UNUSUAL TIMES, A HUGE THANKS AND WHAT’S NEXT

BY JONATHAN DAYTON, EDITOR

We are in unusual times. Times where health and safety take priority over all else. I often wonder why we didn’t take our health and safety more seriously before the pandemic? This raises a critical question with hand hygiene and mask-wearing, making a priority; we must not forget firefighter cardiovascular health and safety. I’ll leave that topic for another article.

I want to say thank you to former editor Mike Dixon. Mike served the Volunteer Trumpet and the Maryland State Firemen’s Association in this capacity for nine years. Mike’s leadership and dedication are admirable.

Looking into the future, I want to stress the importance of having new and exciting topics to share with everyone who reads the publication. Please share all relevant news to jonathan.m.dayton@gmail.com by the 7th of the publication month, which is listed on the MSFA website. This will ensure the information shared is taken under consideration for possible publication.
What a year we are having so far!

First, I want to thank the Convention Committee for doing such a great job with the virtual convention this year. The decision to cancel the convention in Ocean City was difficult but necessary for the MSFA and its members. Then the task to convert as much as possible and keep within the Constitution and By-Laws to conduct the necessary business of this organization was no easy task. The electronic voting process, along with By-Laws changes, went without a hitch.

I want to thank Past President Mike Faust for the job that he has done over the past year; your leadership has been second to none. The presidents worked extremely hard this past year to accomplish a great deal in a short amount of time. 2nd Vice President McCrea and I enjoyed our time and learned a great deal at the same time from you.

I now look forward to continuing with the progress made and following up on the issues that were not completed by the time June rolled around. I believe that 1st VP McCrea and 2nd VP Kurtz and I will finish what was started last year.

The MSFA will continue to move forward with the Recruitment and Retention Committees to be continually active in the coming year. Past President Mike Faust has asked to chair the committee this year and has some excellent ideas, so let's all give a helping hand.

Even though the pandemic has kept us from meeting in person for the last four months, we have all gotten used to Google and Zoom meetings and calls to accomplish committee meetings and even had our first Executive Committee meeting via Zoom, quite an accomplishment.

I want to congratulate all the MSFA officers for being elected to their positions and say thank you to all the appointed officers for accepting the office positions.

To LAMSFA President Donna Struntz, I say Congratulations to you and your officers for the coming year.

Let's all be safe and continue to follow social distancing mandates and wear masks in public until we're able to meet again.
GAME TIME

ARE YOU SMARTER THAN AN OLD TIME FIRE CHIEF?

ROUND 8

1. Name the famous NBA basketball player who lost his home due to a fire on January 31, 1983? Hint: He was over 7 feet tall.

2. In what year was the AFL-CIO International Association of Firefighters founded?

3. All of the following are elements of “The Three E’s of Fire Prevention” except: a. Education b. Extinguishment c. Engineering d. Enforcement

4. Name the comedian/actor that played the character “Fire Marshal Bill” in 1991?

5. Have you heard of the “1 in 4” rule for ladders? What is it?

6. Which ladder is the lighter, a fiberglass or aluminum?

7. What is the maximum effective range of a 15 lb CO2 extinguisher?

8. Which type of heat transfer is a major contributor to flashover?


10. According to NFPA, a fire extinguisher weighing less than 40 pounds, should be hung so the top is not more than ___ feel above the floor/ground?

1. Kareem Abdul-Jabbar
2. Jim Carrey
3. 3
4. Convection
5. Aluminum
6. 7
7. 8
8. 5
9. a
10. 5 feet
HIGHWAY BRIDGE SIGNS DEDICATED IN MEMORY OF FALLEN EMMITSBURG FIREFIGHTER

BY: WAYNE POWELL

On a very hot Saturday morning, July 25, 2020, a formal unveiling of highway signs took place next to the new bridge on East Main Street (Maryland Route 140) in Emmitsburg / Frederick County where it crosses over Flat Run. The ceremony honored the memory of the late Vigilant Hose Company (VHC) Firefighter Terry Lee Myers. Firefighter Myers died in the Line of Duty on February 15, 1999, of a heart attack while operating at the scene of a brush fire on the campus of Mount Saint Mary’s University. His family continues to be very active with the VHC. Tim Clarke, VHC Past President, served as Master of Ceremonies and the Frederick County Fire/Rescue Services Honor Guard Posted the Colors followed by singing of the National Anthem by Ms. Jane Moore. VHC Chaplain Pastor Heath Wilson offered the event’s Invocation and Benediction. Key honored guests & organizations were recognized for their support. Tributes were offered by VHC Past Chief Frank Davis and VHC Past President Tim Clarke. Additionally, 15 members of the Patriot Guard Riders came as far away as Salisbury, Maryland, and the State of Delaware to proudly display American Flags in honor of Firefighter Terry Myers. Open to the public, the event followed CDC guidelines of social distancing and face coverings. Nearly 150 attendees were present including local, county and state levels dignitaries. Special guests making presentation included Maryland State Senator Michael Haugh, Maryland State Delegate Dan Cox, Frederick County Government Affairs Director Joy Schaefer representing County Executive Jan Gardner, Emmitsburg Mayor Don Briggs and Frederick County Fire/Rescue Services Chief Tom Coe. Flying high proudly next to the bridge was the U.S Flag from the VHC’s Tower 6, a 100’ aerial truck, plus on hand for inspection was VHC’s Engine-Tanker 64 and its memorial plaque dedicated to Terry. The Myers family was presented with replica remembrance signage which was then followed by the unveilings and sounding of VHC’s House Siren. Upon closing, all attendees were invited to join family and department members for lunch at the VHC Activities Building a short distance away. The ceremonial event was coordinated by VHC’s Frank Rauschenberg, MD SFMO retired, and culminated several years of advance coordination by VHC Life Member Austin Umbel working in concert with the MDOT/SHA. Copies of the printed Program are available upon request via VHC’s website or Facebook page. “Photos courtesy of the VHC.
The term box alarm has become synonymous with the dispatch of a structure fire. Many counties use this term when dispatching a full assignment incident response that often is a working fire. When the words “Box Alarm” come over the fire station speakers, people start to move. But, I bet most firefighters today do not fully understand where the term “box alarm” came from or how it evolved into part of the everyday fire service language.

According to the book Fire Alarm, by Paul Ditzel, Charles Robinson utilized a Morse Code telegraph method between fire watchtowers in 1850. The first record of a fire alarm box installation was in 1851 in the city of Boston utilizing a system developed by Dr. William Channing. The proprietary information was purchased by John Gamewell, the name we most associate with fire alarm boxes, in 1859.

It is interesting to note, the installation of many of the early fire alarm box systems were opposed by local volunteer firemen. These new alarm systems could have been seen as the first step to making paid fire departments or a threat to the volunteer companies that would always be on alert and watch for fires. The early opposition of the volunteer fire companies was not unlike the opposition of many volunteer fire companies to implementation of “Central Alarm” or a central emergency fire reporting phone number and dispatch center that occurred in the 1960’s and 1970’s.

The first city to install fire alarm street boxes in Maryland was the City of Baltimore sometime before 1861. Gamewell was a Charleston, SC entrepreneur. Civil War nearly destroyed his new business venture. But, when John F. Kennard purchased his patents, the two joined together and expanded the business to become the leader in fire alarm circuit systems.

According to a 1941 Gamewell listing of customers in Ditzel’s book, in addition to Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Hagerstown, Cumberland, Bel Air and Hyattsville had Gamewell fire boxes installed. I am also aware some smaller cities such as Rockville and Gaithersburg had a few fire alarm boxes that activated a siren or went directly to the firehouse. Many volunteer fire stations still have an alarm box of some nature that activates the firehouse siren in unmanned stations. Though always one of the largest cites in Maryland, Frederick never had fire alarm boxes. As early as 1894, the membership of Junior Fire Co. No. 2 of Frederick voted to recommend to the city fathers to install a fire alarm system, but never came to fruition. I do remember Frederick having police call boxes at several locations around the city that were used by citizens to summons both police and fire.
When a fire box was transmitted, it would sound at each station and at the fire alarm center of the municipality. The watch desk at the fire station would usually know their first response by heart, but still pull the “box card” or running assignment and announce to the station what equipment was due on the alarm.

Once the era for radio communications entered the fire service, when the fire box was pulled and the alarm transmitted to the dispatch center the radio dispatcher would announce: “Fire Box 8863, Northern Parkway and Mattfeldt Ave, Engine 44, Engine 45, Engine 43, Truck 25, Truck 27, Battalion Chief 9.” over the fire department radio system as well. In areas that did not have an actual street fire alarm box, some jurisdictions set up a “phantom box” with an appropriate running assignment the same as if there was a fire box at the locations. The “phantom boxes” were set up on a map in areas of the city that did not have fire boxes installed. Thus the term “box alarm”, “box card” and “box assignment” has become a modern day terms linked to an era of steam and horses.

We often hear the term “tap it out” usually meaning to send out the full assignment. This terminology comes from the fact each fire box also had a telegraph key inside the box so the incident commander, usually a battalion chief or division chief, would take a special key, open up the fire box, and “tap” the telegraph to transmit to the fire alarm office requests for additional equipment or alarms.

In most metropolitan cities, the fire alarm box became a continuing nightmare of false alarms. The City of Baltimore finally dismantled the Gamewell Fire Alarm system in the 1970’s and the actual fire boxes were sold. I was fortunate to obtain alarm box 8863 that was previously located at Northern Parkway and Mattfeldt Ave just off I-83. I was told by a Baltimore City firefighter this box was frequently pulled for auto accidents on or near I-83. In fact, I rode by the location a few months after purchasing the box and the pedestal was still there. When I received the fire box, I discovered it was an older style Gamewell from 1913-1923. I was extremely fortunate to discover the actual “box cards” were still in the fire alarm box. These cards were in each box so the chief officer could actually see the assignments and request apparatus accordingly.

The fire box was ugly, painted orange. In the 1970’s, all fire boxes and apparatus in the City of Baltimore were repainted orange to replace the color red. Engines and Trucks were white with orange highlighting. I was very fortunate to have a good friend that would be able to restore this historic piece of fire service memorabilia to it’s original, beautiful appearance. Many in Maryland may remember Bob Hargett, retired Frederick firefighter who was truly the Picasso of gold leafing on fire engines. For many years, Bob did the gold leaf striping on Seagrave fire engines and spend a great deal of time in Baltimore firehouses.

Bob was able to have my fire box totally sandblasted and stripped of the god-awful orange. He repainted the shade of red appropriate for a Gamewell box and was able meticulously highlight the lettering in white “FOR FIRE, BREAK GLASS, OPEN DOOR, PULL HANDLE DOWN, LET GO. Below the lettering was the box number panel – 8863. The Gamewell thunderbolt fist remained in red, same as the original box.
CONT.

It has been said the fire service is “200 years of tradition unimpeded by progress.” Many of the terms we use today relate back to our ancestors 100 years or more. Though the fire alarm systems are essentially obsolete, and our horsepower is provided by Detroit or Cummins, we still talk the same language and put the “wet stuff on the red stuff”. Some things will never change.

NOTE – I look forward to working with Jonathan Dayton as the new editor of the Volunteer Trumpet and thank Mike Dixon for his years of dedication to the newsletter providing an excellent resource to the membership of MSFA.

BE SAFE
CHIP

Safety Message
From: Jim Jarboe

The Volunteer Trumpet
This periodical is issued six times a year by the Maryland State Firemen’s Association. Its purpose is to publish interesting and informative articles for the volunteer fire, rescue and EMS personnel of Maryland.

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Picture from Page 4

Dédicace à Firefighter
Terry Lee Myers
Vigilant Hose Company
02-15-1999

Danger inside!

When it comes to HOT vehicles, safety is your first concern. Here are 3 things you should do before you leave your vehicle...
1st. Check the back seat.
2nd. Everyone goes with you.
3rd. Lock your vehicle.
Since 1989 until the end of 2019, 849 children have died, an average of 29 each year. Here are a few ideas to help you not to forget... place your cell phone, wallet or one of your shoes on the back seat. What ever it takes, so you won’t forget.
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Representing the volunteer fire, rescue and EMS personnel of Maryland

Thank you to all first responders.