

The Lookout



A Publication of the Groom Creek Fire District



Proudly Serving Groom Creek Since 1970

APS / Asplundh Tree Service working in Groom Creek

Arizona Public Service Company is currently performing line clearance tree work in Groom Creek and the surrounding areas. We will be utilizing Asplundh Tree Experts as a contractor to perform this work. We will be evaluating trees that pose a hazard to the overhead power lines and working with homeowners to address them accordingly. APS performs these safety measures at no cost to homeowners for the following reasons:

- To protect your home and your neighborhood from fire danger
- To provide safe, reliable power
- For your safety and the safety of our workers

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) made a final ruling on January 31, 1994, that only qualified line clearance tree trimmers can prune trees within 10 feet of energized power lines of 50 volts or more. Additionally, Arizona Revised Statutes § 40-360.41-45, commonly referred to as the "Overhead Power Line Safety Law", specifically prohibits any work including tree pruning

or removal from being performed by others near overhead power lines unless the utility company is contacted first to make the area safe. The law was established to prevent the accidental contact of a power line either directly, by tools, or by tree limbs all of which can cause severe injury or death. Therefore, make sure no one attempts to trim or remove the tree with out first contacting APS to make proper safety arrangements.

APS began natural or directional pruning techniques in 1995 to promote healthy trees and provide safe reliable electric service. This type of pruning is based on American National Standards Institute (ANSI) A-300 pruning guidelines. The National Arbor Day Foundation and the International Society of Arboriculture endorse this pruning.

If you have any questions or concerns about line clearance tree work you can contact Jeff Spohn or Matt Meierbachtol at 928-776-3663. (See page 3 for more information.)

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Dumpster Program to return April 16

It's that time again. The Dumpster Program portion of the SFA 4008 Community Assistance Project will be in full swing again on Saturday, April 16th. This year the program will run for 10 weeks (until June 24).

Dumpsters will be delivered every Monday, Wednesday and Friday (as in past years) and will be available for pine needle and leaf litter disposal only. Small diameter branches and other woody materials should be addressed with the Chipper Program portion of this grant. We have had great success with this program in the past and will look for-

ward to everyone's compliance with the following requirements (this gets us the dumpster service at a reduced cost):

- 1. No Bagged Material**
- 2. No Branches or Logs**
- 3. Push your material as far forward as possible to make room for our neighbors**
- 4. Nothing higher than the top of the dumpster**

Please call 928-778-6519 if you have any questions about this program.

Special points of interest:

- *The Fire District Board meets in regular session the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm at Station 41. Public attendance is welcome and encouraged.*
- *Volunteer members are always needed. Please stop by the station if you are interested. Regardless of your abilities, we have positions available that will benefit the community.*

Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project

We've been very busy in spite of our recent wet weather clearing brush and small diameter trees from around homes and vacant lots here in our community.

We are continuing to receive authorization forms for treatments from property owners daily, and are working hard to complete as many as we can before the warmer weather sets in and our annual wildland fire season begins.

A vital component to this project is the initial property assessment. This simple process identifies hazards that exist on a property that may threaten the residents, the structure, or even responding firefighters in the event of a fire related emergency. Elements such as building construction, access to the property, and types and density of vegetation in the area are all taken into account and allow us to create strategies for not only for mitigating the potentially hazardous fire fuel vegetation that currently exist, but also what appropriate tactics to implement when confronted with a fire there in the future. This type of pre-planning goes a long way toward the life safety and property conservation decisions we have to make.

We have recently taken delivery of an important piece of equipment that will assist us in the use of this collected data. It is called RedZone and it is a software program that takes the information that we collect in the field while conducting a property assessment and transfers it into a Palm Pilot device. It not only gives a fire hazard rating based on nationally recognized standards, but will allow us to make recommendations on how to address the hazards.

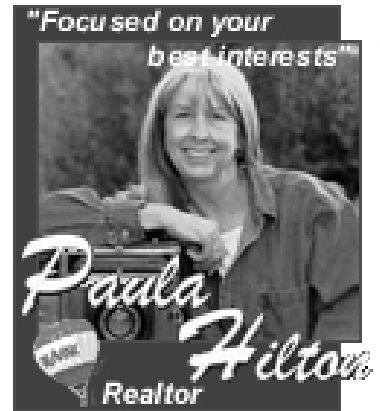
If you haven't signed up yet it's not too late. In fact, April

23rd we are hosting an Open House and BBQ at Groom Creek Fire Station #41. We'll be providing hot dogs and hamburgers; assorted side dishes, and homemade desserts provided by the Groom Creekers. This will be a great opportunity to sign up for a fuels assessment, find out more about our various programs we have available, as well as learn from your neighbors how these programs have helped them in making their homes and their community more FireWise.

We have also invited representatives from the Prescott National Forest to attend. They will be discussing the Fuels Management programs that they are currently conducting on the forested areas that border Groom Creek.

For those of you who have done work on your own property, and at your own expense, we would really like to hear from you. Whether you raked pine needles from around your house, removed beetle-kill trees from your property, or even hauled debris such as trees to the dump.

These types of activities all can be credited towards hazard mitigation efforts being done by community members which makes our community eligible for state and federal funds that otherwise would be unavailable. But this can't happen if we don't hear from you. So please call us at (928)778-6519 or stop by the station and ask for a Sweat Equity form.



FireWise Day 2005

April 23rd we are hosting our annual FireWise Day from 11:00 am until 2:00 pm. It will be held at the Groom Creek Fire District Station 41 (at the corner of Friendly Pines Road and Spur Lane).

We'll be serving lunch including hot dogs and hamburgers, chips, potato salad and homemade desserts provided by the Groom Creekers. Beverages available for a small fee or from our pop machine.



Presentations will begin at 11:00 and the hotdogs and hamburgers will be available throughout the event (until 2:00 pm). Come on out and meet your neighbors.

If you would like more information about the topics that were discussed at the meeting, please check our website after April 23rd for an outline of the presentations.

APS Tree Service

Asplundh Tree Experts and APS will be recommending the following treatment when assessing the power lines near your home:

- 10' clearance from all wires above and below
- Removing all overhanging and forked-top trees
- Brushing out around poles 10' in all directions
- Cutting all trees into firewood length and leaving on site
- Chipping all slash created by pruning and bucking

The Groom Creek Fire District **wholly endorses this prescription** and we need the support of all the homeowners in the area to make this project successful.

This project will tie-in with the other hazardous fuels reduction projects and keep our firefighters and residents safe from the hazards associated with downed power lines. If there is any slash remaining after they are done, we'll help with our chipper project to make certain that all hazardous fuels are mitigated.

Annexation

The annexation of Spruce Mountain and Upper Groom Creek as well as Marapai Road is almost complete as we are awaiting final verification of signatures from the County.

Once the signatures are verified the boundary change will be ordered by the Fire District Board at its next board meeting.

This has been a long process and we are almost at the completion. We appreciate all of the support from the ar-

Senator Highway

Crews are making progress on the understory along the Senator Highway. Work on the ladder fuels has been completed south of the District and is being done currently between Marapai and Schoolhouse Gulch Roads.

Please take care while driving in this area as there may be personnel and equipment working on the side of the roadway. You can already see a difference in some areas and we will be even better off when the larger diameter trees are removed.

Contractors will be removing these larger trees when the ground dries out and they can get into the work areas.

Wildland Fire Drill April 1 & 2

This year, Groom Creek will be the site of the Prescott Basin Interagency Wildland Fire Drill. The drill will take place at Prescott Pines Camp and may include a live fire scenario.

On Friday April 1, the YCSO Jeep Posse will be performing their evacuation drill in conjunction with the fire drill. You may see members of the VIP and Sheriff's Posse, as well as other parties, handing out evacuation procedures and related information door to door. The evacuation portion will be on Friday only.

All agencies involved are trying to simulate the actual procedure that will need to take place in the event of a real wildland fire. Please thank these volunteers when they come to your door. Also, feel free to call if you have any questions about the drill. Groom Creek Fire District personnel will be actively involved in the drill both days.

was to be annexed as two-thirds of the property owners were in favor of becoming residents of the Groom Creek Fire District.

Our next big project will be evaluating the need for a new Fire Station at the corner of Marapai Road and Senator Highway. This will be a more centrally located facility with sleeping quarters for future personnel and more room for training. Please feel free to comment on this issue and any others on our website at www.groomcreek.org

New Fire Engine

Chief Bentley and Captain Pinson went to South Dakota last month for a pre-construction conference for our new fire truck.

We were impressed by the facility and the personnel who are building it for us. Even though the contract was awarded to the lowest bidder, we feel like we will get exactly what we desired from the start.

Once the new engine is here (estimated early summer), it will be our first due apparatus for all calls. You may even see it in the Frontier Days Rodeo Parade. It will be the pride of the Groom Creek Fire District.



Groom Creek Fire District

1110 E. Friendly Pines Rd
Prescott, AZ 86303

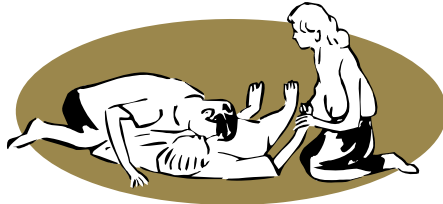
Phone: 928-778-6519
Fax: 928-443-5078
Email: gcfid@cableone.net

www.groomcreek.org

CPR Class Announcement

On Saturday April 30, we will be holding another CPR and First Aid Training for our community members. The class will begin at 8:30 and last until about 3:30 pm.

Lunch will be provided and there is no cost for the class for residents of the Groom Creek area.



Class size is limited to twelve participants. Please call 778-6519 to enroll or email Chief Bentley at gcfid@cableone.net. Please leave a message if no one answers the phone and you'll receive a confirmation of your enrollment.

Fire Season Forecast

In spite of all of the precipitation this winter, (Groom Creek has measured over 20" of rain since the first of November) we will be looking forward to what forecasters are calling a "normal fire season."

Although our trees will be healthier from the rain and snow, we will certainly see an increase in the grasses that help to carry a fire. These fine fuels need to be in place to support a fire in the tree canopy.

The best thing we can do to mitigate this hazard is to make sure all leaf litter, pine needles, grass and low brush is removed and revisit your defensible space within 30 feet from your home prior to these fuels drying out. Check our website for defensible space contractors if you need assistance.

Please feel free to contact us at 778-6519 and have your defensible space evaluated.