DON'T LET THE PANDEMIC STOP YOUR RETENTION EFFORTS

BY:
SATCHEL KORNFIELD, RETENTION SUB-COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

As we enter a new decade, we would like to offer some retention tips for the time ahead.

Find a way to recognize your volunteers. This should be something as simple as certificates of appreciation to challenge coins or gift cards. Additionally, does your department have an annual award? If not, now may be the perfect opportunity to create one.

Create or update your SWOT analysis for your department. This could also go in conjunction with your strategic plan.

Plan for in-person opportunities in the future. As conferences come back, some members might benefit from out of county and out of state programs. This could range from the IAFC Recruitment and Retention Certification Course to NVFC programs. The research could also be delegated to keep auxiliary members engaged.
I hope everyone had a joyous and safe Holiday season and Happy New Year to all.

First, I want to THANK all the frontline firefighters and EMS personnel for doing what you do every day during these trying times. The MSFA is gearing up for the 2021 General Assembly session starting on January 13, 2021. There will be different paths to complete our job in Annapolis this year. There is no in-person testimony, no direct contact with legislators, and no admittance to the buildings or capital. As with everything else this year so far, it is all virtual.

The MSFA legislative office at 17 State Circle has been retrofitted with a fully functional sprinkler system. I want to thank all that were involved with this. If I tried to recognize everyone who had a hand in this, I am sure I would miss someone, but a BIG thank you goes out to the NFSA and the Capital Region Fire Sprinkler Assn. and their member companies for their work on this, Richard Smith, PP Steve Cox, SFM Brian Geraci, and the city of Annapolis for their help.

Things have been slowed down almost to a crawl for the presidents in general although we do a lot of virtual meetings and conference calls with our state partners and MSFSA committees. We were lucky to have an in-person Executive Committee meeting in October at Flintstone VFC in Allegheny County. Attendance was down a little but the business of the MSFA was taken care of. January 9, 2021, was held virtually though. Everyone please stay safe and when able to get your vaccine when it becomes available.

Chuck Walker

The Takoma Park VFD in partnership with the Takoma Park Lions Club provided funds to purchase 21 complete turkey dinners for families throughout the community for Thanksgiving. Each dinner will feed 6-8 people. We also added a list of “cooking” safety tips. This marks the 26th year. We do it because we care about our community and the ones in need. Meet the Dinner Pickup and Delivery Crew: Jim Jarboe TPVFD/TPLC, Terry Seamens Takoma Park City Council Member, Mike Bigler TPLC/Past District Governor, and David Hooker TPVFD.
GAME TIME

ARE YOU SMARTER THAN AN OLD TIME FIRE CHIEF?
ROUND 10- BY: JIM JARBOE

1. WHAT IS THE EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBER TO THE NATIONAL CAPITAL POISON CENTER?

2. NAME THE SONG THAT IS USED TO ASSIST WITH “HANDS-ONLY CPR”?

3. WHAT IS A CLASS “F” FIRE?

4. WHAT ARE THE 3 LAYERS OF A TURNOUT COAT?

5. WHERE IS THE NATIONAL FIRE HERITAGE CENTER LOCATED?

6. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A “DUTCHMAN” WHEN PACKING A HOSE?

7. WHAT DOES CHEMTREC STAND FOR?

8. AT WHAT TEMPERATURE SETS OFF FIRE SPRINKLERS?

9. WHAT IS THE DEADLY GAS THAT IS ALWAYS PRESENT IN FIRES?

10. WHAT IS THE NFPA STANDARD FOR PPE (PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT)?


1. 1-800-222-1222 2. Staying Alive 3. Cooking or fat 4. The outer shell, moisture barrier,
UNITED STEAM FIRE ENGINE COMPANY NO. 3 CELEBRATES 175 YEARS OF SERVICE

BY: CLARENCE “CHIP” JEWELL, VICE-CHAIRMAN MSFA HISTORICAL AND ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

November 22, 2020, is the 175th year of uninterrupted service of the United Steam Fire Engine Company No. 3 of Frederick. The company was organized in 1845, exactly 100 years after the founding of Frederick in 1745. An ordinance was passed by the town in 1817 establishing fire wards and assigning the early companies to each ward. The Second Ward was originally assigned to the Union Fire Company. In 1837, the Washington Hose Company was organized on East All Saint Street and assumed the responsibilities for Fire Ward No. 2. The company had a metal “tank” fabricated to capture water for a bucket brigade at a fire scene but never owned a pumping engine.

The firehouse was built in a very swampy area near Carroll Creek, thus, the firehouse was dubbed “Swamp Hall” and the firefighters of the United’s got the nickname “Swampers.” The colorful figure atop the cupola is the company mascot “Johnny Swamp.” Even the bell atop the cupola was locally known as the “Swamp Bell” as noted in Englebrecht’s Diary. This bell was also sounded to warn the citizens of a rapid rise of Carroll Creek during times of flood. The original part of the firehouse is still in use and is believed to be the oldest continuously operating fire station in the country has been in service as a fire station since 1848.

In 1858, Captain John Sinn of the United Fire Company organized the “United Guard” a militia group of United members. The other fire companies in Frederick also organized militia units, the “Independent Rifles” and the “Junior Defenders”. These three fire company militia units were summoned to Harper’s Ferry on October 17, 1859, to help quell John Brown’s Raid.

In 1860, the United’s purchased an engine named “Old Lady” of the Mechanical Fire Company No. 1 of Baltimore when the Baltimore paid fire department was organized. The United’s received the mahogany engine, “Old Lady”, from the Mechanical on April 19, 1860, for a cost of $400. As this engine would have been owned by the United Fire Company on May 8, 1861, it is highly probable the “Old Lady” fought the 1861 Court House fire the weekend after the Maryland Legislature met in Frederick to vote down an attempt at succession from the Union. The “Old Lady” is on display at the Frederick County Fire & Rescue Museum in Emmitsburg, MD.

In 1878, the United Fire Company entered the then “modern” era of the steam–powered fire engine pumper. The steam piston pumper was delivered by rail at the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Depot across the street from “Swamp Hall” on February 22, 1878. The United’s paid a total of $4,000 for the engine and 500 feet of gum hose. Upon arrival in Frederick, the excited members removed the tarp placed over the engine during shipment and were immediately distressed. Instead of the beautiful shiny steam fire engine, they saw in Philadelphia, an ugly big, black machine was revealed. The firemen attempted to remove the covering by scraping but were concerned they would damage the metal. Mr. Clapp of the Clapp and Jones Company arrived and directed the “Swampers” to put boiling hot water over the engine to remove the protected covering. The United’s tested the “Lily” by throwing water over the “Town Clock” actually damaging the clock, so much damage, the church consistory voted the fire companies could no longer test the fire engines by throwing water over the steeple of the town clock.
The members named the new engine the “Lily of the Swamp”, indicative of the location of the firehouse built in the swampy area south of Carroll Creek. Upon receipt of the “Lily of the Swamp”, in 1878, the United Fire Company changed the company name to the “United Steam Fire Engine Company”. At some point in time thereafter, the number 3 was also added to the official company name.

The “Lily of the Swamp” was in service for a total of fifty-four years, quite an accomplishment for a steam pumper. In 1932, the “Lily” was donated to the Smithsonian Institute where she was on display for many years at the American History Museum. Today, she is on loan to the Fire Museum of Maryland in Lutherville, MD where the engine is on display.

In 1919, the United’s purchased the first of which would become one of 6 Ahrens-Fox apparatus in service in Frederick. The chain-driven piston pumper was delivered on September 4, 1919. The engine was shipped to Frederick on the Pennsylvania Railroad. While the train was being situated on the siding along East Street, an automobile struck the rail car carrying the new engine and pushed to rail car off the tracks. This engine is still in Frederick owned by the Gladhill family and displayed at the Gladhill Tractor Mart near Jefferson.

In 1939, the United’s continued with the Ahrens-Fox with the purchase of a magnificent 750-gallon piston pumper. Engine 32, as it was known, remained in service until the early 1980’s pumping at both the YMCA fire on December 6, 1974, and the Goodwill Fire On August 8, 1979, 40 years after the engine was placed in service. The number “32” was permanently retired from the roster when the “Fox” was finally placed out of service. The United still proudly owns the 1939 Ahrens-Fox, which is on display at the Frederick County Fire & Rescue Museum in Emmitsburg and is occasionally brought out of retirement for special events.

In 1935, the United Fire Company purchased the first rescue truck in Frederick. The 1935 Diamond “T” was equipped with floodlights, ladders, and early rescue equipment. Dr. James Marrone was truly the father of EMS in Frederick County and was the captain of the members of the rescue squad. This unit was replaced with a 1959 Ford Young rescue truck which was the first rescue unit in Frederick County to be equipped with a hydraulic rescue tool.

In 1954, Dr. Marrone was instrumental in coordinating the first fire department ambulance service in Frederick when the United’s purchased the first ambulance. The unit was a Superior Cadillac that even had hot and cold running water. 1970 marked a historic change in the United Steam Fire Engine Company No. 3, and ultimately to the entire fire service in Frederick. A simple by-law change deleting two words, “white male” opened a new chapter in our city fire service. John W. Howard was the first African American to join a fire company in the City of Frederick as the United’s became the first fire company in Frederick to eliminate discrimination based on race or gender. These actions especially opened the door to the African American community that was so much a part of the area served by the United’s. The United’s had another first in 2003 when Jerry Dorsey became the first black fire chief in Frederick County. This by-law change also allowed the first female firefighter in the City of Frederick.

The United Steam Fire Engine Company No. 3 is an original member of the Maryland State Firemen’s Association. The company has had outstanding administrative leadership in the 175-year history of the company with company Presidents Lloyd T. McGill, Joseph W. Gaver, W. Bartgis Storm, and William Moore all serving as president of the Maryland State Firemen’s Association.

The United Steam Fire Engine Company No. 3 of today is a vibrant fire company responding to the needs of the citizens of Frederick County, or wherever called, over 10,000 times each year. Over 100 committed volunteers work hand and hand with the career staff of the Frederick County Division of Fire/Rescue Services to assure the public of expeditious service with the highest level of training. The “Swampers” of yesterday built the foundation of the men and women of the United Steam Fire Engine Company No. 3 that will serve into the future.
Though Christmas shopping will most likely be diminished this year, many stores pack aisles with merchandise, often blocking and sometimes even locking marked exits. You would think after almost 80 years since the Cocoanut Grove Fire, building owners would understand the importance of blocked exits. But mercantile inspections constantly find marked exits blocked, obstructed, locked, or even chained shut.

The month of November marks the anniversary of the Cocoanut Grove fire in Boston on November 28, 1942, the third deadliest building fire in American history. The building was originally built as a garage and converted into one of the most popular nightspots in Boston. The building was nearly 10,000 square feet with bars, lounges, and dance areas on two floors. The walls were decorated with fake palm trees and colorful decorations, most likely contributing to rapid fire spread.

In an ironic twist of fate, the Boston Fire Department responded to an automobile fire approximately 3 blocks from Cocoanut Grove about five minutes before the first firebox was pulled and alarm transmitted to the Boston Fire Department. After the car fire was extinguished, a firefighter thought he saw smoke coming from the Coconut Grove. People began to the run-up to the firefighters reporting the building was, in fact, on fire. Between the first box being pulled at 10:20 PM and 11:02 PM, five alarms were transmitted.

At the time of the fire, Cocoanut Grove was packed well beyond the capacity of approximately 600 to, what was estimated, well over 1000 patrons. The fire broke out in the Melody Lounge and the area in the basement of the building. According to Stephanie Schorow, and NFPA Journal contributor and author of “The Cocoanut Grove Fire, “Within a minute, the fire had spread to the foyer upstairs.” She goes on to explain, “Two minutes later, the fire raced through the passageway into the Broadway Lounge” The fire traveled 225 feet involving both floors end to end in about 5 minutes.

Many exit doors were locked, other exits had been concealed, still, other exits had doors that opened inward. The main exit to the club was a revolving door, which was soon overwhelmed with bodies stacked up trying to escape the inferno. The panic that arose in the building greatly contributed to fatalities as bodies piled high trying to get out of doors and windows. Of the 492 lives lost, 200 were within feet of a jammed exit. Ironically, a fire-safety inspection of the Cocoanut Grove by the city only eight days prior to the fire noted the conditions were “good”, an adequate number of exits and interior decorations were not combustible.
How soon we forget. On February 20, 2003, 61 years after Cocoanut Grove, combustible materials and blocked exits again become a stampede inferno at the Station Night Club Fire in West Warwick, Rhode Island. Another ironic twist of fate provides a video of the fire as it happens. A television crew in the building taping a segment about crowded nightclubs. The TV station was following up on a recent “stampede” of patrons at a Chicago night club when errant pepper spray to break up a fight caused panic and stampede that killed 21 patrons of the E2 Nightclub on February 17, 2003. Little did the videographer and reporter realize the tape would provide graphic and gruesome evidence of a failure to follow simple life safety regulations that would lead to the needless death of 100 patrons.

December is the 117th anniversary of the Iroquois Theater Fire in Chicago on December 30, 1903, the largest death toll in a building fire after September 11, 2001. The building of fire-resistive construction was not fully completed and had many life safety deficiencies that greatly contributed to the death of 602 people, many children, and families that were there to see the matinee with Eddie Foy in “Mr. Blue Beard”. A single stairway to the crowded balcony and rapid-fire spread from the fire flow path contributed to the death toll.

The month of December in Chicago also memorializes the Ladies of Angels school fire on December 1, 1958. Three nuns and 92 children died in the blaze, which broke out about 2:15 p.m. in the Catholic school’s basement. It swept through the school of 1,600 students in a few hours. I was in first grade at a Catholic school at the time and remember our teacher stopping class to say prayers for the nuns and children that died in the tragedy. Beverly Hills Supper Club on May 28, 1977, and the Happy Land Social Club, March 26 1990 that killed 87 people added to the list of tragic high loss of life fires with the constant theme of simple life safety violations that created hundreds of senseless loss of life.

Also in December, we remember the death of 6 Worcester firefighters who lost their lives on the December 6, 1999 fire at the Worcester Cold Storage facility. Though not a public assembly building, their death serves as a reminder that we must always be cognizant of the hidden dangers that exist to our personnel, even in abandoned structures.

Be vigilant. Be aware of your surroundings. When you see a blocked or locked exit, politely ask to see the manager and advise them of their moral and legal responsibility to life safety. Fire and life safety is always the right holiday message. Season’s Greetings, and make every holiday a fire-safe holiday!!

Stay Healthy, BE SAFE!
CHIP
Members of the United Fire Company that served on the original committee to purchase the "Lily of the Swamp" pose with the famous steam pumper.

Picture submitted by Jim Jarboe

Thinking outside the box is precisely what The Cockeysville Volunteer Fire Company has been very busy these last couple of months! With the colder months upon us, look for other unique opportunities to fundraise until Springtime!
STATEWIDE (January 18, 2021) - Today marks the start of Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Week, a grassroots effort by the nation's fire service to encourage fire prevention and life safety education. Although COVID-19 will change the look of this year's efforts, the Office of the State Fire Marshal, along with multiple fire departments throughout Maryland, will take part in physically distanced or safe CRR initiatives to get ahead of the 9-1-1 call before an emergency happens.

"I have always believed that the best way to keep the public and emergency personnel safe from fire is to prevent the 9-1-1 call from happening via public safety education," said State Fire Marshal Brian S. Geraci. "Whether it's social media posts, side-by-side burn demonstrations, or school presentations - it is vital to spread the word about fire safety to every generation of Marylander in the State."

This week, the Office of the State Fire Marshal will be sharing videos of CRR professional profiles on some of the many dedicated individuals who have made community education and life safety a top priority in their daily work. Look for #CRRWeek across social media platforms for efforts, both local and national, by various fire departments. You can also check out the official Twitter and Facebook CRR Week accounts for more information.

For information about how you can participate in CRR Week, click here or go to www.crrweek.org
MSFA HOLDS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING-VIRTUAL

Maryland State Firemen’s Association
Executive Committee Meeting Agenda

Saturday, January 9, 2021
Virtual Committee Meeting

January 9, 2021, 1000 hrs. Executive Committee Zoom Conference Call
Call to Order (Chairman Lutz)
Invocation (Chaplain/Vice Chaplain)
Presidential Remarks Chuck Walker

OFFICERS REPORTS
President (President Walker)
1st Vice President (1st Vice President McCrea)
2nd Vice President (2nd Vice President Kurtz)
Executive Director (Director Tomanelli)
Secretary (Secretary Cox, PP)

Financial:
Treasurer/Financial Team (Treasurer Siarnicki)
Financial Secretary (Mitch Vocke)
Chaplain (Chaplain Rev. Long)
Board of Trustees (Chairman Alexander)

COMMITTEE REPORTS
VCAF (Joseph Antoszewski)
Convention Committee (Ron Siarnicki)
Constitution & By-Laws (Douglas Guare)
Old Business

New Business

Good of the Order

Remarks from Executive Committee Members
Remarks from the Presidents
Benediction / Adjournment
RAMPING UP CONCERN AND INTEREST IN A STATEWIDE MSFA - PEER SUPPORT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM!

The MSFA Safety Committee has been very busy. Although, by the time this article is published there will have been a Zoom webinar on PTSD symptoms in firefighters. This presentation is based on a recent study conducted by the University of North Carolina, Asheville researchers Dr. Evelyn Chiang, Dr. Keith Cox, and Kevin Riordan along with Joy Ponder and Chris Johnson. - Editor Dayton

The below information regarding the webinar will have been posted to the members of the association electronically.

If at all possible, please join us and listen in to the below webinar, as we try to do continual education, as much as possible, here in Ocean City, to keep tuned to the countries Emergency Responders concerns and personal behavioral health issues, for our members!

Stay safe, everyone! Chairman Mike LeCompte