

# The All Hands

It takes all of us working together, to get the job done!

April 2013

Volume 1, Issue 4



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## Are You Ready?

By **DARREL DONATTO**

Deputy Chief

As we look toward the future, the opportunities for promotion are many, in fact, almost too many. There are 12 people currently in the DROP program, with all but one of them being in a promoted position. These 12 people will be forced to leave sometime in the next three years; however, they have the ability to option to leave sooner if they wish.

There are another 11 people who are in promoted positions that are eligible to retire or enter the DROP sometime within the next 3 years. The possibility exists that we could be looking at 11 Lieutenant promotions in the next three years.

The significant downsizing of the department, the loss of 12 positions since FY2010, leaves us with fewer people to choose from in the future. Those people who we seek to promote in the future will be those who exhibit a

great work ethic and sound ethical judgment. Moreover, the department has specific criteria for promotion, including both Fire Officer I certification and Fire Inspector certification. Currently, we don't have 12 people who meet those qualifications for promotion. We see this gap as both a problem and an opportunity. Over the next several years, we are going to do everything possible to help close the gap by pouring into and investing in the top talent we have in our organization today; that is, those who exhibit the desire and capability to be a leader in the organization in the future. We want to work together with those who want to assume a leadership position within the organization in the future to prepare them for that future.

The message here is this; the opportunities are great, the path is clear, are you ready to start the journey? 🔥

## Admin Update

By **DARREL DONATTO**

Deputy Chief

We have been working on a number of new initiatives including the implementation of Fire and Medical Priority Dispatch. The Priority Dispatch System is designed to standardize and codify the approach to triaging and categorizing fire and EMS calls. The Priority Dispatch System protocol uses a system of software guided interroga-

tion and problem determination that enables the system to prioritize response according to user-defined response configurations. Today's "run card" approach to dispatch sends the same general complement of units to almost all calls based upon the nature of the call and the location of the call. Priority Dispatch will improve Fire-Rescue's response by safely prioritizing responses. The Department

will be reducing the number and/or type of units that it dispatches for minor or less significant fire and medical calls. For example, we will be reducing the response to residential automatic fire alarm activations, which we have about 300 per year of, to a single fire engine. This will allow the Department's to use its limited resources more effectively and optimize their

*Continued on page 3*

## Safety Update

By **BRODIE ATWATER**

Assistant Chief

The most recent Safety Committee meeting was attended by Risk Manager Karen Temme, Assistant Chief Atwater, Division Chief Duane, Lieutenant Ward and Firefighter Dickson. These quarterly meetings are held to discuss any problems and issues relating to safety and the wellbeing of all Palm Beach Fire Rescue personnel as well as the public.

Among the items of old business discussed at this meeting was the possibility of sealing the bunker gear storage room at Station 1 and supplying it with a source of fresh air to reduce the possibility of vehicle exhaust contacting the gear. This is an ongoing issue which will be readdressed following the completion of Plymovent re-installation at the station.

Additional old business included the repair and/or replacement of the apron at Station 1 due to cracking and settlement. Public Works will be conducting core compaction testing in the near future and will be checking the concrete for proper reinforcement. They will then complete a scope of work for the re-

placement project and submit it for outside bids. This work is included in the FY13 budget for Public Works and should be completed this summer.

A third item of old business was the possible installation of an additional push button door opener to be located at the front of the bay at Station 1. The feasibility of this item is still being evaluated and input has been gathered for consideration.

Items discussed as new business included the performance of the new commercial dishwashers installed at each station. Input was gathered regarding any problems with the dishwashers and this information was forwarded to Public Works. The dealer has been notified of the issues and has been advised of the need to remedy these concerns. We are currently awaiting a response from the dealer and manufacturer regarding the next step in the process.

Additional items of new business included: The possible installation of additional key pad access to the south stairway at Station 1 and to the bathroom door exiting to the gym at Station

3. Also discussed was the possible installation of additional floor marking at Station 2 to assist with backing and the positive evaluation of the Binder EZ Lift patient lifting device.

The committee also addressed three recent damage claims involving the Fire Rescue Department. The first caused damage to a bay door at Station 2 when it was struck by the Engine when backing in the station. Spotters were in place, but due to the close proximity of the door to the top of the Engine, they could not notify the driver quickly enough to stop the apparatus. The door sensor was adjusted to allow greater backing time.

The second and third claims involved damage caused by Department vehicles either striking or being struck by other vehicles. Drivers were advised to use due care and diligence at all times to avoid the any future incidents.

Personnel are encouraged to contact any member of the Safety Committee with suggestions or concerns regarding the overall safety of the Department and its members. 🔥

## Ocean Rescue

By **CRAIG POLLOCK**

Lifeguard Supervisor

Over the month of March Mid-Town Municipal Beach continued to see sharks in the area as the annual spring shark migration continued. As a result of sharks in the area Mid-Town Beach Lifeguards closed the beach to swimming on seven different occasions.

On March 1<sup>st</sup>, turtle season began in the local area, lifeguards ask beach

patrons to please not disturb turtles or turtle nest.

The week of March 23-30, Mid Town Municipal Beach saw some large crowds as a result of Palm Beach County Schools being out for Spring Break. 🇺🇸



## Admin Update

### From page 1

use for medical conditions that require short response times and the highest level of clinical capability. This change will reduce vehicle wear, reduce fuel consumption, result in some operational savings; more importantly though, this would increase the availability of units for significant emergency and for simultaneous calls. Training for the Town's dispatchers has been completed for Emergency Medical Dispatch and is scheduled to begin for Emergency Fire Dispatch in April 2013. In the beginning of May, a "quality improvement" committee, including Lt. Baker and Lt. Marx, will be trained. This committee will be reviewing all of the Fire and EMS calls that are dispatched and making recommendations for improvement where applicable. The final system implementation is estimated to take place in the beginning of June 2013.

In addition, we are working with the Town's Information Systems to implement a Closest Unit Response / Automatic Vehicle Location system. All of the Department's emergency response units have mobile data terminals that include a built in GPS system that constantly tracks the units exact location, however this information is not being used for decision making about unit response. Once implemented, units will be selected for response based upon their proximity to a call, not the zone they are assigned to cover. This system will reduce response times and potentially improve patient outcomes and/or emer-

gency scene mitigation. We anticipate full implementation by June 1, 2013.

Lastly, we just purchased and are in the process of placing in service Dry Sprinkler Powdered Aerosol (DSPA) fire extinguishing devices in service on all of our response vehicles and all of the Police Department's patrol vehicles. DSPA devices are aerosol based fire suppression systems that can simplistically be described as fire extinguisher grenades. These devices act volumetrically, which means that a compartment is filled with an extinguishing agent that extinguishes and suppresses fires in less than a few seconds. They use a safe, non-toxic potassium carbonate condensed aerosol, which is dispersed within a fire compartment as a fire knockdown tool. When properly deployed, a DSPA device interrupts flame and lowers temperature rapidly, making an interior attack safer. Deployment of these types of devices may buy time for additional responders to arrive and for hose lines to be deployed for an interior attack. They may also provide the ability to initiate an attack on fire in areas that are difficult or impossible for crews to access such as attics, basements, and the interior of ships. 🔥

## Simulation Training

### By LEWIS STEINBERG

Florida Atlantic University

Town of Palm Beach Fire Rescue personnel have been training regularly for nearly two and one half years at the Florida Atlantic University Simulation Center. Dozens of customized simulated cases have been created and experienced in order to reinforce existing knowledge, recertification and learning of new material such as guideline changes.

The Town has much to be proud of in its personnel. Despite some initial skepti-

cism, ALL paramedics and EMT's actively and eagerly participate in sessions and return to the island with a better understanding of at least some aspect of patient care. In addition, training has frequently led to the issuance of clarification for uncertain issues. While it is clear that many experienced paramedics possess comprehensive understanding and ability with regard to the delivery of emergency medical service, the consistent level of teamwork displayed is even more laudable. Even during complex cases where the cause is obscure, ALL crews have actively worked together

to ensure that appropriate care is delivered in an appropriate and timely manner. There is also frequent feedback regarding the relevance of the training to actual emergency situations that are encountered.

Ongoing simulation training has contributed to a better understanding of emergency medical care and delivery of the highest levels of service to the residents and visitors of the Town of Palm Beach. Of equal importance, it has fostered the outstanding teamwork that is essential to continued excellence.

## Training and Safety Division

By **JIMMY DUANE**

Division Chief

Training is one of the single most important functions in the fire service. Over the years, our occupation has stayed relatively the same from a physical aspect; however, mentally the challenges and knowledge needed have steadily increased.

The phrase “Every day is a training day” is an expression that will be in our organization for many years. Think about what it means and the responsibilities that each member of the department has to themselves, each other and most importantly to the person that calls 911, needing your assistance. With (7) probationary personnel and a possibility of more to follow, it is more important than ever that the Officer’s take them under their wing and teach them right.

It is evident that people are training, just look at the hours. Don’t limit yourself to only what is assigned to you. Pick something every day and become a little more familiar with it. I read an article by someone, whom I’ve had the pleasure to meet and be taught by on a few occasions, John Salka from FDNY. The article titled, “What’s on That Rig” refers to something that seems so basic, yet we are so complacent with it. I spoke of the importance of carrying your tools and caring for the tools that you carry on the rig. How many times have we opened a compartment, looked at the inventory book and found the tool, only to move on to the next item on the list? Knowing where your equipment is located is very important, however, knowing everything about that equipment and how it works is crucial. Take a little time out of each shift and become more familiar with what you

carry. Change it up each day and have someone different teach what they know about what’s behind that roll up door.

April is very full month for training. Palm Beach is fortunate to have the opportunity of hosting the National Fire Academy Incident Safety Officer class. Hopefully many of you were able to take advantage of this hard to find class. In May, Lieutenant’s Cuomo and Sekula will be teaching RIT and SCBA confidence over in West Palm at the old city hall building. I am also scheduling “live fire” training toward the end of the month.

I am always looking for new and exciting ideas for training. If there is something you would like taught or want to teach yourself, don’t hesitate to call me. 🔥

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## Battalion Chief’s Corner

By **DAVE BURKE**

Battalion Chief— A Shift

Operations personnel are in a unique position to contribute to their profession through adhering to safety practices. Vigilance in safety improves working conditions for you, your peers and those you have sworn to protect. Though this job is never done, a sense of accomplishment can be gained everyday by trying something simple...think *old* and *new*. An example of this can be found with our new hose loads aboard the engines and trucks. Lieutenant Dudley, Firefighter J. Grimes and Firefighter Dorcas took the time to demonstrate a new hose load for the 300’ 1 3/4” line on E-1. Our department has always had these *old* hose lines, but increasing our efficiency at deployment through training and effort gives credit to our agency and profession.

Another example will be rolled out in the near future with the update to the Communications Procedure #103, which will require the use of Firecom headsets during apparatus operations. Evaluating crews gave valuable input to the implementation of these important safety devices. While all *new* equipment comes with challenges, success is achieved when the main goal of safety is kept in focus.

Finally, the simplest is always the best. During a recent informal inspection of Truck 3, it was discovered that a large pulling tool was unsecured in the back of the cab for quite some time. Lt. Caudell took *old-school* initiative to find a way to mount the tool at no cost and a small amount of labor. This simple, safety-minded gesture could save a life. I encourage you to challenge your coworkers and yourselves by using passion and skill to place safety first. Discovering new techniques, implementing change and never letting safety come second are paths to guarantee success. Each of these concepts envelope both innovation and tradition, and all can be as simple as *old* and *new*. 🔥

## Fire Prevention Division

By **TIMOTHY POMPOS**  
Division Chief

In the month of March, the Fire Prevention and Life Safety Division completed 191 fire prevention activities with the assistance of Fire Operations shift personnel.

Recently, the Fire Prevention Division successfully worked with the Society of the Four Arts to complete the renovation of the former Palm Beach Public School

building. The new building was opened to the public on March 9th. It's called The Fitz Eugene Dixon Education Building and will be used for Adult Educational programs.

The Fire Prevention Division will be coordinating with the Battalion Chiefs to ensure the 20,000 square-foot structure has a Pre-Incident Plan / Quick Reference Sheet. The address of the building will be 240 Coconut Row. The Knox Box will be located on the side of build-

ing facing Coconut Row.

While completing our Fire Company Inspections in our community, we always take the opportunity to promote fire safety tips. Some of the tips we share are never leave the break room while something is the microwave or in the toaster oven, discard or replace all frayed electrical wires, never run wires under rugs, and never leave a lit candle unattended. 🔥

*Welcome  
Back!*

Welcome back to Nancy Roedel who recently returned to us after working in the Public Works department. Nancy has returned to her previous position in Fire Prevention, her office is located within the building department in Town hall. All of us are glad to have you back Nancy.

## Unique Device Identification

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has released a proposed rule that most medical devices distributed in the United States carry a unique device identifier, or UDI. Congress passed legislation in 2007 directing the FDA to develop regulations establishing a unique device identification system for medical devices.

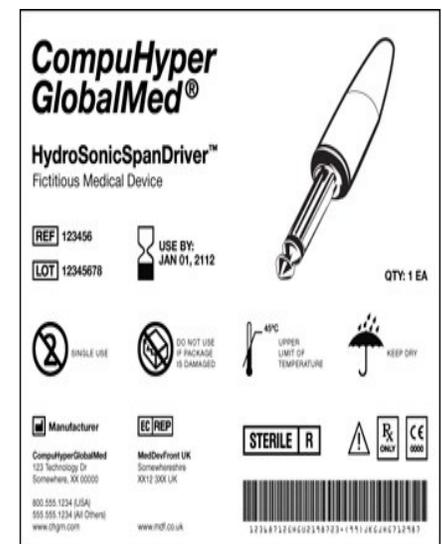
A UDI system has the potential to improve the quality of information in medical device adverse event reports, which will help the FDA identify product problems more quickly, better target recalls and improve patient safety.

A UDI is a unique numeric or alphanumeric code that includes a device identifier, which is specific to a device model, and a production identifier,

which includes the current production information for that specific device, such as the lot or batch number, the serial number and/or expiration date.

The FDA is also creating a database that will include a standard set of basic identifying elements for each UDI, and will make most of it available to the public so that users of a medical device can easily look up information about the device. The UDI does not indicate and FDA's database will not contain any information about who uses a device, including personal privacy information.

In developing the proposed rule, the FDA worked closely with industry, the clinical community and patient and consumer groups, and conducted four pilot studies. When fully implemented, the



Example of what a universal device identifier (UDI) would look like on a medical device label. The label contains information about the product

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## EMS Division

**By BRIAN FULLER**  
Division Chief

We continue to experience a shortage in some life saving medications on an ongoing basis due to the medication shortage crisis. We are currently having difficulty in obtaining Dextrose 50%, as this item is on a Nationwide shortage in production. We were successful in procuring Atropine and Morphine in March and are awaiting the delivery of the latter.

Some medications, such as Sodium Bicarbonate and Magnesium Sulfate were received in an unfamiliar concentration and/or packaging. Personnel are encouraged to be very familiar with these, and other medications, form, concentration, and size to avert any errors.

Currently, there are no plans or stipulations allowing the use compounding pharmacies or the extension of expi-

ration dates of the medications in Florida.

You spoke, we listened. The department has requisitioned and received both the King Vision video laryngoscope system, and the King supraglottic airway tubes to assist in the advanced airway treatment of patients. The Training Division is coordinating in-service training on the new devices so that we can place them on the units as soon as possible.

During the month of March, staff explored the possibility of adding additional landing zones in response to the potential Flagler Memorial Bridge closure. As such, 3 additional landing zones were identified and added to bring the total to 6. Furthermore, Procedure 307 (helicopter medevac) will be updated to reflect the additional landing zones. However, the additional landing zones

are not officially in use until familiarization training is conducted.



Recently, a pressurized saline wound wash was introduced to aid in the debris removal and cleansing of wounds instead of Hydrogen Peroxide which was found to be damaging to the tissue. Please read the product label for further information. †

## UDI

From page 5

UDI system may:

Allow more accurate reporting, reviewing and analyzing of adverse event reports so that problem devices can be identified and corrected more quickly.

Reduce medical errors by enabling health care professionals and others to more rapidly and precisely identify a device and obtain important information concerning the characteristics of the device.

Enhance our analysis of devices on the market by providing a standard and clear way to document device use in electronic health records, clinical in-

formation systems, claim data sources and registries. A more robust post market surveillance system can also be leveraged to support premarket approval or clearance of new devices and new uses of currently marketed devices.

Provide a standardized identifier that will allow manufacturers, distributors and healthcare facilities to more effectively manage medical device recalls.

Provide a foundation for a global, secure distribution chain, helping to address counterfeiting and diversion and prepare for medical emergencies.

Lead to the development of a medical device identification system that is recognized around the world.



An actual 6.0 mm Endotracheal tube from PBFR



“Manufacturer”.



“Date of manufacture”



Symbol for or expiration.

## Retiree Locator

### By ROBERT "BOB" SHINEDLING

Retiree

I began employment by competing against only 40 applicants (quite different today). Hired early in 1975, I was on the Department for at least a year before they sent me to fire school at the North Tech facility in Riviera Beach. The administration wanted to make sure that you would fit in before spending money on your education.

Calls were received from the police department in our Station One watch room for us to then dispatch to the three stations. We all had 3 hour shifts sitting at the console so that we could receive the call, turn on the dorm lights (at night), introduce 3 beeps over the air and then transmit the specific information. The dreaded 2 to 5 AM watch was difficult not to sleep through. I can say now, many of us barely made it, though I know of no calls ever missed.

In 1975 only two of our three front line Seagrave pumpers had tops over the cabs and, if I remember correctly, did not have side windows in the doors. Our ladder truck was one of earliest cab forward designed, open cab styles made by American LaFrance. I was told that this vehicle was originally equipped with wooden ladders and later refitted with metal (before I arrived). A Boynton Beach man was instrumental in its design. Our back-up pumper was an old 12 cylinder, gasoline fueled, dual plug, dual starter and dual distributor open cab Seagrave. Chiefs drove around in Chevrolet sedans and north and south stations ran squad trucks (pickup trucks with a short cargo bed) on all medical and fire responses (manually floor shifted, what fun). An old 50's Ford pickup, driven by the newest employee of

course, was dispatched daily to station 3 to pick up multiple 5 gallon cans filled with diesel for Engines 1 and 2. These engines were not allowed to leave their zones at that time.

The "new boy" was also responsible for the grocery run, three times a day, across the street to Brinkley's Market. Breakfast, lunch and dinner were high priority, next to wiping vehicles down with *real* chamois after each and every call (rain or shine) We all had to take turns cooking for everybody. Only after eating sensibly became popular did we start fending for ourselves and bringing food from home (much cheaper).

For many years we shared bunker gear. When you got to work in the AM, and the prior crew had worked an incident, you picked the least sweaty set of gear that fit you. You attached it to tailboard and waited for the call. Responding on the tail board was a real rush! Rain or shine, two to three persons hung on for dear life looking into the distance for signs of smoke.

In 1979 I completed Paramedic School and participated in the first ever State certification test for paramedics. I was assigned to the brand new, recently donated GMC motor home that we were using as our only transport vehicle. True luxury. For a short period of time paramedics were segregated from the fire crews by living on the third floor of old station #1 (north end of town hall). That ended with the arrival of Chief Elmore.

In 1993 I was promoted to Captain and assigned to old station one. After station new 3 opened I was reassigned as the station officer for the next ten years. I was very proud of that station,

and it seemed that the crews were too.

I retired in April of 2005 after 30 years. Taking the advice of the older retirees, I prepared for retirement by establishing a follow-up line of employment so that I wouldn't wake up the first day of retirement staring at four walls. I was told it could drive a retiree crazy. It turned out to be very good advice.

In my case I acquired a Community Association Manager's License for the purpose of managing condominiums. Upon retirement I immediately started managing a 376 unit condominium in Boynton Beach. I did so for the next four years. I am now semiretired, consulting and managing part-time as needed and when called upon. Grandkids (5 and 9) are calling for my wife (of 43 years) and I almost daily. No time for boredom, that's for sure.

My advice to future retirees; gear your house payment to retire when you do (accelerated mortgage payments), participate in the drop (if you can afford it), stuff your ICMA (and other savings vehicles) best you can and gear down slowly with a job or major hobby waiting for you.

Good luck. You have chosen an honorable and interesting profession. There is *nothing* else that I would have preferred doing. 🔥



## 5 Ways To Make Sure You Don't Fall Off The Fast-track

By **DAN MCCARTHY**

[www.greatleadershipbydan.com](http://www.greatleadershipbydan.com)

Most organizations have some kind of formal or informal succession planning process to identify their high potential (HIPO), or “fast track” talent. Some will come right out and tell you you’re part of a high potential pool, and some let you know in a more indirect way. Either way, what they don’t always tell you is that these lists are fluid. Each year, people are added and dropped. Most managers are happy to let you know you’re on the list, but avoid having to have the tough conversation to tell you you’ve been dropped. However, there are usually telltale clues that you’ve fallen off the fast track. It’s been my experience that when it comes to high potential identification, second chances are rare. So, IF you have aspirations to rise to the next level in your organization (and I realize not everyone does), and you’ve figured out you’re part of your organization’s HIPO pool, you’ll want to do what it takes to stay on that list and not shoot yourself in the foot. How do you make sure you remain seen as a high potential once you’ve been tagged? Here’s 5 ways:

### 1. Maintain your performance at a high level.

Although this one seems obvious, it’s not as easy as it sounds. Organizations will often inadvertently do everything they can to sabotage their high potentials. Like it or not, development assignments are not an excuse to under perform. As a high potential, you’re expected to have a high degree of “learning agility” and will be expected quickly climb their learning curves and nail each new assignment. I’ve seen it happen over and over – last year’s rising star, faced with a challenging assignment (often with little or no support), can turn into today’s disappointment one year later. While you don’t want to get risk-adverse and

turn down challenging opportunities, it’s a good idea to try to choose wisely and try to negotiate conditions that will improve your chances of success.

### 2. Take advantage of the development support offered to you.

High potentials are often offered developmental resources that organizations just can’t afford to offer to every employee. These include access to mentors, executive coaches, executive development programs, special projects, international assignments, and cross-functional lateral moves. You may find it hard to believe, but I can’t tell you how many HIPOs I’ve worked with that *turn down* these opportunities, or view them as a distraction and accept kicking and screaming. It’s understandable- they are probably too busy maintaining their performance at a high level (see #1), and they often don’t understand the how these opportunities can help them perform better in their current role. The fact is, they may not, but they are designed to get you ready for *the next level*, not your current job, and if you take advantage of them, they WILL. And by turning them down, you’ll come across as not interested in advancement or not committed.

### 3. Don’t get too full of yourself.

Again, I’ve seen this happen all too often. Sparky is told by his manager he’s next in line for her position and needs to start acting like a leader. Sparky starts walking around like he’s second-in-charge, gets arrogant, and his peers and other managers start to notice. “*Hey, who anointed Sparky as our new manager?*”? Yes, it’s important to perform at a level above your current level, and you’ll be expected to be learning and practicing new leadership behaviors. However, if you start acting like a little prince or princess, you’ll soon be labeled as someone that doesn’t understand what it takes to be a leader.

Leaders are humble, authentic, trusted, and inspire and lift those around them. When it’s time for a possible promotion, your peers should be ready to vote for you, not take a step back and let you hit the pavement during the team trust fall exercise.

### 4. Make sure you’re getting feedback.

When it comes to high potential development, “no news” is NOT good news. Keep an open line of communication between you and your manager, coach, mentor, employees, and peers. One way to do this is with periodic 360 assessment feedback. Getting isolated and cut off from feedback often happens during development assignments, lateral moves, and expat assignments, so if you’re in one of these situations, it’s even more important to maintain close contact with your support network.

### 5. “Market” yourself.

Arrrrgh, the idea of “marketing” yourself sounds slimy, doesn’t it? Wouldn’t that be the same as getting too full of yourself? Not really. Marketing is all about developing a personal brand and making sure your buyers understand your value proposition. Accomplishments are like trees falling in a forest – if no one is around to hear them, they may as well not be real. Imagine your manager in the next talent review meeting, and your name comes up for discussion. Could he/she accurately represent your accomplishments for the last year, and just importantly, come up with examples of the kind of leadership and potential criteria that everyone is being assessed on? If not, then you haven’t marketed yourself very well.

If you’re talented and lucky enough to be considered a high potential by your organization, congratulations! Follow these tips and you’ll increase your chances of making it to the next level!



## **National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week April 14 — 20, 2013**

This week—**April 14-20, 2013**—is National Public Safety Telecommunications Week. It is designated as a time when citizens can thank public safety men and women who respond to emergency calls and dispatch emergency professionals and equipment during times of crisis. Americans can show gratitude to 9-1-1 call takers, dispatchers, technicians that maintain radio and emergency phone systems, communications staff trainers, communications center personnel, and other public safety telecommunications staff across the country who work tirelessly, often behind the scenes, to help you during emergencies.

Many local agencies around the country will host tours and celebrations to mark the occasion.

Personnel are encouraged to stop by the Dispatch center to thank our courageous team members for the excellent job and endless support they provide us.

*Thank you from all of us for the incredible job you do 24 hours a day. We are glad to have you as part of our team.*

*Sincerely,*

*The Palm Beach Fire Rescue Department*

## The Fire Scene: What's On That Rig? Be Sure You Know

By JOHN SALKA

www.firehouse.com

We just had an interesting training night at the local firehouse. The usual 15 or so firefighters and officers were there and although a training topic was scheduled, we tried something different. The firefighters were all asked to gather around the 1980s-vintage rear-mount aerial ladder. We started at the first compartment on the driver's side just behind the crew compartment and the question was asked, "What is in this compartment?" The question was not just thrown out to the group, but rather a single firefighter was put on the spot.

We asked just one firefighter, rather than the group, because it puts some pressure on that single member. Sure, the other firefighters were straining to remember just what is in there too, but they didn't have to answer. Not yet.

### A wake-up call

The first firefighter named a tool that he believed was in that compartment. So we opened the compartment and, sure enough, that tool was right there on the top shelf. We quickly closed the compartment and asked another firefighter what else is in there. That firefighter also gave a correct answer and named one of the other items in the compartment. As we went through each of the truck's compartments, we continued to ask the question to another and another and another firefighter.

Some of the firefighters had the answer every time, even when the question was being asked of other members. Others were not quite sure, but they had an idea about what tools are carried on

the rig.

The process of going through what may be viewed as familiar material was a great lesson in training and familiarity. Most of the firefighters who were at that drill attend almost every drill. They are frequent responders and good attentive firefighters. What was surprising was that there were tools and other pieces of equipment in just about every compartment that almost none of the members in attendance knew about. This is not a criticism, but rather a wake-up call. We all get into a regular routine at the firehouse, whether you are a career firefighter who follows the same rig-check routine every shift or a volunteer who goes through the apparatus compartments during the weekly rig check. Let's take a look at a great way to conduct a tool-and-equipment check on your apparatus;

First, select a compartment. Before opening it, name the tools and equipment inside. Not just the major tools, but all of the associated items. If the compartment holds the portable power saw, that's great. If there is one circular saw and one chain saw, you must know that too. You need to also know that there is a fuel tank to refuel the two saws. You must know what type of fuel or fuel mix is in each fuel tank and which saw takes which fuel. If the tools to remove the blade are stored here, you need to know that, and how to use them. If spare blades or chains are inside, that too must be known.

Second, when you identify each tool or piece of equipment, remove it from the compartment and examine it. Make sure it is in good shape. Ask questions about it. If you have a collection of hand tools, ask questions about each

one. What is the pike axe best used for? Can it be used for forcible entry? Is the blade sharp or dull? Is the handle tight and smooth? When you look at the power saw blades, have the firefighters identify each blade and tell what it is used to cut. How many tips missing from a carbide-tipped blade should cause it to be taken out of service and replaced? Do you fully throttle up the circular saw when cutting with the carbide-tipped blade? Is the same process used for the metal cutting blade?

Third, remove and start any piece of equipment that uses a motor. The starting procedure should be reviewed before attempting to start the motor. Remove carry slings and other attachments before starting the motor. Use ear and eye protection during this check, just as you would during operations. Ask the firefighters how you can tell by looking at a machine whether it uses only gasoline or a gasoline-oil mixture. Once that is determined, make sure the proper fuel tank is located and also that it is properly labeled as "gas" or "gas/oil mix," or with the name of the machine it refuels.

This simple process can be modified or streamlined to fit your department's specific needs, but the value is obvious. Make sure you can answer the question, "What's on that rig?" 

## Photo Gallery



Community education board proudly displayed at 2000 South Ocean Blvd during a 5 hour community outreach event spearheaded by Lieutenant Basset and crew. Residents received stroke and blood pressure screenings, as well as fire alarm education.



Firefighter Jeffrey Wunsch taking a blood pressure during the event. The remaining crew (not pictured) was Lt. Basset, Lt. Caudell, DE Johnson, DE Katz, F/M Kintner.



Many thanks to many people who contributed but could not be pictured here. Job well done.



The *Shiny Sheet* sponsored a food drive and, with the Town of Palm Beach United Way and Palm Beach Fire-Rescue as partners, launched the Empty Your Pantry Food Drive on March 18.

MARCH DEPARTMENT STATISTICS		APRIL BIRTHDAYS:	
Training Hours		Jill Bassford	4/5
A Shift	525	James Weber	4/11
B Shift	478	Joe Sekula	4/15
C Shift	596	Richard Buttery	4/19
Total	1599	Phil Dudley	4/21
Fire Prevention Inspections	191	Brian Fuller	4/24
Ocean Rescue Visitors	29,207	Robbie Locy	4/24
Town Ordinance Enforcements	257	Marc Bortot	4/26
Preventative Actions	185	Danny Gargiulo	4/27
Man-O-War stings	7	APRIL ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS:	
FIRE and EMS		Belinda Hardy	28 years
FIRE Calls	65	Jose Ruiz	20 years
EMS Calls	163	Brad Caudell	19 years
Transports to Hospital	112	Dave Burke	17 years
		Mark Bradshaw	16 years
		Derryl Bucheck	16 years
		Jill Bassford	12 years
		Damon Patrick	12 years
		Hector Ayala	10 years
		Jody Sronce	6 years
		William Layman	4 years
		Crystal White	4 years
		EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH 2013:	
		January Stephanie Mavigliano	July
		February Jody Sronce	August
		March James Weber	September
		April	October
		May	November
		June	December

## Employee of the Month—James Weber

D/E Weber has served in the Palm Beach Fire Rescue organization for almost 8 years. He is currently assigned as a Driver Engineer on “B” shift at Station 3. He is a past recipient of the Employee of the Month award from November 2011. James serves the department in such roles as Public Information Officer, Field Training Officer, SCBA and SCUBA Coordinator, step-up Fire Officer, and is a member of the Palm Beach Police Department dive team. James serves as a member of the Town’s Communication Committee who is tasked with the development of the new Town of Palm Beach web site. He also holds a certification as an instructor in Public Safety Dive Rescue and is a state certified Fire Officer I and Fire safety Inspector.



James is well respected by his peers and supervisors for his determination, passion and work ethic. His supervisors describe that: “James provides a service to the community that is second to none, always looking for methods to improve the Fire Rescue Department in the eyes of the community. He is customer service driven, always caring about the needs of the public.” Recently, James assisted a resident that had lost her cell phone at Phipps Ocean Park. After talking to several people and finding out that no one had turned in the phone, he organized his crew to search the parking lot for the phone; the device was found after a few minutes of searching. James was able to give the visitor a positive resolution because of his dedication to customer service. Again, James was recognized by a resident for his outstanding efforts teaching CPR/AED training. He spent a good part of his morning training a family on CPR and the proper use of their AED. The resident stated that “Before he left, we all felt a little more confident about what we can do in the event of an emergency”.

Besides fulfilling his normal job duties and responsibilities as a Driver Engineer, James consistently goes above and beyond what is required of him at work. Serving as the department’s Public Information Officer, James continuously represents the Fire Rescue Department in a positive and professional manner. His position as PIO plays an incredibly important role to Fire Rescue. His news stories and interviews are the first depictions of what most of the public sees and James represents it well.

On the morning of March 26<sup>th</sup>, James was traveling on I-95 and witnessed a (3) car vehicle accident involving (2) cars and large work truck. James quickly pulled over and assessed the situation finding three people hurt, one of them critical. After discovering a significant fuel leak, James was able to extricate the non-critical and carry the critical patient to safety. The patient with the life threatening injuries was assessed by James. During his questioning; the man suddenly went into cardiac arrest. James performed CPR on the individual until the arrival of Palm Beach Gardens Fire Rescue. Though, sadly the man died of his injuries, the efforts of James helped to render the scene safer for the remaining people who were moved from the fuel spill.