

# Pioneer Mutual News

Pioneer Mutual Hook & Ladder Society  
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Sacramento, CA. 95816

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**The date of the annual crab feed was incorrect in the Fall Newsletter of PMN.  
The correct date for the PMH&LS Crab Feed is Friday, February 10, 2017  
Please see the enclosed Crab Feed Flyer for more information.**

# Pioneer Mutual News

Winter, 2016

## The San Francisco Fire Department's 150th Anniversary Celebration

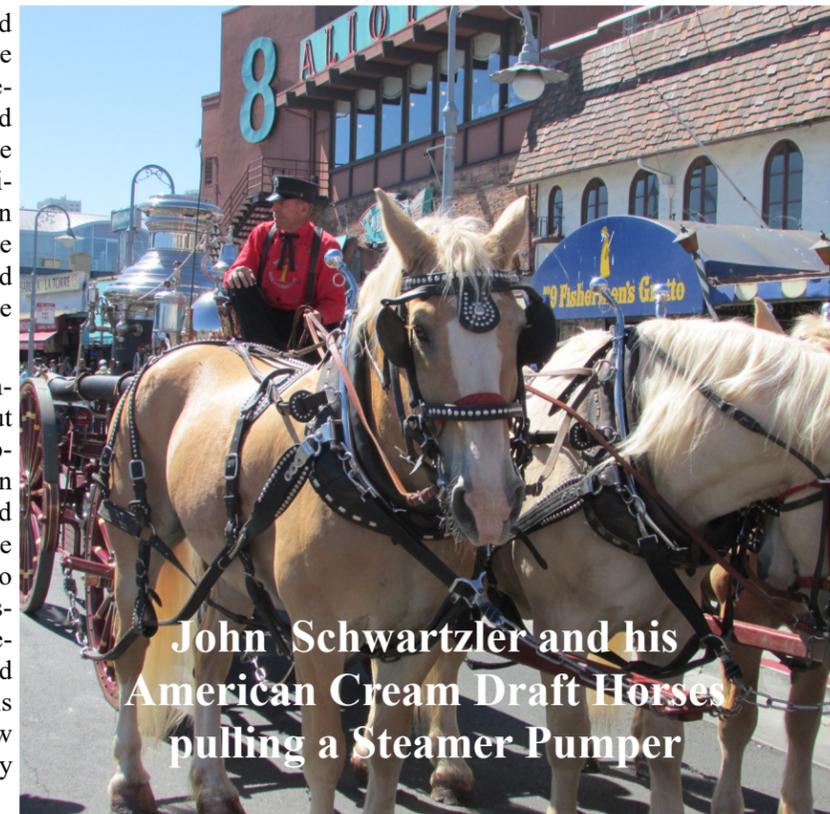
By: Pamela Basurto

The Fisherman's Wharf will never be the same for me after I attended the San Francisco Fire Department's 150th Anniversary Celebration on September 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The wharf was the backdrop for a parade of horse-drawn fire equipment dating from the 1880s to the early 1900s. This event also included an array of fire equipment used throughout the 1900s. This two day event gave the participants and the attendees an opportunity to travel back in time. A performance using three steamer pumpers was truly amazing. After connecting our present day yellow hoses to the restored steamer pumpers, the hotbox was filled with wood cut to the right size and then fired-up. Once the boiler reached the right pressure, steam powered pistons chugged up and down with a loud and unforgettable sound: a sound also heard over one hundred years ago when these beautiful pieces of fire-fighting equipment saved lives and property. The steamer pumpers' efficiency was proven when the hose nozzles were opened and pressurized water shot high into the air.

The parade not only included restored rigs but also time-aged equipment. The comparison between the two revealed how much work has to be completed in order to achieve the desired pristine condition. The celebration also included newer retired rigs. This reunion of old and new gave us the opportunity

to compare side by side the advancements in fire technology.

Our Pioneer Mutual Hook & Ladder Society Red Shirts, and many other Red Shirts from other areas, came dressed in their appropriate time-period uniforms. The Red Shirts included the Pioneer Red Shirts, the Mountaineer Hook and Ladder Company Red Shirts, the SFFD Red Shirts and others. They played a big part in this event. They drove the horse-drawn wagons and steamer pumpers, operated the pumpers and rode the many historical rigs. The Red Shirts also rescued "damsels in distress" from the Franciscan Restaurant's balcony using one of the restored wooden ladders.



John Schwartzler and his  
American Cream Draft Horses  
pulling a Steamer Pumper

Pier 45 is a large building located at Fisherman's Wharf and it provided shelter for a number of participants and the horses. Inside Pier 45 there were travel trailers, horse trailers, horses, trucks, cars, and almost all of the fire equipment. While the rigs were lined up inside Pier 45, I was able to see all the details, such as beautifully polished original gas lamps mounted on the steamer pumpers, hand painted scenes as fresh as if they were painted today instead of over 100 hundred years ago, and gold leaf embel-

Continued on page 6



S.F.F.D. 150th Anniversary Continued from page 1

ishments with fancy scroll work which added to the beauty of the workmanship. Chrome, brass and paint gleamed on rigs which included American La France, Fageol, Mack, and Ageo. Names of cities on the equipment included New York, Auburn, Menlo Park, San Francisco, Sonora City, Moreland, and Virginia City. One was called Old Tom and another, Protection.

John Schwartzler, a Mountaineer Hook & Ladder Company Red Shirt, and his wife Sandy, brought their American Cream draft horses and three of the Gold Rush Fire Brigade's restored rigs: a chief's buggy, a horse drawn ladder truck, and a 1901 Seagrave hose wagon. John was responsible for organizing our local Red Shirts for this event. He also set the stage for the Percheron and Standardbred horses which played a huge part in this celebration. The Percherons were provided and driven by David Cantrell of Cantrell's Mule Barn, Jeff and Dakota Shinn of Shinn's Ranch, and Michelle Russell of Iron Horse Ranch and Dan Dietrich also brought his Standardbred Harness Horses, bringing the total to 17 horses altogether. After John configured where everyone and everything should be inside the pier, he found a place for our little trailer too.

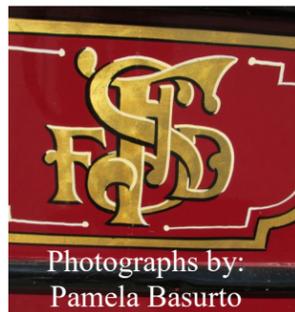
Each of these incredible pieces of fire equipment has a story to tell. I wondered, is the history of each piece documented somewhere? Did the city keep all the hand-written logs of their fire runs? Did one of the steamers work the fire in San Francisco after the 1906 earth quake? How many more lives were saved as fire protection evolved to what we have today? These are a few of the questions I thought about when I had the privilege of experiencing this celebration of the San Francisco Fire Department's 150th Anniversary.



The San Francisco Fire Department's 150th Anniversary Celebration



David Cantrell and his Percherons



Photographs by: Pamela Basurto

## Doug Lent - Member at Large

Wow What a Weekend!

On the weekend of September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, several Red shirt members of Pioneer Mutual had the good fortune to attend a very special event in San Francisco. It was the celebration of their Fire Department 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, and it was special.

Two SFFD members, Paul Barry and Hans Untz, helped put the whole thing together. Paul was the lead member who orchestrated most of the vents that weekend. Paul and Hans are seriously interested in fire department history and have even come to Sacramento for the last several years to help we local Red Shirts with Gold Rush Days in Old Sac.

The City of SFO emptied one of their huge warehouses directly across the street from Fisherman's Wharf at pier 45 and turned it into a gigantic apparatus storage area and horse barn. It was quite something to see so many old and newer rigs in one location mingled with a bunch of gigantic draft horses. Hay and straw, diesel and gas, wood to stoke steamer engines (more about this later), campers and fire apparatus of all sizes and descriptions crammed together in the spirit of celebration.

Of special interest was the 4, count 'em, four old time steam engines that were housed under a single roof. It's doubtful that this has happened anywhere in the world in modern history. They were parked alongside rigs of all shapes and descriptions including an old water tower rig used by the SFFD for years. It had been trucked to the event on a trailer but the engine was lovingly started and the rig was driven out into the street where water was pumped to it putting on quite a display for the spectators.

Spectators? Yes, several blocks of the Embarcadero were closed to traffic, and bleachers were set up for the crowds that came to enjoy a bit of history. Our Pioneer Mutual Red Shirts along with active and reserve SFFD personnel put on skits each day involving "rescue of the damsels in distress" from a balcony right on the waterfront.

Speaking of the waterfront, many of us were able to take a SFO Bay ride on one of the city's fireboats, the meticulously cared for Phoenix... sixty one years and kept in pristine condition. We were given a short tour of the Bay and even went in McCovey Cove.



OK, back to the steamer engines. On Saturday afternoon, fires were stoked (this is where the wood comes in) in three of the steamers. The steamers were then pulled by horses out onto the Embarcadero and actually pumped. Yes, for a while on a glorious San Francisco afternoon, there were THREE steamers pumping water much to the delight of the

onlookers including me. I had never seen one in action and to be standing a few feet away from three of them in action was, to me, a once in a lifetime event.

John Schwartzler, his wife Sandy, her sister Pam, several of their wranglers and members of the Gold Rush Fire Brigade were responsible for bringing their draft horses and several horse drawn apparatus to the City. You ain't seen nothin' until you've seen a horse drawn ladder truck flying down San Francisco streets being chased by a horse drawn steam engine! You might have even spotted a horse drawn rig double parked in front of an Irish Pub, but that's another story.

It won't be long before the Sacramento Fire Department celebrates its 150<sup>th</sup>. Don't miss it!

**Pioneer Mutual Hook & Ladder Society Presents**

# “the Best” CRAB FEED



**Friday February 10, 2017**

**Scottish Rite Center  
6151 H St. Sacramento**

**\$50 donation**

**Please note the new location,  
across the street from Sac Fire station 8**

**Plenty of on-site parking!**

**6:00pm No host cocktails, full bar available**

**7:00pm Dinner begins**

**Antipasto, Salad, Pasta, rolls & yummy fresh crab!**

**For tickets contact:**

**Craig Barmby: 916-686-8395**

**Ed Basurto: 916-457-9998**

**Checks can be mailed to:**

**PMH&L c/o Craig Barmby**

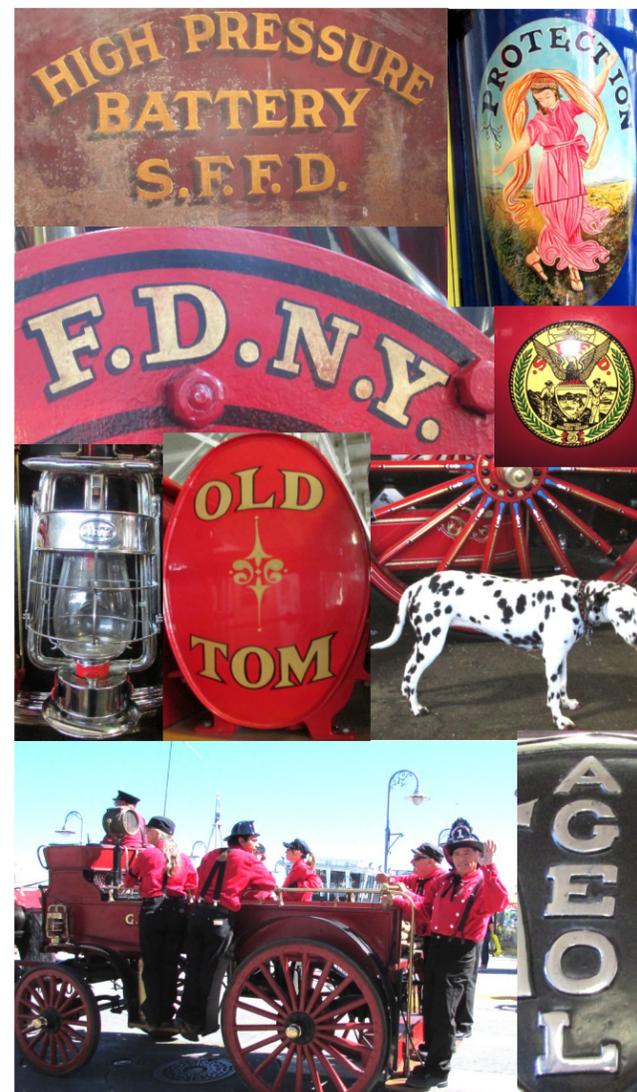
**PO Box 545 Amador City, CA 95601-0545**



*Tickets can be held for you to pick up at the event*

Please feel free to eat your fill, but we respectfully request that NO food is to leave the premises. We order our crab based on the number of tickets sold. This event is a fundraiser. We've kept our alcohol prices low so that you'll buy from us. Outside alcohol is discouraged and is bad karma. We will have an ample supply of quality beer, wine and hard liquor available for purchase. Must be 21 to purchase or consume alcoholic beverages. *Please drink responsibly.*

*Pictures from the San Francisco  
Fire Department  
150 Year Anniversary*



**The Last Issue of Pioneer Mutual  
News had the wrong crab feed  
date published.**

**Please note - the correct date is  
Friday, February 10, 2017**

**Scottish Rite Center**

**6151 H Street**

**Across the street from station 8**

**Plenty of on-site parking**



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