



4498 Hwy 35, Kalispell, MT 59901

Hot Spots

Newsletter of the Creston Fire Fighter Associate Membership

Learn more about your fire department and the efforts of its dedicated, hardworking volunteers.



The Chief's Corner: What Happens When We Think We Can

by: Gary Mahugh

After 18 months of creative thinking, hundreds of fire fighter and associate member hours and a bit of hired labor, our Lake Blaine Training Facility has taken on a new look and a new function. For many years we have trained at Lake Blaine Station in two buildings that were built specifically for structure fire training—one is a two-story “house” and the other is a live- burn building. Missing was a classroom on-site and a place for fire fighters to spend time comfortably. That has now changed.

Thanks to a strategic partnership with Bigfork Schools, Creston Fire acquired a three-room modular classroom building that was moved to the Lake Blaine Road site in four sections. Placement of the modular building required the relocation of the two-story training building as our space is limited. Once the modular was moved and set up, a new roof was added to protect the interior and work began transforming the building into a multi-use facility. One room remained a classroom with an interior refurbishment, audio/visual equipment was added and comfortable seating was installed. Another room has become a fitness room where several pieces of exercise equipment have been

Creston Fire Fighter Associate Membership

moved. Our fire department encourages personal fitness as the job is not an easy one. The third room has been transformed into a staff quarters complete with four bunk rooms, a kitchen and casual seating and study area.

While 24-hour station staffing is not part of what we do today, this facility will allow fire fighters to spend time at this station as their schedules permit and it will allow for more formal staffing down the road. Staffed stations for volunteer fire departments cannot be a realistic community expectation; however, we now have a place for that to occur on an intermittent basis.

A side benefit to this project is that it allows us to host others at this site, right down to having a place for outside instructors to stay. This is a big deal, as all local fire departments rely on their neighbors for mutual aid and training together is a key to success. Up until now we have been limited in what we could provide.

And the capper to all this is that approximately 90% of this project has been funded with non-tax dollars. Contributions from donations and the

<http://www.crestonfire.org>

annual Creston Auction have been used. Being fiscally responsible has long been a trend at Creston Fire—we have a history of accomplishing a lot with very little. This project is another example of what can happen when an organization thinks it can rather than thinking it can't. Our Creston fire fighters seldom say they can't.

Estate Sale, Anyone?

Have you been thinking of having an estate sale but know you don't have the space for all your treasures plus the crowd you are hoping for? Why not let the Creston Auction be your venue? We definitely have the room and the bidders to help you sell. This venture isn't for just a few articles. It would be a way for you to “unload”, say, a house full of furniture pretty quickly that you really need to part with, but aren't sure how to manage doing so. We are the experts at this! We have over 7,000 people and hundreds of bidders roaming the sale grounds every year. Just call 250-7396 before March 29th and we'll talk about your individual situation and see whether we can help.

Issue No. 10 (Spring 2013)



The inside of the Lake Blaine Training Complex pictured from top left to lower right: the classroom, which can seat 50 comfortably; the great room, looking into the kitchen and then into the main part of the room; one of the four bunk areas; the fitness room; and the spacious kitchen. Photos by Robin Tabors

CFD Member Receives Award for Life-Saving Efforts



The biggest fundraising event for the ALERT air ambulance service takes place annually at the Flathead County Fairgrounds. The past year of ALERT's operation, the people it touched, and the presentation of the Clyde Smith Award are highlights of the evening's program.

The ALERT foundation established the Clyde Smith Award, honoring the man who offered his business, Smith

Logging, as collateral against the original loan that funded the hospital's purchase of its own helicopter. Each year at the banquet, the ALERT board presents the award to a member of an emergency medical service or quick response unit. The recipient is chosen from across northwest Montana for his or her dedication, volunteerism and service toward life-saving efforts in the community.

In 2012, the Clyde Smith Award was presented to William Tidwell, EMT, known to many as "Wild Bill." He has been an EMT volunteer for over 20 years in the Flathead Valley and is currently deputy chief and the medical training officer for Creston

Fire. As a volunteer, Bill responds to over 140 medical and fire calls each year. He is also a current member of the Flathead County EMS Advisory Committee.

For 15 years, Bill owned a wilderness guide service gaining valuable experience. He was one of the only outfitters in the Bob Marshall Wilderness to have radio communications for requesting ALERT. He has been instrumental in coordinating between Kalispell Regional Medical Center, the Spotted Bear Ranger District and area ranchers for safe landing sites for the ALERT crews.

Since the early 1990s, Bill has taught hundreds of CPR,

first aid, wilderness first aid, and health/safety classes to fire departments, quick response units, and the public. Bill teaches these classes to at least 1200 people each year estimating that in his career, he has shared his pearls of "the mental medical toolbox" to over 21,000 responders.

Creston Fire is very proud to salute one of its own.

The winner's name drawn on December 15 for the quilt "A Cabin in the Woods" was Gayle Giffords. Congratulations!

Getting the Best out of the 2013 Creston Auction

Tips for Sellers

- **Advertise your treasures:** Contact us in early March to include your larger items for free in our ads throughout northwest Montana.
- **List it:** For faster service and to insure you are paid in full, bring a list of the items in your load on Consignment Day.
- **Consign and donate:** Bring all items to the sale grounds Friday, April 5, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- **Give your best:** Donations are welcome and tax deductible. Consider donating one or more items from your load to the Creston Fire Department for the sale.
- **Think like a buyer:** If you wouldn't spend \$5 on an item, please donate it to the Rummage Sale. All proceeds from items that sell for \$5 or less in the auction are donated to the fire department, so improve the sale by taking these items to the Creston School gym's west door.
- **Organize your load:** Rather than handing over a box with books, canning jars and videos, make one box for each type of item so that it is easy to sell.
- **Form a group:** Collect items at your church, school, etc., and bring them as one load to the sale. We'll send the

proceeds (minus the fire department's commission) to your organization.

- **Take junk to the dump:** We also cannot accept tires, hazardous chemicals, ammunition or livestock.
- **Prepare for weather:** Bring disposable tarps to cover your items. We regret that we cannot guarantee their return.
- **Sleep soundly:** We provide security for all consigned items from Friday, April 5, through the sale Sunday, April 7.
- **Note this:** At Saturday's auction, no items are sold with minimum bids attached. At Sunday's equipment sale, a minimum bid can be set at \$1500 or more. Call 250-7396 for more information on reserves and titles.

Tips for Buyers

- **Pack cash:** We accept MasterCard and Visa for auction purchases only, so bring cash, checks or your ATM card.
- **Buy your ticket:** The auction's \$5 bid tickets go on sale at 8 a.m. Saturday. Get \$10 bid tickets for the equipment sale at 9 a.m. Sunday. These fees pay for security.
- **Carry ID:** Show it to buy a bid ticket.
- **Bid away:** There is no buyer's premium. Your winning bid is what you pay.
- **Stay warm:** Hot food is available

throughout Saturday and Sunday.

- **Treat your sweet tooth:** Visit the Bake Sale in the Creston School gym on Saturday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Even better, donate your favorite goodie! Call 250-7396 for drop-off times.
- **Get artsy:** The Arts & Crafts Sale is held Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Eastside Grange Hall.
- **Keep it clean:** Federal rules prohibit smoking on the school grounds. And please leave your dogs at home.

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers make the Creston Auction happen, and we could use your help:

- **In advance:** Attend the CFFAM meetings, typically held the third Tuesday of each month (see p. 4).
- **With promotions:** If you have a flair for writing, graphics or photography, you can help us behind the scenes. Call Gloria: 250-4655.
- **On Consignment Day:** Help on April 5 as items are dropped off. Call Gloria Graves: 250-4655.
- **At the auction:** Call the auction hotline: 250-7396.

Creston Fire Department
 Creston Fire Fighter Associate Membership
 4498 Hwy 35
 Kalispell, MT 59901

Non-Profit Org.
 US Postage
PAID
 Kalispell, MT
 59901
 Permit No. 166

Postal Patron

More Than A Fundraiser

CFFAM's 5th annual Soup for Supper warmed over 340 people's tummies.

The fundraiser for Creston Fire has become quite a highlight of the fall season. We had 16 roasters of 12 different kinds of soup, along with the salads, desserts and beverages. You could dine in or take out. There were raffle tickets for the hand-made quilt, "A Cabin in the Woods," donated by the Thursday Sewing Group of the Mountain Brook Ladies' Club and 27 whole homemade pies we sold. We collected over \$4300.00 in donations and that amount continues to grow every year. (The monies bought supplies needed for the

On Call
 CFFAM Meeting
When: 7 p.m., March 19
Where: Creston Fire Station,
 4498 Hwy 35
What to bring: A dish to share
More info: Contact Gloria Graves,
 250-4655, crittermom10@hotmail.com

Lake Blaine Training Complex).

But to look out across the room and see so many people just sitting and visiting with their friends and neighbors in the relaxed setting of the fire hall, that's what is so special about the entire evening. There just aren't many of those opportunities anymore in the constant rushing around that we do in our daily lives. It just does your heart good to see it and it definitely makes you smile and make plans for next year's event!



47th ANNUAL

Join us for
**A FUNDRAISER TO
 BENEFIT THE
 CRESTON FIRE
 DEPARTMENT**

Sell your gently used items and support a good cause.

Friday, April 5	Saturday, April 6	Sunday, April 7
DONATION & CONSIGNMENT DAY	CRESTON AUCTION & COUNTRY FAIR	AUTO, RV, BOAT & EQUIPMENT SALE
7 A.M. to 7 P.M. Volunteers needed!	Starts at 9 A.M. \$5 bid tickets	Starts at noon \$10 bid tickets

Arts & Crafts Sale • Rummage Sale • Bake Sale • Local Food
 Bring your items to sell to the Creston School, MT Hwy 35, 12 miles east of Kalispell, and we'll take care of the rest. Then come to browse and buy from the acres of items for sale during the auction. Proceeds benefit the Creston Fire Department.
 250-7396 • crestonfire.org • Creston Auction on Facebook