

# THE CACHAGUA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

Volume 3, 1st Quarter 2017



## From the Chief:

First, let me wish everyone a Happy New Year. I hope your holiday season was a good one. We had a successful Santa's Toy Delivery Run on Christmas Eve that was appreciated by all. Thank you to our Santas and their helpers.



Chief Gregg Curry

This last year was a busy one. We had significant personnel turnover within the department but still managed to provide a high level of service to the community. Please see below for some data that summarize our responses during 2016.

The District Board has decided to publish a newsletter every 6 months, one in January and the other in July. The first newsletter of the year will provide a recap of the previous year along with some safety reminders for the spring and early summer seasons. The second newsletter in July will provide a "how it goes" summary of the first six months along with reminders for the late fall and winter. We hope the schedule of two newsletters will meet the needs of the community. Of course, we will continue to post current, timely information on the Facebook page.

The major event of 2016 was the Soberanes Fire. Cachagua Fire stepped up and contributed from the beginning to the end. We are now in our season of rain and water. Later we will have our early summer season of no school and vacations. Please continue to read along and see a summary of each topic below. As always,

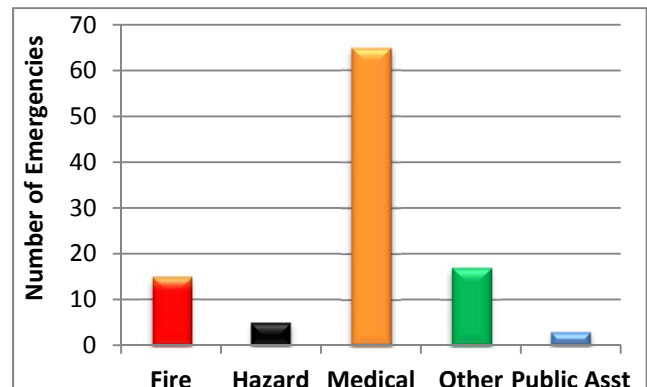
please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Feel free to contact me at [cfcchief@cachaguafire.com](mailto:cfcchief@cachaguafire.com).

Again, I wish everyone a special 2017.

Sincerely, Gregg I. Curry, Fire Chief

## Year in Review: 2016

We had 105 calls during 2016, the majority of which were associated with Medical calls. We also had quite a few calls related to the Soberanes Fire.



## SOBERANES FIRE, CACHAGUA FIRE

**PARTICIPATION:** The fire started on 22 July 2016 as a result of an illegal campfire in Garrapata State Park. By the time it was fully contained on 15 October, it had burned more than 132,000 acres and was the most expensive wildfire in US History, costing more than \$236 million. At the peak of the fire, more than 5,000 personnel were involved in the firefighting effort. Included in that number were members of Cachagua Fire.

As the fire moved from its origin in Palo Colorado, it was within the jurisdiction of Mid Coast Fire. Cachagua Fire kept a close eye on the movement of the fire as it approached our district. Cachagua Fire maintained contact with Cal Fire representatives and started planning a role for Cachagua Fire. Initially Chief Curry, Battalion Chief del Valle, Battalion Chief Davis, and Captain Friday were hired on as liaisons and local area experts to work with other departments who were coming into the district as part of the overall response. Their key contribution was in sharing their detailed knowledge about the local area.

When the fire reached the Cachagua Fire Protection District boundary lines, the department was hired with Engine 7731, Rescue 7761 and 9-11 personnel to man the vehicles. At this time, Battalion Chief del Valle moved from assisting Chief Curry with the liaison assignment to assuming operational control of district personnel and equipment. Captain Friday moved to the suppression operation as well. Chief Curry and Division Chief Davis remained in the liaison role for the district working with the command staff.

The district engines and personnel stayed on the fire for 10 days until the fire had passed the Prince's Camp area and moved into the wilderness of the Los Padres Forest. At that point, all district assets were released.

Chief Curry and Battalion Chief del Valle remained on the fire until it was completely contained and assisted with the rehabilitation efforts, again serving as local area experts.

It is important to note that the women's auxiliary stepped up in first class fashion to support the firefighters with much appreciated food. Additionally, Cachagua Fire received many positive comments from the other departments that participated in the overall firefighting effort. We thank the community for all of your support during such a trying time.



Another night of tired Cachagua firefighters being fed at the firehouse courtesy of the Cachagua Fire Women's Auxiliary.

**RAIN and WATER:** We are now in winter, which means rain. Rain means mudslides, rock slides, road closures, and flooding. So far, we have had periods of gradual gentle rain with an occasional downpour that stirs up the river and our creeks. The Carmel River has passed flood stage once already. We must be ready for more intense rain as the season continues. Please look at your properties and make adjustments to all of the little "rivers" that are close to you. Remove debris to prevent the blockage or flow of water. Keep the channels clean. No matter how clean you keep the flow channel, there will always be "stuff" coming downstream that is not yours. Do your best to keep the channel clean. In the summer, you can take all of the "stuff" to the transfer station or dispose of it in a responsible way.

It looks like this will be a wet year. Last year was an El Niño year and Cachagua received a total of 21.05" of rain, which is above the annual average of 18". We are already ahead of last year

even though we were warned of a “La Niña” drought year. Please do your best to help with the cleanup of rocks and other debris on the roads when you see it. If each of us helps a little, we will keep the roads safer and more open while we wait for the county to do a serious cleanup.

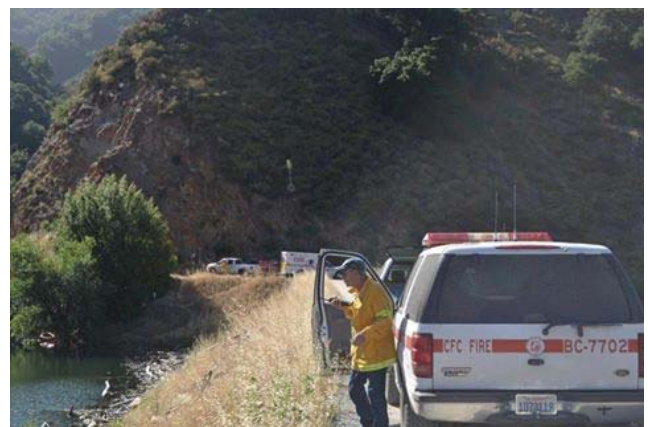
**SUMMER REMINDERS:** First is the issue of fireworks – legal or illegal. Before you know it, the July 4th holiday will soon be here. Also, we will have high school graduations and other celebrations as school ends. Often, there is a temptation to light off a few firecrackers. The Cachagua Fire Protection District has a ban on the use of fireworks of any kind at any time. Basically, this means all fireworks are forbidden and use of them can get you arrested along with a very hefty fine. And, if a fire were to occur because of their use, you can be found liable for the costs of putting out the fire – an endeavor that can quickly mount into the thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of dollars.

The other subject we would like to remind you about is in reference to the address marking of residences. We ask for, and require for new construction projects, 5” number markers. Based on many decades of experience, this is one of the biggest and most helpful things you can do to aid us in finding your home. We have map books and Google maps but, living in a rural area like Cachagua, it is often tough to find homes in a quick and efficient way. Also, when driveways are shared, it is nice to have directional pedestals that show or point to each particular address. It can be a simple sign with 5” letters and arrows: for example, left arrow points to address 123 and the right arrow points to address 456.

The actual design of the letters is up to you. We only care about the size, proper placement, and the reflective properties to ensure that we can navigate to emergencies with relative ease.



Congratulations to Firefighter Jeff Klein for his recent graduation this past December from the Monterey Peninsula College Firefighter 1 Academy class 2016-2. During the graduation ceremony, Jeff received the "Most Dedicated" award as voted on by members of the academy instructional staff and fellow recruits. Jeff represents the very best of Cachagua Fire's next generation of dedicated firefighters. Congratulations Firefighter Klein.



Cachagua Fire recently recognized Battalion Chief Jaime del Valle for his 40 years of volunteer service to Cachagua Fire. He has been on call 24/7 since 1976 and has saved countless lives on the thousands and thousands of calls that he has responded to over the past four decades. We at Cachagua Fire stand proud and salute one of the most dedicated firefighters that most of us will ever encounter in our lifetimes. We thank you Jaime!