



SPARKS of Interest

Newsletter # 6



IN THEIR OWN WORDS

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE START OF THE SHERIDAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT by Eugene Johe

During the drought of 1989 the City of Las Vegas pumped water at the Taylor Field. It caused some wells in the Sheridan area to run dry. People of Sheridan, Romeroville, La Manga, Cedar Hill and Ojitos Frios united in a Water Association to fight the City of Las Vegas. The Water Association prevented the City from drilling a 16" diameter well at the Taylor Field, (before) it could have done greater harm.

After the drought, the Water Association was disbanded and a little money was left over after the attorney was paid. That money was used to start a Volunteer Fire Department. Charter members were Jim Sandin, Mike Coca, Richard Reed, Littleton Scott and myself. We went to work with a Jeep, on loan from the Forest Service. It was equipped with a 300 Gallon Tank, a Pump and Reel, a couple Shovels and a Pulasky. For a time the vehicle was parked at Jim's house. Meetings were mostly held at Mike Coca's house. By and by we acquired more tools from the Forest Service. The McCarty's who were running the KOA allowed us to build a shed on KOA property.

In order to qualify as a Fire Department the State required that the vehicle be housed in an enclosed area. Jim's neighbor let us put up a partition in his car shed. He also allowed us to use his electricity to keep a dipstick in the tank to keep the water from freezing.

On May 12, 1992, we were recognized by the State of New Mexico and we're now Officially a Fire Department. Our "Rag Tag" group responded to structure, woodland and car fires. Also to accidents and usual trash bin fires. All of it with cast-off bunker gear and equipment.

Then came the big day, GROUND BREAKING FOR FIRE STATION. Mr. Parkinson had graciously donated the property for the station. On November 30, 1994, the San Miguel grader prepared the building site and construction began. (Photos in Eugene's album.) Mr. Parkinson permitted us to tap into his water well. A tank and line to the station were installed. On April 6, 1996 we had water at the station.

To improve communications the Radio Tower was put in place on January 28, 2000.

With plenty of work and determination we accomplished a lot.

Yes. We came a long way and still going!!!!

[Eugene's summary of the Sheridan Fire Station history written at age 80.]



Eugene and Gertrud Johe