



Thurston County Fire Protection District 8

SOUTH BAY NEWS

3506 Shineke Rd NE Olympia WA 98506 360/491-5320

Volume 3, Issue 3

March-April 2008

BENEFITS INFORMATION

Many thanks to all our members who participated in our Benefits Fair Monday night. We had several new recruits as well as veteran members attend. For those of you who were unable to attend, here's a brief review on what was covered:

Gordon MacIvennie from MacIvennie Associates, Inc. gave information on our VFIS insurance. Accidental life and accidental dismemberment insurance for members is upwards of \$80,000. The Federal Public Safety Officers' benefit is over \$303,000.

Irene Keiffer and Nicole Stauffer from the Board for Volunteer Firefighters shared information on the state line-of-duty disability and death insurance. Coverage is \$152,000. They also shared information on the state pension program. Details on individual pension status will be included in members' stipend checks next quarter.

Jane Benson from the Employee Assistance Program shared information on the EAP. This is a confidential, voluntary and free service for members and their families to help them deal with personal or work-related issues and provide resources for continued assistance.

Sherry Hanacek from California Casualty offered special discounted auto and home insurance rates for fire fighters. This insurance program is part of the Washington State Fire Fighter's Association.

Chaplain Terhune informed members that he is available to them and their families for emotional and spiritual support in times of crisis or as a resource in any situation of need.

For more details on any of these benefits, please contact secretary Prince or one of the Chiefs.

Skills Course & Awards Banquet on April 5th!



The 17th annual Firefighter Stair Climb fundraiser took place last weekend with 11 members of our Department participating. The event is the largest individual firefighting competition in the world. More than 1,300 firefighters from the United States, Canada and New Zealand participated wearing full firefighting gear as they climbed 69 stories of Seattle's 76-story Columbia Center.

The stair climb benefits the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, and this year's climb will honor 5-year-old Mason Watamura of University Place near Tacoma, who is undergoing treatment for acute lymphoblastic leukemia, a fast-growing cancer of the white blood cells that is the most common form of leukemia in children. This cause makes the hard work worthwhile for all the compassionate participants. Camaraderie and the good-natured competition between departments also makes this event popular.

Congratulations to our very own **Adam Graham** who was one of the top five South Sound finishers coming in at 16:25 minutes!!

Our Department's goal was to raise \$5000 for the fundraiser. It's not too late to contribute. You can log on at the following and make a donation:

www.active.com/donate/17thscottstairclimb/SouthBayFireDepartment

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Recently, we've had 16 new members join our organization. We'd like to welcome them here. The following will be attending fire academy: Kris Hawkins; Adam Jones; Maressa LaRosa; Rikki Reid; Patrick Sharp; Phillip Thomas; Lorenzo Moreno; Chris Neuman and Evan Parnell. The following will attend EMT class: Justin Beard and Jacob Kappert. Welcome to our newest lateral members: Firefighters Josh Cox; Jerry Kessler and Travis Garner!! David Sugarman also joins us as a new volunteer.

You may have also noticed our new volunteer receptionists at the front desk. Welcome to Judy Caron, Mary Belcher and Shawn Trenberth.

Please make all of our new members feel welcome!

Upcoming Events



- ◆ **March 3**
Benefits Fair
- ◆ **March 10**
Drill/Officer's Mtg
- ◆ **March 17**
Drill/Officer's Mtg
- ◆ **March 20**
First day of Spring!
- ◆ **March 21**
BoFC meeting 11 noon
- ◆ **March 31**
Drill/Officer's Mtg
- ◆ **April 1**
BoFC meeting 4 pm
- ◆ **April 5**
Skills Course 8 am
Awards Banquet 6 pm
- ◆ **April 7**
Bus/Assc BBQ 6 pm
- ◆ **April 14**
Drill/Officer's Mtg
- ◆ **April 18**
BoFC meeting 12 noon
- ◆ **April 21**
Drill/Officer's Mtg
- ◆ **April 28**
Drill/Officer's Mtg

Volunteering creates a national character in which the community and the nation take on a spirit of compassion, comradeship and confidence. ~ Brian O'Connell



AWARDS BANQUET

Our annual awards banquet will be held on Saturday, April 5th, at Panorama City. There will be a no-host bar from 6:00—7:00 and the meal begins at 7:00. Our theme is “Hollywood.” You and your guest are encouraged to “dress up” for this adult affair. This special event is held to recognize and thank our hardworking, outstanding members for all their efforts made throughout the year. Following dinner and awards, you can dance the night away. Entertaining music will be provided by a DJ. We also have lots of cool door prizes. Invitations will be sent to your homes and there will be a sign-up sheet in the dayroom. We’d love to have our newest members attend and get to know us. You don’t want to miss this exciting event!

TAX CHANGE FOR 2008

Each quarter volunteers receive nominal stipends and non-accountable reimbursements. In the past, nominal stipends have had Federal withholding of FICA taxes taken out; however, non-accountable reimbursements have not. The IRS considers all reimbursements (stipends and non-accountable reimbursements) as wages and therefore must be taxed.



Beginning in 2008, the South Bay Fire Department will withhold the appropriate taxes from all volunteer checks. Taxes include Federal withholding and FICA, or Social Security and Medicare.

Please be sure to have an up-to-date W-4 form on file so that your taxes are taken out correctly.

Recent legislation suggests that \$360 of a volunteer’s compensation may be income tax exempt. Members will be informed as soon as details of this exemption become available. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact our district secretary, Heidi Prince.

REGISTER NOW ON SOUTH BAY WEB SITE

Please visit our web site and register as a new user. Simply go to staff login; new staff registration and follow the prompts. You will not immediately be able to view some components of the *members only* portion until you have been certified as a member of the South Bay Fire Department. Heidi will have to do this. She will check the site daily for new members and certify them. You can also call her and have her certify you immediately as you are registering. Once you log in as a (certified) member, you will have access to the monthly calendar, policies and procedures and more! We will be adding things to the site as they become available and look forward to using it as a powerful communication tool for both our members and the community.

WWW.SOUTHBAYFIRE.COM



SKILLS COURSE COMING UP!



All Volunteer’s who wish to drive heavy vehicles or operate any District vehicle in the emergency mode must successfully complete the District approved drivers training and certification program prior to being assigned as a driver. Remember, all new heavy vehicle drivers are limited to skills course driving only. No open road driving is allowed at this time. Evaluators are responsible for and must be present during all skills course training. The skills course is scheduled two times a year with the first weekend in April and October designated as testing days. This year’s dates are scheduled for April 5th and October 4th starting at 8 am at the South Sound Mall parking lot. A sign up list will be in the dayroom.

WASHINGTON SAVES WEEK

Many people find saving money is challenging, either in good economic times or bad. According to the Consumer Federation of America, “A national survey conducted earlier this month found that about half of all U.S. households report adequate savings progress. Only 53 percent say that they save at least 5% of their income, while only 57 percent of those not retired say they are saving enough for a retirement with a ‘desirable standard of living’.”

Governor Gregoire has declared February 24 - through March 2, 2008 *Washington Saves Week* to assist us in creating savings goals for our future.

Washington Saves Week is part a nationwide initiative America Saves Week. This effort was started in response to statistics that show our national personal savings rate, once strong, is weakening.

Here are a few not-for-profit organizations and their websites that can make it easy for you to get excited about saving for you and your family’s future this week and throughout the year:

- Dept. of Financial Institutions - www.dfi.wa.gov
- Dept. of Retirement Systems – www.drs.wa.gov
- America Saves – www.americasavesweek.org
- Choose to Save – www.choosetosave.org



OFFERS VOLUNTEERS DISCOUNTS!

As a member of the South Bay Fire Department, you are qualified for a 17% discount on your phone service packages as well as huge savings on phones. These phone deals can save you over \$100 from the on-line prices.

To take advantage of the discounts, you must go to: www.verizonwireless.com/discounts then use your South Bay email address to qualify. This will prompt an email with a link to enable registration for the discounts.

If you need help using your South Bay email address, call Heidi and she will help you.

Mission Statement: *We are committed to serve our community with prompt, consistent and professional fire suppression, basic life support and rescue services.*