



## DRY CREEK-LOKOYA VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

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(707) 944-1562

A 501(c)3 Non-Profit Corporation Tax ID #68-0383597

[www.drycreek.org](http://www.drycreek.org)



Vol. Fire Chief  
Erik Madison

Thank you for your continuing support of your local Volunteer Fire Department!

We are working very closely now with Napa County and have signed a new property lease agreement since the fire department's main firehouse sits on county property. This agreement strengthens and increases the Dry Creek-Lokoya Volunteer Fire Department's readiness and response. So far the county has helped us improve our drinking water system and repair our septic system. There are future plans for getting an emergency generator and response software program for Engine 16 as well as placing an emergency 911 phone at the front of the firehouse for 24 hours access.

Starting January, we have some new Napa County Emergency Medical Services protocols as well as a better designed cervical collar, head restraint system for neck injuries and new equipment for restraining arm, leg, and back injured areas. Training on these new devices is complete and all of your local volunteer firefighters are ready to use if necessary.

The Christmas Party sponsored by Enchanted Hills and the Dry Creek-Lokoya Volunteer Fire Department was even better than last year with good music and food as well as seeing and meeting with our neighbors.

Please contact us if you wish to become a Volunteer Firefighter or work on the Home Winemakers Classic fundraiser or the Mt. Veeder Fire Safe Council. Please visit any of the following websites:

[www.drycreek.org](http://www.drycreek.org)

[www.homewinemakersclassic.org](http://www.homewinemakersclassic.org)

[www.mtveederfiresafe.org](http://www.mtveederfiresafe.org)

*Thank You*

**Dry Creek-Lokoya Volunteer Fire Department  
Selects Napa County Firefighter of the Year**



The Napa County Fire Department hosted its annual Firefighter of the Year ceremony in December. Captain Stephen Marek was selected as Volunteer Firefighter of the Year for the Dry Creek-Lokoya Volunteer Fire Department by the members of the department.

Stephen has been a volunteer Firefighter with the Dry Creek -Lokoya Volunteer Fire Department since 2006. He has grown up around the fire service in Napa. His Uncle Joe Marek was a Captain for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and worked at the old Napa CDF Station on Jefferson Street. Stephen has served in the ranks of our fire department as a Firefighter, Engineer, Lieutenant and currently as Captain 16. Stephen works for Piner's Ambulance and hopes to find a full-time career fire-fighting position.

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## **Mount Veeder Fire Safe Council**

### **15 Fire Fighters From South Korea Visit Mt. Veeder Firesafe Council and The Lokoya Loop Fuel Reduction Project**

*Special to the Register by Kathleen Henry*

Napa is not only famous for its wines. It is also known for its all-volunteer Mt. Veeder Fire Safe Council because a group of 15 firefighters from South Korea flew to America on a private ten-day vacation tour last week, and the Council's firehouse on the crest of Dry Creek Road was their first stop.

The firemen were from the Gyeonggi province of South Korea, where the capital city of Seoul is located, and where about 22 percent of the country's 50 million people live within forested mountain ranges, steep cliffs, deep valleys and four national parks. They had trolled the Internet for places to visit on their tour, and discovered the Fire Safe Council's website describing inventive programs to reduce the risk of wildland fires.

The firefighters were intrigued and decided to come to Napa to see the Council's work first-hand, so they sent an email asking to visit a fire prevention project. The Council emailed back agreeing to host a tour of the work site of the Lokoya Loop Fuel Reduction Project near Mount Veeder. The visit was set for September 25<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m.

Council member and local volunteer firefighter, Gary Green wondered why South Korean firefighters wanted to travel over five thousand miles to Napa. "I went to a map to check out South Korea, and saw that it was on the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel, the same as Napa, and figured that had something to do with it." His hunch was right. Tour translator James Lee said, "Napa and Gyeonggi are both near the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel, and we were impressed there were no major wildfires in Mt. Veeder for 60 years."

Just a few hours after the firemen's plane touched down, their sleek tour bus rumbled up the steep grade of Dry Creek Road and pulled alongside the Dry Creek-Lokoya Volunteer Fire Company firehouse, right on time. Fifteen firefighters disembarked and eagerly put on black baseball caps specially ordered as a welcoming gift with the Council's logo colorfully embroidered in the shape of a triangular treetop. Then group leader Tae Seok Kim presented the Council with carefully wrapped gifts of three wooden boxes made in a traditional South Korean style. A tone of mutual respect and collegiality was set, despite the language barrier.

Green gave a power point presentation in the firehouse on reducing the ground fuel that causes fires to burn hot and out of control and gave the firefighters a C.D. of the presentation to take back home. After coffee and snacks to fight jet lag, the men boarded their bus and followed Council members Bill Robertson, Gregory Holquist, and Green to the Old Lokoya Lodge. Overlooking steep wild hills, the area's three-mile-long former wagon roads had become overgrown and impassible by fire trucks. The Council is converting these roads into shaded fuel breaks by thinning the vegetation to reduce ground fuel and allow passage of heavy equipment.

PG&E provided a grant to fund the project after Holquist told the utility about the need for fire prevention in the region. Robertson wrote the grant proposal and Holquist and Green designed the project and supervised the crews. All three men donated their time and expertise.

The bus parked in a clearing inside the giant Redwood and Douglas Fir tree grove at Lokoya Lodge. As the firemen stepped off the bus, they stopped short at the sight of these magnificent trees, and within seconds, 15 digital cameras were clicking simultaneously. A line formed for the firefighters to get photos of themselves hugging the biggest Redwood standing at the edge of the clearing.

Ken Van Oeveren, Assistant Chief of the Dry Creek-Lokoya Volunteer Fire Department, greeted the visitors wearing his impressive uniform and cap. "Stage Coaches used to come here," he told them. Holquist described logging in the region. "These Redwoods and Douglas Firs are 'second growth' that rebounded after the original trees were clear cut about 150 years ago for lumber to build San Francisco." As Green fielded questions from interpreter James Lee about how high the Redwoods grow, Holquist pulled out a bright yellow pocket-sized clinometer, and measured one tree at about 180 feet, or 18 stories high.

Then Robertson, Green, and Holquist led the firefighters down a steep trail to the 1.36 mile perimeter Lokoya Loop Project, where the South Koreans watched the 15-foot-high articulating arm of a giant Caterpillar "mowing" machine take down a 40-foot tree blocking a fire truck path, grinding it into wood chips. "We leave the chips on the ground so it will decompose in the rain and protect nearby hillside soil from erosion," Holquist said. As the group walked back up the hill, its leader Tae Seok Kim stopped, turned around, and used both hands to give a double "thumbs up" sign of approval to the Council members following behind.

Interpreter Jim Lee said that the firefighters had not used this machinery in South Korea and were amazed by the amount of fallen trees and vegetation it devoured and chipped in a matter of minutes. The firefighters took videos to show their comrades when they return home. "We can't use these machines because our forest hillsides are too steep, and there are no roads wide enough," Mr. Lee said.

Susan Fair had followed the group part way down the path. She and family members own a portion of the property being cleared, and she was happy to allow council members on her land to reduce wildfire fuel. "We're up here by ourselves, so if we don't do it, no one will."



The South Korean Firefighters and the MVFSC members at the Dry Creek-Lokoya Vol. Fire Co. main fire station.



This old growth Redwood tree was a real treat to the visitors.



The 15 firemen from South Korea had never seen a CAT mower in action because their forest roads are too narrow to use machines of this size.

The 15 firefighters returned to the bus for the final leg of the visit at *Vinoce* Winery in downtown Napa where they sampled Merlot, Zinfandel and Sauvignon Blanc wines before heading back to their hotel at 6:00 p.m. Grasping 20 bottles of wine as souvenirs, the group said their goodbyes in the universal language of a bow and a handshake, waiving to Green, Holquist, and Robertson through the tinted glass of their bus as it drove away.



Sipping the remains of his wine, Robertson said, “Being able to share with people of other countries what the Fire Safe Council is doing for the Valley as far as fuel reduction, along with Cal Fire, PG&E, private home owners and utilities, is so important. Weather, topography and fuel cause wildfires. We can’t do much about the weather or topography, but we can control the fuel, and that is what we are trying to do.”

## Mount Veeder Fire Safe Council Old Ridge Road Shaded Fuel Break Project Update

Thanks to generous grants from PG&E, the MVFSC was able to continue working on the Old Ridge Road Project (ORR) as well as begin the Lokoya Loop Project (see above article). We received over \$150,000 and divided it between the two projects. Phase 3 and two-thirds of the ORR Project is now complete with the hopes of completing the entire three-mile shaded fuel break project within the next two years. We have applied for and received a federal grant as well. We are currently awaiting the first installment of the grant. Please see below for an example of the work we are completing. Notice the flagging to compare pictures.



BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER

Some neighbors are still asking, what is a shaded fuel break? Simply put, it is *not* clear-cutting but is a fuel break built in timbered areas where the trees on the fuel break are thinned and pruned to reduce the fire potential yet retain enough crown canopy to make a less favorable microclimate for surface fires. Opening up some the canopy allows for better penetration of air tanker drops to help stop wildland fires at the fuel break. Removing the smaller brush and pruning up the trees removes the ladder fuel that would allow a wildland fire to reach the crowns of trees. All of this is to help stop wildland fires at the fuel break and to allow firefighters a chance to work to prevent the wildland fire from jumping the fuel break.

## MVFSC 5<sup>TH</sup> Annual Golf Tournament

Stay tuned for this year’s golf tournament fundraiser sometime in the spring! Will include a dinner and raffle! More to come.

## **MVFSC 911 Address Sign Project**

### **911 REFLECTIVE ADDRESS SIGNS**

#### **Help The Fire Department Find Your Home When Every Second Counts!**

Have you noticed all the new, green address signs in our neighborhood? Join your neighbors as seconds count in emergencies. Your local volunteer firefighters have been able to find emergencies much faster due to the 911 green signs.

911 reflective address signs save time when emergency crews are responding to your house. We respond from multiple directions so the address numbers need to be seen from both directions to your location. Many people expect that all help will come from Napa City but that is not true. To aid emergency personnel in finding your home, residents are encouraged to purchase a 911 House Numbering Sign, a reflective address sign made of green reflective metal background with large, 4" white reflective numbers. These 911 reflective address signs can be seen from great distances at night, and are the easiest house numbers for emergency crews to spot. If you have one of these reflective address signs and others on your street do not, tell them they need to have these reflective 911 address signs, as many times we must slow down to check their numbers to be sure we are not passing the house we are responding to. If they had a 911 reflective house number sign, we could pass their house without needing to slow down to see their house numbers.

The Mt. Veeder Fire Safe Council is now offering the 911 Address Signs at a reduced price of \$10.00 plus tax with free, personal delivery. These 911 address signs meet the Napa County Fire Department regulations for house numbering (Fire Safe standard #14).

Go to <http://www.mtveederfiresafe.org/protect.html> to find the order form and how to pay. Help the local Dry Creek-Lokoya Volunteer Fire Department firefighters easily find your home when every second counts!



**Good Address! Easy to see.**



**What is the address?**



## **Back in the Saddle**

Your local Mount Veeder Fire Safe Council (MVFSC) has made great strides in the past few years, particularly 2014. Last year under the guidance of past chairperson Kelly Wallace and the MVFSC members over \$250,000 in grant money was awarded! Over \$180,000 was spent on shaded fuel breaks on the Old Ridge Road and Lokoya Perimeter Projects. This year the remainder \$70,000 will be spent on finishing the Old Ridge Road project with an additional \$10,000 to be spent for roadside clearance on Wall Road. Only a few weeks ago your local MVFSC applied for \$75,000 to Cal Fire for an expansion of the Lokoya Perimeter Project and implementation of the proposed Lokoya Community Fuel Reduction Project.

I am very grateful for being nominated and appointed as chairperson again for such an outstanding group of individuals and for all of their expertise and hard work protecting the residents of our mountain community from wildfires and supporting the volunteer fire department.

I would like to give a quick overview of the current and proposed projects so the residents of our area may understand and appreciate the Vision, Planning and Implementation of work the MVFSC have been accomplishing recently.

The Old ridge Road project is located on the ridge top between Dry Creek Road and Mount Veeder Road. This shaded fuel break is 100' in width following an old road bed, enabling fire engine access to contain fires within the watershed in addition to providing a recognizable target for air tankers to drop fire retardant. This is a long-term project and 2015 marks the 4<sup>th</sup> year of work and hopefully completion but then comes the maintenance phase which will be ongoing as needed.

The Lokoya Perimeter Project is located off of Lokoya Road. It is a 1.37 mile long loop shaded fuel break 200' wide. This was completed in the late fall of 2014 and provides a much needed buffer from a wildfire in addition to fire engine access and fuel reduction.

Wall Road roadside clearance project is anticipated to start in the spring of 2015. Since roadsides are a primary ignition source due to motor vehicles and other travel activities, MVFSC is partnering with Cal Fire to clear brush and limb up trees thus reducing the fire ladder effect within the County Right of Way along this road.

The Cal Fire Grant application for the Lokoya Community Fuel Reduction Project has met the initial phase requirements and has proceeded to Phase 2. Cal Fire representatives, along with the Napa City Fire Marshall and Napa Communities Firewise Foundation representative, walked the site for assessment. Their initial response was one of approval. However, the Cal Fire application board in Sacramento has to recognize the value of this project before moving ahead toward the next phase in the competitive application process – keep your fingers crossed!!!

Well enough said for this quick article except one very important item...please look at our MVFSC website: [mtveederfiresafe.org](http://mtveederfiresafe.org) to keep informed and become engaged to support this wonderful group of volunteers. We can sure use your expertise and help.

Thanks, Greg Holquist – Chair MVFSC

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## **We Are Still In A Drought!**

So, lots of rain in December and some in February. Time to forget about wildland fires? Read the article below about a wildland fire that just happened in California. Remember, the under brush is still dead and dry and any wind dries out all of the vegetation.

### **Round Fire Burns Nearly 11 Square Miles Destroys 40 Structures in Eastern Sierra**

Posted 10:28 AM, February 7, 2015, by [Tracy Bloom](#) and [Steve Kuzj](#), Updated at 11:31pm, February 7, 2015

Firefighters on Saturday were beginning to gain control over a fast-moving brush fire raging at the base of Sierra Nevada that burned roughly 11 square miles in Inyo and Mono counties, destroyed 40 structures and prompted mandatory evacuations of two entire communities.



The Round Fire prompted mandatory evacuations in two small towns on Feb. 6, 2015. (Credit: Tim Dunfee)

The so-called “Round Fire” broke out shortly after 2 p.m. Friday near Highway 395 at the Sherwin Grade, according to Cal Fire. It grew rapidly in size overnight, going from an estimated 500 acres at 9 p.m. Friday to 3,000 acres by 7 a.m. the next day. By 10 a.m., the blaze had more than doubled in size, scorching about 7,000 acres, according to the latest Cal Fire estimates. It was 50 percent contained by late Saturday afternoon. “Significant” shifts in wind initially made containment a challenge for fire crews, as the windy conditions effectively grounded the use of aircraft to attack the flames. However, the 200 plus firefighters battling the wildfire were aided overnight by rain that stopped the forward progress of the fire at 2 a.m., Cal Fire said. One firefighter had to be treated for smoke inhalation, but no other injuries have been reported. About 40 structures and outbuildings had been destroyed, according to Cal Fire. The communities of Paradise and Swall Meadows have been placed under mandatory evacuation orders, and a center for displaced residents was opened at Crowley Lake Community Center. Even as containment grew, fire officials warned that downed power lines and venting propane tanks would make it difficult for residents to reenter the area. Firefighters have not given an estimate as to when they believed the Round Fire would be fully contained. The cause of the wildfire was under investigation.

*KTLA's John A. Moreno contributed to this report.*

Let's not let this happen in our community! Start to plan now for your spring cleaning and clearing around your house. The chipper program will return this spring and we will keep you posted on when it begins this March. Your MVFSC is attempting to extend how long the chipping program runs and how to make it cover more properties.

## **Join our all-volunteer Fire Department**

For those who wish provide additional service to our community and join our volunteer fire department, the procedure is simple. An application must be submitted to the volunteer fire department, go to <http://www.countyofnapa.org/CountyFire/> to download the application or contact the Training Officer at chief316@icloud.com. The candidate will have to pass a physical and background check and then undergo a training program. Firefighters may also have additional training and become certified as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs).

Dry Creek-Lokoya volunteer firefighters include the young, as well as veterans; they may be from any profession such as accountants, insurance sales people, computer technicians, mechanics, stay-at-home parents and the self-employed. They may be career firefighters with other cities, paramedics and emergency medical personnel. They are your neighbors. In some cases, the Fire Department is a family tradition that includes fathers, sons, and, even, husband and wife teams. Some firefighters are also allowed by their employers to respond from their workplace.

### **Your Local Volunteer Firefighters Do More Than Just Put Out Fires!**

While fires, both structure and vegetation, are the most noticeable and seemingly most dangerous to the most number of neighbors, you local firefighters also respond to medical emergencies (about 95% of our calls), traffic accidents, assist with water and rope rescues, and mitigate other hazards (trees and power lines down across our roads). This is why they train so often and need to have the same training as the paid county firefighters. Below are some of our trainings we must attend to stay proficient in our skills.



Auto Extraction



Water Rescue



Ropes Rescue



Building Entanglement Prop



Pump Operations



Wildland Fire Hose Lay



Medical



Structure Fire

### **Qualifications:**

- Must be at least 18 years of age.
- Must be able to read and write the English language proficiently.
- Must pass physical.
- Must be living within responding distance from station but not necessarily in the service area such as in the city limits.
- Must attend two drills a month; there is criteria for excused and un-excused drill absences.
- Must attend recruit training through a College or from Napa County.