

# PORTAL RESCUE NEWS January 2019 Portal Rescue, Inc., P.O. Box 16331, Portal, AZ 85632 Tel: (520) 558-2206; Emergency Calls Only: 911 www.Portalrescue.com

# President's Report Bill Wilbur

Each year brings a different situation to the office of the Portal Rescue President. Last year it was fire law changes from the state of Arizona and the Department of Forestry and Fire Management.

In years past the DFFM presented fire management rules but never pressed any department for implementation. Early in 2018 DFFM warned fire departments that the implementation of existing regulations would be enforced starting in April. This meant that Portal Rescue had to obtain legal assistance in the form of a lawyer who was qualified to understand and implement fire laws for Portal Rescue and assure proper implementation.

Obtaining legal opinions costs money. We obtained the necessary opinions and are in the process of implementing the suggestions made by the lawyer. The result, however, was an unanticipated drain on our treasury. Was legal representation necessary? Yes. Having legal opinions in place and having a lawyer on retainer these days has become a necessary tool for any fire or EMS organization.

Another item from 2018 was a suggestion that Portal Rescue allow our fire equipment to support out of state fires. On the surface it does not seem to be a bad idea. However, after some analysis it became obvious that having our fire equipment out of area was not a good idea should a fire occur locally. Portal Rescue is here to support the community and as much as we'd like to be of assistance elsewhere, our community comes first.

Our organization is always on the lookout for volunteers. We have a new EMT and five new firefighters who have joined Portal Rescue as well as new Radio Operator trainees. We are happy to have the additional support. As EMT and firefighter classes become available we will again seek volunteers. These classes are of the highest caliber and our members are trained to the fullest extent for the safety and well-being of all involved. (Federal, State and college classes and training opportunities are offered and paid for by Portal Rescue to insure that Federal and State criteria are met.) One does not have to be a firefighter or EMT to volunteer and support Portal Rescue. In January we will begin training new Radio Operators for the necessary radio dispatch duties required when firefighters or EMTs go out on an emergency call. Other volunteer opportunities exist such as grounds maintenance, fund raising assistance and supporting the annual February "Soup's On" (known to the local community as the "Soup Kitchen") fundraiser.

I thank all our volunteers and wish the local community well.

# **Portal Rescue Board of Directors** (*Current until March 2019 elections*)

Bill Wilbur, President Ray Mendez, Vice President Susan Apitz, Secretary Jackie Lewis, Treasurer John Yerger, EMS Chief through August David Newton, Fire Chief Bud Johnson, Member-at-Large



# 2018 Fire Chief's Report *David Newton*

It was an average year for Portal Fire. We had nine fire calls. Malfunctioning power equipment caused two wildfires and destroyed one backhoe. Power line problems started three wildfires. The county mower started a couple of fires. We assisted Sunnyside FD with a semi-trailer fire on Hwy 80 in November. The fire near Herb Martyr in October was another reminder that fire is no respecter of any "season".

Kudos to Debb Johnson and her team, and the community for a successful campaign to obtain Firewise status for Portal. These and other continuing efforts will make a difference in surviving a wildfire.

Local training: Extrication from motor vehicle accidents (with Rodeo FD), tender operations, air brakes, pump and roll, progressive hose lays, and radio communications.

Special training: Three additional firefighters qualified as Rope Rescue Technicians (for a total of four). Two firefighters were able to participate in a prescribed burn at Ft. Huachuca. Assistant Chief Rolf Koford completed a class in the system used by state agencies to track wild land firefighter qualifications and training. In May, Arizona State Forestry put on a Basic Wildland Firefighter course here in Portal. Many folks from the community completed the course and five new firefighters passed the wild land fitness test and joined the department.

Thank you for your support.

#### **Fire Fighter Roster**

David Newton – Chief Matthew Arambula\* Eric Desfachelles Alina Downer\* Lee Dyal Henry Essary\* Jeff Gee Tim Lawson

Rolf Koford Larry Rivers Victor Shawe\* Lance Shultis Andrew Waser\* John Yerger \**New 2018* 

# Congratulations! We're FIREWISE! *Deb Johnson*

After a yearlong cooperative effort, our community was rewarded with Portal becoming a recognized Firewise Community. There was a presentation at the Portal Rescue Classroom with Mayra Moreno from the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management. This is a great accomplishment and it took a tremendous amount of work by many of you!

In November we had two meetings in the Portal Rescue Classroom to continue community education on the dangers of wildland fires in the Wildland Urban Interface. As a Firewise community, we can improve our chances of surviving a major wildfire by some basic, rather simple Firewise practices.

We re-iterated the importance of fuel reduction on our properties and around the community, emphasizing that this is not a one-time job. It has to be an annual or bi-annual effort to keep grasses mowed, dead and low hanging branches limbed up, and leaves and ground litter removed. Also, using fire resistant materials when doing any renovations improves our home's survivability during a wild fire.

We also did a tabletop evacuation drill using a satellite image of our community. This allowed us to view the escape routes available from our homes and emphasized the need for all of us to become familiar with evacuation route options from our properties. When possible, we are encouraged to drive evacuation options occasionally to ensure they are open in the event of an emergency.

Being a Firewise community means we are eligible to apply for 90/10 grants to reduce the cost of fuel reduction work. The next application period will probably be in February or March of 2019.

Watch for announcements of upcoming community meetings this spring and summer to continue our Firewise education efforts. This has been a significant effort by everyone and should remain a part of our daily lives to keep our forest and homes safe.



# EMS Report for 2018 John Yerger – EMS Coordinator

2018 was busier than the previous year, with 32 medical calls. Looking at the statistics, it is sobering to realize how frequently we have only one or two EMTs available at any given moment to respond to medical emergencies. Without enough of our own EMTs to answer the call, community members must wait for EMTs from Douglas, which can easily quadruple the amount of time one must wait for emergency medical care. Every Portal Rescue member is of critical importance, and we are always eager to expand that team to better provide for the community.

We also need to retain every team member we have - it doesn't hurt to thank your nearest EMT for their volunteerism! In that vein, I'd like to publicly thank E.T. Collinsworth, Joan Galanis, Jackie Lewis, Barbara Roth and our newest addition Carolyn Nordstrom for sticking with our small but effective crew. I would also be remiss if I failed to thank outgoing EMTs Jennifer (2 years) and Jerry Racicot (7 years) for their service; I will personally miss your skilled participation on our team. Our Radio Operators also provide a critical service, dropping everything to run out the door at the same time as our EMTs. Thanks to Susanne Apitz (12+ years as EMT) for staying on as a Radio Operator, and to Bonnie Bowen and Dinah Davidson for stepping up their efforts to assist us during emergency operations.

A brief note to area residents: if you must call 911 from a cell phone, please remind the dispatcher that Portal Rescue is your closest resource. Cell phone calls are routed through New Mexico even if you are in Arizona, which can be confusing for everyone. Landline calls, however, stay within the county from which you are calling.

Another reminder: if you do not yet have an air ambulance membership, please consider it. We live in a beautiful but remote area, and <u>roughly one-third of our patients must be</u> transported by helicopter to advanced medical care.

Finally, a big "thanks!" to our community supporters – without you, Portal Rescue would not exist.

# **EMT Roster**

John Yerger – EMT CoordinatorET CollinsworthCarolyn Nordstrom\*Joan GalanisBarbara RothJackie Lewis\*New 2018

# Drivers

Steve Chapman\* Shane Burchfield \*New 2018



# June 4th fire off Desert Willow 2018 *Helen Snyder*

Portal Rescue and Rodeo Fire responded to a midnight transformer fire yesterday, along with several Columbus Electric trucks and crew. The 10-acre fire started near a private residence whose owner had done an excellent Firewise preparation job, clearing brush and grass so effectively for 100 feet, that Jeff Gee says that's undoubtedly what saved the house.

Jeff said Columbus Electric found one pole burned completely through at the base and suspended by its wires. The crew brought in a new pole, set it and got the electrical components installed in the dark. I believe the transformer may have been toast and had to be replaced too but am not sure.

The attached photo was taken across the burned fire ground by Jeff, and shows the Rodeo truck and Lance Shultis. Flame lengths in the grass were up to ten feet, Jeff thought, but were mostly less and adds that night time fire photos can look pretty dramatic. Lance and Ramon from Rodeo and chief David Newton and Jeff were taking no chances. A lack of wind helped.

Jeff had high praise for CEC for the speed at which they got this one fixed in the dark and smoke. We're lucky to have all these skilled people willing to do these dangerous jobs, both our electric crews and the volunteer firefighters.



Newsletter compiled and edited by Patricia Espenak with assistance from Jackie Lewis, and IT & page layout support by Fred Espenak — Printed and folded by Office Max, Sierra Vista, AZ



# Mid-March Fire 2018 Peg Abbott

I would like to give a testimonial to thank our community. I was a direct witness to one the three fires of the last days and learned a lot about how we all need to be ready with a plan, equipment (at every home something!) and communication.

Being close by, I felt this one more personally, and learned that until you are looking and feeling the flames threatening what you love and cherish and worked so hard to build, you can't really know how much we need these dedicated, skilled and brave people and what they do.

When a fire broke out at Wadsworth's home, just uphill, it was only minutes before it went from light smoke to raging flame. Sarah Lounsbery alerted me by cell as she rode her bike to work and she took immediate action. No power, no water, and the fire was taking off. Noel Snyder, Penny Smith, Loren Smith and Bob Rodrigues came on a moment's notice.

Shovels can only do so much, yet neighbors and friends poured forth to help and held the back end by the house until those glorious fire engines could come. And I do mean glorious! With them came skilled help, organization and calm. They fanned out and beat down the flames crowning in the mesquite as the fire raced towards Carl Anderson's. No shovel would have worked at the front of that fire. Without the community response at all levels, it could have reached several homes.

We owe so much to the fire crew and the communications crew that supports them. I am so thankful to all who came to help that day, when my neighbor was gone. It could have been a terrible loss to them and many others if the shovel brigade and then the fire trucks and skilled fighters had not come.

I feel committed to do what I can to fire proof my home, make a solid evacuation plan for my animals and have my equipment where I can find it. I plan to get water storage and a way to use it when there is no power. We all must take part in a safe community and I certainly thank those who step up as such amazing volunteers, thank you all!

# March 14th Fire near Wadsworth's *Helen Snyder*

After Wednesday's scary fires and power outages I called Chris Martinez, Columbus Electric Coop manager, to get a better idea of what happened, since the fires seemed to be related to the electrical system. He was very helpful and explained it had started with faults on our power line to south Rodeo. After hours of patrolling and repairing damaged lines it was determined that a crow or raven (I'm guessing probably nest building, as it's that time of year), had bridged the lines and created a fault across two phases, sending twice the amperage down the wires. Our usual outages here are caused by a short or fault between the ground and one phase.

When the outage began, the cause and exact location of the fault was unknown and the fault tripped the power all the way back to the substation. When the crew tried to bring power back on line, the fault had not cleared, so this caused damage to other sections of line. Repairs continued throughout the day until later in the evening when it was thought all was clear because the role of the crows/ravens was still undiscovered.

The crews again tried to bring the feeder back on line, but the fault still existed. This time a device malfunctioned, taking power down to three Substations– first Pyramid, then Animas, and finally the third substation, in Rodeo and power eventually went out for all. As it cascaded, this fault caused wires to overheat and catch fire and at least one wire ended up on the ground. The repair crew was in the Rodeo substation when an electrical flash occurred, a frightening situation for them.

The crews worked till after midnight patrolling down each branch of the system where power was still out. At that point Chris ordered them home to rest, leaving only some areas south of Rodeo without power till Thursday morning.

With the existing grid, each branch has to be checked for faults, so power can be restored to homes on that branch. Chris says over the next three years they'll be working on a system that will allow your individual meter to communicate remotely with the co-op office, quickly allowing them to pinpoint loss of power and the fault that caused it.



# **EMERGENCY INFORMATION and** CALLING 911

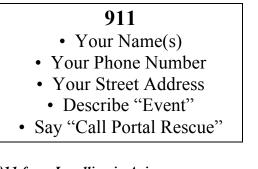
Below is a summary of the information you need for emergencies. Post this page for quick reference or keep it with your phone book.

# **GUIDE FOR CALLING 911 in** PORTAL, AZ, and RODEO, NM **Bonnie Bowen\***

#### When should you call 911?

- Whenever you have concerns about medical issues that need immediate attention
- When you have a fire
- When you have another emergency (such as a break-in)
- Don't let concerns about imposing on others stop you from calling 911

Make the guide below and post it near your phones, on your fridge, and in other locations where it can be easily found by you or a visitor.



### Calling 911 from Landline in Arizona

- Who answers? Cochise County Dispatch Center
- What do you tell the dispatcher? (see above guide!)
  - Name, phone number, address
  - Describe the "Event"
    Ask them to "Call Portal Rescue"
- You can call a Portal Rescue EMT or member if you know one - AFTER you call 911

#### Calling 911 from Landline or Cell in New Mexico

- Who answers? Hidalgo County Dispatch Center (Lordsburg)
- What to tell the dispatcher? same as AZ

# Calling 911 from Cell Phone in Arizona

#### (use a landline if possible)

- •Who answers? Hidalgo County Dispatch Center (Lordsburg)
  - Cell tower is in New Mexico
- Tell dispatcher you are in Portal, AZ and ask for call to be transferred to Cochise County Dispatch
- What do you tell the Cochise County Dispatcher? same as when calling from a landline

• If you cannot reach Cochise County Dispatch from your cell phone, you can call the following number that goes directly to Dispatch

#### • 520-803-3550

• Tell Dispatch that you are calling from a cell phone and are requesting assistance in Cochise County

#### What about 911 for a FIRE?

- Call 911
- Dispatch will route the call
- State Fire, Forest Service, other communities may be dispatched
- Portal Rescue will be notified and will respond; other resources may arrive
- \*Based on Sew What Program about 911 11/28/2018

# File of Life

### Medical information kept in a magnetic pouch on *your refrigerator*

There should be one form filled out for each member of your family. If necessary, you may have more than one set posted. Use pencil so you can update when there are changes in medications or medical conditions.

The File of Life can be used by EMTs in the event that you or your family members are unable to provide information during an emergency. Emergencies can be quite overwhelming and having medical information immediately handy can reduce the stress as well as aid in providing the appropriate medical care.

File of Life packets are available at Soup's On (Portal Rescue's annual fundraiser) and other events where Portal Rescue is present. It is also included in Sew What Welcome Wagon packets.

What can you do to be prepared for a medical emergency or evacuation? A guideline to Essential Documents is available in the Portal Library (supported by Friends of the Library).

Your packet of Essential Documents should include instructions for copying and storing documents such as

- Medication list
- Drivers' licenses
- Medical insurance cards
- Living wills
- Powers of attorney for healthcare
- Contacts lists
- Pet care instructions.

Your packet should also contain the 911 calling instructions given on this page and the File of Life medical information cards.

Be sure to pick up your File of Life Packet and copies of your Essential Documents at the Portal Library if you haven't already!

(This page is based on the November 2018 Sew What Club Program, where members and guests learned about the 911 system in the Portal and Rodeo areas. Bonnie Bowen, Susanne Apitz and Deborah Herczog covered the various contingencies when calling from a landline or cell phone and how to be prepared.)

# Treasurer's Report Jackie Lewis

I want to thank the Board members and Rick Beno for filling in during my unexpected 3-month absence in early 2018. It was an especially busy time with our annual fundraiser going on in February.

The annual donation drive brought in \$21,729. Many thanks to Morgan Jackson for processing the Donation Drive mailings and updating the thermometer. This brought our total donations to \$31,138, which is \$1,138 over our \$30,000 budget. Community financial support continues to affirm your desire to keep Portal Rescue viable as first response to local emergencies.

> Total Income: \$75,037 Total Expenses: \$85,085

We had some heavy line items in the expense categories and subsequently came in over budget. We do not foresee those expenses being carried into another year. The full report will be given at the Annual Meeting, Wednesday, March 20, 2019.

# **RCO Roster**

Suzanne Apitz Bonnie Bowen Dinah Davidson Rolf Koford Jackie Lewis Bill Wilbur





# Helicopter Service Memberships For Portal-Rodeo Residents

There are three helicopter services that can respond to Portal Rescue 911 calls. We don't have control over which one comes, so PR recommends that people subscribe to memberships in all 3 services. All costs are per year. Your health insurance will be charged for helicopter flights, but if you don't have insurance or you have a co-pay or deductible, you won't have to pay if you have a membership in the service that you belong to. Contact your insurance company if you have questions about your coverage.

#### AirMedCare (LifeLine/Air Evac):

www.airmedcarenetwork.com/ or 1-855-771-1355. This service based is in Douglas and is the MOST COMMON provider. The cost is \$85 for an adult or couple (<60) or \$65 for a senior individual or couple ( $\geq 60$ ).

<u>Air Methods Advantage</u> (helicopters are labeled *Life Net* or *Native Air*)

www.airmethods.com/airmethodsadvantage or 1-855-877-2518. Life Net is based in Willcox and sometimes responds to Portal. Native Air is based in Silver City and responds to New Mexico emergencies (not sure if it responds in AZ). The cost is \$40/year for an individual and \$75 for a household.

**PhiCare:** www.phicares.com or 1-888-435-9744. PhiCares helicopters are based in Sierra Vista. The cost is \$30 for an individual and \$50 for a household if you have health insurance, \$100 per individual if you don't have health insurance.

> **Portal Rescue Annual Meeting** Wednesday, March 20, 2019 Portal Rescue Classroom 5:30 pm Community Potluck 6:30 pm Business Meeting

• Nominate and vote for board members

- 2018 in review
- What's new for 2019

# Home Medical Items Available For Borrowing from the Portal Rescue Storage Area

Contact Jackie Lewis (558-2287 or winjac12@vtc.net) for assistance with access to the needed items.

- 3 Wheeled Walkers
- 2 Wheeled Walker with seat and brakes
- 1 3-Wheeled Scooter
- 4 Sets of Adult Adjustable Height Crutches
- 1 Set Child Adjustable Height Crutches
- 4 Canes
- 2 Black Wheelchairs
- 1 Raised Toilet Seat
- 2 Raised Toilet Seat with Arms
- 1 Portable Toilet Chair
- 1 Soft Toilet Seat
- 1 Bedpan
- 1 Urinal
- 1 Handheld Shower kit (attaches to faucet)
- 3 Shower Stools

2 Suction Safe-er-Grip

- Limb Icer
   Back Brace
   Soft Boot
   Orthopedic Ankle & Leg Brace
   Air cast Ankle Brace
   Bed Back Pillow
- Continuous Passive Motion Machine
   Wheeled Oxygen Tank Carriers

   Variety of incontinence pads and adult diapers
- 1 Child Car Seat
- 1 Booster Seat and cover
- 1 Car seat



Portal Rescue and Portal Lodge

Portal Rescue P.O. Box 16331 Portal, AZ 85632

#### Yes, I want to help support Portal Rescue Here's my tax-deductable\* donation of: \*Please consult your tax advisor. < \$80 **\$80** \$500 \$1000 \$150 \$300 Donor Friend Patron **Sponsor** Benefactor Steward Please make checks payable to **PORTAL RESCUE**, Inc.

Mail to: Portal Rescue Inc, P.O. Box 16331 Portal, AZ 85632

Name:		
I wish to remain anonymous. (Please circle: Address:	Yes or No)	
Phone: ( )	Email Address:	(for meetings and announcements<)

# "SOUPS ON" RAFFLE PRIZES - TICKETS \$1.00 ea.

#1	TWO FREE NIGHTS at CAVE CREEK RANCH for 2 people
	Donated by Reed Peters
#2	TWO ORIGINAL OIL PAINTINGS "Hill Behind the House"
	Painted by Crystal Forman Brown <i>Donated by Bill &amp; Chris Wilbur</i>
	"Monsoon Gift" painted and donated by Sandy Urban
#3	QUILTED WALL HANGING 23" X 22" "Pyrrhuloxia in the Morning
	Glories" Created and donated by Carolyn Dearing
#4	TWO FREE NIGHTS AT DD GAMBLES GUEST LODGE includes all meals
	and a horseback ride for 4 people. <i>Donated by Tom and Alicia Davidson</i>
#5	MATA ORTIZ POTTERY by Quesada family 9"x10" Great Horned Owl
	Hand-formed not turned (stand included) Donated by Joe and Anne Morris
#6	DAVE UTTERBACK PRINT "Baby Great Horned Owl"
	(print is 8.5"x12", matted 14"x18") Donated by Diana Hadley
#7	PHOTO of "Great Nebula in Orion" and ONE NIGHT STAR GAZING at
	Conferring with the Sky Observatory donated by Rick Beno
#8	\$100.00 GIFT CERTIFICATE from Chiricahua Desert Museum
#9	\$100 of AZ Scratch LOTTERY TICKETS
#10	CAT or DOG EXAM & VACCINATION (2 prizes)
	Donated by Dr. Michael John of High Desert Vet Service
#11	LET'S EAT OUT <i>includes 6 meals</i>
	Breakfast for 2 at Rodeo Café, Lunch for 2 at Sky Island &
	Dinner for 2 at Portal Café
#12	Vintage Bill Reinbold WOOD CARVING
	"Magnificent Hummingbird in Flight" Donated by Robert and Cecilia Hessler
#13	\$100 CERTIFICATE payable toward PET-SITTING
	by Best Ever Animal Care Donated by Theo Codry
TICk	<pre>KETS PURCHASED@\$1.00 ea. = Total \$</pre>
Indicate how	many tickets you want for each prize above. Make check payable to <b>Portal Rescue</b> and <b>MAIL</b>
this form & y	your check to <u>C. Wilbur, 11999 Wrangler Rd., Portal, AZ 85632</u> . We will fill out your tickets,
mail your stu	bs and phone you when you win.
	Phone #

and form & your encer to <u>e. (filled)</u> , (filling) (filli	05052
mail your stubs and phone you when you win.	
Name	Pho
Address	

# 2018 Donor List

### **DONOR:**

Peg Abbott Hank & Elizabeth Addison-Dozier Anne Blondeau Susan Crawford Philip & Barbara Deegan Teri Denson Monica Rector Edward & Josie Rivera Saucedo's Super Market Joyce Schatz Barney Tomberlin James & DeniseValverde-Miller Amazon Smile

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Lisa Addison Robert & Cecilia Hessler John & Karen McQuillan Pete & Barbara Miller Sew What Club Vanguard Charitable Fund Anonymous x 2

#### **DONATIONS IN MEMORY OF:**

Bob & Jeanne Addison Rene Blondeau Alice Chew Gary Dyal David Fredericks Gerry Hernbrode Adeline Miller Joyce Schatz

#### **DONATIONS IN HONOR OF:**

Gloria Childress Jeff Cooney Bob Dearing Vicki Freitas

#### **Other Services:**

**Umphres** Propane

Portal Rescue is a 501c3 organization and your donations may be tax deductible. Please work with your accountant. Your donations provide the majority of the income that Portal Rescue receives. Thank you for your dedication to keeping Portal Rescue funded.

We thank individuals and businesses for their donations of food, raffle items and time working the annual fundraiser.

Thank you for bringing your aluminum cans to the Post Office to be recycled and to Pete Miller for collecting them and driving to the recycle center.

If you find your name missing, please contact Jackie Lewis, PR Treasurer at 520-558-2287 or winjac12@vtc.net. I was away for the first 3 months of the year and some names may have slipped through the paperwork cracks. A correct page will be posted at the Post Office in Portal and in Rodeo when completed.