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COMMUNIT NEWS

Getting To Know The Men And Women Of Daisy Mountain Fire Department

Submitted article ~ 2/3/2010

Travis Holt , Engineer/Bike Team Program Manager

Did you know that Daisy Mountain Fire Department has a bike team that provides emergency medical coverage at public events? Started in 2002, the Daisy Mountain Fire Department Bike Team has 19 members and is headed by Travis Holt, who is also an Engineer assigned to C shift at Station 145. Holt went through his first Fire Academy in 2001 and joined Daisy Mountain Fire Department in 2003 from Rural Metro Fire Department. He is an Arizona State Certified Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), has an associate's degree in Fire Science from Phoenix College and is planning to return to school in the near future and finish his Bachelor's degree. Holt is the youngest of four brothers (one of his brothers is on the Phoenix Fire Department) and the son of a retired Phoenix Police Officer.

Holt enjoys traveling and is very interested in how people live and interact across the world. He raced mountain bikes competitively before becoming a fire fighter and now rides recreationally. In 2006 Holt mountain biked down the most dangerous road in the world- El Camino de la Muerte - a 43 mile road that leads from La Paz to Coroico, 35 miles (56 km) northeast of La Paz in the Yungas region of Bolivia. This single lane road descends 3,600 meters, winds through hairpin turns, and claims the lives of hundreds of people each year. Holt has also backpacked through most of South America, Europe, Central America, Australia, Mexico, and a few spots in Asia.

You will see the Daisy Mountain Fire Department Bike Team in action at scheduled events in the community such as the July 4th celebration and the Veteran's Day Parade. They are truly an asset to the department and our community.

Why does Daisy Mountain Fire Department have a Bike team, and when are you deployed?

"The bike team is another tool we can utilize to help provide the best possible coverage for our district. Our primary goal is to provide emergency medical coverage at public events. It gives us access easily and unobtrusively in large crowds and in other circumstances where vehicles

would not be practical. All bike team members are either Arizona State Certified Emergency Medical Technicians or Arizona State Certified Paramedics. Our bikes are first rate Gary Fisher and Trek All terrain Mountain Bikes. Each bike team member carries a radio, and a Medical backpack similar to those used by most Mountain Ski Patrol and rescue teams. The back packs are full of medical supplies, including oxygen and a heart defibrillator. As a side benefit, the bike team has also shown to be an effective way to promote safe bicycle riding and injury prevention to the public.”

What are your responsibilities as Bike Team Program Manager?

“I am in charge of staffing events in our district that may benefit by the presence of our bike team, i.e. large outdoor events where vehicle access is restricted or limited. I maintain our fleet of Mountain Bikes and make sure they are in operable condition and safe for our members. I am responsible for conducting our annual training for current bike team members, as well as putting on classes for new members to certify them as bike team capable. The training consists of slow speed riding techniques, obstacle courses, a rigorous trail ride, along with some class room work on bike maintenance and event planning. Overall my goal is to have our members fit and competent to be able to provide the best service on two wheels.”

What do you like best about your job (both as a firefighter and being on the bike team)?

“I like the diversity of my job best. It allows me to see and do a lot. Every emergency is unique and challenging in its own way. I have always been hands on kind of person and being a Firefighter I get to see the results of my work in real time. I also enjoy helping people and interacting with the community.”

What special equipment and/or skills do you use in your position?

“Multitasking and staying physically and mentally fit are very important skills.”

Do you have any special message for the bikers in our community?

“Yes, always wear your helmet and ride safely!”