rob Sontag, District Administrator at 303-526-0707** if you are interested in helping.

Special thanks to the following for the production of this edition of the Foothills Fire and Rescue "Firefly" newsletter: Lynn Pike, of Lynn Pike Designs, (303) 526-4990, for donating design and layout of "The Firefly"; and K.E.M. Printing at 16250 S. Golden Road in Golden (303) 277-1127 for donating their time and printing of this publication.

"The Firefly" is distributed to every address in the Foothills Fire Protection District. Sometimes issues are mistakenly delivered to addresses in the Genesee, Golden, Evergreen or West Metro fire districts. If you are not located in the Foothills District, we apologize and encourage you to contact your fire district if you need further information on any of the topics presented in this issue.



Foothills Fire & Rescue Welcomes New Recruit Class for 2003

In February, Foothills Fire and Rescue welcomed 11 new recruits to our department. These new recruits are currently attending training to obtain their firefighter certification and familiarize themselves with our district and departmental procedures.

These new recruits should be commended as they have just committed themselves to a minimum of 70-100 hours of training in the next 5 months in order to provide service and protection to this community.

Our new recruits are:

Matthew Saindon
Christopher Brunette
Adam Goldman
Justin Dusdal
Daloy Veldhouse
Noah Harkless
Josh Wenninger
Don Koogle
Duane Schettler
Jeffrey Nepple
Jen Sliemers



Next time you see any of these individuals, please give them your support and appreciation!

Water Conservation at the Fire Department

The potential of drought restrictions in the coming summer months is a consideration that Foothills Fire & Rescue has kept in mind as it relates

to training and the maintenance of our fleet of response trucks. As such, we'd like to share with you our plans for the upcoming season.

As it relates to training, our ability to pump and move water is a key skill for fire protection and must continue. To reduce the amount of wasted water, we have limited our training to areas where the water runs back into natural sources or can be recirculated with minimal loss. As an example, you will probably see us at the Cold Springs Ranch pond quite often as we continue to maintain our skills.

Keeping our trucks clean and free of an accumulation of road grime is necessary for two reasons. First, it allows us to inspect for any damage to the trucks that may need attention. Secondly, since a majority of our responses are to motor vehicle accidents on the highway, it is important to keep our trucks clean to maintain its' visibility. The visibility of the trucks are for the safety of our volunteer firefighters and the patients we are caring for.

Extreme situations of snow, rain, mud may require that we wash our trucks more frequently, however, being mindful of the potential drought restrictions, we will be limiting our routine truck washing to once a month.

Water is a precious resource to everyone for obvious reasons. However, for the fire department, it is also an essential tool in providing fire protection. We will continue to be mindful of its' use wherever we can.

Colorado Snow Has Returned... Is Your Vehicle Ready?

By Captain Brian Zoril

As we enter our snowy spring months, it is important to have your vehicles in top condition. A vehicle that is properly equipped for adverse conditions allows for more peace of mind and is safer for you and others on the road. Here are a few things to check before your next excursion to the market, or to the mountains.

- Check operation of heaters and defrosters. They are needed for safe driving.
- Make sure your wiper blades are in good condition, and top off the washer fluid reservoir. Nothing helps you arrive safely like clear vision.
- Make sure your tires are in good condition, have sufficient tread, and are inflated to the proper pressure. (Refer to the vehicle manufacturer for proper inflation pressures).
- Keep plenty of extra winter equipment in your vehicle. A combination snow brush and ice scraper is great for clearing off your vehicle. Tire chains of the proper size are great for severe snow and ice conditions (check with vehicle manufacturer for recommendations for your vehicle). A shovel is useful to clear excess snow from the vehicle if you become stuck. Sand bags can be useful for additional weight, and the sand can be used as a traction aid.

- Make sure that all lights and reflectors are clean, and in working condition. This is especially important in low visibility situations, like snow storms.
- Keep emergency supplies on hand. Should you become stranded in a major winter storm, extra food, water, blankets, and a first aid kit are vital. They don't take up much space, and are easy to maintain and replace.

Keep in mind that Colorado weather is very unpredictable. Don't wait for a major winter storm to hit. Take a few minutes now, and save some difficulty later.

Emergency Evacuation Tips

- If a wildfire is threatening your area, listen to your radio for updated reports and evacuation information.
- Confine pets to one room and make plans to take care of them in the event of evacuation.
- Arrange for temporary housing with a friend or relative whose home is outside the threatened area. Leave a note in a prominent place in your home that says where and how you can be contacted.
- If your home is threatened by wildfire, you will be contacted and advised by law enforcement officers to evacuate.
- Follow the routes that are specified to minimize conflict with incoming emergency units. Be familiar with your neighborhood streets and the major arteries out of Mt. Vernon Canyon and Bear Creek Canyon.

- Remove important documents, mementos, etc. from the possible fire area.
- When evacuating, wear protective clothing: sturdy shoes, cotton or woolen clothing, long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, gloves, and a handkerchief.
- Watch for changes in the speed and direction of the fire and smoke.

Even though we may have snow on the ground, the wildfire danger in our area is still a major concern and will become more of a concern this spring. This fact sheet was produced in cooperation with the Colorado State Forest Service. FIREWISE is a multi-agency program that encourages the development of defensible space and the prevention of catastrophic wildfire. The website for additional information is www.ext.colostate.edu.

Join the Auxiliary!

You can help Foothills Fire and Rescue without becoming a firefighter. Sure we need new firefighters too, but for those of you who would like to volunteer in another way, now you can!

The Auxiliary is designed to assist the volunteer fire fighters of Foothills Fire and Rescue before, during and after calls, through a variety of ways from babysitting for children of firefighters (during a call), supplying refreshments, providing a pot of chili at the fire house after a lengthy day of

calls, organizing social events and assisting with fund-raisers.

If you are interested in helping the Foothills Fire and Rescue volunteer team in this unique way, give us a call! Contact **Nancy Burke, President** at **(303) 526-7590** or **Barb Bogaert, Vice President** at **(303) 526-5532**.

It's a great way to get involved have some fun, and show your support of the Foothills Fire and Rescue Team and our community!

Let's Not Be Fooled!

By Robert Aussprung

Let's not be fooled by our recent weather. The drought is still upon us and concern and care for our property is a must to get us through the new fire season. Experts said we would need 3 or 4 years of above average snow pack to ease the drought along the Front Range. Unfortunately, we are still below normal snow pack for the year. Luckily, we have our 2 biggest months of snowfall coming up — March and April.

A couple of things we can do now could be the difference between losing our homes or not. Take the time to look at your property and evaluate where the greatest "threat" from wildfire is. Look for roads, hiking trails, power lines or previous lightning strikes on trees. Get an idea where a fire could come from that would attack your house. (And yes, it can and would be an attack!)

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