The Mountain Communities Fire Safe Council Newsletter is funded by a USDA Forest Service grant through the California Fire Safe Council, sponsors, and donations. Donations to Mountain Communities Fire Safe Council are used to further public awareness and support fire prevention and hazard fuels reduction objectives.
At a recent community council meeting, CAL FIRE Mountain Battalion Chief Dan Johnson announced that Pinyon Pines was 100% in compliance with last year’s fire abatements. The property pictured above is a good example of the fine work done by this community.

Prior to the opening of the brush dump in Pinyon Pines seven years ago, residents were required to take their green waste to the Anza Transfer Station, which is a 30 mile round trip. The Pinyon Communities Chapter of the Fire Safe Council (FSC) was formed largely in response to this problem.

The Pinyon Brush Dump is sited on United States Forest Service (USFS) land and operates under a Memorandum of Understanding between the USFS and our local chapter of the FSC. CAL FIRE provided a grant for the perimeter fencing and handles the brush chipping. Riverside County provides a roll-off dumpster for green waste that cannot be chipped, such as cactus, yucca, grass and annuals. The dump accepts only native species, with the exception of Christmas trees, from properties in the Pinyon communities.

The brush dump has been a real asset to the community. We are told by the personnel at Station 30 that property inspections are showing compliance rates well into the 90% range on first inspections!

The dump is staffed solely by volunteers from the Pinyon Communities and is open for two hours every Saturday. Residents can dump at other hours if necessary by calling Ray Barmore at (760)349-8503.
We were very proud to host a visit with the national group of fire prevention managers from the US Forest Service this past February 16. A large group representing every USFS region of the country came up from their national meeting in Palm Springs to see our program.

This honor was the result of a previous site visit from USFS Assistant Director Trudie Mahoney from Region V headquarters in Vallejo. She came in October with California Fire Safe Council Executive Director Margaret Grayson and our Grant Manager, Denise Carrington. Trudie liked what she saw so much and said then that she wanted the national group to meet us. True to her word, she set it up with MCFSC Executive Director Edwina Scott, who laid out a very successful day of events for the group. As we took them around the hill to see various projects, we were pleased to have our own Forest Service District leaders with us to meet the visitors and answer their questions. Laurie Rosenthal, Dan Felix, Chris Fogel and Freddie Espinoza fielded questions and spoke about our partnership, as well as the details of Forest Service fuels projects that tied in with those of the Fire Safe Council.

They met the Woodies while this industrious group of volunteers worked at The HELP Center, visited a Double View project managed by Don Patterson, and stood on the Pine Cove Fuel Break while Blair Ceniceros talked about the project that led to the creation of our local Fire Safe Council. They met Mountain Area Safety Taskforce (MAST) members after lunch at the Nature Center, and heard an impromptu and superb comment by Riverside County Fire Chief John Hawkins supporting our work together. Our last stop was the Silent Valley Recreation Center in Poppet Flats, where Pat Boss described the considerable work done in that area.

It was a fine day for all of us. Edwina, Don, Pat and Blair did a great job leading the day, and our local Forest Service folks were a great support.
TWELVE THINGS TO HAVE READY WHEN YOU’RE ORDERED TO EVACUATE YOUR HOME

Everything on this list can be stored in one or two lightweight plastic file boxes or totes and kept in an easily accessed place, preferably near the door you’ll be leaving through when you evacuate during an emergency. If you’re taking pets, remember their food, water and a leash or carrier.

- A minimum of one-week supply of any medications you need to stay alive.
- Extra glasses or contacts if needed to see, read, or drive safely.
- At least one large bottle of drinking water and a couple of energy bars per person.
- Copies of your property and auto insurance policies and the phone number for their claims departments.
- Photos of the inside and outside of your home, garage and any outbuildings, as well as any vehicles that will be left behind. Take photos now, get them developed right away, and keep them updated as things change. Digital photos on a disc is the easiest.
- Current medical records and copies of your health insurance cards.
- Passport and/or driver’s license or other photo ID. (NOTE: if your ID address is NOT the same as the home to which you will return following an evacuation, such as a PO Box, also keep a copy of a recent utility bill in your name that shows that service address or you may not be allowed through checkpoints.)
- Birth certificates, especially your children’s.
- Military records, if needed for VA or DOD reporting or claims.
- Copies of any important papers or documents (mortgage, credit cards, recent bank statements, investment accounts, Social Security documents) - whatever you will need to continue your life away from your home for several days or weeks.
- Irreplaceable personal papers and photos or copies. Scanning and storing on a disc simplifies this.
- Your computer backup on an external hard-drive or flash-drive.

Are you ready?

Thanks to Veronica Alt and MDP. PO Box 142, Idyllwild CA 92549-0142. MDP@idyllwild.com. 951-659-8100. www.mdp-idyllwild.com

MARK YOUR CALENDAR! June 18: MDP’s ANNUAL AUCTION AND FUNDRAISER PARTY
BLAIR AND KAY CENICEROS LEAVING THE HILL

MCFSC is losing two very important board members. It is hard to overestimate how much the Ceniceros have contributed to our organization over the years. Blair served as president for four critical years during its formation and later became board secretary. Earlier, he and Kay played key roles in helping create the Community Wildfire Protection Plan, a document essential to grant application.

Blair’s experience at Mt. San Jacinto Community College made him an effective leader and a skilled negotiator with other organizations on which we depend. Kay brought to the board her extraordinary experience as Riverside County Supervisor for 16 years and as a member of the Planning Commission before that. There were not many people or mechanisms in local government that Kay did not know. And, if that was not enough, she had been involved with national forest and resource issues earlier in her career.

Both brought great skill and knowledge to MCFSC, also infusing a wonderful grace and charm into any meeting. Blair with his wry humor and Kay with her radiant smile, they modeled a positive, cooperative attitude and commitment to the well-being of the mountain communities. We are grateful for all they have given our organization, our community and our county. We shall miss them.

A GRATEFUL COMMUNITY CELEBRATES CENICEROS CONTRIBUTIONS

A farewell celebration honoring Blair and Kay Ceniceros was held at the Idyllwild Nature Center on Sunday afternoon, March 20. Sponsored by individual board members of MCFSC and arranged by Ron Perry and Doris Lombard, it was a warm and delightful event featuring photographs and conversation, food and testimonials, all beautifully facilitated by Doug Austin. A looping slide show added to the memories and fun, while Local Color’s angelic voices sang several songs, starting with a musical tribute to a very surprised Riverside County 3rd District Planning Commissioner John Petty for his work affecting the hill.

Testimonials from colleagues and neighbors ranged over the many years of Bair and Kay’s contributions to our community and the county. Bob Smith spoke of Kay’s crucial help forming the Historical Society; Doug Pumphrey told how she helped him get to know the hill when he became District Ranger in 1981; John Petty remembered that Kay was instrumental in his being on the Planning Commission. Larry Keuneman and Freddie Espinoza summarized Blair’s significant contribution to the formation of MCFSC, and Mike Esnard thanked both for the healthy norms they helped create for the board. Riverside County Fire Chief John Hawkins reminded us how much safer the community is because of Kay’s dedicated work for public safety and the “fire safe attitude” she brought to the County Board of Supervisors.

Finally, Blair expressed their appreciation for the quality of people they have worked with on the hill. He remarked that he had been so amazed at the Woodies’ commitment, showing up “day after day, month after month.” Blair said they felt privileged to see all the cooperation among agencies as MAST took shape and the Community Wildfire Protection Plan was developed. He finished by recognizing the hill for its remarkable volunteer spirit, which continues to make our community the unique place that it is.
ABATEMENT SEASON IS HERE!

Local fire agencies are beginning their yearly inspections. Off-Hill property owners should visit their mountain properties to check for any damage to trees and/or structures. Clean-up of properties is essential to reducing fire hazard.

The contractors advertising in this newsletter are used by the Fire Safe Council for grant work. They are licensed, insured and bonded.

Financial help is available through FSC. If you would like one of our Property Managers to assess your property, call our office at 951-659-6208 for more information.

MCFSC WELCOMES NEW BOARD DIRECTOR

At its March 19 chapter meeting, the Idyllwild MCFSC selected Chris Kramer to be its newest board director. He will fill one of the empty slots left by departing Blair and Kay Ceniceros. Chris is retired recently from a 30-year career as a firefighter in Palm Springs and is ready to be involved in our community. He joined the Woodies last fall and now brings his considerable experience to the board, where we are very happy to have him.

“MOST FIRE SAFE HOMES ON THE HILL” CONTEST

MCFSC in partnership with Idyllwild Fire, CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire and the U.S. Forest Service is sponsoring a contest to identify the Most Fire Safe Homes on the Hill. Property owners may enter their homes in this contest, to be judged on its defensible space and ember-resistance. The guidelines for defensible space and ember-resistance will be available at the April 30 Firefighters’ Muster at Idyllwild School and after April 30 on our webpage, www.mcfsc.org.

To enter your home, complete the application below. At this time, we are accepting applications only for homes in the communities of Idyllwild, Mountain Center and Pine Cove. One winner will be selected from each area. All entries must be received by May 16, 2011, and the winners will be announced on June 15. We look forward to working with you. Good luck!

“MOST FIRE SAFE HOMES ON THE HILL” CONTEST

OWNER’S NAME:_________________________________________________________________

PROPERTY ADDRESS:_____________________________________________________________

MAILING ADDRESS:_______________________________________________________________

TELEPHONE NUMBER:________________________YEAR BUILT:______________________

By entering this contest, I give permission for MCFSC to enter my property for the sole purpose of judging it for the contest. This information will not be used for any purpose other than this contest. Additionally, if my home is selected as one of the winners, I give permission for my name and a photo of my home/property to be published in the Idyllwild Town Crier and the MCFSC Newsletter. Property addresses will not be released. Please mail this entry form to MCFSC, PO Box 507, Idyllwild CA 92549.
MCFSC THANKS THE BUSINESSES WHO ADVERTISED IN THIS EDITION FOR THEIR HELP IN SPONSORING OUR NEWSLETTER.
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM — Spring, 2011
($10 per person or $20 per family)

NAME: __________________________________________

HILL PROPERTY ADDRESS: __________________________________________

MAILING ADDRESS: __________________________________________

CITY, STATE, ZIP: __________________________________________

PHONE: __________________________________________

EMAIL ADDRESS: __________________________________________

MCFSC, PO BOX 507, Idyllwild CA, 92549

You can view a color version of the newsletter on our website at www.mcfsc.org.