

The Lookout



A Publication of the Groom Creek Fire District

Proudly Serving Groom Creek Since 1970

2005 Wildland Fire Season Update

This year has provided some great opportunities for our personnel to receive wildland fire experience by responding to calls for aid from the Arizona State Land Department. This is the first year we have been included in the rotation of local agencies that will send apparatus and personnel to out-of-district assignments.

So far this year, our personnel have been assigned to the following incidents:

- Rusty Fire—Wickenburg
- Shiner Fire—Kingman
- 303 Fire—Phoenix
- Hulet Fire—Mojave Valley
- Three Complex—Cave Creek
- Sunset Point Fire—Cordes Junction
- Lousy Canyon—Black Canyon City
- Bozarth Fire—Bagdad
- Horse Fire—Ashfork
- Flower Pot Fire—Dugas
- McMicken Fire—Surprise
- Enas Fire—Parker

Groom Creek was the only agency requested by the Arizona State Land Department to staff

Severity Patrols in the Prescott area for two weeks this season.

The extraordinary efforts of our personnel and the sacrifices of their families have resulted in \$47,134.71 in revenues for the fire district this year alone. In 2004, we generated \$29,132.40 in revenues for the entire year.

By making themselves available for these responses, our members are receiving the experience necessary to increase their qualifications which will provide better leadership and more comprehensive training to our personnel.

After the personnel costs and expenses are paid, the fire district is able to upgrade our wildland fire equipment and apparatus. In the future, the off-district wildland program will be able to support the purchase of a new brush truck when the need arises.

This is just one more example of our attempt to provide the highest level of service while maintaining the fiscal responsibility with which we are charged.

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Groom Creek Community Classic 10k Run for the Red

On September 11, 2005 the Groom Creek Fire District will be sponsoring a 10k run to benefit the American Red Cross. We have great sponsors assisting with the event including Friendly Pines Camp who is providing the parking facilities, an after event gathering and more. Anyone interested in assisting with the event can contact Captain Matt Fay by email at run@groomcreek.org or by phone at 776-0181.

If you would rather participate in the event, registration forms are available on our website at www.groomcreek.org. There is a 10k run,

5k run and 2 mile fun walk. Remember that this event is to benefit the American Red Cross so please do your best to get sponsors or donations using the form provided with the registration information.

The course will be from the fire station along Friendly Pines road and then south on the Senator Highway. The race starts at 08:00, so please be patient for a few hours that day (and avoid these roads if possible) as traffic along these roadways will be reduced to one-lane.

Announcements:

- *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

Groom Creek Fire District is one year into our very successful US Forest Service funded project with the following objectives: making our community safer from a major wildland fire, increasing and improving the level of emergency incident service we can provide and restoring the ponderosa forest ecosystem to a healthy state that we can all enjoy for years to come.

Building on the success of our previous Defensible Space Project, the Hazardous Fuels Project has been successful removing the fuel loading around homes and on vacant lots. It is this fuel that is shown to contribute significantly to catastrophic fires in the wildland / urban interface areas just like Groom Creek. Our crew has been able to treat 85 individual property parcels totaling 75 acres so far, with many more scheduled to be completed during the upcoming year.

The crew performing these treatments is comprised of firefighters for the Groom Creek Fire District and are responsible for the arduous duties of clearing and chipping our community's brush piles, as well as conducting periodic prescribed burning of slash and pine needles.

Projects like this make it possible for us to keep our firefighters available in the area to respond to emer-

gencies providing a level of service that we have not enjoyed in the past. The project is also allowing us to implement fire prevention strategies through the property assessment aspect of this project.

Our residents are to be commended for their overwhelming support of this project. Not only has everyone been very cooperative by their authorization of work to be done on their individual parcels, but also through their own efforts toward creating Defensible Space and reducing the hazardous fuels on their property. These efforts have generated over \$20,000.00 toward supporting our Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project.

With the level of community involvement that we have experienced thus far, we are confident that our goal of treating 60% of parcels in the Groom Creek area by the end of July 2006 is a very realistic one.

In fact, it's successful projects like this one that have allowed us to apply for national recognition through the Arizona State Land Department as a Firewise Community USA. This distinction is reserved for communities who have not only shown a commitment to raising the awareness of the factors that contribute to forest fires, but also taking action to mitigate them (see article on pg. 3).



Community Assistance Project Update

This year's dumpster program was again a huge success. We hauled away over 1000 cubic yards (exceeding 46 tons) of pine needles and leaf litter debris. Next year, we will look at locating the dumpsters in different areas of the fire district at different times in addition to the one here at the station.

If you have done work this year to create or maintain defensible space by raking pine needles or removing trees, please complete the enclosed Homeowner Activity Sheet. Your efforts provide matching funds that are invaluable to keeping the overall project costs low and continuing the project into the future.

The Chipper Program is ongoing and we appreciate everyone's patience while we have been in the midst of fire season. We will be back out on a regular basis with the chipper starting in August. We will only chip materials at the properties where we have received a request. Requests can be made on our website or by calling 778-6519. The costs for the chipper are:

- \$20.00 for a small pile (less than 1 hour)
- \$140.00 for 1-4 hours (half day)
- \$250.00 4-8 hours (full day)

The costs always include two personnel. If you have any questions call and we'll come out and provide an estimate.

Groom Creek Online

If you have not been to our website in a while, we have installed a weather station that reports the current and historical weather data for Groom Creek. All of the information collected by the weather station is transmitted automatically to our website.

If you are a seasonal visitor or just curious, you can find our website at www.groomcreek.org. Information regarding our grant projects, operations, business management, board meeting minutes and the like can be found there. If you would like to see any information added, please let us know.



Mt. Tritle Annexation

The Groom Creek Fire District Board of Directors was presented with a letter of intent from residents of the Mount Tritle area to be annexed into the Groom Creek Fire District. The Board accepted the Boundary Change Impact Statement presented at their last meeting.

This area was proposed to be included in the district formation attempt for the Walker area. Homeowners were able to be excluded from Walker due to logistical reasons and their desire to have a higher level of protection provided to them by the Groom Creek Fire District. There are approximately 51 parcels in this area to which we already respond since we are the closest agency.

If approved by the Fire District Board and the County, this will allow the boundaries of our fire district to be shared along the east and south with the Walker District to provide continuous service to our residents and visitors.

FIREWISE Communities USA

The Groom Creek Fire District has applied for recognition as a FireWise Community under the NFPA Sponsored Firewise Communities USA program. This application was the culmination of hard work by the fire district over the last few years and the effort of a Firewise Community Board whose members include: Jan Woodward, Dennis Erickson, Anna Cano, Mary Lou Huff, Chris Starr and members of the Groom Creek Fire District.

This Board will be responsible for the annual renewal application and will have meetings to discuss future projects, enhance public education, determining responsible codes and tracking the current progress of projects for reporting to the State Forester.

Continued recognition requires that Groom Creek Fire District expend \$2.00 per capita for fuels reduction projects. Our Dumpster project alone satisfies this requirement.

This recognition will allow the Groom Creek Fire District to greatly increase our chances to receive future grant funds and continue towards our goal of complete forest restoration.

Groom Creek is already designated as a Firewise Arc-View Community by which we utilize GIS technology to assist with fuels planning and fire management planning tools, which we share with other communities.

Excerpts from *Echoes of the Past* - Groom Creek History

Robert Groom, after whom Groom Creek was named was a native of Kentucky, but came to Arizona in 1862. He was a mining prospector and surveyor, and was appointed by Arizona's first territorial governor to survey and lay out the streets of Prescott. He also prospected the Groom Lode in the Groom Creek area, as well as other mines in northern Arizona.

"...In the late 1890's my father became engaged in the mining business in the Groom Creek area, being superintendent of the Silver King Mine. About the



Robert Groom -1864

time of my father's arrival in Arizona, my maternal grandparents, Charles Henry and Alvina Bennett, came to Prescott and established residence on Banning Creek in an old log cabin known as Thorbeck Place, which land is now covered by Goldwater Lake.

The Bennett's had ten children, and their daughter, Alvina, born in 1883, became the wife of Peter Mackin in 1901. They were my parents."

- Evelyn Mackin Zuchero



Groom Creek Fire District

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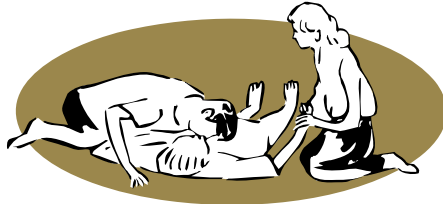
Phone: 928-778-6519
Fax: 928-443-5078
Email: gcfid@cableone.net

www.groomcreek.org

CPR Class Announcement

Saturday, September 17, 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.

New Fire Station

As part of our Strategic Plan, the fire district is currently doing some research regarding the building of a new fire station. The location of this facility is proposed for the southwest corner of Marapai Road and Senator Highway.

Application for a Special Use Permit for the two-acre site has been submitted to the US Forest Service. Preliminary application materials have been submitted to the USDA Rural Development Program for a low-interest rate fixed loan. These loans provide 40-year repayment terms.

We have formed a committee from our membership to study the feasibility of the new station and to perform a cost/benefit analysis. Information on our progress will be in future issues or at Board Meetings. If you are interested in the design concept and/or are willing to provide input, please stop by the station or send us an email with your comments. We always appreciate the community's involvement in our operations.