

He came, he sawed, he honored

Artist carves hero in wood

By DONNA KIMURA
Sentinel staff writer

ZAYANTE — The Zayante fire station has a new firefighter.

He stands tall amid the flames, vigilantly battling a fire in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

He is a lasting symbol for the small volunteer fire department.

Standing 7 feet high, the wooden firefighter is the latest carving by Felton artist Cliff Short, who is responsible for many of the wooden statues in the San Lorenzo Valley.

"I like the fact that it's going to be a community thing," Short said Wednesday, minutes before the carving took its permanent post in front of the station, overlooking East Zayante Road.

The firefighter was carved from a huge redwood stump that probably dates back 1,000 years. The tree had been logged years ago in the local mountains. The only non-wooden part of the statue is the fire-hose nozzle that is aimed toward the road. That came from the Zayante department.

The carving bears No. 1 on its helmet.

"He's the No. 1 firefighter," Short said. "I guess they're all No. 1."

Short started the project about a year and a half ago. He used several different chainsaws and hand tools to make the piece.

The idea of having the firefighter goes back about five years, originating with volunteer Jack Unger, said Chief Ken Boynton.

Boynton said the carving is typical of the community.

"Everyone is pitching in and doing what they can," he said.

Short made a substantial contribution to do the piece with

Please see STATUE — BACK PAGE



Dan Coyro/Sentinel

Chainsaw sculptor Cliff Short guides his carved firefighter into place Wednesday.

Statue

Continued from Page A1

wood that was donated by a local real estate agent. Short's wife, Norma, created the Zayante Fire Station signs at the base of the carving.

Bud Tapley of Manteca built the base out of concrete chunks. A plaque will be dedicated in memory of Tapley's wife, Kay Kuljis Tapley, whose grandson, Chris Kuljis, is a captain in the department.

Short also carved the large ox in the Felton Covered Bridge Park. He also recently created the white raven in flight that is above the White Raven coffee house in Felton.