



# the Sunshine fire protection district newsletter

Jun02

Vol. 02 Iss. 2



S U M M E R

## Fire Station News

### District Modernization Plan Update: New Firetruck Purchase

*by Doug Young and Bruce Honeyman*

After several months of planning and negotiating, the board of directors has selected a final vendor to build and deliver the district's new state-of-the-art pumper. The board is waiting for a final contract from the vendor for our signature before releasing the details of the contract, but the specifications are no secret.

It will be a brand new, modern custom four-wheel-driver pumper with all the features of a fully capable Class A pumper, as well as additional capabilities for handling the unique challenges in our rural mountainous environment. The new truck will carry 1000 gallons of water, pump 1000 gallons of water per minute, and pump straight water as well as water mixed with foam and

air to create Compressed Air Foam for superior water efficiency and penetration. It will carry a crew of 4, and is designed to handle the roads and driveways found in our district.

Once the contract is signed, the truck should be completed within 9-10 months after that, so this means that the new truck should be in service in the spring of 2003, in time for the summer fire season. This is an exciting time for the district, as the new firetruck is a very important component of the modernization plan that voters approved two years ago. We will keep you updated once the contract is signed and the truck moves into production.

*(Ed.'s note: many thanks to Doug and Bruce who spent many hours compiling specifications, contacting vendors, evaluating bids and checking references.)*

Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) mitigation grant. SFPD has won a grant of approximately \$30,000 from CSFS for fire mitigation efforts. It's a matching grant, with an equal contribution in contract service expenses or property owner labor required.

Steve Stratton is working with the board to finalize the details of eligibility, application, approval and payment and plans to schedule a community meeting when his plan is completed.



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### Calendar of events

#### *Firefighter trainings:*

Trainings are now scheduled for the *second* Saturday of each month at 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at the fire station.

Jun 8, Vehicle Stabilization/BES

Jul 13, Pump review

Aug 10, Advanced Quick Attach/port-a-pond

Sep 14, CAFS/foam operation

Oct 12, Burn Building

Nov 29, Radio/Communications

No Dec. Training

#### *Squad meetings:*

Squad meetings are held the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm at the fire station.

Jun 27, Jul 25, Aug 22, Sep 26, Oct 24, Nov 28, no Dec. meeting

#### *Medical trainings:*

Medical trainings are held from 7:30 pm to 9:30 pm.

June 19–Four Mile, July 10–Gold Hill, Aug 21–Four Mile, Sept 11–Gold Hill, Oct 16–Four Mile, Nov 13–Gold Hill, No Dec. Medical Training

#### *Board meetings:*

Board meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm at the fire station. Meetings are open to all residents.

Jun 11, Jul 9, Aug 13, Sep 10, Oct 8, Nov 12, No Dec. Meeting

#### *Special Events:*

Sunshine Schoolhouse Potluck, July 19, 6:30 p.m. at schoolhouse



*(Mail Alert—cont. from p. 7)*

- Consider having sensitive financial documents sent by certified mail or to a more secure mailbox.
- Outgoing mail is also at risk for check washing, where thieves take checks from bill payment envelopes, eradicate the handwriting, and reuse them. Consider posting outgoing mail that includes checks or financial information at a mail drop box.

### Current board

Pavel Bouska, Chairperson

Bill Bender, Treasurer

Mary Mesch, Member

Jay Schumacher, Member

David Wheeler, Member

Eric Bader, Fire Chief

Steve Stratton, 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 and are open to all residents (see schedule at left).



#### Contact information

Eric Bader, Fire Chief

Home ph. 303-440-8123

Work ph. 303-444-8420

Pager 303-441-3851 #4561

SFPD-Chief@egroups.com

Steve Stratton, Asst Chief

Home & work ph. 303-786-8255

Pager 303-441-3851 #4562

steve@talksinc.com

Bruce Honeyman, Fire Marshal

ph. 303-786-7731

SFPD-FireMarshal@egroups.com

**Premiere Property Brokers**  
**Tom Stevens**  
 MOUNTAIN REALTOR AND RESIDENT

449-7720 or 459-0457

1877 Broadway 12286 Switzerland Trail

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## Chief's Message

After 6 years as the chief of the Sunshine Fire Protection District, I am proud to announce our next chief: Steve Stratton. I am turning the job of chief over to a person that will do an awesome job for our district. As a homeowner in Sunshine, I know that our fire district will be in good hands with Steve. I will remain active with the fire department and continue working on some of the unfinished projects.

Over the past 6 years I have enjoyed being the chief of Sunshine. As a department, we have made huge improvements for our district. We now have more active members on the department than we ever have had. Our volunteers have more qualifications, are better trained, the equipment is in better shape than ever, all of which leads to a better fire department. I want to thank the district members, the board, the officers, and our volunteers for all the help that you have given. It has been the help of everyone that has allowed us to make the huge improvements to our fire department. I want to say thank you both as a resident for our improved fire depart-

ment, and as the past chief for having such a great group to work with.

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### Thinning of Trees

I would like to mention a couple of items regarding thinning of trees in Sunshine.

1st: Thinning of your trees will make your trees healthier and your property more resistant to fire.

2nd: Thinning your trees will make your property look more natural. Our current forests are in an unnatural state because we have removed fire. Fire used to thin trees, now it must be done with a chain saw.

3rd: Do not leave slash piles under trees. Please build slash piles in areas with an open canopy.

4th: Lop and scatter does not work in Sunshine Canyon. Due to our elevation and climate, branches do not break down fast enough to reduce fire danger. If you lop and scatter your thinning project, you are

increasing your fire risk.

5th: You must burn, haul, bury, or chip your slash.

6th: Please do not put slash down mine shafts. Burning slash in mine shafts is very dangerous due to starting underground fires or setting off old dynamite left in mines. Slash also fills up mine shafts, then dirt will cover the slash, making the ground look fine to walk over. Eventually the wood will rot, and someone could walk over the mineshaft and fall in. *[Ed.'s note: for professional thinning services, see Pine Mtn. ad on p. 8]*

Tax Deductible Donations can always be sent to:

Sunshine FPD  
311 County Rd. 83  
Boulder, CO 80302

Anyone donating money to the fire department will get a letter from us thanking you for your donation and giving you a tax deductible record.

Eric Bader  
Chief

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## Thank you, Eric Bader

Thank you, Eric Bader, for six years as the chief of SFPD. The community and department have benefited from your commitment to growing and improving SFPD. Many hours and much work went into this position and we all thank you.

Under his leadership, the number of volunteers grew to record numbers

and significant projects, such as the cistern program, were implemented. The department's effective response to the December wildland fire is testimonial to the success of Eric's efforts.

Our profiled volunteer, John Clark, commends Eric as being knowledgeable, fair and promoting the well-being of the fire department.

## Rich Landen, Board Chairman, finishes term

For the last four years, Rich Landen has served on the SFPD Board of Directors, acting as Chairperson for the last two years. Rich chose not to stand for re-election this spring as he and Nina will be relocating to Chicago this fall. Thank you for your efforts and good luck on your move.

I am writing an open Memorandum to you - the Chief of the S. C. F. D. - in order to make a Community-at-large suggestion that would in the long run be of benefit to everyone who resides in this beautiful Canyon of ours.

My family and I have been residents in Sunshine Canyon for the past 32 years. And, as summer comes closer every year we become very apprehensive with the fire danger that could surround us... In all these years that we have resided in the Canyon, we have never been more concerned than this year.

Drought and Fire go hand in hand. Without being an alarmist or pessimist I believe that each one of us could contribute in one way or another to minimize and/or avert the potential hazard problem.

Our suggestion is for each family or resident living in Sunshine Canyon to contribute \$ 10.00/m to the S. C. F. D., or otherwise to contribute with an annual voluntary donation of \$ 120.00.

The voluntary contribution mentioned above should be used specifically for updating and obtaining new equipment that the Fire Department is in need of. An Accountability of the contributions should be made as a matter of routine and disclosed via the Sunshine Fire District NewsLetter on a quarterly basis or upon request to the Fire Chief.

Also, if possible, we would like to suggest that some simple "signs" be placed a mile apart displaying visually in bright red: PLEASE: NO FIRES - NO SMOKING - NO CAMPING DUE TO HIGH FIRE HAZARDS. Due to my health I have been unable to physically be a part of the S. C. F. D., but would find time to take "signs" for home owners to display on private property near the road.

Please find enclosed a check drawn against the S. C. F. D. for \$ 120.00. We do hope that many of the residents would likewise contribute economically for the benefit of all who reside in this lovely Canyon of ours.

Sincerely,  
Al Espinosa, Ph. D.

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## Responses to Dr. Espinosa

Regarding the letter from Alvaro Espinosa:

The Sunshine Fire Protection District always needs and welcomes donations. With more money, our department can do more for the district. In addition to money, we also need volunteers to help with the projects. Mr. Espinosa is correct that the potential for a wildland fire in our district is at an all time high.

I would like to encourage residents to donate what they can, either time or money. For those that can, I would encourage even larger donations than \$10/month. People's time is as or even more valuable than the mon-

ey. Please do what you can.

As for more signs through the district, we have another fire ban sign that will be up shortly. It is my opinion that more signs will not stop the drivers that throw cigarettes out their car windows, and will reduce the scenic beauty of my drive home. My personal vote is against the signs. It is not a bad idea, and if the signs were put up, I will still enjoy my drive home.

Eric Bader  
Chief

*[Note: below are additional ideas on what you can do to protect your home.]*

Dear Alvaro:

We could not have stated this any better than you did. The reason why our fire department works so well is because all of the people like you who either volunteer some sort of effort whether in time or money or both! I personally think your idea is great, not only does it inspire but it recognizes those who generously donate much needed funds.

Thanks For Your Support,

Bill Bender  
SFPD Treasurer

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## Wildland Fires, what can you do?

There is a great deal that you can do as a resident of Sunshine to better protect yourself from fire.

The first is to mitigate the property around your house. Some mitigation is easy. Cut or weed whack around your house. Limb the lower branches as high as you can reach on the trees. Consider relocating some of the decorative Fitzers and other plants near the house that are highly flammable.

Thin the trees around your house as much as possible. (See Chief's message for more info on thinning trees.)

Clean your gutters.

Clean out the junk under any deck, and consider enclosing the underside of your deck. If you can, make sure wood fences have a gap near the house. Firefighters call fences slow fuses for starting houses on fire.

Inside your house you can also get yourself ready. Make a list of the items you want to grab before evacuating your home. Prioritize your list. Kids first, animals, pictures, etc.

Please leave the power to your house on, as the fire department may need the power on to be able to use your well water. Make sure your electrical panel is accessible for the fire depart-

ment to turn off. If you can do it, turn off the propane before evacuating your house.

Make sure that your family has a contact person or a meeting spot down in town in case the canyon is closed for fire and you want to know where the rest of your family is.

I hope that this information helps you prepare and that we may never need this information.

*Eric Bader*  
Chief

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## Volunteer Profile

John Clark jokes that he moved to Sunshine from Gold Hill because his new wife, Francelle, had in-door plumbing. Whatever his reasons, we're fortunate John made the move eleven years ago. Not only has he been a tremendous volunteer, but his warmth and genuineness are equally appreciated.

These qualities—embodied in John's warm bear hug—made an impression on Francelle when they first met many years ago. When she left Colorado, she never forgot John's hug. It didn't take long for the sparks to ignite when she returned and the fire burns brightly to this day. Francelle cites John's honesty, loving disposition, and loyalty as his strongest traits and says that his friends would probably add reliability, fairness, and mechanical knowledge to that list.

These traits have been the key to John's volunteer efforts in our community. When he retired at the end of 1998, John approached Eric Bader about how he might contribute to the community well-being and was put in charge of equipment maintenance. It was a smart choice, tapping into John's expertise from the Gold Hill Volunteer Fire Department and his career with the Institute of Arctic and Alpine Research. John's natural leadership skill, solidity and personal warmth helped attract other volunteers and now he has five persons helping him with maintenance.

John and his team do a weekly check to insure that truck and pump engines are in operating condition at all times. Our new engine, expected spring 2003, will be more complicated and challenging, but John feels it's well worth it for its enhanced capabilities—better brakes, 4WD, higher water volume, and greater passenger capacity.

During the almost twenty years that John worked for the Institute of Arctic and Alpine Research, reliably functioning equipment was imperative for his work and survival. John was responsible for the operation of four weather stations, applying both his intellectual acumen and athleticism to get the job done. He enjoyed working closely with CU scientists to design new and improved environmental monitoring equipment for the stations.

The stations were located at Niwot Ridge, with the highest at 12,000' elevation. Winters, John would Sno-Cat as far as possible and then hike the last few miles to the station. In his understated way, John claims the hiking wasn't too difficult as the tundra was hard-packed and swept clean by the wind. The worst condition was windy days with gusts up to 80-90 miles per hour. On one of these days, the swirling winds

and white out conditions so disoriented John, that his Sno-Cat pitched 300' down a couloir and John was forced to snow shoe out five miles.

Fortunately John was well prepared, being a member and onetime group leader of Rocky Mountain Rescue Group in the 60's and 70's. He also served on the National Ski Patrol during this period and worked as National Park Service Seasonal Ranger at Longs Peak for six years.

His love of the mountains and snow comes naturally to him, having been born and raised in Boulder. His family were miners and his grandfather owned several mines including Poorman and Caribou. Although he minored in geology at CU (with a major in biology), he had no desire to follow in the family trade. He much preferred tramping the mountains in open air than burrowing into them.

Since retirement, he and Francelle enjoy daily walks, often on the Switzerland Trail, and exploring small mining towns along the backroads of Colorado.

Thank you, John, for your deep sense of commitment to doing good for the community.

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## Fund-raising and Webmaster Volunteers Needed

We have two new volunteer positions that we need someone to undertake.

- Fund-raising: coordinate fund-raising activities for the fire department
  - Webmaster: maintain and add to the newly created SFPD website
- If interested, contact Steve Stratton at 303-786-8255 or [steve@talksinc.com](mailto:steve@talksinc.com).

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## Sunshine Schoolhouse and Cemetery News



### Sunshine Schoolhouse Potluck Dinner

Our annual potluck will be held at the school house on Friday, July, 19th, 6:30 pm. Everyone should bring their own place settings, drinks, a dish to share, and plenty of catch-up conversation! Questions? Contact Janice Wheeler 303-442-0657.

### Alert: Mail Theft in Canyons

During the last few months in Sunshine, several incidents of mail theft have resulted in tens of thousands of dollars of fraudulent checks and stolen goods. New bank-issued checks and checks sent by credit card companies have been stolen and passed at local retailers. Bank statements have also been taken and used to create computer-generated facsimile checks.

Although one suspect has been apprehended, the case detective states that it's possible that more than one ring may be responsible, so residents should continue caution. If you have any information or have been victimized, please contact the Boulder County Sheriff's Office, Deputy Donald Jones #558, 303-441-4444.

## Sunshine Wildfire

*(This article just missed the last newsletter, but we feel its message is still important.)*

December 4th, we got a tone to respond to smoke in Sunshine Canyon. The Sunshine Volunteers responded to the call. Even before arriving on the scene, smoke was visible and Boulder Rural FPD was also called in. The Sunshine brush truck went arrival on a 200' x200' grass fire at 5100 Sunshine that originated from a grass clipping pile below a resident's driveway.

During the time it takes to park, start the truck pump and pull the hose, which was about 60 seconds, the wind had pushed the fire to three times the original size. In the next five minutes, the fire went to three acres and spread northeast, pushed by the wind. Near the road, the fire hit old piles of slash.

The slash put up 10' flames that threatened to catch the trees on fire. If the trees started on fire, the fire was going to jump the road and take a good run up the hill toward a group of houses.

To stop the fire, Sunshine led a coordinated fire attack with the aid of Boulder Rural FPD, Gold Hill, Boulder Mountain Fire Authority, Boulder Emergency Squad, and Boulder Emer-

*cont. next column*

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In the meantime, residents may want to practice these precautions:

- Report any unknown or suspicious persons seen at mailboxes
- Try to pick up your mail as soon after delivery as possible or ask a trusted neighbor to collect it for you if your schedule makes this difficult. Do not leave your mail out overnight.

gency Services. There were seven engines on the fire including Sunshine's, new Forest Service Type IV fire truck. There were four more engines en route to protect the threatened houses when the fire attack knocked down the fire front.

I have been on quite a few fires over the years and I have not seen a volunteer department perform as well as the Sunshine Volunteers did that day. They did an awesome job. The fire had the potential to jump the road and conditions could have made this fire into another Old Stage Fire.

When you can, please thank your volunteers for all of their hard work so that they are ready for a wildfire.

The houses that were in the path of the fire were: 4610, 4604, 4622, 4602, 4588, 4600. Others could also have been in the path depending on the wind. If one of these houses is yours, be especially glad the Sunshine FPD did an awesome job.

Eric Bader  
Chief

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- Place a "hold mail" order with the post office if away for a few nights.
- Check your bank and credit card statements promptly when received as well as monitor recent transactions by phone in mid-cycle. Also check that statements are received when due. *(cont. p.2)*

# Pine Mountain Contractors, Inc Complete Forest Management

Owned and operated by  
Michael and Hollis Schmitt  
Sunshine residents

Phone: 720-352-0099

Fax: 303-442-0282

Email: mountainwork@msn.com

**We offer a wide variety of quality services  
to manage forests of any size including:**

- Fire Mitigation
- Complete Forest Thinning
- Chipping • Winching • Grading
- Post Hole Drilling
- Hauling • Excavating
- Snow Plowing • Firewood

We are pleased to provide you with a list  
of references who can tell you about  
our high level of workmanship.

## Classified Ads

Piano Teacher needed. Looking for patient and talented piano teacher for a beginning 8 year old. Our house or yours for this summer and beyond. Please call 303-444-0916 and ask for Lisa.

Free Swing Set. Childrens swing set needs new home. Has 2 swings, slide, and a 2-4 seater swing. Free for the taking. Call Diana or Dan Breed 303.440.9084.

*Classified ads are \$1/line. Business ads are \$10.*

*The deadline for the next issue is Sept. 15th.*

## From the editor

Remember, this is your newsletter! 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@ionsky.com

## High Speed Internet Update

Since our last newsletter, many Sunshine residents have begun to use the high-speed wireless Internet Service offered by ionSKY with good reports. The company has recently added repeater locations, so if you don't have line-of-site to the Lee Hill towers, there's still a good chance you can use their system. The following is excerpted from a letter sent to the editor.

"My family and I have been residents in Sunshine Canyon for the past 32 years. We have seen numerous changes in our Canyon. The most exciting change was the catching up with the Wireless Connectivity that has been implemented by a young entrepreneur by the name of Greg McCoy. Greg has given us the freedom of attaining a fast Internet at variable chosen speeds...Greg has been very helpful and prompt in deployment and in answering questions regarding the hardware and the configuration of our system. His company ionSKY ( and Greg's Tel. 720.406.1575) has provided first class services in the installation of the Wireless System as well as the wireless system within our home-office network..." Al Espinosa, Ph.D.