

EDITORIALS

Fires + Fire Protection A Grim Anniversary.

Lest we forget, in 12 days it will be just one year since Pine mountain burst into flame and spread almost to Swanton, causing the worst Santa Cruz county forest fire in several decades.

Owners of depleted timber stands and Swanton ranchers who lost valuable grazing areas have not forgotten — neither have volunteer fire departments nor the state division of forestry.

Thousands upon thousands of dollars and man hours were expended quelling the fire. Homes were endangered and hundreds of acres of coastal watershed were destroyed for years to come.

Chief Ranger Lester H. Gum of Felton forestry division yesterday said the county has already had 82 fires and timber and brush is dryer now than it was one year ago at this time.

If you are in rural areas do not throw lighted tobacco out of your car, don't light a fire without a permit, be certain your car muffler is in good condition, and if you live out in the country be prepared for fire—this is the time of year it pays to be careful.

Santa Cruz county cannot afford another conflagration like the 20,000-acre Pine mountain fire August 31, 1948.

Let us all do our part to prevent fires.