

# the Sunshine fire protection district newsletter

## A To-Do List for Safety

Jun 06

Vol. 06 Iss.1



When I joined the Fire Department, almost a decade ago, wildfire 'season' seemed to really be a season. The last several years, however, we have had our wildland firefighting gear set to go essentially the entire year. As of May 29<sup>th</sup>, the moisture content of the 'thousand-hour-fuels', the relatively heavy fuels that will sustain a forest fire, was at 11%; this is a moisture content that we usually see in late summer, not the end of May. When the moisture content of the thousand-hour fuels drops into single digits, we are in extreme fire conditions. Some of the things that you can do to prepare your home for defending against wildfires are:

1. Keep roofs clear of debris: all of those pine needles that accumulate over the winter need to be cleaned from gutters.
2. Enclose porch floors, roofs and attic openings (this will help keep wind-

blown firebrands from getting into your home);

3. Create and maintain defensible space zones.
4. Dispose of slash from thinning.
5. Don't park vehicles in tall, dry grass: hot mufflers can start fires.
6. Stack firewood uphill or on a contour and at least 15 feet away from buildings.

However, preparing for emergencies is something we all need to think about throughout the year, not just when the summer heats up. Below are some other things for you to think about in terms of emergency preparedness.

1. If you have a buried propane tank, provide us with a means of locating it when access to the tank is under snow (e.g., a flag sticking up several feet).
2. If you have a sprinkler system for your house, please let us know if you

have a fire department connection and its location (fire-marshall@sunshine-fpd.org). If you don't know if you have such a connection, call me (303-449-6685) and I'll check it out for you.

3. Put emergency contact and medical information in a location that is easy for firefighters and emergency medical personnel to find. Pharmacies sell plastic information holders, usually emblazoned with a big red cross, that you can attach to the re-

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## Calendar of events

Training and meeting schedules are also available at the Sunshine Fire Department website: [www.sunshinefire.com](http://www.sunshinefire.com)

### *Firefighter trainings:*

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

Jun 10, Jul 8, Aug 12, Sep 9, Oct 14, Nov. 11, Dec. 9

### *Squad meetings:*

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

Jun 15, Jul 20, Aug 17, Sep 21, Oct 19, Nov 16, Dec 21

### *Medical trainings:*

Medical trainings are held from 7:30 pm to 9:30 pm at either Gold Hill or Four Mile

Jul 19, Aug 10, Sep 20, Oct 12, Nov 15, Dec 14

### *Board meetings:*

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

Jul 11, Aug 8, Sep 12, Oct 10, Nov 14, Dec 12

### *Special Events*

Arts & Craft Fair, Sunshine Schoolhouse, Sat & Sun, Sept 23-24th  
Cemetery & Schoolhouse mitigation, Sat, Oct. 7, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm



## Chief's Message (cont. from p.3)

firefighters if some of these tasks could be taken over by others. This has lead to the idea of forming an "auxiliary". The planning and operation of the Pancake Breakfast is a perfect example of how this can work. Such auxiliary members could even provide support services at a fire if necessary (Thanks Janice for the hot chocolate that night!). More info will be forth coming. Let me know if you are interested.

**Steve Stratton**

Fire Chief

### Tax Deductible Donations

Please send donations to:

Sunshine FPD, 311 County Rd. 83, Boulder, CO 80302

Donors will receive a letter that can be used as a tax deduction record.

## Board Members

Pavel Bouska, Chairman

Don Dick, Treasurer

Bill Bender, Member

Frank McGuire, Member

Pat Noyes, Member

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

## District Officers

Steve Stratton, Fire Chief

Bruce Honeyman, Asst. Fire Chief & Fire Marshal



### Contact information

Steve Stratton, Fire Chief

Home & work ph. 303-786-8255

Pager 303-441-3851 #4561

[steve@stevestratton.tv](mailto:steve@stevestratton.tv)

[SFPD-Chief@egroups.com](mailto:SFPD-Chief@egroups.com)

Bruce Honeyman, Asst. Fire chief & Fire Marshal

ph. 303-786-7731

[SFPD-FireMarshal@egroups.com](mailto:SFPD-FireMarshal@egroups.com)

In any emergency, call 911.



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## Chief's Message

It has been awhile since our last newsletter, ironically because so much is going on. After the Sunshine fires in February and March, and preparing for this year's fire season, it's been catch-up for us volunteers. Hopefully, between the personal letter I sent out and our Community Meeting in April you have felt informed. Here's a rundown of additional things you should know.

Sunshine now has FIVE NEW FIREFIGHTERS! This is huge news. With several of our personnel moving away over the last couple years our volunteer base has gotten rather slim. Bret Haberstick, Mike Sanders, Peter Beresford, Wanda Bennett and Fred Elles all completed 50 hours of training and are now certified Wildland Firefighter II's. This has required significant dedication on their part. Welcome to all of you guys to SFPD. We look forward to putting you to work. (You can see Wanda's interview during her training at )

All indications point to a significant fire season this year. I know this is not what you want to hear. Our predicted wet spring never materialized and below normal rainfall is expected. Light fuel moistures are already down to 12%. We would not usually expect to see this until July or August. In fact, current data are matching the numbers from 2002, the worst fire season in Colorado in 30 years. Each of us needs to deal with the eventuality of wildfire in our own way, but here are some suggestions: cut the grass around your house, thin and limb-up your trees, know what

you would take in an evacuation, know your area – if a road is closed what are your alternate routes, and consider putting important papers in a safety deposit box somewhere. Don't worry too much... we live in the mountains and go through this every year. But plan ahead!

I have always encouraged people to report any suspicious smoke immediately to 911. While this is still true, please keep something in mind. Most smokes are not forest fires. When you call 911 you are basically asking one of your neighbors to stop what they are doing, change their clothes, drive to the fire station, get in a fire truck and try to locate the smoke you saw. This could be your one chance to be a firefighter. If it makes sense, take an extra five minutes and drive or walk to where the smoke is. If you can confirm the situation, or at least get a better idea of where the smoke is coming from, you can save tens, perhaps hundreds of man-hours. You could be a volunteer for a few minutes. If you see flames, don't waste time, call 911 immediately.

Our Pancake Breakfast was a major success! Thanks to all of you who attended. It was wonderful to meet many of you and I must say the pancakes were outstanding (Thanks John Jensen!). We were able to meet all our expenses, and several people took the opportunity to deliver their larger contributions toward the completion of the new fire station. I am very happy to say, with the monies received that day we have paid off all expenses for the new



station! All invoices have been paid and we are back to our normal operating budget. THANK YOU Sunshine for your outrageous support!

We talked a lot at the Pancake Breakfast about having a Fire Mitigation Community Forum; basically a class to teach homeowners how they can best protect their properties. This would include mitigation experts to help the community develop an official community mitigation plan and eventually open the possibility for grant money. Plans for such a gathering are under way. If you have specific requests, please let me know.

It is true, we fight fires. But most of what we do is take care of our equipment, keep the station clean, water the new trees, etc, etc. Recently I have had several people say they want to volunteer with SFPD but can't really be a firefighter. A huge burden would be lifted from our

*(Cont. on p. 2)*

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## Volunteer Profile: Brett Haberstick

Although he's one of the newbies in the fire department, Brett Haberstick is already handling himself like a veteran. At his first training, he won a trophy for driving our fire engine down a rocky twisty road with the least errors. Oh, and he had never driven an engine before. And he had to do it backwards.

Brett is the kind of guy who puts 100% effort and enthusiasm into any endeavor, including volunteer work. He pushed forward to get his red card as soon as he could, even though he knew he was close to the annual expiration date and would have to be recertified almost immediately. This kind of dedication and attitude has led to his steep learning curve. It doesn't hurt that he's a pretty smart cookie, too.

When asked about his career, Brett states that he works in the psychology field. Pushed a bit, he explains that he has a Ph.D. in Quantitative Genetics that he

applies to determine statistically significant correlations between genetics and behavior. Which explains why he just tells people he's in psychology.

Outside of work, Brett is an avid tennis player and, true to his gungho nature, plays in a competitive league. He also enjoys cooking as a hobby, with a flair for spicy ethnic food.

Brett has been an active social services volunteer for many years so the decision to join the department was a natural choice. For him, it was a great opportunity to both help people and make new friends within our community.

He says he feels great when he's fighting a fire because he has such confidence in his training and the support he gets from his fellow SF-

PD fire fighters. "Everyone in the department has been incredibly encouraging and supportive," he states, "each in his own unique way." Sunshine is exceptional in the quality of interaction within the department, Brett feels.

In his opinion, the burning of the old fire station, while a great loss, also served to strengthen the already strong bond among the fire fighters.

Brett, a thoughtful person, also recognizes the importance of the support from the fire fighters' families and the sacrifices they make. They're our twelfth man and deserve a measure of thanks from all of us.

And thanks to you too, Brett, for your service to Sunshine.





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## A To Do List (cont. from p. 1)

frigerator door. If you have a living will or Do Not Resuscitate Orders (DNR), make sure that they are easy to find by emergency responders. Good locations include the refrigerator door, as described above, or with your collection of medications.

4. Get a fireproof safe for critical personnel information.

5. Think about those items that are precious to you (e.g., family photographs) and keep them organized for quick and easy access if you need to quickly evacuate your home. In an emergency, you may have only a few minutes to gather belongings.

6. Make sure that emergency responders can locate your house: your fire department address marker (the green plastic strips) should be in good shape and visible from the road. If you need a new one, or are unsure if your current marker is adequate for the task, contact me. Remember that some of our mutual and automatic aid responders (e.g., Priemark Paramedic Services and adja-

cent fire districts) may not be as familiar with our District as we are.

7. Trim branches along your driveway to facilitate moving our equipment to your home (our largest pumper, 4501, is 9 feet wide and 11 feet tall).

8. Develop a family evacuation plan. Agree upon a rendezvous point, perhaps at a friend's house in town. Practice family fire drills: know the best exits from your home.

9. Check the batteries on your smoke detectors.

10. If you are going away on vacation, try to remember to park vehicles away from likely routes of emergency access. If you have a turnaround at your home, leave it free of vehicles so that we don't need to back down your driveway when we leave.

11. Make sure that your fire extinguisher is charged and is located for easy access. A good place for

an extinguisher is just outside the kitchen. Extinguishers need to be serviced yearly! If you don't know the proper way to use an extinguisher, contact us and we'll be glad to show you.

12. Have flashlights with fresh batteries at convenient locations in your home.

13. If you have a gate on your driveway, make sure that we are up-to-date on the access code.

14. Consider purchasing a Knox Box ([www.knoxbox.com](http://www.knoxbox.com)) so that we can gain access to your home in an emergency.

15. Clean out your garage and storage areas! Properly dispose of hazardous materials.

Remember to plan ahead. If you have any questions about emergency preparedness, please do not hesitate to contact us. Have a safe and fun summer!

*Bruce Honeyman, Fire Marshal*

## Sunshine Community Auxiliary

Please contact Janice Wheeler if you would like to become a member of our Community Auxiliary.

We are in the formative stages of this community support group. A list of duties, trainings, and events will be coming soon. Any suggestions and comments are welcome.  
e-mail: [hgtvgal@aol.com](mailto:hgtvgal@aol.com)  
Phone: 303-442-0657

### Political Quotes

"Outside of the killings, Washington has one of the lowest crime rates in the country," --Mayor Marion Barry, Washington, DC.

"We are ready for an unforeseen event that may or may not occur."  
--Al Gore

"I love California. I practically grew up in Phoenix." --Dan Quayle

"That lowdown scoundrel deserves to be kicked to death by a jackass, and I'm just the one to do it," --A congressional candidate in Texas.

## **Confrontation of the first kind**

On Monday, May 8th, 2006, at about 4:15 p.m., a large mature mountain lion was stalking our Chow-Chow, named Paipa, who was in her pen. A strong six foot fence on the north and west side of our residence protects the pen. Paipa was very agitated, running back and forth and continuously barking inside the pen at someone or something on the other side of the fence. I thought that she might be so excited because of the presence of a bear. Thus, I decided to walk out from my home office to the northwest of the fence to ascertain what was going on, and to my surprise I saw about 15 feet away from me a majestic, beautiful and lean looking full grown mountain lion looking at me! I froze with fear, because the victim was me and no longer Paipa who was safely, so I thought, behind the tall fence. Fortunately, I was standing on a promontory and am 6'3" tall; hence, the mountain lion looked at me, growled and turned northwest into the woods. What a beautiful but dangerous wild animal! The beast moved one step at a time in slow motion and I turned like a top instantly and ran to safety with my adrenaline pumping and over saturated which, by the way, kept me in a state of uneasiness that took some time to subside. I was careless to have ventured with curiosity to find out the reason for Paipa's agitation! I could have been victimized by this beautiful wild animal's instinct to seek a daily staple to calm its hunger. One must mitigate risk and not be so bold or one must pay the price.

## **A week later a Lion attacks and a Chow is Rescued**

A week later, Monday the 15th at about 9:05 p.m., Eugenia Claiborne and I were in the Skippers Room and Eugenia heard a lamentation coming from the outside of our residence. She stood up as I also did and ran to the window facing the west side of our home. She saw the mountain lion on top of Paipa and said so! I ran frantically to the foyer located on the second level of our house, grabbed a hand-held pressure horn, ran as fast I could down to the first level, opened the door and blasted the horn several times. The lion grabbed Paipa by her head and jumped upward to the top of the fence. Paipa was hanging between the lion's forward legs and the lion's left hind leg, stabilizing herself with the captured Chow. I kept blasting the horn (acoustically at a level of about 125 dB) and the lion became frantic and dropped Paipa. Upon falling, Paipa came running to my side in a hyperactive state, bleeding and beat-up tremendously. Paipa was traumatized severely and was quite disturbed with the horrible experience that had taken place.

Next day we took Paipa to the Humane Society Veterinary Clinic where she was treated, x-rayed, and other necessities were done to calm her. She has since been under the dedicated care of Eugenia Claiborne who medicates Paipa with three pills every three hours: pain killers, decongestants and antibiotics. Paipa is recovering very slowly and we hope that she will make it! Take care of your lovely animals that are prey to the lions that reside in our midst. I was able to save our Chow by using the pressure horn as a deterrent—I recommend it very highly indeed. I have used this horn in the past to counteract the visits of bears on our properties.

A recount of an experience that happened at 3940 Sunshine Canyon Drive, Boulder, located in the beautiful foothills of the Rocky Mountains of Colorado at 6800 feet above sea level. The protagonists were Álvaro (Al) and Eugenia Claiborne Espinosa, a Chow by the name of Paipa and a majestic and beautiful mature wild mountain lion called "the intruder/stalker".

**Álvaro Espinosa**

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## First Annual Firehouse Flapjack Fling

On Sunday, April 23, Sunshine Fire hosted a pancake breakfast to celebrate our new Station #2. With the help of more than 20 non-firefighter volunteers, we had a wonderful success - we fed approximately 200 people!

In the firehouse, which was decorated with streamers and balloons, we served pancakes, bacon, veggie sausage, coffee, tea and juice to a steady flow of neighbors, friends and firefighters from several other agencies from 9 - 11 am. Then afterwards, Chief Stratton led a public meeting to talk about recent events and community concerns.

Before beginning the meeting, we remembered Bob Heflin and Jay Shumaker as members of the Sunshine community who will be greatly missed.

Topics of interest were the burning of Station #1 in February and questions about the future of that building. Many who attended the meeting also ex-

pressed interest in a community mitigation plan, which will be addressed by holding a meeting in the near future. SFPD will contact those who signed up just as soon as possible.

Additionally, there is a huge amount of enthusiasm for forming a more organized auxiliary in the community. This will be a great asset, not only to the Fire Department, but also to the community. The ideas are flowing and upcoming services and events should be lots of fun! Janice Wheeler and Wanda Bennett will be contacting those who signed up very soon for an organizational meeting in June.

Sunshine Fire would like to send our very sincere *THANKS TO ALL* who participated in our first Flapjack Fling. From those who cleaned, washed fire trucks, set up tables & chairs, obtained propane for the griddles, cooked bacon, flipped pancakes, mixed batter, poured juice, made cof-

fee, cleaned tables, bought supplies, decorated, made aprons, provided hotplates, etc., to those who so cheerfully came out on a Sunday morning for breakfast and to support the fire department, we are grateful. We live in an extraordinary place.

Finally, SFPD wishes to acknowledge the fire and emergency agencies that were represented. We had members from Sunshine Fire, Boulder Emergency Services, Gold Hill Fire (thanks so much for the use of your griddles!), Boulder Mountain Fire, Fourmile Fire, Sugarloaf Fire and Boulder Communications Center. Thanks so much for showing your support by attending!

What do you think? Should we do it again next year?

*Submitted by Wanda Bennett*



*Daily Camera photo*

*Mike Howard pouring batter; John Jensen flipping flapjacks; Ene Beresford serving bacon and sausage in background*

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## Sunshine Trivia

1. Which resident is known as "the Waver"? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Which Sunshine carpoolers were pulled over as suspects in a drive-by shooting?
  - a. the kids on the elementary school bus—they're cute, they're sweet, they're lethal!
  - b. middle-schoolers Erin Kirton, Garrett Lapp, Gigi Mesch, and Ian Metzger—and they say it was just an elbow
  - b. teen terrors Lance Bender, Bonnie Hoffmann, Dustin Spencer, Mike Wheeler—heck, if you had to listen to Steve Spencer's jokes at 7 a.m., you'd turn violent, too
3. Which resident was voted the biggest sleaze (or a similar word not suitable for a family publication) at a neighborhood party?
  - a. Chris Voorhees, but he's not cheap. He only gives out for the *really good* tequila.
  - b. Ruby Heflin, in a black leather mini-skirt, rhinestones and fishnet stockings—hey! in that outfit, she could singlehandedly raise enough money for our next fire station
  - c. the kids on the elementary school bus—they're cute, they're sweet, they're *TRAMPS!*
4. Which resident recently became a U.S. citizen?
  - a. Hildegard Stowe, who expedited the process by bribing officials with Linzer torte
  - b. Tony Luchangco, who celebrated by leaving the country for a month
  - c. Pavel Bouska—obviously no one sent officials our Halloween carnival photos

Answers: 1) Don Dick 2) middle-schoolers 3) Ruby "va-va-va-voom" Heflin 4) Tony Luchangco

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## Community News

### New arrivals:

- Lola Sunshine Ferrell, born to proud parents Tracy and Tim

### New neighbors:

- Mara Palowski, Nancy Norton and son

### Achievements:

- Joyce Schroeder passed her final boards for Radiology and now heads off to Stanford for a year-long fellowship. Way to go, Joyce!
- Gigi Mesch received a Rotary Youth Leadership Award
- Deb Miller successfully ran her first Boston Marathon

## Yoga Classes!

- \* Join us for an established, gentle yoga class that tones, strengthens, stretches, and relaxes
- \* Call for schedule. Limited space.

## Children's Art & Nature Classes!

- \* Nature walks, water color painting, art projects, in a small setting, with a seasoned teacher of little children.
- \* Age group: 3-6 yrs.
- \* Call for schedule.

## Flute Lessons!

- \* Come learn to play the flute! Skills include reading music and developing an "ear".
- \* Beginner's welcome
- \* Youth or Adult students.

Dee Spencer  
(303)-443-0121  
Local Sunshine resident  
1254 County Road 83  
[deefish@starplay.com](mailto:deefish@starplay.com)  
References available



## Sunshine Schoolhouse and Cemetery News



### Summary of April Board Meeting

*Treasurer's report:* \$4,876 balance

*New board member:* Paul Gatza

### *Topics:*

*Restoring electrical:* options being researched include direct service and service through the old fire station site, if it is rebuilt

*Mitigation:* community mitigation day scheduled for Oct. 7, 9am-1pm

*Maintenance:* Joe Howard and Chris Voorhees commended for redoing steps; Danny Williams to oil floors

*Art & Craft Fair:* to be held Sept. 23-24

## Mountain Gardening

Showy Milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa*), a native wildflower found in our district, has long, widely spaced, felt grey leaves that ascend a tall and sturdy flower stalk. Its huge, showy cluster of pink/white flowers is sweetly fragrant and nectar bearing, attracting bees and butterflies. The tan, three inch long seed pod containing silky hairs around the seeds was used in the past as pillow filling.

Linneaus named this genus in 1753. John Torrey named the species from a specimen collected by Edwin James in 1820. "Asclepias" was a legendary Greek physician and the Greek god of medicine and "speciosa" is Latin for "showy or beautiful".

The plant has been reported, however, to be a rampant runner in fertile garden soils. It might be best to try it somewhere where it will have less nutrition and more competition.

## Wildland Fire

A violent storm cell moved into the Front Range on June 11th and the accompanying lightning started a number of fires in the foothill and adjacent plains. Sunshine Fire was dispatched to a smoke sighting that originally came in as 6320 Sunshine Canyon Drive. However, responding firefighters saw a substantial smoke plume at what appeared to be the terminus of Whispering Pines. Sunshine and county resources were re-directed to Whispering Pines where a lighting strike resulted in the 'torching' of a tree, the initiation of a ground fire. The blaze was quickly - knocked down although mop-up took another hour or so.

Upon arrival at Whispering Pines, a second tone came in for mutual aid in Gold Hill for another wildland fire. Some Sunshine firefighters were released from the Whispering Pines site to provide aid to Gold Hill. That fire, at approximately 11000 Left Hand, was several acres in size. Firefighters from neighboring districts staged in Gold Hill and were formed into 'handcrews'. Air operations with water and fire retardant helped suppress the fire. The fire was largely contained by late in the day.

*Bruce Honeyman*  
*Assistant Chief*

### Why It's Good to Live in Boulder

"Your food stamps will be stopped effective March 1992 because we received notice that you passed away. May God bless you. You may reapply if there is a change in your circumstances."

Department of Social Services,  
Greenville, South Carolina.

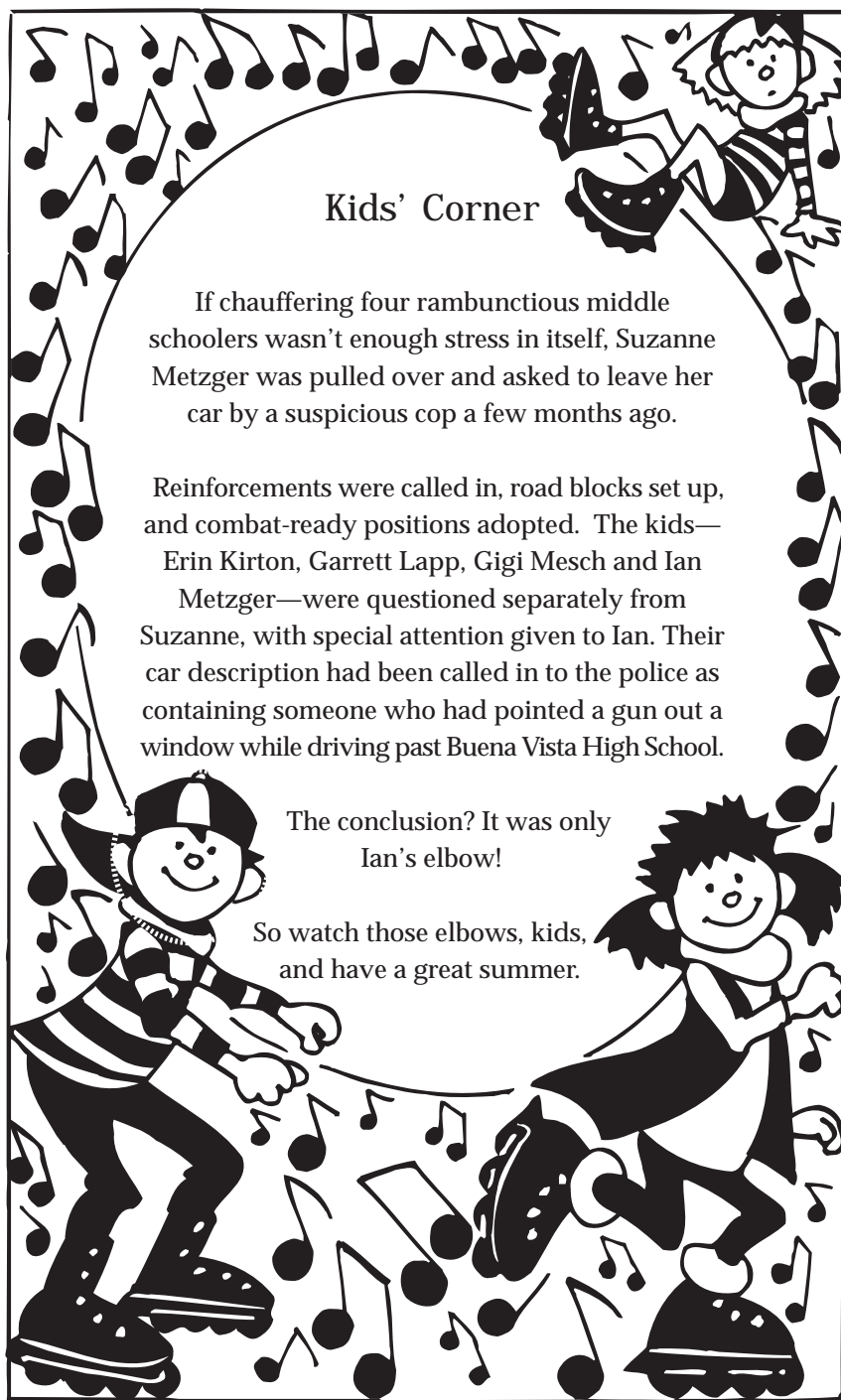
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Personals are \$1/line; business ads are \$10. Next deadline is Sept. 15th.

## Editorial Contact

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## Dog's Best Friend

While Ardie Sehulster and Gene Tidball were recently on vacation, their rescued border collie Walter ran away from his dogsitter.

About 2:30 in the morning, neighbor Carol Ward heard a whimpering noise outside her house. Warm-hearted Carol got up, found frightened Walter at her door, brought him in, and made a soft bed for him.

Carol's daughter Lucy was the first to recognize Walter. As she told her mother, the dog obviously had Walter's eyebrows!

Given the pack of coyotes in their area, Ardie is convinced that Carol saved his life.

So, Carol, please accept our first "Dog's Best Friend" Award.

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