

Introducing “Cavalieri del Fuoco,”

After experiencing the devastating effects of the Glass Fire in October 2020, the team at Dario Sattui's Castello di Amorosa vows to be ready when the next Red Flag Warning is raised in the Napa Valley. Announced today was the formation of a newly assembled fire watch team, which will provide additional defense against fires during fire season and is equipped with fire protective gear and thousands of feet of fire hose, which attach to the Castello's 3 fire hydrants on the property.

“The Glass Fire hit our Farmhouse so fast,” said Georg Salzner, President of Castello di Amorosa. “We were on site when it struck in the early morning hours, and we did what we could but felt like we could have done more to limit the damage. We could have been more of a resource to the firefighters who were stretched thin that night,” he added.

Salzner organized a fire defense team of 8 long-term employees who know the intricacies of the Castle, its grounds and Dario Sattui's Victorian home just outside the main Castle gates. This team is known as the “Cavalieri del Fuoco,” which means the Knights of Fire in Italian. This team will establish a fire watch and be ready to respond during Red Flag Warning conditions and will provide support for firefighters. On an ongoing basis they will establish and maintain a defensible space around all structures by removing as much threat from those structures as possible.

“It is critically important that we implement fire defensive measures now,” Salzner explained. “We've outfitted this team with the proper equipment. The entire perimeter of the Castello can be reached by the thousands of feet of fire hose that we purchased which will allow us to support the fire department's efforts,” he continued.

The Cavalieri del Fuoco is led by Salzner, Tim Dexter, Maintenance Manager and Josh Fairbanks, owner of Fairbanks Mechanical (manages all mechanical systems at the Castello including the fire safety equipment). Long-time employee Carlos Perez is the official Fire Chief of the Cavalieri.

“Our main goal,” explains Tim Dexter, “is to have and maintain a defensible space of 150 feet from all structures to flammable vegetation. Smaller brush, tree trimming (branches lower to the ground) and tree clearing will be done using our newly acquired wood-chipper. This process will eliminate fire fuel sources which will prevent fires from becoming a threat. Regular gutter cleaning will take place in the summer and fall to eliminate fuel sources near roof lines. The new hoses will allow us to water down roof tops as well,” he adds.

To make the property less susceptible to fire, the Castello invested nearly \$100,000 in gear for the fire defense team and equipment which includes a portable water pump that obtains water from the lake, adaptors for the existing fire hydrants, thousands of feet of high-pressure fire hose and nozzles plus custom firefighting gear for the employees.

Each hydrant can be outfitted with dual 4” hose attachments, which allow the use of 1.5” fire hoses. The fire defense team then attaches the hoses to the fire hydrant and can begin to extinguish the fire with a strong water stream which can reach distances of 150 feet.

Castello di Amorosa is one of Napa Valley’s most recognized wineries and welcomes visitors by appointment seven days a week.