

# Fire victims offer heartfelt thanks

By: Gamin Summers  
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Phyllis Hawthorne was more than a little overwhelmed when she received a \$1,736 check, the result of fund-raising efforts by Cromer School's PTO.

"I cried. I was shocked by how much money they made for us," she said. Some of the money came from Hat Days, when students paid \$1 to wear a hat to school, and from Buck in a Bag, when students took home a paper bag in which parents could anonymously put money. Other parents wrote checks and donated household items.

The Hawthorne family lost their home to a fire in January, and their insurance covered only the dwelling. Since Feb. 3, the family has stayed at the Howard Johnson Motel on Route 66, and Hawthorne is thankful for the discounted rate they've received.

Hawthorne's daughter, Georgiana, 11, is a student at Cromer, and her son Juan, 13, goes to Mount Elden Middle School. Parents of MEMS students also donated money and household items.

The family's new mobile home should be ready for occupancy soon, and Hawthorne is grateful for donations of time and materials from those who helped prepare her lot for the new home: Block-Lite, Arrow Redi-Mix, Brick Right, Canyon Pipe, Big Bear Heating and Cooling and Wirth Masonry.

Hawthorne wishes to express thanks also to Summit Fire, Flagstaff Sheriff's Posse for donated beds, the American Red

Cross and the Knights of Columbus and their Fishing for Funds program. Maximum Martial Arts replaced all of Georgiana's equipment for her classes. They also donated money and household items, as did Hawthorne's workplace, NEBS. Silver Saddle Storage and Burris Lane Storage provided units in which to store the donated items and anything salvaged from the fire. "We have a whole house full of furniture," she said, "all donated. It's awesome."

Hawthorne expresses thanks to family and friends who have taken the time to work on the property.

"You never expect this to happen," she said, and tears flowed freely when she spoke of the experience. "It's been a really hard, long haul, and I just want to thank everybody from the bottom of my heart for all the support they've given us through this time. I'm overwhelmed by the kindness and community support we've received, even from strangers."

#### SUMMIT FIRE PAYS TRIBUTE TO RETIRING SECRETARY

Sharon Dobrinski was born and raised in Flagstaff. She lived in Doney Park for 10 years, then she moved to Mormon Lake. As fate would have it, that's when she started working for Summit Fire Department, and every day for the past six years she has traveled 42 miles, one way, to work. Before the move, she lived within a half-mile of her future workplace.

Dobrinski is retiring, and March 25 is her last day. She had previously been with Flagstaff Unified School District for 23 years, mostly at Thomas School.

Chief Don Howard bemoans the loss to his department.

"We're going to miss her tremendously. I feel that, of all the people involved in Summit Fire, she represents the culture that we want to have here: positive attitude, good work ethic, dealing with others on a daily basis in such a friendly, open and unassuming way," he said.

Howard said, and Dobrinski agreed, that the only difference between working at the grade school and working at the fire department is that the firefighters are children of a larger size.

Each shift is doing something special for her before she goes, Howard says, and then the whole department will have a get-together. "We're not going to forget her. We'll get her some bonbons occasionally, so she doesn't forget us."

Dobrinski has enjoyed her time with Summit Fire. "The people are super to work with. The community is very lucky to have this department."

Dobrinski and her husband have been building a home in Mormon Lake for about four years. They are living in his grandmother's little 100-year-old home while they build on the same property. Her immediate plans are to finish painting and sanding their log home. "Hopefully we'll get to move in," she says.

"I'm going to miss everybody, and the people I've met within the community. I hope to stop in from time to time and say hello."

## PEAKS VIEW COUNTY PARK IMPROVEMENTS ON THE WAY

Coconino County Parks and Recreation Department is in contract negotiations for restroom and picnic ramada construction projects at Peaks View County Park.

Work is expected to start later in the spring and be completed before summer's end. Landscaping projects involving the Master Gardeners and AmeriCorps volunteers will also take place.

To be involved or for more information, call Tom Dresler at 774-6126.

## PUBLIC TRAILS MEETING HELD

About 35 people attended the public trails meeting hosted by the Coconino County Parks and Recreation Department (CCPR) on

Thursday, Feb. 12, at the Summit Fire Station on Koch Field Road. The purpose of the meeting was to inform Doney Park, Timberline and Fernwood area residents about the proposed trail system that would link those communities to Flagstaff. The project is part of the Coconino Parks and Open Space Program, approved by voters in November 2002.

CCPR asked residents to tell them about their current trail use and what they would like to see in a future trail system.

Supervisors Liz Archuleta and Deb Hill, and CCPR staff Nalon Smith and Cynthia Lovely answered questions from the participants and encouraged residents to form a trails advisory group. Board of Supervisors Chairman Matt Ryan urged people to volunteer to work on all stages of the trail development and implementation, saying that the more that people get involved, the better the system will meet their needs.

Gamin Summers is interested in your news of Doney Park and surrounding areas. Call her at 890-7628 or email [gamin@commspeed.net](mailto:gamin@commspeed.net).

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