

# Newsletter



## Southern California Association of Foresters & Fire Wardens

### OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

2011-2012

#### OFFICERS

President Troy Whitman - SCE  
First Vice President Robert Michael - RRU  
Second Vice Pres.—Frank Vidales - LAC  
Secretary Gordon Martin—CNF  
Treasurer David Leininger—LAC retired

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Dan Snow—BDF  
Vacant—ANF  
Tom Plymale—LPF  
Steve Griffin—SQF  
David Allen—MVU  
Don Forsyth—ORC  
Dave Witt—KRN  
Rod Megli—VNC  
Tim Ernst—LFD  
Suzanne Penfold—BDU  
Chris Childers - SBC  
Abigail Srader—CSR—Membership  
Steve Reeder—SLU  
Ed Shabro—Vendor Representative  
Jim Neumann—Publicity  
Paul H. Rippens—Newsletter Editor  
Doug Lannon—Arrangements

*We, the members of the Southern California Association of Foresters and Fire Wardens, do band together for the purpose of strengthening inter-agency cooperation, fire safety coordination, and fellowship.*



**An Association dedicated to the  
Training and Safety of Southern  
California Wildland Firefighters for  
over 81 years.**

Minutes of the Board of Directors of the Southern California  
Association of Foresters and Fire Wardens

December 2, 2011—Bakersfield, California

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# FIRE WHIRLS

## ***A Message from President Troy Whitman— Southern California Edison***



It is an honor to be working on the 82<sup>nd</sup> Conference of the Southern California Association of Foresters and Fire Wardens. As I look back through the history books of our association, I can't help think of those who served as a Directors or Officers and the time and effort they put forth in their attempts to make other conferences a success. The current Board of Directors certainly does have big shoes to fill.

I remember hearing about a Fire Chief from one of our agencies saying the he *"could not believe that a bunch of grown men spend a whole year planning a two day drunk."* This surely must have been long before I came on the Board. The Board has worked hard over the years to rid the association of such a comment. Yes, we want those who attend the conference to enjoy themselves but we don't want to see anyone get in a situation where they would be in trouble with the law or with their department. That is why we spend time planning activities in the evening to encourage our attendees to stay at the camp and enjoy the evening.

As I looked back at the history of the association, I was amazed at how the registration fees have changed over the years. Only thirty years ago it cost \$25.00 to attend the conference

compared to today's \$110.00. This is not because the association wants to make money. After all, we are a non-profit organization. The increase comes from the camp where we hold the event. They must make a profit, which is a hard thing to do in this economy, so they pass their increases on to us. In reality, the association profits only from the raffle and bingo night, not from the conference. Sound and very prudent management of our bank account has allowed the association to build a reserve that allows us to compensate some speakers and to have money available in case of something happening that is beyond our control. It is now, and always has been our intention to provide the best conference for our members at the lowest cost.

At our December Board of Directors meeting, we discussed programs for the 82<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference. The suggested programs are listed in the minutes (page 4&5) of that meeting and now the Board members are working to secure those programs so we can make the final selection at the February meeting. With only four meetings before each conference, it is imperative that everyone do their job to get the program, arrangements, safety, exhibits and event flyers completed. It can be a daunting task but one that we are committed to do for our membership.

We sincerely hope that you, our membership, appreciate what we do for you and for the Association. We hope to see many of you at the 82<sup>nd</sup> Annual Wildland Fire Safety and Training Conference on May 3 & 4, 2012. And don't forget to bring a friend.



## A SHORT BIT OF HISTORY

During the 1960s, the Los Angeles County Fire Department took advantage of the progress being made in the fixed-wing aircraft program. A lease was signed with A-J Tankers, Inc. out of the



Van Nuys Airport in the San Fernando Valley. Pilots Jack Hennessey and Lou Leach flew their converted Navy AJ-1 Savages, numbered 77 and 88 out of the Van Nuys locating until 1966 when the operation was moved to the Burbank Airport. The planes were capable of 180 miles per hour air speed and carried a 2,000 gallon payload in four tanks. Both tankers were a common sight over Los Angeles County during this time.



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Southern CA Foresters and  
Fire Wardens**

***Did you or are you thinking of  
changing your E-mail address?  
Please remember to contact the  
SCAFFW at SCAFFW@aol.com and let  
us know so we can send you your  
newsletters and other important  
information.***



## 2012 ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF FORESTERS AND FIRE WARDENS

Work has begun on the **82nd Annual Wildland Fire Training and Safety Conference** that will be held on May 3 & 4, 2012 at Camp Pilgrim Pines in Oak Glen, California. We will continue to keep you informed on the proposed programs for that conference via our newsletters and website. Meanwhile, if you have any suggestions regarding our annual conference, please E-mail them to [SCAFFW@aol.com](mailto:SCAFFW@aol.com).



**Cover Photo:** CAL FIRE dozer at work on the Chicuhua Valley Fire, San Diego County. August 28, 2011. Photo by Jeff Hall  
CAL FIRE VIP Photographer

**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION  
OF FORESTERS AND FIRE WARDENS  
82nd ANNUAL WILDLAND TRAINING  
AND SAFETY CONFERENCE.**

**May 3 & 4, 2012**

**CAMP PILGRIM PINES**

**Check our web site for further  
information [www.scaffw.org](http://www.scaffw.org)**

**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION of  
FORESTERS & FIRE WARDENS**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**December 2, 2011**

The meeting of the Southern California Association of Foresters and Fire Wardens was called to order by President Troy Whitman at 0910 hours at Kern County's ECC, Bakersfield, California on December 2, 2011. David Witt was introduced as the new Director for the Kern County Fire Department.

**Officers and Directors Present:**

Chris Childers – Santa Barbara County Fire Dept  
Gordon Martin – Cleveland National Forest.  
Dave Allen – CAL FIRE – San Diego County  
David Leininger – Los Angeles Co. Fire Dept.  
Rod Megli – Ventura County Fire Dept.  
Doug Lannon – CAL FIRE – San Bernardino Co.  
Tim Ernst – Los Angeles Fire Dept.  
Frank Vidales – Los Angeles County Fire Dept.  
Robert Michael – CAL FIRE – Riverside County  
Steve Reeder – CAL FIRE – San Luis Obispo Co.  
Don Forsyth – Orange County Fire Authority  
David Witt – Kern County Fire Dept.  
Troy Whitman – Southern California Edison

**Officers and Directors Absent:**

Tom Plymale – Los Padres National Forest  
Dan Snow – San Bernardino National Forest  
Paul H. Rippens – Newsletter Editor  
Suzanne Penfold – CAL FIRE – San Bernardino Co.  
Abigail Srader – CAL FIRE – Southern Region  
Steve Griffin – Sequoia National Forest  
Jim Neumann – Publicity  
Ed Shabro – Vendor Representative

**Guests:**

Anthony Caezza – Life Member

**Minutes:** President Whitman presented the minutes of the May 4, 2011 meeting for consideration. Motion by Director Forsyth, seconded by Director Reeder to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was approved. President Whitman presented the minutes of the May 6, 2011 meeting for consideration. Motion by Director Forsyth, seconded by Director Vidales to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Leininger presented his report covering the period from May 4, 2011 to December 2, 2011.

Balance as of 5-4-11	\$21,763.88
Receipts: Dues & Conference Reg.	\$15,129.00
Total Receipts:	\$15,129.00

**Disbursements:**

Pilgrim Pines (Conference Fees-2011)	\$9,889.50
Luther Glen (Rooms-2011 Conference)	\$1,164.00
Allstar Fire Equipment (Vendor Letters/Postage)	\$62.02
J&M Trophies (Plaque-LA County Fire)	\$130.00
Total Disbursements:	\$11,245.52
Balance on hand:	\$25,647.36
Last year at this time:	\$20,889.00

Motion by Director Megli, second by Director Vidales to approve the treasurer's report as presented. The motion was approved.

**Committee Reports:**

**Arraignments:** Chairman Lannon stated that Camp Pilgrim Pines is still there and doing good. The winds did not do much damage this year so there is not much clean-up to do. Treasurer Leininger reported that the contract has been signed. The costs are up and the Board decided to raise the pre-registration fee to \$110. Camp Luther Glen is locked in at the same rates as we had last year. There were problems with people staying at Luther Glen thinking that the rooms were included as part of the registration fee. This year the keys to Luther Glen will be controlled by registration so that room fees can be collected at that time. Treasurer Leininger expressed concern about the long term availability of Pilgrim Pines beyond this year due to their financial situation. Director Forsyth stated that he had a potential site in Orange County at a new Boy Scout camp that we could look at before the February meeting. The \$10 fee for registration at the door did not seem very effective and he proposed that it be raised. It was discussed that Editor Rippens was having problems getting PayPal on the web site for registration. President Whitman assigned Treasurer Leininger and Director Srader to work on getting PayPal added to the web site. Director Childers proposed that the registration at the door fee be raised to \$125, Director Megli seconded the motion. The motion was discussed as to what point we would be discouraging people from coming. The motion passed.

**Program:** First Vice President Michael led a discussion on the proposed programs for the 2012 conference. He reminded the board of the lessons learned from last year's conference: 1) Fewer Speakers, 2) More bonding time for networking, 3) There was too little time for the vendors. The proposed programs, tentative speakers and the assigned contacts are:

**Emcee:** Suggestions for emcee are Duane and Ernylee Chamlee and Steve Martin from LA County. Second Vice President Vidales will contact Steve and check his availability and the Chamlees will serve as backup.

**Color Guard:** USFS, Director Snow will check on availability and they will be the primary if available. CAL FIRE will serve as the backup First Vice President Michael will serve as the contact.

Keynote Speaker: Suggestions for Keynote speaker are Mike Dietrich (Director Forsyth), Tom Harbour (Chairman Lannon), Chief Osby (Second Vice President Vidales), Tim McClelland (Chairman Lannon). Responsible person should contact their person and determine availability.

There was an involved discussion of topics for the program.

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Tentative Speaker</u>	<u>Contact</u>
What Makes a Wildland FF	Rob Lewin	Reeder
Australia Wildfires	Dicus	Michael
Jesusita SIIT	Gaines	Michael
Exercise Physiology	Dr. Ruby	Reeder
Social Media and the Fire Service	Daniel Berlant	Vidales
Narrow Banding	CAL FIRE/Firescope	Allen
Crew Resource Management - Aviation Use		Ernst
Dozer Ops		
Mapping Pre-Plans	Clark/Woodward	Lannon
Private Fire Protection		Lannon
Human Factors	Mayhew	Childers
Fuels/Weather	Chavez	Michael
Safety	CHP	Forsyth
Kern County Fires 2011	Brian Marshall	Witt
History of Fire	Pyne	Childers
Sim Table		Forsyth
Campbell/BEHAVE	Schubert	Megli
Marketing the Fire Service		Vidales
IT/GIS Mapping Applications	Dargin	Megli
Leadership/Motivation		Ernst

All contact people should check with their speakers and report back to First Vice President Michael as to availability of their speakers, what time frames they need and if they have a preferred day. June Boutwell will do the invocation and Tony Caezza will do the pledge of allegiance. There was a motion by Director Forsyth that we approve a speaker fee of \$500 for Dr. Ruby. Director Allen seconded the motion and the motion passed.

**Exhibits and Demonstrations:** Second Vice President Vidales reported that he had not contacted Representative Shabro but would do so soon.

**Registration and Membership:** Treasurer Leininger reported that he had purchased a new computer as the cost of upgrading the old one was almost the same. The total cost was under the \$700 limit set by the board. It was decided that we would comp Member Kurtz for his help with registration.

**Entertainment and Raffle:** Director Ernst asked that everyone look for a band that we can use at this year's conference. He is also looking for leads for donations so that he can send out letters. Director Ernst also reminded the Directors to be thinking about their \$75 raffle prize donation.

**Publicity:** Director Reeder will contact Chairman Neumann to see where he is at with publicity. President Whitman stated that we will keep the same direction

that we had last year and not spend any money on publicity. He also asked that we try to get all of the membership to "like" us on Facebook. There was a discussion as to whether we should have a new Electronic Media chairman. It was decided that this would be put on the agenda for the next meeting under Old Business.

**Historian:** Historian Whitman stated that he had posted photos to the Facebook page.

**Safety:** Director Forsyth stated that he did not have much to report. It was decided that we would budget time for the CHP Officer presentation this year.

**Golf:** Director Snow reported via email that there was nothing to report at this time.

**Newsletter:** Secretary Martin reminded everyone that Editor Rippens needs any articles and/or photos that anyone can find or create. Director Allen reported that he had sent Editor Rippens a link to the CAL FIRE Flicker site for all of their photos.

**Old Business:** Director Witt was assigned the task of locating the Knot Head award. It was asked if we should purchase t-shirts again this year. Director Ernst moved that we spend up to \$1,500 for t-shirts again this year. Director Forsyth seconded the motion. The motion passed, First Vice President Michael will contact the vendor. The remaining challenge coins will be sold at this year's conference for \$5 as per a previous board decision.

**Life Membership Recommendations:** There were no Life Member recommendations.

**New Business:** Everyone should bring any ideas for giveaways to the next meeting. There was a discussion of the temperature and audio qualities of the meeting room. First Vice President Michael will look into the availability of a department sound system. Director Ernst asked if everyone could check into the possibility of bringing fans on stand from their home or department. Second Vice President Vidales will check with the vendors to see what they can provide.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Board of Directors of the Southern California Association of Foresters and Fire Wardens will be held February 3, 2012 in Orange County, CA.

President Whitman closed the meeting at 1220 in honor of our recently departed Life Members Jim Dulitz, Dennis Ensign, Harvey French and Clyde Sims.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gordon P. Martin,  
Association Secretary



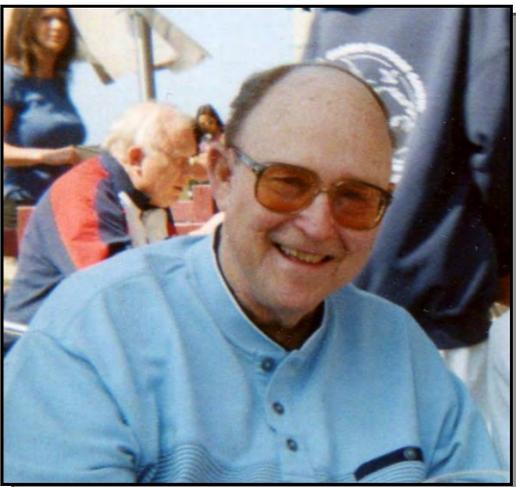
## DENNIS H. ENSIGN

June 8, 1937—October 27, 2011

A native of Santa Barbara, Dennis was raised along with his sister, Donna Lee by his parents G. Herbert Ensign, Montecito Fire Chief, and Ruby Anderson Ensign. Dennis attended Montecito Union, Santa Barbara Jr. High and graduated from Santa Barbara High School in 1955. During the summer of 1954, Dennis became a member of the Los Prietos Hot Shots (U.S. Forest Service), fighting fires throughout the State of California. He again worked on the Hot Shot crew the summer of 1955 and fought the devastating Refugio Fire on the Santa Barbara front country. Dennis then attended Santa Barbara Jr. College but decided firefighting was in his blood and left just prior to his finals to rejoin the Forest Service in a career that lasted 32 years.

Dennis was promoted in the Forest Service to engine foreman at the summit of San Marcos Pass, then transferred to the Los Prietos engine. He was then promoted to Assistant Fire Control Officer for the Santa Barbara Ranger District of the Los Padres National Forest. After seven years, Dennis and his family were transferred to the Mi-Wuk District of the Stanislaus National Forest as Fire Control Officer. Four years later, Dennis was transferred back to the Los Padres and the Supervisor's office as Forest Fire Prevention Officer/Public Information Officer for the entire forest. Dennis retired from the Forest Service in 1988.

Dennis served for many years as the Director from the Los Padres National Forest to the Southern California Association of Foresters and Fire Wardens. He served as President in 1975 and was made a Life Member upon his retirement.



## Jim Dulitz

1922—2011



Jim Dulitz was born in 1922 in the Atascadero Hospital, and passed away on August 19, 2011 at his home in Atascadero. His parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents had settled in the newly formed Atascadero Colony in 1918 after having moved from their Idaho Cattle ranch.

In 1939, he hired on as a seasonal firefighter for the California Division of Forestry. This sparked his interest in being a wildland firefighter.

After high school, Jim attended San Luis Obispo Junior College in preparation for Forestry School. However, World War II interrupted his college attendance and Jim enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps and trained as a B-24 bomber pilot. He also married his only girlfriend since grammar school, Sylvia McGhee.

Jim returned home from the war and enrolled at U.C. Berkeley, where he majored in Forestry and minored in fathering his first son, Dan. After graduation he worked for the U.S. Forest Service before joining the California Division of Forestry in Porterville where his second son, Dave, was born.

Jim held many assignments throughout the state with CDF, but was able to spend more than half of his 35-year career as the Ranger Unit Chief in his home county of San Luis Obispo.

Jim served Southern California Association of Foresters and Fire Wardens as the Association Secretary from 1954-1957. He was a life member and will be missed by all who had the honor and pleasure of knowing him.



# NEEDLES FIRE LOOKOUT TOWER BURNS

## SEQUOIA NATIONAL FOREST

The Needles Fire Lookout Tower, located on the Western Divide Ranger District within the Giant Sequoia National Monument on the Sequoia National Forest was destroyed in a structure fire. “This is a tragic loss to the District,” stated District Ranger Priscilla Summers. “I’m relieved the person staffing the lookout tower was able to safely evacuate the tower before it burned.”

The cause of the fire is under investigation, however it was determined to be a structure fire and not in any way related to the Lion Wildland Fire that was burning in the Golden Trout Wilderness. Firefighters ensured the safety of visitors by closing Forest Road 21S05 and trail 32E22 that lead to Needles Lookout, and closure of the area surrounding the rock formation where the lookout was perched. The closure area included the formation popular for rock climbers known as “The Magician” and remained closed until the wildland fire resulting from the burning debris had been contained and the area safe for visitors.

The lookout tower was constructed in 1937-38 by the Civilian Conservation Corps atop the rock formation at 8,245 feet. A Forest Service employee, stationed in the tower, was responsible for detecting fires and relaying radio messages to a dispatcher, who in turn sent firefighters and support equipment to extinguish the reported fire. The tower was utilized as this employee’s office as well as their home for the summer months while the lookout was on duty.



Needles overlooked the Kern River Drainage, Mt. Whitney, Olancha Peak, Farewell Gap, and Dome Rock. The tower was the primary communication line for persons in the backcountry where cell phones do not work. The Needles Lookout

Tower was one of the most popular places to visit on the Western Divide Ranger District.



“The loss of this historic landmark is significant.” stated Summers. “My immediate concern was for the safety of firefighters who were working to contain the Lion Wildland Fire in the Golden Trout Wilderness who lost one of their main lines of communication.” More information will be sent out as soon as

it’s available regarding the cause of the fire, availability of the rock formation for visitors, and future plans.



## World War II Hero Used His Skills to Build a Fire Engine For Ojai

By Gary Girod, Training Chief (Ret.) VNC

In 1946, the Ventura County Fire Department was still building some of its fire engines from the chassis up. The work was done at the department's headquarters facilities, located in Santa Paula. When an order came in to build two high-pressure fire engines, head mechanic Ira Goodale turned to a World War II hero for help.

Sergeant Ambrose Little was a 26-year-old firefighter who had joined the department after the war. Assigned to the Army's 144<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment, Little's unit was in the second wave of the D-Day invasion at Normandy Beach in France. They moved in 15, 155mm guns that fired 100-pound shells. But it took almost two hours to position each gun. Sergeant Little designed modifications to the guns that enabled them to be ready for service in less than a half-hour. His innovation earned him the Legion of Merit medal. When the war ended, he brought those skills to the department.

Fire Engine 218 and a sister engine were the first brush fire rigs built to deal with major fires that couldn't be reached with conventional apparatus. To construct the engine, Little fitted a 500-gallon, non-baffled tank onto a 1941 Chevrolet cab and chassis. A positive displacement Waukesha rear-mount pump produced 400 psi. There were two high-pressure, hard-rubber hose reels, each equipped with machine gun-style Bean nozzles. These nozzles could push out a straight stream of water over 200 feet, enabling the firefighters to reach the head of a grass fire, across barrancas or high into trees.

Engine 218 proved its worth during the 1948 Ojai Valley Fire. The fire burned past Upper Ojai, Thatcher School, the Hermitage Ranch,

Gridley Road and the top of Signal Street. Then the fire turned south toward Ojai. The crews on Engine 218 could pump and drive through the burn, knocking down the head of the fire.

Engine 218 was a great example of ingenuity and innovation. Ambrose Little is now 92-years-old and lives in Ventura.



### Harvey G. French

September 12, 1916—October 13, 2011

Life member and long time supporter of the Southern California Association of Foresters and Fire Wardens, Harvey started with the California Division of Forestry in 1936 and following his service with the Marines during WWII, returned to the CDF and was promoted to Captain, and then Battalion Chief for the Perris and Elsinore areas. After serving 34 years in the Fire Service and 4 years in the Marines, Harvey retired from CDF on December 30th, 1974. He was a regular attendee at the SCAFFW conferences for many years and will be missed by his many friends.

