

In case of evacuation, what would I save?

Kathy Hedberg/Lewiston Tribune

I've never had a deputy knock on my door and tell me I needed to be prepared to evacuate at a moment's notice because forest fires are licking all around.

But plenty of people in this area have lately.

It doesn't take a personal experience to make one consider how he or she would act in such a situation.

Leave immediately and take your chances your property won't be vandalized? Or stick around and fend off the inferno?

I like barbecues as well as the next guy, but I think I'd take the first option and just hope the vandals have asthma and wouldn't want to deal with the smoke.

When you've got the safe distance to ponder these scenarios, it's interesting to think about what you'd take with you if you had to leave your home immediately.

What to save? What to leave behind?

People used to always say they'd grab their photo albums first. But these days you don't really have to worry about that so much. Lots of people have digitized the old family photos and all our kids now post their pictures on social media sites. The only albums you'd risk losing are the ones you've saved from high school that your friends autographed when you graduated, and, come to think of it, I don't really want that stuff passing on to my posterity anyway. So out you go, old albums.

The highest priorities for me, besides my cat and my two dogs, are my musical instruments, and I think I might even try to be a hero if it meant saving my mandolin.

One of my friends said: "What are you so attached to those things for? They're just slabs of wood and a bunch of metal strings." And I bopped him - not with my guitar, though.

I have seriously considered how I can take my guitars and mandolins to heaven with me (assuming I'll end up there) when I go. I know that sounds kind of crazy, but the ancient Egyptians used to stock their tombs with all the stuff they might need in the afterlife, including clothes, food, spouses, jewelry, pets and old high school albums.

Also, my dad, who was a banker, told me once that his company had been considering adopting a new motto.

"It's no longer true you can't take it with you," Dad said the slogan went. "Idaho First National now has banks all over hell."

Apparently the idea didn't pass corporate muster.

Anyway, I haven't figured out my problem yet, but in the meantime I'm keeping my fingers crossed, my essentials spare and my hopes for good outcomes to all those folks in this area facing fire danger.

Hedberg may be contacted at kathyhedberg@gmail.com or (208) 983-2326.