

New fire truck in service at station 2

By Dan Klapheke
IVN Staff Writer

The Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD) has retired a 41-year-old engine and brought in a new, custom truck thanks to a hefty federal grant.

IVFD Fire Chief Dennis Hoke said the engine is a big upgrade to the department's fleet, and to the department as a whole.

"It's got a whole bunch of stuff," Hoke said. "It's really kind of neat."

One of the biggest innovations on the new truck is a front discharge monitor, which allows a remote-controlled hose to be utilized from the truck's cabin. For calls that sometimes only two fire fighters are available for, the drivers can now put out fires while driving the truck.

"It's a huge increase of our capability," Hoke said. "So now we can just literally drive around the fire."

Getting a new truck isn't as simple as walking into a dealership, Hoke said. The rigs are custom made and can take a year to build; IVFD's new rig came from Deep South Fire Trucks in Mississippi. But each engine has to address the issues of the area it's going to service.

"You look at your risk; what is your problem? And then you try to build it," Hoke said.

For IVFD, steep hills and inaccessible driveways are common obstructions to fires. In the design stage, the department deemed necessary four wheel drive, a 1,000 gallon water tank, a 1,500 gallon-per-minute pump and room for extraction equipment.

But the truck never would have been built if it weren't for the \$350,000 federal grant the department received last year. Everyone hates paying taxes, Hoke said, including himself, but in this case the community gets to see what it goes toward.

"When you see your statements you get when you get paid for work, and you see that they took out that federal taxes, at least you can say, 'Well, OK, there's something I can put my hands around. I helped pay for this particular piece of equipment,'" Hoke said.

The department matched \$17,000 of the grant, which is ultimately what the truck actually cost.

"There was a 5 percent match, so that truck actually cost the district \$17,000," Hoke said of the grant. "So we got a \$350,000 piece of equipment for \$17,000 by the federal grant."

The new rig will also help upgrade every other station in the Valley, Hoke said. The truck sends off the 41-year-old engine and allows a newer truck to be sent to the Selma station, and then a Selma truck was moved to the O'Brien station. The old truck will be for sale to help offset other IVFD costs, and Hoke said collectors, loggers or other fire departments typically buy used trucks.

The old rig was bought new by the department in 1975, and Hoke estimated the department will save several thousand dollars a year from maintenance on it alone, which included yearly work on the hydraulic brakes, engine, electrical issues and having to pay for a mechanic.

"When you have older rigs like that you gotta increase maintenance cost," Hoke said. "And the whole reason we've been trying to



(Photo by Judy Hoyle, Illinois Valley News)

Members of the IVFD along with community members participate in the ceremonial "push-in" Tuesday, July 26 in Selma.

upgrade the fleet with really good equipment that we don't have to put a bunch of money in to maintain them--that allows us to take money to use for other things, like protective gear and other equipment we need."

Previously, the newest truck in the department's fleet is a 2014 rescue truck, but the last full engine before that was from 2000. The IVFD lineup also includes a rig from 1999, and the Dryden and Takilma stations have 1980s engines. According to Hoke, an average truck lasts 20 years.

"It was a 1975 engine," Hoke said of the newly retired rig. "It definitely needed to go."

A ceremony was held the evening of Tuesday, July 26 to christen the new rig as part of the IVFD fleet. Fifty to 60 people

were in attendance, Hoke said, and the chief addressed the crowd as to the significance and importance of the new truck. It was then pushed into the garage by over 30 people as symbolic to when horse-drawn fire wagons would be pushed into stations after use.

IVFD has four fulltime staff and only 15 volunteer firefighters. The stations are shorthanded, and Hoke said three stations in Holland Loop, Takilma and Dryden have no volunteers. But the department is always looking, and doesn't take the support it has for granted.

"I appreciate the continued support of the community," Hoke said. "We need more volunteers. That's always the message that we want to get out."

The Archive Zone: by Hillary Mohr from the Illinois Valley News archives

This week we find ourselves going back to Aug. 1, 1952. Summer was sizzling, smokejumpers were fighting fires and there was still much to do in the Valley to prepare for the up and coming Jubilee Festival. Strap on your parachutes and get ready to jump feet first into this weeks' red-hot Archive Zone.

17 men arrive to aid jumpers. With all but five smokejumpers and a squad leader having been jumped into small lightning fires in northern California and Oregon, the Siskiyou Aerial project based in Cave Junction was reinforced with a crew of 17 flown in from Missoula, Montana, Wednesday. The flying in of Montana replacements was a precautionary

measure against possible lightning storms in the Siskiyou forest which were feared might strike Wednesday or Thursday. As of Wednesday the local smokejumpers had 11 men in Klamath forest, six in Shasta and Wednesday noon two were flown into the Rogue River national forest. The project has a total of 25 jumpers, 2 squad leaders and the foreman, Cliff Marshall.

Temperature hits 100 degrees twice. Yesterday's rainfall broke a monthlong dry spell in the Valley postponing any chance of local forest closure. The thermometer took a beating twice last week with temperatures of 100 or more degrees recorded twice by the ranger station. Northern California loggers have

voluntarily shut down temporarily at the request of the Six Rivers national forest. Several Valley logging outfits have been affected by the California closure.

'Cat' on rocks ignites fire. Sparks created by a cat skidding on rocks ignited a forest fire on a ridge about 2 miles north of White Lumber Co. of Selma, Monday afternoon. Ralph Kaiser was logging the area when the fire was discovered at about 1:30 p.m. The state fire patrol and volunteer crews and equipment had the blaze under control by 4 p.m. confining it within about a two-acre area.


Services held for drowning victim. Graveside services were held

at the Laurel Cemetery near Kerby Wednesday for Linda Sue Jerome, 17-month-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Francis M. Jerome of Holland. The youngster drowned in an irrigation ditch near the Jerome home at about 10 a.m. Sunday. Attempts to resuscitate the child by Valley Ambulance Service and Dr. A.N. Collman failed after the body had been discovered by her father.

Falling tree top injures Ralph Sowell. A falling tree top seriously injured Ralph Sowell Saturday morning and he wasn't found in the woods until two hours later by his wife. Sowell was brought into Cave Junction by Valley Ambulance Service for treatment of two fractures below

the knee on his right leg, injured back and internal injuries. He was taken to a Medford hospital Saturday afternoon where he underwent surgery that evening. Mr. and Mrs. Sowell operate a logging and mill firm in the Valley.

Now playing at the Ivy Theatre. "Two Tickets to Broadway" starring: Tony Martin, Janet Leigh, Gloria DeHaven, Ann Miller and Eddie Bracken; "Sailor Beware" starring: Dean Martin, Jerry Lewis and Corinne Calvet; "A Millionaire for Christy" starring: Fred Macmurray and Eleanor Parker; and "Pandora and the Flying Dutchman" starring: James Mason and Ava Gardner.



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