



Seldovia Gazette

Serving Seldovia, Alaska and Kachemak Bay southeast

Seldovia, AK

34 °F / 1 °C

Mostly Cloudy
at 9:24 AM

[Click for Forecast](#)

Thursday, April 10, 2008

Just another day in paradise

[Local News](#)

[Calendar](#)

[Opinions](#)

[Spotlight](#)

[School](#)

[Classifieds](#)

[Archives](#)

[Seldovia.com](#)

[Gazette Services](#)

A truly unique shopping experience - Gifts for that special person! Friendly - Affordable

HERRING BAY MERCANTILE

<http://www.herringbaymercantile.com>

Located in beautiful downtown Seldovia - 275 Main St.



[Current Spotlight](#) | [Spotlight Archives](#)

Seldovia Fire & EMS Preparedness

by Mary Glover & Lisa O'Leary



WILD FIRE PREPAREDNESS MEETING

by Lisa O'Leary

How would Seldovia and the surrounding area fair in the event of a wild fire? What would you do to protect your property and surrounding area? These questions were among those posed at a recent community meeting with Terry Andersen, who has been contracted by the Kenai Peninsula Borough to develop plans for the communities on the south side of Kachemak Bay in the event of wild land fire. This planning process is sponsored by the Spruce Bark Beetle Mitigation Project in an effort to help outlying communities be prepared for the potential of wild land fire.

Community members met with Mr. Andersen on Tuesday, April 8, in the conference center to discuss the potential for wild land fire and ideas for mitigation in the event of wild land fire. The purpose of the meeting was specifically to get community members thinking about what they think would be good prevention and preparation. Mr. Andersen has a background as a firefighter here on the Kenai Peninsula, and was the Incident Commander for the first 24 hours of the Caribou Hills Fire. His experience was key in facilitating the meeting with local residents, and guiding them in productive brainstorming.

Seldovia Fire & EMS Department

by Mary Glover

An unchallenged community issue is the necessity of an adequate and professional fire & emergency medical services. At any given time any one of us could become ill or have a fire. As no one has a crystal ball, preparedness is the key.

Here in Seldovia, we have a volunteer service. Volunteers give back to their community... and, volunteers need to be trained. Historically, the Seldovia Fire and EMS Department was like a big family. The meetings were held at the Linwood and it was a social affair. (This is the reason the Linwood has been so helpful for so many years with substantial funding of the Seldovia Fire and EMS Department by pull tabs and other means.) Most of the original founders of this city service are no longer in Seldovia. As a family grows, it also changes. It is obviously ridiculous to expect the department to function as it did in the past on the same professional, technical and social levels. As fire fighting technique, medical developments, equipment and knowledge improves and increases, it becomes essential to get training to be able to properly respond in an emergency situation. Here we get into "Being Prepared."

What time constraint does "training" involve for the fire

Terry will be back in June to hold the second meeting in the series, and actually put some of those ideas on paper as action points. Any and all input is welcome from the community. These meetings have been held in other communities, and action points have been developed and documented with encouraging results. Examples of these action plans can be viewed at the Borough website www.borough.kenai.ak.us/sbb, and then following the link to community wild fire protection.

Watch for postings and a mailed notification of the second meeting to be held in June. Terry Andersen will be visiting for a few days at that time, taking a look around the community and surrounding area and assessing potential risk factors. Your thoughts and ideas are important to this planning process. When we work together, good things happen!

Lisa O'Leary
Fire Administrator
City of Seldovia
907-234-7812



Lisa O'Leary, Fire Administrator

department? **Only four (4) hours a month!** Monday night for two hours, every other Monday night! I spend more time drinking a cup of coffee each week!

To the trained crews, in either EMS or Fire Department, we would rather have one trained person work with us than a dozen by-standers who all have the best intentions to help. On April 29th last year, if you were in Seldovia, you remember the lodge fire. This was the largest fire Seldovia has had in many years. The entire town came out to help. It was amazing there were no injuries or casualties and the fire was contained without spreading to other nearby buildings. But, the structure burnt to the ground. Fire Administrator, Lisa O'Leary, stated that the biggest problem during the fire was that there was no communication or teamwork. It would have been great for the Seldovia Fire and EMS Department to have had all the people who helped that day to have been a trained firefighter. I personally witnessed two very potentially dangerous situations, that had something gone wrong, we could have been evacuating some severely injured people out of Seldovia. They were not dressed to fight a fire and the scene definitely was not safe.

Some really good news is that the Seldovia Fire and EMS Department is moving forward with plans for training. In addition to the regular Fire & EMS trainings on Monday nights, the EMS group is going to hold an EMS II class starting this week. There are plans to continue the "paint a hydrant" next summer, doing the pancake breakfast on the 4th of July, and hosting a Firefighters Challenge for adults and children on the 4th.

Within the fire department, a commitment of only four hours a week will enable a person to be able to handle a hose, know where and how to operate some of the equipment on a fire truck and essentially be a really big trained help when needed. Plus, I know of no other city I have lived in that I could really be part of a fire department, wear the equipment and ride the truck! "That is way cool!"

So, why not sign up for a class and give back to your community? It is a win, win. (PS If you own property, you also qualify for \$10,000 of assessed valuation on your property. Depending upon the value of your property, the percentage of gain varies, but it may help. [Here's the form.](#))



Devastation after the lodge fire of 4/29/07



Co-Fire Chief, Tim O'Leary, teaching EMS ramp rescue.



Firetruck dressed up for the 4th of July



Firetruck in operation at fire.
On top is Co-Fire Chief Mike Driscoll



Fire training on a Monday night



Fire training on a Monday night



Parade on the 4th of July - ambulance and fire truck



Ambulance out of firehall during training session

Copyright © 2008 Seldovia.com, Inc. and Seldovia Gazette. All rights reserved. The Seldovia Gazette is published weekly by Seldovia.com, Inc. Contents of this publication may not be used or reproduced, in whole or in part, in any form or manner without the express written permission of Seldovia.com, Inc. [Click here for additional details.](#)