



IN THE NEWS

Good News for Vergennes, Illinois

The **Vergennes Fire Department** is an all-volunteer operation located in Jackson County that services a population 300 across 300 square miles. The Department operates on a budget of \$8,000 and had one pumper fail the pump test and another with mechanical issues. The two departments connected through a classified post on the OSFM Equipment Exchange Program which ultimately led to a gifted 1990 E-One Custom pumper by the Williamsville Fire Protection District to Vergennes



Spring Bay Fire Protection District calls it paying it forward. On July 23, they bidded a farewell to their 1987 Pierce Dash pumper they purchased new. Engine 422 served them well over the years but replaced by another and posted for sale. Without any offers, the District decided to donate the engine to the QEM Fire District in Jersey County, southwest Illinois.



More Good News



The **Illinois Fire Service Institute (IFSI)** has officially launched a new fire engine into the IFSI apparatus fleet. The engine is the first new apparatus purchased by IFSI since 1992. It was purchased through the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG). It will allow IFSI to expand and further develop training efforts with the accessibility of a modern pumper engine.

IFSI Director, Royal Mortenson, states, "The new engine represents a significant increase in our ability to continue to deliver high quality training utilizing a modern engine and pump."

The new apparatus is unique to the IFSI fleet as it is painted in Illini orange and blue colors. The distinctive color palate highlights the Institute's relationship with the University of Illinois campus. In addition to usage for daily training activities, the engine will support University activities. The engine appeared in the first campus event during the University Homecoming Parade on Friday.

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IN MEMORY



John P. "Mac" McCastland passed away on October 1, 2019. He served the citizens of Oak Lawn as a member of the Fire Department from 1964-1993. He retired as the Fire Chief in 1993. After Oak Lawn, "Mac" served the Orland Fire Protection District as Deputy Administrator and then Fire Chief until 2000. From 2000 through 2006 he served as Deputy Chief for the Homer Twp. Fire Protection District.

Chief McCastland taught for the University of Illinois Fire Service Institute (IFSI) for more than 30 years, as well as holding teaching responsibilities at a number of local fire schools, a community college and the Chicago Fire Department. He contributed significantly to curriculum development at the state level with the Office of the State Fire Marshal and for numerous other programs throughout Illinois, with a more recent focus on Statewide Weapons of Mass Destruction (SWMD) training. Chief McCastland also participated in a number of research projects to advance the knowledge base of Illinois firefighters. Chief McCastland's military service includes being a Cpl. E-4 with the United States Marine Corps. He was decorated as a combat veteran, in the Republic of Vietnam and having survived the "TET" offensive of 1968. He served with the Golf Battery, Third Battalion, Eleventh Marine Regiment.



SIDNEY – George "Earl" Bennett (59) passed away at home on August 28, 2019. Earl is survived by his wife of 39 years, Alana and four grown children. As the 10-year Fire Chief for Sidney Fire Department and decades-long village supervisor and public servant, Earl was well-known around the county for his Southern "twang" on the radio and his warm smile when he saw a familiar face on a scene. Earl's legacy

is one of quiet service to others. He was never one to brag or seek attention for the work that he did. He would respond to fire department or village maintenance calls at any hour of the day or night, sacrificing personal or family time to serve those in need.



MOMENCE – Dennis C. Sherwood, (73) of Momence passed on Sept. 29, 2019. He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Kathryn, two children their spouses and seven grandchildren. Dennis served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War where he received the Purple Heart Commendation, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam

Service Medal, Combat Infantryman's Badge, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Two Overseas Bars, Air Medal, Bronze Star Medal and Good Conduct Medal (1st Award). He was a member of the Momence Fire Protection District from 1968 to 1987, where he retired as captain and served as the local fire inspector. He was appointed as a trustee of the Momence Fire Protection District on Dec. 11, 2007 and served to the current time.



BEECHER – Bill Waterman (87), Bill served the Beecher Fire Protection District for 40 years and retired as a mechanic at Allis Chalmers after 29 years, worked at Village of Beecher for many years. He was also a U.S. Navy Veteran. Rest in peace Sir.



BRACEVILLE – Louis Michael Naretto (88), passed away October 6, 2019. Naretto was a Veteran of the United States Army having served during the Korean Conflict. Active and devout member of the St. Lawrence Catholic Church in South Wilmington, IL. Louie served on numerous boards including Grundy County, and the Gardner and Braceville Fire Protection Districts. While Louie was always an agricultural farmer, he was also a dairy farmer for numerous years. When he wasn't busy farming, he enjoyed carpentry. He was known to build just about anything and offered his craft to many family and friends. He always looked forward to drinking coffee and getting the latest news at the Dibble Coffee Club with his friend, Barney Vigna.



MCHENRY – Nunda Rural Fire Protection District mourns the loss of two long time members in recent months.

Donald L. Lechner (83) passed away on August 21, 2019 who served the District for a total of 32 years, 29 as President, after a 23-year career with the Des Plaines Fire Department.

Paul D. Linak Sr. (80), of Crystal Lake IL passed away September 9, 2019 at Northside Hospital, FL. He was a member of the Woodstock and retired Deputy chief of Nunda Rural Fire Department.



Fire Service Memorial
Saturday, June 20, 2020
9:00 am, Peoria Civic Center

In conjunction with the Annual Conference, IAFFPD presents a special dedication to honor fallen firefighters and other members of the Illinois fire service who have passed away of the past year.

The event welcomes family and fire department members to attend, share and remembers. To include a person on the necrology and program please be sure to notify IAFFPD.