

**Fire Team 4  
Volunteer Fire Association  
PO Box 41  
Skull Valley, AZ 86338  
April 2024**



It's here: 2024 Skull Valley Fire Team 4's (SVFD) annual newsletter and membership drive. Following on from August 2023's newsletter, we have achieved all of our short-term goals as outlined herein. More importantly, we move forward every month to further our level of service to you, the community residents. Updates have been posted on the Skull Valley Face Book page and the Skull Valley community website ([www.skullvalley.net](http://www.skullvalley.net)). However, I recognize the news and updates need to be more available. To that end, I'll be striving to submit articles for inclusion in the *Yellow Sheet* monthly publication, placing hardcopies in a leaflet box on the post office notice board, and having some available in The Station coffee shop.

Since the last newsletter, four of our first responders have become nationally certified EMTs, which gives us five overall. We are fortunate that the schedules of these volunteer EMTs is such that there should be at least one EMT available in the Skull Valley area at all times. These qualifications mean that basic life support treatment can be administered to a patient in need, prior to paramedic arrival. In addition, SVFD has purchased and installed an additional AED device in The Station coffee shop in coordination with and thanks to Vance and Kim Burck.

The first responders have completed several training classes including: Helicopter landing zone preparation and on-scene operations, radio and communication protocol training, and Wild Land Fire Fighting certification, which the latter allows us to be called in to support fires on public lands and to be compensated for services rendered. Our first responders also completed joint exercises with our neighbor, Southern Yavapai Fire Department (SYFD, Wilhoit), to test the interchangeability of fire-fighting equipment between the units.



**Helicopter Landing Zone Class**



**Practice Fire Fighting**



**2024 Wild Land Basin Ops Training**

Regular station workdays have and will continue to be conducted to test and maintain SVFD equipment. A major expense in the coming months will be having our Structure Engine's water pump rebuilt, which may be as much as \$7,000. One of our absolute priorities is to make sure that when we are called to an incident, our equipment is fully functional!

On February 15, 2024, we went live on Rural Metro dispatch services, the same dispatch system used by all surrounding fire departments. Joining Rural Metro simplified and streamlined the process for receiving emergency alerts. Our service area, which extends to the center of Kirkland and includes the Kirkland school (serviced jointly by SVFD and SYFD), is part of the computer definition of all areas under Rural Metro who ensures the nearest fire department is called to each incident. As well as alerts through an app (*IamResponding*) on each first responder's personal mobile device, we also get alerted through hand-held radios via towers installed on the regional mountain tops. To-date, we have been called out approximately 25 times. Rural Metro provides a written report for each incident and preliminary results indicate our SVFD response times have significantly improved.

If you experience an emergency, always call 911. Your 911 call goes to Yavapai County Sheriff's Office who determines the location and engages Rural Metro. Alerts from Rural Metro go to the nearest fire department's first responders, AND, if a

medical emergency, they dispatch a LifeLine or AMR ambulance from Prescott. Typically, this results in SVFD being on-scene about 15 minutes before the ambulance arrives from Prescott. The majority of ambulances dispatched from Prescott will have a paramedic on board, and, crucially, are licensed to transport a patient to a hospital if required.

With the change to Rural Metro dispatching service, it would be remiss of me, on behalf of the community and fire department, not to recognize the many years of volunteer dispatch personnel. Thank you for your dedication and time over the years.

Fire Team 4 has opportunities for volunteer first responders, EMTs, and board members. If you sign up to be a SVFD first responder and are interested in the National EMT certification, SVFD will reimburse you for the training upon successful completion of EMT certification (~\$1500). If you would like to give back to the Skull Valley community, please consider joining Fire Team 4. And if you have trade experience in electrical, plumbing, building maintenance, etc. please consider volunteering your time. Many others help support your volunteer fire department and we thank everyone for their continued support. The current SVFD board members and first responders are as follows:

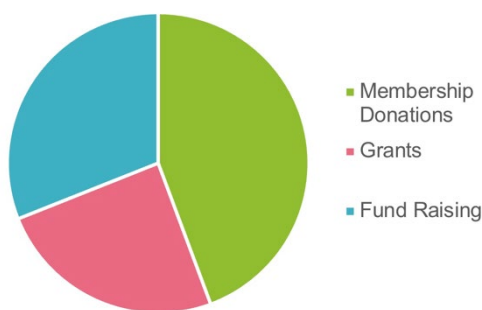
**Board Members:**

- Mark Wood – President
- Mike Haberern – Vice President
- Jesse Garnee – Secretary
- Gary Ralston – Treasurer
- Fred Wiese – Director at large
- George Schaffer – Director at large
- Oscar Acedeo – Director at large

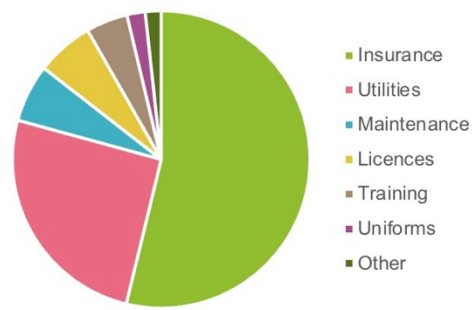
**First Responders:**

- Dan Arnold (Training Officer)
- Nick Colombo (Certified EMT)
- Morgan Floyd (Certified EMT)
- Shane Floyd (Certified EMT)
- Sierra Fortner (Certified EMT)
- Willy Pleitgen (Chief)
- Caleb Schaffer
- Gareth Schaffer
- Wesley Schaffer
- Jon Sheskey (Asst. Chief, Certified EMT)

The SVFD is funded by membership donations, fundraisers, and grants. While the membership donation has remained the same at \$50 for over 25 years, despite costs having increased significantly, this year we are increasing the membership donation to \$100 for residents and \$200 for businesses. See Figure 1 for a breakdown of the prior year income sources and Figure 2 for a breakdown of the prior year expenditures. I respectfully encourage you to consider supporting your local volunteer fire department as without you we may not be adequately funded to provide emergency services. New this year, we will be providing all SVFD members a color embroidered SVFD patch.



**Figure 1: 2023 Income by Source**



**Figure 2: 2023 Expenditures by Category**

Your membership also includes SVFD oversight of a controlled burn, when allowed and upon request. If you plan to burn slash piles, please call the non-emergency SVFD telephone line at 928-442-3487 and provide the contact and burn location details. A burn-notification reference will be assigned and entered into the Rural Metro dispatch computerized service area map.

The funding from membership donations is vital to keep the SVFD equipment properly maintained and functioning. Funds are also allocated to upgrading equipment where needed. With an eye to the future, we would like to obtain an EMS equipped, SUV-sized response vehicle. This additional vehicle will further reduce our response times for EMS incidents. Improvements to the station are also needed, such as electric service panel upgrade, external water storage and pumping system, and a renewed effort to provide weather protection for the water tanker vehicles.

Later this year, look out for a Skull Valley and Kirkland resident survey. This survey will seek to understand whether residents want to become a Fire District or remain a non-profit Fire Department. The details of typical costs versus what service levels to expect for each will be provided in a data-driven format. Responses will be anonymous with the only personal data being if you are a Skull Valley or Kirkland resident, and whether you own property or rent.

I also want to make sure everyone is aware that an emergency notification system mobile phone app, called *alertYAVAPAI*, is available and provided by Yavapai County Sheriff's Office. The notification system provides up-to-date information about wildfires, evacuations, floods, and missing persons. Google "alertYAVAPAI" to find instructions on how to sign up.

Finally, save the date for the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Skull Valley Car Show on Saturday, October 19, 2024. It will be held on the school grounds and proceeds will go to SVFD. With the support of many Skull Valley volunteers and entries from all over Arizona, last year's car show netted proceeds to SVFD of \$6,300. There were a record 109 entrants and many visitors. You can find the 2024 event flyer and entry form at [www.skullvalley.net/car-show](http://www.skullvalley.net/car-show). Spread the word!

Please feel free to reach out to any board member or your Fire Chief with questions or concerns.

Your SVFD President,



Mark Wood



Fire Team 4  
Volunteer Fire Association  
PO Box 41, Skull Valley, AZ 86338

The Skull Valley Fire Department is a volunteer organization, funded solely by donations and fund-raising.

Membership runs from May 1<sup>st</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup> each year and rates are:

**Residential Membership Donation:** \$100 covers one private residence and associated buildings.

**Business Membership Donation:** \$200 covers associated buildings.

*PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN BELOW SECTION WITH YOUR DONATION FOR 2024/2025*

*(THIS INFORMATION IS USED TO UPDATE OUR RECORDS)*

---

I, the undersigned, understand that to become a member of Fire Team 4 Volunteer Fire Association, I must be a current resident, or own property within the service area, and have membership donations current. Membership donations will be due annually in May. Please complete and return this form along with your donation.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Text Available? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City & Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City & Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions to property (please be as descriptive as possible, indicate milage and gate code if applicable):

---

---

*Please return with your check to: Fire Team 4, PO Box 41, Skull Valley, AZ 86338*