

Fire agencies to receive conflagration payments

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

POLK COUNTY — Fred Hertel, the fire chief for both Dallas Fire & EMS and Southwestern Polk Rural Fire Protection District, gave high praise to the system the state has for fighting large-scale wild fires.

The Oregon Conflagration Act allows the governor to declare a fire a “conflagration,” which enables the state to call on fire agencies statewide for assistance. Local fire departments sent qualified firefighters and equipment to the Eagle Creek and Chetco Bar fires.

Crews from Dallas, Southwestern Polk and Polk No. 1 were out for a couple of weeks assisting on the attack in those incidents.

Those agencies will receive money in return for their assistance, which is paid for by the state. Southwestern Polk is expecting to receive about \$60,000, Dallas about \$15,000. Polk Fire No. 1 did not have an estimate as of press time.

Hertel said the reimbursement is nice, but the best part about the system is that all agencies have guaranteed back up.

“It’s a good deal for all of in the state,” he said during Southwestern Polk’s board meeting on Sept. 25. “Any one of us could have that large-scale emergency that we can’t handle, and we would have to rely on other people to come help us.”

He said if it wasn’t for perfect timing, a fire that erupted off Highway 22 earlier this summer could have threatened homes and people in Dallas.



Fire crews from Dallas, Southwestern Polk and Polk No. 1 assisted on the Eagle Creek and Chetco Bar fires.

MIKE KISSELL/for the Itemizer-Observer

“We happened to be hosting a training with ODF (Oregon Department of Forestry) and we got five engines on it in less than five minutes,” he said. “If that had not happened, that could have been in the city limits of Dallas really easily.”

He said firefighters from Dallas and Southwestern who responded to calls to help in the gorge and Southern Oregon got good experi-

ence in battling wild fires.

“It does leave us a little short here, but we moved things around and we actually borrowed a tender from DPSST (Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training),” he said. “We worked with our partners to make it work for the greater good. It’s an awesome thing that we are able to give a little bit to help to firefighters across the state.”



Fire agencies who assisted on the Eagle Creek and Chetco Bar fires will receive money in return for their assistance, which is paid for by the state.

MIKE KISSELL/for the Itemizer-Observer

Wines of the Valley

Polk County Edition

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

— and Eola Hills Wine Cellar in Rickreall is inviting you to come to a showing of *Pretty in Pink* on Oct. 21. Doors open at 5 p.m., with the movie beginning at 6.

Watch the classic '80s movie while sipping on a lovely Eola Hills pink wine. Take pictures with friends in a pink photo booth. Suggested donations are \$5 for the event, which will go toward the American Cancer Society, along with 20 percent of all pink wine sales.

The people at Eola Hills have a tradition of helping raise awareness and fight cancer through support of American Cancer Society activities. Each year, the winery sponsors the Polk County Relay for Life’s Survivor’s Dinner. The dinner for the 2017-18 Relay season will be on April 14.

That’s just a glimpse of what’s going on at the winery this month and throughout the holidays, including regular Paint and Pinot nights, brunches, and, of course, the annual Noir Friday, the Willamette Valley wineries’ alternative to Black Friday.

Harvest is still going on, and that means new wines to release, including a pinot noir from the Fossil Block.

This block of the Legacy Estate vineyard is named such because of the fossils found in the rock formations – leaves, animals. The good ones are put on display throughout the tasting room at Rickreall and will be at the new tasting room being built at the Legacy Estate – due for its grand opening next Memorial Day.

Until then, check the website, eolahillswinery.com, or follow the vineyard on Facebook to keep up with the winter and holiday events. The tasting room in Rickreall is open year-round from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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Legacy Estate Vineyard
Willamette Valley



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