



The Sunshine Fire Protection District Newsletter

Letter from the Chief
By Michael Schmitt

Dear Sunshine Residents,
I would like to get your attention first on an important subject. **Contact Information!** Over the years we have had many occasions where the Sunshine Community Directory has come in quite handy for us during an emergency call. We've been able to call someone while there was smoke in their home, others because of a family member needing help, and even when suspicious activity was, well, suspected. If I try harder I will probably come up with better examples to convey just how important and helpful the directory can be for us as your fire department. We have recently had a call where we discovered that the residence occupants were not listed in the directory and because of an emergency at the home were not able to reach them. Luckily it turned out to be a false alarm in

this case, but we may have to break into a home instead of asking you pertinent questions over the phone that can alleviate the problem, without damage. We see the benefits of neighbors being able to reach others in the community for the typical neighbor-to-neighbor communications. We understand that some people may still prefer to keep their numbers unlisted from the Sunshine Community Directory. For those who do not want to be listed in the Sunshine Community Directory, while I highly encourage it, we can

keep a department internal contact list with your information so that we can reach you when it is important. If this applies to you, please contact me at chief@sunshine-fpd.org. If you would like to be added to the directory please email directoryupdates@sunshine-fpd.org

Additionally on the subject of access, if you have a gate that we do not have the gate code for, please provide us with the gate combination at your earliest convenience. Codes are handled confidentially and it is a code requirement through the International Fire Code, which both Sunshine FPD and Boulder County as the enforcement agency have adopted. We cannot be responsible if we have to break a gate that we have not received the combination for and hope for your cooperation.

As of July 31, 2024, SFPD has responded to 75 calls.

- Structural, car, & wildland fire/smoke reports – 6
- Vehicle/Bike Accident – 10
- Medical/Medical Assist – 20
- Hazardous Conditions - 2
- Other/Autom. Alarm Activated - 5
- Dispatched & Canceled in Route - 32

Continued on Page 2

Letter from the Chief - Cont

By Michael Schmitt

Don Dick's Legacy:

We have had a very generous donation from our former friend, firefighter, board member, and legacy member Don Dick who sadly passed away in 2023. If you were at the recent fall festival you may have heard Jen Lansky giving a heartfelt summary of who Don was, and what all he did for the community from the very early days of the department until recent years. In his application to volunteer that I recently discovered in our archive, he was asked "Why do you wish to become a volunteer?" and answered succinctly "Help SFPD". He did this throughout his long time in the district and will continue to do so with his generous donation. Thank you, Don, from myself and your fellow firefighters. A committee consisting of Josh Shoenfeld, Jen Lansky, and Chien Lin who were all friends and neighbors of Don are working on how to memorialize his contributions. Thank you all.

Firefighter Update: The year 2024 has been quite eventful so far for the members of our department. We have had units dispatched to Oregon, California, Idaho, and Wyoming wildfires. The fire service works as well as it does, and not disregard the constant room for improvement, because agencies are supposed to look beyond their own borders. Partly because a single agency cannot possibly be able to handle large incidents on its own. The budget and the available manpower alone wouldn't be able to handle that, and we can see this with every wildfire start in the County, State, and nationally. Helping each other beyond borders is what the spirit of service to others is about.

We have had a record attendance since 2023 when it comes to training and certifications, particularly in wildland fire. This helps us become better and more prepared. Going to wildland fires out of state then allows us to provide training to our firefighters that they don't get at the frequency in our district or county. Imagine having to know a skill that can impact your community, and your own life, and only have a chance to experience it every so often to become good at it. It's not possible. So, the additional classes that our firefighters are taking in combination with the dispatch to State and national fires are crucial. In addition to wildland fire certifications, we have a strong record by our firefighters for structure and medical training and have the highest number of trained medical and structure firefighters in our department's history. We can't stop here and always have to look at what we can streamline, improve, and tweak in our approach and with our limited available funding, but I thought this would be a nice bit of information for you.

A few announcements: Firefighter Malachi Brooks has completed his two years as a Junior Firefighter and is currently attending the Boulder County Fire Academy for his structure fire and Hazmat certifications. Malachi, we all can't wait to see where you will be going with "this". Chris Reid has joined the department and is currently going through his probationary period and is a great addition to the team.

Please Become CPR Certified! I want to thank Sherri and David Begleiter for teaching another CPR class

Continued on Page 3

Letter from the Chief - Cont

By Michael Schmitt

to our residents. This time around we had to reach out to our neighboring communities in Gold Hill and Fourmile to fill up this class because not enough Sunshine residents showed interest in taking the class. I don't know why that is and what else we can do to encourage you to take this class. We can't give you distinct examples of when basic knowledge or lack thereof had a positive or negative impact on the family member's outcome for obvious privacy reasons. Please consider taking this class to learn the skills needed to help the people in your life have a better outcome. In my ideal world, every family member in the foothills of Boulder would take this class. The quality of care in the first few minutes is essential. Thank you, Sherri and David, for getting the certifications and teaching this class on your own time!

It's About Winter time: Please ensure that your chimney is cleaned, your furnace is fully operational, portable generators are not placed near your windows during power outages, your tires are swapped to your winter tires, and that you have supplies and emergency clothing in every vehicle you may be traveling in this winter. If you need a list, feel free to contact me. Very importantly, and I understand the difficulty of obtaining one, line up a snow removal service that doesn't just plow your driveway when you are home. Canceling the service while you travel may seem like a good idea, but plenty of times a home is unoccupied when issues arise

and we will need access to your home.

Can You Help Volunteer? Last but very much not least, we need your help. As a busy yet small district we are always looking for help, and not necessarily for the position of firefighter. Although we will be going through our annual hiring round for that position in early 2025. We need auxiliary help to not burn out our firefighters. They do a lot, and for them to justify to their family to do the job in the first place, for free, they cannot always take on the additional projects. We are adding a UTV to our fleet that was recently approved, building a shower in station 1 that is primarily to serve firefighters for decontamination, and building a storage shed among other smaller projects. We are looking for help on that end, and if you are good at project management and delegation, that is a skill we can very much use. We are also looking for an Equipment Manager. This position is a trained position and in charge of delegating and managing truck repair vendors, organizing who takes a truck to a shop and back, or communicating needs with our SFPD truck group to organize a task needing to get done on a truck. This would be ideal for a mechanically inclined person. If you can help out, please contact me at chief@sunshine-fpd.org. Thank you, and have a warm, safe, and fun winter.

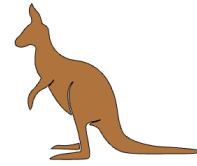
Michael Schmitt Chief, Sunshine Fire Protection District

IMPORTANT WINTER ASH & COAL SAFETY NOTICE

- The ONLY proper method of disposing of ashes and coals is to put them in a metal container with a lid that is designed for that task, then drown them with water.
- The ONLY way to know if they are cool is if you can put your hand in the coals/ashes, all the way to the bottom, without your hand getting hot.
- **Never** dispose of ashes on your deck or cover them with snow.



**Save the Date:
for the Second Annual
Sunshine Wine Tasting Fundraiser!
NOVEMBER 8th**



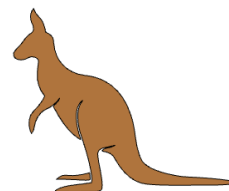
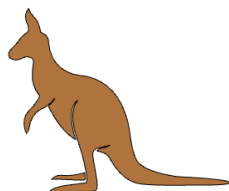
Mark your calendars for the evening of Friday, November 8th, for the Second Annual Sunshine Wine Tasting Fundraiser! If you attended last year’s event, you know how much fun we had tasting great wines and foods and spending time with our Sunshine neighbors and friends in the cozy Sunshine School House. All net proceeds will again help to support our Sunshine Fire District.

We intend to replicate much of last year’s event, building on what we all thought was a great success. We will “Escape Down Under” this year, as Jim Peacock and volunteers will pour tastings of a variety of outstanding Australian wines and we will have fun with our theme around that warm winter place.

We will again be offering high-value items in a silent auction and raffling off unique baskets of goodies. Last year, we had an amazing variety of baskets and auction items, and we will be looking to our residents to get creative with donations of themed dinners, weekend getaways, beverages, coupons, crafts and more to sell lots of raffle tickets and maximize bids for the silent auction items.

In addition to offering admission tickets for both wine drinkers and non-drinkers, we plan to offer “Donor Package” tickets this year that will include special benefits while increasing the donation value to the district. Stay tuned for more details.

The event will run from 6-9 PM on the night of Friday November 8th at the schoolhouse. There will be an opportunity during the day to buy raffle tickets and stuff the boxes for your favorite baskets. If you have items to donate for the auction or for the baskets, please contact John Bauer. You can contact John at jrbauer01@gmail.com. Watch your emails and our website for more details and ticket information. www.SunshineFPD.org.



CWPP Committee Update

By Abby Silver & Alan Kirton

As most of us are likely aware, wildfire can occur in our district (and beyond) at any time of year. There are ways for each of us to reduce our individual and community risk. We hope each resident will do what they can to harden your home and maintain defensible space around your home and other structures. Meanwhile, our CWPP Mitigation Committee is working on landscape-scale (multi-property) fuels reduction projects that will help protect our community as a whole as well as homes in our neighboring districts.

HOME HARDENING

Our homes are potentially additional fuel to feed a fire, and ignition could negatively impact your neighbors in addition to the tragic loss to your family. SFPD continues to partner with Boulder County's Wildfire Partners program to help provide information and funding to help with individual efforts. This partnership includes:

Community Chipping

SFPD is partnering with Wildfire Partners (WP) to provide free chipping. Our spring event included over 30 participants! Fall chipping will begin on October 14 but the deadline for registration was October 8 per the rules set by WP. If this is the first you're hearing about this, and you aren't receiving emails from sfpd-announcements, reach out to Jean Gatza to be added to the list.

Free Individual Home Assessments

Wildfire Partners offers free assessments to all residents of west Boulder County. If you haven't had one yet, or it's been a few years, we highly encourage you to apply to the program. The program is confidential and voluntary. Those who complete all the

required mitigation actions that are identified during your assessment will receive a certificate that can help with retaining homeowners' insurance and a yard sign that lets firefighters know you've made conditions at your house safer for them to defend it.

Rebates for Home Hardening Actions

Boulder County's Wildfire Partners is offering up to \$500 in rebates for taking any of the following home hardening actions:

- Junk Your Junipers
- Hardscape the First Five Feet around your home
- Retrofit Combustible Fencing where it attaches to your home
- Screening Vents that could allow embers to penetrate into your home

Find out more via the program link above. Please note that the application deadline for 2024 is October 31.

SFPD Mitigation Funds Are Available for Home Hardening

The CWPP Committee, with SFPD Board approval, has allocated funding 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 for the first time are eligible. Please look for more details in the Spring 2024 newsletter.

STRATEGIC FUELS MITIGATION:

In 2022 Sunshine FPD partnered with neighboring fire protection districts of Four Mile, Sugar Loaf and GoldHill FPD to create a joint Community Wildfire

Continued on Page 6

CWPP Committee Update - Cont

By Abby Silver & Alan Kirton

Protection Plan (CWPP) document under the name of the Boulder West Wildfire Authority (BWWA). The four districts continue to work together to plan and implement mitigation projects and to keep our joint CWPP document up to date. The BWWA CWPP document, which was completed in 2023, is posted on the Sunshine FPD website. In our district, we are working on two landscape-scale projects:

Dry Gulch South Fuels Reduction Project- Underway

The Dry Gulch South Fuels Reduction Project is a 70-acre mitigation project between 3100 and 3600 Sunshine Canyon Drive. The project was divided into three sub-project areas, South, North and East. The cutting and fuel extraction have been completed in the South Project Area (26.8 acres) and the work has been certified by Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS). Cutting and extraction have begun in the North Project Area and should be completed by late winter or early spring. The East Project Area will follow directly after that.

The mitigation work for Dry Gulch South is being funded by a CSFS Incentives for Local Government Grant, a BOCO Strategic Fuels Mitigation Grant and SFPD's CWPP mill levy

Dry Gulch North Fuels Reduction Project – Upcoming

We are in the planning and grant writing stage for a 57-acre mitigation project along Sunshine Canyon Drive between 3700 and 4200. This project will tie directly into the Dry Gulch South project and will augment other mitigation projects we have done along the shared driveway at 3701 Sunshine Canyon and

mitigation work done by Boulder County at Bald Mountain. We have successfully passed the first phase of a federal grant for this project and will be following up with both state and county grant applications. More information about this and other CWPP projects can be found on the Sunshine FPD website. 2024 CWPP Project List

SIDEBAR:

This type of project is called a shaded fuel break, where the forest is being nudged back toward a tree density closer to what naturally occurred before a century of fire suppression. The risk of catastrophic wildfire is reduced by:

- Reducing the amount of fuel that could ignite – thereby reducing fire intensity and creating safer conditions for emergency responders.
- Enhancing forest health - mitigating the existing overcrowding which increases vulnerability to disease which makes trees more combustible.
- Protecting homes – homes and their contents are a source of increased heat and toxicity during a wildfire event. Home loss is expensive and traumatic for the homeowners and community.
- Providing safer egress conditions along Sunshine Canyon Drive – this impacts evacuation of residents to the west as well as the ability of responders to access our district.

CWPP Committee Chair: abberoo@msn.com

Sunshine FPD Board News

Jean Gatza, Dan Fischer, John Bauer, Pat Noyes, Dick Smith

Your Sunshine Fire Protection District volunteer board of directors has had a busy last few months since the last newsletter. We continue to carefully manage the funds that come from your tax payments and from the many grants we have received this year. These resources in 2024 include \$208,000 from tax revenues, \$198,000 from grants and \$35,000 from donations, as well as interest earnings and contracted fire services funds.

Here's are a few current areas of focus in recent months:

Command Vehicle Grant. Due to a generous grant award from Boulder County, your fire district has been able to purchase a new pickup truck and accessories that will serve as a command vehicle in our district and in support of neighboring districts. We now have a dedicated vehicle for the Chief that will help coordinate department response on calls. The Boulder County Emergency Services grant covered \$80,000 of the cost for the vehicle and most of the accessory equipment.

Don Dick Bequeathment. Most residents in our community who have lived here for a few years remember Don Dick, who served as a firefighter, board member and general volunteer to our community for decades before he passed away early last year. We cannot say enough good things about how important Don was to Sunshine. And then to our surprise, we learned that Don donated more than \$300,000 to the SFPD through his estate! To keep that in perspective, our annual tax revenues for the district are only about 2/3 of that amount. It is very important to your board that Don's donation supports the district in a meaningful and enduring way, and we have been gathering ideas for how to do that. Ideas we are considering include funding a critical cistern for the district, funding our reserve for

capital equipment, creating an endowment to support firefighter training and funding a pension plan for firefighters (as many other volunteer districts have). As always, our community is encouraged to weigh in on this and other plans.

District Cistern Plan: Perhaps the most critical weakness we have in defending the homes and properties in our district from wildfires and structural fires is our lack of a sufficient water supply within 1,000 feet of every structure. The strategy to resolve this is to install a series of buried cisterns to meet that goal throughout the district. It is an expensive and challenging mission being led by Fire Marshall Michael Johnson. In the plan, we must consider property owner permissions and easements, engineered plans, county review and permits and a funding gap that may look to property owners to cover costs. We will soon be announcing one or more community meetings to share the initial plan and to gather your input. We encourage everyone to attend.

A special thank you to all our volunteers who make our district possible! The fire team and its leadership, our board of directors, and the volunteers who make our events happen! And thank you to all our community members who support us through their taxes and donations!

Board Meetings: The 2nd Tuesday of the month at Fire Station #1 from 6:30 - 8:30 PM. These meetings are always open to the public, and our agenda leaves time for public comment and input.

Be sure to follow all the news in the district by visiting our website at www.SunshineFPD.org.

Are you planning to burn slash this winter?

If so, you need two burn permits, one from the county and one from SFPD.

- Boulder County Permit information: <https://www.bouldercounty.org/safety/fire/burn-permits/>
- SFPD Permit: <http://www.sunshine-fpd.org/downloads/Slash-burn-permit-v4.pdf>



New Command Vehicle

Keep a lookout for the white Ram 2500 truck in the neighborhood!

Communication & Sunshine Community Directory

SFPD Communications:

To receive SFPD email communications or to update your email address for both urgent and non-urgent SFPD business please contact chief@sunshine-fpd.org. SFPD communications may include announcements, evacuation information, safety concerns/issues, CWPP, and fire department information. The SFPD announcement emails will not be used for conversations/discussions.

Directory:

The Community Directory is available on our Sunshine website. To make changes or for instructions and password please email directoryupdates@sunshine-fpd.org. 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. Help us by keeping this information updated with your information.

Sunshine Community Forum:

As a way to keep our Sunshine community connected, we created a special Google Group called the Sunshine Community Forum. It's a private group that allows all our neighbors to post non-commercial topics and respond to others. If you would like to join this group, please contact John Bauer at JRBauer01@gmail.com. Also, please email John if you would like more instructions on how to post to the group.

Sunshine Historical Society Update

Pat Noyes

The Sunshine Historical Society manages the Sunshine Schoolhouse and the Sunshine Cemetery. We are a purely volunteer organization funded through community donations. The vision of the Sunshine Historical Society is to preserve the history and legacy of the Town of Sunshine by preserving and using the Sunshine Schoolhouse and Sunshine Cemetery to enhance the Sunshine community and celebrate its rich mining history. The schoolhouse was built in 1900, replacing the first school that burned in 1876. The cemetery was established on the southern edge of the original Sunshine townsite, with the earliest marked grave dated 1875. These historic properties are a treasure to the Sunshine community and the Sunshine Historical Society is working to identify, prioritize, and fund projects to preserve them as community assets.

Over the next year, the Sunshine Historical Society Board plans to conduct a structural assessment on the schoolhouse to address critical structural issues and improve the usefulness of the building for community functions. Informational signs are planned for both the schoolhouse and the cemetery to give some historic context for visitors. The Board is also looking at repairing the cemetery gate and stone pillars, and developing an aerial map of known plots with digitized historic records. Plans for a new memorial garden are being developed to increase the capacity and plot options for those who want to stay in Sunshine forever. The Board is also interested in expanding the use of the schoolhouse for community and private functions. These include community programs and events, such

as the Fall Crafts Fair, historic presentations, fund-raising events and holiday parties.



Information on the Sunshine Historical Society is available on the Sunshine website at www.sunshinefpd.org/community. The website is currently being reviewed and updated with new information posted as it becomes available. If you would like to donate or volunteer with upcoming projects, or if you are interested in buying a plot in the Sunshine Cemetery, please contact the Sunshine Historical Society Board at sunshine-historical-society-board@googlegroups.com. Help us preserve Sunshine history for current and future residents.

THANK YOU!

Special thanks to our fabulous neighbors Emily Gebhardt, Debbie Burns, and Yetta Lee for planning a wonderful Sunshine Fall Festival. Your extraordinary effort, creativity, and willingness to pivot due to bad weather is appreciated by all. Also, thank you to all who came out and enjoyed the festivities. Kudos to those who made it to all three locations.



A few attendees and vendors from the September 21st Sunshine Fall Festival around Bonnie's Nightingale Astrology booth. - nightingaleastrology.com

GET YOUR NEW SUNSHINE GEAR

Look for it at upcoming events or come wearing it by ordering online at the link below. There are more styles, colors and sizes available online including hats.

<https://www.bonfire.com/store/love-sunshine/>



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
marshal@sunshine-fpd.org

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President - Jean Gatzka
jeangatzka@gmail.com

Treasure - Dan Fischer
fischer_dp@outlook.com

Secretary - Dick Smith
regjsmith@gmail.com

Communications - John Bauer
jrbauer01@gmail.com

Pat Noyes
pat@patnoyes.com

**COMMUNITY WILDFIRE
PROTECTION PLAN (CWPP)**

Co-Chairs

Abby Silver - abberoo@msn.com
Alan Kirton - alanj.kirton@gmail.com

Other Volunteer Positions

Deputy Treasurer -
Stephanie O’Hearn
stephanie@drnuzzi.com

Events Coordinator -
Emily Gebhardt
emilydreyer@hotmail.com

SFPD’s Website:
www.sunshinefpd.org

SFPD Phone #
303.786.7731

Instagram -
@sunshinefire.boulder.
colorado

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

Oct:
2 Medical Training - 7-9 PM
8 Practical Training - 8AM -5 PM (Wildland Refresher)
12 SFPD Board Meeting 7:30 PM @ station #1
24 Classroom Training - 7 to 10 PM

Nov:
6 Medical Training 7-9 PM
8 Winetasting Fundraiser 6-9 PM
9 Practical Training 8:30 AM - 12 PM
12 SFPD Board Meeting 7:30 PM @ Station 1
28 Classroom Training -Fire Attack 7 to 10 PM

Dec:
4 Medical Training 7 -9 PM
10 Practical Training 8:30 - 12 PM
14 SFPD Board Meeting 7:30 PM. @ Station 1
26 Classroom Training 7 -10 PM

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