CHIEF REEDER’S REPORT

With the retirement of Chief Lewin, I have been appointed as your Acting Fire Chief. I want to thank Chief Lewin for his 37 years of leadership and dedication to the fire service. Our Unit, San Luis Obispo County, and the public we serve, has benefited greatly from his commitment while serving with CALFIRE.

Although several of our SLU leaders retired this December, I remain confident that our CAL FIRE / SLO County Fire team is prepared to face our future challenges head-on without a miss.

As of mid-December, drought conditions continued to affect our wildland fire environment. Live fuel moistures remained critically low over most urban interface areas of Southern California. Many of our resources responded on Christmas evening to a fire in Ventura County that grew to over 1200 acres before it was contained. The 2015 fire season was long, fire activity high and fire behavior extreme. Too many fellow firefighters were injured or died in the line of duty. We have much to talk about as we look back on the 2015 fires and much to talk about before the 2016 fire season begins.

As I write, rain like we have not seen in years is hitting our County. We must focus our attention on the possible issues associated with the heavy rains anticipated this winter. Be at the ready by knowing the flood prone areas within our county and refreshing your water rescue skills.

I wish you all a great and safe 2016.

CAL FIRE firefighters say yes. When we are called, we go!

This is what we do. This is who we are.
Over the summer, Station 15 – South Bay was proud to provide free chipping services to 66 residents, in partnership with the California Conservation Corps.

Battalion Chief Veneris and Company 15 with Engine-215 participated in a control burn at Camp San Luis Obispo in May. This control burn consisted of 230 acres of grasslands on the firing range.

Company 15 Reserve Firefighters inspected every lot in the District for violations to the fire code over the summer. In total, Station 15 – South Bay sent notices to 288 property owners and by late-August, all residents were in compliance.
In June, DeWitt Stern Group and Fireman’s Fund Insurance Company (FFIC) hosted a Presentation Ceremony recognizing a $10,190 grant awarded to Station 15 – South Bay. The money was used to buy 57 carbon monoxide/smoke detectors with 10-year battery, two 4500 lb. Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus’, two full sets of Structural Firefighting Gear and funded a CPR/AED Course of 24 students.

Station 15 happily moved their cardio equipment to the back room of the fire station. This made it possible for cardio equipment and strength training to have their own separate spaces and this makes for happy firefighters.
In September, A.M. Sun Solar installed solar panels on the southern portion of the Station 15 – South Bay roof.

The 11th Annual Fire Safety Fair was held in October. With over 450 people in attendance, Station 15 – South Bay Fire was proud to feature tours of the SLO County Fire Safety House, Medic Engine 15, Medic Engine 215 and Boat 15. Attendees also participated in our Raffles and Silent Auction, benefitting the Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation. Firefighters demonstrated Rescue 42s (struts), Heavy Lifting Airbag Device, “Jaws of Life” and Extinguisher Flash Pan. Experts also taught ‘Hands-Only CPR.’ Other Emergency Service Agencies, such as SLO County Sheriff’s, San Luis Ambulance, Community Emergency Response Team (C.E.R.T) and Los Osos Focus Group/Emergency Services Advisory Committee presented interesting displays, raffles and vehicles throughout the event. A pulled pork lunch was available for purchase, provided by our very own South Bay Reserve Company.
On December 3, 2015, the Los Osos Board of Directors (LOCSD) presented retired Battalion Chief Phill Veneris with a Resolution recognizing his 30 years of service with CAL FIRE and 11 years of service to the community of Los Osos.

The LOCSD Board, Unit Chief Robert Lewin and community members spoke of his outstanding accomplishments, exemplary leadership and dutiful oversight. Phill’s wife, Wendy, was also recognized by the LOCSD Board for her unyielding support and partnership that made it possible for Phill to be so successful.

As a final and fitting farewell of continued health and prosperity to Phill, Wendy and their two children, Max and Sidney, and the Station 15 – South Bay crew each took a moment to stick their finger in Phill’s retirement cake. Mmmm…. enjoy!
Station 20

This year is quickly coming to an end and has been a busy one for Station 20. The station will reach almost 1600 calls for the year. It was also a very busy year for E-3467 and OES-273 which responded to several out of county assignments for many of the large fires that occurred throughout the state. The station staff continued to be heavily involved with the local community through several school programs, fire extinguisher classes, station tours, and other community outreach programs.

New Fire Engine

Station 20 will be receiving its new engine in the near future. This new engine is a 2015 Spartan ERV and is replacing the 2006 Smeal that has served as ME-20 for almost 10 years. This new engine is a custom designed Spartan ERV Star series powered by a Cummins ISL 450 horsepower engine, Allison transmission. It also includes a Hale Q-max 1500 GPM rated pump, aluminum body, LED lighting, 35 foot ladder, quick connect hydraulic tools, chainsaw, K-12 saw, Rescue 42 struts, and new ALS gear.

Welcome and Congratulations

Station 20 would like to welcome and congratulate three new candidates as Paid Call Firefighters: Ryan Bower, Bryan Jeans, and Riley Foster - Evans. These candidates will still have to complete the San Luis Obispo County Paid Call Firefighter Academy and when they do, we look forward to them assisting us in serving our community.

Station 21

Station 21 has welcomed two new FAE’s from out of the Unit. FAE Leonel Plata comes from MMU and FAE Jeramy Guercio from SCU. Both will become ARFF trained in the new year after first attending the FFA in Riverside County.

Mike Roe has taken the third permanent Fire Captains position at Station 21. Welcome back, Mike!

Company 21 attended the Fire Prevention week event at San Luis Obispo’s Farmers Market. Rescue 21 was displayed with some of its rescue systems. PCF Patrick Larsen showed some young, prospective fire fighter candidates how mechanical advantage can help during rescues.
On October 10 the Airport and Station 21 held the first “Airport Day and Station 21 Open House”. The idea to combine both events came from Chief Lewin and Airport Manager Kevin Bumen.

The day went well with over 1,000 people passing through Station 21’s apparatus bay. Company 21 set up different activities for attendees to watch and participate in. They included: Crash 221 rides, Water Tender 21 filling and suctioning water into the pumpkin, lifting heavy objects with a rope system and using the Jaws of Life to crush cans.

Paso Robles Air Attack Base also participated by having Air Attack 340 and Tanker 75 fly in to display their planes, and allow the public to look inside. Company 21 purchased water, nutrition bars, and cookies to serve to the public.

Station 22

In cooperation with Phillips 66, Fire Captain Alvin Taylor and Fire Captain Felix Camacho were able to participate in the 2015 Pipe and rail school/Crude by rail training.

This is a weeklong training course that takes place in College Station, Texas. Both captains were very excited to have had this opportunity and to be able bring back and share with the stations the skills and knowledge obtained.
On December 10, ME-22 and E-3467 had the opportunity to participate in the Arroyo Grande Creek Levee - storm season meeting for first responders and cooperating agencies. The County Department of Public Works and the Office of Emergency Services provided this training. The training included the following topics: overview of the levee, roles and responsibilities, monitoring, and emergency response.

With the end of 2015 fast approaching, Mesa station 22 is closing in on almost 1100 calls for the year. This rise in the number of calls for the station can be attributed to the significant growth in both residential and commercial development that the Nipomo Mesa has experienced over the last few years.

P-22 is now in its third year of the program and has responded to over 270 calls on the Oceano Dunes for 2015. This program has grown exponentially and the continued ALS response has been well received by all parties involved.
Military Crew Assignment From 2015 Summer on Fire!

(Article submitted by Fire Captain Jim Gray –MCAD)

This fire season has been one we will all remember. When the National Guard is activated to provide Type 2 Hand Crews, you know we are at serious draw down. This year there were three different activations of the National Guard. The San Luis Obispo Unit supported this activation with full force. We provided qualified Crew Captains, Logistical support from Fire Fighters, Supplies from the Service Center, and arranged for housing the Military Crew Advisors (MCAD) from out of the area. The Program trained, provided safety gear, and placed 32 Type 2 crews on multiple fires in California. This gave Type I crews the ability to be reassigned to new fire starts and not be held on cold fires. The Training was conducted at Camp Roberts. Three whole days: Basic 130/190, line cutting presented by power point for two days and one day in the field actually cutting line. The next day we were on the road to a fire. The Crews were made up of 24 GI's, four of them being drivers. The crews were commercial bused to the incidents then their Light Medium Tactical Vehicles (LMTV) would convoy and meet at the incident base to transport them to line assignments from Base Camp. The Military vehicles were hard to miss around base camp and on the line. They did provide excellent personnel transportation and Logistical support in back hauling tens of thousands of feet of hose, Pumpkins, Portable pumps, and trash from the line. I will not forget the look on some of the C's faces as we dropped off the mountain of hose each day. We backed it up by rolling it for them. The Military Firefighters smashed the 3c's hose rolling record by rolling. I think it was 58 miles of hose in a 2-day period.

The original idea behind the MCAD program was to use Retired Annuitants (RA), from the pool of retired Camp Captains and former Camp Captains now assigned to the A world. When the calls were placed, I guess they were all playing golf or on some tropical island sipping adult beverages. So a larger pool of former and a couple current Camp Captains activated. The MCADs came from all parts of the state and even a couple from out of the state. We had a strong showing of RA's and a majority of them was from our Unit. Jim Sasulas spent almost three months running Military Crews. Bruce Fosdike and Greg Shultz were some of our SLU retired Camp Captains. Captains April Mangels, Jeff Elmore and Ken James made it out as MCAD’s. We were supported with logistical needs and some saw work by Firefighter Chris Gannon. Thank you all for accepting the assignment.
The National Guards get it done attitude and military leadership structure made the transition from Soldier to Firefighter seamless. The paramilitary fire organization we work in made blending our two forces a good fit. There was a lot of acronym learning from both sides, we all pick it up quick. "Tracking" was my favorite. This is a response given when receiving an assignment or direction and you understand the leader’s intent.

This is way more then you ever wanted to know about the MCAD world, but I found myself in the role of Military Crew Ambassador or Liaison and wanted to share with the San Luis Obispo Unit and say thank you for all the support we received. I especially want to thank our partners who covered behind us for weeks while we were on this assignment.

I would not be surprised of activation this winter for a sand bag mission if we get the predicted El Nino rain.
Station 62

This summer in Avila Beach has kept the town busy, with the town being full of whale watchers, concertgoers, SUPers, and people escaping the heat for a day at the beach.

We have been fortunate to have some great training opportunities lately in a variety of topics. We have spent time training at Diablo Canyon Power Plant; swimming, boating, and paddling to keep up on ocean rescue skills; and had the opportunity to make plenty of ventilation cuts on an abandoned house in Shell Beach.

Station 62 has just hired on three rookie PCF’s and all three are ready to begin their rookie task books.

PCF Ross Porter is currently attending Class 136 of the Allan Hancock Fire Academy and will be graduating in December. PCF Lauren Bradley is staying busy with seasonal firefighting in CZU and is also working as a Tactical Officer for the Allan Hancock Fire Academy, helping to train the new cadets.

Station 63 - Shell Beach State of the Station

Shell Beach State of the Station:

The Shell Beach Fire House is happy to report that all of our personnel are back in action for the final months of the year. The reunited crew has been able to charge the water on our coast and hump the hills that surround our City.

The Woodman Family would like to thank everyone for their continued support. The Twins are both home and doing well. Austin is a happy fun loving baby that is tipping the scales at 9.14 lb. Easton is the “Chunk” of the family that never skips a meal. Little Chunks crushes the scale with his 12.14 lb. frame. Danny and Dea are happy to be home with twins after a long NICU journey. Danny is glad to be back at the Shell Beach Fire House.

Thomas Kofron continues to push himself while adventuring across the country. His latest accomplishment was the John Muir Trail. Thomas was able to complete this 200-mile hike in seven days and 18 hours. This self-supported trek was done solo during rain, hail, and freezing overnight temperatures. His most dangerous moment came when he was attacked by a 350 pound black bear while passing through the golden staircase. Thomas was forced to take refuge on top of a large boulder until the bear lost interest. Thomas hopes to return next year and complete the hike in 5 days.

JD Miller is back from his injury and ready to hit the ground running. In late November he’ll hunt deer in San Luis County to keep our protein quantities high. Clint, Jeremy, and Jesse will help support this late season hunt with additional tags and fire power.

Patrick Carufel, who joined our crew from TCU, has begun to adapt to new surroundings. We have utilized his strong EMS skills and linguistic abilities during our operations. His love is so great for the SBFH that he recently moved into an apartment next to the Station.
Our freshest crewmember continues to hone his SBFH skills. Hayden Mislavsky has reached many milestones during his first full Cal Fire summer. He has successfully donned a wet suit in the right direction; he survived OOC, and turned 21 without incident.

Two Northern California abalone hunts helped fill the Station freezer for the summer. The Station was able to use our game meat to feed Peter Yang on his last day on the job at the Shell Beach Fire House. Good luck in San Diego Peter, you are always welcome at #63.

The next time you are passing through the area stop by the Station. We would be happy to hike, run, swim, or row with you. If physical exertion is not your thing, coffee talk is always an option.

**Station 64**

The Pismo Beach Heights Fire Safe Council (FSC) Focus Group brought in 300 goats to help knock back Poison Oak on the North side of the Heights. This was a week-long project and will allow Cuesta crews to do more work when funding becomes available. The goats have reduced the ground fuel which will keep a fire from spreading into the tress. This project was funded by the County FSC, PG&E and donations from residents in the heights. The local Heights FSC Focus Group is able to accept donations through the County FSC.
The Price/Bello VMP is going well, work continues toward the Price House and to the Bello Bridge South of the creek. Crews will continue on the other side of the creek helping to reduce fuel loading issues. This is a Fire Department and Public Works project being completed by CAL FIRE Crews.
PREVENTION

LEWIS BURN

November 6, Firefighters and Range Improvement folks are briefed on the 300 acres Lewis Burn in LaPanza.

Burning just underway.

Prescribed fire progressing slowly due to cool temps and fuel conditions.

Perimeter ignition is complete on the Lewis Burn. Interior areas did not burn due to cool, damp conditions.
ARFF TRAINING AT THE AIRPORT

[Image of firefighters extinguishing a fire involving an airplane at an airport]

[Image of aARFF truck spraying water on a simulated aircraft fire]
US&R Team teaches Rescue Systems course at the County Drill Grounds. Deputy Chief Reeder talks with the instructors.
November 20, CALFIRE SLO teaches its first Rope Rescue Tec class with the new CA Fire Marshal curriculum.
WELCOME/PROMOTIONS

Susan Stone, our newest personnel specialist comes to us from CMC, where she was the PS for the last seven years. She brings a lot of knowledge with personnel transactions.

Susan will be working with Paula in Personnel and covering personnel with the letters L-Z and Ventura Camp.

Next time you are at HQ, come by and introduce yourself.

Jason Thompkins started in SLU as our newest FLO. He comes to us from FKU where he was their material store specialist for a number of years. He also has experience as a Dispatcher with CAL FIRE.

He has worked with Bob to learn the Unit and our systems, and will be working the Sunday-Wednesday schedule.

Please give Jason a warm welcome when you meet him.

Art Wood has come back to the unit as a RA. Art worked for the state as a HEM for 34 years with Cal Trans and CAL FIRE. Art will be handling the FEM duties until a new test comes out and we can fill the position. Art will normally work Monday through Thursday with a few vacations thrown in here and there.

Please welcome Art back and contact him with any fleet issues you have. Art will be coming around to all the stations to check out the equipment and get an idea of the age and condition of the fleet.

Chief Greg Alex was appointed LT Training Battalion, effective Monday October 19, 2015.

Greg Alex began his career with CAL FIRE in 1989 as a seasonal firefighter in the San Benito / Monterey Unit where he served for eight fire seasons. He then promoted to Fire Apparatus Engineer and Fire Captain in the Fresno / Kings Unit. He worked in the Fresno Unit for 11 years at various metropolitan and rural fire stations and worked in the Fresno ECC. In 2007, Greg transferred to the San Luis Obispo Unit and work in the SLU ECC,
and then later transferred to the Fire Prevention Bureau as a Pre-Fire Engineer. Greg has also served CAL FIRE as a Supply Unit Leader, Safety Officer, Public Information Officer, and Decision Support System Administrator. Greg has done an amazing job as our PreFire Engineer leading a program that has brought recognition from all over the country.

Geoff Money promoted to Assistant Chief – Administration (D3402). Chief Money’s appointment date is January 4, 2016 at which time Chief Eric Cleveland will transfer to the Cuesta/Inland Division (D3403) position behind retired Division Chief John Richardson.

Geoff Money started his career in 1988 as a Seasonal Firefighter for the San Benito Monterey Unit (BEU). He then went to Paramedic school in 1990 and was hired as a Firefighter/Paramedic for the City of Selma in 1991. In 1992 Geoff was hired by CAL FIRE in Highland in the San Bernardino Unit (BDU) as a Firefighter II/Paramedic where he worked at the busiest fire station in CAL FIRE. In 1996 he was promoted to Fire Apparatus Engineer/Paramedic at the Yucaipa Station in BDU. Geoff Money then promoted to LT Fire Captain at Highland Station in BDU. In 2000 he promoted to permanent Captain here in the San Luis Obispo Unit at the Headquarters Station. In 2002 Money transferred to Nipomo Fire Station to start the new paramedic program. After 4 years at the station he took the assignment as a Captain/Paramedic as the EMS Coordinator for the Unit for the next 6 years. In addition to his regular duties, Geoff was involved with the development of the State’s EMS program and hiring the Department’s Medical Director. In 2012 Geoff was promoted to Battalion Chief for Emergency Command Center in SLU. After three years Geoff then moved into the field as the Battalion Chief for South Coast Battalion which included two oil refineries and FAA indexed airport. Geoff also serves on Incident Management Team #4 as Deputy Finance Section Chief and the San Luis Obispo County XSL Type 3 Team as a Safety Officer.

His wife Amy works for the Templeton Unified School District and they have two children, Jared (15) and Abby (12). They currently live in Templeton.

Zach Nichols promoted to Battalion Chief of our Law Enforcement Bureau effective January 4, 2016.

Zach began his fire service career in 1998 at the Avila Beach City Fire Department and graduated from the AHC Firefighter 1 Academy that same year. In 1999, he left the San Luis Obispo area to study equine reproduction at the Colorado State University and returned to San Luis Obispo in 2001. Soon, he joined our firefighting team as a PCF at Station 21 and obtained a FFI position in 2003. Zach became a Fire Apparatus Engineer for SLU in 2006 and promoted to Fire Captain in 2011. Zach graduated from the AHC Police Academy in 2011 and transferred to the SLU Law Enforcement Bureau (P-3421) in 2012.

Zach’s background and experience have prepared him well to head our law enforcement activities.
Fire Captain transfers into the Unit

Ben Graves - Station 10
Jeff Burrow - Ventura Camp
Jeremy Brant - Ventura Camp

New FAE's

Jimmy Jauregui - Station 40
Jeramy Guercio - Station 21
Leonel Plata - Station 21
OTHER NEWS FROM OUR UNIT

ELKS LODGE RECOGNITION

Battalion Chief Josh Taylor and Captain Dave Kay were honored at the annual Elks Lodge Safety Appreciation dinner for their actions of a rescue on the Cuesta Fire. Elected officials were there present to congratulate them.
TOURISM HERO AWARD

CAL FIRE/SLO was honored, along with the Forest Service and Santa Margarita Fire Department, to receive the Tourism Hero Award from Savor the Central Coast during the opening ceremony in October. Forest Supervisor Bob Baird and CAL FIRE SLO Chief Rob Lewin accepted the award from San Luis Obispo County Supervisor Debbie Arnold on behalf of the firefighters who fought the Cuesta Fire.
Chief Lewin did not want any goodbye parties, resolutions, or fanfare upon his retirement. He just wanted to fade quietly off into the sunset. But, Senator Monning managed to sneak in a little recognition honoring him for his 37 years of excellent public service.

On behalf of all the other retirees, Don Salisbury welcomes Rob to the ranks.
PICTURES FROM CUESTA FIRE

Pictured at the top is IMT 4

At TOP right is Undersheriff Tim Olivas’ adventure with fire retardant.
Rob –

*My* uncle in Grass Valley was so excited to have local SLO firefighters up there that he sent this photo. Glad they were able to help!

Take good care.

Kim Murry
Deputy Director Community Development - Long Range Planning

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**WELL-DESERVED LUNCH ON THE HOUSE**

San Luis Obispo area firefighters, who are helping to battle the Lowell Fire in Nevada and Placer counties, take a break from duty Wednesday at Pine Street Burgers off Dorsey Drive in Grass Valley.

According to Christine Barnes, customers inside the restaurant broke out in applause when the six firefighters walked in. And, Barnes said, when customers tried to pick up the cost of the firefighters’ lunch, Pine Street Burgers employees said they were covering the bill.
Below is a copy of a letter which a resident of Los Osos sent to The Tribune commending Engineer Teddy Borja and Gabriel Garcia.

Dear Chief Lewin:

This is a letter I sent to the Tribune newspaper. I think you should have a copy.

Sincerely,

Gerada Ondano

5 October 15

Dear Sir,

I am a very disabled lady, confined to a motorized wheelchair. On 26 September, the day before my 90th birthday, I accidentally broke a hosepipe and created a geyser in my backyard. I was so upset and frightened. I didn’t know what else to do, so I called 911 and they sent the fire department.

Engineer Teddy Borja and Gabriel Garcia arrived within minutes and were so kind. They calmed me down, shut off the water, went to the hardware store and out of their own pocket purchased repair materials, returned and fixed the pipe, and even put out my 3 trash barrels. They left, but an hour later returned with two more firemen and presented me with a balloon that said Happy Birthday and then they sang Happy Birthday to me.

Where do we find such men?

Sincerely,

Gerada Ondano
CAMP CINDER

Camp Cinder’s Mission is to introduce young women to the fire service by providing hands on experience in a positive, team building environment while encouraging and supporting self-confidence and a can do work ethic. This year, Camp Cinder was held June 24-28.
WHAT IS WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?

HEARST BBQ

In November, The Hearst Corporation hosted an appreciation BBQ for our unit at their property. Everyone in our unit was invited, as well as the retired folks. At right is a picture of Chief Lewin thanking Steve Hearst for His generosity and recognition of our firefighters.
CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to our eight graduates of Allan Hancock College Fire Academy Battalion 136, December 11, 2015. Pictured below with their families are Garrett Carney (Class Speaker), Brandon Eckles, Andrew Garcia, Cullen Joy (Class Valedictorian), Adam Nelson, John Penner, Ross Porter (Most Outstanding), and Ethan Reeves.
The ECC would like to welcome its newest member! Baby Eryk Eugene Vogan Aguilar was born at 9:17 this morning, weighing in at 8 lbs. 20 ½ oz. Eryk, Michelle, and all the Aguilars are all doing great!

Station 41 would like to welcome Emma Lynn "baby Immordino". Emma was born on 10/31/2015 at 12:40 a.m. weighing 7lbs 12oz at 20 inches long. Mom Alissa and dad Marc Immordino are happy and doing well.
Please join Ventura Fire Camp and of course the Proud Papa, Enrique Ornelas, in welcoming Isabel Christina Ornelas into the world. She weighs 7 lbs. 6 oz. and is 19 inches long. Mother and Daughter are both doing well... Congrats to Mom, Dad, & Big Brother, she is Beautiful... :)

Would you join us at station 40 and congratulate Josh and Denise Lorenzo on the birth of Logan Gregory Lorenzo

Born 5:50am, July 24th 2015.

Logan Gregory Lorenzo stats: 7lbs 13oz
21-1/4 inches

Logan enjoys sleeping; crossfit.

Station 40 would like to welcome Liam Edmund Lozier "baby Lozier". Liam was born on 07/14/2015 at 7:11pm weighing 7lbs 5oz at 19 1/4inch long. Mom and dad are happy and doing well. He is happy making bubbles and he is getting pretty good at holding his head up.
Kim Corella and her husband Jubal, announce the birth of their son. His name is Ridley Viviano Corella, born Dec. 19, 2015. He was 7lbs 13 ounces and 20 inches long.
RETIREE SPOTLIGHT

PAUL O’CONNOR

Spotlight on the Keepers with Paul O’Connor.

I was born in Michigan, yes the state with the most lighthouses, but since the age of twelve I have lived in California. I consider Santa Cruz my home but while working for CDF I made the decision to move to SoCal for a permanent job in Riverside County. After 23 years in SoCal, I made it back to the Central Coast, to finish my 30-year career with the fire service at the CDF station in Shell Beach. During my last few years at Shell Beach, I would drive the Fire Engine and Crew up to the lighthouse (maybe this is why driving the trolley on the lighthouse road is such a good fit for me).

I fell in love with our Lighthouse and when I retired, volunteering here seemed like the perfect fit. I helped work on the restoration of the fog signal building and head lighthouse keepers building. During this time I became involved in the Pecho Coast Trail program as a dual docent.

In the beginning there were only a few of us with dual training, and it really helped both organizations. I also served on the board at the Lighthouse until I decided I wanted to drive the vans and eventually the trolley for the lighthouse.

I miss working on the grounds but giving tours and driving has occupied most of my time at the Lighthouse now, along with helping with some of the training.

Since being retired I have volunteered for the State Parks, Marine Mammal Center and Osher lifelong learning center. Today I still volunteer for State Parks in Morro Bay, Pecho Coast Trail and the lighthouse. I’m also enjoying my “second career,” driving the trolley for the lighthouse, working part-time for Central Coast Outdoors, as a hiking, biking and kayak guide and most recently as a kayak/lighthouse guide. I guess I’m really not retired, but all these jobs are fun and I can work when I want now!

Who knew that life really starts and gets more interesting after retirement?! I always wondered why Docents were mostly older people, now I know, we have the time!
HUD BANKS RECEIVES MEDAL FOR GALLANTRY

Hud Banks receives special recognition at the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors meeting on Tuesday, August 11, 2015, and an undated photo of Hud Banks as a young firefighter.

In 1941, 15-year-old Hud Banks and a 19-year-old firefighter were returning to the station near Peachy Canyon when they spotted a toddler floundering in the Paso Robles Plunge off Lake Nacimiento Road. They drove to the outdoor pool and discovered the gate locked. Hud scaled the fence and rescued the 16-month-old girl, saving her life. Following the rescue, Hud returned to work as a firefighter.

A few months later, the attack on Pearl Harbor changed everything. Hud joined the US Marines and shipped off for the South Pacific. After World War II, he resumed firefighting in San Luis Obispo County. He married his wife of 67-years, Mumfie. Ultimately, Hud became Chief Banks.

On Tuesday, Hud received a Medal for Gallantry from CAL FIRE and the Board of Supervisors for saving the life of the toddler back in 1941. Mumfie and several dozen retired CAL FIRE personnel attended the celebration. Also in attendance, 75-year-old Kathy Hemmeter Reed, who was the baby who nearly drowned in the Plunge. The award presentation came about after she tracked down the young man who saved her life.

Shortly after her mother died, 75-year-old Kathy Hemmeter Reed discovered an article describing her near-drowning. Although she lived in Arizona, she tracked down 89-year-old Hud Banks in Paso Robles. She called the Banks and talked with Hud’s wife. Mumfie told her that Hud had been waiting all his life to hear what happened to the toddler he saved. In January, they rendezvoused in Yuma, where Hud and his wife travel each January.

Tuesday afternoon at the San Luis Obispo County Supervisors’ Chambers, Hud and his family gathered with retired and current CAL FIRE personnel and Kathy Reed and her family. Hud received his award and spoke to about 150 people who attended the event. Then, Hud posed for pictures with Kathy Reed and members of her family.

It took nearly 75 years, but Hud finally received recognition for saving the life of a toddler at the old Plunge in Paso Robles. Additionally, Kathy Reed, her two adult children and her grandchildren thanked Hud for his quick-thinking back in 1941. His rescue saved the lives of each of them.
SPANISH RANCH MEMORIAL

Several retired folks along with Captain Deleo, and the support of Acting Chief Reeder are moving the Spanish Ranch memorial closer to construction. The hope is to have a dedication of this simple monument on the 37-year anniversary of the tragedy on August 15, 2016. The memorial will be off the Highway 166 where Engine 5373 Captain Marty, FF Lorant, FF Manely and FF Cox turned up Chimineas Ranch Rd to fight the Spanish Ranch Fire. If you are interested in helping with construction or donating to the effort contact Captain Deleo at Station 20.

Below is an image of the proposed memorial plaque.
FOURTH ANNUAL GILBERT MARSHALL MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP TEAM BRANDING

SAVE THE DATE: RAIN OR SHINE
Saturday, March 12, 2016, 8 A.M. to ???
19606 AUBERRY ROAD, CLOVIS, CA.

This is a one-day annual family event open to the public, free admission, held in memory of Gilbert Marshall, the son of Cal Fire Retired Captain Pat Marshall. Gilbert died in a logging accident while Pat was employed by Cal Fire. The proceeds of the day go toward scholarships for graduating seniors of Sierra High School in Tollhouse, California from which Gilbert graduated, and Minarettes High School in North Fork, California.

Breakfast burritos, coffee, hot chocolate for breakfast, and tri-tip sandwiches and sodas for lunch are served at a nominal fee. Come watch the action-packed events and see familiar fire family faces and make new friends. Watch San Luis Obispo County fire personnel and their families participate in team branding and steer decorating.

There are free arena games and free prizes for the youngsters, who are divided into appropriate age groups for stickhorse races, boot races, dummy steer roping. Take your chances in a Calcutta. Buy $10 raffle tickets for our great raffle prizes, and bid on our beautiful silent auction prizes, many of which are handcrafted by friends and family of Gilbert and the Marshall family.

We would love to have you join us, or contact Pat or Valorie (Shorty) Marshall at valtrig140@gmail.com for further information, or to donate toward a scholarship in Gilbert’s name. “Like” us on Facebook at Gilbert Marshall Memorial Team Branding to keep up to date.

Below are a few pictures of familiar faces from the GMMS Branding 2015.