



# the Sunshine fire protection district newsletter

## THIN WE MUST

I'd been thinking about it for years. Then there was the Walker Ranch fire. When I saw the stark results of how tree thinning could help save homes and thwart a forest fire, I finally began thinning the overgrown, unhealthy Ponderosa pine forest overtaking my four acres of Sunshine property.

Ever since the West was settled, we have aggressively suppressed fires, yet completely ignored the results: overgrown, unhealthy forests that burn faster and hotter, threaten more people, destroy more homes, and exacerbate erosion impact. If we are willing to artificially manage our forests by putting out all fires, then we should, in turn, be willing to artificially thin those forests to maintain the natural balance.

The average span between naturally occurring forest fires in our district is

only about 40 years. Starting with the mining boom in the mid-to late 1800s, we've all but stopped that natural process in the foothills of the Front Range. Before that, lightning strikes would start fires that burned, but essentially made for stronger, disease-resistant trees with thicker bark, and generally kept the forests strong and beautiful. Now, with so much fuel waiting to burn, we've created an ever more volatile situation here in our district.

I wanted to reduce the fuel levels on my land and started out with chain-saw in hand. But the task was quite overwhelming. If only I could quit my day job! There were literally hundreds of trees and tons of vegetation to be removed. However, when I saw how the Walker Ranch fire had virtually stopped at an area that had been thinned the year before, I decided the time had come to get this job done. (If

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that area hadn't been thinned, the Walker Ranch fire almost certainly would have spread MUCH farther and almost certainly would have destroyed homes).

I contracted with a new outfit now located here in Sunshine, Pine Mountain Contractors, owned by Michael Schmitt (303-449-8239). After several weeks of working between snowstorms, Michael's crew finished a beautiful job of thinning out my forest. It feels so much safer, and I even

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## Calendar

### *Firefighter trainings and meetings:*

Held at fire station on Saturday mornings from 0900-1200, unless otherwise noted.

Mar 21, Weds, 1930-2130 - Wildland Classroom Training with Boulder Mtn Fire Authority at BMFA St. 1 (Pinebrook Hills)

Apr 28, Sat, 0900-1500 – Hose Testing at Boulder Reservoir

May 5, Sat, 0800-Wildland Practical Training with Boulder Mountain Fire Authority at BMFA Station 2 (Boulder Heights)

May 10, Thurs, 1900-2100 – Medical Training/Equipment Familiarization

Jun 2, Sat, 0900-1200 – Vehicle Stabilization with Boulder Emergency Squad

Jun 14, Thurs, 1900-2100 – Pump Training

Jul 7, Sat, 0900-1200 – Advanced Quick Attack (with porta-pond)

Jul 12, Thurs, 1930-2130 – Officer Meeting

Aug 4, Sat, 0900-1200 – Long Hose Lay

Sep 1, Sat, 0900-1200 – Topic to be determined

Sep 13, Thurs, 1900-2100 – SCBA (self-contained breathing apparatus)

Oct 6, Sat, 0900-1500 – Structure Fire Training at Boulder Regional Fire Training Center

Nov 3, Sat, 0900-1200 – Hazardous Materials Training

Nov 8, Thurs, 1930-2130 – Officer meeting

Dec 1, Sat, 0900-1200 – Incident Command/Communications (ICS, radios, pagers)

### *Medical trainings:*

Mar 21, Weds, 1930-2130 – Gold Hill Fire Barn

Apr 12, Thurs, 1930-2100 – 4-Mile Medical Training

May 16, Weds, 1930-2130 – Gold Hill Fire Barn

Jun 14, Thurs, 1930-2130 – 4-Mile Medical Training

Jul 18, Weds, 1930-2130 – Gold Hill Fire Barn

Aug 9, Thurs, 1930-2130 – 4-Mile Medical Training

Sep 19, Weds, 1930-2130 – Gold Hill Fire Barn

Oct 11, Thurs, 1930-2130 – 4-Mile Medical Training

Nov 21, Weds, 1930-2130 – Gold Hill Fire Barn

### *Board meetings:*

Second Tuesday of every month, 7:30 pm, fire station, all community members are welcome

Apr 10, May 8, Jun 12, Jul 10, Aug 14, Sep 10, Oct 9, Nov 13, Dec 11

*Since the schedule is subject to change, please call Assistant Chief John Metzger at 303-440-1921 to confirm.*

## Current board

Rich Landen, Chairperson

Bill Bender, Treasurer

Kimberly Neill, Secretary

Nancy Talmey, Member

Jay Schumacher, Member

David Wheeler, Member

Eric Bader, Fire Chief

John Metzger, Asst. Fire Chief

Bruce Honeyman, Fire Marshal

Board meetings are at 7:30 pm on the second Tuesday of every month at the fire station.



### Contact information

Eric Bader, Fire Chief

Home ph. 440-8123

Work ph. 444-8420

Pager 441-3851 #4561

surf@boc123.com

John Metzger, Asst Chief

Home ph. 440-1921

Work ph. 786-7000

Pager 441-3851 #4562

## Premiere Property Brokers

1877 Broadway &  
12286 Switzerland Trail

**Tom Stevens**  
MOUNTAIN REALTOR AND  
RESIDENT

449-7720 or 459-0457

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## Chief's Message

*Is your house address clearly visible at the end of your driveway?*

There are too many houses/driveways in our district that are not clearly marked with addresses. I'd like to put an order in for anybody that needs a new address for their house. I believe it is free from the county. Please let me know if you need a new address. You can e-mail me, which would be best, or give me a call. Please include the address that you want. These house identifiers are on a green background with white letters.

If you think you don't need one or rather not have an address on your place, keep in mind that in a medical emergency, the ambulance may not be able to find you. Hopefully your local fire department will find you, but please make it easy for our volunteers to locate your house in the dark, snow, rain, etc.

Put your address on your house or at the end of your driveway.

To order, send your name and address:  
E-mail: [sfpd-chief@egroups.com](mailto:sfpd-chief@egroups.com)  
Voice mail: 303-786-7731

### *Tree moisture level low*

We've had some snow this winter, so the moisture content of our plants is back up and the threat of wildfire is gone... Not exactly. Our fire danger is much lower this time of year than summer, but it has not gone away. Our Ponderosa Pines are extremely dry. Due to the lack of moisture this past summer, our Ponderosa trees were stressed. To survive this problem, our trees went into dormancy early this year which was before the moisture increased. Even though our snow and moisture are improving, the trees are

not absorbing the moisture. Please keep in mind if you are burning any slash piles that our trees can catch on fire easily.

### *New Trucks for the district*

Our Forest Service Tender has given up the ghost. At the last training, a slow leak in the tank developed into a bigger leak. The Forest Service took the truck back on Feb. 20th, leaving us with a loaner. Due to the age of our old tender, the Forest Service is not going to repair the tank. Instead, Sunshine is going to get a new tender. Estimated time of delivery is June. Our new tender will be diesel powered, have calves and be start of the art tender for wildland fire suppression. I do not have all the specs, but be assured that this tender will be a huge improvement over the old one.

### *Sunshine FPD adopts new Driver requirements*

The Sunshine Fire Department is changing dramatically. The department is moving into a new stage of its evolution. The department is working on projects that will improve the medical and fire capabilities dramatically. We as a fire district are working on the acquisition of 2-3 fire trucks. With these changes, the volunteers are also working on gaining the skills and knowledge to use this new equipment to its full potential. In order to achieve this potential, we now have a two step driver/engineer certification for our department. We are evolving this plan, so if anyone wants to participate or have input, please let me know. The first step of the certification is the driver training.

We are training our volunteers on

driving skills and safety for responding with our fire trucks. The driver certification also includes knowledge and skill to operate the radios in the trucks and know where items are on the trucks. Our drivers are being trained to get the trucks from the station to the call.

The next step in our certification process is the engineer certification. This certification builds on the first one and adds the training/ability to pump the trucks at the proper water pressure and flow for fire suppression. An engineer is capable of running everything on our trucks.

I want everyone in our district to share in the department's improvements understand who might be responding. The engine driver arriving at a fire may not know how to pump water onto the fire. Our first goal is to get our trucks to the event as quickly as possible and if the driver is not engineer certified, then hopefully an engineer will show up on scene to pump our trucks. We'll be training as many people as possible on how to drive and engineer our trucks. I also want to mention to our district members that used to be active in our department that a great deal has changed in the past few years and a great deal more is going to change. If you are a past member of our department and want to help roll our trucks, we need you to join our trainings and become familiar with all the changes.

Thank You,  
Eric Bader  
Sunshine Fire Chief

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## Homeworkers

Back in '90, working out of a home office was a dark secret I hid from my business contacts. I was working for a startup with no funding and we needed to appear legitimate... and at that time only Avon ladies worked out of their homes. My customers marveled at the hours I spent at the "office", answering my phone anywhere from 6 a.m. to 12 a.m., I must "live" there!

I was equipped with the latest technology: 9400 baud modem, MacPlus computer, inkjet printer, portable phone, fax machine that spewed out mountains of curled paper. I was ROBOCHICK!

Fast forward to present time and things have changed a lot. Now I'm a bonafide "teleworker" and my customers envy my ability to work at home. The only problem is that the same frustrations I had in the old millenium still exist in the new. Even though communication technology has vastly improved, it still trails my needs and there are days when I want to hurl my Pentium III laptop with Win2000, DVD drive and 56K modem out my window. Adding insult to injury, I've spent the last two years selling networking technology to broadband service providers. It's like selling Ferraris and driving a '67 Volkswagen.

The biggest bottleneck is the lack of broadband services—communication super highways—in the mountains. There are some glimmers of hope for teleworkers as well as anybody who wants to surf the web at better than glacial speeds. Nederland residents recently held a town meeting to discuss the options, as reported here. It's a good thing, too. It's getting expensive replacing my digital frisbees. *Editor*

## High Speed Internet Access for Sunshine Canyon

*contributed by Scott Mesch*

If you're like Mary and I, we love living in the canyon, but at times we get a little jealous of our city-folk brethren who have high-speed Internet options available to them. Now, there are some good solutions for those of us living outside the city.

I attended a meeting in Nederland on March 6<sup>th</sup> where the topic of discussion was "High-speed Internet Options" for Nederland. There were representatives from Qwest, RockyNet, Vanion, WI-Com, Starband and others. There were almost 100 people who turned out for the 6:30 pm community meeting, so interest was high! It was a good opportunity to get input on most of the high-speed Internet options available to remote communities.

We can have affordable high-speed access in Sunshine Canyon in two to six months if we act now. We need to have about 20 households signed up in order to make it worthwhile for a company to put in the needed infrastructure for a wireless network. Speeds are available from 128 Kbps to over 1 Mbps. Pricing would start at about \$49 per month with a one-time equipment/install charge of \$250. These prices are approximate. This network also supports VPN for business users and includes the connection charge, ISP charge and plenty of e-mail addresses for the whole family.

Being in the computer business and having my own e-commerce site, I've investigated many of these options over the last few years. We

currently have ISDN to our home, but most Sunshine residents are limited to 28.8 Kbps access even when using a 56 Kbps modem. This 28.8 Kbps speed will work for e-mail, but is excruciating slow for browsing the Internet.

It's my feeling that wireless high-speed Internet access would be a great solution in our canyon. It has the advantages of high-speed connections for both up and down link to the Internet, is very immune to weather related interference and is reasonably priced. It does require line-of-site access to a central mini-tower/antenna. There can be repeater antennas for homes not in direct line of site to the primary antenna. The technology is based on the 802.11 standard and uses radio signals similar to your 900 MHz or 2.4 GHz phones.

Bill Clark, an ex-IBM engineer who lives in Sugarloaf Canyon, has already implemented this type of high-speed wireless network for a group of households in Sugarloaf. From talking with Bill, this system is working well for Sugarloaf. They have their own web site at:

<http://www.sugarloaf.net>.

Whether or not you use the Internet much now, it is continuing to grow at a rapid rate. There are enormous resources for business, education, family fun, music, research, shopping, law and government access.

In most cities today, users can subscribe to DSL or Cable access to the Internet. Medium to larger businesses  
*(Cont. on p. 5)*

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## Volunteer Profile

Ten years ago, Rich Landen traded the big city life of Washington, D.C. for the peacefulness of the Boulder mountains, moving first to Sugarloaf, then to the Whispering Pines neighborhood of Sunshine. Mountain living suits the Landens, who need space for their growing menagerie. Their twenty-eight leg household includes Rich and wife Nina plus four cats and two dogs, all of whom were adopted from the Humane Society or as strays (...the animals that is!). In addition to his pets, Rich's interests include home improvements, fishing and skiing.

Rich is one of Sunshine's many teleworkers, with a corporate office in Chicago. Rich's career has been spent in healthcare and he is currently employed by Blue Cross/Blue Shield in the Electronic Data Interchange area. EDI is the exchange of data between companies and their suppliers and customers electronically, rather than through paper documents. When you think of all the patient forms, hospital and medical records, and other reporting that are required for insurance transactions, you get an idea of how important Rich's efforts are to his employer's business as well as to reducing paper usage.

In addition to work, hobbies, and pets, Rich has volunteered for the Sunshine Fire Protection District for the last two years. Currently, Rich serves as chairperson of our Board.

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## *High Speed Internet Access for Sunshine Canyon (cont. from p. 4)*

normally use T1 lines. These Internet connections offer speeds 10 – 50 times faster than a modem connection. Unfortunately, DSL and Cable are only available at very limited distances from a central point. For instance, DSL is currently available only to users closer than 3 miles from a central phone office. This restriction doesn't look like it will change soon. T1 lines can be installed to a home in Sunshine, but costs can exceed \$1000 per month! The wireless option, which I'm recommending, is available today from a couple of companies and offers similar speeds to DSL and Cable.

If you're interested in getting reliable and high-speed Internet access to your home or home-based business, send me an e-mail at: [scott@starplay.com](mailto:scott@starplay.com) (or call at 303-447-0438). I'll put you on the e-mail list. Assuming there is sufficient interest, we can schedule a meeting at the Sunshine schoolhouse sometime soon to discuss these options in detail. I'll make sure the proper representatives are present. Also, please e-mail me your own inputs and experiences with Internet access in Sunshine Canyon. If some of the terminology used here is Greek to you, feel free to contact me with questions. I'm glad to act as a conduit to disseminate information.

**THIN WE MUST** (*cont. from p. 1*)  
have a sense that I own more property now that I can see it. The only problem is, our property remains surrounded by dense, overgrown Ponderosas. My four acres may be safer, but hundreds of surrounding acres in our district remain volatile. At least I have created more "defensible space" and have greatly increased our chances to save our home in the event of a wild land fire.

The thinning work was not inexpensive, but now that the big job is done, I can easily maintain a healthy forest on my property by myself. I just wish there was more interest in thinning in general. Unfortunately, the expense and some environmentalists who are well-meaning but misguided keep this issue on the back burner. It's one of those jobs that's probably too big for private enterprise. As a public safety issue, maybe the government can get involved in this, particularly if there is a way to turn the logs and slash into energy, such as with biomass plants that generate power by incinerating fuel.

I highly recommend Michael's services to all Sunshine residents, and encourage everyone to take the time and pay the expense to make our district safer.

*Assistant Chief John Metzger*

*Editor's note: Thinning should not be undertaken during the summer months when Pine Beetle flight occurs, as the smell of pine pitch is an attractant. Now is a good time for both thinning and removing pine beetle infested or susceptible trees.*

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## Publishing Humor

*As editor and chief typo-ist, I enjoyed these publishing goofs. These are actual clippings from church newspapers. It's amazing what a little proofreading would provide.*

Bertha Belch, a missionary from Africa will be speaking tonight at Calvary Memorial Church in Racine. Come tonight and hear Bertha Belch all the way from Africa.

Miss Charlene Mason sang, "I will not pass this way again," giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.

"Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Don't forget your husbands."

The sermon this morning: "Jesus Walks on the Water". The sermon tonight: "Searching for Jesus"

The Rector will preach his farewell message after which the choir will sing "Break Forth into Joy."

Don't let worry kill you - let the Church help.

A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow.

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What is Hell?" Come early and listen to our choir practice.

Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles, and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.

For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person(s) you want remembered.

Attend and you will hear an excellent speaker and have a healthy lunch.

The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.

Ladies Bible Study will be held Thursday morning at 10. All ladies are invited to lunch in the Fellowship Hall after the B.S. is done.

*The following were taken from recent classified ads in newspapers:*

FREE PUPPIES: 1/2 COCKER  
SPANIEL - 1/2 SNEAKY  
NEIGHBOR'S DOG

1 MAN, 7 WOMAN HOT TUB --  
\$850/offer

AMANA WASHER \$100. OWNED  
BY CLEAN BACHELOR WHO SELDOM  
WASHED.

SNOW BLOWER FOR SALE...  
ONLY USED ON SNOWY DAYS.

FREE PUPPIES...PART GERMAN  
SHEPHERD - PART STUPID DOG

2 WIRE MESH BUTCHERING  
GLOVES: 1 5-finger, 1 3-  
finger, PAIR: \$15

COWS, CALVES NEVER BRED..  
ALSO 1 GAY BULL FOR SALE.

NORDIC TRACK \$300 HARDLY  
USED\*\*\*\*\*CALL CHUBBIE

FOUND: DIRTY WHITE DOG. LOOKS  
LIKE A RAT..BEEN OUT AWHILE..  
BETTER BE A REWARD.

NICE PARACHUTE: NEVER OPENED  
- USED ONCE SLIGHTLY STAINED

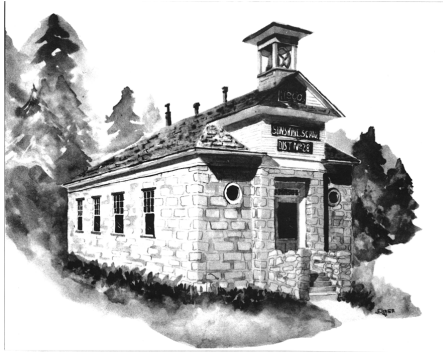
TIRED OF WORKING FOR ONLY  
\$9.75 PER HOUR? WE OFFER  
PROFIT SHARING AND FLEXIBLE  
HOURS. STARTING PAY: \$7 -  
\$9 PER HOUR.

EXERCISE EQUIPMENT: QUEEN  
SIZE MATTRESS & BOX SPRINGS  
-\$175.

JOINING NUDIST COLONY! MUST  
SELL WASHER & DRYER \$300.

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## Sunshine Schoolhouse and Cemetery News



The Schoolhouse maintenance project is continuing with help from the Colorado State Historical Society. The new roof has been completed with the exception of re-shingling the bell tower, which is being undertaken by the Society from a grant of \$10,000 in matching funds. The remainder of the money is being used to correct a drainage problem and to patch some interior cracks.

This project is the result of the efforts of many, with special thanks being owed the Sunshine Schoolhouse and Cemetery Board:

Tom Stevens, president  
Janice Wheeler, vice president  
June Howard, treasurer  
Haydee Kuner, secretary  
Chris Voorhees, member

The Board will hold their annual meeting in mid-May, date to be determined. If you would like to attend, please contact Tom Stevens at 303-459-0457 for more information.

## Wildlife Watch

Bobcat sightings have been reported in our area, including one close encounter at a hot tub. The following information is from the CO Division of Wildlife website.



“The bobcat is a familiar animal, but it is secretive and seldom seen. The animals are 32 – 37 inches long with a tail about 6 inches in length. Bobcats are similar in appearance to their cousin, the lynx. ...Hasty observers sometimes confuse mountain lion kittens – which are spotted – with bobcats or lynx, but that is a careless error because young cougars have distinctly long tails.

Bobcats occur widely in North America, from southern Canada to central Mexico, and they range statewide in Colorado. They are most abundant in foothills, canyons, mesas and plateaus, where brush and woodland provide suitable habitat. Bobcats tend to avoid open prairies, tundra, heavy subalpine timber and wetlands.

The staple fare of bobcats is rabbits. Like other native cats they hunt by hiding or stealth rather than engaging in long chases. When rabbits are scarce, bobcats eat mice, voles and birds. They are active throughout the year.

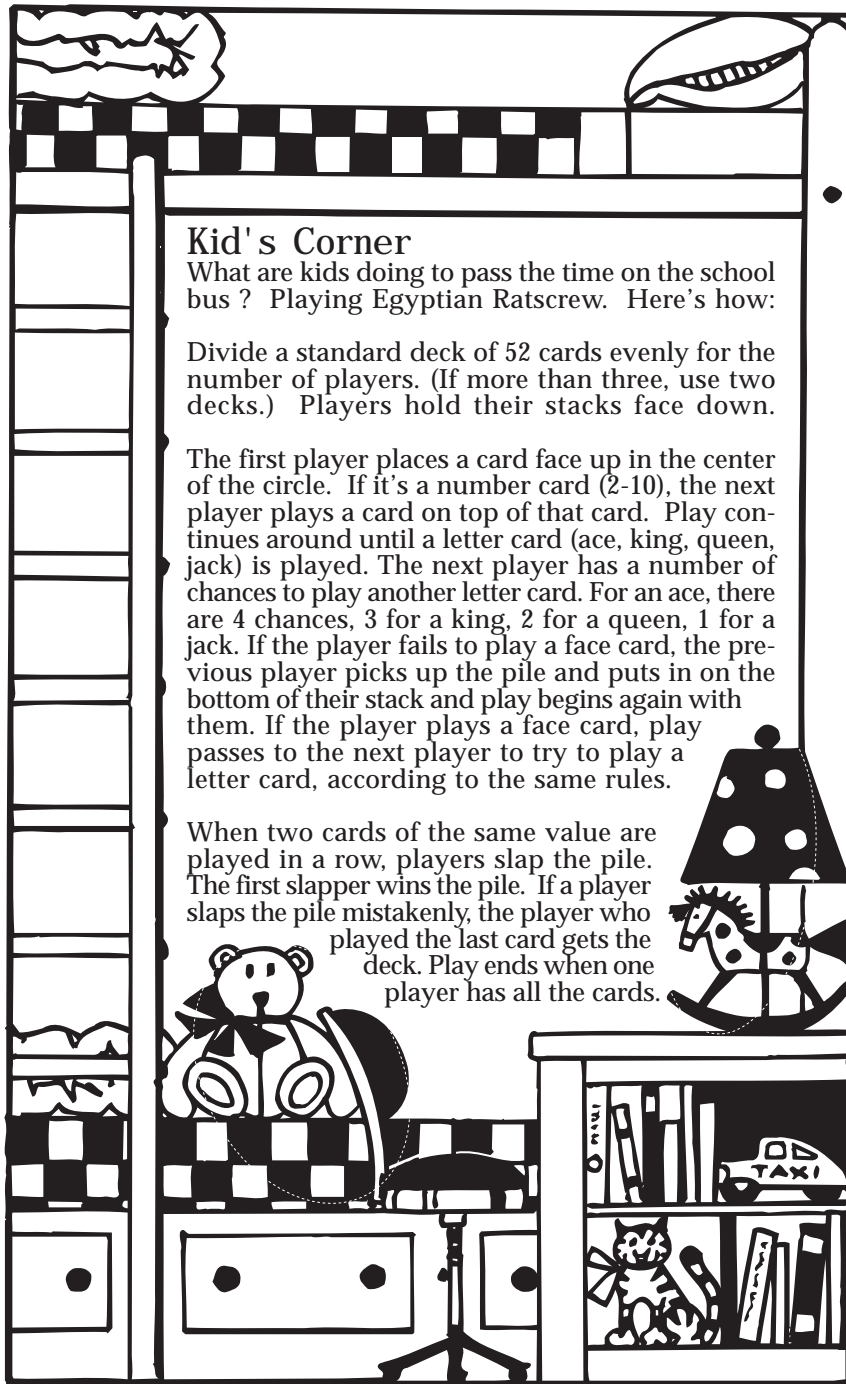
Bobcats breed in late winter and spring and produce a single litter each year of one to seven (typically three) young after a gestation period of about 10 weeks. The nursery is a simple natural shelter – under a rock or log. The young are weaned at about 8 weeks of age.”

## Ed Howard Remembered

On November 12th, longtime Sunshine property owner Ed Howard succumbed after a lengthy illness. Several donations to the Schoolhouse maintenance fund and Sunshine Fire Protection District were received, says June Howard, and she would like to express her appreciation.

The donations were an appropriate remembrance for a man involved in our community for almost forty years. Ed and June bought the Pilot Mine, sight unseen, in 1965. Ed was the manager of the Hotel Boulderado when an old man, who lived in the hotel and was in need of cash, asked him if he knew anyone who would want to buy a gold mine. Since the price was next to nothing, Ed took the gamble. Old time resident Forrest Jones helped Ed and June find their 22 acres, which included the Pilot mine and a two-room mining office. Over the years, they added to their property and ties to Sunshine. Ed volunteered extensively, but liked to do so in a low key way and left organizing and Board memberships to June. His happiness came from working with the other volunteers, hammer or saw in hand at the schoolhouse or as a member of the fire department.

As his illness progressed, June says that his interest in Sunshine was one of the few things that could entice him on an excursion. His love for Sunshine will be commemorated with a marker at the Cemetery as well as by our pleasure in the Schoolhouse he helped renovate and through our remembrances of him.



### Kid's Corner

What are kids doing to pass the time on the school bus ? Playing Egyptian Ratscrew. Here's how:

Divide a standard deck of 52 cards evenly for the number of players. (If more than three, use two decks.) Players hold their stacks face down.

The first player places a card face up in the center of the circle. If it's a number card (2-10), the next player plays a card on top of that card. Play continues around until a letter card (ace, king, queen, jack) is played. The next player has a number of chances to play another letter card. For an ace, there are 4 chances, 3 for a king, 2 for a queen, 1 for a jack. If the player fails to play a face card, the previous player picks up the pile and puts in on the bottom of their stack and play begins again with them. If the player plays a face card, play passes to the next player to try to play a letter card, according to the same rules.

When two cards of the same value are played in a row, players slap the pile. The first slapper wins the pile. If a player slaps the pile mistakenly, the player who played the last card gets the deck. Play ends when one player has all the cards.

### From the editor

If you have any feedback, ideas, letters or would like to submit materials, please contact me.

Mary Mesch  
 5188 Sunshine Canyon  
 ph. 447-1471 fax 447-2739  
 mmesch@cisco.com

### Bunko, Anyone?

All of a sudden, bunko leagues are popping up around the country. What's Bunko and what's the big deal?

Ask any Bunko player, and you'll get some vague statement that it's a dice game, but the fun part is just getting together with a group of friends on a monthly basis. The game is extremely simple—our league has had seven-year olds sit in on a few hands when we were short. Don't ask me to list the rules here, other than to say that it involves dice, a winners and losers table, a car, players screaming Bunko, prizes, wine and lots of good food.

In our Sunshine group, we have 16 regular players, plus substitutes, who get together once a month, rotating who hosts the party. The hostess provides beverages and sets up a few tables while the guests bring all the food. It's the easiest entertaining imaginable. After sampling from 15 different appetizers and desserts and wine and catching up on each others lives, we're ready to play Bunko. That is, if there's any time left.

### Ads

Business ads are \$10. Classifieds are \$1/line. Please submit ads by June 10th for the next issue.