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## Firefighters learn the ropes at Painted Rock

By Nick Marnell



Area firefighters participated in a low angle rope rescue training class held July 22 at Painted Rock in Moraga. The class included personnel from the Moraga-Orinda Fire District and was conducted by Northern California Rescue Training, whose instructors are certified by State Fire Training, a division of the Office of the State Fire Marshal.

Attendees gave examples of the need for a low angle rope rescue. The procedure can be used when a car crashes over a ridge, such as along Grizzly Peak, or when someone falls into a shallow ravine, or in many cases where it is unsafe or impractical for rescue personnel to climb down a hillside unattended to aid a victim.

Firefighters practiced various components of the rescue operation, including treating and moving the victim, descending and ascending techniques, and group fall protection.

For MOFD Capt. Jon Bensley, a 14-year district veteran, the Painted Rock training session was his second go-around. Bensley took the course when he first came on board and he said it was time for a brush up.

"Everything we learn is a perishable skill," Bensley said. "Technology and strategy have changed over the years and have made things better. We have to train constantly."

The class was conducted by Brook Mancinelli, a lieutenant with the San Francisco Fire Department.

One of the NCRT principals, Mancinelli lives in Lafayette and is hardly a stranger to MOFD. He began his fire service career as an MOFD reserve and worked as a firefighter-paramedic, eventually serving more than three years as a district director.

Mancinelli made special arrangements to offer the rope rescue course to MOFD personnel. "The district has done a lot for me, and I wanted to give something back," he said.

Reach the reporter at: [nick@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:nick@lamorindaweekly.com)

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