

Call/Volunteers Serving Today to Protect Your Tomorrow

Smoke Showin'

The Official Publication of the Massachusetts Call/Volunteer Firefighters Association



**The Fall River Fire Department
Special Service Unit**

**Deconstructing Nero's Law
Membership is Important**

Dalton FD Live Burn

2ND ANNUAL

Massachusetts Call/Volunteer Firefighters Association

Golf Tournament

Sunday, September 25, 2022



Southers Marsh Golf Club

30 Southers Marsh Lane
Plymouth, MA 02360

8:00AM - Registration

9:00AM - Shotgun Start

Cost: \$125/per golfer (\$500/foursome)

PayPal, cash and check all accepted.

Questions

Chris Hajder, Swansea Fire Department @ 508-962-0147

Mike Palimeri, Carver Fire Department @ 781-771-3958

Register early as this event will sell out!



www.mcvfa.org





2022 MCVFA Officers

President

Tom Burnett
Whitman
617-719-1289
president@mcvfa.org

Secretary

Kathy Bird
508-295-2716
kibird@verizon.net

Treasurer

Pamela Crombie
Swansea Fire Department
774-930-0026
treasurer@mcvfa.org

Executive Vice President

Vacant
evp@mcvfa.org

Region 1 Vice President

Chris Hajder
Swansea Fire Department
chrishajder552@gmail.com

Region 2 Coordinator

Lisa Evans
Groveland Fire Department
reg2cor@mcvfa.org

Region 3 Vice President

Michael Goldstein
Sherborn Fire Department
vpregion3@mcvfa.org

Region 4 Vice President

Kevin Connolly
Northfield Fire Department
413-498-4388
shamrock3910@comcast.net

Region 5 Vice President

Frank Speth, III
New Ashford Fire Department
413-446-3627
vpregion5@mcvfa.org

Recruitment and Retention Program Coordinator

Susan Dyer
443-994-3350
susan@sdyerdesign.com

CONTENT

- 4** Seeking *Smoke Showin'* Editor
- 4** Report from the Treasurer
- 6** The Fall River Fire Department Special Service Unit
- 8** NVFC Board Meeting in DC
- 9** Fire Service Commission Update
- 9** New Massachusetts NVFC Director
- 10** Call to Career Pension Benefits - Sometimes
- 12** PFAS Task Force Report Highlights Fire Service Concerns over "Forever Chemicals"
- 14** Deconstructing Nero's Law
- 16** How Old Are Your Smoke Alarms?
- 18** Monson Fire Department Sponsors Regional Recruit Training Program
- 19** Membership is Important



COLUMNS

- 5** President's Message
- 20** Regional News

The editorial staff of *Smoke Showin'* is always looking for topics and articles about the industry. If you have any suggestions or would like to write an article, please contact Pamela Crombie, at pamela.a.crombie@gmail.com.


Cover photo courtesy of Frank Speth III.

Seeking Smoke Showin' Editor

By Pam Crombie, Interim Editor

On behalf of the entire MCVFA, I would like to extend a sincere 'Thank You' to Larry Holmberg, who, among countless other acts of service to the MCVFA, edited Smoke Showin' for many years. The results of the survey indicated that the members of the MCVFA enjoy receiving and reading a paper copy of this magazine, and we look forward to continuing to improve and provide this magazine as part of your membership.

With the announcement of Larry's retirement, we are currently seeking a new volunteer Editor. Our new editor will be tasked with working alongside our designer Susan Dyer, as well as with our Board and other guest authors to coordinate, proofread, edit, and ensure timely distribution of the magazine's 3 issues per year. We estimate the role to require 10-15 hours of time for each issue.


This role is a great resume builder for a high school or college student interested in journalism, but we welcome an editor from any background that is excited to donate their time and expertise. If you, or someone you know, might be interested, please reach out to President Burnett at president@mcvfa.org. 

Report from the Treasurer

Pam Crombie, Swansea Fire Department, Region 1

As we all start to move forward in a post-COVID world, the MCVFA Board of Directors has been discussing the future of our organization, and what additional benefits we can provide to our members. We appreciate and thank the many of you that took the time to fill out the survey that was sent a few months back. The board has spent a great deal of time discussing the results and we look forward to making some positive changes in the coming year.

We have stopped all telemarketing efforts, and have made the decision to focus on internal fundraising and sponsorship events, in addition to increasing our membership numbers. We plan to host an annual calendar fundraiser in the spring, and a golf tournament in the fall of each year. Myself and the entire MCVFA Board welcome you to join us at the Second Annual MCVFA Golf Tournament on Sunday, September 25 at Southerns Marsh Golf Club in Plymouth, MA.

We welcome your ideas, opinions, and sponsorship thoughts. Please feel free to reach out to me with any suggestions. I can be reached at treasurer@mcvfa.org, or 774-930-0026. 

Smoke Showin'

The Official Publication of the Massachusetts
Call/Volunteer Firefighters Association



MCVFA Offices

PO Box 1015, East Wareham, MA 02538
1-800-551-FIRE
mcvfa@mcvfa.org | www.mcvfa.org

Published by
SDyer Design

MCVFA President
Tom Burnett, Whitman

Interim Editor
Pam Crombie

Art Director
Susan Dyer

Production Manager
Susan Dyer

Legislative Director
Joe Maruca, West Barnstable

The editorial deadline is the 18th of the month preceding each issue

Address all editorial content to:
Smoke Showin'
MCVFA, PO Box 1015, East Wareham, MA 02538

For address changes or MCVFA membership questions please call
1-800-551-FIRE

For advertising requests contact Susan Dyer
443-994-3350 or email susan@sdyerdesign.com

Smoke Showin' is published three times a year by the Massachusetts Call/Volunteer Firefighters Association, PO Box 1015, East Wareham, MA 02538. Periodicals postage is paid at East Wareham, MA, and at additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send all address changes to:
MCVFA, PO Box 1015, East Wareham, MA 02538.

Smoke Showin' is the official journal of the Massachusetts Call/Volunteer Firefighters Association, a non-profit organization, and carries news and announcements concerning the MCVFA. MCVFA members receive this magazine as part of their dues. The MCVFA is not responsible for contents or opinions other than Association activities. Entire contents are ©2022 the Massachusetts Call/Volunteer Firefighters Association, all rights reserved and, as such, may not be reproduced in part or in whole without written permission of the publishers. The MCVFA reserves the right to print portions or all of any correspondence received by the editors without liability on its part and no such correspondence will be returned without prior agreement. Home delivery of *Smoke Showin'* is one of the many benefits of MCVFA membership.



President's Message

We have been working on a few improvements and I would like to share our progress.

First, we have eliminated our ties with the telemarketer companies that we have been working with for the past 20 years. I thank them for their service to us and the funds that they have brought into our organization. Those funds have helped us complete many projects over the years. Based on feedback from many of the departments on the dislike of our organization working with telemarketers, our board has chosen this path. As always, we heard you and we listened. After some discussion of how we were going to move forward in our fund-raising efforts without increasing dues we have finalized the decision to discontinue the contracts with the telemarketers.

Last year we tried the calendar raffle, and it became a big success. This year we did it again and I am proud to share it was an even greater success. We will work on keeping this as a yearly event and hope that revenue stream continues so we can provide more benefits to our members. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all of those that participated in the raffle whether you sold tickets or purchase them, A BIG thank you for your support.

The other fund-raising event will be the golf tournament we held in Lakeville last year. This year it will be held in Plymouth at the Southerns Marsh Golf Club. Check out our web site MCVFA.ORG for more information as it becomes available. The other project we are working on is the replacement of our Editor for our magazine. We are looking for someone that has the time to dedicate about ten hours per issue to proofread the articles that are submitted. The magazine gets published three times a year. If you or someone you know would be interested in doing this, please email me at president@mcvfa.org for more

information.

Lastly, there is an opportunity for members get more involved in a great cancer screenings program that Department of Fire Services Massachusetts Fire Academy and the American Academy of Dermatology sponsored called SPOT me. This is a quick 5-minute screening that can be lifesaving. They also provide a virtual program called Taking Action Against Cancer in the Fire Service. These programs are all provide to you from MFA and they help built a healthy and safe environment for you and your departments. Please take advantage of these benefits and many others that are offered by the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy, Department of Fire Service. You can request the lecture and/or skin cancer screening by filling out a request form.

www.mass.gov/forms/mfa-course-request-form

For more information please visit:

www.mass.gov/service-details/occupational-cancer-in-the-fire-service

Be safe out there and always be aware of your surroundings on the roadways. 🚔

Tom Burnett
MCVFA President
president@mcvfa.org

Be safe out there!



The Fall River Fire Department Special Service Unit Emergency Management Agency

by Richard S. Aguiar, Deputy Chief of the Special Service Unit

The Fall River Fire Department Special Service Unit/Emergency Management Agency derived from the Fall River Auxiliary Fire Department. The Auxiliary Fire Department was established in the 1940s. The main objective of the Auxiliary Firefighter was to render support to the regular Fire Department when the men of our city went off to war. The Auxiliary Firefighters worked along the Fall River Firefighters for nearly sixty years.

The assumption is that the idea to start a rehab unit in Fall River came to fruition when the Fall River Fire Department lost a great asset with the passing of Father John Folster. Father Folster was the fire chaplain not only to Fall River, but to all surrounding communities that needed him. He would respond to all fire calls to render a hand, whether it was handing out water in paper cups or just being there for the firefighters. Father Folster had a great bunch of young volunteers, and he was also a great medic himself. Many of them went on to be EMT's and firefighters.

I worked as an Auxiliary Firefighter for nearly 30 years, becoming the Deputy Chief of the Auxiliary Fire Unit. I think Fire Chief Edward Dawson saw the void in the fire department without Father Folster, and in 1999, I was asked by Chief Dawson to start the Special Service Unit to provide Rehab to our firefighters in Fall River, as well as in our surrounding communities when our assistance was needed. That was the beginning of one of the best decisions that the Fall River Fire Department made. I must say it was never a struggle, but it was a lot of hard work and a great project to get where we are today. Fortunately for us, we had the cooperation of most of the firefighters, but as with any new idea, we had some resistance.

Rehab is not a new thing to the fire department, and in larger cities, rehab has been around a long time. When we had large fires in Fall River, the Salvation Army or the American Red Cross would respond to a fire to render services to the displaced victims. The Providence Canteen would also come into Fall River to render canteen Services to the firefighters.

As we all know, the Department of Fire Services has a Rehab Unit that will respond to any city and town that requests their assistance. How ironic that they are usually dispatched through the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency. A lot of communities have their own rehab unit, because we all know the need is there for such a service.

As time went on the Special Service grew to the point that we are now responding to all fires in the City of Fall River to render rehab operations to our firefighters. I guess you had to have been in the hot zone to really appreciate a wet towel, a cold bottle of water or Gatorade, or even a bench to sit on with a misting fan blowing cold mist at you. I remember when we had to go to a leaking hydrant just to wash the smoke soot off of your face. So, you may imagine that we are a welcome sight at an incident!

I saw the need for lighting around the fire scene, and the lighting unit came into play as with all the other projects we got involved with, with the Chief's opinion and approval. We now light the fire scene on all sides, and also assist with inside lights for the fire investigator. When we started with lighting, we had to use generators and extension cords. We now have all battery operated lighting equipment, with the exception of our four tele-lights and our Light Tower. Speaking of Fire Chiefs, every Fire Chief has welcomed the Special Service members and our Rehab and Lighting Unit. I believe that they all know it is a valuable asset to have.

The Special Service Unit has come a long way by updating all our equipment. We started off with an old reconditioned 1967 ambulance for our Rehab Truck. As our demand increased to provide rehab and lighting, I saw the need for a larger rehab unit to provide better rehab service. I approached Chief David Thiboutot and asked him if he would give us one of the old ambulances. He agreed and we received the International Ambulance that became Rehab 1. In November 2014, Rehab 1 was replaced with a 1998 KME Rescue Truck with 13,000 miles on the vehicle. We converted that truck to our rehab unit. The 1970 Lighting Unit was replaced with a 1983 Chevrolet utility body pickup. In 2006, the lighting unit was replaced



with a Ford utility body pickup truck donated by Fall River Ford. In 2017 the lighting unit was replaced with a 2014 Ford F300 Heavy Duty walk-in utility body truck with 4,000 miles. This truck is also used as our second rehab unit and responds to all our day fires and is the first vehicle to respond to our mutual aid calls. Lighting 1 also responds to all our night fires to provide lighting on the fire ground. We are now getting a 2022 Ford F250 to add to our fleet of vehicles. This vehicle will be used to pull our light tower and rehab trailer and to pick up supplies. The Deputy Chief /Emergency Management Director has a 2021 Dodge Durango. We also have additional equipment including the 1998 KME, the 2014 Ford F300, our Rehab Trailer with all the shelter supplies and the Dodge Durango. Most recently, a 2022 Ford F250 has been purchased through the Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG Grant).

We have a rank structure that is similar to that of the fire department. We have the Deputy Chief of Special Services that works under the Fire Chief along with two Captains and four Lieutenants. Two Lieutenants are Company Officers and the other Lieutenants have specific duties assigned to them. We also have a retired Honorary Captain and Honorary Lieutenant. We currently have a total membership of twenty members. All of our members are assigned turn out gear, radios and uniforms, including class A uniforms. On the Special Service Unit, we have retired firefighters and a firefighter from one of our nearby towns. We welcome anyone to become a member of Special Services.

Since January 1, 2021 the Special Service Unit has responded to forty two emergency calls and public service events to provide rehab and lighting. We also provide assistance to the displaced families after a fire and work alongside the Red Cross to assist the displaced families. Each Special Service vehicle is equipped with a laptop, and we do the fire report on the fire scene for the District Chief. The fire report is sent to the Incident Commander, the fire investigator, the American Red Cross, the building inspector and any city agency that requests the report.

We have also worked with the Department of Fire Services recruiting class to provide rehab and lighting for the upcoming



firefighters at the Fall River Fire Department Drill Tower.

As the Emergency Management Director and Deputy Chief of Fall River Fire Department Special Services Unit, I deal with all types of different situations and unusual challenges. I feel the best asset the City of Fall River has is the volunteer group. The Fall River Herald News called the Special Service Members the unsung heroes of Fall River. I have twenty dedicated volunteer members that go through a three month training program. They have training in Rehab Operations, Fire Ground Safety, Lighting Operations, Shelter Operation, Emergency Operation Center Procedures (ECO), ICS 100 and 700 training. My members play a vital and important role in Emergency Management procedures in the event of a City Wide Emergency, and Rehab Operations for our Firefighters. Before becoming a member of my organization, potential new members must go through a training program in all the above. We have a Light Tower that we use for large scale events and a rehab, as well as a trailer with a 20x40 blowup rehab tent and shelter supplies such as cots, blankets and all necessary supplies. We also respond to automobile accidents, crime scenes, and public events when requested to provide lighting. My members come from all types of backgrounds, students, business owners, volunteer firefighters, laborers and retirees. Their ages run between 20 to 80 years old. I cannot explain the dedication they have to their city, but each individual has their own reasons why.

The only answer that I can give is that they love what they do. I have been told by the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency that I have one of the most active organizations and one of the most respected Emergency Management organizations in Region II. I am deeply proud of my members. When you speak of volunteerism, I feel my organization is the best kept secret and most dedicated volunteer organization that Fall River has. I am very proud to say that I am their Deputy Chief and the Emergency Management Director. On a personal note, I too have dedicated 50 years of my life to public safety. As the Deputy Chief of this most prestigious group, I have been asked why I do what I do. All I can say is I love what I do. 🚒



NVFC Board Meeting in DC

By Joe Maruca & Michael Goldstein

The NVFC held a meeting of the Board of Directors April 6-9, 2022. We attended on your behalf and met with representatives of call/volunteer departments from all 50 states. Over three days, we met with federal officials and discussed NVFC initiatives to benefit the volunteer fire service.

We met with Dr. Lori Moore-Merrill, the new US Fire Administrator. Dr. Moore-Merrill told us of her plan to get rid of NFIRS (National Fire Incident Reporting System) and replace it with a simpler to use and cloud-based system. This is long overdue. Dr. Moore-Merrill also explained her desire to have a system where fire departments could access the system and its data for analysis. The current NFIRS system has compiled truckloads of great data about the fire service, but there is no practical way to get at any of it.

We also met with Eriks Gabliks, the Superintendent of the National Fire Academy. Superintendent Gabliks reviewed their plans to resume classes in the post-Covid world.

If you haven't checked out your fire department in the FireCares system online, please do. FireCares is an initiative to create town by town data about fire department responses so that departments can use the data to support their needs. John Oates, the director of the International Public Safety Data Institute (IPSIDI) spoke with the Board of Directors about the system and its multiple components. The basic data is free to access. It is static annual data. For a fee, you can have live data about your community and additional data analytics through NFORS. FireCares can be reached online at firecares.nfors.org.

NFORS also provides an excellent Firefighter Exposure Tracking App for your smartphone. This is free and any firefighter can use it to track their toxic smoke and other hazardous exposures over the course of their time on the fire department. You can download it at <https://app.nfors.org/login>. The NVFC recommends all firefighters should be tracking their exposures.

Another hot topic at the meeting revolved around NFPA standards. Among the items discussed is that NFPA will be recognizing Support Personnel and developing a minimum training standard for support personnel. The first draft of this standard will be released soon for public (your) comment.

Watch for it. It will be in NFPA 1010.

In other standards changes, thermal imaging training will be added to the Firefighter I standard, and Traffic Incident Management (TIMS) Training will become a prerequisite to Firefighter I in the same way that CPR/First Responder training is required. In NFPA 1500 (changing its number to NFPA 1550) the requirement for a power-lift stretcher is being removed and moved to the annex as a recommendation (not a requirement).

Many of the key NFPA standards have one or two NVFC directors who sit on the technical committee to represent your needs during the standard revision process. NFPA standards are typically revised every five years. Chief Joe Maruca is Chair of the NFPA 1917: Ambulance Technical Committee.

NVFC is also lobbying for increased funding for AFG grants and SAFER grants, as well as for simplifying the application process. At the meeting, we discussed these issues with Tina Godfrey of the FEMA Grants Office. For the next federal budget, the President has requested \$370 million for AFG and congress has recommended \$360 million. The NVFC is lobbying for the increase.

With regard to the Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) grants for wildland firefighting (federal money administered by states – DCR in Massachusetts) the NVFC has, with its partners, been successful in getting additional grant money for volunteer fire departments. VFA is funding at \$20 million dollars this year, but an additional \$4 million was added to the grants as part of the infrastructure bill that Congress and the President approved. That extra \$4 million will be provided for five years.

We urge each of you to become an NVFC member. Membership is only \$22 per year and gets you access to online training, national training and recruitment conferences, national advocacy, access to group purchasing plans/prices, mental health programs (Share-The-Load), volunteer firefighter recruitment tools, death/disability insurance, webinars, PPE giveaways, and much more. Check out the NVFC at www.nvfc.org. (There is also apparel available for purchase at <https://mynvfc.myshopify.com/>).

The next NVFC Board of Directors meeting will be in October in Wilmington, North Carolina. 🏠

Fire Service Commission Update

Captain Mike McCullough, Lakeville FD, Fire Service Commission Representative of MCVFA

I have just a brief update from the Fire Service Commission for this issue. I'm pleased to announce that Chief Peter Shedd of the Bernardston Fire Department has been seated to fill the Full Call/Volunteer department Fire Chief seat on the Commission. I look forward to serving with Chief Shedd and am happy there is another voice from the call/volunteer side of the service on the Commission. The full Call/Volunteer Chief position can be a difficult position to fill - the last time it was vacant for three years. This time it took a few short months – positive progress.

In January, Chief Gregory Burns and myself were re-elected to serve as chair and vice chair respectively for a third one year term. I thank the other members of the commission for their continuing vote of confidence.

The current members of the Commission are:

- Chairman: Reading Fire Chief Gregory Burns - Representative of Fire Chiefs' Association of Massachusetts (FCAM) - Community from Metro District 13
- Vice Chair: Lakeville Fire Captain Michael J. McCullough - Representative of MCVFA
- Ms. Jeanne Benincasa Thorpe – Undersecretary, Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (Ex-Officio)
- Ms. Roberta Fitzpatrick - Representative of the Insurance Industry
- President Richard MacKinnon, Jr. - Representative of Professional Firefighters of Massachusetts
- Lynn Fire Chief Stephen Archer - Representative of FCAM – Full paid Fire Department
- Belchertown Fire Chief John Ingram - Representative of FCAM - Part Paid, Part Call Fire Department
- Bernardston Fire Chief Peter Shedd - Representative of FCAM - Full Call or Volunteer Fire Department 🚒

New Massachusetts NVFC Director

The Massachusetts Call/Volunteer Firefighters Association (MCVFA) has appointed MCVFA Region 3 Vice President Michael Goldstein as a Director of the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC). Firefighter Goldstein joins West Barnstable Chief Joe Maruca on the Board of Directors of the NVFC and fills the vacancy created by the death of Captain Mike Bird in 2019.

The NVFC's Board of Directors is made up of two directors from each state fire association. It typically meets in-person twice a year and as needed virtually.

FF/EMT-B Michael Goldstein is a 5+ year member of the Sherborn Fire and Rescue Department who attended the Massachusetts Fire Academy (MFA) as part of MFA Call/Vol Class 083 (canceled due to Covid) and graduated in the next class, MFA Call/Vol Class 086. He is also an instrument certified private pilot and a licensed SCUBA diver. His non-fire full-time job is as a Professor of Finance at Babson College, where he holds the Donald P. Babson Chair in Applied Investments and teaches and does research in both investments and climate finance. He received his Ph.D. in Finance from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. 🚒



NEW ENGLAND
— EMERGENCY TRAINING —

American Heart Association Certified Instructors

- CPR/AED	- ACLS
- FIRST AID	- PALS, PEARS
- COVID	

Budget concerns call N.E.E.T. we will work with you and your staff.

Contact Bob Horte @ 508-680-6085
NEET-CPR.COM



Call to Career Pension Benefits SOMETIMES

By Chief Joe Maruca

I suspect everyone has heard that when a call firefighter gets a career firefighting job, that he or she can “buy-back” their call time and get extra credit in the pension system. Once upon a time this was as simple as remembering that you get one year of career pension service for one year of call firefighter time, up to five years. It’s not so straightforward anymore.

The process is more technically called applying for and receiving pre-membership credit for past service as a reserve, permanent-intermittent, or call firefighter. I’ll refer to this process in this article as call time buy back, or something similar that matches the language I hear people use when describing it.

New laws, regulations, and court cases since 2009 have added requirements and made getting pension credit for call/volunteer firefighter time more difficult. Let me lay out the elements as they stand today:

- 1 You must serve as a call firefighter; and
- 2 You must get a career firefighting job for a Massachusetts city, town, or district that has accepted the provisions of GL Chapter 32 Section 4 (2) (b) OR Section 4 (2) (b1/2); and
- 3 You pay the retirement contribution that you would have paid on your compensation as a call firefighter (typically 9%); and
- 4 You pay interest on your retirement contribution from the date you would have paid it and the date you do pay it; and
- 5 Your earnings as a call firefighter since July 1, 2009, were at least \$5,000 for each calendar year you are applying to get credit for.

Now for some details: First, you can’t buy back call time if you get a state firefighting job or any other state job. The law only applies to Massachusetts’s cities, towns, and districts. For example, if you serve five years as a call firefighter at the West Barnstable Fire Department and you get a job at the Joint Base Cape Cod Fire Department, a state fire department, you cannot buy back your five years of call serve at the West Barnstable FD.

If you are a call firefighter and you get a job working for DCR, DOT, State Police or any other state agency, your call time cannot be bought back. This is not a change to the law, but something that was not well known or understood.

The \$5,000 minimum compensation rule is new and was added by a statutory change (GL Chapter 32 Section 4(1)(o)) in 2009. A 2020 decision of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court (SJC) affirmed that you are required to pay for your call firefighter pension time and that you must have earned at least \$5,000 per year as a call firefighter for any buy back credit after July 1, 2009.

Now there are two different rules, one for call time before July 1, 2009 and one for call time after July 1, 2009.

If you are buying back call firefighter time for your pension and your call firefighter service was before July 1, 2009, then there is no requirement that you earn any minimum compensation for the years you want to buy back. If you worked as a call firefighter for calendar year 2008 and you earned \$100 as a call firefighter, you can get one year of credit in the pension system (now that you are a career firefighter) by paying \$9 plus interest to the retirement board. If however, you earned \$100 as a call firefighter in calendar year 2010, then you are NOT eligible to

buy a year of pension time. (I've intentionally skipped 2009 because it has special transitional rules because the law took effect halfway through the year. Just be aware that 2009 requires a special calculation.)

If you are buying back call firefighter time for 2010, and you earned \$5,000 as a call firefighter, then your contribution will be \$450 plus interest.

The current contribution that firefighters must make into the pension system is 9% of their income (excluding overtime – overtime doesn't factor into public pensions in Massachusetts). The 9% contribution rate has been the rule since July 1, 1996.

Because you must pay interest on your call time buy back payment, I recommend that you buy back your call firefighter time as soon as you are hired as a career firefighter, rather than waiting until later in your career. I also think that paying sooner, rather than later, might help protect you from changes in the law, regulations, or policies. It is harder or less likely (but not impossible) that the state will take away a benefit you've already paid for and been granted, than it is for them to say "oops, too late to get in on it."

Additionally, the city, town, or district where you become a career firefighter must have accepted the terms of GL Chapter 32 Section 4 (2) (b) and/or Section 4 (2) (b1/2). You can confirm this by checking with the city, town or district clerk,

as state law requires them to maintain a list of all laws that the municipality has accepted.

The process for accepting these laws varies with whether or not the municipality has its own pension system or is part of a county system. If the city, town, or district has its own pension system, then a majority vote of the city's city council, the town's town meeting or the district's district meeting is all that is needed. If the municipality is part of a county system, the local votes (above) are still required, but the county commissioners must also have voted to accept the law. (I believe that all of the counties accepted these laws decades ago.)

You may hear rumors and discontent about the rule requiring you to pay for the pension credit with interest and about the \$5000 per year rule. This is likely because some pension systems didn't stay on top of this issue and keep giving credit under the old rules. Now those pension systems have to revoke the credit they unlawfully granted.

This ability to buy back up to five years of call firefighter service when you become a career firefighter is a great deal, even at 9% of your past call pay plus interest. 🚒

Pipeline Incidents

Is your fire department prepared?

Millions of miles of pipelines stretch across the U.S., transporting hazardous materials through thousands of communities. Make sure your department is ready to safely and effectively respond should a pipeline incident occur. Access the **FREE Fire Department Pipeline Response, Emergency Planning, and Preparedness (FD PREPP)** online training and toolkit to help your department conduct pre-incident planning, increase preparedness, and improve response.

Access the FD PREPP Resources:
www.nvfc.org/pipelines



Brought to you by the National Volunteer Fire Council and the Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Safety Administration



U.S. Department of Transportation
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration

PFAS Task Force Report Highlights Fire Service Concerns Over FOREVER CHEMICALS

BY DEPARTMENT OF FIRE SERVICES

In a report issued on April 20, 2022, the Massachusetts Legislature's PFAS Interagency Task Force made a series of recommendations to protect public health and the environment from contamination by "forever chemicals," including several based on input from firefighters, fire chiefs, and union leaders that would support firefighter health and assist municipal fire departments.

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a class of chemicals known for their environmental persistence and are used in a wide range of industrial applications and consumer products, including firefighter turnout gear and some firefighting foams. Led by co-chairs Representative Kate Hogan and Senator Julian Cyr, the PFAS Interagency Task Force convened researchers, advocacy groups, community members, municipal officials, state agencies, legislators, and other stakeholders and experts on the issues surrounding PFAS.

The Task Force's 88-page report examines the extent and cost of PFAS contamination in water supplies, health and

environmental impacts, and sources of contamination. Of its 30 recommendations for regulating and mitigating PFAS in Massachusetts, seven would directly support the fire service.

- Fund a second round of the 2018 Aqueous Film-Forming Foam (AFFF) Take-Back Program to collect and dispose of AFFF, clean up and decontaminate storage facilities and equipment exposed to AFFF, and purchase fluorine free foam for fire departments.
- Prohibit the use of AFFF for firefighting training and maintenance.
- Support efforts to reduce the use of AFFF in emergency responses and explore alternative practices to minimize potential environmental impacts where such use is federally required. Require fire departments to notify the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) of releases of AFFF.
- Require manufacturers of firefighter turnout gear to provide written notice of the inclusion of PFAS in turnout gear to the purchaser at time of sale.

- Review standards for turnout gear, support efforts to identify and develop turnout gear that is completely free from PFAS, and ban the sale of turnout gear with PFAS once there are viable alternatives in the marketplace.
- Increase funding for the Department of Fire Services (DFS) and Massachusetts Firefighting Academy to conduct cancer awareness trainings and refer firefighters to screenings for cancers associated with PFAS exposure.
- Direct the Massachusetts Cancer Registry to retroactively standardize “firefighter” as an occupation and to collect information on occupational exposure to PFAS.


“Addressing public health and environmental concerns is an urgent issue for these times,” said Rep. Hogan. “As legislators, we first learned about PFAS when the chemicals were detected in the drinking water supplies of several towns we represent. As our communities grappled with the aftermath of PFAS detection, it became clear that municipalities alone could not shoulder the significant challenges of remediating PFAS in drinking water. We also saw the need for a consistent approach to mitigating and remediating PFAS contamination that could leverage best practices and shared resources.”

“The use of PFAS has grown rapidly since it was first developed in the mid-20th century; we now know that the widespread application of these ‘forever chemicals’ has resulted in contamination of our waters and environment, and poses a risk to human health,” said Senator Cyr. “There is an urgent need to move swiftly to phase out PFAS usage and attenuate a myriad of environmental and public health impacts. This report provides vital, detailed recommendations to regulate and mitigate PFAS in Massachusetts. I am proud to have worked alongside Speaker Pro Tempore Kate Hogan and the members of the task force to formulate this comprehensive roadmap to tackle PFAS contamination and its ramifications in the years to come.”

“The health concerns associated with PFAS exposure are very real for communities, residents, and the firefighters who protect them,” said State Fire Marshal Peter J. Ostroskey, who served on the Task Force. “With occupational cancer a deadly serious issue in the fire service, the adoption of these recommendations would allow us to expand our prevention efforts and help local fire departments stay ready for

any emergency without putting their personnel or the public at risk.”

While the federal government has not yet established an enforceable standard for PFAS in drinking water, Massachusetts has established a maximum contaminant level of 20 parts per trillion for six PFAS. DEP has been testing public water systems and private wells to assess PFAS contamination. DEP is also identifying sites with known or suspected releases of PFAS. Given the financial burden on many impacted communities to address PFAS contamination, the state has allocated funding for a variety of PFAS-related activities, including testing and remediation projects.

In 2018, DEP launched a program in partnership with DFS to collect from local fire departments any stockpiled AFFF made prior to 2003. The program took back more than 220,000 pounds of AFFF from more than 100 local departments. Last summer, DFS and DEP jointly advised fire departments to cease using pre-2003 foam immediately, reserve the use of post-2003 AFFF only for when life safety is at risk, and make a courtesy notification to DEP when it is used. For a copy of that advisory, the 2022 Task Force Report, and other materials related to PFAS and the fire service, visit www.mass.gov/dfs and search for “PFAS.” 







Insurance Solutions for Public Safety Organizations

Gowrie Group and VFIS provide customized insurance and claims solutions for Fire/EMS Departments along with Injured-on-Duty (IOD) claims administration. Our specialty insurance solutions meet the unique and complex needs of public safety operations.

Types of Coverages Offered:

- Property & marine
- General liability
- Medical malpractice, law enforcement & schools
- Management & public officials' liability
- Fidelity bonds
- Accident & sickness for IODs
- Workers' compensation
- Excess/umbrella

Customized Programs For:

- Cities & towns
- Fire departments & districts
- Police departments
- Emergency medical services
- Schools
- Gowrie Claims Services for IOD fire & police

Contact Jonathan Finn | jonathanf@gowrie.com | 781.536.6918 | www.gowrie.com/vfis
VFIS of Southern New England, a member of Gowrie Group. Gowrie Group is a Division of Risk Strategies.



Deconstructing NERO'S LAW

(Note: this information is current as of the end of April 2022)

Nero's Law ("An Act Allowing the Humane Transport of K-9 Partners") was passed by the State Legislature in February 2022 in response to the 2018 murder of on-duty police Sgt. Sean Gannon and the near-fatal shooting of his partner, K-9 Officer Nero. Care and transport of Officer Nero was delayed because EMS was not legally able to provide these services.

The MA Department of Public Health (MDPH) is collaborating with the MA State Police (MSP) K-9 Unit and the Massachusetts Veterinary Medical Association (MVMA) as directed by the new law, to develop the necessary policies, protocols and guidelines needed for implementation. The State of Massachusetts Animal Response Team (SMART) is also lending its expertise in the areas of canine first aid training and emergency response.

Everyone has questions about what will be permitted and required under the new law. This is an enormous and complex project, and it will be some time before we receive firm guidance. Topics that will need to be addressed include clinical/protocol updates, regulatory updates, destination determination, hygiene/sanitization, required ambulance equipment, optional waiver process and EMT training guidelines. Within these broad topics it is likely that subtopics will need to be identified and addressed.

Let's examine Nero's Law as written:

1. The law defines the term "police dog" (*"a dog owned by a police department or police agency of the Commonwealth, or any political subdivision thereof, that is used by the department or agency for official duties"*) and inserts it after the definition of 'person' in MGL Chapter 111C

(laws governing the Emergency Medical Services System.)

This change allows EMS to provide emergency care to police dogs within the parameters defined by Nero's Law. Note the specificity: you cannot legally treat/transport any other 'working' dogs or animals as patients under chapter 111C.

2. The law creates a new paragraph in Chapter 111C that permits EMS to deliver emergency treatment/transport to a police dog, but only with consideration for any **person** in need of care or transport. The new Section 9A reads: *"EMS personnel shall provide emergency treatment to a police dog injured in the line of duty and transport such police dog by ambulance to a veterinary care facility equipped to provide emergency treatment to dogs; provided, however, that EMS personnel shall not transport an injured police dog if providing such transport would inhibit their ability to provide emergency medical attention or transport to a person requiring such services"*
3. Meanwhile, over in MGL Chapter 112 section 58 (the section that governs the practice of veterinary medicine), *"The provision of care to an injured police dog by an EMS provider under section 9A of chapter 111c"*, will be added to the list of activities that are **not** considered the practice of veterinary medicine. Please understand that EMS providers must stick to the K-9 protocols and transport requirements in order to avoid practicing veterinary medicine without the proper license.

Nero's Law directs MDPH, MSP and MVMA to develop policies and procedures for EMS that specifically address:

1. Basic-level first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and life-saving measures, including the use of naloxone;
2. Safe handling procedures for injured police dogs, including

the use of a box muzzle, and coordination with a law enforcement official who is trained in handling police dogs;

3. Identification of veterinary facilities that provide emergency treatment for injured police dogs;
4. Decontamination of stretchers, patient compartment and contaminated medical equipment;
5. Sanitizing allergens and disinfecting to a standard for human transport post-K-9 care/transport.

The law specifically prohibits the provision of Advanced Life Support to K-9's. It is anticipated that the K-9 EMS protocols will be based on Maine's existing and very robust K-9 EMS guidelines.

MDPH will determine minimum standards for EMS training and make that guidance available when it is ready. Decisions will also need to be made about any need for update/refreshers training and if continuing education credits will be awarded. The specific mention of a box muzzle means there may need to be consideration for addition of box muzzle(s) to the required ambulance equipment list. Might there be other required equipment, such as canine oxygen masks or canine pulse oximetry clips? Unknown at this time.

Nero's Law provides for an optional waiver process for agencies or communities, "if the department [MDPH] determines that compliance poses a safety risk to the public". MDPH is directed to develop regulations regarding applications and issuance of waivers. The Law does not offer any examples of situations that might qualify for waivers, so we will need to wait for further clarification.

Another area of focus is transport destination. Closest canine veterinary practice or specialized veterinary emergency/trauma center? One might argue in favor of each choice. A local veterinary practice may be the K-9 Officer's 'primary care' facility and located nearby. It may also only operate during normal business hours. Many general veterinary practices are similar to community hospitals in that they are fully capable of managing emergencies but cannot ensure the immediate surgical intervention needed for critical life threats. Veterinary specialty centers may be open 24/7 and in a constant state of readiness for life threats, but may be located far enough away as to take the transporting unit away from its service area for a lengthy time.

Regarding transport, Nero's Law states in one sentence "transport... by ambulance..." and in another sentence the Law references "by ambulance or EMS vehicle"

MGL Chapter 111c defines "EMS Vehicle" as "an EMS First Response Vehicle or an Ambulance", and further defines EMS First Response Vehicle as "any aircraft, boat, motor vehicle or any other means of transportation, whether privately or

publicly owned, which is intended and is maintained and operated for the rapid response of EMS personnel, equipment and supplies to emergencies by an EMS first response service or by an ambulance service and is not utilized for patient transport".

The option to use an EMS First Response Vehicle in lieu of an ambulance in some situations will need to be clarified and could certainly assist management of a multi-patient event.

The liability clause (Chapter 111C section 21) that covers EMS providers as they deliver care and transport within the scope of their duties has been updated to also include when they are providing care and transport of a police dog. Revised wording is below:

Section 21. No EMS personnel certified, accredited or otherwise approved under this chapter, and no additional personnel certified or authorized under section 9, who in the performance of their duties and in good faith, render emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, transportation or other EMS to an injured person, a person incapacitated by illness or an injured police dog under section 9A shall be personally liable as a result of rendering such aid or services or, in the case of an emergency medical technician or additional personnel, as a result of transporting such person to a hospital or such police dog to a veterinary care facility, nor shall they be liable to a hospital or veterinary care facility for its expenses if, under emergency conditions, they cause the admission of such person or such police dog to the hospital or the veterinary care facility.

There is much to consider during preparations to implement Nero's Law. By the time you read this, additional information may be available to help guide decision-making.

Other activities that your organization may need to plan for might include budgeting for training hours, purchase of recommended/required equipment and advance communications with local law enforcement/K-9 handlers. It will be very important for law enforcement and EMS to be on the same page as to capabilities and limitations (once we know what they are!), before a critical incident occurs! 🚨

Roberge EMS Training Associates



1240 Park St., Palmer, MA 01069
413-867-6920

robergeemstrainingassociates@gmail.com

CPR/AED • First Aid • ACLS • PALS
EMS Continuing Education Programs
First Responder Courses
Coming Soon EMT Programs

www.robergeemstraining.com



How Old Are Your Smoke Alarms?

By Ira Hoffman

Those of you reading this do what you do because you want to save lives. John Norman, in his YouTube video about home fire sprinklers, makes the statement: “I started in the fire service in 1970, so I’ve seen my share of tragedies. I’ve been blessed to be able to save human lives from fire.”

I can’t do that, but I can talk about the single most important thing in surviving a fire – **working smoke alarms**. Every time I meet someone new, or someone I haven’t spoken to for a while, I ask: “How old are your smoke alarms?” They (usually) give me an answer, the conversation goes from there.

Sometimes they give (what I consider) a good answer. That their smoke alarms are less than 10 years old. Unfortunately sometimes their answer is “I don’t know”, or “they were there when we moved in, 15 years ago”.

By a series of questions, and answers, I discuss **smoke alarms**:

- To figure out how old the smoke alarm is, find the date of manufacture. Unfortunately, the date is usually on the back of the smoke alarm.
- If there is no date on the smoke alarm, it is more than 10 years old. I explain that smoke alarms more than 10 years old, or without a date, may test OK, but probably would not react to actual smoke, and should be replaced.
- I ask if their smoke alarms are battery-powered stand-alone, or inter-connected.

- If battery-powered stand-alone, I then ask: “if your smoke alarm in your basement is activated in the middle of the night, will you hear it from your 2nd floor bedroom?” I then suggest they replace their stand-alone smoke alarms with interconnected smoke alarms, either hard-wired, or wireless. I explain that with interconnected smoke alarms when any one of them is activated, all smoke alarms will sound.
- I ask if they have children and explain that studies have shown that some children don’t react to smoke alarms appropriately (see YouTube “Warning for parents on children and smoke detectors” or “Warning for parents on smoke alarm safety”, among others.)

I explain that it doesn’t matter:

- Where their smoke alarm system came from (was there when they moved in, purchased, and installed by them, donated by the fire department or Red Cross, etc.)
- What their smoke alarm system consists of (battery powered stand-alone, hard-wired interconnected, combination smoke/CO, etc.)
- Who made their smoke alarms (Kidde, First Alert, Nest, X-Sense, etc.)
- Where they live (single family home, apartment, McMansion, off the grid, etc.)
- Who tests their smoke alarms (done by themselves or someone else – testing based on manufacturer’s recommendations)

- Who maintains their smoke alarms (done by themselves or someone else – usually by vacuuming them or blowing compressed air into them, based on manufacturer’s recommendations)

What **does** matter is that they, or someone else, makes sure that their smoke alarm system works, 100% of the time, from the date of installation until it is replaced. And always remember that if there is smoke, they can accept nothing less than the smoke alarm doing what it is supposed to do **100% of the time**: alert the family that there is a fire.

I then talk about the **family escape plan**. I offer these suggestions:

- Have a family escape plan with 2 ways out of every room, **and practice it**.
- Have **LARGE** house numbers, that can be easily seen from the street, year round.
- Have a meeting place outside the house, such as the front yard, that is accessible year round.
- Talk about who will need help in getting out and who can help others.
- If there is smoke or fire, or they even **think** that there’s a fire, to quickly get out, closing doors behind them as they leave, if possible. Once outside, call 9-1-1 and **don’t go back into the house**.
- I ask if they have pets, and if they do, would they go back into a burning house to try to save their pets. For those who would go back into the burning house I tell them that without protection, including breathing apparatus, **they** might become a victim requiring firefighters to search for them. My wife, having heard my speech many times, is more blunt. She adds: “think about your kids graduating or getting married and not having you there to see it, because you went back into the house to try to save your pet”.
- Calling 9-1-1: Stay calm and answer the questions asked, don’t waste precious seconds asking the 9-1-1 operator why they are asking these questions. Tell the 9-1-1 operator if everyone is out of the house, or if people or pets are unaccounted for. Don’t hesitate to call back if the situation changes.

Next, I will talk about **home fire sprinklers**. There have been a few times that the person was going to make major renovations and said they might install home fire sprinklers, so the discussion is more along the lines of supporting legislation (the yearly local-option sprinkler bill), or installing home fire sprinklers if they build a new home. I mainly discuss the myths that the anti-sprinkler folks continually bring up:

Myth

New houses don’t need home fire sprinklers because they don’t have fires.

Truth

Fatal fires are caused by smoking, overloaded power strips, wood stoves, candles, etc. The age of the house is irrelevant, it’s the contents and the stupid things that some people do.

Myth

Remote Area / No Town Water Myth – “We don’t have town water so home fire sprinklers are not an option”.

Truth

Pump and tank systems are available where water pressure and / or flow is insufficient to meet the requirements of a standard home fire sprinkler system.

Myth

Sprinklers are ugly and detract from the home’s appearance.

Truth

Unlike commercial sprinklers, home fire sprinkler cover plates are small and blend in with the ceiling. They come in virtually any color or design.

Myth

Water in sprinkler pipes will freeze and pipes will burst and the damage will be worse than damage caused by a fire.

Truth

If installed correctly all pipes should not freeze. There are products available today that send low temperature alerts, or alerts when there is a water flow, but shouldn’t be.

Myth

When one sprinkler goes off, they all go off.


Truth

Only in the movies. When the heat reaches ~150° only the sprinkler closest to the fire is activated, not all sprinklers. And most of the time that single sprinkler puts the fire out!

Myth

The added cost of sprinklers will make housing unaffordable to first-time buyers.

Truth

The cost to install sprinklers when a home is being built is significantly less than it would cost to retrofit it later on. Carpeting, a paving stone driveway, granite countertops, whirlpool bath, can be added on at a later time, but at the same cost. The cost for a sprinkler retrofit - installing home fire sprinklers after the house has been built and lived in, much more. 

About the author: Ira Hoffman is the Special Projects Coordinator for the Holden, MA Fire Department. He writes about fire survival. He has also produced YouTube videos “Massachusetts Fire Photos” and “FDNY War Years Brownsville 1969-1973”. He can be reached at: iraatfsp@gmail.com



Monson Fire Department Sponsors Regional Recruit Training Program

Monson Fire Department is hosting a new regional training program, with 13 recruits from 6 area departments. The Training began in mid-March and includes probationary firefighters and instructors from Bondsville, Brimfield, Holland, Monson, Palmer and Three Rivers.

Monson, like most MCVFA member departments, has a long-standing internal training program for new members. The difficulty has been providing comprehensive introductory training for a few people at a time. Training is staffing intensive, and it is difficult to teach all the necessary team tactics and approaches to such small groups. Monson Chief Brian Harris and Assistant Chief Jonathan Miller looked for a better solution and in 2021 piloted a recruit training program with two neighboring departments, Wales and Stafford CT. Coordinated by Monson Lieutenant Reuben Baker, a 3-month 85-hour regional training program was developed. The program was such an overwhelming success that it was repeated and expanded six months after the conclusion of the first class.

The goal of the program is to bridge the gap for new call/volunteer firefighters between date of hire and FF 1/2 certification. Upon successful completion of the program new members are trained to the Firefighter 1 level and are subsequently cleared to respond to some emergency calls. Although the program was designed to mirror Massachusetts Fire Academy training, it is not intended to replace Academy training nor Pro Board certification, but rather give probationary firefighters the ability to respond in some capacity

to emergency scenes. While both MA & CT have excellent fire academies, new members could potentially wait months to years before Pro Board certification. During this time, without probationary clearance to respond to emergency calls, it is very difficult to retain new call/volunteer members.

Another benefit of the program is the sharing of resources. It is a significant time commitment for a department to offer comprehensive in-house training for 1, 2 or 3 new firefighters, especially if not all complete the training. By pooling resources (apparatus, equipment, facilities, and training officers) the program is able to offer high-level training without overtaxing any one department.

A third benefit, and perhaps as important as any other reason to participate in programs such as this one, is the further development of department cooperation and camaraderie. This is an excellent opportunity for area departments to work together. Instructors from all departments and all ranks are participating. There is knowledge sharing and officer mentoring, we are sharpening our skills and are building long lasting professional friendships.

The recruit program is scheduled to conclude in June with a graduation ceremony, and with its current momentum it is likely to continue for several years into the future. Anyone interested in finding out more about the program or starting a similar program elsewhere is welcome to contact Monson Fire Assistant Chief Jonathan Miller at jmiller981@gmail.com. 🚒



Carver Fire Headquarters Station 1



West Barnstable Fire Department

Membership is Important

MCVFA has sent out their annual dues renewal package and are due by July 1, 2022. If you have not received a packet, please reach out to the office at 1-800-551-FIRE. We don't want to see any members lose out of the benefits the association has to offer.

Annual membership runs from July 1 of each year to June 30 of the next year.

You get a lot of value for your \$20 per year in dues to the MCVFA.

The MCVFA is the primary advocate for call/volunteer firefighters and their departments in Massachusetts. The MCVFA advocates for more and better training, financial benefits for injured, disabled, or killed in the line-of-duty call/volunteer firefighters. The MCVFA provides representation on the Massachusetts Fire Training Council, the Massachusetts Fire Service Commission, and the Emergency Medical Care Advisory Board.

The MCVFA also participates on a national level through its representatives to the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC).

Additionally, membership in the MCVFA entitles your call/volunteer members to:

- > \$14,000 Death & Dismemberment Insurance (both on and off duty)
- > Subscription to *Smoke Showin'* – 3 issues of the MCVFA's Magazine
- > College Scholarship Opportunities
- > Training Assistance & Materials

All call/volunteer fire and EMS providers can be members. Full time chief officers of combination departments can also be members.

For more information about your membership in the MCVFA you can go to our website at mcvfa.org or email MCVFA President, Tom Burnett, at president@mcvfa.org.



TO JOIN VISIT WWW.MCVFA.ORG!

REGION 1

Covering the counties of Barnstable, Bristol, Dukes, Middlesex, Nantucket, Norfolk, Plymouth

Vice President Christopher J. Hajder, Swansea

Once again I hope this letter finds you all safe and well as we head into the spring and summer of 2022. I'd like to start with a big shout out to Fall River Fire Chief Roger St. Martin, EMA Chief Rick Aguiar, and the members of the Fall River Fire Department EMA for hosting our most recent Region 1 quarterly meeting on March 14. Those in attendance were treated to a sampling of Fall River style foods and pastries, as well as a meet and greet prior to the meeting. Fall River Emergency Management has become one of the foremost authorities in the state on EMA and had most of their apparatus and equipment on display. Attendees were also given an opportunity to listen to a presentation from retired Franklin Chief Gary B. McCarraher, who represents a federal government cellular program called FirstNet. The program is designed for first responders and allows for cellular service during incidents where it normally is restricted. The brief presentation was an introduction into a more in depth program reserved for another meeting. Thanks Chief!



I'd like to remind departments that members of an Emergency Management Agency are encouraged to join the MCVFA if they aren't already. Emergency Management Agencies are integral parts of most fire departments, and much like firefighters, are typically volunteers assisting the community. If you have any questions feel free to drop me a line.

I had the opportunity to attend the Berkley Fire-Rescue Department's 75th Anniversary Celebration on March 30 as the Region 1 representative. Assistant Chief Kevin Partridge emceed the event, and MCVFA President

Tom Burnett presented Chief Scott Fournier and Assistant Chief Partridge with a MCVFA Certificate of Appreciation. The Berkley Fire-Rescue Department's history was proudly on display, with numerous guest speakers eloquently providing some personal memories, with family and friends also participating. Congratulations on the milestone and cheers to another 75 years.

As a reminder, MCVFA will be hosting our 2nd Annual golf tournament on Sunday, September 25, at Southers Marsh Golf Club in Plymouth, MA. With the tremendous support we received last year for our first tournament, we decided to move the event to a larger course. The committee is once again hard at work to create another unforgettable event, but needs your help. Golfers, sponsors and volunteers are needed and welcomed. Please email Region 1 Coordinator Mike Palimeri at mpalimeri@gmail.com if you have any questions or would like to join us.

During a recent training session I had a conversation with a young member and we discussed how things change and yet how they seem to remain the same. We also discussed how the fire service is, and has always been, a 'quasi-military' organization. I was compelled to find a quote for this *Smoke Showin'* issue and found this one to be fitting. USN Retired Admiral Arleigh Burke once said "in the heat of the battle you don't remember very much. You don't think very fast. You act by instinct, which is really training. So, you've got to be trained for battle so that you will react exactly the way you did in training." Train hard my friends, train often, and you will do as you train to do. Be safe and help one another. As always, I thank you for your commitment to your community and the MCVFA. 🇺🇸

REGION 2

Covering the counties of Essex, Middlesex

Coordinator Lisa Evans, Groveland

Bulldog Fire Apparatus delivered Groveland Fire Department's new 2021 Ferrara Engine on April 15, 2022. The new Engine 3 has a 1,000-gallon capacity and can pump 1,500 GPM. Funding for the new engine was provided by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). This engine was used as a demonstration engine by Bulldog,



which helped to decrease the overall cost to the Groveland Fire Department. The engine will also serve and be maintained as a BLS licensed, Class V Non-Transporting Ambulance. The new Engine 3 will replace

the old Engine 3, a 1991 KME Pump that held 750 gallons with a GPM rating of 1,000. 🚒

REGION 3

Covering the counties of Worcester, Middlesex, Norfolk
Vice President Michael Goldstein, Sherborn

Next Region 3 Meeting

After a long drought due to COVID, Region 3 will finally be having an IN PERSON meeting on Wednesday, June 8, 2022 at the Upton Fire Station at 20 Church St, Upton, MA 01568. There will be a dinner at 6:30 pm, followed by the meeting at 7 pm. (You should definitely come for dinner – Upton Fire and EMS Association throws a wonderful dinner!) It has been a very long time since we have all seen each other, so a large turnout from many towns would be nice. Upton Fire & EMS has asked for a head count (for dinner reasons) so if you are coming, please email me at vpregion3@mcvfa.org.

This is the third time in just the past few years that Upton Fire & EMS has opened up their facility for an MCVFA meeting – in fact, the last in person MCVFA Region 3

meeting was in Upton on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, literally just before everything shut down due to the Covid-19 pandemic. We are thrilled to get to start up again in the very place we left off just over 2 years ago. We deeply thank Upton Fire and EMS Association, Upton Fire and EMS Department, and Upton Fire Chief Marchand for their generous support of MCVFA over the years.

We are looking forward to having more meetings in person. Please contact Michael Goldstein at vpregion3@mcvfa.org if your department or association is willing to host a meeting!

Cash Card Fundraiser

Dover Fire: On Monday, April 11, 2022, Dover Fire graciously allowed the Region 3 VP to start their meeting with an update about MCVFA and the cash card fundraiser. Dover Fire has been a longstanding member and supporter of MCVFA; in fact, Dover MCVFA delegate John Vounatsos has been Dover's MCVFA delegate for 27 years and may very well be one of, if not the, longest continuously serving delegate throughout the entire MCVFA!

Dover Fire generously helped raise \$200 by selling \$20 cards. Dover FF Dan Murphy assisted in the collection. We thank Dover Fire Chief Paul Luttazi and Dover Fire and MCVFA delegate John Vounatsos for their help and support!

Dover Fire Chief Paul Luttazi (left) and Dover Fire and longstanding MCVFA delegate John Vounatsos (right) holding their MCVFA 2022 Cash Cards.

Other Region 3 News

First, an important reminder that 2021-22 dues are OVERDUE and you should be getting ready to pay your 2022-23 dues. As a reminder, you and your crew are not covered by the life insurance policy until this year's dues are paid.

There is a great deal of good news about Region 3 departments on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/MCVFAReg3Worcester). Please check it out! Please also forward anything you would like to have posted.

Please pass along any news, new apparatus, pictures, or details of special events or actual fires you would like to share to vpregion3@mcvfa.org so we can feature YOUR department or association in the next *Smoke Showin'*. 🚒

continues on page 22

... continued from page 21

REGION 4

Covering the counties of Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire
Vice President Kevin Connolly, Northfield

On Saturday, April 16, the Northfield Fire Department held their annual brush fire training for the area's junior firefighters. There were 20 junior firefighters participating from the Northfield, Ashfield, Colrain, Deerfield and Warwick Fire Departments.

In addition, members from Northfield, Bernardston, Gill, Warwick, Colrain and DCR District 9 Forestry assisted in training designed for these juniors to familiarize them with firefighting experience in regard to safety precautions, equipment, and tactics used by fire departments to mitigate brush fires.

The New England Muster Association (NEMA) has sponsored events since at least the 1960s. Teams from around the New England States & NY have participated in the past.

Our events are based on team building and basic firefighter skills with a touch of history.

Musters are an amazing opportunity to improve morale and skills, as well as recruit and retain firefighters. Our events have the additional benefit of developing a strong camaraderie among the teams, and also departments who may never meet otherwise. There is also a family feel to the musters bringing the fire service and community together.

We are actively looking for new teams to join us on the track and as spectators.

Our current schedule is as follows:

- Whatley, MA Muster: June 19, 2022
- Hinsdale, MA Muster: July 24, 2022
- Florida, MA Water Polo August 20, 2022
- Florida, MA Muster August 21, 2022
- September events are to be announced.

Please let me know if you have any questions and certainly follow us on social media, Facebook &

Instagram for updates on upcoming events. 🚒

Ed Harvey, 413-429-1608

www.facebook.com/NEMA00/

REGION 5

Covering the county of Berkshire
Vice President Frank Speth, III, New Ashford

Tanker Task Force/Tanker Shuttle Drill

Hosted by Savoy Fire Department

Saturday, April 2, 2022





The Savoy Fire Department held a mutual aid tanker task force drill that involved multiple fire departments from Berkshire County and Hampshire County. The fill site was located on Center Rd. and the dump site was on Blackbrook Rd. The participating departments were from Savoy Fire, Florida Fire, New Ashford Fire, Clarksburg Fire, Cheshire Fire, Plainfield Fire, Peru Fire, Adams Forest Wardens, Worthington Fire, and Cummington Fire.

There were 10 towns and 52 firefighters in attendance. During the drill, 87,400 gallons of water was transported, averaging 800 GPM on scene. Special thanks to Savoy Fire Department for hosting this training.

Dalton Fire Department

The Dalton Fire Department held a live fire training that was conducted in an old root cellar located on a commercial property in Dalton. The live fire training was attended by members of the Dalton Fire Department and New Ashford Fire Department.

The training was held over 2 nights, April 4th and April 11th. These sessions provided the opportunity



for the Departments to have all their members learn about deploying a handline, proper search patterns in a structure fire and search and rescue operations during an incident.

A big Thank you to Chief Peltier from Dalton Fire Department for providing this great training opportunity for all of us. 



Has your Information changed?

If your address or email has changed please let us know. To update your information, contact the Membership Secretary at kibird@verizon.net or 1-800-551-FIRE (3473).

Like the MCVFA on Facebook

Check out the Massachusetts Call/Volunteer Firefighters Association (MCVFA) on Facebook and LIKE our page.

The MCVFA Facebook page is a great source of training opportunities, up-to-date fire/ems methods, and political and regulatory changes that affect your department.

The MCVFA Facebook is also a great place to see what other fire departments, like yours, are up to. You can see their emergency calls, drills, and events. You'll get excellent ideas from see what others are doing.



MCVFA

PO Box 1015

East Wareham, MA 02538

www.mcvfa.org

Advertise with Smoke Showin'

to Reach Firefighters & EMS Leadership throughout Massachusetts



If you would like to reach thousands of decision-makers throughout Massachusetts, you need to advertise in *Smoke Showin'*.

With a readership of approximately 5,000*, advertising your product or service in *Smoke Showin'* is the best way to reach firefighters and emergency service leadership throughout Massachusetts.

**approximate pass-on rate: 2.5 readers per copy*

For more details, contact Susan Dyer at 443-994-3350 or email susan@sdyerdesign.com.
www.mcvfa.org