



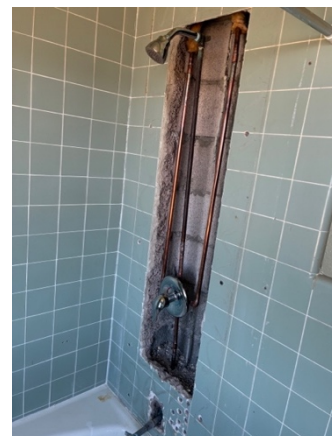
BALD BULLETIN



The official monthly newsletter of the Eastern Sierra Local Chapter of the FFLA

End of July, 2026 - Volume 2

1. **SWAG UPDATE:** Our Quartermaster Paula is very busy researching online sales and payment services. We will have plenty more to report next month.
2. **SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATE:** Our Social Media Coordinator had a priority pop up, and can no longer do this. So, we are now looking for a volunteer who is handy with that stuff. The job is to link with the FFLA and Inyo Facebook pages, and to build Bald Mountain exposure on any other cool platforms. Please e-mail Scott and let him know you're in.
3. **ANOTHER FIRST:** Last month, our volunteer went in service, and Dispatch immediately provided him with a legal description and asked him to check it for a citizen's report of smoke there. So, he had to reverse-engineer the smoke report process. He had to locate the legal on the Osborne map to figure out the location, mark it with the grease pencil, then identify and glass the area carefully. Turned out to be dust. You might practice this; in case it happens to you. And trainers, this is another drill for your trainees. *(Info for new people: to "glass" an area is a verb meaning to check it carefully with binoculars. The phrase is common in this business.)*
4. **HELP NEEDED:** Plumbers came and repaired our burst pipes, but left some holes in the walls. If you have experience in repairing holes in cinder block and tile, we can use your expertise. Please contact Scott.



5. **BOMBS AWAY:** In Hawthorne, Nevada, there is a military munitions depot where occasionally they detonate bombs and explosives. When they do, it sends up a plume that we see from 33 miles away between azimuths 15 and 24 degrees. **Do not call these in as smoke reports.** Instead, confirm it with a conversation like this:

TOWER: Inyo, Bald Mountain Lookout, North, Tone 3

DISPATCH: Bald Mountain Lookout?

TOWER: *(in a calm and professional voice)* I'm seeing a plume at __ degrees, in the direction of Hawthorne Army Depot. Can you confirm a detonation?

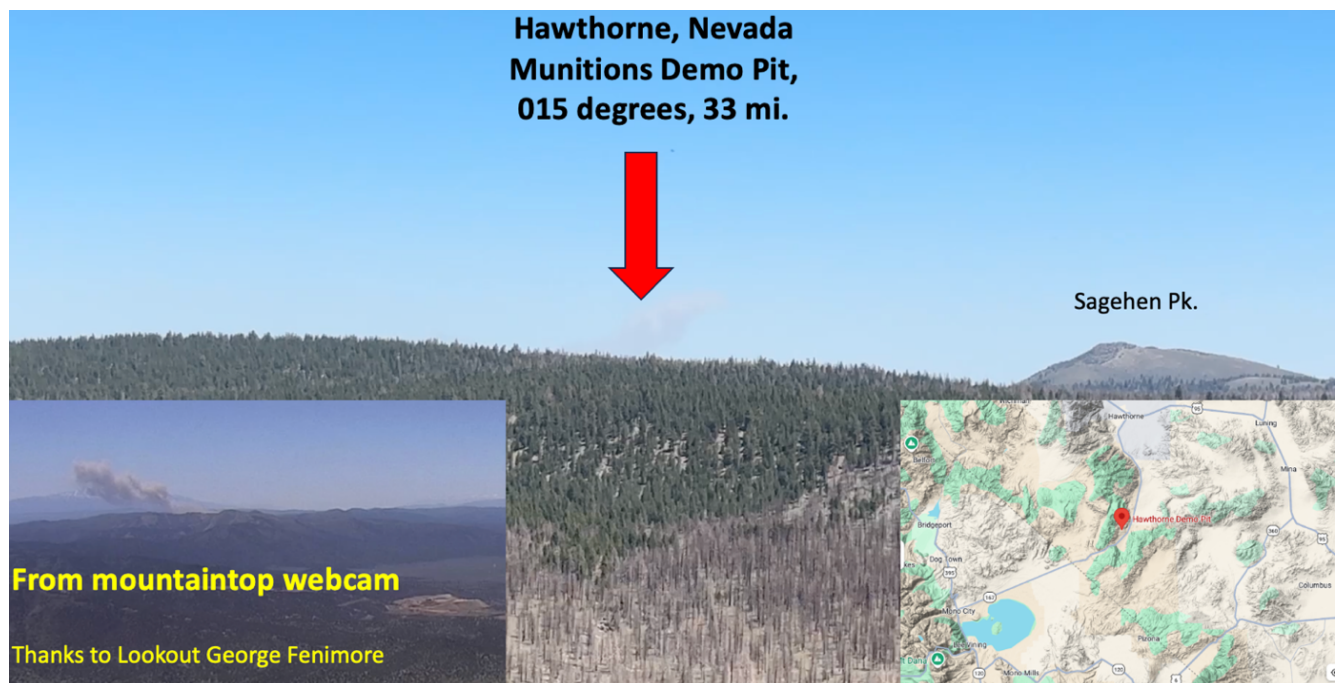
DISPATCH: Affirmative Bald Mountain, Hawthorne blasting confirmed.

BREAK: (Duty Officer), do you copy direct?

DUTY OFFICER: Copy

{then make an entry about it in the log} The above script is posted in the Cheat Sheets binder.

Our latest of about 6 Hawthorne plumes were on 7/29 and 7/30. This collage is the first page in the Training Binder on the desk for your reference:



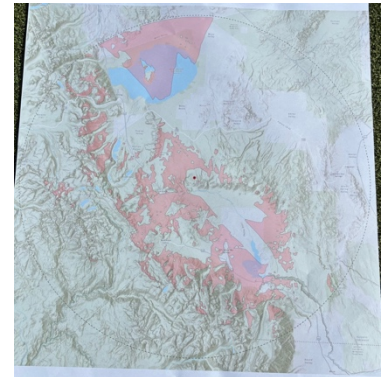
6. **PLUMBING & HEATING:** Plumbers repaired our burst pipes and the shower and indoor toilet worked for 2 weeks - then it all backed up. So, as of today, all plumbing fixtures are out of service. The wall heater in the bedroom is also offline, and we have a portable propane heater if needed. Here's a mini-video describing it all, and directing you to the shower house at the Ranger Station:

<https://vimeo.com/1214109439?fl=ip&fe=ec>



7. **HERE'S A THOUGHT:** Why not burn 10 minutes of the late-afternoon doldrums and complete your online Daily Communications Log just before you go out-of-service? Cell phones work well as "hot spots" up there. That gets the info posted as early as possible, especially for the staff coming on tomorrow.

8. **A NEW RESOURCE:** George Fennimore got his brother-in-law's company to print a viewshed map for Bald Mountain's summit. Viewshed maps use GIS software to illustrate what features can be physically seen from the tower, and which ones are blocked from view by the terrain. Let's keep our 18 X 23 printed copy folded and kept in the response area maps binder, which we keep behind the desk binders. (until "that guy" puts it elsewhere)

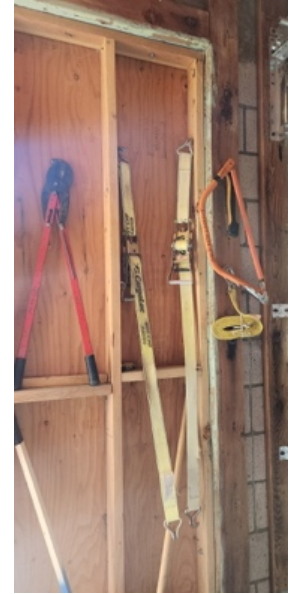


9. **HARRANGUE OF THE MONTH:** We *still* struggle to contact our on-duty, or our in-route lookout staff who separate themselves from their cellphones and miss our calls. Please, please find a way to wear your phone on your person with the ringer ON while traveling to, and while working the tower..... *please*.

10. **CURRENT EVENTS:** Cal Fire has opened a new fire station at Mammoth Airport. You may hear their Engine 3574 get mentioned on the radio. Scott is scheduling a session to visit their new digs and show them our slide show.



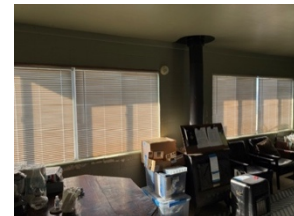
11. **TREE DOWN!** We have assembled everything you need to clear a small-to-medium tree that may have blown down and blocked the road. Just inside the garage door are mounted: 1 bow saw, 1 limb saw, 2 come-alongs, & 1 tow strap. If the tree trunk is too big or too dangerous to try to move, your other option is to call Patrol 11 or Patrol 12, who may or may not be able to answer the phone; and may or may not be able to bring in a Forest Service resource with a chainsaw. Option #3 is to radio Dispatch and carefully describe the location of the blocked road. (No promises there either!) Next time you are in the tower, see Nancy Baker's narrative of her tree-down experience in the Cheat Sheets binder.



12. **SHE DONE GOOD:** Kay Boyko is Bald Mountain's busiest trainer, working 13 days this season. She also volunteers for the Southern California Mountains Foundation on the San Bernardino National Forest. On June 30 she was in Butler Peak Lookout and made the first call on the Snow Fire, 8 miles from the tower. Good Obs Kay!! *(Info for new people: anytime you see a smoke photo taken by a lookout, know that it has been growing for about 20 minutes before the lookout had time to snap a picture of it after writing it up and calling it in)*



13. **CURB APPEAL:** Thank you to our trainers Jan and Rich Kinney from Buck Rock Foundation for hanging a new set of blinds in the living quarters. They did a professional-looking job and reduced the shabby factor considerably. Now, to tackle the broken window.....



14. **VACUUM:** Chris procured a new charger and battery for our cordless rechargeable vacuum. We know how much you enjoy cleaning up the place before you sign out, and now it is that much easier. The charger is plugged into the inverter on the chair next to the fridge.

15. **ADDING TO THE TEAM:** Our visiting in-tower trainers have been working very hard and as of the end of July have certified **28** trainees to go to work for this, the Eastern Sierra Chapter of the Forest Fire Lookout Association. 9 more are either in training or are about to start. We know the calendar is a bit constipated this season – that is due to the number of trainers we had to deploy to get all of this work done. Remember we prefer two volunteers per shift for safety and for workload sharing. And if you haven't yet, be sure to go to <https://firelookout.org/join/> to get your official FFLA membership – to help our noble cause!

16. **PHOTO OF THE MONTH** by Phil Kohlmetz



Complementary Meme from Visiting Volunteer Mike Smelser:

