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The Far Reach of MOFD

By Nick Marnell



Left to right: Russ Stratton, Terry Wolff Stratton, Mike Lacy and Darren Bourne. Photo Ohlen Alexander

going to be here?"

It was a happy ending for the Pine Mountain Lake area. There were no casualties, and no structures were lost.

Terry Wolff Stratton owns a home there. "We were following the fire minute by minute on Facebook," said Stratton. "We saw the MOFD firefighters along the town border. My husband and I would like to thank them."

"It's 100 percent professional," said Lacy, speaking of the reciprocal aid among fire agencies. "If something like that ever happened in our district, the firefighters from Groveland will come here. Our citizens will receive the exact same treatment in return."

Into captain Mike Lacy's office rushed Moraga-Orinda Fire District battalion chief Sean Perkins.

"Are you ready to go?" asked Perkins.

By late afternoon Aug. 21, Lacy, along with two firefighters and an engineer, headed out state route 120 to Groveland ... and the Rim Fire.

It was Lacy's first day as MOFD captain.

The emotions of the crew as it rolled toward Yosemite Valley ran the gamut, he said. Am I ready? Will we be able to put this thing out? What can our one engine, and its 800 gallons of water, possibly do to combat this monster of a fire?

Upon arrival at the command center Lacy's team was given its assignment: Pine Mountain Lake. Their job was to protect homes should the fire circle the lake.

"Most of the people had evacuated," said Lacy. "And it was impressive how prepared they were. They knew from experience. The defensible space around those homes was A-plus."

But how do you prepare for the human reaction?

"Please save my toys and my house," pleaded a young boy. At the same time, Lacy was speaking with the boy's father. "What's the reality?" the dad asked. "Is my house

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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