



The Sunshine Fire Protection District Newsletter

Letter from the Chief By Michael Schmitt

Dear Sunshine Residents,

I would like to thank everyone for their time, commitment and donations for this year's Sunshine Community Fest. Special thanks go to Beth Byerlein who once again did the vast majority of the preparation for the fest itself but also acquired donations and talked to businesses and homeowners months in advance. Thank you Beth!

Folks, this is a good place in this letter to bring this up. I know I have said this before but I cannot say it enough; without you, our valuable residents, stepping up and getting involved as much as your busy lives can sustain this department cannot have a Community Fest or other activities that not only benefit your fire department but also bring you as neighbors closer together. The people that used to help the department have retired and moved out of the area, and the department is struggling to keep up with this demographic change as not only the new residents, but also long-time residents have not stepped up to the

same degree. In this case a community fest cannot be done primarily by one person, it simply isn't right. I apologize for the long speech here but we as a department not only need you as firefighters or in other functions associated with the operations of the department (contact me, you'll be surprised how many different jobs there are!), we also need your help with events and even some fire trainings.

**As of September 1, 2019,
SFPD has responded to
59 calls.**

- Medical – 10
- Structural, car, & wildland
fire/smoke reports – 2
- Vehicle & Bike Accident – 7
- Automatic Smoke Alarm - 1
- Hazmat including CO - 3
- Other - 2
- Cancelled enroute - 35

Old Man Winter will be here before too long, and from our experience in the fire department I would like to point out a few things for the safety of you and your family..

Please ensure that your car is prepared for this winter. Not only that fluids such as the coolant is able to cope with the cold, but also that your tires can manage the cold and most importantly the tread can provide enough traction on ice and snow on our steep roads. Talk to your trusted mechanic to ensure that everything on your car is working as intended.

I have personally driven Sunshine residents to their home during snow storms over the years after they got stuck on the ice or in the snow. One commonality all of them had was insufficiently warm clothing and shoes for the elements, in two cases even slippers and loafers. Another

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CWPP Committee Update - By Abby Silver

Summer is always a great time to make progress on our mitigation projects. Thankfully, we started off with a cool wet summer, but suddenly it's hot, dry and flammable! Thanks to all who participate in any way, whether it's keeping on top of your tall grass, thinning and low limbing trees on your property, or participating in any of the other projects that we organize to keep our district as safe as possible.

Spring Chipping was a success, with 27 households participating. There are already signs throughout the district that folks are getting ready for fall chipping!

Fall chipping is happening in early November. Look for details in an email from SFPD on how to stage slash and other useful info. DATES: November 4-7 (weather permitting) Email Abby abberoo@msn.com to sign up.

The Fourmile Canyon Creek Shaded Fuel Break Project was completed in June. This project thinned live trees and removed fallen/burned trees across a section of the Fourmile Canyon Creek drainage between CR83 and Whispering Pines, linking burn areas from the Fourmile Fire. The resulting fire break should help protect the upper part of our district from a fire running up the drainage that begins at Wagonwheel Gap Rd. SFPD paid for half and the rest was paid for by a matching grant, for a total cost of \$26,020. Thanks again to Alan Kirton for his grant writing magic, the State for their funding, and to Eric Bader of Boulder Tree Service for heading up the forestry work and to Ben Pfohl of the CSFS for the tree marking.

The **Hazard Trees Project** has begun. We are in the process of identifying and removing dead or leaning trees that could potentially fall across a roadway, impeding egress/ingress. Several trees have already been removed. If you feel you have such a tree on your property, please contact Abby (abberoo@msn.com). The removal will be almost entirely subsidized by the district, and the work is being done by the Boulder Tree Service.

We are also making progress on adding or **improving water resources** at strategic locations throughout the district. Since spring, the cistern at 875 County Road 83 has been made operational (cleaned, filled with water, and appropriate hardware installed).

The wet hydrant at Station 1 has been repaired and is now protected by an outhouse- (or phonebooth-, or Tardis-) sized structure. Thanks to Henry Ballard for his hard work!

We are currently down to less than 120 piles remaining in our **Slash Pile Burn Project**. There were almost 800 piles when we started this in 2016. Matching funding for this project was provided by two state of Colorado grants. With some luck and snow, we will be able to wrap this project up in the 2019/2020 burn season.. Special thanks to Eric Bader of Boulder Tree Service for continuing to keep this project moving forward!

Brochure for Out of Town Visitors

We have created a brochure for residents to share with their out of town visitors and Airbnb/VRBO guests. The brochure touches on the major points that folks from the wetter parts of the world might not be aware of (an example would be a heads' up not to park on dry grass). We distributed 2 copies to each mailbox last fall, but there are plenty more available for residents with a high volume of guests. No one wants to start the next fire, so let's get the word out regarding

Save the Date:

Fall Community Chipping

November 4-7, 2019

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CWPP Committee Update

By Abby Silver - Continued from Page 2

appropriate practices in our community! Shoot Abby an email if you'd like more of these at this time. We will distribute another round with our Spring 2020 newsletter.

Thanks!!! to all who volunteer their time, wisdom, and energy to help conceive and execute these projects. And as always, we really appreciate our partnership with Boulder County and with the Colorado State Forest Service for the expertise and funding that they both provide. Thanks!!!

Our CWPP planning committee will get together in early 2020 to review our 2019 projects and map out a list of future priorities. Complete notes from our 2019 meeting, including budget line items, can be found on Sunshine Protections website: <http://www.sunshine-fpd.org/downloads/CWPP-Planning-Meeting-20190219.pdf>

Abby Silver,

CWPP Committee Chair: abberoo@msn.com

Fire Safety Brochure for Out of Town Visitors Available

Let's get the word out regarding appropriate practices in our community! Shoot Abby an email if you'd like more of these abberoo@msn.com.

Update your EXTINGUISHERS and DETECTORS or add another

Fire Extinguishers go dry or need service periodically – how old are the ones in your home, what is your Warranty?

Two recommended extinguishers that are carried at McGuckin's are:

1. PRO5 Fire Extinguisher 5LB - Commercial Grade, Multipurpose Dry Chemical
2. First Alert HOME1 Fire Extinguisher- Standard Home Extinguisher, Multipurpose Dry Chemical

Read Fire Extinguisher 101 for info on ABC ratings <https://www.fire-extinguisher101.com/>

Smoke Detectors - The sensors in detectors fail over time. Pick up a new smoke detector with a 10 year warranty – or pick up a couple. Current Boulder County code calls for detectors in every bedroom and on every level.

Carbon Monoxide - Current Colo. law calls for Carbon Monoxide detectors in homes using propane or natural gas, OR with attached garages. It doesn't hurt to have them in multiple locations and ones with Explosive detection. Nighthawk Carbon Monoxide and Explosive Gas Alarm is available at McGuckins.

Note: Please read detailed instructions for installing because Natural gas is lighter than air and propane is heavier. If you have natural gas it is recommended that the detector be located high in the room. If you have propane, it is recommended that it is installed low in the room. Also gas detector alarm is specified to sound by the time the concentration reaches 25%, this is below the explosive threshold but above most people smelling levels. Therefore, you may have a heavy gas odor without the alarm sounding. In this case, it is still recommended that you leave the premises and call 911 from a neighbors phone.

Letter from the Chief Cont - By Michael Schmitt

one was that the tires were entirely inappropriate for the conditions (blank or high-speed tires with no winter tread).

Colorado is very different than most states and it is crucial that you have a set of warm clothes for anyone who is in the car and not just the driver, and follow the Safety and Preparedness guidelines from CDOT (search "CDOT winter preparedness" online). Winter is another reason why it is good to be involved and know your neighbors (you knew two paragraphs ago that this was coming again). That way when you have a knock on your door on a cold and snowy winter night you know that it is your neighbor who is out there. There are countless stories of Sunshine neighbors helping each other out.

If you have any questions about winter preparation and/or are a new resident that needs some pointers, don't hesitate to email me.

November 3rd will be our return to standard time this year. Please remember to replace the batteries in all of your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors on that day. Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors save lives but need their batteries to be changed twice a year when the clocks are changed.

I continue to receive many phone calls from our residents. If you know me you will know that I very much value a close relationship with our residents and always enjoy answering questions and communicating closely with you. I do however have a very busy life and between my personal and my professional life can't easily find the time to return phone calls for questions that can be easily answered by email. My friends in the department and the residents that have known me for a while know that Email is the best way to get my attention and a reply. Even 70-90hr work weeks are not that uncommon between the department and my professional job and as a result I don't listen to phone messages more than once a week. I just get too

many. Therefore, please send me an email so that I can get you a reply in the time that you deserve and not on the rare occasion when I listen to my many voicemails.

If you have an emergency call 9-1-1, not my personal phone. I continue to get phone calls when residents want to report a fire or even a crime, and that is the least efficient way to get whatever situation it is taken care of. When Boulder County Dispatch gets a 9-1-1 call they notify the appropriate department for whatever you are reporting. Notifying myself, an Officer or Marshal Honeyman will delay the response, and every minute counts. That first phone call needs to go to 9-1-1 and our pagers (not depended on cellular network, works just about everywhere in Boulder County) will notify us of the nature and location of the emergency. Last but not least. If you haven't had your chimney checked in more than a year please consider doing so before winter begins. We can't stress enough the importance of a clean chimney. Built up creosote is highly flammable, and most homeowners do not have the type of fireplace fire that is short and hot and good at preventing creosote buildup. At the same time consider using electric Menorah and Christmas lights. Winter cooking is the leading cause of winter fires, and almost 900 people die every year in the United States from winter home fires. There are so many causes such as the aforementioned chimney fires, fireplaces without a screen, grease fires, unattended cooking fire, electrical fires from extra lighting, furnace malfunctions (should be checked at least once, better twice a year), space heaters, lit candles and many more.

On that note, please be safe out there and enjoy your winter.

Michael Schmitt

Fire Marshal's Report - Some notes from 23 years as Fire Marshal

By Bruce Honeyman

Two things happened over the last several weeks that have prompted this retrospective. In one event, Regina Daly (the Four Mile Fire Marshal) and I met with a group from Boulder County Land Use to talk about our districts' relationship with the County. In another, Claire Levy, whom I've known for many years, came up to our Station #1 to talk to me about the County and its relationship with the fire districts. Claire is running for Boulder County Commissioner. Doug Young, a former SFPD Fire Chief and two-term member of the Boulder County Planning Commission, suggested to Claire that I could provide her with some thoughts on fire district needs. More on this later.

Water. When I took over as Fire Marshal from Jim Burch, Sunshine had a robust plan to place cisterns roughly every mile along Sunshine Canyon Drive. This was a plan developed by Jim and funded, largely, through required contributions to the fire district as a new construction development fee for emergency water supplies. At the time, a cistern cost roughly \$1 per gallon of cistern size. It was a remarkably ambitious plan for a small fire district but crucial to fire suppression. The County recommended cisterns of 1,200 gallons (gal.) if the district decided that an onsite cistern was better than taking the cistern contribution. The

cistern contribution fee was, I believe, around \$1,500. We have a few of the 1,200 gal. SPR (Site Plan Review) cisterns scattered around the District but they are, in practice, too small to be of use. As I became more familiar with the District's needs, I understood that the cistern contribution was inadequate for District development and substantially undervalued the cost of our fire suppression needs. I created a contribution scale that increased in value with the size of the structure, topping out at \$5k. We also started making a push toward larger on-site cistern with the 'standard' size being 5k gal. In the background of all of this was a desire to meet the Insurance Services Office (ISO) target of being able to have a sustained flow of 250 gallons per minute (gpm) for 2 hours (or 30,000 gal.). One wrinkle in our plans was that we, in essence, had no authority to require a builder to do anything outside of the requirements provided by the County.

The relationship of the County's fire districts with the County (primarily Land Use) has always been strained but in the mid-1990's it was highly asymmetrical. Only two of the 'mountain' fire districts had a fire marshal (Sunshine and Left Hand). Jim had warned me that

interaction with the County was frustrating and essentially pointless but I felt that I should try some constructive engagement. At the beginning it was frustrating and seemed pointless: the county would ignore my recommendations or simply fail to respond to my SPR reviews. But I kept at it and developed a good working relationship with a couple of the County planners. The effort took about six years of writing detailed SPRs and meeting with the planners and their forest mitigation specialist. I still had no authority to make something happen but the planners started listening and deferring to my recommendations. A substantial leap forward came in 2012 when the County's adoption of the International Building Code included residential fire suppression systems. Last year, Sunshine's Board of Directors raised the emergency water cistern contribution to a flat rate of \$10k. This has done two things: 1) it more fully captures the cost of us preparing for fire suppression; 2) it makes the cost difference between a 5k gal. cistern (our minimum on-site cistern size), now about \$2 / gal. in cost to install, and the contribution minimal.

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Fire Marshal's Report - Some notes from 23 years as Fire Marshal - cont**By Bruce Honeyman**

We have also made progress with the County on the water supply front. The International Fire Code (discussed more below) gives us more authority on determining water supply needs. We use the guidance documents in the Code as well as that of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) to size the amount of water needed for fire suppression. For most of the homes in our District, 30,000 gal. and 500 gpm fire flow are the starting points. Our challenge is how to achieve those targets. A positive development is that we are working with the County to find some creative means of providing the water needed such as giving 'credit' for larger reservoirs for the residential sprinkler systems, including tapping into the on-site emergency water cisterns. The goal of the hybrid system idea is to buy us time to set up the fire fighting water system of hose lays and water tenders while keeping costs to builders for those systems as low as we can. The key is developing a partnership with the County.

Emergency access. The water fight has been nothing compared to the emergency vehicle access issue. The County's position has been (largely) to minimize land disturbance and destruction of 'viewshed'. My position has always been that if a residence is permitted then the fire

department needs to be able to access the structure safely, that first responder and resident safety outweigh other factors.

My first substantial clash on this issue came with the development of a residence along CR 85J, also known as the 'Church Road'. Long-time residents will recall that CR 85J was an abandoned County road used mostly on Sundays by Sunshine hikers to go to Salina for the pies made locally. Two landowners along CR 85J decided that they would force the County's hand and started to bulldoze a driveway past 6299 SCD to their properties. After a standoff the County relented and the landowners completed their driveway. I responded to the SPR and noted that the planned house was 0.5 miles from SCD, the access road did not conform to even the County's driveway standard at the time and could potentially be a death trap for residents and responders. As this was a highly contentious development, the Commissioners held a hearing and I presented my case. After my comments, one of the Commissioners stated that the homeowners should sign a document stating that the fire department would not respond to any 911 call at the residence. As you can imagine, that caused quite

a stir and even the Daily Camera, which had been following the issue, said it was a silly recommendation. Adding confusion to the issue was the statement by the then Chief of Four Mile Fire that they would respond to the residence, forgetting to add that they couldn't get a structure engine up CR 85J from the southern end ('J' stands for 'jeep'). Subsequently, the County met with the developers, without an invitation to Sunshine and Four Mile fire districts, to hammer out the driveway details. We were presented with a fait accompli. I was furious and met with the head of Land Use. My indignation seemed to stir something as communication with the planners got incrementally better on the access issue. I put in as much technical detail as I can into my SPR write-ups (e.g., the grade that each engine type could handle, their turning radii, etc.) to argue that for us to get to an emergency we need a driveway of certain attributes. On particularly contentious sites I'll meet with the planner, bringing one of our engines and pointing to the staked out driveway would say, 'Do you think we can get up that

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Sunshine FPD Board News

Alan Kirton – Chair, Sam Mishkin – Treasurer, Jean Gatza – Secretary, Gene Fischer, Jim Peacock

Sunshine FPD will need to replace three of its board members in 2020. Sam Mishkin, Gene Fischer and Jim Peacock will each be finishing their second 4 year term in May of 2020. As a Special District, SFPD is a division of local government in Colorado. As such, we have a number of obligations that need to be met to ensure that we stay in good standing with the state. The board performs those functions as well as being ultimately responsible for the operations and the affairs of the district. We need to have community members get involved with board activities and become candidates to fill the positions that will be opening in 2020. Please contact Alan Kirton to learn more.

As always, we are grateful to the people who volunteer their time to the district. Thanks to the Officers, Firefighters and EMTs who respond to emergencies in Sunshine and surrounding districts; to the Board Members; to Abby Silver for being the Chair of the

CWPP Committee and running many of the district’s mitigation projects; to Jen Lansky for publishing the newsletter and pulling together the district’s emergency call statistics; to Eric Bader for managing the sunshine-fpd.org web site; to Don Dick for managing the Sunshine communications; to Beth Byerlein and others who pull together the Community FEST and other district events during the year.

As a reminder, board meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month, at 7:30 in Station 1 at 311 County Rd 83. Community participation in these meetings is welcomed and encouraged. The Sunshine web site provides access to the board meeting minutes and Treasurer’s reports. Feel free to contact board members if you have any questions or concerns about what’s happening in the district.

New Communications Manager: Don Dick

I’m pleased to introduce our new Communications and Database Manager for the Fire District, Don Dick. Don will be sending SFPD community notices using the current notification system. In fact, he has already been sending notices. These Emails come to you from: community@sunshine-fpd.org

He will be updating and editing the Directory in the fall. Look for an email requesting any edits to your listing. Special Thanks to Anna Mefford for handling this the last two year.

District Email Notices

If you are NOT receiving email notices from the fire district, and wish to receive them, please email Don Dick at sfpd.don.dick@gmail.com. Please contact Don whenever there is a change to your email address, so that she can update your information.

Please Call 911

If you need emergency assistance or come upon an emergency, please call “911”. This is the most efficient way to get emergency response to the scene. Calling a SFPD firefighter directly can delay emergency response.

Fire Marshal's Report

by Bruce Honeyman - Continued from page 6

driveway safely?' ('Jaw, jaw is better than war, war'.) As for CR 85J: In 1996 when the bulldozing of the road took place and it was clear that there was going to be further development along that road, Bret Gibson (the new Four Mile chief) and I started working on the County to improve the road from Salina. The County refused, stating that improving the road would encourage development. Since 1996 there have been three houses built along CR 85J with another in the SPR stage. Bret determined that as many as seven more sites could be developed. As recently as last year, at an SPR hearing, we again pressed for the road's improvement so that Four Mile can respond from the South and that there is an emergency egress to the South if needed. There is no movement on that issue from Land Use in spite of the Four Mile Fire and 2013 flood as evidence that we need it. We feel stymied on the issue.

In our assessment of emergency vehicle access, we also try to evaluate a driveway or road under what we believe will be the most inclement conditions. A driveway that is readily accessible during warm summer days can be treacherous in a winter storm. The current multi-model standard from the County for driveways is an all-weather surface 12 ft. wide with 2 ft. of shoulder on both sides of the driveway. We also now require a minimum inside turning radius of 35 ft. for turns, up from the 30 ft. recommended by the County. In writing my SPR review, I try to imagine navigating the driveway from the cab of an engine during a storm. It's not part of the driveway standard but it is what we need to consider to keep resident and responders as safe as is possible. As such, at times I will require a wider driveway in spots than is required by the multi-model standard. The good thing is that as our relationship with the County has evolved (and improved) we can achieve what we need as the planners understand the reasons behind our design needs instead of just reflexively pushing back.

The fire code.

In 2014 we decided to adopt the 2012 International Fire Code (IFC). This has been a game-changer for our relationship with the County. Boulder Rural Fire Prevention District's Fire Marshal, Jeff Webb, broke the ice, so to speak, with the County on the adoption of the IFC. The IFC with amendments is adopted by the Board, sent to the Fire Code Review Committee of the County and, then recommended (or not) to the Commissioners for approval. Regina and my meeting with Land Use, noted at the beginning of this commentary, was to understand what County approval means. It means that the Commissioners (or the County lawyers) see no conflict between the IFC, as adopted, and the County codes. The practical effect has been that the fire districts that adopted the IFC (four in the County thus far) have the authority to require those elements of the IFC relevant to the District. It takes us from being in a secondary position relative to the County to two governmental agencies trying to work out issues of mutual interest.

Communications. Which brings me to my meeting with Clarie Levy. Michael Schmitt and Henry Ballard joined us toward the end of our discussion. Claire asked what the biggest issue with the County is for the fire districts. Communication. Although our relationship with Land Use has improved dramatically over the last 23 years I've been Fire Marshal, and I would categorize it as good at this time, the direction of Land Use comes from the Commissioners and it is clear to me that the Commissioners do not fundamentally understand what the fire districts need. Claire asked me what the District's operating fund is. I told her and she sat back, speechless. She said she had assumed that it was far more. 'How do you do it?', she asked. With great volunteers and supportive district residents but

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Fire Marshal's Report by Bruce Honeyman - Continued from page 8

it's not easy.

There needs to be a better mechanism for interacting with the County than exists currently. Chief Schmitt says that the Commissioners do not engage with the fire districts and that it is a common position among the mountain district chiefs. It was so when I was Chief and before me, etc. There are long-standing issues with Boulder County Dispatch and their willingness to adapt the system to the mountain department needs. And so on.

I'm hopeful that things will continue to improve and we are trying new tactics. We have been working with Land Use so that the fire districts are part of the conversations at the beginning of the SPR process. Regina and I created a document that is now given to prospective builders at the early SPR meeting between the builders and Land Use

outlining the role and authority of the fire districts. In this way, we are proactive in working with the builders on water supply and access rather than reactive to plans that have already been drawn.

There was an agreement at our Land Use meeting two weeks ago that we will have a field trip with some planners so that they can get first-hand knowledge of why some of the developments are so worrisome to us. We're also trying to get some of the Commissioners to take a tour of CR 85J in one of our fire trucks so that they can be terrified, too, when trying to drive a 40,000 lb. engine down a crummy, exposed driveway. Mostly, we need Commissioners who fully understand the needs of the rural fire districts and who are active in trying to find common ground and better solutions to our problems.

Bruce D. Honeyman, Fire Marshal

Community Fest 2019



Tim Lockhart sporting his new Chainsaw Chaps that he won in the silent auction.



Lisa van Leuwen and Steve Spencer doing their best Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz act during the Live Auction

Thanks for all of the support at the 2019 Community Fest. Your donations and generosity year after year is much appreciated and needed. If you were not able to make it but would like to make a donation, you can mail a check made out to "SFPD" to 311 County Road 83 Boulder, CO 80302.

SFPD OFFICERS

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chief@sunshine-fpd.org

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honeyman@stanfordalumni.org

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**COMMUNITY WILDFIRE
PROTECTION PLAN (CWPP)
COMMITTEE**

CWPP Chair - Abby Silver
(303) 442-1253 abberoo@msn.com

Website: www.sunshine-fpd.org
SFPD Phone # 303.789.7731

**District Resident Email Group
and**

Fire Department Notices

If you are NOT receiving email from either or both the Sunshine community email group as well as the Sunshine Fire Department email group (which is only used by the Chief and Officers for emergency or important notifications) please email **BOTH** sfpd.don.dick@gmail.com & chief@sunshine-fpd.org. Also, please contact **BOTH** emails whenever there is a change to your email address so that we have updated information.

**Please Welcome
our Newest SFPD
Firefighters:**

None at this time

Are you ready to Volunteer for SFPD?

We are always looking for dedicated individuals to become FireFighters, station cleaners and organizers, event managers/support, and equipment managers. Please contact Michael Schmitt at chief@sunshine-fpd.org if interested.

Calendar

Oct:

- 2 Medical Training - 6-9 Four Mile
- 8 SFPD Board Meeting 7:30 p.m. @ station #1
- 12 Practical Training - Four mile 8:30-12 PM
- 24 Classroom Training TBD 7 to 10 PM

Nov:

- 6 Medical Training 6 -9 @ station #1
- 9 Live Burn training 8:30 AM - 12 PM @ Training Center
- 12 SFPD Board Meeting 7:30 p.m. @ station #1

Dec:

- 4 Medical Training 6 -9 @ Four Mile
- 10 SFPD Board Meeting 7:30 p.m. @ Station 1
- 14 Practical Training: Car Fire 8:30 AM - 12 PM

Comments or suggestions for next newsletter contact:
Jennifer Lansky at 303.442.2709 or jen@lansky.cc