The Sunshine Fire Protection District Newsletter

Letter from the Chief By Michael Schmitt

The year 2022 is an eventful year for the Sunshine Fire Protection District. It started with the Marshall Fire that SFPD sent an engine and personnel to. Rick Lansky joined a Fourmile **FPD** engine and Sunshine's 4501 went to Louisville and then to Superior with David Begleiter, Josh Shoenfeld, Michael Sampliner, and myself. We spent about 20 hours providing suppression at the beginning of the and had some significant moments of success and as it goes during an event like that, losses when it comes to saving homes. Much of the coverage this fire gets refers to the fire behavior and activity being pushed by the severe winds we had that day. And that is true. However, the brief periods of time when the wind wasn't as strong still generated enough fire behavior that when comparing it to our district's topography it is a stark

reminder that I keep repeating and hope am now reaching more of our residents: Fire keeps evolving, and there is no rational reason not to evacuate an area. Not to write the devil on the wall, but I was really happy that this fire with the wind was not in our foothills. It would have been an even more significant event.

If you want to see some pictures

In 2021, SFPD Firefighters participated in 102 calls¹

Structural, car, & wildland fire/smoke reports – 12

Vehicle/Bike Accident – 12

Medical/Medical Assist – 28

Hazardous Conditions - 3

Other - 3

Dispatched & Canceled in Route - 44

and videos that were taken by us during the Marshall Fire go to our Instagram @sunshinefire.boulder.colorado

Then there is the new truck, that as the time of writing is only days away from being delivered to us. I went to Minnesota to conduct its final inspection in February and got to see and experience this new addition to fleet before the our manufacturer Rosenbauer adds the final touches and makes corrections that were discovered during the inspection. With pandemic supply chain issues this truck took over 18 months with the purchasing contract signed in August of 2020. We are replacing our old 1979 GMC 7000c, aka "4502". That

¹ The total call volume for 2016: 75 calls, 2017: 81 calls, 2018: 80 calls, 2019: 103 calls, 2021: 104 calls.

Chief's Report By Michael Schmitt - Continued from Page 1

truck was once called "the icing on the cake for our district" by then Chief Doug Young in a Daily Camera interview, and it really was for many years. We have used it in state and around the western US on a number of fires and it has never let us down. It has had a number of issues now for a while and we are happy to see it go and are thankful that we can use the perks (safer, more effective, more reliable) of a modern and well-built engine for years to come. When it arrives, we will go through driver and operator as well as pump training with everyone. We now have 30 firefighters, so that will be a tall order for us to get everyone through it. But a truck is a major investment and there is a myriad of reasons why proper training pays off. We are excited to get this truck and will do a proper push-in and wet-down ceremony when it arrives. For that, we spray an arch over the entrance to the station apron that the truck drives through, and firefighters push the truck into its bay in the station by hand. This tradition goes back to the 1800's and is not forgotten in Sunshine either.

There are some significant personnel changes this year as well. Alan Kirton is leaving after many years on the SFPD board. Alan has been a firefighter and a board member with SFPD and has left a really positive mark on the district. As residents, you may not be able to see it, but Alan has worked effortlessly on grants for the district that have made an enormous difference for our firefighters and how our department can respond to emergencies. I don't think I have enough space here to list everything but there is a long list of items like radios and SCBA (our breathing equipment) plus many others that are all safety-related and would not be in our possession and making our jobs better if it

hadn't been for Alan pursuing those grants. So I know I speak for our firefighters when I say: Thank you, Alan! He is still on the CWPP, which also positively affects our district. That cistern at 1460 CR 83 is mainly the product of his relentlessness on getting it done. Our new truck, the process since ordering it, has been lengthy and Alan has been instrumental there as well. So you can see what kind of a loss it is to have him step down, both personally and professionally. Next time you see him tip your hat! If you can see yourself helping out the department as a grant writer, please get in touch. I am sure Alan would like that, too.

John Bauer has agreed to take Alan's spot on the board. Thank you, John, for doing so, and I am looking forward to working with you. Another significant personnel change is Bruce Honeyman who will be stepping down as SFPD's Fire Marshal on April 1st. Bruce has a passion for the district, which he of course also calls home. For well over 20 years he's been unabatedly working on improving the district. It wouldn't be fair to describe the job in the little space I have here. I never had any idea until I became Chief and was more involved in how the Marshal operates and how much work there is. As a Marshal, there are so many hurdles, and he has always worked through them as the pleasant person he is. I have learned a lot from Bruce over the last few years as Chief and will miss our joyous interactions on serious stuff (adding humor helps process)! I am still trying to guilt him into staying as a firefighter but make no mistake; he's done his share

Chief's Report By Michael Schmitt - Continued from Page 2

of work for the district. He's been a firefighter and EMT, Officer, Chief, and Marshal. Pretty darn good career and a huge contribution to the Sunshine Fire Department and the community through the years! Thank you, Bruce, for all you've done and taught me and others!

We really got lucky when we found Bruce's replacement(s). The position of Marshal has become more detailed and time-consuming, and I realized that a Marshal and a Deputy Marshal is the best way to balance this position. Thankfully, two very competent individuals are able and willing to step up and have been learning the ropes from Bruce since early 2021. Please welcome Michael Johnson, who will take over

as Fire Marshal, and Paul Hourihan, our first Deputy Fire Marshal. Both are as pleasant as can be and are a true asset to the district and I very much look forward to working with both in the future.

Sunshine is in a good position at the moment. We are starting to enjoy the fruits of having the largest membership the department has ever had to date. With a crew of 30 firefighters come many opportunities and a lot of work and cost. I can tell you that the department is well suited at the moment with great volunteers that are all working together to serve our district.

Michael Schmitt - Chief SFPD

Wildfire Partners & Partnership can help fund your Mitigation Project:

The Fourmile Canyon Fire Findings Report says that 17% of the homes were lost to crown fire and the remaining 83% of the homes lost were attributed to direct firebrand ignitions and/or surface fire spreading to contact the home. Adequate D-Space mitigation and home retrofits to provide more ignition resistance would have kept many of these homes from burning. In order to help address this, change to "CWPP Committee, with board approval, has allocated up to \$5,000 for 2022 to support improvements to the wildfire resiliency of homes in our district. This is designed as a partnership with Boulder County's Wildfire Partners program. Homeowners who join Wildfire Partners will receive a report detailing the vulnerabilities of their structure(s) and the defensible space around them, as well as a list of mitigation measures. Any SFPD taxpayer who joins the Wildfire Partners program for the first time will be eligible for up to a \$1000 match from SFPD toward either forestry work or home retrofits that are required or recommended on their Wildfire Partners report.

For example, home retrofit work, like creating a gravel border around the home or patching holes in siding costs \$1000, you could receive \$500 from this fund; if it costs \$2200 the homeowner could receive \$1000. If forestry work costs \$4500 and Wildfire Partners provides their maximum of \$2000 toward this work, homeowners could receive an additional \$1000 from SFPD as they will still have to pay \$1500 out of pocket.

Please visit www.wildfirepartners.org for more info on the Wildfire Partners program. Please contact Abby Silver (abberoo@msn.com) with any questions or to apply for SFPD reimbursement. Receipts will be required, and homeowners' time does not count.

CWPP Committee Update - By Abby Silver

Our CWPP planning committee got together on February 22 to review our 2021 projects and map out a list of future priorities, summarized here. For the full meeting notes go to http://www.sunshine-fpd.org/downloads/2022_CWPP_Meeting Notes.pdf

RECAP OF 2021 PROJECTS:

Community Chipping

We had almost 60 participants in the two chipping events in 2021. As usual, the Gephardt's win the prize for "the slash pile that can be seen from the International Space Station". Seriously!

Hazard Trees Project

Please contact Abby or Eric Bader if you have a hazard tree on your property. These are trees that are dead and could impede egress on district roads if they were to fall in a wind or fire event. Many thanks to Eric Bader and Chris Voorhees for keeping our community roads and egress routes free of obstacles.

Emergency Water Supply

It's exciting to report that our new community cistern at 1462 CR 83 was installed last year. Thanks to Alan for his Sisyphean efforts. About a dozen community members met up in the fall to re-seed the disturbed area around the new tank. This was a fun and successful project until the first gale-force windstorm blew away all our grass seed. So, look forward to a call to action this spring to do it all again!

Shaded Fuel Break

In the spring of 2020, Ben Pfohl from the Colorado State Forest Service marked an 18-acre shaded fuel break along the shared driveway at 3701 Sunshine Canyon Drive. The forestry work began in the summer of 2021, led by Eric Bader from Boulder Tree Service. The project has now been completed and looks fantastic!

2022 PROJECTS – Fuels Mitigation:

Community Chipping

This popular program will be back in 2022. Firm dates have yet to be set, but we anticipate Spring chipping in the first week of June and Fall chipping in late October. Feel free to create piles (easily accessible by a truck towing a chipper and with the cut ends facing the vehicle access) at your convenience. Actual dates, instructions, and sign-up information will be emailed out a month or so before the chipping begins. If you're unfamiliar with this and want more info on staging piles, please contact Abby anytime.

Hazard Trees Project

We will continue to identify hazard trees. These are dead or leaning trees that could potentially fall across a public roadway, impeding egress/ingress. 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 (90% with a 10% homeowner contribution.)

Shaded Fuel Breaks

The fire district has identified several areas where we can continue our work thinning trees and we have two projects in our sights at the moment: around 9 acres a little bit east of the intersection of CR 83 and Sunshine Canyon Dr, and about 20 acres along Sunshine Canyon Drive between 3250 and 3700. Last year we applied for matching grants to help implement these projects but were not awarded any money. There are now some new grant opportunities coming up in the near future, based on both State and Federal interest in ramping up wildfire mitigation efforts. meeting, we decided to collaborate with the Boulder Watershed Collective and submit a grant application together with Fourmile and Gold Hill FPDs that might help make our small district more appealing in an ever more competitive grant environment. Since the timing

CWPP Committee Update - Continued from Page 4 By Abby Silver

of the grant applications is still to be determined, we may or may not be starting these projects in 2022, or possibly waiting until 2023.

Community Wildfire Protection Plan Update

We last updated this document in 2013, and it seems appropriate to update it again. We were hoping to get this done last year, but since that didn't come together, we'll try again in 2022. We really need a project manager to get this off the ground, recruit help, and keep things moving along!

2022 PROJECTS – Emergency Water Supply: Hydrant/Water Capacity Projects

We are always trying to increase our district-wide water capacity, and have a number of projects that are under consideration or in process. WE NEED YOU!!! The biggest thing holding back these projects are the need for volunteers who can contribute endless hours to move the projects forward. Alan K has made a heroic contribution to date, but he is ready to hand over his large rock to the next sucker (I mean community member) who's willing to start pushing it uphill.

I Fire Cistern on Whispering Pines: According to Chief Schmidt, this is currently the highest priority for firefighting in the district when it comes to water capacity. Therefore, we will be focusing on that this year. As Alan discovered, the first and somewhat

protracted step is to get the permits through the County review process. That's the goal for 2022, with installation to follow once permits are issued. Alan does have notes he's willing to share about how this process works.

I Pressurized (Gravity-Fed) Wet Hydrant on CR83 near Misty Vale: The hydrant would be gravity fed from the 130,000-gallon cistern under Station 2 and be available to firefighters when needed. This is a complex and multi-faceted project that will require coordination with the County DOT, landowner permission and easement, and contractors to install the infrastructure. The funding is allocated and the goal is to complete the project in 2022/2023.

Thanks!!! to all who volunteer their time, wisdom, and energy to help conceive and execute these projects. Volunteers are always welcome, so if any of these projects tickles your fancy, please contact Abby (abberoo@msn.com) and your skills and enthusiasm will be gratefully embraced!

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!!!Abby Silver

CWPP Committee Chair: abberoo@msn.com

Burn Permits for Bonfires & Fire Pits:

Remember that **every year** in Sunshine Fire Protection District you need a new burn permit for **fire pits** and **bonfires**. If you have a question or need a burn permit, please contact our Fire Marshal Michael Johnson (775) 790-2662 marshal@sunshine-fpd.org, or Chief Schmitt.

Sunshine Website and Community Directory

Website:

We have made changes, to the Website and Community Directory. Please take a look at: Sunshine-FPD.org

We have also added a page for the Sunshine Historical Society. Now you can find information on our School House and Cemetery.

Directory & SFPD Communications:

- We have an updated Sunshine Community Directory and email list. The Community Directory is available on our Sunshine website. Everyone should have been emailed instructions on how to access the directory. Please email directoryupdates@sunshine-fpd.org for this information, if you did not get this email. It is password-protected for security. This directory is for just our community, please do not share it outside of our community and protect our secure access. We have created a new email list with everyone that we have a record on. This email list is just for important community announcements, like evacuations, safety concerns/issues, CWPP, and fire department information. The resident conversation emails are managed by John Bauer through a Google Group. The Sunshine Fire Department announcement emails will not be used for conversation/discussions.
- Our directory and email list are always a work in progress. If you have updates/changes to this list, please email directoryupdates@sunshine-fpd.org with any changes, deletions, or updates. Help us by keeping this information updated with your information and your neighbors who are new to the area.

Sunshine Community Forum:

As a way to keep our Sunshine community connected, we created a special Google Group last year called the Sunshine Community Forum. It's a private group that allows all our neighbors to post non-commercial topics and respond to others. We added most household email addresses initially based on the most recent Sunshine Directory. If your email address is not included, please contact John Bauer and we will add you. JRBauer01@gmail.com. Also, please email John if you would like more instruction on how to post to the group.



The much anticipated new SFPD Fire Truck at the factory. Delivery expected in Spring 2022

Fire Marshal's Report By Michael Johnson

Hello Sunshine neighbors. Despite our rebound from winter's slow start to 90% or better snowpack, the US Drought Monitor report shows that the entire state is still dry, varying from abnormally dry (most of Boulder is rated at D0 - you can find the report here: https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/Curre ntMap.aspx), all the way exceptional drought D4 (the most southeast part of the state). I'm hoping for the current trend of increasing moisture levels to continue as we head into spring.

Keeping up with these conditions how wet/dry the seasons are, and resultingly how much plant/fuel growth there has been - has been a part of human existence for many years, perhaps since trading our hunter-gatherer roots for agrarian ones. Our familiarity brings some level of predictability and therefore comfort to how we organize, manage and prepare for the near future. In recent years, however, there seems to be one factor that is playing a larger role in serious fires - wind. Of course. wind isn't new phenomenon. It's been a primary factor in some of the nation's largest and most destructive fires. example the Great Fire of 1910.

Driven by "hurricane-force wind is that turned the fire into a blowtorch," the Great Fire consumed more than three million acres

(https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5444731.pdf)

Borrowing a term from military science, the wind is a force multiplier. A strong wind with unpredicted changes in direction can be one of the most dangerous factors in a fire. It can bypass containment efforts, jump fire breaks, and as we saw so recently in the Marshal fire, devastate communities. That force multiplication can very quickly change the role of a firefighter into that of an evacuator.

Why do I bring this up? Whether this is upcoming summer is your first living in the mountains, or you've spent decades in this beautiful place, we all need an awareness of fire and fire danger. Living safely in the mountains requires a level of fire awareness that doesn't often exist in urban areas. One benefit of urban living is an expectation that the local fire department will contain and

extinguish a house fire before it spreads.

In the mountains, we don't have the assurances of the city. Under ideal conditions in the mountains a house fire (or unattended campfire, ash from a BBQ, sparks from a dragged chain, and so on) could be stopped. Having said that, the safety margin under ideal conditions is much smaller than in urban areas. The level of force multiplication needed mountain fire to spread is so very small compared to that of an urban fire. A dry couple of months. A very wet spring. A breeze. Too much warm deadwood on the ground. Each of these factors has a multiplying affect on a mountain fire.

If you're new to the mountains (or haven't ever done this), a great first step is contacting Wildfire Partners at info@wildfirepartners.org. They offer good educational resources and can help you understand the fire danger at and around your home.

Fire Marshal's Report

By Michael Johnson - Continued from page 7

Considering the extreme wind, the usual preventive methods need to be reconsidered and expanded.

I'm listing them below, but please consider this the bare minimum. It gives your home a chance to survive, under ideal conditions.

- * Bullet-point content copied from: https://csfs.colostate.edu/wildfire-mitigation/protect-y our-home-property-from-wildfire/
 - Ensure the roof has a Class A fire rating
 - Remove all leaves, needles, and other debris from decks, roofs, and gutters
 - Screen attic, roof, eaves, and foundation vents with 1/8-inch metal mesh
 - Screen or wall-in stilt foundations and decks with 1/8-inch metal mesh
 - Use tempered glass for windows; two or more panes are recommended
 - Create 6 inches of vertical clearance between the ground and home siding
 - Replace combustible fencing or gates, at least within 5 feet of the home

With respect to defensive space around your home, and creating protective gaps or breaks:

- Zone 1 (0-5 feet from the home) is the area nearest the home and other structures. It requires the most vigilant work to reduce wildfire hazards.
- Zone 2 (5-30 feet from the home) is the area transitioning away from the home where fuels should be reduced.
- Zone 3 (30-100 feet from the home) is the area farthest from the home. It extends 100 feet from the home on relatively flat ground.

Houses themselves are also ignition sources. They contain electricity, flammable/combustible liquids, heat sources, fuel, and so on. Creating a defensible space around your house also helps to protect your community if your home becomes the fire source. By creating defensible space around your home, you don't just protect yourself, you help to protect us all. We need the largest safety margin we can create.

The Sunshine Historical Society

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The Sunshine Historical Society is happy to announce their new website, hosted by the Sunshine Fire Department's Website! This is something we have longed to do for years, so congratulations to all who made this possible!

Included on the SHS website are information, photographs, maps, and history, of both the Historic Sunshine Schoolhouse and the Sunshine Cemetery.

Enjoy reading about this colorful mountain history, and connections to others, past or present, who love keeping this history alive.

https://www.sunshine-fpd.org/Historical/Historical.cfm

Sunshine Fire Protection District Board News Alan Kirton – Chair, Dan Fischer – Treasurer, Jean Gatza – Secretary, Cathy Shoenfeld, Dick Smith

Hello Neighbors!

Some recent updates:

- Rosenbauer Timberwolf Engine is anticipated next month. The Timberwolf has been designed to meet both the requirements of a Type 1 structural pumper and a Type 3 off-road, wildland fire-fighting vehicle. It will fit the needs of the district very well. This is the biggest capital investment for the district since the purchase of 4501 in 2003 and building Station 2 in 2006. Thanks to the Apparatus Committee (Chief Michael Schmitt, Deputy Chief Henry Ballard, Fire Marshall Bruce Honeyman and Eric Bader) for working through the specifications and outfitting of the new engine. And special thanks to Chief Schmitt for making the trip to Minnesota in February to perform the final inspection on the engine.
- → Community Fundraising! The Sunshine community really showed up in fund-raising! You donated over \$26,000 to help fund essential equipment for the new fire engine and training. Thanks to Linda Molyneaux and Jen Lansky for coordinating the fund-raising. We'll soon be sporting new t-shirts showing our support for our district! "If you're lucky enough to live in Sunshine, you're lucky enough." Indeed.
- → Community Gathering and Celebration! Stay tuned for plans to GATHER and WELCOME our new engine and many new neighbors we haven't had a chance to meet in-person. We are going to try to coordinate that with the National Wildfire Preparedness Day which will be held on May 7th this year. We will send out notices

once plans are finalized.

The deadline for submitting the self-nomination forms for the board election was February 25th. We had two self-nomination forms submitted, which matched the number of board positions up for election. The board election that was to be held on May 3rd is therefore canceled. Please congratulate and thank Jean Gatza, who will be serving her second term, and John Bauer, who will be a new board member.

As always, many thanks to all the people who volunteer their time to the district. Thanks to the Officers, Firefighters, and EMTs who dedicate their time and energy for training and responding 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 and Pat Noyes for managing the sunshine-fpd.org web site and managing the Sunshine communications.

Please consider helping out the district! There is a lot of work required to keep the district going other than being a first responder. Your skills are needed to:

→ Lend a hand to move forward one of many CWPP
− Community Wildfire Protection Planning – projects.
There are many types of projects and tasks.

Sunshine Fire Protection District Board News - Continued from page 10 Alan Kirton - Chair, Dan Fischer - Treasurer, Jean Gatza - Secretary, Cathy Shoenfeld, Dick Smith

- → Grant writing and grant administration. In any given year there are multiple CWPP and fire department grants that the district can apply to. Grant income has become an integral part of the district's revenue. Reach out to any board member for more information and to volunteer!
- → Become a Board Member!

JOIN US on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7:30 pm for the monthly **Board Meetings**. We are currently meeting virtually but the plan is to move back to in-person meetings later this spring.

Check the Special Announcements page on the SFPD website

(http://www.sunshine-fpd.org/About/Special/Announc ements.cfm) to get the current status of the board meetings and to get the link for virtual meetings. The Board meetings are public and everyone is invited. The Sunshine website also 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.

**** Boulder County's Emergency Alert Notification System ****

This system allows residents of Boulder County to be notified of emergency situations including mandatory evacuations notices in a variety of ways including on their **cell phone**, home, and work phones. This can be sent to you by text messaging and e-mail. You will receive time-sensitive messages for your chosen locations such as home, work, school, and family. YOU pick where you pick how.

To register for these alerts or to validate your existing account please go to:

www.boco911alert.com

Wildfire Readiness Tips

- * Create a 3-5 ft. non-combustible "vegetation free"
 perimeter around all structures and always keep
 wildland grass cut to a max height of 4 in. within 30
 ft. of all structures.
- * Ensure your roof has a Class A fire rating
- * Remove branches that hang over the roof
- * Keep woodpiles at least 30ft away from your house and uphill from any structures* Make sure gutters and the top and underside of decks are always clear of flammable debris.
- * Screen all attic, roof, soffit, and foundation vents with 1/8 in. metal screening.

SFPD OFFICERS

Chief - Michael Schmitt (303) 246-4519 chief@sunshine-fpd.org

Deputy Chief - Henry Ballard (303) 449-8619 deputy-chief@sunshine-fpd.org

Fire Marshal -Michael Johnson (775) 790-2662 msrshal@sunshine-fpd.org

Deputy Fire Marshal -Paul Hourihan (303) 551-3443 pthourihan@gmail.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President - Alan Kirton ajkirton@ionsky.com

Treasure - Dan Fischer fischer_dp@outlook.com

Cathy Schoenfeld cathyshoenfeld@yahoo.com

Dick Smith recjsmith@aol.com

Jean Gatza jeangatza@yahoo.com

COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN (CWPP) COMMITTEE

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

Fire Department & Community Event Notices

Our directory and email list are always a work in progress. If you have updates/changes to this list, please email directoryupdates@sunshine-fpd.org with any changes, deletions, or updates. Help us by keeping this information updated with your information and your neighbors who are new to the area.

SFPD's Website:

www.sunshine-fpd.

SFPD Phone # 303.786.7731

Are you ready to Volunteer for SFPD?

We are always looking for dedicated individuals to become auxiliary department members as Quartermaster, grant writers, station cleaners and organizers, event managers/support and equipment managers. Please contact **Michael Schmitt** at chief@sunshine-fpd.org if interested.

Calendar

April:

- 7 Medical Training 7-9 PM
- 10 Practical Training 8AM -12 PM
- 13 SFPD Board Meeting 7:30 PM @ station #1
- 22 Classroom Training 7 to 10 PM

May:

- 5 Medical Training 7-9 PM
- 8 Practical Training 8:30 AM 12 PM
- 11 SFPD Board Meeting 7:30 PM @ Station 1
- 27 Classroom Training -Fire Attack 7 to 10 PM

June:

- 2 Medical Training 7 -9 PM
- 9 SFPD Board Meeting 7:30 PM. @ Station 1
- 12 Practical Training 8:30 12 PM
- 24 Classroom Training 7 -10 PM

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