



Hot Spots

The Newsletter of the Creston Fire Fighter Associate Membership

Welcome to the first edition of the CFFAM newsletter. We hope this will be the first of many opportunities for you to learn more about your fire department and the efforts of its dedicated, hardworking volunteers.

9/11: Honoring the Fallen

If you drove by the Creston Fire Station on Sept. 11, you likely noticed the firefighters and medical responders honoring those killed in the 9/11 terrorist attacks. For the last 7 years on this date, fire departments across the nation have been remembering colleagues, families, and others affected by this tragedy. The Creston Fire Department vigil included volunteers holding the U.S. flag in silent tribute from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

As you drove by, did you also notice the new flagpole in front of the station? The flags were flown at half-mast on Sept. 11, and a dedication ceremony was held at 7 p.m. Chief Gary Mahugh conducted the ceremony, assisted by the words of Pastor Bill Myers of the Little Brown Church. Firefighter Shawn Derby led the Pledge of Allegiance, and Associate Member Gloria Graves shared a dedication to firefighters who have given their lives helping others.

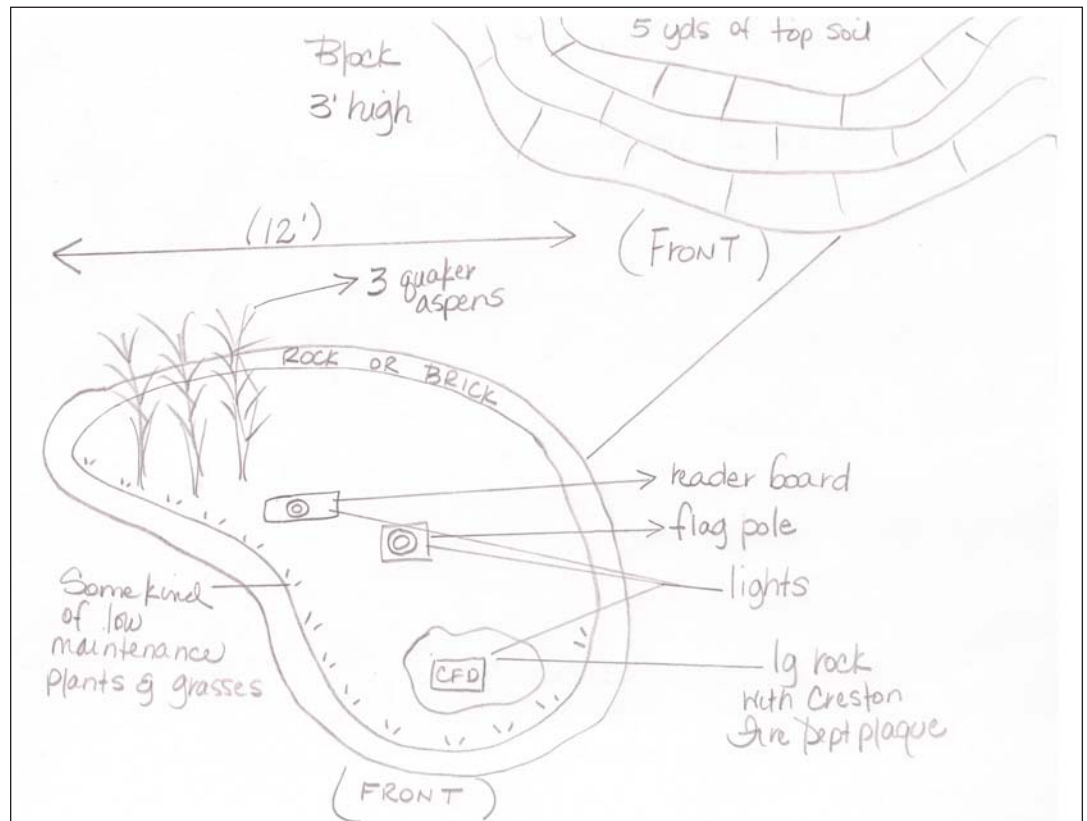
Inside, an absent firefighter memorial, with a table, chair, place setting, and turnouts, was set up to honor "those firefighters who passed before us," said Chief Mahugh. Firefighter John Klippel showed footage of the World Trade Center attacks, reminding everyone of the intensity of the events that day.

The flagpole was installed the previous week so that the ceremony could be held on Sept. 11. In addition to the

flagpole, the completed project will feature a reader board for notices and events and a plaque dedicating the space to fallen firefighters (see the design below).

CFFAM has been working to gather money and materials donations for the flagpole, lights, and landscaping planned for the space. The Many Lakes HOA has already given \$500 to the campaign, and local nurseries have been offering plants and materials.

It is exciting to see the community support such a tribute. If you would like to contribute to the effort, please see the form on page 3.



For the Kids

Sparky the Fire Dog to Visit Schools

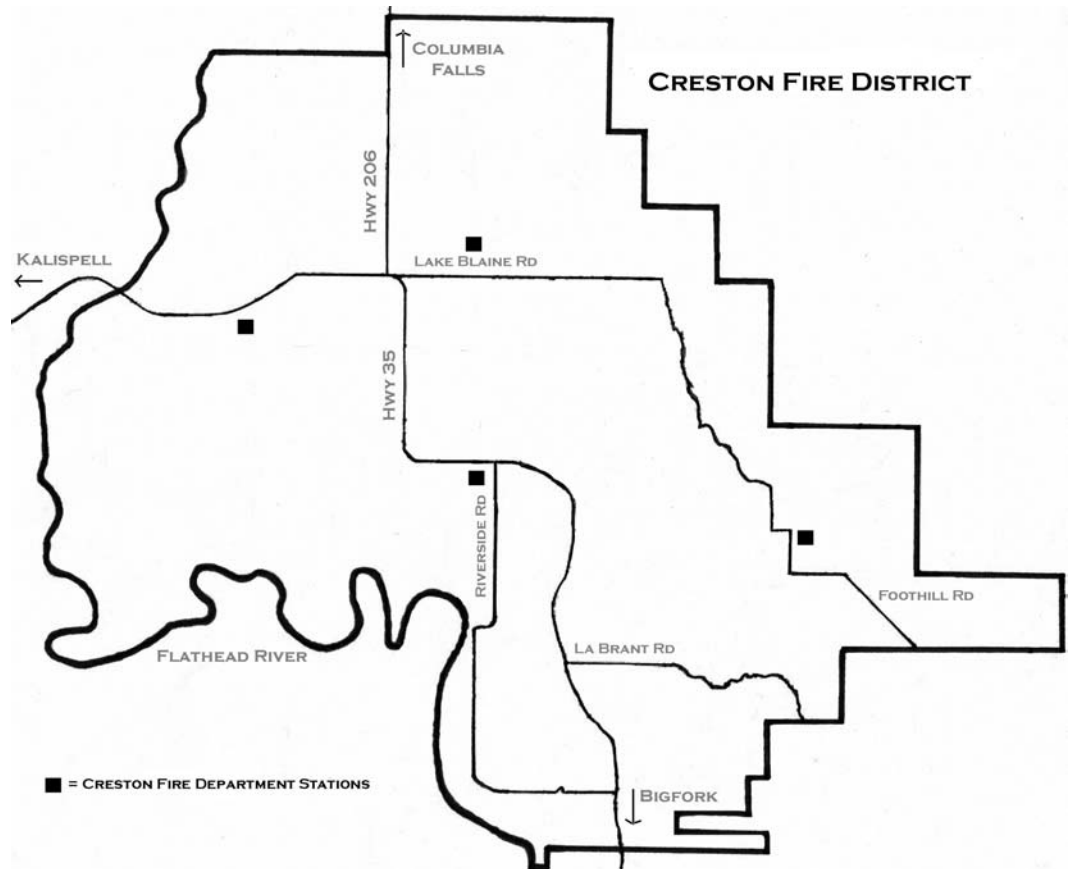
As a part of National Fire Prevention Week (Oct. 5–11), Creston firefighters will join Sparky the Fire Dog at all schools in the Creston Fire District to share fire prevention tips with the students.

National Fire Prevention Week began as a commemoration of the Great Chicago Fire of Oct. 8, 1871, which killed 300 people and left 100,000 homeless. When first observed in 1925, some 15,000 lives had been lost to fire in the United States in the previous year. In 2007, public fire departments responded to more than 1.5 million fires across the country and reported an estimated 3,430 civilian deaths, according to the National Fire Protection Association.

This week, presentations at the Creston, Fairmont-Egan, and Cayuse Prairie schools will begin with a fire drill. Once outside, students will check out Engine 1 and watch firefighters spray water from the engine's hoses. Sparky will then lead the students into the gym.

This year's theme is "Preventing Home Fires." Students will be reminded of the "stop, drop, and roll" procedure and the need to change batteries in smoke detectors with the time changes. A firefighter will put on an SCBA (breathing apparatus), turn off the lights, and "rescue" one of the students so that they learn not to fear the Darth Vader-like figure in a fire.

For homework, firefighters will provide information packets and ask students to have a fire drill at home, checking for two ways out of each room, a working smoke detector, and a common meeting place.



The Creston Fire District encompasses 83 square miles. The Creston Fire Department operates out of four stations situated to ensure quick response time throughout the district.

Putting Your Fire District on the Map

The Creston Rural Fire District covers about 83 square miles. The fire district runs from just north of Austin Crossroad at Hwy 206 to about 3 miles north of Bigfork and from the Flathead River on the west up into the mountains on the east. The district includes the Columbia Falls Stage area, the Lake Blaine area, the Fairmont-Egan area, and the Mountain Brook area.

The Creston Fire Department operates out of four stations: Creston, Lake Blaine, Mountain Brook, and Fairmont-Egan. Live in Many Lakes? This is your fire district. Call Columbia Falls Stage home? Those are Creston firefighters down the road, dousing the flames of an out-of-control field burn. And

Creston medical responders are on the scene when a traffic accident occurs on Highway 35 or any other road in the district.

So who are those fire and medical responders? Your friends and neighbors. The Creston Fire Department was founded in 1958 by a group of local farmers. Today it is an all-volunteer organization of 30-plus fire and medical responders. These responders provide 24/7 emergency response, 365 days a year, to the entire district. In 2007, the Creston Fire Department responded to 230 incidents.

These are some of the best-equipped and trained firefighters and medical responders in Montana. They volunteer their time for that

training, determined to constantly improve their ability to reduce the loss of life and property in the district and, as called upon to do so, throughout the Flathead Valley. Some members obtain more than 150 hours of training annually.

They also spend time training your neighbor, your children—even you. Creston Fire Department volunteers provide ongoing fire prevention and emergency education programs for the community throughout the year. They also bring safety programs to all schools in the district.

If you are interested in joining these dedicated fire and medical responders, please call 756-0612 or email info@crestonfire.org for more information.

Yes! I Support the Creston Fire Department

Your support is important to the Creston Fire Department and its dedicated volunteers. Please help us in our efforts to be the first on scene to help you! All donations are tax deductible, and your canceled check can serve as your receipt. If you would like a written tax receipt, please indicate this on the back of this coupon. For our records, please provide the following information:

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Organization _____
(if the donation is on behalf of an organization)

Address _____

- Please contact me about CFFAM and becoming an associate member.
 Please contact me about becoming a volunteer firefighter or medical responder.

Phone _____ Email _____

Please make your check payable to the Creston Fire Fighter's Association and mail it with this coupon to:

Creston Fire Fighter's Association, 4498 Hwy 35, Kalispell, MT 59901

Thank you for your support!

By the Numbers: Outfitting a Firefighter

What does it take to put a firefighter into the gear necessary to safely approach a blaze? A lot of money...

\$1,600	Turnouts
\$ 250	Boots
\$ 150	Helmet
\$ 35	Protective hood
\$ 75	Gloves

\$2,110 Cost per firefighter

And that doesn't include gear for fighting wildland fires, a pager, a radio, or the \$5,000 self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) vital for supplying clean air as a firefighter goes into a structure fire.

Spotlight on Safety: Fire Prevention Starts at Home

As fall sets in, you increase the possibility for a fire in your home as you load up the woodstove, turn on baseboard heat and portable heaters, and pull out the soup kettle. This means National Fire Prevention Week comes at a good time to remember fire safety indoors.

Cooking

About 40% of home fires start in the kitchen, making cooking fires the No. 1 cause of home fires and home fire injuries, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). So take these steps when cooking at home:

1. Stay in the kitchen when you are cooking. Turn off the stove if you leave it.
2. Keep anything that can catch fire—potholders, wooden utensils, paper and plastic bags—away from the stove.
3. Avoid loose clothing that can dangle onto the stove and catch fire.
4. Keep an oven mitt and lid handy.

If a small fire starts on the stovetop, put on an oven mitt and carefully slide a lid over the pan to smother the flames. Turn off the burner and leave the lid in place until the pan is completely cool.

Heating

Heating fires are the second-leading cause of home fires, according to the

NFPA, so pay attention to the following:

1. Install and maintain smoke detectors.
2. Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected annually.
3. Keep items that can burn—even wet clothes—at least 3 feet from heat sources.
4. Turn off portable space heaters when you go to bed or leave a room, and never use the oven to heat your home.

Electrical

Lamps, light fixtures, lightbulbs, electrical cords and plugs, extension cords—the sources for an electrical fire in your home seem endless. Follow these tips to ensure electrical safety:

1. Keep anything that can burn, such as lampshades, bedding, curtains, and clothing, away from lamps and light fixtures.
2. Check all electrical cords regularly and replace any that are cracked or damaged.
3. If you use an extension cord for a permanent fixture, consider having a qualified electrician add circuits or receptacles.
4. Install tamper-resistant receptacles to keep little fingers out of sockets.

If you blow fuses or trip circuit breakers, have discolored or warm wall outlets, see lights flicker, or have a burnt or rubber smell coming from an appliance, have a qualified electrician fix the problem.

Other Sources

Candles often start structure fires, so place them in safe candleholders at least 12 inches from anything that can burn and never leave them unattended. Mattresses, bedding, and upholstered furniture are the most likely to ignite a home fire, so keep candles and other smoking materials away from them.

Pipes, cigarettes, cigars, and similar smoking materials are the leading cause of fire deaths in the United States, according to the NFPA, and older adults are at the highest risk of death or injury from such fires. So if you smoke, smoke outside and use deep, sturdy ashtrays. Keep matches and lighters up high in a locked cabinet so that they are out of the reach of children.

Smart Moves

Install smoke alarms inside and outside each sleeping area and on every level of your home. Ideally, they should be interconnected so that all sound when one goes off. Clean them with a vacuum and test them monthly; replace batteries with the time changes.

Practice your home escape plan, with at least two ways out of every room and a common meeting place, twice a year.

Creston Fire Department
Creston Fire Fighter Associate Membership
4498 Hwy 35
Kalispell, MT 59901

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Associates Turn Out

The Creston Fire Department has long attracted community members who want to support the department but not take on the challenging role of firefighter or medical responder.

Those associate members are stepping up their effort to strengthen the link between the fire department and the community it serves. CFFAM has several fundraising and responder-support projects in the works. The group is also working to increase community contact with the fire department through this newsletter and public events. And CFFAM plans to take a lead role in the 43rd annual

On Call

CFFAM Meeting

When: 7 p.m., Oct. 21

Where: Creston Fire Station,
4498 Hwy 35

What to bring: A dish to share

More info: Contact Gloria Graves,
250-4655, crittermom10@hotmail.com

Creston Auction next spring. Much of the fire department's new equipment, training costs, and supplies are purchased through proceeds of the auction, making it the fire department's most important fundraising event.

CFFAM is looking for new members with fresh ideas about how to boost the energy and funds of this organization. If you want to be a part of this effort, or just want to find out more about our plans, join us at the Creston Fire Station for our next potluck meeting.

Mark Your Calendar Soup for Supper; Public CPR Class

The Creston Fire Department is hosting two events in October:

Oct. 7: Soup for Supper, 4–8 p.m., Creston Fire Station.

Join your neighbors for dinner at the Creston Fire Station.

We will be serving homemade soups, salad, rolls, and desserts. Donations are welcome! Chief Gary Mahugh will give a short presentation at 6 p.m. If you are unable to stay for dinner, we will provide takeaway containers, so please stop by and say hello.

Oct. 28: CPR class, 6 p.m., Creston Fire Station.

Bill and Louise Tidwell, CPR instructors and volunteers with the Creston Fire Department, will lead this

public CPR class. It will be a low-key environment, with no books or tests, and you will feel very comfortable with your skills when you leave.

The class is taught according to American Heart Association standards, and you will receive a CPR card. This class will not certify health-care providers or day-care center operators. The cost for county CPR classes ranges from \$35–\$50, but any donations would be appreciated; all proceeds go to the Creston Fire Department for medical supplies. To reserve your space, please contact Gloria Graves at 250-4655 or crittermom10@hotmail.com by Oct. 24.