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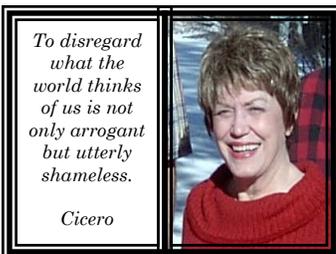
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Editor's Corner

Reba Coulter, Exec. Dir.



To disregard what the world thinks of us is not only arrogant but utterly shameless.

Cicero

Pay Only 25%-Not 100%

We still have funds available for fuel abatement in Idyllwild and Pine Cove, but only limited funds for other areas. This has been made possible, in part, by the cooperative agreement between Riverside County and MCFSC thanks to the efforts of Kevin Turner of CAL FIRE. Under this agreement, 103 fuel reduction projects have been submitted for competitive bidding. Even though currently limited, the abatement program is alive and thriving.

We're NOT FPSI!!

By Mike Esnard

Those of you who read the Town Crier will know that a certain fire prevention company has been in the news around here recently, and whether you read the TC or not, I want to clear up a bit of confusion. We, as I hope you all know, are the Mountain Communities Fire Safe Council, a non-profit organization whose mission is to keep our communities safe from wild-fire. We are not Fire Prevention Services, Inc, (FPSI) which is a profit-oriented company out of San Diego that has a contract this year with the Idyllwild Fire Protection District to carry out inspections and forced abatements in the district.

This will seem like an obvious point to most of you but we have gotten quite a few calls from Idyllwild residents believing we had control over their inspection process. We do not. Some residents believed that the letter they received from Fire Prevention Services telling them of code violations on their property meant that they must use FPSI to do the work. This was a mistake, though it is easy to see why some made it. Let me just say that property owners in Idyllwild are not required to use FPSI for abatement work. They are required to meet the safety codes of the district, but how they do that is entirely up to them.

Regarding forced abatement (abatement work done after repeated inspection failures and without the owner's agreement) IFPD's Chief Kunkle has empha-



MCFSC Project Manager Mike Kellner Receives Heartfelt Thank You From Rosa Lee Long for Helping to Save Her \$1,000's!!
From the Town Crier

sized that if it is apparent that abatement work is taking place, he will postpone any forced action. So if you do get a letter that appears to be a final notice, call the IFPD to let them know you are going to handle it, and take care of it. If you need help with contractors give us a call. We have grant money to assist abatement in Idyllwild and we are happy to help.

As I write this, various people are working on fixing the problems that Idyllwild residents encountered this year. I think next year will be better.

Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain loving one another.
-- Erma Bombeck

Red Cross is Back!

For years the **Red Cross** was present on the hill through the wonderful services of Mary Ann Miller. After her retirement, and without her continued encouragement, our **Red Cross** presence largely disappeared. The Idyllwild area has had Mountain Disaster Preparedness under Dr. Dick Goldberg's and Nancy Layton's leadership, but no **Red Cross** to respond to disasters, large or small.

Starting earlier this year, **the Red Cross is back!** To qualify to represent the **Red Cross** as its disaster response Team on the hill requires classes and training. These classes started this summer and are continuing. If you want to be a part of the Team, please contact me, David Alt, at david.j.alt@altandassociates.com



Proper Pruning

By Megan Foucht



For several months now landowners across the mountain have been focusing on removing weeds, grasses and needles. However, it's important to go one rung higher on the fuel ladder to keep the area around your home fire safe. While working with shrubs, bushes and trees keep in mind proper pruning techniques and practices. Proper pruning has been proven to reduce the impact of stress, disease and insect entry of your plants. It will also reduce the amount of flammable material around your home. Even the threat of highly flammable shrubs like manzanita can be significantly reduced through appropriate pruning.

Here are some tips for decreasing the fire hazards on your property where bushes and shrubs and trees are concerned:

- Prune branches from the ground and clear dead leaves and branches from within the bush or shrub.

- Make sure spacing is at least two times the height of the shrubs to ensure fire doesn't spread from plant to plant.

- Remove shrubs or bushes that are completely dead.

- When landscaping with shrubs and bushes choose drought tolerant or resistant varieties.

- Use well maintained tools such as sharp loppers, hand shears or pruning saws to ease your workload.

- Prune large branches using a saw and a three-cut method. The first cut should be made on the under-side of the branch a few inches from the trunk. The second cut will be made on the top of the branch an inch closer to the trunk than the first cut was made. After these cuts are made the branch will fall off naturally, not harming the integrity of the bark. The third cut should be made at the branch-bark collar and will take off the remainder of the branch.

(continued on page 4)

It's All Habitat By Larry Kueneman

Most of us think that the more trees in a forest the better – this was my belief when I moved to live in the woods in 1993. If that's the way we think, we simply don't understand. Forests grow, period. Nature does not come to rest because we foolishly decreed in 1910 that all fires must be extinguished by 10 A.M. of the morning following their discovery. Fire is a part of nature, and is simply nature's way of cleansing and thinning the ever-growing forest. Natural fire occurring in a natural forest is not (and never was) our enemy. The hard part of all this is the understanding that there are two distinct types of forest fires; the wild-fire or crown fire we are all familiar with today, and the natural fire that occurs in a natural forest (very few of these around). It's only when we have prevented fire to the point that the now severely thickened forest burns as a wildfire or a crown fire that it is a problem – and this is what we face today in almost all of the west.

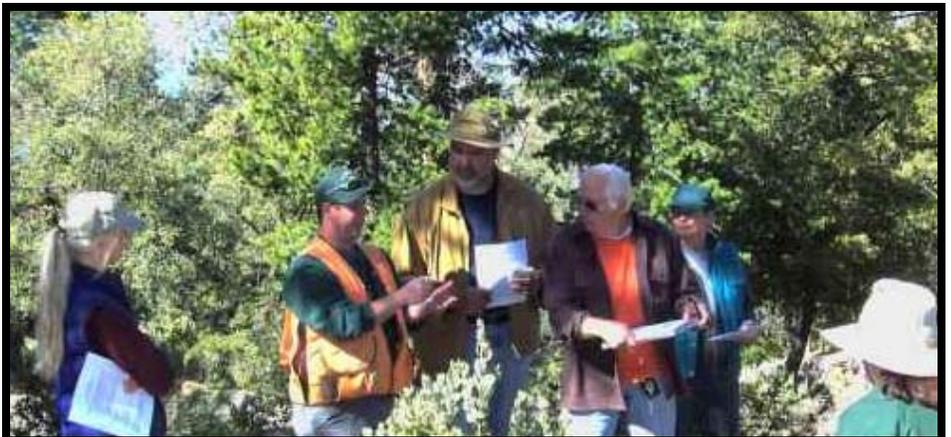
Wildfire, especially a crown fire, can produce as much as 100,000 times as much smoke and ash as would a natural, low flame fire, burning in a natural forest.

The key to both understanding and caring for our forests is to consider all as habitat. This means that the area is habitat for plants, for creatures, and for trees. A natural mixed-conifer forest (pines, cedars, firs, etc.) consists of forty to sixty adult or mature trees per acre (tpa). This means that they are 27 to 33 feet apart on average – a natural forest looks much like a city park. This spacing allows the sunlight to fall on almost the entire crown (top) of the tree every day providing growth for the tree. The spacing also provides for the

sun laying on all areas of the ground for from two to four hours each day. This is sufficient to spark the growth of the grasses and small seed-bearing plants that attract small creatures. Larger animals rarely frequent areas in those forests where the small animals are absent. And the sunlight on the ground is the key to attracting all of them. As we see around us, where fires are restricted, the forests can grow from the original 40 to 60 tpa to as much as over 2,000 tpa in just 100 years. Beginning at about 100 tpa, the ground-laying sunlight exposure is reduced, and the endangerment of species begins (the thicker the forest, the poorer is the quality of the habitat).

I had heard of small areas where thinning the forest back to near what a natural forest would look like, where that thinning produced a resurgence of birds and animals, but it was when my wife and I visited Shaver Lake that the full impact came home. Shaver Lake is fifty miles NE of Fresno, and Southern California Edison owns twenty thousand acres there that they have been thinning for more than thirty years. Based on a critter survey taken before their thinning operations were begun, a given area, after thinning – will almost immediately – have as many as four times the number of species found originally, and the sun on the ground is the key.

By the way, forest biologists now tell us that eighteen percent of all plants and trees – that's almost one in five – are dependent on fire for reproduction.



Hal Carey (USFS) instructs MCFSC volunteers Mike Esnard, Ron Perry, and Trish Tuley for the cooperative "Adopt a Fuelbreak" program while Laurie Rosenthal (USFS) and Michele Marsh observe. Volunteers monitor and report to the USFS on current fuelbreak conditions.



Is It Possible to Prepare For A 7.8 Earthquake?

By Nancy Layton, President, Mountain Disaster Preparedness

When the San Andreas does its next big shake, rattle, and roll, Southern California will look very different than it does today. The scenes painted in *The Great Southern California ShakeOut* by Dr. Lucy Jones and her colleagues is truly terrifying. Property damage, injuries, and deaths will be widespread and horrendous. The projections for long-term devastation are almost impossible to fathom.

Many businesses will be damaged beyond their ability to re-open. Many others may appear to ride it out, but will experience catastrophic losses that eventually force them to close. Jobs will disappear – virtually overnight. Transportation of all types will be slow to recover. Communication, banking, insurance, and real estate will take major hits as systems fail and people can't make payments on damaged or destroyed homes and commercial properties. The losses will continue cascading into failure for many months, perhaps even years.

What can any individual do to prepare for such an almost unimaginable situation? In this article, I'll list a few things you can do NOW to prepare for what is sure to happen somewhere down the road – maybe even in your lifetime. In future articles, I'll go into a bit more detail about specific things you can do to prepare for the long-haul following this devastating disaster the Quake folks have laid out for us to consider.

- ◆ Take a CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) course.
- ◆ Lay in your own supply of emergency food, clothing, and water, water, WATER!
- ◆ Get to know your neighbors and find out what they're doing to prepare. Help them, remembering that each person you help now to be better prepared may be one less person you'll have to help when it all hits the fan.

Then, take your planning to the next level. Consider what you can do now to prepare for sustaining your own and your loved ones' lives when we're all thrown back on our own resources without access to many of the modern facilities and conveniences we all take very much for granted.

- ◆ What if your house is damaged beyond habitability and we're isolated up here? Hopefully, you aren't seriously injured, but you most likely can't get out of town and, given the scenario for the rest of Southern California, where would you go, anyway? Are you prepared to literally **camp out** in your own backyard for a couple weeks or longer?
- ◆ While it may seem ludicrous right now, having an **emergency stash of cash** (buried in a coffee can in the backyard, perhaps?) suddenly looks more appealing when you consider the very real possibility that the stores that can open and still have goods to sell will have no way to process your credit or debit card or even be willing to take a check, given the precarious state of the banking industry in the first few weeks after the Big One. Cash or barter may become our primary means for obtaining what we need.

Next quarter, I'll address a few more ideas on how to prepare for "The BIG One!". In the meantime, here's a few things to get started on today!

- ◆ Look around your house and think about everything that poses a threat when the shaking, rattling, and rolling begins. Start now **to secure things** from falling or becoming airborne missiles aimed straight at your head.
- ◆ As much as you love it there, please, take that heavy picture of Aunt Bessie **off the wall over your bed** and put it somewhere Aunt Bessie can't kill

you by falling on your head in the middle of a nighttime earthquake!

- ◆ Even if you no longer have wee ones toddling around your kitchen or dining room, put **child-safety latches** on your cabinets.
- ◆ Keep a pair of **sturdy shoes under the edge of your bed** where you can easily find them right away once the shaking stops. Socks, too. And, stick a flashlight inside one of them. Think that's silly? Look seriously at all the things that will bury your shoes inside your closet, making getting to them a challenge when you're already in panic mode from the shaker. And how much broken glass or ceramics will you have to tread just getting to them?
- ◆ While it may sound REALLY strange, think about what you wear when you sleep. Nothing? Gee, how will you find something suitable for the occasion when your bedroom is a complete shambles? Might want to keep a sweat-suit or similar **clothing tucked under the edge of the bed** in a drawstring trash bag, too.
- ◆ Mount several **battery-operated emergency lights** (small, round "puck" lights work well) in places your hands can easily find should the quake happen in the darkness and the power is out when you are able to move about. Test these lights frequently and replace the batteries as needed.

Okay, that's enough for now. Get to work! Look for more disaster preparedness tips in the next newsletter. (Including my own recipe for "Earthquake Stew.")

BE PREPARED!

(Proper Pruning continued)

As always, remember to call Forest Care at 1-888-883-8446 for help thinning and pruning trees less than 12" in diameter as well as treatment or removal of brush. Have a fire safe fall.

Success in life has nothing to do with what you gain in life or accomplish for yourself. It's what you do for others. - Danny Thomas

The views and conclusions contained in this document are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as representing the opinions or policies of the California Fire Safe Council or the U.S. Government. Mention of trade names or commercial products does not constitute their endorsement by the California Fire Safe Council or the U.S. Government.



Margaret Grayson (CFSC,) chats with Tom McCullough and Jerry Holldber, directors (MCFSC) during recent filming of Woodies at work for upcoming FOX Channel 11 segment on volunteerism by Bob Tarlau. Reba Coulter points out areas of interest to photographer Julio as Jim Taylor, Janice Fast and Mike Esnard confer.

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Mike & Emily Pearson




Pearson (left) donated the tree used for the 1997 Tree Management. He also regularly donates firewood to the HELP Center for those in need.

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