

DIVISION CONNECTION

Vermont

New Hampshire

Maine

Rhode Island

Massachusetts

Connecticut

Volume 10, Issue 3

THRID QUARTER 2004

President Message

Chief William Weston

Greetings from Vermont. Well, here we go. I hope you are enjoying your summer. Once again because of the efforts of the Division Officers, Directors, their spouses and many others we experienced another very successful joint conference in Springfield. I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all involved for their hard work in making this conference so successful. As you know it takes the commitment and help of all of us to be able to make these events work. I look forward to working with all of you this year.

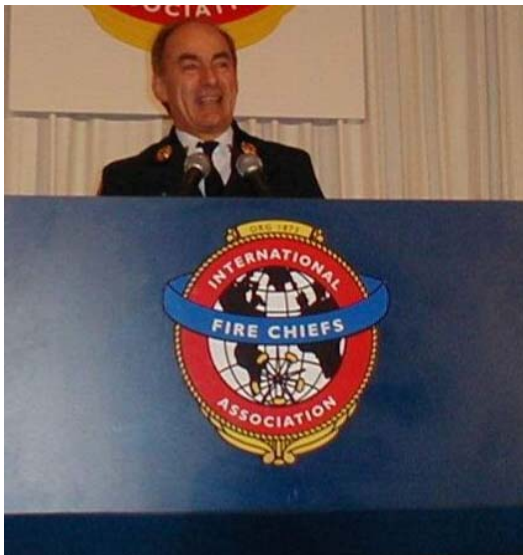
Due to the hard work of Chief Parow and the previous Division Presidents the path of our organization has been outlined. Our strategic plan has been presented and approved at our annual meeting in June and it is now up to us to make it happen. As I stated in my remarks at the banquet I would like to focus on a few main areas that are referenced in our plan. They are the recruitment of new members, the safety and well being of our firefighters and continuing to strengthen or relationship with the New England Association of Fire Chiefs, the New England Fire Equipment Exhibitors Association and the New England Fire Apparatus Maintenance Association. We will be discussing these and other issues related to this new plan at our quarterly meeting in November.

I have just returned from the International Fire Chiefs conference in New Orleans. Chief Bob DiPoli was sworn in as the new President of the IAFC during the banquet. I'm sure Bob has an enthusiastic agenda planned for his year as International President. I would encourage everyone to support Bob in this very important position. There were many excellent seminars and

exhibitors at the convention center. The general sessions were top quality as well. The reception for Bob went very well with hundreds of visitors attending. Chief DiPoli gave a great presentation of at the banquet regarding his goals for his term of office as president. **This reception could not have been successful with the assistance from the Vendors, the State Chiefs Associations, and other Fire Service Associations (see list in newsletter).**

On behalf of the officers and members of the division I would like to thank everyone for their donation to the hospitality room. In addition, I want to thank Greenwood Fire Apparatus, E-One, and Horton Ambulance for sponsoring the Breakfast Meeting in New Orleans.

Throughout the year I hope to be visiting each state association at one of their monthly meetings. If you have issues or concerns about the Strategic Plan or anything as it relates to the New England Division please feel free to share your comments with me or your state officers and vice-presidents. Hopefully with your input and participation we will continue to strengthen our division.



Chief DiPoli giving his presidential speech at the banquet.

Division Officers and State Directors

President

Chief William Weston
Bellows Falls, VT
1st Vice President
Chief Brian Thibeault
Plymouth, NH
2nd Vice President
Chief Brian Hoxsie
Conventry, RI
Secretary/Treasurer
Chief John Wood
Hartford, VT
International Director
Chief Roger Bradley
Hanover, NH

State Vice Presidents

Chief Timothy Wall
Wallingford, CT
Chief James Farrell
Augusta, ME
Chief Gerard Dio
Worcester, MA
Chief Michael O'Neil
Burlington, VT
Chief Stephen Allen
Lebanon, NH
Chief David Sayles
Westerly, RI

Immediate Past President

Chief Jack Parow
Chelmsford, MA



International Director's Report

Chief Roger Bradley

Time sure does fly when we are busy. The New England Chiefs Conference has come and gone, the IAFC Conference has come and gone and summer is almost over.

I would like to take this opportunity to report on some of the highlights from FRI in New Orleans.

The Board of Directors met on August 10 and 11. The Treasurer reported the Association is in very good financial shape due to controlled spending and staff increasing non dues revenue sources such as grants and agreements.

President Mitchell held a news conference to announce a Near Miss Reporting initiative. This will be similar to the airline program whereby close calls are reported so that we can learn from them. This is a million dollar program funded by the US Fire Administration.

The member services department unveiled a new recruitment program. Recruit new members and enter to win a 2005 Harley Davidson Firefighter Special Edition FLHTCUI Electric Glide Ultra Classic motorcycle. For each new member you recruit, your name will be entered into the drawing once. The drawing will take place at Fire Rescue International 2005 in Denver.

I am pleased to report that the board elected me as Director at Large which means I will be sitting on the Executive Committee.

President DiPoli has already assigned me to a site selection task force. Our charge will be to make recommendations for conference locations for 2007 and beyond. If anyone has locations that you would like considered please let me know soon.

Finally, I would like to thank Division President Bill Weston, Secretary/Treasurer John Wood, all of the people that staffed the hospitality room, the vendors and contributors of funds, Judy Marshall for procuring those funds and anyone else who I have missed for making our stay in New Orleans so pleasant.

2004 HOSPITALITY SUITE SPONSORS

Air Vacuum Corporation
All American Investment Group, LLC
American LaFrance of Southern New England
Bound Tree Medical, LLC
Comstar, Inc.
Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association
E. J. Murphy Company
Ed Lyons Fire Equipment, Inc.
Emergency Access Systems, Inc.
Field Service, Inc.
Fire Chiefs Association of Massachusetts
Fire Tech & Safety of New England, Inc.
Fire-Dex Incorporated
Fire Research Corporation
FIREHOUSE Software
Greenwood Fire Apparatus, Inc.
Higgins Corporation
Industrial Protection Services, LLC
J. P. Maguire Associates, Inc.
L. W. Bills Company
Lakes Region Fire Apparatus, Inc.
Nelson & Small, Inc.
New England Association of Fire Chiefs
New England Fire Apparatus Maintenance Assn
New England Fire Equipment Exhibitors Assn
New Hampshire Association of Fire Chiefs
Performance Advantage Company, Inc.
Quality Emergency Vehicles, Inc.
R. B. Allen Co., Inc.
Rhode Island Association of Fire Chiefs
Roberts Company, Inc.
Signal Communications
Specialty Vehicles, Inc.
United Plastic Fabricating, Inc.
Vermont Career Fire Chiefs Association
VFIS of Southern New England

STATE CHIEFS MEETINGS

Vermont-Third Thursday of each month 10am Hartford Emergency Services Department.

Maine-Second Wednesday of the month. Contact Chief Lajoie for location and time.(207-784-5713)

Connecticut Chief-Fourth Tuesday of the month. Contact Chief McDonough for location and time. (860-621-3202)

Connecticut Career Chiefs-Second Tuesday of the month.

Massachusetts-Third Wednesday of the month contact Richard Wether for location and time (781-749-8626).

New Hampshire Fire Chiefs- Second Thursday Evening of the month contact Chief Roger Bradley for location 603-643-3424.

Rhode Island Fire Chiefs-Fourth Thursday of the month, contact David Sylvaria for time and location (401-253-6912).

New Orleans FRI Breakfast Meeting Sponsored by Greenwood Fire Apparatus, Emergency One and Horton Ambulance.

The officers and members of the division thank them for their support. Record high attendance at the meeting with 140 individuals.

VCOS Symposium in the Sun Registration Now Open

Fairfax, Va., April 16, 2004... Registration is now available for VCOS Symposium in the Sun 2004, the definitive conference for leaders of volunteer and combination fire departments, scheduled for November 11-14, 2004 at the Rosen Centre Hotel in Orlando, Florida. Visit www.iafc.org/conferences/vcos/attendees.asp to download a registration form.

Every leader of a volunteer or combination department should attend this comprehensive, industry-leading conference. Register by September 17 to receive the pre-registration rate. After September 17, the registration rate goes up, and after October 22, all registrations must be made on site. All IAFC members are eligible for a member discount; members will need their membership numbers to register. If you do not know your membership number, contact IAFC Member Services at 703/273-0911 or membership@iafc.org. The IAFC has secured special hotel rates for conference attendees; you must identify yourself as an attendee of the IAFC conference in order to receive the discounted rates. Call 800/204-7234 before October 24, 2004, to make your reservations. Please note—discounted rooms are limited and on a first-come, first-served basis, so make your reservations early to ensure availability.

The Connecticut Fire Academy held a cadet team competition. It was the 3rd annual Jr. Firefighter's challenge. 19 cadet teams from around the state competed this year. The winning team was from Simsbury, CT. The competition was sponsored by the Connecticut Rivers Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

Connecticut Fire Officer's weekend was held April 23-25 at the National Fire Academy in Emmetsburg, Maryland. It was the 22nd year the Connecticut Fire Service had participated.

A statewide network of honor guard is being established. The mission of the network will be to provide assistance upon request to any fire department that suffers death in their department. There will be two major functions; planning and ceremonial. If anyone is interested they should contact Jim McLoughlin 860-242-1014 or email; hfdct50@comcast.net.

The Connecticut Fire Chiefs Officers for 2004 are; President Mike Varney, chief@ellingtonfire.org, 1st VP Peter Struble, Peter.struble@snet.net, 2nd VP Fred Dudek, DudekAF@NU.com. The Connecticut Fire Chiefs hold a dinner meeting once a month on the 4th Tuesday of each month. For information on our dinner meetings and educational program please contact Tim Wall at FirewallCo7@cs.com.

Connecticut had a LODD in March of 2004 from Prospect FD, Prospect CT. Firefighter Robert Griffin died while participating in a training exercise. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and all the members of the Prospect FD.

I am pleased to announce that Sanford "Sandy" Anderson was appointed the Chief of the Norwalk Fire Department on April 7. Congratulations and good luck Chief Anderson.

Governor John G. Rowland announced today that Connecticut was selected by the federal Department of Homeland Security to participate in the prestigious TOPOFF 3 exercise program next April. Governor Rowland stated that he has "confidence in the ability of Connecticut's emergency responders to make this program a success -- this program will enhance our preparedness efforts and solidify the relationships between all state homeland security stakeholders."

Connecticut and New Jersey will be joined in the exercise by the Department of Homeland Security, other Federal agencies, and the government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in demonstrating a coordinated local, national and international response to a Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) attack. The exercise will also provide training for Federal, State, and local responders and top officials.

This year the Connecticut Office of the Secretary of State has held and will continue to hold their 4th annual Public Service Awards Program throughout the State of Connecticut honoring volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel. This year when all is said and done over 8000 volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel will be honored.

Volunteer Fire Chief/CT Vice President NED
Timothy S. Wall North Farms Volunteer Fire Department
Wallingford, CT 06492

Fitness for Life

The most important life saving procedure that a recruit firefighter should take with them after graduation from drill school is their dedication to physical fitness. This would have the most profound effect on their lives and careers. It would enable them to react to situations quicker and more efficiently and reduce the risk of heart attack, which is the leading cause of firefighter deaths in the line of duty. It would just about guarantee them a long and healthy retirement.

The recent meeting sponsored by the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation stated a goal of reducing firefighter fatalities by 25 percent within five years and 50 percent within 10 years. One area of concern firefighter health, wellness and fitness, “must be fostered at both personal and organizational levels”. That means we, as Chiefs, must set an example, be supportive of organizational change, and encourage our members to eat healthy and exercise, thus addressing the issue of heart attacks.

It is a cultural change that will take time to be institutionalized just as the Self Contained Breathing Apparatus took time to be accepted and now it is the norm. We should be allowing our members at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour to an hour per shift to do physical exercise that is cardio-vascular based. Weight lifting has its benefits but in combination with a cardio-vascular workout, the body would have better success surviving the rigors of our profession.

The incentive for the Worcester Fire Department to get into the fitness area was a federal grant from the FIRE act. This allowed us \$130,000.00 to start the process of purchasing the right equipment and training to start a program. Myself, and the Union President, Frank Raffa, have both been exercising around the stations and in May 2003, fought each other in a Boxing fundraiser for the Boys and Girls Club. We use this to bring the issue to the forefront. We also run in all the road races and encourage our members to participate also. The two of us met with the Operations Chief Paul Rogacz and agreed that we would start a program for the department. We decided first to start with the new recruits and, through their participation and every recruit class that followed, eventually affect the whole body.

To start this program we agreed to send two individuals to the IAFC and IAFF wellness fitness initiative. Lt. Anthony Grokaitis and Firefighter John LaViolette were sent to Harvard University for a one-week course on the program. Their 100 percent commitment to getting this program out to the members is a very vital part of the overall plan. Support and encouragement for the individuals who take on this responsibility must never be faulted. They are the corner stone for building your program. Attitude is what changes a culture in any department and if all parties concerned exhibit a positive attitude then change will come about.

Don't let the problems you may encounter slow you down. For example, veteran firefighters who probably could benefit the most from such a program cannot be forced to participate (in a union environment). This is why we began with the recruits where health and fitness is part of their training. Physicals and to what extent the physician doing physicals and things of that nature may create some problems. With regards to this issue, we recommended that the individuals not in the recruit class check with their physician before starting a program. Those in the recruit class went through an extensive physical before coming on the job. These are just a few of the stumbling blocks you may encounter but you need to compromise and get the program started. Everyone can find something to complain about as we all know, but things do not happen quickly in the Fire Service. In our positions we all know that. The culture will eventually change but all change takes time.

Gerard Dio, Chief ,
Worcester Fire Department
diog@ci.worcester.ma.us