

High Prairie Community Council

FROM THE TREASURER'S DESK...

Ken Hansen, HPCC Treasurer

SAVE THESE DATES

Community Council Meetings, 4th Thursday of the month, starting at 7:00 p.m. at the Community Center.

Needlers Mondays, at 10:30 a.m. Call 365-5288 for more information.

Fire Volunteers, 1st, 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month at 7 p.m.

Fire Commissioner Meeting, 3rd Tuesdays of the month at 7 p.m.

Visit the community website (www.highprairie.us) for additional scheduled events and meetings.



STAY IN THE LOOP!

EMAIL:

Put your name on the HP info list by emailing highprairiebarb@gmail.com

WEBSITE:

Check us out at www.highprairie.us
Calendar, blog, High Prairian, history, and lots more!

FACEBOOK:

Stay up to date with community happenings and join the discussion:

[www.facebook.com/
groups/180735785338230/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/180735785338230/)

Don't forget to *like* the page.

HP DIRECTORY:

Trade contact info just with friends and neighbors. Add or update at:
[www.highprairie.us/general-information/
community-directory/](http://www.highprairie.us/general-information/community-directory/)

(We can't invite you if we don't know how to reach you!)

With the pending move of the prior owner, I recently purchased the John Deere tractor that our 12-family "neighborhood" has used for clearing our roads and driveways of snow. Our communal kitty pays for fuel and maintenance supplies, and I donate labor.

As luck would dictate, Deb and I had to spend the first week of our recent "Snowmagedden" in Portland for business. I dutifully advised the neighbors prior to our departure. Throughout the week, I watched our weather and anxiously noted the inches turning to feet... Returning home, our roads were open and we drove directly into our plowed driveway. Several of our neighbors had collaborated to address our collective needs. Just as the second round of snow began to fall, an untimely hospital admission again knocked me out of my duties. Again, our neighbors unselfishly rose to fill the need. And Deb has become the "Uber" among several of her friends who are either snowbound or not comfortable driving in snow. Mundane example perhaps, but this is the simple stuff of what "community" is all about.

Simple efforts such as these are frequently multiplied; fresh veggies and fruit appear on doorsteps in the summer; a friend visits or calls just when most needed; that broken part is welded...

Similar to the individual threads of a spider web, when these filaments are numerous, they can be relied upon to support great weights. Think about where you might want to deepen your connections to community. For ourselves, we value HPCC as another venue for building these invisible bonds of community.

HPCC's January brunch afforded an opportunity to visit with neighbors following the holidays. We netted \$1,280 toward Fire District 14 and HPCC uses. Thank you to all the volunteers who made this a success! The HPCC Board is investigating grants and other funding sources for a potential upgrade to the community center kitchen.

On March 16, the Firefighters Appreciation Dinner is an opportunity to thank High Prairie's and Lyle's volunteer firefighters, first responders and staff for their dedication and hard work on our behalf. Special awards and appreciations will be given to firefighters by the two fire districts. HPCC is also collaborating with Fire District 14 toward a community dedication of the new Schilling Road fire hall. More info will follow.

Our March 28 HPCC meeting will feature speakers and a program from Insitu. We will learn about how drones are used in support of wildfire reduction, mapping and suppression efforts! The speaker at another upcoming meeting will be an internationally recognized expert on the decline of bees and efforts we can all take to understand and slow this situation.

As you begin your Spring shopping, don't forget to use the High Prairie account at Amazon. We receive a substantial benefit back from this program. Here is the link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/91-2078267>.

Similarly, if you shop at Fred Meyer, you can register your card to fund HPCC while STILL retaining your own benefits. Stop by the customer service desk to register.

Remember that your community center is available for rental for family and neighborhood events.

A MEXICAN NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

Lozetta Doll

We will be returning to High Prairie in a few days if we can get in to our place! February was a good month for us to be gone!

While here in La Paz we sometimes pick up a free newspaper called the *Gringo Gazette* which is mostly about the Los Cabos area. The writers for the publication sort of tell it like it is and sometimes they have a unique manner of writing. Like the following, from a recent issue:

"The San Jose city dump at Palo Escopeta, on the road to the East Cape, will also be improved. How do you improve a dump? Is that anything like putting lipstick on a pig? Or, put a different way, you can roll a dog turd in powdered sugar, but that don't make it a donut."

THE HIGH PRAIRIAN

"All the news that's print to fit"

Publisher: High Prairie Community Council
 Editor: Gwen Berry
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*Serving the Community of High Prairie,
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LIFE FLIGHT OFFERS VITAL SERVICE, TERRIFIC MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT

Gwen Berry

My recent accident introduced me to how urgently, and unexpectedly, you might need fast transportation to expert medical care. Car accidents and other medical emergencies aren't planned; they just happen. In a serious emergency, getting to a hospital ASAP can limit further physical damage or even save your life. If an emergency happens a long way from needed medical care, air transport is the safest and most efficient way to get you there.



Our area is fortunate to have such a service readily available to help when needed. Life Flight Network is a nationally recognized, nonprofit air medical transport service that operates across the Pacific Northwest, the Intermountain West, and the Alaska Panhandle. Their fleet consists of helicopters, fixed-wing aircraft, and some ground ambulances. They have bases throughout Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana, including one right here in Dallesport. They provide ICU-level care and life-saving transport to seriously ill or injured patients from the scene of an emergency or from one hospital to another. Medical staff on Life Flight's aircraft include a transport critical care flight nurse and paramedic or respiratory therapist. Neonatal teams have specially trained transport neonatal nurses and respiratory therapists.

Life Flight works hand-in-glove with other emergency medical teams and first responders. They are called to the scene when a medical professional or first responder deems the victim's illness or injuries serious enough to require immediate, rapid transport to a hospital. Organizations authorized to call for Life Flight services include law enforcement and rescue agencies, fire departments, ambulance services, hospitals, and other 911 emergency responders.

As one would expect, the cost of operations for this life-saving service is high. It includes the salaries of highly skilled medical professionals, pilots, and maintenance personnel, as well as the purchase and maintenance of aircraft and sophisticated medical equipment. Because of the high cost, bills for their services are also high. Transportation charges start at \$19,993 and go up from there, depending on the distance flown and the type of care provided. (The bill for my half-hour ride to the trauma center in Yakima was almost \$44,000!) The amount that insurance companies are willing to pay for air transportation varies widely. It often doesn't come close to covering the bill.

Fortunately, Life Flight offers an inexpensive membership that guarantees there will be no out-of-pocket expense if you or a family member ever needs Life Flight's emergency air transportation. If you are a member, Life Flight will accept whatever reimbursement they receive from your insurance company and **simply write off the rest**. Membership is only \$65 a year—a very small investment for a very big potential savings and the peace of mind that comes with it. Plus, Life Flight has reciprocal agreements with several other emergency air transport organizations in the western U.S., so your membership will be honored if you need transport by any of them. Life Flight also has a charity program for those who aren't able to pay or who can't pay the full amount.

In addition to providing individual benefits, memberships also form a big part of Life Flight's financial support; so by becoming a member you are helping keep this important service available. The service is also supported by tax-deductible donations to their related 501(c)(3) foundation, Life Flight Network Foundation.

You really never know when an unexpected emergency will happen; and when it does, you don't want to be worrying about how you'll pay for getting needed care ASAP. With a Life Flight membership, you won't have to think about it. And I can say, now that the unexpected has happened to me, it was the best \$65 we've ever spent.

To join, call Membership Services at 800.982.9299, or complete the simple enrollment on-line at <https://www.lifeflight.org/membership/>.



This owl was found roosting in Paul Grim's shop. He asked Jake Jakobosky for help in identification. Jake replied: "I'm sure it is a Saw-whet. I'm going by the brown streaks on its side (not brown with small spots). Also its beak is dark instead of gray and it has thin streaks instead of spots on the forehead. Saw-whets have an inquisitive look to their face while Pygmy owls have a "fierce" look to them. Saw-whets tend to "freeze" when they think they are in danger."

A THANK-YOU TO HIGH PRAIRIE FRIENDS

Diane Cazalet

One of my favorite things to do each year is celebrate Valentine's Day with my Needler friends and neighbors. I love to decorate my home with many of my antique hearts and valentines, setting out my finest china and making it a festive affair. I want this event to be special, as it is a time when I can thank my friends for everything they do and mean to me.

I wrote this poem for them two years ago and re-read it to them this last month for the Valentine's brunch. It brings me to tears when reading it as they are all such supportive, kind and giving friends.

I have been receiving oncology treatments for over 3-1/2 years for recurrent breast cancer. Luckily, I have been stable for over two years now but recently they have found evidence it is coming back in my liver. I am receiving infusions weekly but each and every day brings a new challenge, and each day the more I realize how very important my friends and family are to me. Life is rich and meaningful and hardships are so much more bearable when we have good friends. I have found my friends on High Prairie to be some of the very best!



Friends At Heart

What does it mean to have a friend?
Why does it mean so much?
Sharing, support and caring lift the spirit
and help the heart to mend.

So many hardships and worries
we face almost every day.
Our friends distract us, humor us and
take our cares away.

Sometimes we need to share.
Sometimes we need a helping hand
or find the need to just express
our thoughts with those who care.

Who knows us better than a friend?
Who trusts our motives and knows our strengths?
Who encourages us with what she thinks
and offers us her hand to lend?

A friend does all that and much much more.
We laugh, we cry, sometimes we are shy.
We accept each other for who we are.
Sometimes we care to our very core.

A friend shares, and listens to what we say.
We hear each other as best we can.
Our hearts are warmed when understood.
We want to support in our very best way.

What does it mean to have a friend?
It means the world to me.
I wouldn't trade you for any gift.
So now a great big hug I wish to send.

COLUMBIA GORGE CAT RESCUE GETS \$12,000 GRANT

Gwen Berry



Columbia Gorge Cat Rescue (CGCR) recently announced it has been awarded a \$12,000 grant from the Petco Foundation to support its spay/neuter and adoption program for stray and feral cats. High Prairian Rebecca Sonniksen has been an active volunteer with CGCR and has written about the organization in previous issues.

CGCR's goal is to reduce the feral and homeless cat populations and to bring more public awareness to the plight of homeless cats through education and outreach. CGCR is 100% privately funded through donations and grants. All of their money is spent on the cats' care.

Since 1999, the Petco Foundation has invested more than \$250 million in life-saving animal welfare work in communities across the country. With their Think Adoption First program, they partner with Petco stores and animal welfare organizations across the country to increase pet adoptions. Their generous grant of \$12,000 will be invaluable in furthering CGCR's programs.

A WINTER TO REMEMBER

Photos: Jocelyn Weeks



TO THE END OF THE EARTH

Rebecca Sonniksen

A trip to the "end of the earth," where the Pacific and Atlantic oceans meet, was a fitting celebration for my 70th birthday. In December, Scott and I set off to explore Patagonia, Chile and Argentina. In this diverse South American landscape we viewed magnificent glaciers, observed nesting penguins, hiked to Cape Horn, marveled at tango dancers in Buenos Aires, and tasted the wines of Mendoza.

Flying over the Andes, we began our trip in Santiago, Chile, where we met our guide, Jorge. We arranged for guides and drivers as a way to navigate the logistics of seven different airports as well as sightseeing in remote and challenging locations. It also gave us an opportunity for a glimpse into the everyday lives of the people who live there.

Santiago, Chile's capital city, is a sprawling, sophisticated metropolis of 6 million people wedged between the Andes and mountainous coastal range. Our two days of sightseeing included trips to the Museum of Pre-Columbian Art, and the Museum of Memory and Human Rights dedicated to the victims of the Pinochet regime in 1972. We also rode a cable car up San Cristobal Hill where we had a panoramic view of the city and the Andes.

From Santiago we flew to Punta Arenas, near the tip of Chile's southernmost Patagonia region. Located on the Strait of Magellan, this port city is a base for excursions to Antarctica. It was here, with 100 people of 15 nationalities, we boarded the M/V Stella Australis which was to take us to one of the remotest corners of the earth.

Our 5-day sail began with the crossing of the Magellan Straits, bringing us into the White Side Canal between Darwin Island and the Isla Grande de Tierra del Fuego. The Chilean crew motored us in Zodiacs for excursions that included a hike through a sub-polar forest at Ainsworth Bay, a close up view of the Magellanic Penguins at Tucker Islets, and sightings of many other bird species such as king cormorants, oystercatchers, Chilean skuas, kelp geese, dolphin gulls, eagles and the Andean condor.

We continued sailing through the Beagle Channel and to an area called Glacier Alley where a number of impressive tidewater glaciers flowed down the Darwin Mountains and Darwin Ice Sheet. Entering the Pia Fjord we boarded the Zodiacs for a panoramic view of the spectacular Pia Glacier. Extending from the mountaintops down to the sea, it is approximately the size of Santiago.

On our final day we sailed to the legendary Cape Horn. Referred to as the End of the Earth, this 12,394 foot high rocky promontory marks the northern boundary of the Drake passage where the Pacific and Atlantic oceans meet. We were fortunate the weather permitted us to go ashore, where we hiked up to the Cape Horn Monument that commemorates the lives of thousands of seafarers who perished attempting to sail around the cape.

We were not so fortunate the next day when sea turbulence caused our landing in Ushuaia, Argentina, to be delayed a day. I was grateful for my seasickness patch.

From Ushuaia, the world's southernmost city, we flew to the city of El Calafate where we visited the Glacier Perito Moreno at Los Glaciares National Park. Glacier Perito Moreno is 3.12 miles wide and 197



ft. high above the Argentino Lake, making it the world's third largest reserve of fresh water.

It is one of only three glaciers in the world, including the Pia Glacier, known to be advancing rather than retreating. It is viewed from a walking tour through catwalks where you are warned to watch for the breaking shards of ice which can be deadly. The cracking sounds of the ice breaking inside and out was impressive, like a very loud shotgun.

Shedding our winter clothes, we flew to Buenos Aires, Argentina, where the temperatures were in the 80's. Here we met our guide, Florencia, who with her driver took us see the sights of this cosmopolitan capital city.

Two things to know about Buenos Aires – they drive fast and eat late. Dinner is usually at 10:00 p.m. Referred to as the "Paris of the South," the streets are lined with 19th century European buildings and numerous landscaped parks and squares.

Our tour included the famous cemetery of Recoleta where Eva Peron (Evita) is buried. One of the highlights of our Buenos Aires visit was a Tango Show in one of the original theaters where the Tango started at the end of the 19th century.

During our conversations with our guides we were surprised to learn that many had grandparents who had immigrated to Argentina from Italy in the early 20th century. Our guide Florencia's grandparents were from Sicily. She and her extended family, which included a husband who worked at IBM and a 4-year-old son, lived an hour outside Buenos Aires because housing in the city was too expensive.

They had recently bought a home which was a good investment but required a conversion of pesos to dollars to make the purchase. Striving for a middle class life is challenging in Argentina because of the plummeting value of their currency, which had dropped over 50% in this past year.

Our final stop was Mendoza, located in the foothills of the Andes where nearly 80% of the country's wine is produced. With a tradition dating back to the early 20th century, new varieties thrived from grapes grafted from 100 year old vines. It was a perfect way to conclude a hectic trip.

We went to see the magnificent glaciers and mountains, and to remind ourselves of the enormity and elegance of our planet. At the same time we were touched by the people we met, different in many ways, but basically, all wanting the same things; happiness, security and the ability to provide for their family. It was a good way to start my new decade.



Monument on Cape Horn to commemorate the lives of seafarers who had perished.

See more photos on the High Prairie website:
<http://www.highprairie.us/vol-19-no-1/>



Chief Tim's Tips

Well, folks, as you know we have experienced a very long, very cold spell. Everyone's been burning more wood than usual and, understandably, people are unwilling to climb around on a roof covered in two feet of snow and ice. However, if you haven't cleaned your chimney, now is the time as the creosote is likely quite thick and a serious fire hazard.

If you do get a flue fire, be sure to call your fire department immediately as the heat generated can start things burning in places hidden from view. Firefighters don't consider it out until inspection with a thermal imaging camera proves otherwise.

Just a gentle reminder, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors have saved innumerable lives. Have you checked your batteries lately?

And one more thing—it's a good idea to ensure that address signs can be read even with all the snow. Think about placing yours higher than the snowbank it is currently in. We can find you a lot quicker if we know exactly what your address is.

Firefighter Training

Have you ever wondered what kinds of things we talk about at our twice-a-month fire department drills? Since September, we have been focused on structure fire suppression, vehicle accidents, and medical response. With fire season coming, we will soon concentrate on such wildfire subjects as:

- Pump operations (e.g. drafting, foam, hose lays, tender supply)
- Fire suppression tactics without water (e.g. fireline construction with hand tools, hot-spotting)
- Chainsaw use and safety
- Radio use procedures
- Wildland Urban Interface strategies
- Structural triage (is this home defensible in the face of advancing fire or should limited resources be deployed more safely and effectively elsewhere?)
- Incident command system
- Working with aircraft operations

If you think you would like working with a great team to help your friends, neighbors, and possibly even your own family in a time of need, consider attending one of our drills at the fire hall on Struck Road or call Chief Tim Darland (509-209-4381) or Jake Jakabosky (509-281-1998) with your questions. We hold drills on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month from 7-9 p.m. Apparatus maintenance is performed on the 1st Tuesday, same time, same place.



Your Community needs you

2018 FIRE DISTRICT #14 VALUE OF SERVICE

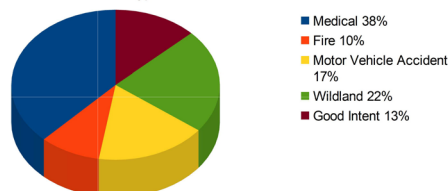
Tim Darland, Fire Chief

I am always amazed when the final numbers come in at the end of the year just how many calls the High Prairie Fire Department (HPFD) responds to annually. The dedication by our 14 members is very impressive, especially when calculating hours spent on training and on active calls. We are extremely lucky as a community and I am personally grateful to each member and their families for the time and sacrifices each give at a drop of a hat.

To recap 2018 HPFD activities: Members responded to a total of 116 emergency calls this last year of which 31 calls were in-district responses. The pie chart below shows the breakdown. Most of the categories are self-explanatory. The "good intent calls" are where our firefighters were asked to stand down when other departments maintained control of their emergency scene or alarm companies called to cancel responding units.

HIGH PRAIRIE FIRE DISTRICT #14

Types of Calls - 2018



To calculate the value of service we take the number of hours spent on emergency responses and training/maintenance activities and multiply it by the total personnel time on each activity. Then we multiply the number of volunteer hours by \$24.69, the average emergency services hourly wage (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). The table shows that HPFD MEMBERS VOLUNTEERED A TOTAL OF 1,905 HOURS in 2018! THE VALUE OF SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY TOTALED \$47,034. Our collected tax revenue for HPFD in 2018 was approximately \$40,000. Money well spent!

HIGH PRAIRIE FIRE DISTRICT #14
Value of Service to Community - 2018

	Man-Hours	Dollar Value @ \$24.69/hr*
Training & Maintenance	1096	\$27,060
Emergency Response Calls	809	\$19,974
Total 2018 Volunteer Hours	1905	\$47,034

*Average Emergency Services Hourly Wage (Bureau of Labor Statistics)

What is not represented in this total Value of Service is the time spent by our Fire Commissioners. Each year they sign a waiver not to get paid for their time serving in their elected positions, which keeps more dollars in the budget for gear and safety equipment. Thank you, Commissioners, for your support to the department and the community.

A few other highlights for the department this last year include the Schilling Road Station (see page 7), Legends Casino Grant for \$4,500, HPCC donation, and a flawless audit with many thanks to Glenna Scott, our department secretary and treasurer. It was certainly a great year for the department with the support of our community. Thank you for helping make High Prairie a great place to live!

LESSONS DRAWN FROM CALIFORNIA MEGAFIRES

Tom McMackin

Last Summer and Fall were hosts to a tremendous amount of national news coverage focused on California. There were 2 wildfires that dominated the reporting cycles. The Carr Fire (229,651 acres/59 square miles—7th largest in CA history—1,604 structures (1,077 homes) destroyed) and the Camp Fire (62,053 acres/240 sq. miles—deadliest and most destructive fire in CA history—18,804 structures destroyed (the town of Paradise, CA) and 85 people killed + 3 still missing/unaccounted for at this writing) were the stories that transfixed us all in America's rural communities.

A tremendous amount of soul searching and review took place following these incidents. Analysis was directed at investigating causes, costs, long term effects, and preventative measure efforts. It looked at pre-event conditions, the realities of fire suppression, and the recovery or other projected future determinations for the communities caught in the 'eye of the maelstrom' of each of these fires. The results have been a mixed bag of comment and critique. Like most things these days in our social media world there are many commentators, but few have the knowledge, experience and understanding of the nature of fire and of human interaction with nature in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI—a fancy way of labeling the places where people live in rural, natural settings).

The Camp and Carr fires were catastrophic, 'tsunami' grade, weather and condition driven fire-storms. These are events so intense and massive that little can be done in the midst of the holocaust to stop them. The best and only decision is to choose life safety and evacuate the areas already threatened or in the progressive line of fire—literally! Many internet opinions were that nothing could have been done or would have made a difference.

However, there were properties saved in areas of devastation surrounding them. This interview shows that prior thought and preparation can indeed change the outcome: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rimeu9pmqjo> (Doug & Kathy Houston, Butte County—Camp Fire)

Deciding to learn about FireWise concepts and then applying the principles to your home and property can make a significant difference with the types of wildland fires we generally see in our area of the Gorge. Creating 'defensible space' around properties improves chances that a fire will have little impact on those treated areas, or makes it possible for firefighters to protect properties, manage the impacts of a fire and guide the flame front around the protected perimeter.

Our firefighters, as part of their continuing training and annual wildland fire refresher courses, learn about the 4 traditional 'fuel' types in the wildfire setting: 1 hour (grasses), 10 hour (twigs to shrubs), 100 hour (trees) and 1000 hour (big trees) 'fuels' models. Now, in the 'WUI,' humans have introduced a new fuel type—referred to as type 'T-111', after the grooved sheet-plywood siding typically seen in rural area construction projects. It's an interesting angle to step back and look at a structure as fuel for a wildfire!

Considering that concept more thoroughly, you can see that all man-made things in or around a building are factors in the fuels



equation. All those flammable elements collected together, plus the proximity of structure to structure, present insurmountable challenges to firefighters because of the resulting intensity and fire volume expansion. We have seen fire events destroy housing blocks and neighborhoods over the past decade.

These have been examples of the

'T-111' fuels model in real-time events. Often, surrounding wildland is relatively untouched by the complete devastation on the human WUI side of the equation.

FireWise is about fuel(s) management and preparation for action, so that when—not if, in our WUI—a fire or other emergency comes our way! We can be active participants within our High Prairie WUIs around each individual home property. We can understand how we fit into the natural processes that come our way—snow would be a good example—along with how we can participate in those events to enjoy the experience and/or mitigate the challenges. The 'FireWise' & 'Ready, Set, Go!!!' programs are good resources, both for learning from the materials they can provide and for tapping into the resource of friends and neighbors who can help "put context to concept" and...possibly lend a bit of morale and muscle support!

Things to do on a timeline for this Summer:

Remember, in 2018 the first wildfire in KCFD 14 was at the end of April.

- Thinking & planning for the period from today to mid-June
- Close FireWise work done around the place by April/May. From the peak of your roof to the ground plus 5' all the way around property and structures.
- NOW is the time to gather up any pine tree pruning limbs and set them aside for burning or other disposal in the coming weeks.

Also, now is the time for a longer considerations of:

- Ongoing work to be done by May/June out to 30' and further to 100' in preparation for the fire season.
- Review of work accomplished!
- Planning and preparations for evacuations, if our event becomes a tsunami FireStorm!

Contact me, Tom McMackin, if you'd like more information on the 'FireWise' and 'Ready, Set, Go!' programs; have comments or suggestions; would like to be more involved with the High Prairie FireWise effort; or want to get connected with the resources we have available as a recognized FireWise Community. Email me at firewise.onhighprairie@gmail.com or leave a phone message at 509-365-2786.

Online FireWise resources:

FireWise – <http://www.firewise.org> or <http://www.firewise.org/wildfire-preparedness/be-firewise/home-and-landscape.aspx>

Ready, Set, Go! – <http://www.wildlandfirersg.org> or <http://www.wildlandfirersg.org/Resident>

Useful strategy for listing time and priority tasks for evacuation action: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4EJfXhwMcwelfqUFUydEQz-R3M/view>

SCHILLING ROAD FIRE STATION COMPLETED

Phillip Haner, Fire Commissioner/Captain KCFPD#14

The Klickitat County Fire District 14 Fire Commissioners and members of High Prairie Fire would like to thank everyone involved with the procurement, planning, and building of the Schilling Road Fire Station. High Prairie Fire Station #2 is nearly complete. By the time this article comes out in the High Prairian, we will most likely have made the last payment to the builder (Kaban Homes of Centerville, WA) and the building will be officially ours. To celebrate, we will be having a ribbon-cutting and open house ceremony on Saturday May 4, 2019 at 1–3 p.m. Everyone is invited and more information will be provided soon.

Fire Station #2 was started approximately 15 years ago with the donation of the property from the Olin family. Initial ground work was begun to develop the property and a whole lot of paperwork was filed to begin the process of obtaining financing, including some preliminary plans. In 2017, then Fire Commissioner Arlen and his wife Sharon Aleckson began working with State Representative Gina McCabe (now Mosbrucker) to obtain a Washington State Capital Improvement Project Grant. The grant for \$435,000 was awarded in January of 2018. Building of Station #2 began in June 2018 with the completion of the building in March of 2019. The construction has remained on budget and on time with the diligent work of our volunteer Project Manager Tim Darland and our Secretary/Treasurer Glenna Scott. Thank you!

Station #2 is a 45' by 80', 4-bay, metal-framed, insulated, metal-sided building with a concrete floor and an ADA-compliant bathroom.



Potable water is stored in a 500 gallon tank and will be delivered as needed, thereby eliminating the need for a domestic well. A pump-out septic holding tank was incorporated so no drain field was required. This station will house four trucks including a Type-1 structure engine, a 2,000 gallon all-wheel drive water tender, an 8x8 heavy brush truck and a second, smaller brush truck. A 28,000 gallon underground water storage system was installed by Fire District personnel and lots of com-

munity members in early October 2018. This water system collects water from the building roof and with its 500 gallon per minute pump will be able to quickly fill fire trucks. As of the middle of February 2019, approximately 21,000 gallons of water had already been collected.

As your Fire District, our next steps will be to ensure the Washington Survey and Ratings Bureau acknowledges the addition of the new Fire Station and adjusts the insurance ratings for homeowners in the area. This process does require some work, including another in-

spection of the Fire District, but we have passed without issues before. Additional members from the District are encouraged to volunteer to help staff both stations. Meetings are the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the Month at Station #1 on Struck Road. Training and Drills will begin at Station #2 after we move fire trucks into their new home.

I would like to thank everyone involved with the High Prairie Fire Station #2. The District could not have done this without the amazing community support.

DREAMING OF SPRING IN THE GARDEN

It may still be cold and snowy, but it's time to be thinking about starting seeds inside for spring planting. Here's an article by American Meadows on how to go about it:

Some vegetables, like tomatoes, eggplants and peppers, require a long growing season so most gardeners start seeds indoors in spring or purchase seedlings (transplants). Starting your own seeds is not only less expensive, it's also a fun, rewarding and a great way to get a jump start on the gardening season. Here are some tips to help you be successful.

1. Purchase seed-starting mix. These mixes don't contain any actual soil, but they provide ideal conditions for sprouting seeds. Most importantly, they provide a good balance of drainage and water-holding capacity. And because they're sterile, they minimize problems with disease on vulnerable seedlings. Don't use garden soil to start seeds indoors; it generally doesn't drain well and may contain plant disease spores.

2. Make sure your containers have drainage holes. You can use recycled pots—yogurt containers, for example, but be sure to poke holes in the bottom. Plastic six-packs and flats are good choices and can be reused year after year. Biodegradable pots are fine, too.

3. Plant seeds at the proper depth. Check the seed packet for planting depth. You don't need to measure, but if it says "1/4" don't plant the seed an inch deep. The rule of thumb is to plant the seed

two to three times as deep as it is wide. Tiny seeds should be barely covered by soil mix, while large seeds like beans should be sown about an inch deep. Sow seeds too deeply and they won't have enough stored energy to make it to the surface. Plant extra seeds because it's likely not all of them will germinate; you'll thin out the extra ones later.

4. Keep seed-starting mix moist. Seedling roots need both air and water. Strive to keep the mix moist but not saturated with water—think of it as a damp sponge that contains both water and air.

5. After sowing, set the containers in a warm location. On top of the refrigerator or near a radiator are usually good spots. Check pots every day.

6. As soon as seedlings emerge, place pots in a bright location. A sunny window will do but supplemental fluorescent lights will give you the best results. Suspend the lights just an inch or two over the tops of the plants.

7. Cool room temperature is best. You'll get sturdier, stockier seedlings at temperatures in the high 60s. At higher temperatures seedlings may get leggy.

8. Begin fertilizing weekly. Use a half-strength fertilizer once the seedling has one or two sets of leaves. Organic fertilizers are a good choice since they provide a range of nutrients, including micronutrients.

9. Once seedlings have two sets of leaves, it's time to thin. You want one seedling per pot, so choose the healthiest, strongest-looking seedling and snip off other seedlings at the soil line and discard them.

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MUSINGS

Doug Taylor

I had been telling myself in January (and any others who would listen) that I assumed we were having our winters earlier in the fall and spring was coming earlier in the spring.

Then came February with snow and more snow. It seemed every morning that I got up there would be another 6 inches or so of snow. It finally got so deep that there was only about 6 inches of my antenna left visible on my pickup. Then it began to warm slightly during the day, then snow would melt and more snow come. The weight of the snow was making one wonder if our roofs were built to withstand it all.

I was fortunate to raise geese last year and was thinking of maybe having an Easter dinner. Then came the snow in February and getting deeper. Well, Mr. Coyote decided that the snow was deep enough that he could get through the fence and he was going to have an early dinner in spite of what plans Doug might have. I had six geese, have two left, unknown gender. Only a goose will know. There is an old saying, never count your chickens before they are hatched. Maybe well laid plans of mice and men are subject to change.

I can well remember snow coming in early November and staying through the middle of March. I have told people that I have skied over the wires of the fences and seen many a drift where you didn't get in or out. Maybe the roads would be plowed out one day and get a inch of snow and they would be drifted full again the next day.

Well, the woodpile is going down and I'm glad it's February instead of November, in spite of not being able to plan on my goose dinner.

You know, I was just now thinking, I guess I need to do a little jig. My grandfather John and grandmother Nellie came to High Prairie just 100 years ago this year. They brought their livestock to Lyle by train and Dad helped herd the livestock from Lyle to the home place. They started out over by Toledo, Washington, spending the night in Vancouver. They had resided and had several

businesses near Toledo on the Cowlitz or near the river. The place was called Knab, which is hard to find on any map now.

When my dad was a young man he started his farming with his brother Robert on what we call the Woods place. The Woods place was owned by J.H. Woods from The Dalles, Oregon. Many properties on High Prairie were owned by outside investors. Mr. Woods had a butcher shop in The Dalles.

The Woods place is located where a portion of the present new fire hall on Schilling Road is located. Around 1948, after buying another property to build a house, the property south of Hartland Road became available; so he sold the other property. Electricity was becoming available on High Prairie, and he wired the house while remodeling inside. He purchased the property from a widow, Lois Clark.

This property had been owned by his parents John and Nellie Taylor, purchased by them in 1919. Dad had come with his parents when he was 14 years old, and it so happened that I moved there when I was 14 years old.

After buying the home place, the folks made other land purchases to add to their holdings. Dad continued to farm the Woods place, and for the first couple years we wintered cows at that location. As there was no mail route or kids from Three Corners north, the County did not plow the road many times in the winter. We would need to ski from Three Corners to feed the cows. The weather was, as usual, very unpredictable. Maybe the day would be nice or maybe the wind would be blowing snow like crazy. You fed the animals no matter what the conditions were.

After a couple years the folks built another barn and they wintered the cows on the present home place. It was interesting in the spring. We would turn the cows loose and the lead cows would go up Hartland Road, take a right on High Prairie Road, go across the prairie, turn left on Schilling and find their pasture.

By the way, the old Hartland post office is still standing on the property, as this was the last location it was used.