

HUNTINGTON LAKE FIRE DEPARTMENT

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Letter from the Chief—Brother Chris



.... a great year for the people we serve!

Four New Firefighters!

At tract meetings last summer we told you that our greatest need was to have more volunteers to assure future service. I am excited to announce that four members of our Huntington Lake Family have answered the call and have worked very hard this winter on some of the specialized training they will need. Two of our new members are now fully certified EMT's and two will serve as first responders. Read about them in the sidebar in this issue!

In addition Glenn Johnson from Dowville Tract has agreed to join the department and to recruit others from the "west end" to serve as first responders. Glenn and his crew will dramatically improve our response to the many people who live and play at the western end of Huntington.

A Fire Engine for the "west enders"!

Cabin owners at Huntington continue to have issues keeping insurance rates at reasonable levels and, in some cases, getting insurance at all. Our department is not rated by the *Insurance Service Organization (ISO)* because the first requirement is year around access. Unrated departments are assigned a "10", the worst rating. Insurance providers allow for a "verification process" that can be used to establish a lower rating and your fire department has worked hard to improve our apparatus, training and response times so that insurers can petition for a lower rating when calculating insurance costs. A rating of 8 rather than 10 can cut insurance fees in half in some cases! We have been very successful so far with most insurers, however the argument to lower rates has been increasing difficult to make for those in Lakeview, Dowville, Home Creek, and Idywilde because of the distance and response times to the closest fire station.

Since our re-organization in 1999, we have been planning for and setting aside funds to replace engine 262 (the used one we bought from San Diego) by summer 2013. Because of a generous restricted donation this winter we can advance our scheduled replacement of Engine 262, and rather than trade it in as we had planned, we now can afford to keep it and establish a station in Dowville.

We are investigating the availability of an "experienced", "demonstrator" or heavily discounted fire engine that will meet our needs. It is our hope to have a new engine in place and a new "station" and engine in Dowville for the summer 2012.

Record year for winter training!

In January the State of California changed the licensing standards for firefighters; a change which invalidated all firefighter drivers' licenses in the State. Your volunteers immediately responded to the challenge, taking courses, passing tests and recertifying to the new standards. Other fire chiefs tell me we lead the state in driver re-certification for volunteer departments!

In addition to extensive driver training we have concentrated on wild land fire fighting certification. Six of our volunteers have invested over 300 hours of training to become certified as Wild land level II firefighters. Additionally six of our EMT's have spent countless hours on maintaining their EMT certifications and one new member completed the entire EMT course and is now newly certified.

We could do none of this without you, the people of Huntington Lake. The fire department is something we have truly built together as a community.

....We the volunteers thank you for helping us to help others!

Side Bar: Dowville engine

Recently a donor offered to fund a dream that we had harbored for some time: *a fire station at the west end of Huntington*. Insurance is becoming more costly and in some cases hard to get (Dowville, Lakeview, and Home Creek etc.). A reduction in response time for the west end of the lake can make a difference in obtaining insurance while helping to save lives.

The department planned and budgeted to have a new E262 in place for summer 2013; this donation makes it possible to replace Engine 262 one year ahead of schedule and allows us to keep the "old" E262 for a new "Dowville" station.

The Big Creek Fire Department now automatically responds to 911 calls at Huntington once the Camp La Salle, (and now the Dowville station) close. We plan to loan Big Creek the "Dowville Engine" during the fall and winter. Their current engine is a much slower engine so this should cut their response time to Huntington in half!

In this economy, manufacturers are offering deep discounts at this time, which will reduce our purchase price as much as \$70,000. The board has moved forward, accepting this generous gift and is the process of ordering a replacement engine which should arrive in time for summer 2012.

Special points of interest:

- Dowville Engine
- 4 New Firefighters
- Pancake Breakfast
- Engine Replacement Fund
- Winter Training
- Silent Auction

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Apparatus Replacement and our Replacement Reserve Fund

We first established the apparatus replacement fund in 1999. The first fire truck we purchased since our re-organization in 1999 was a used engine that came from San Diego County, engine "E262". A few years later, blessed with a donation from 14 Huntington Lake families we bought our type I fire engine E62 (the big fire engine). That was followed by a gift from an anonymous foundation paying the entire cost of the Rescue. Two years ago a \$100,000 grant from SCE helped to pay for the Water Tender. Several years ago Camp La Salle and Lisa Coleman donated the Rescue Snowmobile and a couple of years ago we received the Fireboat as a gift.

With the replacement of E262 and a projected life expectancy of 14 years for first out units and 20 years for the other apparatus we will not need to replace apparatus for some time. Our apparatus replacement fund is in good shape, and thanks to your generosity, we are actually ahead of schedule on replacement reserves. The engine we place in Dowville will experience a low call volume and we plan to drastically reduce the amount of equipment it carries thereby extending its life expectancy so the apparatus fund will not be negatively affected.

Pancake Breakfast & Silent Auction

July 3rd, Lakeshore Resort

ANOTHER REASON TO SAVE THE DATE! On Sunday July 3rd, our famous **Huntington Lake Pancake Breakfast** will again include the HLVFD's second ever SILENT AUCTION! Last year we auctioned off over 50 items donated by our favorite locals in Huntington and Shaver Lake. This year we expect to have some great items from Fresno retailers as well.

You will not want to miss the Auction—there will be a handmade quilt, wonderful original photographs by locals, a watercolor painting, kayak rentals, dinners for two, fabulous wine, and a very cute Beach Loving Carved Bear. And there will be a couple of additional very unique and special items.

Keep your eye out for our Silent Auction flyer: a list of items, along with all the details for the Auction, will be mailed to you in mid June for your review. It will again be a WIN-WIN for all of us. You will have an opportunity to buy some exceptional, local, high quality items, and all the proceeds will go to help the HLVFD continue to maintain its reputation as the one of the best VFD's in the STATE!

The Department, however, relies on the community to fund the day to day operating costs of fire and medical services. By now, you should have received our Annual Appeal letter. The Board urges you to respond as generously and as soon as you can.

HLVFD took over administration of the Annual Appeal from the HLA, and we have been gratified by the community's continued support. We are always looking for new and fun ways to generate funds for the benefit of Huntington residents. The Pancake Breakfast has long been a centerpiece of our efforts and the addition of our first Silent Auction at the Breakfast gave us a real boost. The Silent Auction is now an integral part of our fundraising. We encourage everyone to attend The Pancake Breakfast. The pancakes are great, and there will be terrific items to bid on at the Auction. Of course, Department hats, t-shirts, and sweatshirts will be on sale. The Board looks forward to seeing everyone at this terrific event on July 3rd at Lakeshore.

We welcome community input to help us do our job better. Department members will be at the annual tract meetings. We look forward to talking to you. We also call your attention to the Department's website—www.hlvfd.org—for information about the HLVFD and its activities.

A Message from the Board...

The focus of our efforts continues to be strengthening of the ability of the Department to protect the residents of our community. As the Chief reports, we will soon have enhanced response capabilities at the west end of the Lake which should lower insurance costs for those tracts. We have **four new volunteers** trained and ready for this summer!

The Board has been very successful in pursuing grants and other sources of funds to finance replacement of old equipment and to strengthen our response capability.

New Have New Volunteers: Please thank them!

Spencer Faraday

College Student, first responder,
Title 22 certified

Matt Ferreira

High school teacher
Camp La Salle manager, EMT

William Hall

Old College tract, works in LA
and lives at Huntington!

Eric Lingua:

School teacher, EMT
cabin in Huckleberry Tract

Apologies!!!

We failed to list the
following people in our honor
roll of donors for 2010!

Chief's Club

The Leach Family Foundation

Firefighters Club

Mr. & Mrs. Timothy McFadden