

Foothills Fire and Rescue

THE FIREFLY



A Publication for the Community by Foothills Fire and Rescue

February 2002 • Issue 2002-1

Foothills Fire Protection District Board of Directors seeks New Candidates

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Have you been thinking about ways that you could volunteer your time to the community but didn't know what to do? Well, here's your opportunity. There will be two seats up for election on the Board of Directors (BOD) for the Foothills Fire Protection District in the May elections.

The Foothills Fire Protection District board members meet monthly to manage the affairs of this fire district. This includes:

- All financial aspects
- Setting and enforcing policies and procedures for the district

If you find yourself interested in these matters and would like to volunteer your time to the management of the Foothills Fire Protection District, consider nominating yourself to run for a position on the board. The deadlines are as follows:

February 6-21

Call for Nominations: You may self nominate yourself by filing a self-nomination and acceptance form (Form B-2) with the Designated Election Official.

March 1

The deadline for self-nomination and acceptance forms to be filed with the designated election official.

April 22

Mail Ballots will be sent to active registered electors in the district

May 3

All mail ballots must be received by the designated election official by 5:00pm

To be eligible for candidacy you must be a registered elector who has resided within the Foothills Fire Protection District at least thirty days prior to the election.

This is an opportunity for you to make an impact within your community. If you have talents or skills that you think would be beneficial to the Board of Directors in managing our fire protection district, I urge you to consider your candidacy!

This summary is only intended to provide an overview of the process and requirements and does not include all the definitions and requirements. For the detailed code, you should review the 2002 Special District Election Code Manual.

If you would like more information, please contact:

Designated Election Official
Foothills Fire Protection District
141 Union Boulevard, Suite 150
Lakewood, CO 80228-1898
303-987-0835

Annual Pancake Breakfast is
June 2 from 7:00 to 11 A.M.
at the Lookout Mountain Fire
Station at 67 South Lookout
Mountain Road
Mark your calendar and come
have breakfast with us!

2002 Officers

Foothills Fire & Rescue is entering its sixth year, and we are proud to announce the officers who will lead our department and serve our community. The three Chief positions are elected by the general membership. Captain positions are appointed by the Chiefs. The District Board must also ratify the selection of the Chief. The District Board members, who are elected by the District's residents, are the legal authority governing the Foothills Fire Protection District. Newly elected Chief is Jacob Sliemers, Deputy Chief is Kristina Emperor and Assistant Chief is Michael Whitney.

The Station Captains are:

Idledale – *Bob Schwartz*
 Grapevine – *John Emperor*
 Lookout – *Brian Zoril*
 Mount Vernon – *Steve Close*

The Specialty Captains are:

Emergency Medical Services – *Nettie Calvi*
 Rescue – *Ron Potter*
 Public Information Officer – *Ken Spencer*
 Fire Rescue – *Jon Schreiner*

Jefferson County Wildfire Hot Line 303-271-8200

This number is in service all year & is a source of information about wildfire mitigation and regulations. It is a cooperative effort of Jefferson County, Local Fire Agency's Departments, Sheriff's office, Colorado State Forest & US Forest Service.

This phone number is a great source of information accessed by rotary or touch tone phone. The message addresses fire restrictions, the slash program with a report on the amount of collected slash this last summer, campsite restrictions, scheduled community meetings, fire works restrictions. The Rooney Road facility for dropping off slash is officially closed. Fire restrictions remain on HIGH because of the persisting dry conditions. Any questions please call Joan Schwarz 303-526-0017.

Foothills Fire Protection District Board of Directors Elections – May 2002

The Foothills Fire Protection District will be holding elections by mail ballot this year for two vacancies on the Board of Directors. Get to know who your candidates are so you can make informed decisions. If you talk to any of the Foothills Fire & Rescue volunteers, they are not able to endorse any one candidate over another. However, they will be able to share with you their priorities in regards to the management of the Foothills Fire Protection District.

Mail ballots will be coming out in late April. During elections in 2000, we only had approximately a 60% response rate. It is concerning that not more residents in this community are interested in making their vote count on how the Fire Protection District is managed. Be on the lookout for your ballot in April and be sure they are returned and received by the Designated Election Official by 5pm on May 3, 2002.

Kristina Emperor, Deputy Chief, Foothills Fire & Rescue

Be Prepared...

Have you ever considered what you might do if a wildfire threatened your home? Review the following guidelines to help prepare your family and your home in the event of fire.

Steps you can take now...

- Create a defensible space to clear and thin vegetation that could serve as fuel for a fire.
- Clear away wood debris around your home and under your deck.
- Stack firewood well away from your home.
- Have chimneys/flues cleaned and inspected.
- Clearly display your property's address.
- Clean gutters of debris.

What if a wildfire occurs near your home?

You may be contacted by a fire or law enforcement official and advised to evacuate.

- If you can, evacuate your pets.
- Know where safety areas are within your subdivision. (meadows and wide roads)
- Know emergency escape routes and have a preplanned travel route.

If you have time, follow these steps...

- Remove combustible items from around the house including lawn furniture/umbrellas etc.
- Close attic and basement vents.
- Connect long garden hoses to outside faucets.
- Place a ladder against the roof of the house opposite the side of the approaching fire. If you have a combustible roof, set a lawn sprinkler on it.
- Shut off gas at the meter or at the propane tank.
- Close all windows and all doors, but do not lock them!
- Open the damper on the fireplace to stabilize outside/inside pressure.
- Close fireplace screen.
- Fill bathtubs and sinks with water.
- Take down light-weight curtains.
- Park car in driveway. Close car windows and leave keys in ignition.

Join the Auxiliary!

By Nancy Burke

You can help Foothills Fire and Rescue *without becoming a firefighter*. Sure we need new firefighters too, but for those of you who would like to volunteer in another way, now you can!



The Auxiliary is designed to assist the volunteer fire fighters of Foothills Fire and Rescue before, during and after calls, through a variety of ways from babysitting for children of firefighters (during a call), supplying refreshments including baking cookies or making a pot of chili to leave at the fire house after a lengthy day of calls, organizing social events and fund-raisers, and assisting with other related duties as they arise.

If you are interested in helping the Foothills Fire and Rescue volunteer team in this unique way, give us a call! Contact Jen Sliemers, President at (303) 526-9838 or Nancy Burke, Vice President at (303) 526-7590.

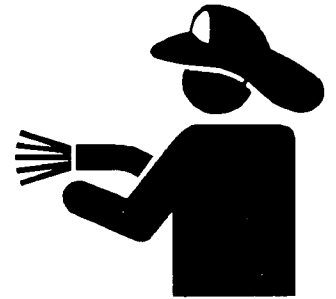
It's a great way to get involved have some fun, and show your support of the Foothills Fire and Rescue Team!

New Additions

The Board of Directors for the Foothills Fire Protection District hired two additional fire personnel to increase daytime preparedness to respond to calls in its Fire District and to protect the district through fire hazard identification and prevention. In addition to the 40 volunteers, there are also three paid personnel for the Fire Department. These added resources will provide day time coverage when most of the volunteers are out of the district primarily working their full time jobs in Denver or elsewhere.

Tim Hendrix, previously with the Copper Mountain Fire Department joined Foothills Fire as a full time fire fighter/EMT on January 7 of this year. Tim received a degree in Fire Technology from Miramar College, San Diego, California in August 1997. He moved to Vail, Colorado in 1999 where he held a position with Vail Resorts as Safety Officer responsible for emergency response management, guest safety and facility security. Tim holds a number of Colorado State certifications as a fire fighter as well as an Emergency Medical Technician. "His five years of experience and solid education in fire science brings added value to our department" says Rob Sontag, Administrative Manager for Foothills Fire & Rescue.

The third member of the team, Tim O'Hayre, joined the department as its Fire Marshall on January 1. Tim brings more than 18 years of experience in the fire service along with extensive fire prevention training and certifications. In the early 80s, Tim was a member of the West Adams County Fire Department, now called North Metro Fire. In 1986 he joined the Lakewood Fire Department which eventually became West Metro Fire. Tim continues to hold a full time position with West Metro as a Lieutenant and Deputy Fire Marshall. In 2002, Tim's objectives are to further enhance fire safety and awareness in the Fire District by working closely with the community including public education programs in the schools, working with homeowners and community associations to increase wildland mitigation efforts, and to assist business owners by making them more aware of commercial building requirements under the International Fire Code.



Give Your Life New Meaning

Join a progressive, professional, organization that provides training and skills development in all aspects of emergency services to your community. Join our team as a volunteer Firefighter, EMT or Paramedic. No previous firefighting or emergency service experience necessary. You need only the willingness to learn.

*Make A Difference In
Your Community.*

Contact: us today!

Foothills Fire & Rescue
67 South Lookout Mountain Rd.
Golden, Colorado 80401
303-526-0707

Carbon Monoxide Detectors

By Ken Spencer

As we well know, wood burning stoves, fireplaces, improperly vented gas/oil furnaces and kerosene heaters can leak carbon monoxide. This colorless, odorless and potentially fatal gas can be cause for flu like symptoms, in the case of low levels of CO poisoning, or at high levels can cause unconsciousness, brain damage and death. Many homeowners realize the danger of CO poisoning and prepare themselves by installing CO detectors. Most models vary in accuracy depending on the manufacturer and age of the detector. The basic model has a 85-dB alarm horn to alert the homeowner of the presence of CO in the area, a test button to check that the horn will sound, an LED "power on" light, and a manual reset button that silences the alarm (most will let the alarm sound again within minutes if CO is still present). The power supply to many of these units are either by a self contained battery or plug-in to house current (with a battery backup). The more sophisticated units have a numerical display that tracks the CO concentration. During the initial development and sale of CO detectors, homeowners felt that they were more of an irritant because of the false alarm rate. The more recently developed detectors are fast improving.

Most manufacturers recommend that the consumer place the detector close to the sleeping area (versus near a furnace, wood burning stove etc.). It has also been highly recommended to have a detector with a battery back up (to detect wood burning emissions in the event of blackout). They finally recommend that the homeowner not immediately call 911 in the event that the alarm goes off. If no one in the house is feeling the symptoms of CO poisoning, open the windows and call a furnace technician. On the other hand, they do recommend that if the alarm continues to go off after being reset and individuals are feeling woczy, the fire department should be summoned. Remember, since the effects of CO exposure are cumulative, it is not only the concentration, but also the duration of exposure that creates a health hazard.

More information on CO poisoning and detectors are available by calling our offices at 303-526-0707 or visiting us Lookout Mountain Fire Station at 67 South Lookout Mountain Road.

Special Thanks to the following for the time and effort to produce this edition of the Foothills Fire and Rescue Firefly newsletter: **Nancy Burke** for donating design and layout of "The Firefly," and **K.E.M. Printing** at 16250 S. Golden Road in Golden (303) 277-1127 for donating their time and printing of this publication.

"The Firefly" is distributed to every address in the Foothills Fire Protection District. Sometimes issues are mistakenly delivered to addresses in the Genesee, Golden, Evergreen or West Metro fire districts. If you are not located in the Foothills District, we apologize and encourage you to contact your fire district if you need further information on any of the topics presented in this issue.

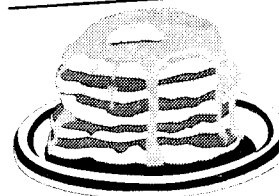
Foothills Fire and Rescue
67 South Lookout Mountain Road
Golden, CO 80401

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POSTAL PATRON

Annual Pancake Breakfast

Sunday, June 2 from 7:00 to 11 A.M.
at the Lookout Mountain Fire Station
at 67 South Lookout Mountain Road



Mark your calendar and come have breakfast with us!
A great way to support your local Fire and Rescue Team and....Hey, you gotta eat!

New Highway Response Guidelines

By Ed Daniels

I became a firefighter about ten years ago when I joined the Lookout Mountain Fire Department, now a part of Foothills Fire & Rescue. It was wintertime, and my first call was to a rolled over truck just west of Exit 251, now the Evergreen Parkway exit. I watched in horror as a driver from Florida locked up his brakes and plowed right into our then-new rescue truck. Fortunately, someone had shouted a warning just in time and we all dove into a nearby snow bank to avoid being crushed.

That was ten years ago, and since that time each year an average of one or two fire trucks and ambulances have been hit along our stretch of I-70. Unfortunately, there have also been injuries to firefighters, medical personnel and police officers. A few years ago two Highland Rescue personnel were on scene of an automobile accident on eastbound I-70 at mile marker 255. A car lost control, and hit both Highland responders as well as the State Trooper. Fortunately, the State Trooper and one of the Highland responders were only slightly injured, but the other Highland person was seriously injured. She is back on duty today, but still suffering from the after effects of her injuries.

Last winter on a snowy, slushy day, Foothills firefighter Jay McKean was responding to a call on eastbound I-70 just west of exit 256. He found a group of people standing around an overturned car in the fast lane. He pulled up behind the scene, presuming that his light rescue truck with lights flashing would ward off the speeding traffic. As he went to step out of the truck he sensed a moving object coming up behind him. Instinctively, he pulled himself back inside his truck. He almost made it. The oncoming tow truck driver saw the stopped fire truck and hit the brakes. He slid into the fire truck and the impact crushed Jay's leg. The tow truck continued to slide right into the accident scene. Three bystanders were seriously injured, and the occupants of the rolled over vehicle were killed instantly.

That incident was a wakeup call for Foothills Fire & Rescue. Clearly, I-70 calls were our most dangerous, and we had to do something about it! John "Spike" Emperor took the lead. He met with our local colleagues at Genesee Fire and Highland Rescue and picked their brains regarding ways to improve safety on I-70 calls. Next, he spent the summer researching how other emergency response agencies around the world deal with the risks of highway emergency response. Finally, he created a set of Operational Guidelines for Highway Response and Severe Weather Operations. The Guidelines are ten pages long with diagrams, and complicated enough that they require classroom instruction as well as simulated practice drills. This training is now required for all Foothills personnel.

Here's a snapshot of our new Guidelines:

When responding to an accident on the highway, protect the scene first, then render assistance to the victims, put out the fire, or whatever is necessary. This sounds obvious, but for a firefighter the hardest thing in the world is delaying response to a person in need or a fire needing to be put out.

In severe weather, establish a single Incident Commander who coordinates all fire truck and ambulance response and coordinates with the State Patrol and Jefferson County Sheriff.

Minimize the number of emergency vehicles on the highway thus reducing disruption of traffic and exposure to accidents.

Assign a "watch out" person to monitor up stream traffic and warn responders when an out-of-control vehicle approaches.

Use special techniques to deploy cones and flares in a way that will warn traffic well in advance, and ease drivers into the correct lane to avoid the accident scene.

There are many more details which we don't have room for here. If you or your community organization would like to learn more about the new Foothills' Highway Response and Severe Weather Guidelines, call Foothills Fire & Rescue at (303) 526-0707 or e-mail at foothillsfirerescue@netzero.com.

A Rescue (with feelings)

An actual Foothills call, but names and certain facts have been changed to protect confidentiality.)

As I pulled up on scene I was running through my checklist. As volunteer firefighters, we are taught to start thinking things through as soon as the alarm comes in, and to keep running mental scenarios until we arrive on scene. At 4:10am I was dead asleep. At 4:11 I was slipping into my jeans and listening to my radio bark out the grisly details, "Single car accident with injuries, possibly two fatalities." When it sounds serious like that, we pick up the pace a bit. I started thinking, "What equipment will we need? Who is in route? Have they put the chopper on standby?" and so on and so on. As I made my way to my car the police radio was informing Sheriff's Deputies and State Patrol that the driver had made his way to a nearby home to get help. He reported his two buddies might be dead. As I jumped in my car I started doing my personal inventory. "Wife, home in bed. Oldest son; at apartment in Golden probably sleeping. Daughter; home in bed. Middle son.....middle son.....oh God, middle son sleeping over at a friend's house, but is he really?" My stomach gave a little twitch as I stepped down on the accelerator and flipped on my overhead red lights.

Over the radio I heard the Highland Rescue Chief, Steve, announce he had arrived on scene. A paramedic and ER nurse, you can count on Steve to be there, usually first, with his Suburban loaded full of emergency equipment. When I pulled up, I realized that I was the first Foothills officer on scene, and thus in command. Steve reported that he had located two victims 75 meters down in a ravine, probably DOA. As we lit up the scene with our flood lights we saw the ugly picture. Their Ford Explorer was down there with them; it must have flown 100 meters through the air. I was running through my checklist again, I thought, "Where's Alan, my middle son?" I couldn't help it; my mind repeated the question. Steve and I edged down to the scene. The slope is steep, probably 50 degrees. We slid and stepped gingerly down to where the victims lay. One was face down in the creek, DOA for sure. The other lay twisted, feet up on the opposite bank, back of his head down in the water, neck twisted at an unnatural angle. Running through my checklist, my mind thought..."Daughter at

home. Oldest son home in Golden. Middle son, middle son, middle son..."The victims lay there dressed in standard teen-age attire. The one who was face down wore sagging jeans.... No, not my son's style. The one face up, unrecognizable. "Khaki pants....check....Plaid shirt...check...blond hair.... Check..." My stomach started to twist again. "He's breathing," Steve said, surprised. The human body is an amazing thing. This kid just started breathing again, spontaneously. I called up to the arriving units on the radio; "We need the rope team.... Now!" Steve started working on him. More help arrived. First Steve tried a nasal airway. No good. The only way to get an airway was to perform a surgical cricothyrotomy....cutting into the front of his neck to establish an airway. Steve finished the procedure, and then we fit a bag valve so we could assist his breathing and get oxygen flowing. Running through my checklist..."not my son." I finally figured out, "but someone else's son." "Anyone have the names?" I asked. I knew them all. Friends of my kids. Went to Cub Scouts together. Another stomach wrench. I held back a tear. "Hey, wait a minute," I told myself. "You've been doing this for years now. You've seen it all. People dying, people dead. This stuff never affected you before. It is always just 'do the job' and think about it later. These feelings, they can't be happening to me." I held back another tear. "Where's that Stokes (a wire basket used for rope and helicopter rescues) and where's the Rope Team?" I shouted. "We'll do it fast, but we've got to make it safe," said Danny over the radio. Danny, thank God. There he was, taking control at the top of the embankment; mild mannered carpenter by day, awesome rope rescue expert by night. He looked like a specter, standing high on the embankment, his silhouette lighted from behind by our rescue truck's blinding scene lights. "OK Danny, anything you say. Make it safe, then we'll get this guy out of here." "But please, Danny, (under my breath) just a little bit faster."

"We need the chopper," Steve radioed to the hospital Communication Center. "Airborne," they reported. I felt relief. Those flight nurses are the best. I figured that once

we handed this guy over to them he would be in the best hands possible.... And only minutes away from the trauma center." "High winds, had to turn back," the chopper reported. "We'll need the best driver you've got." Steve told his ambulance crew. Then, after what seemed like cons, we moved our victim carefully but rapidly into the Stokes basket. The rope team latched in and ever so slowly we began the trek up the hill. I followed, coaching and issuing radio commands to Danny and his up haul team above. We had to help the victim breathe all the way up. That wasn't easy because the Stokes team was buckled to the wire basket. Susan, an EMT, was using an ambubag to help the victim breathe. The angle was 50 degrees with sharp rock outcroppings and loose gravel everywhere. Mix that with a dying 18-year-old and, well, no time for running through my checklist. Finally, we arrived at the top. We lifted the victim into the waiting ambulance and he was gone; whisked away to the hospital at a safe but hasty pace.

It was a strange feeling.... One minute a dozen people totally focused on one person's struggle to survive. The next minute, he's gone, giving us time to pause, to think, to... "No, better not do that," I said to myself. "Better get back to work." At a more measured pace, we hauled up the second victim, obviously deceased. We turned him over to the Coroner and her "body recovery team." Then she left to go tell the kid's family. Nobody wanted her job that morning. Finally, we stood by; chatting casually with the State Patrol as the tow truck guys pulled the mangled Explorer out of the ravine and loaded it onto a flatbed. "The blonde kid didn't make it," they told us. "But his family agreed to donate his organs." How's that supposed to make you feel? Bad, of course, but not as bad as we could have felt. At least something good happened today.

Finally, about 8:30 am, it was time to go home to rest, and to recover. My wife was preparing breakfast as I walked in. "What was the call?" she asked. "Bad accident," I replied, but I couldn't say any more. Sometimes, you just need someone to hold you.