

Firefighters practice emergency escapes

Firefighters regularly train to rescue people, extinguish fires, and save property. Local firefighters continue to strive to learn the best and safest practices to help folks in Sisters Country in an emergency. However, there are times when firefighters find themselves in trouble and needing an alternate way out of a building.

Last month, Fire Training Instructor Harry Ward of the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) met with instructors and firefighters at the Sisters-Camp Sherman fire station on Elm Street for specialized self-rescue skill training. Firefighters from all three local fire agencies, Sisters-Camp Sherman, Black Butte Ranch, and Cloverdale participated in the training, which taught firefighters the proper way to escape through a wall or window, should it become necessary. Ward and DPSST provided the wooden prop that the firefighters used for this training.

Local fire chiefs are preparing to build a similar prop for more frequent training for this situation. The prop forces firefighters to escape through an opening approximately 15 inches wide, the opening between studs in a standard home's wall, or through a small window, such as that in a residential bathroom.

Firefighters found several different ways to safely escape from a building, in which temperatures can reach over 1,100 degrees Fahrenheit.

The training prop also teaches simple ways of getting into a home through a window. The first-floor windowsills of some homes can be as much as five feet above the outside ground level. This makes for a difficult climb while wearing some 60 pounds of fire-resistant clothing and gear, and an air tank that extends approximately 11 inches off of the firefighter's back. Ladders are too tall, and take too long to set up to affect a quick entry of a home through a first-floor window.

The prop will be shared amongst the local departments. These firefighters regularly train together to improve service to the community. Due to their close-knit relationship, the departments are able to easily share resources such as equipment and instructors to ease the burden on each individual community of have to provide the funding to purchase identical resources.

Women set to build Habitat home

Sisters Habitat for Humanity is seeking women volunteers for its 4th Annual Women Build, May 7-9.

Sisters Habitat is one of more than 300 Habitat affiliates nationwide hosting a Women Build project in recognition of National Women Build Week.

Women of Sisters will gather to help build the homes for David Spain and his children, and Kristina and Josh Maxwell. Habitat is asking interested women to sign up for an afternoon shift Thursday, Friday, or Saturday. The volunteers will be working on the two homes at different stages of building.

A mandatory orientation will take place Wednesday, May 6, at 5:30 p.m. at the Sisters Library.

Construction or home-improvement experience is not necessary, however, volunteers are encouraged to attend the "How to Safely Use Hand and Power Tools" clinic on May 2 from 10 a.m. to noon at the jobsite, 910 and 920 E. Cascade Ave.

"It means so much to Josh and (me) that these women will be spending their time to



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Women learn new skills and build homes and friendships through Habitat for Humanity's Women Build program.

help build our home. We are looking forward to working with the community members and my co-workers from U.S. Bank during Women Build. We are so appreciative of everyone's hard work and all those who volunteer," Kristina Maxwell said.

Lowes Home Improvement, a major sponsor of the event, has awarded Sisters Habitat \$5,000 to help purchase materials for the building day.

Registration is required;

“ It means so much to Josh and (me) that these women will be spending their time to help build our home. — Kristina Maxwell

call Sisters Habitat for Humanity at 541-549-1193 or email marie@sistershabitat.org.

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