

Manitou Springs Volunteer Fire Department Community Involvement



The Manitou Springs Volunteer Fire Department is very involved with our community. During the course of any of our monthly business meetings, a motion might be made to purchase soccer uniforms for the high schools girls soccer team, warm-ups for the boys basketball team, a new scoreboard for the Manitou Mustangs football team, or to make a donation for newer and safer park equipment.

Sometimes our donations to the community are not financial. Requests to provide staffing for a worthwhile fundraiser or medical coverage for a large event are all services our department may provide.

For nearly 80 years the M.S.V.F.D. has been responsible for delighting the locals and the tourists alike by putting on one of the most unique Fourth of July fireworks displays in the county. Our fireworks are shot off the side of Manitou's famous Red Mountain. It is a very labor-intensive day with crews needed for both shooting off the fireworks safely and suppression crews to ensure there is no unwanted fires on the mountain. Additional staff is also needed to collect donations for our display, an all day job for all.

Around Labor Day our department for the last two years has collected money for "Jerry's Kids" for the Muscular Dystrophy Association. We have collected over \$10,000 in the last two years. Some call our fill the boot campaign highway robbery but we like to call it doing the right thing.

During the Halloween season the city puts on an historic ghost tour which has been wildly popular in the last few years. Of course, during that time you will find our ghoulish firefighters dressed in red union suits and hauntingly made up as ghosts pulling our 1878 hose cart through the streets of Manitou going to a mysterious fire that no one sees.

One of our major fundraisers is just before Thanksgiving. It is the annual Turkey Shoot that we have been doing for 75 years now. We make it a fun night especially for the lucky 40 or so people who end up going home with a 12-15 pound turkey.

Last year we took on a new task. The M.S.V.F.D. decorated the main drag that runs through town. Lots of great looking lights that give our city that quaint Victorian Christmas look.

Just before Christmas, we collect canned goods from the schools, buy a bunch of chickens, milk and bread and then proceed to assemble Christmas baskets for the needy of our community. The schools do a great job of getting us the names and addresses of those less fortunate than us. Then on a quiet Saturday before Christmas we distribute those baskets. I wish everybody could experience the joy of seeing the faces of those families we touch. It will truly put the real spirit of Christmas in your heart.

Christmas is very busy for us because we have to sack candy and goodies for Santa Clause to give to every good boy and girl in Manitou. One Christmas Eve at around 6:00pm our department brings Santa to the town clock to hear the last minute wishes of the children before he takes his journey round the world. It is a joyous night and a fitting end to explain to you some of the many things our city's firefighters do for our community.