



# Medford Rural Fire Protection District #2

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**Medford Rural Fire Protection District 2**  
*2018 Fall Newsletter*

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## Fire District 2 News & Events

by Fire Chief Brian Fish



Welcome to our Medford Rural Fire Protection District 2 (MRFPD2) 2018 Fall Newsletter. As we transition into Autumn, we are leaving behind a very busy fire season. The smoke we had in the valley since the beginning of July was a daily reminder that wildfire was a challenge this year. Not only have we been involved in fires within our own district, but also several fires around the State of Oregon. Our personnel and equipment were sent to aid in fires including the Klamathon (near Hornbrook, CA), Garner Complex (near Grants Pass, OR), and Ramsey Canyon (near Sams Valley) fires. Our commitment to these fires involved 34 different fire personnel from our agency, for approximately 2,500 hours of time. This was an unusual fire season due to the lightning storms that took place in the beginning of July. Looking back, it further strengthens our commitment to working in our wildland urban interface (WUI) areas to help us all be better prepared for future fire seasons. One of our Deputy Fire Marshals is specifically assigned by MRFPD2 to provide recommendations while you prepare your property against the risk of wildfire. More information can be found on page 3 of this newsletter.



We are pleased to report that the construction of all three new fire stations is com-

plete and they are currently occupied by our very grateful personnel. The crews are making each station feel like a home away from home as they get settled in; while working through a few, minor issues that one might expect with any new building. We have found that the relocation of Station 2 (from 8th Street to Stewart Avenue)



has reduced its call volume while increasing the calls for service from Station 3, located on Highland Drive (right next door to the old Station 3). We keep a watchful eye on any impacts that arise from these kinds of changes so we can make needed adjustments and ensure the best service plan as possible with our available resources.

Another piece of exciting news I'd like to share is that we selected Melissa Cano to fill the City of Medford's Emergency Management Coordinator position, which is under the direction of the Fire Department. Melissa came to us from the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) and began working with us in September. Please see the article on the next page to learn more about her.

I encourage you to be careful as we move into the winter months. Please be fire-safe and be cautious while driving when the roads become wet and icy. If you have any questions about your fire district, please give us a call and we will be happy to assist you.

## New Emergency Management Coordinator

Please join us in welcoming **Melissa Cano** to her new role of Emergency Management Coordinator. Melissa started working with us on September 19 of this year. She comes to us locally from the Oregon Department of Forestry, where her primary position was Public Information Officer. She has extensive experience in the Incident Command System (ICS) and has served as a liaison for local resources and agencies during emergencies. You might also recognize her from her years spent working as a local news anchor. Melissa is a gifted communicator and will be a tremendous asset to the City and your Fire District.



## Equipment Upgrade



This summer, MRFPD2 purchased a Slip-On Unit that vastly upgraded the fleet's Utility Task Vehicle (UTV). The Polaris 6x6 is an off-road vehicle with the ability to access areas that are inaccessible by any other apparatus. With the addition of the

Slip-On Unit, the UTV can carry 75 gallons of water, five gallons of fire-fighting foam, a stokes basket for patient transportation, and many other useful types of equipment.

Because the UTV was primarily used for responses on the Bear Creek Greenway, it is housed at Station 4, which allows quick access to the bike path in the event of a smoke investigation or grass fire. The unit has been especially effective when we receive limited information on the location of an emergency because it can scout the area before we commit our larger apparatus to tight areas. We have had several fires along the Greenway this summer and the UTV has proven extremely useful during those events. We also had the opportunity to use it after a storm brought several lightning strikes throughout the surrounding hills, sparking small fires. The unit was able to access a remote area off of Griffin Creek to extinguish a smoldering fire that was inaccessible by our other apparatus.



**Medford Fire-Rescue hired five new firefighters** this past May. After an intense, six-week Recruit Academy, we are proud to announce that all of our new recruits have graduated and are now working on assigned shifts. Congratulations to our new team members!



WWW.BENNETT

## Promotions



**Brian Farber**  
Captain to Battalion Chief  
May 2018



**Kip Gray**  
Captain to Battalion Chief  
May 2018



**Mike Longo**  
Firefighter to Captain  
May 2018



**Graham Payer**  
Engineer to Captain  
May 2018



**Lars Borosund**  
Firefighter to Engineer  
May 2018



**Andrew Burg**  
Firefighter to Engineer  
October 2018

## Wildfire Preparedness & Mitigation by Deputy Fire Marshal Mark Shay



**Wildfires are devastating communities** throughout our region. Fires in Jackson and Josephine Counties have resulted in many residents being evacuated and throughout the Pacific Northwest, many homes have been destroyed. The residents of MRFPD2 are not immune to the risk of a devastating wildfire. You might ask, "What is the Fire Department doing to reduce that risk in our community?" We are continuing the process of evaluating homes and neighborhoods for wildfire risk. These evaluations began several years ago and are continuing with a new intensity. This year, we have completed nearly 400 home evaluations so far. Homes identified with a higher risk will receive information on how they can reduce their vulnerability to wildfire. In addition to conducting the evaluations, we remain involved in the Rogue Valley Fire Prevention Co-Op, which, among other things, brought the presentation "Era of Megafires" to Medford. We are also seeking new opportunities to collaborate with other agencies to keep Medford safe from wildfire.

Although we are steadfastly working to reduce the wildfire threat, we can't do it alone. We need your help to keep our neighborhoods safe. Your involvement starts at home with keeping your house and property fire-safe. Maintaining defensible space around your home and following current fire restrictions is a good start. Also make sure your address is clearly marked from the roadway to your home. A well-marked address helps us find you quickly, not just during a wildfire, but for any emergency you may have. If you would like an in-depth home assessment and want to discuss fire safety, please call me at (541) 774-2300; or if you would like to view your current home assessment, visit our website at [www.medfordfirerescue.org](http://www.medfordfirerescue.org), click on "Fire & Life Safety" then click on "Wildfire Home Safety".

## Retirements

### 36 Years of Service



**Rick Rohrbough**  
Battalion Chief

**Hired:** February 1, 1982  
Firefighter

**Retired:** April 30, 2018  
Battalion Chief

**Promotions:** Fire Engineer 1985  
Fire Captain 1995  
Battalion Chief 2014

Rick's retirement plans:  
*"Spending more time camping with family and friends."*

### 21 Years of Service



**Ron Nelson**  
Battalion Chief

**Hired:** September 3, 1996  
Firefighter

**Retired:** April 29, 2018  
Battalion Chief

**Promotions:** Fire Captain 2006  
Battalion Chief 2016

Ron looks forward to...  
*"Traveling without boundaries or time limits."*

### 25 Years of Service



**Bill Parks**  
Fire Engineer

**Hired:** September 1, 1993  
Firefighter

**Retired:** September 29, 2018  
Fire Engineer

**Promotions:** Fire Engineer 2012

After retiring, Bill wants...  
*"More vacations with family and more quality time with my adult children."*

## New Employees



**Brandon Grissom**  
Firefighter  
May 2018



**Brandon Jones**  
Firefighter  
May 2018



**Aaron Kersey**  
Firefighter  
May 2018



**Kyle Miller**  
Firefighter  
May 2018



**Ryan Willits**  
Firefighter  
May 2018



**Stephany Smith-Pearson**  
Administrative Assistant  
June 2018

## Daylight Saving Time Ends November 4, 2018



**TIP:** Check smoke detectors and change the batteries when you set your clocks back an hour!



# Fire District 2 Newsletter ★ Fall 2018

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200 South Ivy Street, Room 180  
Medford, OR 97501



Meet Medford Fire-Rescue's new Firefighters!

## Medford Rural Fire Protection District 2

**FALL NEWSLETTER**

