

ASPENDELL-SOUTH FORK RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION
DBA ASPENDELL-SOUTH FORK VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

August 25, 2013

To: Aspendell and South Fork Residents

INVITATION TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE ASPENDELL-SOUTH FORK RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION (doing business as) THE ASPENDELL-SOUTH FORK VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Welcome to the Aspendell-South Fork Residents Association! You may have heard of our recent formation and in this letter we want to report on the substantial progress that has been made to establish new volunteer fire protection services for Aspendell and South Fork, and to invite and encourage you to participate in this volunteer organization.

Background

As you know, under present circumstances professional/outside volunteer fire response to the two communities is at least 30 minutes away. Options to provide more immediate emergency response by local volunteers were explored by a “fire committee” last summer and fall made up of local residents. The committee investigated approaches used in other small communities located in the eastern Sierra and carefully considered possible options, taking into account the legal liability that might be incurred, the costs involved (including costs for workman’s compensation insurance) and the effects on homeowners’ ability to obtain and maintain fire insurance. You may be aware that some insurance carriers have refused to issue insurance to homeowners in our communities because of the lack of fire protection service and/or have raised insurance rates significantly. Unless this problem is addressed, there will likely be significant long-term effects on property values and the cost of home ownership in our neighborhoods.

A poll of community residents showed the preference to establish, as an initial step, a non-profit association with the ability to purchase needed fire equipment and insurance, provide training, collect membership fees, and generally administer volunteer fire protection service for the two communities. Considerable progress to implement this approach has already been achieved:

- The Aspendell-South Fork Residents Association (ASFRA) was formed on July 9, 2013.
- The founding three member Board of Directors includes: Joe Hart (President); Michael McBeth (Secretary) and Mike Johnston (Treasurer).
- Articles of Incorporation for ASFRA have been filed. Once the Articles are processed, requisite steps to obtain both federal and state tax-exempt status will follow and by-laws will be prepared.
- An accounting firm (Shallcross & Associates, in Bishop) has been selected and an account opened at Union Bank.

Lead donor contributions to the new Association have already exceeded \$18,000, all of which is already used or spoken for to:

- Purchase and transport to Bishop a used fire engine in excellent condition from the Illinois Valley Fire District in Oregon. The engine is in interim storage in Bishop while a proposal is prepared and considered by the Aspendell Mutual Water Company (AMWC) to house the vehicle in the existing AMWC firehouse.
- Purchase liability and workmen’s compensation insurance.
- Pay requisite filing fees.

The response by community members to-date has been remarkable, but more volunteers and funds will be necessary to put the volunteer fire department into service. This is where we hope you will come in. If you are concerned about fire protection for your home and community, we strongly encourage you to become a member of the new Association. Most immediately, more donations are needed to equip the new engine and help get the volunteer fire department off the ground. (Please note that until tax-exempt status is achieved, donations are not tax-deductible; we are working expeditiously to acquire tax-exempt status.) **An annual (voluntary) membership fee will be determined later this fall and will be solicited in December.**

In the meantime, please consider sending your generous donations to the ASFRA c/o Shallcross & Associates, 250 Sneden St., Bishop, CA 93514. Checks should be made out to ASFRA.

Thank you most sincerely in advance for your generosity and interest. We will endeavor to keep you apprised of further developments promptly. In the meantime, if you have questions or recommendations or simply want to help, please email us at: asfra@asfra.org

Sincerely,

Joe Hart, President, on behalf of the Board

Please detach this stub and return with your check made payable to ASFRA (Aspendell South Fork Residents Association)

Name: _____ Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Aspendell-South Fork Address: _____ email: _____

Mail to: I am interested in participating in a volunteer opportunity:

ASFRA c/o Shallcross & Associates, 250 Sneden St., Bishop, CA 93514	_____ _____ _____ _____	fire suppression (fire fighter) fire prevention education fund raising-social events engine or fire house maintenance other (please note interest below):
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