

Jim Burdick, Assistant Fire Chief

by Shane Warner, Fire Chief (7/2008)

In recent Fire Department articles we have put our primary focus on the volunteer, reserve, and full-time firefighters. This month I would like to introduce Jim Burdick, the Assistant Fire Chief of the Groveland Fire Department.

When I first met Jim he was overseeing the Tioga High School Fire Science Regional Occupational Program. He stopped by the Fire Station one day in 2006 to talk to me about bringing his students to the firehouse so they could see how it operates. After that meeting the Fire Department put its resources and personnel to work to share their knowledge with the youth in Groveland. Through this program students are introduced to fire science, helped with job applications and career advice to prepare them for jobs in Emergency Medical Services, the Military, Law Enforcement, and Firefighting.



The outcome of my meeting with Jim was mutually beneficial. We began to help with his program and the Fire Department got an Assistant Fire Chief. During our conversation Jim told me how hard it was for him to walk away after putting 30 years in as a firefighter/paramedic with the El Segundo Fire Department in Southern California. He said he felt like someone had pulled the plug out of the wall and told him to go home. Jim feels that everyone that gets involved in the fire service has what he calls a 'rescue personality' - a vocation of helping people in critical situations. It is very hard for these types that have put their heart and soul into their job to one day be told to go home, you're retired. So I asked him if he would accept the position of Assistant Fire Chief.

Fortunately, Jim accepted the position and began to help with medical training with the full-time staff, reviewing reports from emergency calls, becoming a Safety Officer on fire related emergency calls, helping in the designing and building of fire department equipment, taking over personnel scheduling, responding to calls, and also helping me with a myriad of special projects.

In addition to all he does for the Fire Department Jim enjoys working on hotrods and old cars when he has time. Jim's wife Joyce has been a great support throughout Jim's involvement with the Fire Department. She has missed many family dinner engagements and has spent countless hours by herself waiting her husband to come home from emergency calls. Jim and his wife Joyce have sacrificed a great deal of their retirement by giving back to the community not only with emergency calls and all of the special projects but also the late night calls me.

I would like to personally thank both Jim and Joyce Burdick for their dedication to the Fire Department and to the Groveland/ Big Oak Flat Community.