

Thank you, Chief Blum, for this opportunity. I'll try to keep it brief.

Hi, I'm your neighbor Doug!

I'm a 55-year-old native Californian, raised in the rural part of the east bay. My beautiful wife and I moved to Felton in 1998. My neighbor Steve was a Felton Fire Director at the time, and he instructed me to go talk to the Chief about volunteering. So, I did, and I'm sure glad I did, I find such great rewards in giving back. The fire family dynamic is unique and very special. I volunteered at both Felton and Boulder Creek. **I believe to comprehend the fire family it is beneficial to be part of it.**

25 years ago, I was tired of driving over the hill to my corporate retail job at Orchard Supply Hardware. So, when I was 31, I took my savings and bought my own Hardware store in Boulder Creek. In Boulder Creek I was quickly immersed in the strong volunteerism of the community. I wore many hats, including president of the Business Association (a few times), but one of the most rewarding was organizing the towns Lumberjack Days, a tremendously successful event that benefited Valley Churches. My wife and I organized the Fourth of July Parade for years, coordinated Halloween events, auctions, dinners, raffles the list goes on and on. We sold our Hardware store eight years ago. We now own Capitola Wine Bar & Merchants in Capitola Village.

I bring decades of strong leadership and entrepreneurial experience. In my career I've led teams of just a few to over 200 people. I've managed budgets in all kinds of economic climates. I've rescued two local businesses from failing and built one from scratch. When asked to, I stepped up to help save the Boulder Creek Business Association from filing bankruptcy. When our local SLV Chamber of Commerce was being revitalized, I was asked to serve on the board. I also have worked closely with the county on issues over the years, such as the beautiful vintage style streetlights now installed in Boulder Creek.

Our Fire department is in distress. Now is not the time to focus on errors of the past, but rather work together building back a great squad with solid leadership that has a focus on the long term. Unfortunately, it may not be that simple. We must explore all options for fire protection in our district's future. **We must have the best fire protection possible.** I believe we need to involve our community in the department again, including our schools, business, and local residences.

Volunteering for my community for decades, combined with my career experience would be of great benefit to not only Felton Fire Protection District, but the community of Felton.

It's time for **Proven Leadership**. I humbly ask for your vote; I'd love an opportunity to give back again.

Doug Conrad