

AROUND THE STATE



A Word from our Fire Service Partners

From the Editor: The following column is intended to provide our readers an update on fire service activities from around the state.

Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal



The OSFM continually tries to assist Illinois fire departments meet the fire protection needs in their communities. This year we were able to provide over \$2,000,000 in small equipment grants. We had \$5,000,000 available for no interest truck loans and \$3,000,000 available for no interest ambulance loans.

Another underutilized program that we continually try to promote is the Fire Equipment Exchange Program. This program provides a way in which fire departments, fire protection districts, and township fire departments can donate, sell, or trade needed equipment. In many cases, trucks or equipment that may be retired from service by one department could be used as front line somewhere else. We owe it to our firefighters to make the best use of what resources are located in our state. For example, we were informed that the Ford Heights Fire Department was running without a pumper and we could facilitate the donation of a fire truck. Although we work with all the fire service organizations to promote the use of this program, we must do a better job of getting more departments informed and involved.

Recently, Chief Weiss of the Westmont Fire Department and Illinois Fire Chiefs Association- Volunteer & Combination Officer Section chair, independently organized several truck donations to very needy departments. I applaud him for his outstanding service and initiative to make this happen. His efforts also made me think that this is an opportunity for us all to combine our outreach to improve

communication in the Illinois fire service and better facilitate the transfer of this much needed equipment.

OSFM Fire Service Outreach manager Greg Hay operates the Equipment Exchange Program and maintains a website that allows the posting of information and photographs about needed equipment and equipment that is available for trade, donation, or sale. If your department has spare equipment, or is in need of equipment, please visit the website at <http://freeequipmentexchange.sfm.illinois.gov/>. There is no better way for us to live up to being "our brother's keeper".

Matt Perez
State Fire Marshal

Illinois Fire Chiefs Association



Hello! On behalf of the IFCA here are just a few news items: first and foremost, I am honored to represent the IFCA to the IAFFD not only as Executive Director but as a long standing member of the IAFFD. Our partnership over the years has been very strong and I see nothing but a continued growth of working together in areas of legislation, education, training and leadership.

Once again, this past September, the IFCA – VCOC held our annual conference in Bloomington and it was a big success. The interaction of dedicated Volunteer and combination officers was great. We had excellent speakers and venues that will keep us returning to Bloomington for the next several years.

Our Annual Conference was held in Peoria from October 14th -17th. We had

several excellent speakers along with recognition of scholarship recipients and thanking several members for their service to IFCA and the Fire Service of Illinois. We also transitioned the Presidency from Chief John Christian to Chief Mark Pukniatis of Naperville FD. Our 1st Vice President is Chief Greg Earle from Centralia FPD. Chief Gary Ludwig of the Champaign FPD was our guest administrating the oath of office. Chief Gary is the current 1st VP for the International Fire Chiefs and will be President in 2019.

We will also have welcomed some new members to the board as well as several returning to continue representing the IFCA. Chief Mike Mavrogeorge is now the 1st Vice-President of the Great Lakes Division of the International Association of Fire Chiefs. Chief Al Yancey of the Minooka FPD is now on the IAFC- VCOS Executive Board and Conference committee. We hosted the Great Lakes Division of the International Fire Chiefs for a one-day summit. Representatives from Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin along with Illinois attended this one day gathering. We were honored to host and look forward to an enhanced relationship with the GLD.

At this year's conference we recognized three Chiefs for their accomplishments: Chief Emeritus was awarded to Chief Robert Wilcox Matteson FD. Chief of the year for Volunteer/combination was awarded to Chief Andy Bonomo Jr. of the York Center FPD and for Career Chief of the Year was awarded to Chief Richard Mikel of the Elk Grove FD.

Continued on page 21

Around the State

Continued from page 20

The IFCA assessment team is ready to serve the members of the fire service with promotion testing, new hire interviews and consulting services. If you are currently using our services we thank you and we will continue to bring you a professional process. If you have not used our services please give us the opportunity to provide you with our services. We feel we will deliver you quality and professionalism in every aspect. Contact Dave Slivinski our Consulting Manager.

The IFCA Education-Research Foundation continues to host a variety of Fire Officer Class and new Chief Officers programs. The Foundation also sponsors many scholarships every year, so please get the word to the members of your organization to apply for funding that will assist them with certifications and college funding. At this year's conference approx. 70 scholarships were awarded.

A continued work in progress is The Blue-Ribbon Report. The Committee has finished our updated survey under the guidance of Chief Al Yancey and Executive Director Cheri Breneman. We had just over 400 responses to the survey which will give us a great foundation for addressing the fire service needs in Illinois. Deputy Director from IFSI Jim Keiken is helping us with a major update to the report. Jim has offered his help to us as a continued show of support from IFSI to and for the Fire Service of Illinois. We will then be developing the new/updated report that will go to the Governor and all elected officials in early 2019.

The Illinois Fire Chiefs are holding the following events:

49th Annual Symposium

East Peoria IL - May 15-17, 2019

69th Annual Conference

Peoria IL - October 2019

We have updated our website with the help and direction of Chief John Buckley, Chief Larry Moran and Maureen Griseto. I am sure you will find it useful and very informative. www.illinoisfirechiefs.org.

If you have any questions or need information please do not hesitate in contacting me or our IFCA office. jgrady3@illinoisfirechiefs.org 1-847-966-0732.

Jim Grady III

Executive Director

www.iafpd.org

Illinois Fire Service Institute



On August of 2017 the Illinois Fire Service Institute (IFSI) launched the First Responder Resiliency Project. This initiative infused 1 hour of mental health and resiliency education into all IFSI classes of 24 hours and greater, with the intention of making it safe for firefighters, of all ranks, to talk about mental health and resiliency. To date, IFSI has presented Resiliency training to over 5,000 First Responders.

Since 1957, when IFSI established its first "Firemanship" Training Section to deliver year-round training, up until last year, IFSI did not specifically address the issue of how First Responders who help and care for others may need to understand their own personal mental health vulnerability and resiliency. As with any new program, great excitement and trepidation preceded implementation, regarding the potential for this education and for how the message would be received by students. Both of these elements were addressed in Resiliency Project Train-the-Trainer Sessions, of which 145 IFSI instructors attended.

Now, a year after the Resiliency Project rolled out, IFSI instructors have expressed pleasant surprise as to how well students have received the resiliency message. In fact, some students have even stayed after the training to speak with instructors about their personal challenges and how they've associated with the resiliency message. We've received ample input from students who've expressed gratitude for our instructors' ability to present the mental health message, which gave them the courage to seek assistance with their troubling thoughts.

IFSI Research recently conducted a survey of Resiliency students and instructors to evaluate the project's strengths and opportunities for improvement. This valued feedback provided the Resiliency Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) with a road map for continued curriculum development, program inclusion, etc. One message in particular, that received strong support from students and instructors alike, concerned the importance of a firefighter sharing his or her lived experience with suicidal thoughts or a suicide attempt firsthand. This, coupled

with small group discussions, will continue to be a strength of program delivery.

These are the objective of the IFSI Resiliency Project:

- Demonstrate how firefighters can safely discuss mental health around and with their peers.
- Identify the components of personal Resiliency.
- Identify mental health Resources available to firefighters and their families.
- Identify and dispel myths of mental health challenges.
- Discuss the Stress Response experienced by firefighters.
- Discuss Post Traumatic Stress.
- Discuss Post Traumatic Growth.
- Discuss the facts and science of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.
- Discuss suicide and Dr. Joiner's Theory of Suicide.
- Create a personal Resiliency Plan.
- Create a personal mental health safety plan.

During the next six months the IFSI First Responder Resiliency Project will undergo improvements in how we deliver the message to our students, including the following:

- A revised 1-hour Resiliency training for inclusion in key courses.
- A 4-hour, stand alone, Resiliency training will be available for fire departments across the State.

IFSI is proud of the instructors to have demonstrated the courage to be vulnerable enough to share the mental health message during their classes. As these Instructors continue to present the IFSI Resiliency Project training we're certain that many more students and lives will be impacted in positive ways. The IFSI Resiliency Project appreciates the support and donation from the REACT Foundation, in memory of Lt. Ryan Elwood, who was an IFSI student.

If you would like more information about the Illinois Fire Service Institute's First Responder Resiliency Project, please contact J.P. Moore at jpmoore1@illinois.edu.

James P. Moore

Assistant Director for Leadership & Command Programs

Continued on page 22

Around the State

Continued from page 21

IL Fire Safety Alliance

"Be Alarmed!" Smoke Alarm Program Growing Across Illinois



In January, the Illinois Fire Safety Alliance (IFSA) and the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) launched "Be Alarmed!" - a smoke alarm installation program that provides alarms to Illinoisans through their local fire departments. OSFM and IFSA cooperatively distribute smoke alarms with 10-year concealed batteries and fire safety educational materials to participating fire departments, then department personnel personally install each smoke alarm, educate the homeowner on fire prevention and safety, and provide installation survey data to the host organizations.

"Be Alarmed!" is a fire safety educational program developed to educate Illinoisans and to ensure that properly installed and working smoke alarms are in homes across Illinois. The program seeks to educate Illinois residents, young and old, on home fire safety and prevention methods, reduce the number of fire-related injuries in Illinois, reduce the number of fire-related deaths in Illinois, and identify the reason for non-working smoke alarms in Illinois homes.

Through the first nine months of the program, 87 Illinois fire departments from 46 different counties are participating in the program and 3,168 smoke alarms have been distributed (1,562 of which have been installed). 515 homes and 1,248 (375 high-risk) residents are now protected with these new smoke alarms. Of the 515 homes that now have these new alarms installed, there were 941 pre-existing alarms in those homes - 80% (753) of which DID NOT WORK or were EXPIRED!

All smoke alarms and educational materials are provided at no-cost to eligible fire departments as a result of OSFM and IFSA funding.

Interested fire departments should go to www.IFSA.org/programs/alarms for eligibility requirements and the request form.

Philip Zaleski
IFSA Executive Director

IL Fire Service Administrative Professionals



As a division of the IL Fire Chiefs Association, IFSAP has a lot to offer. If your administrative staff is not a member of IFSAP, I ask that you consider allowing them to join. Membership is very reasonable and both the education and network opportunities offered throughout the year are numerous and are geared toward fire service support staff. IFSAP subsidizes a substantial portion of the training through the Education Fund.

IFSAP supports fire service organizations. Most recently two members; Donna Van Steenhuyse (Grayslake FPD) and Lisa Norton (Rolling Meadows FD) assisted at MABAS Headquarters with administrative duties during Hurricane Florence. IFSAP volunteers Carla Clark (Lemont FPD) and Priscilla Jezuit (Warrenville FPD) assisted at the IFCA Fundraiser on July 11.

The IFSAP Fall Seminar was held on September 21st. The program had informative presentations addressing FMLA, Employee Leave Issues and IMRF.

The IFSAP Annual Awards and Recognition Luncheon will be held Dec. 13, 2018 at the Double Tree by Hilton in Alsip. The Illinois Fire Chiefs Association 2018 Administrative Professional of the Year will be announced during the luncheon. I look forward to seeing everyone there.

The 2019 Annual Conference will be held April 24-26 at the Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa in Galena, IL. IFSAP is fortunate to have some outstanding speakers lined up. IFSI Director, Colonel Royal Mortenson will present "Leadership Tenets for the Individual: How to be the Best Leader You Can." Professional speakers include Bobbe White and Desi Payne who will present "Laughter for the Health of It", and insights for "Stress and Leadership". In choosing speakers, the IFSAP Board looks for topics that are fire service related and topics that will help members professionally and personally.

The Executive Support Program is a 13-week program held in odd-numbered calendar years and designed to meet the needs of the members who are willing to become more effective in their role as support personnel. The class is recognized

by the Office of the State Fire Marshal. The classes are taught by both chief officers and local attorneys. It's an excellent program and one your support personnel should attend.

As President of IFSAP, I would like to thank all the exceptional ladies and their chiefs for providing assistance and support during the year.

Janice Gumprecht
IFSAP President - Bartlett FPD

IL Firefighters Association

The Illinois Firefighters Association is asking all Fire Service organizations to jump on this very important campaign. The GO GLEAN CLEAN campaign is designed to get the awareness out to all Firefighters about the use of the Best Practices to prevent cancer. Cancer is one of the leading health issues that face our firefighters. Our exposure to high levels of cancer-causing carcinogens and not protecting ourselves properly have raised the risk of cancer in all firefighters. With the help from the International Fire Chiefs Association and the National Volunteer Fire Council and the other Fire Service leaders around this nation, they have put together the Lavender Ribbon Report. I highly recommend that all fire departments and their personnel read this report and implement those Best Practices. It was released in August of the year addressing the eleven actions to mitigate the risk of cancer. It is everyone's duty and obligation to promote this vital information out to all the Fire Service in Illinois and around this nation. Let's all take our Firefighters and their families well-being serious. Smokey the Bear stated "Only You Can Prevent Forest Fires" we must say "Only You Can Help Prevent Firefighter Cancer" so get on the bandwagon and GO GREEN CLEAN.



John Swan
President

Continued on page 23

Around the State

Continued from page 22

MABAS Illinois

I've had the opportunity to serve as the MABAS Chief Executive Officer since late last year after the retirement of Chief Jay Reardon. Before that I was the MABAS Section Chief of Administration after retiring from the Arlington Heights Fire Department as fire chief after a 40-year career. MABAS exists to assist member agencies and fire chiefs in providing timely aid to resolve whatever situation a department faces. This year MABAS celebrates its 50-year anniversary. What started as a small group of fire departments and districts in the northwest suburbs of Chicago to provide a pre-planned mutual aid structure under a common agreement has grown to over 1,100-member agencies in 69 Divisions in all Illinois counties. Today MABAS supports over 90 divisional special Technical Rescue, Hazardous Materials and



Water Rescue response teams with initial training support funding and equipment. MABAS also supports the 240-person Illinois Task Force 1 Urban Search and Rescue Team based at the Wheeling, IL MABAS Readiness Center. These teams are supported with Federal Homeland Security and Urban Area Security grants distributed through MABAS.

A 15-member group from the IL TF-1 USAR Team specially trained in swift water rescue deployed to North Carolina after that state requested aid from Illinois in response to the massive flooding following Hurricane Florence. The Team spent 11 days in Riegelwood, North Carolina which is located northwest of Wilmington along the Cape Fear River. There they supported the rescue activities of the Acme-Delco-Riegelwood FPD and the community of Riegelwood. The Team made 15 rescues of victims trapped in flood waters, provided humanitarian aid support to the residents, assisted in searching and repairing homes and provided generator power to gas stations so residents could fuel their vehicles. The Team members are specially

trained firefighters from departments throughout the State who are released from their regular duties to participate in these types of deployments. Our Facebook page (MABAS-Illinois) has several videos and photographs of the Team's efforts in North Carolina.

In closing I would like to invite everyone to attend the 2019 MABAS Command and Dispatch Summit to be held February 25, 2019 to March 1, 2019 at the Bloomington/Normal Marriott Hotel in Normal, IL. We are currently finalizing the list of speakers and presenters who will be addressing emerging issues facing fire department leadership and dispatchers along with lessons learned from fire departments and dispatch centers from recent major incidents. Please watch our website, www.mabas-il.org, for further details and registration information.

Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions or suggestions.

Glenn Ericksen
CEO MABAS Illinois

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