



# Thurston County Fire Protection District 8

## SOUTH BAY NEWS

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

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### Upcoming Events



- ♦ Jan 31 & Feb 1 ITAC Training 8:30-4:30
- ♦ February 2 Assc/Bus Mtg benefits info
- ♦ February 6 BoFC Mtg noon
- ♦ February 7 Awards Program
- ♦ February 9 Drill: Infectious Disease (required)
- ♦ February 14 Happy Valentine's Day
- ♦ February 16 PRESIDENTS' DAY
- ♦ February 20 BoFC Mtg noon
- ♦ February 23 EVAP
- ♦ March 2 Assc/Bus Mtg
- ♦ March 6 BoFC Mtg noon
- ♦ March 9 OTEP
- ♦ March 14 Birthday Bash 12-5
- ♦ March 16 EVAP
- ♦ March 20 BoFC Mtg noon
- ♦ March 30 Multi-company Operations

"Be of service. Whether you make yourself available to a friend or co-worker, or you make time every month to do volunteer work, there is nothing that harvests more of a feeling of empowerment than being of service to someone in need."



### 2009 AWARDS PROGRAM

Our 2009 Awards program takes place this Saturday, February 7, 2009 at Panorama City. There will be a no-host bar from 6:00—7:00 and the meal begins at 7:00. This special event is held annually to recognize and thank our hardworking, outstanding members for all their efforts made throughout the year.

The "dress-up theme" this year is pirates but if you don't have all the attire—don't worry; we will have plenty of pirate hats, scarves and eye patches to go 'round.

We hope to see you and your guest there!

### MORTGAGE FORGIVENESS ACT

Please note that for the 2009 year, stipend pay to volunteers in the amounts of \$30 per month or \$90 per quarter WILL NOT be taxed as per the Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief Act 2007. See below. This pay will now be reflected on your warrant stub under "Other Payroll Items" Stipend Volunteer Tax Exempt.

#### Exclusion for Firefighters and Emergency Responders

The Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief Act of 2007 contained an important provision affecting firefighters and other emergency responders who receive local tax benefits or other benefits for volunteer services.

The new law provides that the value of other benefits that qualifying volunteers receive (such as reimbursements for expenses or equipment allowances), up to \$30 for each month of service during a calendar year, may be excluded from income for income tax, social security and Medicare purposes. If the volunteer performs services in each month of the year, the maximum exclusion for these benefits is 12 x \$30,

or a maximum of \$360 per year for each employee. The qualified organization making these payments is not required to withhold income, social security or Medicare taxes on these amounts; withholding on each individual for income, social security and Medicare tax should begin for each month after the first \$30 of excludable benefits has been received.



### BIRTHDAY BASH

South Bay Fire Department has donated a Birthday party for the Big Brothers Big Sisters that will be held on Saturday, March 14, 2009 from 1- 4:30 pm. There will be 15 kids from Big Brothers Big Sisters attending. Volunteers will set up and play games, serve cake and ice cream, take kids on a fire engine ride and take pictures. Mike Fernstrom is a Big Brother to Justin and he is coordinating this fantastic event!

We need help from noon to 5 pm. If you are interested in helping please contact Michael Fernstrom at (540) 230-1736.



Big Brother Mike with Justin

# VOLUNTEER BENEFITS & INCENTIVES

In case you missed the benefits briefing at Monday's meeting, here is a recap of volunteer benefits with the South Bay Fire Department. Details of benefits can be reviewed in the Policies and Procedures available on our web site. If you have any questions, please see Heidi.

## **Basic Benefits:**

- ✓ Stipends
- ✓ Tuition Assistance
- ✓ Training
- ✓ Complete Uniforms & Bunker Gear
- ✓ Pension Plan
- ✓ Accident Insurances
- ✓ Life Insurance
- ✓ Health & Wellness
- ✓ Chaplain Services
- ✓ Employee Assistance Program
- ✓ Fire Fighter's Association
- ✓ Social & Recognition Events

## **Pension Plan**

Following initial training, volunteers are issued a *Pension Plan* through the Volunteer Fire Fighters' & Reserve Officers Relief & Pension Act.

## **Life Insurance**

### **Accident & Sickness Insurance**

Prior to initial training, volunteers are issued *Life Insurance & Accident Insurance* through the Volunteer Fire Fighters' & Reserve Officers Relief & Pension Act. In addition, volunteers are issued *Life Insurance & Accident & Sickness Insurance* through the VFIS (Volunteer Firemen's Insurance Services).

## **Other Benefits:**

### **Register as a Member on the South Bay Fire web site**


As a member of the Department, we encourage you to use our web site to access important information such as drill & shift schedules, shift assignments, policies and procedures, important announcements and more.

Some information on the site is for *members only* so you must register as a member. To do this simply go to the site, click on *Staff Login* then *New Staff Registration* then following the prompts. Once you've created your username, call Heidi so she can 'certify you' as a user.

## **Using Your South Bay Email Account**

Each member is given their own email account that they can access for Department and personal use. Your account will be your last name@southbayfire.com To access your email, you can go to [southbayfire.com/email](http://southbayfire.com/email) and log in or log in first as a member to the [southbayfire.com](http://southbayfire.com) web site, (as above) then click on *access your email account*. Your start-up password is the same one given to you to access computers at the Department.

## **Verizon Wireless Offers Volunteers Discounts**

As a member of the South Bay Fire Department, you are qualified for a 17%  discount on your monthly 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](http://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.

## **US Standard Issue Offers Volunteer Discounts on Oakley Products**

Members can purchase discounted selected sunglasses (up to 50% off) from Oakley by simply going to the site: <https://www.usstandardissue.com/> You will have to set up a log-in to view the items & prices. To place an order you must fax verification of your "government" membership; which could be a business card, pay stub, or anything that has your name and links you with the South Bay Fire Department organization. They recommend calling after the fax is placed to verify that it was received. Directions are on the web site.



Discounted items also include boots, gloves and more. Items are limited and not all Oakley items are available. These great deals are offered to Military, Government and Public Service employees only through this web site.

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