



PRESSRELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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One Week Later after being deployed - San Mateo County Fire Agencies and Firefighters are still at the CAMP FIRE in Butte County

It's been a week since Strike Team 2276 Alpha left San Mateo County Thursday, just after noon. The five Type 1 (Heavy) municipal Fire Engines from Central County, San Carlos/Redwood City, San Mateo County Consolidated Fire and the Menlo Park and Woodside Fire Protection Districts are staffed by 20 personnel and under the watchful eye and command of Strike Team Leader Battalion Chief Joe Novelli with Consolidated Fire.

The last week has been filled with the chaotic, overwhelming and dangerous initial first days on the Camp Fire actively working in the City of Paradise, then getting a needed break. Being reassigned to Paradise only to be quickly moved into the community of Migalia where they cut off and flanked an advancing fire front saving several neighborhoods of homes from being burned over and in recent days putting out spot fires and helping save animals.

Fire Captain Greg Womble with the Menlo Park Fire Protection is an experienced veteran firefighter with the Fire District. He's also a former military veteran who served as an Army Medic in Somalia and was actually involved with the real events made famous by the Movie Black Hawk Down, something he rarely talks about.

Womble's young crew is far less experienced than he is, but they are quick learners and what they lack in experience they more than make up in enthusiasm and a can do and get it done attitude.



Pictured above – The crew of Menlo Engine 101 from left to right Captain/Paramedic Womble, Firefighter/Paramedic Nguyen, Engineers Bates and Lennon – **Photo Credit Menlo Fire**

Initially, the crew was too busy to communicate and with cell coverage down in the area it was impossible to reach them. But earlier in the week as they came off the fire line into base camp they have been texting their story and status as well as some amazing pictures.

Captain Womble texts “Good morning Chief, E-101 engaged in a fast moving fire climbing ladder fuels into the crown. We flanked it and the crews made a hell of a stop. Saving 3 streets being overrun. 1200 foot hose lay”.



Pictured above – Engineer Bates and Captain Womble engaged in a firefight in the community of Migalia above Paradise – **Photo Credit Menlo Fire**

In recent days the excitement and satisfaction of knocking down fires, saving neighborhoods and homes has been replaced with improved fire conditions. Captain Womble texts “Good morning Chief, E-101 is back in Magalia. There is no fire front on our line, only spot fires, our efforts are focused on tightening the fire line and knocking down spot fires”

Pictured Below – Engineer Bates and Firefighter/Paramedic Nguyen extinguish hot spots on the fire line in the community of Magalia – **Photo Credit Menlo Fire**



Today, Captain Womble Texts “Good morning Chief, today we are also providing search/animal support. We rescued a pig, 13 chickens, provided oxygen to a raccoon and chased several cats, but caught none. We are doing well and making a difference in the lives of those we encounter”.



Pictured above – Firefighter/Paramedic Nguyen feeds a stray pig in the community of Migalia above Paradise – **Photo Credit Menlo Fire**

Fire Chief Schapelhouman said “in a controversial and polarizing world at times, ours is still a noble and honorable profession. Being a firefighter means something and our family of firefighting brothers and sisters on the front lines of multiple fires across the State are making a difference. I asked Captain Womble to do me a favor and check on my parents’ home (both passed away several years ago) in Magalia – he later texted – Not sure it is standing, that area was devastated – I’m glad they weren’t around to see and experience this”.

Pictured below – Engineer Lennon and Firefighter/Paramedic Nguyen provides oxygen to a raccoon in the community of Migalia located above Paradise – **Photo Credit Menlo Fire**



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