



North Sonoma Coast Volunteer Firefighters



December 2020

Holiday greetings from North Sonoma Coast Fire, the combined team of volunteer firefighters and CAL FIRE staff who respond to local emergencies. We want to keep our community informed of our activity and needs, and to thank all of you for your continued support. We love what we do, but we could not do it without you.

Who is NSCVFA?

The North Sonoma Coast Volunteer Firefighter Association (NSCVFA) supports the North Sonoma Coast Volunteer Fire Department by raising funds to maintain the North Fire Station and to provide support for the volunteer firefighters, including helping to pay for new firefighting vehicles and equipment. NSCVFA was originally created in 1973 as "The Sea Ranch Volunteer Fire Department" (TSRVFD). With the creation of the North Sonoma Coast Fire Protection District, which includes the area previously covered by the Annapolis and Sea Ranch Volunteer Fire Companies, the fire department became North Sonoma Coast Fire. TSRVFD was renamed The North Sonoma Coast Volunteer Firefighter Association to reflect this change.



North Sonoma Coast Fire 2020: Back: Chief Bonnie Plakos, Captain Chuck Breier, Gregory Miller, Phil Martin, Phil Kaufman, Steve Smith, Eric Agnew, Captain Dave Pelzer, Asst. Chief Chris Aitchison. Front: Dagan Holmes, Malay Thaker, Bill Wong, Abel Solis, Captain Paul Plakos, CAL FIRE Captain Red Miller, CAL FIRE FAE Diane Mibach. Not pictured: Goldie Pounds, Randy Burke, Captain Shelley Spear, Dan Peterson, Skylar Martin.

How Your Donations Help

Your generous donations via mail or our website, and attendance at the Memorial Day Weekend Picnic, allow us to provide financial support to the North Sonoma Coast Volunteer Fire Department and our community. With your support we have now been able to make the first three year's payments (total \$86,000!) on the department's newest Rescue vehicle (that responds to virtually every call in the Sea Ranch, Annapolis and Stewarts Point areas). The VFA intends to continue to pay off the entire cost of \$215,000. Funds also go to maintaining the North Fire Station along Highway 1, and keeping firefighters supplied with equipment and clothing. And by your purchase of Christmas trees we were again able to provide three \$1,000 college scholarships to local youths.

Fundraising Affected by Covid-19

Unfortunately our 2020 Memorial Day Weekend Picnic had to be canceled due to the global pandemic. Not having this year's picnic put a pretty good size dent in our annual fundraising efforts. So, if you decide to donate to the VFA this year, please consider giving just a little more to help us make up this deficit.

Donations to the NSCVFA are deductible as provided for in IRS section 170. The NSCVFA is an IRS recognized 501(c)(3) DBA of the TSRVFD EIN# 94-2197071. Checks may be made out to NSCVFA and mailed to PO Box 65, The Sea Ranch, 95497. Or donate online at nscvfa.org. Thank you for your support!

Gratefully,
North Sonoma Coast Volunteer Firefighter Association



Outdoor, masked and distanced training on our newest engine.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic hit us all hard, and changed how we have to do things (as evidenced in the photos above). Your fire department modified their training procedures to be safe but to still carry on with what is needed. We may look and act a bit different on calls: more masks and other PPE, minimizing close contact and moving the action out of doors when appropriate, but we are still there for you, doing whatever is necessary to handle the situation.

New Apparatus In 2020

This year NSCFPD acquired two new vehicles that will improve our firefighters' response capabilities. In March a new Chief's truck, "4400", was put into service. The new 4400 is a 2020 Ford Ranger. The mid-size truck was chosen to have something agile, with 4-wheel drive, to be able to navigate all of the roads in the District as well as many off-road locations. The new 4400 replaces a 1997 Ford Explorer which had given long and rugged service but was past-due for retirement.

The biggest addition is our new Engine 4483. This engine replaced a 1990 Ford "cab-over" engine which had suffered the inevitable damage from use and being deployed on the coast, and no longer met current safety standards for firefighting.

The new 4483 was custom-built for the District by Rosenbauer in Minnesota. District staff looked at many options to find an engine configuration powerful enough to fill the "type 1" engine category, but short enough to be able to navigate the majority of the District's roads and steep driveways. The new engine is a leap forward in technology from the old one, with digital controls and a pump that can provide low or high pressure. Like the old engine, it has a roof-mounted "monitor" (really big nozzle) that can be used to deliver large amounts of water at a major structure fire. The total cost of the engine was \$402,621. The new E4483 was picked up from Modesto by District staff on May 15 and was placed in service in July.



Chief Aitchison, Captain Spear and Chief Plakos picked up the new E4483 in Modesto in May.



2020 Ford Ranger "Chief's Rig" 4400



The VFA Christmas Tree Sale is on! This year you may pre-order trees online, please visit <http://nscvfa.org> for details.

Trees will also be available at the North Fire Station (located at Mile Marker 55.6, Highway 1) for walk-in purchase while stocks last:

Saturday/Sunday, November 28 & 29, 2020, 12 noon - 4:00 p.m.

Saturday/Sunday, December 5 & 6, 2020, 12 noon - 4:00 p.m.

(also December 12 & 13 if not sold out)

After November 29 a small number of VFA Christmas trees may be available for walk-in sales at Sea Ranch Supply at 35550 Verdant View, during their regular business hours.



Welcome Captain Redwood Miller

In February Captain Redwood Miller replaced long-time Captain Shelley Spear as our "Schedule A" Captain, leading the program that brings full-time 24x7 coverage of our District by career CAL FIRE staff. Our CAL FIRE partners run our volunteer training program and manage day-to-day department operations, in addition to their usual duties such as defensible space inspections and, of course, responding to emergency calls. Captain Miller is a long-time coast resident and volunteer for the Cazadero and Fort Ross VFDs. He has been with CAL FIRE since 2005 and was stationed here at Sea Ranch in 3 earlier years. After working in Riverside for a year and then working as a captain for 4 years in inmate camps he has returned to Sea Ranch. We are lucky to have him back!



Want to learn more? Visit us on the web!

<http://nscvfa.org>

<http://northsonomacoastfpd.org>



1974: Old Sea Ranch engine with a happy crowd!



Left: Old engine as found. Above: Cleaned up and ready to be restored!

NSCFPD Responds To LNU Lightning Complex

"Fire Season" got off to an early and devastating start this year following a dry winter. In August the state suffered more than 14,000 lightning strikes and over 800 new wildfires, burning over 1.4 million acres. Here in CAL FIRE's "Sonoma-Lake-Napa" Unit (LNU) the "LNU Lightning Complex burned 363,220 acres. Closest to TSR were the Meyers fire to the south, and the Walbridge fire to the east and south, both closing all of our southern and eastern access roads, and forcing some of our neighbors to evacuate. Responding to so many fires at the same time stretched resources extremely thin. Our coastal area was very much "on our own" to fight these fires, especially early on before help could arrive from afar.

North Sonoma Coast Fire (NSC) rented Engine 4471 to CAL FIRE for area coverage, and sent Engine 4457, staffed with 3 of our volunteers, to help with the Lightning Complex fires. E4457 went first to Guerneville, then the Meyers fire, then to the Walbridge fire, working in shifts of 24 hours on / 24 hours off from August 20-31. Our usual CAL FIRE state engine was eventually deployed elsewhere but we had a South Coast Fire engine here to cover. Keeping sufficient local resources here was extremely important because we did have several small fires start from lightning strikes in remote and difficult-to-access areas in our District. These fires, burning in heavy timber, took several days to extinguish. You did not hear about them on the news as they were not allowed to grow into large fires, though they easily could have without the efforts of our volunteers, CAL FIRE, local residents, aerial spotting from Henry 1, and a bit of luck. All of our NSC volunteers worked hard to be available and prepared for new incidents in our area.

It All Comes Around

Late last year our Assistant Chief, Chief Aitchison, received a call from a local resident, asking if he would like an old fire engine that has been sitting in a barn in the Annapolis area for many years. Chief took a look at it, and checked to see if there was VFA interest in restoring it. There was a lot of interest so he gathered up a VFA crew and it was moved out of the barn. The 1940s vintage engine was moved to an empty bay at our Annapolis Station, which is 10 miles in from Hwy 1, on Annapolis Road. The old engine received a wash before being put in the bay, but after just a few restoration work-parties we had to stop due to the pandemic. So it sits in the bay, warm and dry, and will hopefully be worked on in the Spring. In the meantime, in looking at some old framed photos on a wall at our North Station, we realized that this engine was in service up here decades ago! Here's that photo with many joyful riders. See anyone you know? The plan is for this old engine to be restored and brought out to participate in a parade or three each year, and to be on display at fundraising events. It will be terrific to have it back in (fundraising) service.



E4457 on the Walbridge Fire



E4457 crew: Firefighter Phil Kaufman, Captain Chuck Breier, Firefighter Abel Solis.

Water Water Everywhere

You can't have a fire department without having water sources. Those living at The Sea Ranch have the great benefit of hydrants on the streets. Virtually an unlimited supply for fighting fire. However, The Sea Ranch only represents 10 square miles of our 172 square mile North Sonoma Coast Fire District. The remaining 162 square miles have no street hydrants. So, how do we get water to a fire where there are no hydrants? Our five firefighting apparatus carry anywhere from 300 to 1,500 gallons of water. But when shooting water at 150 gallons per minute per hose, it runs out very quickly.

The answer is to store water in tanks. We currently have 2 of our own tanks in the Annapolis area, storing 10,000 gallons of water, plus access to several county or privately-owned tanks. Water is shuttled from these tanks via a water tender or tanker, to where the pumping apparatus are located. Currently NSC has one water tender, and one water tanker on order, to arrive in the spring of 2021. Because of mutual aid, many other coastal fire departments respond to assist each other. This means even more pumping and tendering apparatus join in the fight. But water becomes very critical. We are very grateful that neighbors with ponds and their own private tanks of water are most generous in allowing us to draft from their supplies.

The plan is to add 2 more 5,000 gallon tanks and a water catchment system at the county roads yard this year. These systems do cost money, so your donations are very important to us and the money will be well spent!



The two newest water tanks in the Annapolis area. One is filled from a roof catchment system, the other will have a catchment system added this winter.

NSC Fire Statistics

- Numbers of calls: 318 in 2019; 244 through October in 2020.
- Types of calls in 2019: 50% medical, 19% hazardous conditions, 7% fire, 8% vehicle accidents, 3% alarms sounding, 2% smoke checks, 3% rescue, and 8% other.
- Call locations in 2019: 65% Sea Ranch, 25% Annapolis/Kashia/Stewarts Point, 9% Timber Cove/Fort Ross, 1% other.
- The VFD currently has 18 active and 4 support members. Nine members are EMTs.
- NSC maintains 4 fire engines, 1 water tender, 3 rescue squads, 1 utility truck, and 1 Chief's truck.. Apparatus respond from 2 stations on Sea Ranch and 2 stations in Annapolis.

Stay Informed!

Our county has had a rough few years of fires, floods, and COVID-19. It is essential for everyone to be informed about emergency situations and to know where to look for information. Please be sure you are signed up for any and all alert systems available to you such as PG&E's alert system and Sonoma County's SoCoAlert and Nixle systems. If you live on The Sea Ranch, sign up for TSRA's Everbridge alert system. If you live in Annapolis or Stewarts Point, put yourself on the "Annapolis group" in the "One Call Now" system provided by the Horicon School. Know your local radio stations KGUA, KTDE, and KSRO. For details on how to sign up for all of those systems, and more, please visit our website at <http://nscfpd.org> and look for the "Emergency Information" link.

In Memoriam Walt Jorgenson

1943 - 2020

Walt joined TSRVFD in 1993 and was an active firefighter for many years. He coordinated our picnics, Christmas tree sales, and scholarship program. He was a big man with a big heart, and is sorely missed. RIP Walt.



We Don't Know If We Will Be Able To Picnic

But we will monitor the COVID situation and restrictions and hopefully figure out something. Please keep it penciled in on your calendar!

Mark your calendar for the 2021 Memorial Day Weekend ??Picnic??



Burgers. Hot Dogs. Hot Links. Slaw. Beans. Drinks. Desserts Kids Games Smokey Bear!

SUNDAY MAY 30, 2021

AT ONE-EYED JACK'S

NOON—3:00

Become a Volunteer Firefighter!

We are always looking for motivated volunteers who don't mind being awakened in the middle of the night to help their friends and neighbors. Our members come from many backgrounds and careers. Prior experience in emergency services is not required. Please see <http://nscfpd.org>, or call 707-785-2648 for information.

North Sonoma Coast Fire Protection District
PO Box 386, The Sea Ranch, CA 95497
(707) 785-2648 email: info@northsonomacoastfpd.org

North Sonoma Coast Volunteer Firefighter Association
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(707) 785-2970 email: info@tsrvfd.org