



# ON THE LOOKOUT

From the  
**National Chairman**  
**Keith A. Argow**  
Vienna, Virginia  
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## **WEAR YOUR FIRE LOOKOUT BADGE PROUDLY!**

### **IT EXPRESSES BOTH YOUR COMMITMENT AND THE OPPORTUNITY FOR OTHERS TO SERVE**

Our communal efforts and hard work to protect fire lookouts comes from a love of these vintage structures as well as our enjoyment of the beautiful views they afford. We also appreciate the trees and forests they were built to protect. Most of us have spent time as a volunteer or paid fire lookout observer. Those who haven't had this opportunity likely harbor the dream that they may one day wear this badge of honor. If not, at the very least they know they have helped keep these symbols of forestry up on the skyline for future generations of outdoors people to enjoy. This spring, the Executive Committee (which serves as our governing body between the annual meetings of the FFLA Board of Directors each January) approved an FFLA Fire Lookout badge in two versions: Volunteer and Observer. The 1-3/4 inch diameter badge, with a polished silver finish, is designed to be worn with an appropriate uniform (i.e. a khaki shirt). With many visitors to our most popular lookouts, a uniform and identity is appropriate. The badge was proposed by Brad Eells, California-Pacific Chapter Director and San Diego-Riverside Local Chapter Chair. Brad is also the National Secretary of FFLA and our liaison to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire). In addition to the badge, Brad submitted an FFLA nametag design (see page 3) that was also approved by the Executive Committee, as well as an attractive shoulder patch to be worn on their local chapter uniform. The Volunteer option of the FFLA badge is modeled after the U.S. Forest Service Volunteer badge seen in many USFS Visitor Centers and Ranger Stations. The alternate Observer badge option may

be preferred for paid, part-time, and volunteer observers who have not received a badge from their agency. If enough interest is shown, the badges will be purchased in bulk by the FFLA and made available to Directors at cost (\$6.85 + s/h). This is not a fund raising item. The standards for use will be set by the Directors as appropriate for their state or region. A minimum uniform shirt standard is suggested. With nearly 800 active lookouts staffed this year, about a quarter of them by volunteers, these new badges and/or nametags will give FFLA the visibility and respect we have earned. Most visitors to lookouts probably think the observer on duty is an employee. Yet of the 12 active lookouts in Southern California, only one is staffed by a paid lookout.

### **YOUR CHANCE TO HAND OUT A FFLA BROCHURE!**

When folks see these badges with the distinctive FFLA logo, they are likely to ask about our association. Voila! Here is the opportunity to present them with the FFLA brochure! Let them know how they can become involved in either maintenance or staffing as a volunteer. A select few will even adopt a favorite lookout as the Lookout Steward by making application through their state director, with the approval of the agency confirmed by the national chair.

Some lookouts in remote areas of the west, especially those with only trail access, really need a Lookout Steward. In fact after years of minimal maintenance, we are now witnessing an increase of declarations of unsafe conditions. It is much easier to save a lookout before that condemnation is made.

### **FIRE TOWERS IN THE SOUTH IN DANGER**

Last quarter I summarized an ambitious program of work for our Association, especially in the southeastern U.S. Unfortunately, too few people have responded to that urgent agenda! The public agencies--both state and federal—are receptive to our assistance in helping maintain their large inventory of fire towers. Even though they may only remain standing to hold up a radio antenna, they are still important symbols of forestry and protection from wildfire. We have bought time, but not forever! Please contact a friend or relative in the 13 southeastern states today and ask them to help. It just won't be the same in the piney woods of the south to have fire towers but a memory. You may have a relative who has become a "snow bird" spending their winters down south. We have opportunities for them too. After you read this, and before you put down this magazine, please take a minute to drop a line or email a friend in the south--or anywhere for that matter--who could be willing to lend a hand. I know a number of fire towers that will be glad you did! Email me! I will see they get an opportunity to help.

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