



On the Fire Line

PULLING TOGETHER— A MESSAGE FROM THE ALRFPD BOARD

Planning and fundraising continue for our new central fire station. Our primary goal is to effectively and efficiently serve our community and its visitors in all aspects of emergency response. We are addressing the changing community and its environs by planning construction of a facility that will meet our needs now and in the future.

Our current Station 810 (behind the Albion Grocery) is too small to accommodate a single modern fire engine, training facility and acceptable office space. The new station will have two separate buildings; one will house up to four emergency apparatus (*e.g.*, two fire engines, water tender and rescue vehicle) and the other will include offices, a large multipurpose room, bathrooms, kitchen, training and sleeping quarters.

Today's health and safety requirements are ever increasing for our volunteer firefighting staff, adding to the cost, complexity and time commitment required to provide full time emergency services to our community. Nothing is more important to the safety of our community than the health of our fire department and emergency services. A new fire station will benefit all of us by improving emergency response capability, facilitating improved safety of firefighters through training and decontamination, and increased educational opportunities for our community.

We have initiated a fund drive for our new firehouse at 810 in Albion. Many of you have heard about this or attended meetings to discuss the concept drawings. The large price tag: \$7-8 million, is primarily due to prevailing wage rules for public buildings and because the firehouse is within the Coastal Zone. Although we will rely on large funders for the bulk of this funding, it is important to raise as much as possible locally to demonstrate community support for this effort. Our community funding target is \$250,000, and we have already secured the first \$100,000 by approaching our own potential larger donors first. Now we need contributions marked for the New Firehouse from everyone—no matter how small. The more our community shows support and buy-in, the more weight it holds with big donors and potential lenders. We are currently in the permitting process and our appeal to consolidate the five lots the district currently holds in the village was approved late last year.

Please consider making a donation to support the overall safety of our community and those who volunteer to protect us.

-ALRFPD Board of Directors



CHIEF'S CORNER

This past winter got off to a slow start, but severe weather was in full swing by the beginning of February. The February 4th storm kept our crews running for 27 hours consecutively and on call throughout the week, ending the month with a total of 40 calls. Things have eased up a bit lately, but remain steady. ALFRPD Firefighters have headed out the door 94 times so far this year. 2023 saw a total of 229 calls—an average of 4.4 calls per week. 2024 is right on par with 4.9 calls per week.

Even with the busy months, our District's call volume seemed to have hit a plateau in 2023. In 2024 volunteer firefighter response numbers continue to wane making it evident that with the state of the economy it becomes more and more difficult for volunteers to take time away from the families, and work, train to the professional level that is expected and mandated by state and federal regulations. The term "Volunteer Firefighter" has never meant anything less than professional. Personally, I prefer the term "Professional Volunteer Firefighters over simply "Volunteer Firefighter"; the expectations are the same, and the only difference between a paid firefighter and volunteer firefighter is a paycheck.

In a time of need, our public expects both paid and volunteer firefighters to do the same job at



a professional level. State and federal government does as well. ALL firefighters are required to meet and maintain the exact same standards of ability and training, regardless of pay.

For the Professional Volunteer Firefighter these standards become harder and harder to achieve each year and has literally become a tight rope juggling act for our volunteers.

You can't beat the heart of a volunteer. It takes a special breed and caliber of person to volunteer to become a Professional Volunteer Firefighter. They show up at 100% because they WANT to be there to help you in your time of need. A lot of time and sacrifice go into being a Professional Volunteer Firefighter for not only the individual, but their spouse, family, and even their employers. Being a Professional Volunteer Firefighter means training at least once a week but also perhaps abruptly leaving during family dinner, dropping everything in the middle of a project, not being able to attend your child's basketball game, jumping out of bed in the middle of the night to head out into extreme weather to make sure others are safe, and the list goes on and on. It progressively gets harder and harder to achieve this expectation of our volunteers. Family, full-time job, part-time job, more training requirements, keeping a high level of physical fitness and being on call at all times all play a part in the challenge of being a Professional



(Cartoon used with permission of Paul Combs, FIREHOUSE MAGAZINE)

(Cont'd CHIEF, Pg. 3)

(CHIEF—from pg. 2)

Volunteer Firefighter.

The history of the Albion-Little River Fire Protection District is as foggy as an August afternoon. One thing is clear—volunteers have been the heart and soul of the fire department since its inception. I recently came across some documents in a box at the fire station that outlines how some time in the late 1950's a group of long-time residents got together and “decided that a fire department was urgently needed.” It is said that the residents of Albion were called upon to raise enough funds to purchase a seven-year-old pickup truck with a gas powered water pump and tank mounted in the bed of the truck. This was the formation of the Albion Volunteer Fire Department. There were a dozen or so volunteers that were dispatched by an audible siren and “telephone tree.”

Another document we came across was titled, “Subcommittee Report Volunteer Relations.” It looks to have been written sometime in the late 1970's or 80's. It is an interesting snapshot of the volunteer fire department's issues at the time, identifying many of the same issues we face today: “...members found increased demands, more than they bargained for and retired from active participation; ...state and federal governments became more involved in mandating requirements for volunteers; ...expanded the public's expectations of service; ...long-term financial support will be insufficient to meet the equipment and structural needs of the department.” These concerns are from over forty years ago.

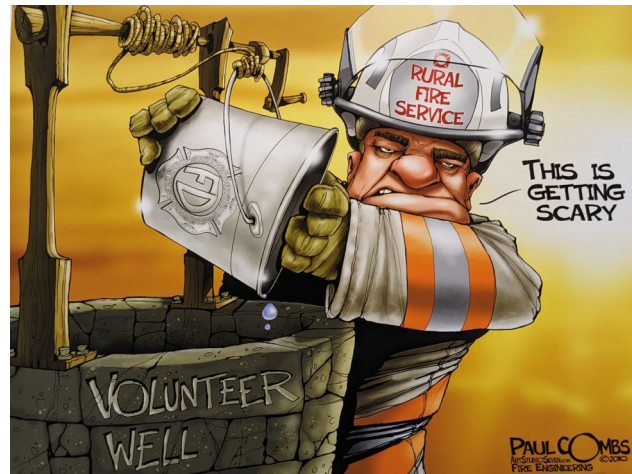
ALRFPD Statistics

ALRFPD currently has 19 active members and one support member. Five members are EMT's. We have five volunteer board members.

Number of calls in 2023—227

Types of calls in 2023:

Fire—17
Storm Response—23
Hazardous Condition—28
Medical—109
Public Assist—26
Traffic Collision—24
Visit our website: www.alrfpd.com



(Cartoon used with permission of Paul Combs, FIREHOUSE MAGAZINE)

Today the Albion-Little River Fire Protection District is facing many of the same challenge: aging population; more people traveling through the area; high cost of living; aging and deteriorating infrastructure and apparatus; availability of volunteers; no central station with facilities that can accommodate training or gathering of any sort. Revenues funding fire from the County are down even with Measure P Sales Tax dedicated to fund fire districts. We still find ourselves looking at a deficit in the future. Everything has increased—from operating costs to training standards to wildfire danger to extreme weather. Most importantly, declining numbers of those willing or able to make the sacrifice to become a Professional Volunteer Firefighter.

We currently have 19 personnel on our volunteer roster: 16 firefighters, and 5 emergency medical responders. The Fire Chief is the District's only paid full time employee and the Administrative Assistant is the only part-time paid employee. We have one grounds maintenance volunteer.

Albion-Little River Fire Protection District has a strong vision for the future, with sights set on some large projects and big achievements. We need a modern, centrally located fire station to accommodate modern fire apparatus and house firefighters and EMS responders to staff 24/7. This community needs a central anchor point-something we can all support and take pride in. We need your support to see this vision come to fruition. We need you as much as you need us.

OUR DONORS

The Albion-Little River Fire Protection District extends its heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has generously donated and supported our organization. For inquiries, feel free to contact the District at (707) 937-4022 or via email at: office@albionfire.com.

If you wish to make an online donation, please visit our website at www.alrfpd.com/donate-today. Alternatively, contributions by mail can be sent to P.O. Box 634, Albion, CA 95410. Kindly make your checks payable to ALRFPD.

Thank you for your ongoing support. Together, we enhance the safety and well-being of our community.

**All gifts* listed below
were received between
April 16, 2022 and
April 15, 2024**

*Charitable contributions to the Albion-Little River Fire Protection District are tax deductible under section 170(c)(1) [charitable contributions to government units of the internal Revenue Code if made for a public purpose.

FIREFIGHTER HERO (\$500 AND UP)

ALRFPD Auxiliary	Ann Zollinger	Anonymous Donor
Beachcomber Motel	Charles & Olivia Hasty	Charles & Claire Ellis Greenberg
Cris Beaty	Douglas Dodds & Leon Hamaekers	Dr. Chas. Homcy Charitable Foundation
Ellen Beaty	Esther Koch & James Reynolds	Fedele Bauccio
Foolstwist Holdings LLC	Gary & Lynelle Johnson	Georgia C. Thorpe
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FIREFIGHTER FRIEND (\$200—\$499)

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Thomas Pepper	Virginia Jorgensen	Virginia Stearns
William & Karen Lewis		

FIREFIGHTER SUPPORTER (UP TO \$199)

Alfonso Tatano	American Legion Auxiliary	Anjelica Gazzano
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Barbara Oceanlight	Benjamin & Pamela Graham	Brenda Hall
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NEWS FROM AROUND THE DISTRICT



OUR NEW WILDLAND ENGINE IS HERE!

Our new type 3 Model 34 Wildland Engine finally arrived in Albion late January. Paid for by PG&E Settlement Funds from the Redwood Complex Fires, some Covid Relief Funds and the remainder from YOUR generous donations, this Engine was ordered in August 2021 and was a CalFIRE tag-on order. Due to supply chain delays and other extenuating circumstances, delivery was pushed back several times, but we patiently waited and as you can see, it was worth the wait!

The new engine replaces our old Engine 8163 which we've had since 1987. Thank you so much for your generous support and donations! We need you as much as you need us!



IN MEMORIAM JOHN ROBERT SHANDEL 1943-2023

John Shandel was an active volunteer firefighter, EMT and Fire Chief for the Albion-Little River Fire Protection District for many years. Well known in the community, John will always be remembered as a kind man with a huge smile who was always willing to lend a helping hand. He will be sorely missed. A Celebration of his Life and Barbeque will be held on July 20 at the Albion-Little River Fire Protection District's Little River Picnic Area (43100 Little River Airport Rd., Little River) at 1PM. Please RSVP message or text to: 707-489-4371

VOLUNTEERS MAKE IT HAPPEN

Besides responding to emergency calls, volunteers are expected to train 126 hours per year on average.

From learning how to manage a firehose (*pictured right*), to using a chainsaw, driving a firetruck, understanding the behavior of a fire, and delivering life-saving assistance to those in medical need, our volunteers are ready.

Are you up for the challenge? Send an email inquiry to: chief8100@albionfire.com.



MEET OUR FAMILY

MALIA REES

Malia Rees is a remarkable young woman who has become a vital part of emergency medical services for the Albion-Little River Fire Protection District. At 22 years old she is one of our most passionate volunteers with a fierce dedication to serving her community.

Malia was born in Vermont and raised in the Comptche, Mendocino and Albion communities where she attended local schools, graduating from Mendocino High School in 2019.

Initially drawn to the idea of becoming a policewoman, Malia's interests later pivoted towards nursing. This shift in focus led her to attend the University of California at Davis where she delved into the realm of biological science. Fate had it's own plans, however as the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic altered the course of her academic journey.

Returning home, Malia found herself working at Princess Seafood, initially stationed behind the counter, however it wasn't long before her drive and leadership qualities propelled her into a managerial role within the company. Also during this time she expressed an interest in pursuing an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certificate and was encouraged to join the Albion-Little River Fire Protection District's volunteer firefighter squad by her father, who happens to be the Chief—on one condition—that she would be required to have the same expectations as any other volunteer.

Malia not only agreed and joined, but wasted no time in acquiring the necessary qualifications and underwent testing to become a certified EMT.

Her journey took a significant leap forward when she accepted a paid part-time position at South Coast Ambulance. Her commitment to helping others continues to show as, in addition to volunteering for Albion-Little River FPD, she also volunteers with Anderson Valley Ambulance. Periodically, Malia will also work for Crowd RX to provide EMT services for special events.



From seafood counter to saving lives as an EMT, Malia exemplifies the spirit of community, service and volunteerism. With her dedication and passion lighting the way, there's no doubt Malia will continue to make a profound impact, one life at a time.



IT'S TIME FOR A BARBEQUE!

SPONSORED BY THE ALBION-LITTLE RIVER FIRE DEPARTMENT AUXILIARY

Join us on Saturday, July 13, from Noon to 5PM at ALRFPD Station 812 at 43100 Little River Airport Rd., Little River, for our annual Summer Barbeque to raise funds for the Albion-Little River Fire Protection District.

Support our firefighters while munching down on tasty barbequed chicken, tri-tip, chili beans, corn-on-the-cob, garlic bread and desserts.

We're featuring live music, bar, auction featuring wine and other high end items along with an opportunity to mix with your neighbors. If you'd like to help with preparation, event staffing, or by donating auction items or dessert items, please contact our volunteer coordinator: wendy@albionfire.com with your preferred task and shift. Requests honored on a first come, first served basis.

Tickets are available day of the event, and are \$25 for adults, \$12 for 6-12 year olds, and free for children under 6 with a paying adult.

Albion-Little River Fire
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http://www.alrfpd.com
Or visit us on Facebook



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Whether you're battling blazes or simply savoring a moment of respite, let Three Ridge Blend be your companion. With every purchase, you're not just enjoying exceptional coffee – part of the proceeds go to help fund our new Albion-Little River Fire Protection District Fire Station.

Join us in celebrating the spirit of heroism with every cup. Grab your bag of Three Ridge Blend today available at all our events and at ALRFPD Station 810 in Albion Village.

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MEDIUM ROAST

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ALBION FIRE DEPARTMENT

When you buy a bag of this delicious coffee, a part of the proceeds go to funding the building of the new Albion and Little River Fire Station. Thanks for all your support!



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(Coffee package artwork courtesy of Ajah Leas)