



# WILMAR

VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

JULY 2014

VOLUME MMXIV

PUBLISHED TWICE A YEAR

ISSUE 2

## ANNUAL CHICKEN BBQ SUNDAY JULY 27

at the Holy Ghost Hall  
----Bodega Ave. at  
Eucalyptus

11 am TO 4 pm

Adults \$12  
Children age 10  
and under \$7

*Fun for the  
whole family!*  
2 Raffles  
Kids' Games  
Fire Engine Rides  
Silent Auction  
Can't stay?.....  
Take your meal  
*"to go"!*

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WILMAR  
FIRE DEPARTMENT, INC.

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## Chief's Report

As our community transitions from spring to summer, you can hear the sound of mowers and weed eaters on the weekends. We find ourselves with vegetation that is drying out earlier than what we've seen in a long time. The growing season was short; however the rains in March and April along with warm spells after the rains produced a grass crop that looks like normal in some locations. When using your mower and weed eater to cut dry grass, try to finish your cutting before the heat of the day and in most cases by noon each day. The humidity is normally lower after noon along with the wind increasing in velocity making the fuels more receptive to ignition and for the fire to grow more rapidly.

When Wilmar is dispatched to a vegetation fire we are also receiving resources from CAL FIRE. As we arrive at the incident, firefighters evaluate the fire conditions and attack the fire. If the fire is spreading through a neighborhood like the fire last June on Thompson lane, additional units are dispatched to help with structure protection. When firefighters arrive at a property they evaluate the house to determine if the property is safe for them to make a stand and protect it. This only takes a few seconds to make a decision. Access to the property is important as that is your escape route along with the firefighters. Make sure the trees are trimmed back and limbed up. By taking the time to clear grass and brush 30' to 100' from your home and remove any debris and over hanging tree branches from your roof makes your home easier to defend from fire.

The community support Wilmar receives is tremendous and the Volunteer Fire Department would not be what it is today if not for that support. There are more than 50 personnel that make up the firefighters, support personnel, Board members and Auxiliary members. We hope you can make it to the BBQ this year on July 27<sup>th</sup>, to enjoy your friends and neighbors and have some of the best BBQ chicken this county has to offer! Hope to see you there!

Have a safe and enjoyable summer!

## Director's Dialogue

Hello again to the friends and neighbors of the Wilmar Volunteer Fire Department. The weather is getting warmer as summertime approaches, and as always your volunteer fire firefighters are working diligently to protect our community residents and their properties!

It was good to see many of you at our annual dinner meeting in March. Our volunteer firefighters prepared a delicious pasta dinner and raffled off some great prizes. Keith Percell, owner of a local computer repair shop, proudly accepted the Community Recognition Award for this year for all his generosity in keeping Wilmar Fire's IT systems up and running.

The annual dinner meeting is an important event for our department: it provides your Board of Directors the opportunity to bring community members up to date on important fire department activities and current events, to hold nominations and elections for board member openings, and most importantly it provides you a chance to meet and socialize with the volunteer firefighters.

Unfortunately, with our busy lifestyles and full schedules attendance at the annual dinner meeting has been dwindling over the past few years. Keeping our community members involved and up to date is very important to our department, so any suggestions or ideas that you might have to help enhance attendance at our events, or in any other way improve communications with your fire department would be greatly appreciated. Visit our website at [Wilmarfire.com](http://Wilmarfire.com) and click "contact us" to leave your comments and suggestions.

We have an outstanding group of firefighters, fire explorers, and support personnel who work tirelessly to make Wilmar one of the finest volunteer fire departments in the north bay area.

In addition to responding to emergencies and calls for service, all of our members put in countless hours training, maintaining tools and equipment, keeping up on chores around the firehouse, and perform all the recordkeeping and administrative work that goes along with running a fire department. With the ongoing drought and drying conditions our firefighters are in store for another busy wildland fire season as well. If you stop by the firehouse or see the firefighters out in the community be sure to take a minute to thank them for all they do for us.

Another great way to show your appreciation to your volunteer fire department is to support us by attending the annual Wilmar Chicken BBQ and fundraiser on Sunday July 27<sup>th</sup> at the Holy Ghost Hall. Come and enjoy our renowned BBQ chicken with all the delicious fixings, ice cold sodas and beer, a vast array of silent auction and raffle prizes (including a chance to win a Hawaiian vacation!), fun games, and fire truck rides for all the kids! It adds up to a great time and a terrific way to support your volunteer firefighters. Be sure to mark your calendars and we'll see you there!

Thanks to our Wilmar friends for your continuing support of our fire department, and as always a big thank you to all of the volunteers. Their hard work and tireless efforts have made this department the outstanding organization that it is.

## Explorer Update

We are pleased to announce that five of our Explorers graduated from the California Explorer Academy on March 22. The weeklong academy began on March 16 in Healdsburg, California. Explorers from fire departments throughout California and Nevada travel to attend this annual academy. This year, attendees learned about flammable liquid fires, wildland fires, structure fires, ropes, vehicle extrication, and a great

deal of additional information pertaining to the fire service. We would like to thank our Explorers' parents for their support and our Wilmar Fire Explorer Advisors for taking time out of their schedules to help teach in this academy.

In the coming weeks, we will prepare our Explorers for wildland season. As you know, California is in a serious drought and all fire departments are preparing for a busy as well as a very early fire season! Our Explorers are an integral part of helping Wilmar mop up at wildland fires, clean and roll any used hose, and ensure that all equipment is put back into service.

We are expecting a few of our Explorers to leave for college in the fall. We are currently recruiting any high school students interested in the fire service (ages 15 ½ to 20) that would like to become involved in our exciting Explorer Program. Find us online at [Wilmarfire.com](http://Wilmarfire.com) and click on the Explorer tab or stop by the station to obtain more information.

## Volunteer Profile

James Richard (Rich) Casarotti is a Petaluma native who has been associated with Wilmar since its



inception. Both of Rich's parents are from families who came to California in the mid-1800's and were both long time Petaluma residents. His dad went to work for Railway Express as a young man, became an agent and worked for them for over fifty years. His mother was a housewife, a secretary for G.P. McNear, and for many years worked as the Petaluma Court Clerk. Rich was born in the old Petaluma General Hospital in 1935. He was educated in the Petaluma school system graduating with honors from Petaluma High in 1952, where he

played tennis and basketball. He attended UC Berkeley, graduating in 1956 with degrees in Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture. He earned his state professional licenses in both Mechanical Engineering and Nuclear Engineering. Rich took a position with the Mare Island Naval Shipyards upon graduation to work on nuclear submarines and stayed with them for his entire professional career, retiring in 1993.

Rich met his wife Gail in 1956. They married in 1959, purchased a home in Petaluma, and raised their three children and a grandchild here. Gail was a primary grade school and art teacher for many years. Rich has always been an active outdoorsman and continues to enjoy fly fishing and skiing. Both Rich and Gail are avid gardeners and Gail an accomplished quilter and knitter.

Rich became involved with firefighting during the big 1965 grass fire that preceded and drove the formation of Wilmar. Although not a member of the organizing group, he was an active member as a firefighter from the start and retired as an active firefighter at age 63. During the 1990's he was heavily involved in the financial oversight of Wilmar, leading to his appointment to the CSA-40 Board, a position he still holds along with Joe West. The primary responsibility of the CSA-40 Board is to provide oversight for the county of the money raised by the Community Facilities Act (Mello-Roos). This amount of money is on the order of \$116,000 and plays a significant role in providing the services offered by Wilmar.

Rich's contribution to the Wilmar community is much appreciated by the Wilmar Board of Directors. He has provided valuable continuity during the evolution and growth of the department and plans on remaining "as long as he is able".

## Board of Directors



Jim Eckhoff	President
	Vice President
Bob Green	President
Al Mello	Treasurer
Cheryl Brown	Secretary
Lisa Gravesen	Member/Historian

# WILMAR ROSTER



Below is a list of all the personnel who volunteer their time to serve the Wilmar community:

### Firefighters:

Mike Mickelson	Chief
Kelly Bradley	Assistant Chief
Justin Fox	Captain
Brian Mickelson	Captain
Chris Bonilla	Captain/Explorer Trainer
Devon Ayers	Engineer
Urban Anderson	Firefighter
Hannah Barnett-Powell	Firefighter
Marco Barros	Firefighter
Kenderic Braal	Firefighter
Patrick Bradley	Firefighter/Explorer
Jesse Cole	Firefighter
Scott Gratto-Bachman	Firefighter
Eric Haggard	Firefighter
Ryan Hamilton	Firefighter/Explorer Trainer
Andrew Ihlenfeldt	Firefighter
Nick Joyner	Firefighter
Carlos Lopez	Firefighter
Jonathan Lucchesi	Firefighter
Mathew Moulynn	Firefighter
Tyler Selna	Firefighter
Gabriel Sacher	Firefighter Recruit
David Tuttle	Firefighter/Explorer Leader

### Support:

Mark Heine	Web Site
Mark Horn	Admin. Captain
Pat McLaughlin	Auxillary Chairman
Debby McLaughlin	Newsletter Publisher
Julie Mello	Marketing Director
Don Reid	Projects

### EXPLORER ROSTER

Isack Guzman	Dillon Plumbtree
Bailey Maack	Tony Rossi
Cameron Murrin	Ian Toll
Garrett Petersen	