

# the Sunshine fire protection district newsletter

Jul 03

Vol. 03 Iss. 3



## Sunshine District Gets \$44,000

Money from feds will buy new equipment. Michael Brown, the undersecretary of the Department of Homeland Security, presented our fire department with \$44,000 to buy personal protective equipment (PPE) at a ceremony at Chatauqua. The money received is part of \$48 million the federal government is handing out this year to fire departments across the country to pay for equipment ranging from helmets to fire trucks. Fire departments in Colorado have received \$398,000 so far this year.

Chief Steve Stratton said his firefighters need the equipment badly. "This will pay for our most basic gear — hats, pants, gloves and shirts," Stratton said. Until now, Stratton said, his firefighters have been woefully under-equipped. "For the first time, we will be able to send people into a scene with the required equipment."

Bruce Honeyman, fire marshal, recalls a burn building training exercise that left him with second degree burns on his shoulders and chest due to old, worn out gear. The small quantity of adequate PPE units has also been a restricting factor on the number of firefighters we can suit up.

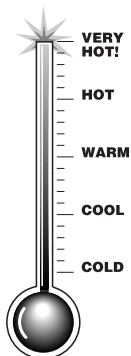
When chief Stratton and former chief Eric Bader worked on the grant proposal, they thought our chances of an award were slight although our department met all the requirements. Over the last year, a large part of FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) funding has been awarded for antiterrorist measures. Coupled with governmental budget woes, this has meant that funding available for fire districts has been limited.

Still, Stratton and Bader thought it was

worth a shot and gave the proposal considerable effort, one that paid off significantly. In fact, the Sunshine district is the only department in Boulder County to win grants so far this year.

Local "first responders" like the Sunshine firefighters are the most important resource the country has to fight natural disasters, and many of them aren't getting the funding they need, Brown said. When the federal gov-

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Community Fest Sept. 13th



## Calendar of events

Training and meeting schedules are also available at the Sunshine Fire Department website: <http://www.sunshine-fpd.org/>

### *Firefighter trainings:*

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

Aug 9, Sep 13, Oct 11, Nov 8, Dec 13

### *Squad meetings:*

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

Aug 28, Sep 25, Oct 23, No November and December meetings due to holidays.

### *Medical trainings:*

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

Aug 14 Four Mile, Sep 17 Gold Hill, Oct 9 Four Mile, Nov 19 Gold Hill, Dec 11 Four Mile

### *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.

Aug 12, Sep 9, Oct 14, Nov 11, Dec 9

### *Special Events:*

Community Fest, Sept. 13th, 2:00 to 6:00 p.m., station

Sunshine Arts and Crafts Fair, Sept. 20-21st, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., schoolhouse



District Gets \$44,000 (cont. from p. 1)

ernment asked for grant applications, 20,000 fire departments responded nationwide, asking for a total of more than \$3 billion.

Brown said he thinks some people in Colorado have grown complacent lately about the risks natural disasters pose because high-profile wildfires aren't racing across the state.

"People get lackadaisical," he said. "They see that the snowpack is up to normal, and they stop worrying. But I can tell you, there are seven wildfires burning in the state right now."

*(Includes excerpts from Daily Camera article by Ryan Morgan, Camera Staff Writer, July 15, 2003)*

## Current board

Pavel Bouska, Chairperson  
Bill Bender, Treasurer  
Mary Mesch, Member  
Jay Schumacher, Member  
David Wheeler, Member

## District Officers

Steve Stratton, Fire Chief  
Tom Higbee, 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 the public.



## Contact information

Steve Stratton, Fire Chief  
Home & work ph. 303-786-8255  
Pager 303-441-3851 #4561  
steve@talksinc.com  
SFPD-Chief@egroups.com  
  
Tom Higbee, Asst. Fire Chief  
Home ph. 303-541-9891  
Mobile ph. 303-956-1507  
Pager 303-441-3851 #4562  
Higbeehomeinspection@netzero.net  
  
Bruce Honeyman, Fire Marshal  
ph. 303-786-7731  
SFPD-FireMarshal@egroups.com

Net Humor: A hospital posted a notice in the nurse's lounge saying: "Remember, the first five minutes of a human being's life are the most dangerous." Underneath, a nurse had written: "The last five are pretty risky, too."

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## Chief's Message

We're growing up. I suppose it is inevitable. While there really isn't much room for too many more houses in our district, the ones we have seem to be getting bigger. Add that to the drier summers, and we have more and more concern over the fire danger in Sunshine and surrounding neighborhoods. A couple years ago this concern led the people of Sunshine to provide an increase in property tax to bolster the operating abilities of our fire department. And today, right this minute, the growing pains are signaling significant changes. Active participation in our fire fighting squad is higher than ever. More training is being required. Equipment needs are rising. And administration of fire district resources is becoming more and more complex. The mandate from the Sunshine public is pushing this adolescent into adulthood.

As I write this, seven of our fire fighters are mopping up a small 3 1/2 acre fire on Sugarloaf. Seven more

just got back from 10 days at the Brush Mountain and Carr fires near Grand Junction. I just finished a phone call with the forest service who wants to know how fast we can man another crew. This week we will take delivery of our first custom ordered brand new fire truck. This summer we are once again funding help for fire mitigation on private properties. And, by the way, have you heard, the feds just gave us over \$40,000 because they think we are under equipped to keep our fire fighters safe on the fire line.

In the past 30 days, SFPD has moved into high gear. Yes, some of our resources are being pushed to their limit. There just doesn't seem to be enough hours in the day. But we are meeting the challenge. Sunshine is safer from fire danger than ever before, but only because our people are getting more training, more experience and more support from you.

Despite all of our desires Sunshine

will continue to grow. In the last 10 years the number of people living in Colorado's interface "Red Zones" has increased 30%. It is estimated this population will double by 2020. Our emergency services are keeping pace with this growth. Keep an eye open for more changes in your fire department. And the next time you pass an SFPD volunteer, give a wave and say thanks for their dedication and hard work.

**Steve Stratton**  
Chief

### Tax Deductible Donations

Please send donations to:

Sunshine FPD  
311 County Rd. 83  
Boulder, CO 80302

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

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One Sunday morning, a priest wakes up to a beautiful morning and decides to go golfing. He calls the Pastor saying that he is sick and unable to say Mass. Way up in heaven, Saint Peter sees all this and asks God, "Are you really going to let him get away with this?"

"No, I guess not," says God.

The priest drives to a distant course so he doesn't bump into anyone he knows. The links are empty when he gets there. So he takes his first swing, drives the ball 495 yards and gets a hole in one.

Saint Peter watches in disbelief and asks, "Why did you let him do that?"

To this God says, "Who's he going to tell?".

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## Volunteer Profile

Shortly after moving here, Pavel Bouska dropped by a board meeting to offer assistance. He's a man of conviction and believes in doing his part. His offer was snapped up and he was appointed to the board, then later elected chairman. Pavel believes that fire management is the most important thing we need to do. He loves the beauty of Sunshine and sees that everything we have could be destroyed without support for our fire fighters.

He learned conviction from his parents, who were unwilling to compromise their beliefs when Prague was overrun by Nazi Germany and then Communist Russia. Life was hard during the "dark ages of Stalinism" and his parents' political status made it harder. Emotional ties bound Pavel to stay, though.

Two events influenced Pavel to defect. After college, where he studied civil engineering, Pavel was drafted into the Czech military, a "totalitarian system using any lever to control citizens". There he witnessed terrible abuses.

After leaving the military, he joined

"Samizdat", an underground group that published banned books. Members retyped entire books, pressing the keys hard to make as many as six carbon copies. Fear was already a way of life, so the extra risk didn't weigh on him at first. But after a wave of arrests, the group moved the forbidden books to his apartment which was thought to be safer. If caught, he knew the authorities would use force and threats to induce him to collaborate. It was time to leave his homeland.

He defected in 1982, after creating a false trail to protect his family. Germany granted him political asylum; he was not truly a citizen of any country. His facility with languages allowed him to learn flawless German and he thrived, with an excellent job and good friends. He was sure he'd never leave Germany.

During a 1987 visit to the U.S., "something grabbed him" though. He couldn't put it into words at the time, but two weeks after returning to Germany he knew he needed to

live in the U.S. He states that he understands now that it was the sense of freedom here, realized on a deeper level than in the Old World.

Two days after moving here, he met his wife Beth at a Christmas party. The couple moved to Sunshine four years ago and have two children, Hannah age three and Hailey age one. Spending time with his daughters is Pavel's favorite activity.

His involvement in the community extends to his work as well. Recently, he joined ionSKY Inc. as CEO and part owner. IonSKY provides wireless internet connectivity to our community and Pavel's neighbors are now his clients. He takes this responsibility seriously, to the point of climbing the antennae himself to assure proper service.

Pavel also loves following politics and skiing, which he learned at just two years old. And, if he ever has time, he'd like to add Spanish to the handful of languages he already knows.

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Unlimited local calling, 3 custom calling features,  
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\*within US, from US to Canada, Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands, Guam



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## SFPD Helps Battle Brush Canyon and Carr Fires

On July 11th, Sunshine got a call to help out with the Brush Canyon Fire near Grand Junction. Tom Higbee, Henry Ballard and I took the Tender, Sunshine 4541, to the fire. Once at the fire, Sunshine helped with patrolling the bottom of the Brush Canyon Fire: putting out spot fires, supporting hand crews with hose lays, filling pumpkins, (orange portable water tanks that helicopters use to dip out of) and keeping portable pumps running.

On the afternoon of July 15th, our team had just been called up to assist with a burn-out operation where hand crews were going to set fire to a drainage on the Southwest side of the Brush Creek Canyon, when another fire call was received. Sunshine 4541 and one other brush truck were dispatched to the next canyon to the west where a new fire was reported. Our trucks rolled up to

a fast moving wildfire with small log cabins and a ranch in the fires' path. I assigned the brush truck to defend two small cabins and Sunshine 4541 to protect the Ranch with about six structures.

Once the Sunshine truck was in position, along with a water tender from the local Debeque fire department, a back fire was lit to remove fuels in front of the fire. Ashes from the fire started the grass and a shed roof on fire, but the Sunshine crew put them out before they could get big. After about 30 minutes, other resources moved in, including hand crews, single engine air tankers, a slurry bomber, smoke jumpers and two helicopters. In four hours, the fire had grown to 125 acres but was mostly controlled in five hours. No structures were lost.

On July 19th, Bruce Honeyman and Rick Lansky took over for Tom and Henry as the crew. They helped with mop-up, putting out burning stumps, filling water bladders and patrolling for escaped fire. On July 21st, Larry Campbell and Kathleen Monahan replaced Bruce and Rick on the engine. On July 22nd, the crew was released from the fire and brought the engine home.

Sunshine helped out with two fires, helped save a ranch and did an awesome job. The on the job training doesn't get any better. Your volunteer firefighters continue to improve their skills and abilities.

Eric Bader  
Engine Boss



*Above: Tom Higbee and Henry Ballard put out spot fires  
Left: Henry Ballard waits for advancing fire*

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## Wildfire Mitigation Grant

### 2003 Program Description

Sunshine Fire Protection District is pleased to offer funds to help local residents mitigate fire danger on their properties. We have approximately \$14,000 to dispense this year. SFPD is offering \$500 to interested property owners, who can choose *one* of the following programs:

#### Chipping Assistance Program

Property owners can contact SFPD and request up to \$500 in free chipping to get rid of slash piles on their property.

If the necessary chipping goes over \$500, the property owner will be required to pay the balance for finishing the job, or the remaining slash will remain un-chipped. SFPD will schedule a time for the chipping contractor to do the work.

#### Fire Mitigation Assistance Program

This program entitles property owners to submit invoices to SFPD for fire mitigation expenses they have incurred. A reimbursement check for 1/2 the amount up to \$500 will be

given to property owners participating in this program.

Unfortunately, funds are limited and the list of interested residents is filling up rapidly. The deadline for signing up is August 31, 2003. If you would like to participate in one of these mitigation programs, please contact one of the following SFPD representatives for details:

Steve Stratton 303.786.8255

Henry Ballard 303.449.8619

Tom Higbee 303.541.9891

## IMPORTANT! Fire Mitigation Time Sheet

It's very important for our department to have documentation of the time property owners spend on fire mitigation: cutting trees, chipping, mowing, burning slash, etc. Records of these hours will help support our future requests for grant money in the upcoming years.

Please take the time to fill out this form. You may mail/drop off this form at the SFPD mailbox at 311 County Rd. 83 or e-mail to Beth Byerlein at [byerlein@ionsky.com](mailto:byerlein@ionsky.com). If you have any questions regarding the time sheet, please call her at 720.635.8188. Thank you.

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## Fire Mitigation Time Sheet Form

Since January 2003 to the present date \_\_\_\_\_, I/we have put in \_\_\_\_\_ hours in fire mitigation on the property located at \_\_\_\_\_.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Sunshine's New Fire Truck

After waiting one and a half years, Sunshine Fire Protection District has taken delivery of a new RED pumper truck! As soon as the radios are installed and the necessary accessories to outfit the truck are onboard, SFPD will have the capability to haul more water and pump it higher, farther and

faster than we have ever been able in the past. Engine 4501 is designed specifically for our challenging terrain and includes four wheel drive among other custom features.

When our volunteer firefighters complete their certification training

to drive the truck and use its equipment on fire calls, the new pumper will be put into service in Sunshine. In the future, dispatching 4501 to wildland fires outside our district will give our firefighters extremely valuable experience that would not be possible otherwise.

Fire Engine 4501, July 2003



Stella Award (for most frivolous lawsuit): 19 year-old Carl Truman of Los Angeles won \$74,000 and medical expenses when his neighbor ran over his hand with a Honda Accord. Mr. Truman apparently didn't notice there was someone at the wheel of the car when he was trying to steal his neighbor's hubcaps.

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## Sunshine Events

Sunshine Community Fest!  
Saturday, September 13th, 2-6pm, Station

Sunshine Schoolhouse Annual Arts and Crafts Show  
Saturday & Sunday, Sept. 20-21st, 10-4, Schoolhouse

Sunshine Community Fest! Mark your calendars for September 13th. Our annual bash boasts good food, great beer, interesting mountain folk, kids games and activities, an auction for crafts and fresh baked goods, and too many other things to mention. And all supporting a good cause—the Sunshine Fire Protection District.

Suggested donation is \$7 per person, with a \$20 maximum per family. Kids under 12 are free. Bring a dish to share or a baked item for raffle. Chili, beer (micro and macro) and soft drinks will be provided. Your donation gets you door prize tickets for some great items. You may buy raffle tickets good for valuable goods and services. And our auction offers the best in locally baked foods and local handicrafts.

Please call Stephen Hall at 303-444-0916 during the day if you'd like to volunteer your time. Better yet, email him at [shall@skimoguls.com](mailto:shall@skimoguls.com).

Sunshine Schoolhouse Annual Arts and Crafts Show, Featuring the work of local residents: books on local history, paintings, Halloween decors, holiday table linens, crafts, soft sculpture, cards, jewelry, specialty foods and more! Free admission and refreshments. Arts & Crafts Show proceeds benefit the Schoolhouse and Cemetery Association. Call Linda Luchangco at 303-413-1282 by Sept. 15th to be a vendor.



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## Sunshine Schoolhouse and Cemetery News



### Sunshine Appreciation

Thank you to Linda Luchangco and Janice Wheeler for organizing and setting up the Annual Sunshine Potluck. Also, thanks to Mike Aronson for providing firewood for the schoolhouse.

Annual Sunshine Arts & Crafts Fair Reserve Sept. 20th and 21st, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for the annual Arts & Crafts Fair benefitting the schoolhouse fund. The fair features Sunshine artists' wares as well as free refreshments. To be a vendor, call Linda Luchangco at 303-413-1282 by Sept. 15th.

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### False Alarms

Over the last year, SFPD has responded to an increasing number of false alarms. Not only is it a burden on our volunteers, but it can be expensive to homeowners as Boulder County's policy is to issue fines after three false alarms. An even greater cost to the resident is property damage.

When there is no occupant present at an alarm, the responding fire fighter can either force entry into the residence or do a visual check through windows. Forced entry incurs costly damage; a visual check, however, is not a dependable method of investigation. Putting the safety of our residents first, the department is implementing a policy of forced entry, if necessary, when responding to alarms.

To minimize the chance of property damage, SFPD is adding a Knox Box system to our response capabilities. Participating homeowners will each have a small metal lock box affixed near their main entries or gates. In case of an alarm, SFPD will receive a code from the alarm company that opens the lock box containing the house key.

SFPD encourages all home owners to participate in the program. There is a one-time fee of approximately \$250 for installation of the lock box. For more information or to sign up for the program, please contact:

Steve Stratton 303.786.8255  
Tom Higbee 303.541.9891

### Burn Ban in Effect

On July 17, 2003, a burn ban went into effect in Boulder County as well as in Arapahoe & Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland. Restrictions will remain in effect until rescinded by the Boulder County Commissioners, or until September 30, 2003 on federal lands.

The following fire restrictions apply in all of these areas in Colorado:

- Open burning in unincorporated Boulder County in the mountainous areas (west of Broadway);
- Building, maintaining, attending or using a fire, campfire, charcoal, coal, or wood stove, except within a developed recreation site;
- Prescribed burning of fence rows, fields, wildlands, trash and debris;
- Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site, or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is cleared of all flammable material;
- Discharging of all fireworks, including permissible fireworks outside incorporated city limits;

These restrictions are being implemented for public safety due to extreme fire hazard conditions in unincorporated Boulder County and on federal lands within the listed areas.

Violation of these regulations is punishable as a Class B misdemeanor, by fines and possible imprisonment.

Despite these fire restrictions, it is still permissible to use your propane or charcoal grill at home.

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## Wildlife Watch

*Bad News Bears.* Here's a heads up from Paul Gatza on recent bear activity in the Sunshine and Boulder Heights area. "On

the night of July 15th, a bear entered Cindy Jones's home in



Boulder Heights and took her pet rabbit. The following night, a bear entered the United Empire Gold Mine building in Sunshine to help itself to a cooler full of bird seed and climbed around in the kitchen. The same night, a bear bit into a jug of transmission oil on the front porch at Chris Voorhees' house. (He probably thought it was Guinness Stout.) Anyway, you may want to think

about how a bear could get into your home and take steps to prevent it."

Soon after these reports, a bear attempted entry into the Higbee residence via a window. John and Francelle Clark were visited by a bear that climbed a dog ladder up to their deck to raid their birdfeeder. (Fortunately, it was agile enough to be able to back down the ladder, too). Luchangco guests were entertained by a bear wandering by, which returned later that night for leftovers and smashed a patio table in frustration.

## 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

*Classified ads are \$1/line. Business ads are \$10. The deadline for the next issue is Oct. 15th.*