SPRING 2022

North San Juan

Fire Protection Department Newsletter

We are the oldest volunteer fire department in Nevada County.

The department began serving the town of North San Juan in 1862, and was incorporated as a Fire Protection District in 1986. Today we cover the largest territory with the smallest budget of all fire districts in Nevada County. Like all fire departments, only a little over 10% of our emergency responses are related to fires. Over half of our responses involve medical emergencies, one-fourth are vehicle accidents, and the remainder are other miscellaneous emergencies. This newsletter is coming to you after a 2-year break!

Save the Date!

Yaki Soba Drive-Thru

April 9th, 2022-2pm till gone

The Firefighter Association is hosting a Yaki Soba Noodle Fundraiser! Come by Station 1 in NSJ to help support your Local Fire Fighters-Recipe inspired by Toki and perfected by Allison Green-$15 a plate.

Prescribed Burn Class

Coming Soon TBD

Date, Time, and Place to be decided. This first class will be an 8-hour classroom experience followed by a live fire burn in the fall.

In This Edition Enjoy Updates From or About:

- Fire Station News
- Yaki Soba Drive-Thru
- Hellos and Goodbyes and more
- New Engine 6168
- Chief's Letter
- Covid Protocols
- Op Ed on Training
- Auxiliary
- Firewise Community
- Other Ridge News
- Coloring Page
- Gratitude

Fire Station News

Both the engine and the advanced EMT program are a direct result of the passage of Measure Q in 2014.

See Next Page for the full story on Engine 6168.

Promotions

Tom Browning – Deputy Chief
Angela Flores – Battalion Chief
Chris Dorn – Battalion Chief
Rich Mead – Captain
Nathaniel Van Order – Captain
Andy Guetebier – Engineer
Bill Scott – Engineer
Chris Rainville – Engineer
Casey Fites-Kaufman – Engineer
Forrest Simpson – Engineer
Jerrod Hayden – EMS Coordinator

Five new Advanced EMT's in January

Andy Guetebier
Theo Blevins-See page 4 for more info
Jerrod Hayden
Dustin Fernandez
Christian Moorhouse

Resignations

Boyd Johnson – Battalion Chief
Shawn Olson - Captain
Dustin Fernandez - Firefighter
Will Green – EMS Captain
Jefferson Wilson – technically went on reserve, was formerly serving as the EMS Captain
Tracy Corris – District Manager of Finance and Facilities, passed in March 2020
Kelly Moreno – District Manager of Operations and Personnel. Started a new job at Grizzly Hill School

Engine 6168 is in Service

By now you have probably seen the newest addition to our engine fleet in North San Juan, Engine 6168. It has been a great addition to our fire fighting fleet and directly helps keep you safe. Engine 6168 was purchased with revenues generated from measure Q. Measure Q was passed by the voters of the North San Juan Fire Protection District in 2014. One of the objectives of this tax measure was to provide better equipment to respond to wildland fires while increasing our capability to respond to structure fires. The National Wildfire Coordination Group (NWCG) establishes the standards for wildland firefighting equipment. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) establishes the requirements for structure firefighting equipment. The Insurance Services Office (ISO) evaluates Fire agencies and provides a classification of the fire agency to insurance companies which determine your insurance rate. Engine 6168 meets the standards of all of these for a type II/III engine. In short, this means it has the necessary equipment, hoses, pumps, ladders, and water to meet the requirements for fighting wildland fires and meets the insurance requirements for structure fires.

The engine was built by Rosenbauer of America and purchased through a completive bid process from Burton's Fire of Modesto, California. The engine can pump 1250 gallons per minute and carry five firefighters. It has an air filtration system to provide clean air for firefighter rehabilitation. It has compartment space for firefighting and auto extrication equipment, as well as room for carrying personal equipment for out of district assignments. The cost of the engine, including the equipment for the engine, was approximately $500,000.00.

Since being placed in service in May of 2021 the engine has been very busy. The first assignment was an out of district call to the River Fire on the Cal Fire, Madera-Mariposa-Merced Unit. Then it was on the Tamarack Fire for the USFS and then went directly to the Dixie Fire on the Plumas National Forest. With the number of fires throughout the state last year, Cal Fire contracted with us to provide coverage at their Columbia Hill station. Engine 6168 and a crew of three were assigned there for most of August and September. While there, they responded to our fires on Pleasant Valley Road and Vicky Lane. They also responded to the Glen Fire near Dobbins and the Bennett Fire in Grass Valley. When back in quarters at Station 3, the engine responded to the Grizzly, China, and High fires in the North San Juan Fire Protection District.

Not only is this engine a tremendous resource for our district, it also provides an excellent opportunity to our firefighters for training and experience. Either on an initial attack fire within our district, or part of an organized Strike Team to a large out of district fire, our firefighters are learning fire behavior, operations, team work, technical skills, the incident command system, and accountability. These skills provide much stronger firefighters for our district. They share their experiences with the district so we all learn from their assignments.

This engine, like our water tender and other type II engines require either a commercial class B or a California Firefighter endorsement license to operate. Since the purchase of this engine, we have trained seven new operators. The addition of this engine has also increased the morale and enthusiasm within the district. Our firefighters are excited about increased training opportunities and being able to work with this apparatus.

We look forward to continuing to serve you in the best way we can. Please stop by and see the new engine or give us a call if we can answer any questions you have.

Tom Browning
Deputy Fire Chief

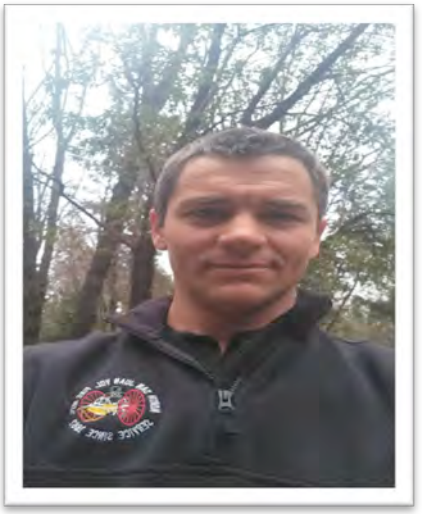
Welcome New Firefighters

Sambhava J. Burke…

Is a resident within the local, intentional community of Ananda Village. Sambhava joined the NSJ Volunteer Fire Department in the spring of 2021. He has served primarily as a chef, currently is assistant manager of the community grocery store, Master's Market, and enjoys connecting with people. He has a BA in Psychology from Appalachian State University in North Carolina and a desire to help people improve their lives. He joined the NSJ volunteer fire department as a community service, to build and make new friendships, and to bridge Ananda Village with the broader community.

Eugene Lehman…

Is from Nevada City, California. He applied to the North San Juan Volunteer Fire Department to gain experience in firefighting and to help people in need. He is currently a senior in high school at the Sierra Academy of Expeditionary Learning in Nevada City and has worked for two seasons on the recreation crew for the United States Forest Service. In his free time he enjoys skateboarding, snowboarding, and playing guitar. His grandparents were longtime residents of North San Juan and his father was born and raised here. He is excited and honored to serve this community.



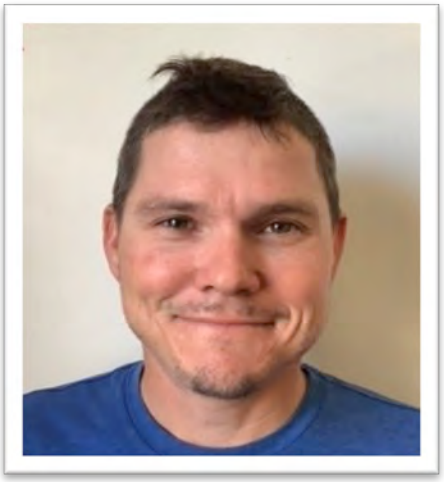
Badri Matlock…

Joined NSJFPD as a volunteer firefighter in the spring of 2021. He lives at Ananda Village with his family of four, and works there in community and property management, with an interest in forestry and prescribed fire. He is a native to southern California and has lived on the ridge since 2009, and enjoys the camaraderie and community service through fire, medical and rescue emergency services with the NSJFPD team.

Welcome Continued

Melanya Gonshorowski…

Is a mother of two young boys and a specialty teacher for math and reading at Yuba River Charter School. She enjoys farming, biking, swimming, knitting and skiing with any free time she has. In her previous life she was a midwife and an herbalist. While firefighting is a new and welcome challenge for her, serving people in various ways has been a calling throughout her life so volunteering at our local fire protection department in NSJ was a natural addition to her life.



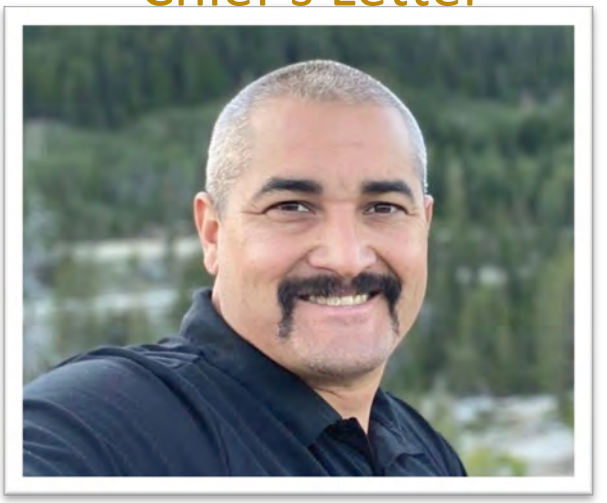
Michael Maurin aka Bama…

Joined NSJFD in April of 2021. Michael has called Nevada County home for more than a decade and felt called to serve his community in a more impactful way. The opportunity to work on a Type 3 engine (Engine 6168) and represent NSJFD on out-of-county fires was irresistible. Michael is working towards a full-time career in the fire service. He is starting his first season in the Forest Service with Tahoe Helitack. In his spare time he enjoys hiking, fly-fishing, riding his dirt bike, running, and anything that involves spending time with his family.

Theo Blevins (formerly known as Kritters)…

Is not new to the department but recently went on to complete Paramedic school and is progressing through their field potion in Yolo County. Working part-time up at Sierra Family Health Center as an MA, they continue extending themselves into the community. Theo has an extensive Ag background and feeds this passion serving their third year on the Nevada City Farmers Market board as the Chair. They are looking forward to bringing back there new scope of practice when licensed this coming June.

Chief's Letter



North San Juan Residences,

The 2022 Fire Season is fast approaching and seasonally we are setting up for another record year, starting even earlier than usual potentially. Thank you all for being fire safe, for burning your backyard vegetation during burn days only and joining together in Firewise Communities. A few reminders:

- Please have your driveways accessible for large fire equipment and clearly marked with address signs.
- Water storage is great too. Label it and ensure easy access so we can find it quickly if the time comes.
- Be prepared for long hot summer days with Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS).
- Have a plan by knowing your family's evacuation routes and a meeting spot for the need to act fast.
- Social Media is great for communication but if you smell smoke call 911. An early response keeps fires small.
- Check your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors every six months they save lives. Heck, do it right now.
- If you have fire extinguishers, ensure they are in service and easily accessible.

You can get your Burn Permits online: They are good until the BURN BAN goes into effect. Please call before burning as it could save you a headache or a fine. THANK YOU ALL!!!

Fire Chief Jason Flores

For more information check out our website at https://nsjfire.org/

COVID-19

It has been two years since the CDC declared the COVID-19 virus a pandemic. This has brought many changes to the way we do business. In our personal life we have seen social distancing and the wearing of masks in public as well as mandates and recommendations. Vaccinations were presented, although with controversy, as the means for controlling the pandemic and saving lives.

When the pandemic occurred, the North San Juan Fire Protection District responded by developing a working committee to evaluate and implement policies and procedures to protect our members and the public we serve. The committee consisted of the Chief Officers and our Emergency Medical Services Captain. Committee members met with the Nevada County Health Department, Nevada County Fire Chiefs, and the Sierra Sacramento Valley Emergency Medical Services Agency (SSV-EMS.) Our goal was to ensure we were following all state and local guidelines for providing medical care and fire responses to the community we serve.

Some of the changes you may have seen included our members wearing masks, eye protection, and sometimes gowns on our medical calls. We also placed an N95 mask on all patients we treated. Some changes you didn't see were our trainings initially went virtual, with on-line and Zoom type trainings. When we were allowed to return to in-person trainings they were conducted in the apparatus bay and not our normal training room to provide greater distancing for participants. We limited the number of firefighters making patient contact on medical calls to reduce our potential exposure. Many times, there were a number of firefighters waiting outside the residence in case more help was needed. COVID-19 vaccinations were provided but not required of our members. Approximately 50% of our firefighters are vaccinated which is consistent with other firefighting agencies in California.

The North San Juan Fire Protection District had the first confirmed patient contact with a COVID-19 patient in Nevada County. To date, three of our members have tested positive for COVID-19. Their symptoms varied but both have recovered and returned to duty.

As this pandemic winds down and our lives start to return to the way they once were, our COVID-19 committee is still meeting. We have included our District Manager of Personnel in this committee. She has been very helpful with communicating with the Nevada County Health Department and SSV-EMS to insure our policies and procedures are staying consistence with the ever-changing State and County recommendations and mandates. We will continue to serve you in the safest and most professional manner possible.

If you have any questions, please reach out to us. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Tom Browning
Deputy Fire Chief

Our Volunteer Firefighters: Brave, Strong, and…. Smart

By Rhea Williamson

Our volunteer firefighters are there, responding to a wide variety of calls and supporting our community in other ways as well. Whenever I attend a community event that involves fire safety, fire education, prescribed burns, Firewise communities, and the like, or when I read in YubaNet or The Union of how members of our North San Juan Fire Protection District (NSJFPD) are rescuing someone from a raging river or fighting alongside other fire departments to protect others near and far, or when I randomly happen on a car accident or roadside burn… in all these situations, one or more of our volunteer firefighters are there. It is clear that they are not only brave, but also strong.

However, it was not until I walked into Station 3 of the NSJFPD and perused the various wall items that I learned of the education requirements for every firefighter. It nearly set my hair on fire! The education required of these brave firefighters of the NSJFPD includes a wide range of certifications: most are Federal and State **mandated** certifications. Required certifications are divided into Training Certifications and Medical Certifications. Annually, the NSJFPD schedules 96 training hours in four 2-hour training sessions per month. Additional training hours are completed at off-site training facilities. The time and energy commitments our firefighters make in order to voluntarily serve us, their community, are astounding to me. WOW! Plus, many of them work 40 hour per week jobs and then volunteer in their off work hours. WOW!

I decided pop in and talk with the firefighters before one of their Wednesday evening weekly training meetings. We discussed training requirements, advanced certifications, and ways to support them. I learned that the NSJFPD is highly regarded in the volunteer firefighting community for providing exceptional training opportunities to its fighters and for almost always reimbursing them for their skill development and training. Chris Dorn noted the value of having the District offset the costs of them doing work they enjoy. He described the District as a really functional volunteer fire department. Others noted appreciation for the exceptional training and opportunities to learn by experience. The overall feeling I got from talking with the firefighters was of gratitude and thankfulness.

We talked about ways the community might provide support for the volunteers. Currently, there are two wonderful groups of people working to this end: the North San Juan Fire Auxiliary is a long-standing community organization that raises funds to support the firefighters. They work closely with the District and with the North San Juan Firefighters Association, which is composed of the firefighters in the District. Theo Blevins, former President of the North San Juan Firefighters Association stated that the Association supports any effort to coordinate with the community to find ways to help volunteer firefighters better prepare to respond to calls. WE as community members can help with their fundraising efforts in a number of ways once COVID restrictions have ended: 1) attend the annual Spaghetti Dinner sponsored by the North San Juan Firefighters Association and other innovative drive-by dinner fundraisers in planning as a result of COVID; 2) attend and donate at the Mother's Day Pancake Breakfast event put on by the North San Juan Fire Auxiliary; 3) send a contribution to the North San Juan Fire Protection District and designate in the subject line how you want the funds to be used. Some of the ideas suggested in my meeting with our volunteer firefighters include:

- **Boot and Medical Pants Fund**. The District provides most of the firefighting gear. The exception is related to personal wear gear, specifically Wildland Boots and Medical Pants. I was quizzed about how much I thought a pair of boots might cost….a very heavy duty big boot was hefted onto the table almost at eye-level. $225? I guessed? Answer: try $550! WOW.

- **Annual Training Event**. Chris Rainville, President of the North San Juan Firefighter Association, suggested the District fund an instructor to come to the region annually and present on a timely topic. Others in the room voiced support for this idea.

Those of us living within the boundaries of the North San Juan Fire Protection District are blessed with having such dedicated and educated people supporting us, protecting us, and responding to our calls for help. They, in turn, are lucky to have us. So, it seems this is a win-win for all. This year, please be sure to eat spaghetti and pancakes, and donate to support our firefighters. Be safe, be smart, and be kind.

Respectfully submitted by Board member,
Rhea Williamson.

Firewise Communities Update

By Pat Leach

Firewise USA ®: The NSJFPD is pleased to announce there are 13 Firewise Communities (FWC) within its District. That equates to hundreds of thousands of dollars in time and expenses managing hazardous vegetation and home hardening that is being recognized by CalFire and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). And for any Firewise Community (FWC) that has not entered their vegetation management data or submitted their Action Plan to NFPA – Pat Leach is available to help you through the process. The CalFire Chief who approves all FWC's will likely have other duties as the fire season approaches which will delay your community's certification – potentially for months. And Insurance agents are asking the question now – are you in a FWC? FWC in the North San Juan Fire Protection District (55,600 acres):

Residences = 550+ Population = 1300+ Acres = 17,000+

FWC bring coordinated hazardous vegetation management to a neighborhood's landscape. That is why we suggest our FWC's think even bigger and bring this thoughtful process to the entire Ridge. Together we can make a significant impact sooner and reach out to multiple partners and agencies – with the goal of drawing grant funding to the Ridge. Seems big ideas (or little ones combined) are receiving favorable status from the funding sources – especially "shovel-ready" projects with partnerships. We hope to encourage you to help brainstorm and craft strategies that supports landscape resilience in this entire Fire District. The larger the landscape we modify, the better we can reduce the temperatures of raging wildfires. The Yuba Watershed Institute success with programs is proof this can be accomplished – let us lend our voices to this effort.

Zone Haven: New Nevada County tool, "Know Your Zone" for your home, schools, workplace, etc. It is on the Ready Nevada County Dashboard (left margin), add your address and your identifier number will display.

Pat Leach
Firewise Coordinator at: FWC@AreYouFireSafe.com

PS: CalFire Prevention grants are hopefully reopening this fall and are required to be granted to local, State, and Federal Agencies, tribal entities, and/or 501c3 non-profit agencies. Private land/homeowners are not eligible for these Grants but there are organizations to contact to possibly participate in an ongoing or new fuel reduction project. Nevada County Fire Safe Council will be accepting projects that are shovel ready and have owner agreement forms already for mitigation projects. Looking to bundle many projects together...1 large grant split among many neighborhoods. Info@AreYouFireSafe.com.

In Other Ridge News

Ridge Connections, proudly celebrating fifteen years of publication, is now produced independently and will no longer be associated with the San Juan Ridge Family Resource Center or its funders. We remain committed to continuing to provide this valuable vehicle of communication with and for the community and hope it will be better than ever.

We're reaching out to the wonderful San Juan Ridge community today to request submissions of articles, event announcements, creative writing and art for the next edition of Ridge Connections. Individuals, groups and organizations are welcome to submit.

As we no longer have funding for this project, contributions to offset the cost of printing are gratefully accepted. If you'd like to support the newsletter financially - no donation is too small - please be in touch! Advertising space is now available. Please contact us for details by emailing sjrdigeconnections@gmail.com

We very much look forward to continuing to build community, foster connections and have FUN producing Ridge Connections. We appreciate the support we've received throughout all these years from contributors and readers alike. Thank you!!

All the best,

Diana Pasquini & Kristin Snell, Co-Publishers

New Weekly Pop-up Kitchen at the NSJ Community Center

Meet Chef Quinna Water

I was born and raised in North San Juan. Growing up, I often wished that there were more delectable meal options available on The Ridge. As an adult, I love to cook and wanted to contribute something unique and valuable to the community. Soo...I decided to start a rotating cuisine Pop-Up Kitchen under the name of Gifted Gourmet. My intention is for people to get the gift of delicious and quality food in a convenient and local manner. I use primarily Organic and sustainably sourced food. Please order through my website Gifted-Gourmet.com. by Thursday for Friday Pick-up at the NSJ Community Center.

Gifted Gourmet

Coloring Page for Adults and Children Alike

San Juan Ridge
Family Resource Center
(The Oak Tree School)

Thank you to Grace Mack who donated this page from her coloring book. The whole coloring book can be found online at any book seller and will be available in her online shop soon at Gemvisuals.com.

NSJ Fire Protection Department
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POSTAL PATRON

Training Wednesdays
From 7-9pm Weekly
If you're interested in learning more about volunteering start by joining us at one of our on-going trainings.

Appreciations

We have so much gratitude for the Ice Machine, 3 Ice Chest Coolers, and other Kitchen Supplies donated by Koji Koda San with the Center for Cultural and Naturalist Studies, inc.

Thank you to the Auxiliary Members for the wonderfully nourishing and generous food donations on Wednesday Training nights and other times throughout the year.

And an immense thank you to the entire NSJFPD staff and board who keep our doors open and makes it possible to help you!