



# SOUTH KING FIRE & RESCUE

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# AT YOUR SERVICE

*Serving the citizens of Greater Federal Way and Des Moines*



## From the Chief's Desk



*Fire Chief Al Church*

Happy spring and summer to all of our citizens in the South King Fire & Rescue service area!

We are pleased to be your provider of Fire and Life Safety Services as we enter our 64<sup>th</sup> year of existence. The past few years have been difficult, but the future now looks bright!

2013 is unfolding to be a great year of rebirth for South King Fire & Rescue. After losing over 28% of all revenues since 2009, the Fire District has now turned the corner thanks to our citizens for approving a \$3.5 million excess levy beginning in 2013 through 2016. Coupled with grants received from the Federal Government to assist with procuring equipment and firefighting personnel, we have been able to sustain our emergency services and rehire enough firefighters to re-staff an emergency aid car that we had to close in 2011. The re-staffing of this aid car along with the ability to slow the reduction of personnel (by 28 positions since 2009 through retirements and layoffs), will now allow the Fire District to focus on providing emergency services, as opposed to eliminating more programs and positions. Truly a year of rebirth for YOUR fire district.

Data from 2012 regarding emergency responses has been analyzed and will soon be available as part of our Annual Report to the public. The data shows that the reduction of staff positions has resulted in significantly longer emergency response times, primarily related to full structural fire responses.

*We strongly anticipate that returning our closed aid car back to full-time service will dramatically assist with improving response times. We look forward to July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013, on which date we will re-staff the vacant aid car.*

[ See From the Chief's Desk page 4 ]

*"Your firefighters responded to a rollover car accident involving my son. The crew was kind and caring besides efficient. Thank you all for your skill, speed and attitude. We sincerely appreciate you all!"*

*Susan B.*



*A group photo of our new recruits hired January 1 - please turn to the middle of this newsletter to learn a little about each one*

## 2013 Carbon Monoxide Alarm Requirement

### *New State Law Requires Carbon Monoxide Alarms*

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a poisonous gas that cannot be seen or smelled, and can kill a person in minutes. CO can quickly build up to unsafe levels in enclosed or semi-enclosed areas. CO has killed over 1,000 Washington residents between 1990 and 2005. In the aftermath of the December 2006 windstorm, over 300 people were treated at hospital emergency rooms for CO poisoning, and eight people died. Generators in garages or near air intakes and the use of charcoal or gas grills indoors, are common causes of CO poisoning during power outages. Fuel burning appliances, attached garages, and fireplaces are also sources. State law now requires CO alarms be installed in **existing** apartments, condominiums, hotels, motels, and single-family residences as of January 1, 2013. Owner-occupied single-family residences, legally occupied before July 26, 2009, are not required to have CO alarms **until they are sold**. The alarms should be located outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedroom, and on each level of the residence. Combination CO and smoke alarms are permitted.



[ See CO Requirement page 3 ]

*Visit our website at  
[www.southkingfire.org](http://www.southkingfire.org)*



## An Afternoon in the Life of a Firefighter

*(Part 2 of a 3-part series ~ see our website for Part 1)*

Ever wondered what a day in the life of a firefighter is really like? The following is a day in my life many shifts ago. Sixteen emergency responses will happen today. I won't go into the details on each call for many reasons. Nonetheless, I love what I do and wouldn't have it any other way...

*...After what little time we have left for lunch, we quickly wash the dishes and clean the kitchen. A couple of the guys head downstairs to clean the bathrooms and sleeping quarters. We clean the entire station daily to keep it neat and organized. This is our home-away-from-home, so we treat it as such.*

*Now we're off to a large business inspection. We meet the building superintendent to guide us through the many locked areas and unfamiliar rooms. He is a wealth of knowledge to us as he explains recent changes to some mechanical areas. We diligently scribble notes and make changes on our detailed maps of the building so that our GIS people can make changes to the computer graphics that are available to us when we respond to an incident.*

[ See An Afternoon in the Life page 2 ]

# Chief of Operations



Chief Ed Plumlee

As the Chief of Operations, I am frequently reminded of how important citizens are to a successful fire and EMS service. Every day people in our community participate directly, by helping those who are injured, starting CPR, calling 911, or reporting unsafe conditions. This initial response is vital in many situations. South King Fire & Rescue (SKF&R) would not be as successful and our homes and families would not be nearly as safe, without community members willing to engage in caring for the injured or taking steps to prevent fires.

While our responses to fires, technical rescues, hazmat, and marine emergencies are absolutely critical, fortunately thanks to concerted prevention efforts by the fire department and citizens, these types of events are a fraction of our overall responses. Most fire department responses are for medical aid. This medical aid can range from a major accident or heart attack to a person who has fallen and needs assistance.

Clearly not all of these medical responses require transport to the emergency room, which is a costly option. The firefighter/emergency medical technicians (EMTs) at SKF&R are trained to evaluate whether injuries or illnesses require this very specialized treatment. In many cases patients can be treated and left at home or advised to see their private physician or visit a nearby clinic. Within our service area alone, this approach has been shown to save millions of dollars in health care costs and thousands of hours in hospital visits. It can also provide better and more appropriate care to the patient, since studies have shown that unnecessary hospital visits and hospitalizations can be detrimental to patient outcome.

In many other parts of the US, fire and EMS agencies are encouraged to transport a much higher percentage of patients to the hospital, partly because that is how they are reimbursed for their service and partly because they are not given the training or guidelines to make these decisions. While we strive for more efficient fire department services, it is important to recognize the cost and time savings that our firefighter/EMTs provide right now.

[See Chief of Operations page 4]



My name is **Shannon Oltman**, born and raised in Edmonds and now residing in Auburn. I attended the University of New Hampshire on a soccer scholarship and graduated in 2005 with a BS in Kinesiology-Athletic Training. Prior to being hired by SKF&R, I was a volunteer firefighter/EMT at KCFD #20. I also spent 6 years as a Donor Program Coordinator at Seattle Reproductive Medicine. Outside of work I enjoy spending time with my family, including two sons who keep me on my toes. Fitness, medicine and customer service are a few of my passions. I am both honored and excited to be serving the citizens of Federal Way and Des Moines. I strive to learn all I can in this career from those who came before me, passing on traditions old and new.



My name is **Arthur Kanonik**. I was born in Renton, raised in a Ukrainian household, and currently live with my roommates in Auburn. I graduated from Kentlake High school in 2010 and attended Bates Technical College, receiving a degree in fire science. Before joining SKF&R I worked in light construction. I enjoy spending time outside, camping, fishing and hiking.

## An Afternoon in the Life (continued from page 1)

We are about half-way through our inspection when our 5<sup>th</sup> call comes in at a nearby school. Someone has fallen off a playground toy. The building superintendent says he'll stick around until we come back. He has been around for a while, so he has seen us come and go many times during his years working with the fire department. The child is a third-grader that slipped and bumped her head. She is alert and talking when we find her in the nurse's office. As a precaution we double-check her neck and back to make sure she has no obvious head injury. When mom shows up to take her daughter home, we tell her what signs or symptoms to watch for and to call us back or take her daughter to the ER if she sees anything unusual.

While we are at the school, we hear a tone-out for a motor-vehicle crash nearby. Because we are out-of-service on a call, the apparatus of our next nearest fire station is sent to the crash. Since we are trained to monitor our radios for district-wide events, we know that we are much closer if we can safely clear this call. Since mom is fine taking it from here, we excuse ourselves and let our dispatch center know we are available and will take that call.

It turns out to be a minor rear-end incident. Both cars have moved off the street into a parking lot and are exchanging information. We talk briefly with both drivers and make sure there are no injuries. Again, we let them know signs and symptoms that may lead to a doctor follow-up if they have any problems later today or tomorrow. Call number six is completed and we head back to the business inspection. We don't quite make it.... call number seven is at a senior living facility. Someone has fallen and needs assistance to get up. We do not go with red lights and sirens on every call; this is one that appears okay to go with the regular traffic. We arrive at a facility that is very familiar to us.

[See An Afternoon in the Life page 4]



My name is **Danny Peterson**. My wife and I have two kids, and one due in August. I grew up in the Seattle area and have lived in Federal Way for the past 10 years. I graduated from the UofWA with a bachelor's degree in neurobiology, and later attended Seattle Pacific University for my master's degree in teaching. I am a sports enthusiast and love being outdoors. My wife and I enjoy traveling and have been to over 20 countries for humanitarian work and leisure. Before coming to SKF&R, I was a pastor at Grace Church. I currently serve as a school board director for Federal Way Public Schools.

## Scout Night, May 8th



SKF&R partnered with the Federal Way Police Department and Lakehaven Utility District for this annual event. Over 400 girl and boy scouts enjoyed a fun night learning about our programs, as well as hot dogs and fixings prepared by our own gourmet chefs!



Hi, my name is **Mickey McLain**. I became interested in firefighting shortly after being involved in a serious car accident as a child. I later attended a burn camp for children and enjoyed spending the summer with the firefighters who volunteered their time to help run the camp. On my days off I enjoy urban farming, hiking, and volunteering for Camp Eyabsut, a children's burn camp. I am excited to be a part of SKF&R and look forward to serving this great community.

*"Thank you for trying to save my infant son. I was touched that you all stayed at the hospital until you knew. Thank you for all your efforts."*

Barb H.

## CO Requirement (continued from page 1)

### **How do I prevent carbon monoxide poisoning during a power outage?**

**Never use a charcoal or gas grill in an enclosed space**, such as inside your home, garage, or in a tent or camper. Do not burn charcoal in your fireplace. A charcoal fire will not create a chimney draft strong enough to push the CO to the outside. **Never use a generator inside** your home, garage, carport, basement, or near an outside window, door, or vent. One gas-powered generator can produce 100 times more CO than a car's exhaust. Generators should be at least 15 feet away from buildings. Even at 15 feet away, air flow patterns could still blow CO into homes through attic vents, windows, or doors, so it's very important to have a working CO detector inside the home. Never use a gas range or gas oven to heat your home. Never sleep in a room while using an unvented gas or kerosene heater. Have oil and gas appliances and fireplaces, as well as wood stoves, checked every year by a trained professional. ■



My name is **Walter Hanks**. I was born and raised in Tacoma. I graduated from Clover Park High School in 2009 and from Bates Technical College in 2012 with an AA degree in Fire Science. I first worked for SKF&R in 2011 as a temporary hydrant tester and was hired a year later for the same position. To be able to serve a community and fire department that introduced me to the fire service is a dream come true.



Hello. My name is **William Mainaga**. I am originally from Maui and I have lived in Washington State for the last three years. Prior to this I was a volunteer firefighter with the Burien Fire Department and worked as an EMT at the Dutch Shisler Sobering Center in Seattle.



## John Moncrief

South King Fire & Rescue firefighters honored and celebrated the life of firefighter John Moncrief in the summer of 2012. Only 59 years old, John died from a cancer known to be caused from long-term exposure to toxic products of combustion. His death from this type of cancer is considered a line-

of-duty occurrence and he was memorialized at the State Monument June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

After working 22 years, John retired in 2011 to spend time with his family. However, in January of 2012, he was diagnosed with an advanced stage cancer. He is survived by Bev, his wife of 25 years, daughter Tessa, and son Trevor. John was known throughout his career as a thorough and diligent firefighter and this made him an excellent mentor to his many fellow firefighters. He worked most of his career at Station 66, the Redondo/Woodmont station at the southern edge of Des Moines.

*The Washington State Fallen Firefighter's Memorial was held on June 2, 2013 in recognition of members who died in the line-of-duty in 2012.*

## Drowning Prevention

- Drownings are preventable tragedies and an important public health and safety issue.
- In any open water, the best ways to prevent drownings are:
- Know your limits – drowning often happens when a person gets tired while swimming or when novice swimmers try to keep up with more experienced ones.
- Wear a life jacket when swimming in areas without lifeguards or whenever you boat, jet-ski, or do other water sports. By law, children 12 years old and younger must wear a US Coast Guard approved life jacket at all times when in a vessel less than 19 feet in length, unless in a fully enclosed area.
- Avoid drinking alcohol or using other substances when swimming, boating, or doing other water-oriented sports. Drinking alcohol is a major risk factor for drowning. As blood alcohol levels increase, so does the likelihood of drowning. Alcohol affects balance, coordination, and judgment. Exposure to sun and heat amplify these effects.
- Closely watch children and keep them within immediate reach when you are near any type of water.



For more information, visit the Water Safety website at:

[www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/injury/water](http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/injury/water)



My name is **Jason Tupa**. I was born in Washington to a military family and moved around the country a lot growing up. I graduated from Lakes High School in Lakewood and from the Bates Technical College Fire Service Program, while also working as a Resident Firefighter in Maple Valley. I had a variety of professional experiences before starting my career as a firefighter: working on a fishing trawler on the Bering Sea; working for stunt shows at Universal Studios; and appearing in two P90X videos, just to name a few. I met my wife in a Seattle film school and we have two children, ages 7 and 5. I started my firefighting career with The City of DuPont Fire Department and am now very happy to be part of the SKF&R family.



My name is **Randy White**. I was born, raised, and still reside in Puyallup. I graduated from Emerald Ridge High School in 2006. Since then, I have served 8½ years in the WA Army National Guard, having been sent on two deployments. I have been married 4 years and have a 3-year old daughter, and 5-month old twins. In my free time I enjoy golfing, hunting, spending time with family, and just relaxing!



## From the Chief's Desk (Continued from page 1)

This year has also seen the reemergence of our Strategic Planning Committee focusing on the future. Along with meeting the goals of this committee will be a renewed effort to seek out the thoughts and opinions of the citizens we serve. There are many options being considered at this point; from citizen surveys to the recreation of a Citizen Advisory Team (or CAT). We will be finalizing our plan to elicit citizen input in the very near future, as we are here to serve YOU and want to hear from YOU regarding our services.

In closing, we once again want to thank our citizens for their ongoing support. We are here to serve YOU, and YOUR support of us has directly resulted in 2013 being a year of rebirth for YOUR Fire District. We look forward day-in and day-out to serving our citizens and keeping our Mission Statement as foremost in all our minds:

***WE HELP PEOPLE by responding with professional fire department services***



Dr. Allen D Church, EdD  
Fire Chief/Administrator



***SKF&R firefighters partnering with kids from Todd Beamer High School to carry out a mock DUI drill***

## Chief of Operations (Continued from page 2)

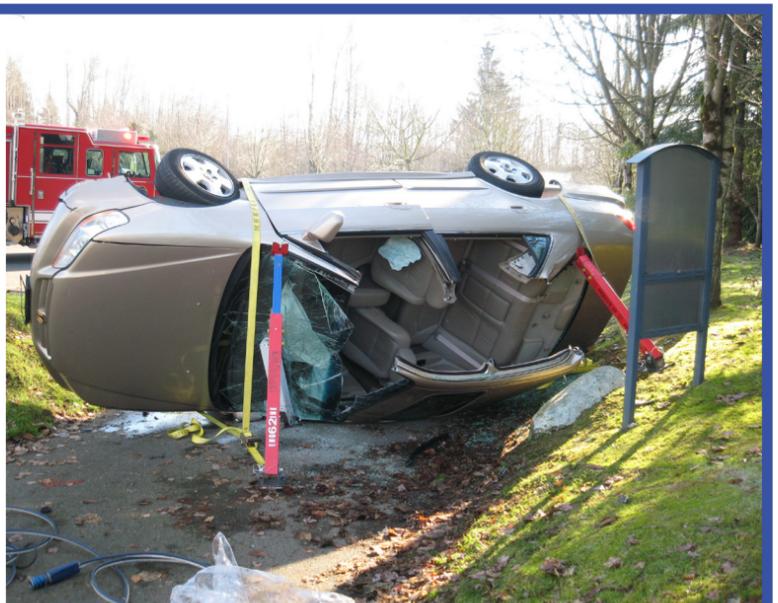
SKF&R is part of the larger King County Medic One system that is among the finest in the world. The fact that we leave some patients at home, with guidelines by our Medical Director, is but one measure of the high-performing emergency medical system in SKF&R and King County. With the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, medical care is changing, and SKF&R (along with you) must stay up-to-date with the changes. We feel that avoiding unnecessary hospital emergency room visits like the ones mentioned above fits in with the goals of the Affordable Care Act. There is much more for each of us to learn about healthcare in the future and how it will affect us.

It is a privilege to serve the communities of Des Moines, Federal Way and a part of unincorporated King County. As we address challenges in the months and years ahead, we look forward to partnering with you as we continue to provide the community with helpful and professional fire department services.

Thank you! ■



***Firefighter/EMTs assisted a patient after a rollover accident in Federal Way earlier this year. The roof had to be taken off the vehicle in order to free the patient. Thankfully, the patient was not seriously injured.***



My name is **Travis Sapp**. I am from Kent and attended the Fire Science Program at Bates Technical College after high school. Prior to getting hired in the fire service, I worked in the construction industry and was a volunteer firefighter in Maple Valley. I worked for Maple Valley Fire and Life Safety 5 years before joining SKF&R. I enjoy spending time with my family including my 4-month old son.

## An Afternoon in the Life (Continued from page 2)

*Senior assistance is one facet of service that has grown immensely since I entered the fire service. We are happy to assist as we have always been the public service agency that society has turned to when they don't know where else to turn. We cannot seem to, or do not want to, say no to anyone. Some citizens only want us to respond to true emergencies. Well, everything is an emergency to someone, so we go. In truth, the fire service is exploring model programs and services to meet this growing need, while keeping emergency response intact.*

*Back to our responses...we help the lady to her chair and check out her condition thoroughly to make she is not hurt and to determine why she fell in the first place. Did she just trip? Or did she pass out? We are satisfied that she is okay, so we are off to try and finish that inspection and I give the superintendent a quick call to tell him we are on the way. We finish the inspection and head to our training center where a hose-and-ground-ladder training drill awaits our presence. It is now 3:30 pm and one of the guys jokes about missing his 3:00 pm coffee break. We laugh! When was our schedule ever normal? However, since we will not get a specific time to sit and relax, we take the opportunity while riding in the fire engine to make sure everybody is dealing okay with the infant death this morning. We will keep checking over the next few weeks to make sure our co-workers are dealing with it appropriately.*

*At the training drill, we have a couple new rookies just completing their first year and we like to practice whenever or for whatever reason we can. Firefighting is low frequency/high risk. We have to practice to be ready as a matter of safety to ourselves and the community. We never know when a fire will happen. How true that will become in a couple of hours from now..... Join me in the next community newsletter and I'll tell you about my evening! ■*



Hi, my name is **Lance Campbell**. I am loving my new position at SKF&R as well as being closer to home, as my previous position was held at Vancouver Fire & Rescue. I have lived in the area all of my life, growing up just down the road in Tukwila. I have been married for 9 years and we have two amazing children, ages 3 and 6 that keep us busy! I am currently completing my final quarter at Eastern Oregon University where I will receive my BA degree in Fire Command & Administration. I am also a drill sergeant in the Army reserves after serving 6 years in the Active Army and overseas. I am excited at the possibilities that are ahead of me at SKF&R and can't wait to see where it all leads!

### STATION 62 - HEADQUARTERS

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