



THE RURAL HITCH

FOURTH QUARTER 2015 /
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11-11-15 Armont Inn Fire, Campton, NH



By Chief Daniel Defosses, Campton-Thornton Fire-Rescue

At 0434, NH 9-1-1 and Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Dispatch began receiving calls reporting a building fire at 311 Ellsworth Hill Road in Campton, the Armont Inn. When 35C1 signed on, responding with LRMFA, they indicated multiple calls had been received, reporting a well-involved structure. A second alarm was requested, due to the size of the building and the remote location.

Campton Police arrived on scene moments later and were heard advising Plymouth Dispatch that there was a vehicle in the driveway and the officer was trying to rouse the resident. Moments later, the officer advised he was attempting to force entry to the structure.

ARMONT INN – CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

We READY? We SET? ARE WE EITHER OR NEITHER?

By Deputy Chief Billy Goldfeder, Loveland-Symmes Fire Dept., Ohio

Did you hear about the man whose jet ski broke down in NYC's Jamaica Bay a few years ago? So he swam three miles to JFK airport, and then was able to climb an eight-foot "security" fence and ran across two runways...and he was not detected until he approached an airline employee for help. Just a year before that, another man was able to swim through Jamaica Bay and scale that very same fence before making his way – totally undetected – to the airport's jet fuel storage area. As you may know, JFK, LaGuardia, and Newark Int'l Airports are run by the very powerful and pretty much self-supervising NY/NJ Port Authority.

The system that was supposed to catch those "intruders" is called the "PIDS" project, using motion detectors and cameras, and is supposed to make JFK impregnable to both trespassers and potential terrorists who approach by water. It's long been plagued by delays and cost over-runs. **It did not work.**

One article had one of the current bosses at the PA blaming one of the past bosses for the problem. **The buck stops, er, ummmm...over there. Forget that.**

ARMONT INN – CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

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From the Chief...

By Chief James R. Hayes



To use a quote from a Disney movie, “The winds of change are blowing.” Even though this is a combined two quarter newsletter, there are lots of things that have changed and are continuing to. Personnel is one area of change. Matt O’Neill has resigned from a being a full-time dispatcher in order to pursue his goal of being a paramedic. He has stayed with LRMFA as a *per diem* dispatcher. We currently have five people engaged in training to become *per diem* dispatchers. Completion of their training will bring us to a full roster of 12 *per diem* dispatchers.

Periodic review of each department’s run cards are recommended to ensure that the tables are serving the area as expected and changes of designated apparatus can be made. Several departments have received new apparatus over the past six months resulting in enhancements to those local departments’ capabilities. Several of these units are either tankers or have large water capability that can be beneficial for mutual aid responses. To ensure receiving apparatus with special capabilities such as large volume water those units need to be designated by unit number on a run card.

LRMFA is continuing to move forward with some radio infrastructure upgrades. A Homeland Security Grant was received in 2014 to connect to and expand the microwave system built by the Belknap County Sheriff’s Office. That project will be completed by the end of June 2016. This will give LRMFA a redundant connectivity path to the transmitter on Mt. Belknap as well as control of remote transmitters in Meredith, Franklin, and Bristol.

The Town of Bristol and LRMFA are jointly working on a project to replace the existing wooden antenna support structure on Hemp Hill Road with a new 80-foot metal tower. This will increase the height of the existing antennas as well as allow for future expansion needs. This project should be completed by late fall.

LRMFA has entered into a contract with FairPoint Communications to establish a fiber optic connectivity system between the Communications Center and our remote transmitter sites. This project should be completed in early 2017. It will provide a redundant control path to each of the remote sites and enable individual control of the secondary radio at the site. This will allow for the direct monitoring and recording of operational frequencies during incidents as well as future capabilities of data transmission for equipment monitoring and simulcast system upgrades.

We are working with King Fisher Fire Alarms Inc. on the establishment of a radio box monitoring system to replace the system that was functionally destroyed by the collapse of our antenna tower on Mt. Belknap due to ice loading. Four temporary

FROM THE CHIEF — CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

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is published quarterly by
Lakes Region
Mutual Fire Aid Association

Chief
James R. Hayes

Editor
Debbie Kardaseski

Email all submissions to:
debbie@debbiekgraphics.com

Many of the responders could see a glow in the sky. LRMFA updated that the PD had accounted for all the residents. Upon arrival, the only known occupant was in the back of the Campton PD cruiser, with Corporal Foss advising he needed to be evaluated. The Corporal indicated that he, along with a neighbor, assisted the resident out of the structure.

Heavy amounts of fire were noted in an approximately 100 ft. x 50 ft., 2-story building. Smoke was beginning to push from the attic vents on the attached “L.” A third alarm was requested at that time. 35 Engine 3 arrived a short time later, laying a 4" supply line from Orchard Street to the scene. The first crew off 35 Engine 3 pulled a 2½ inch line and began attacking the fire from the exterior. Moments later, 35 Engine 1 arrived and attached to the supply line. Waterville Valley Engine 1 was sent to US Route 3 near Chesley’s to establish water supply. 35 Ambulance 1 evaluated the patient, who refused transport.

A crew from 35 Engine 1 was sent into the structure and made it to the second floor of the main residence. They conducted a quick search and found no other occupants. The smoke from the attic vents in the “house” section began to push and become dark. The interior crew was making good progress; however, the fire was intensifying above them in the attic and also began to push through the first floor. Chief Mardin from Holderness Fire Rescue arrived and was given the task of overseeing operations. We had a quick consult and agreed the fire was beginning to intensify faster than we would be able to suppress it. At that time, I made the decision to pull crews from the building and go defensive. 35 Engine 4 arrived and experienced a mechanical issue with the hand throttle, but was able to pump off its water before being taken out of service.

Woodstock Ladder 1 arrived and was positioned in front of the house section. The ladder was raised and at that point, the bulk of the roof had collapsed and burned off. The ladder was raised and ladder pipe positioned to hit the base of the fire from above, as we were having difficulty hitting the base of the fire from the outside. Crews also worked in tandem to try and slow the spread of the fire in the house section from the A and C sides of the building with hose lines. A fourth alarm was requested to maintain adequate water supply, and LRMFA was asked to build a fifth alarm run card, should we need it.

Deputy Chief Chris Dolloff from Bristol arrived and was assigned water supply and organized the incoming engines and tankers, as well as oversaw the fill site at Chesley’s. Their operations



were put onto a separate fireground channel. Water supply was a struggle, as there was difficulty filling trucks fast enough at the fill site and the narrow road width. There was difficulty turning trucks around at the offload site. The nature of the structure being on a long hill also contributed to the difficulty of getting water to the scene.

Lakes Region Deputy Coordinator Beland arrived on scene and we had a quick consult about setting up a dump tank, due to the needed volume of water flow. Unfortunately, there were none on scene or en-route. DC Beland then went to assess a nearby pond on Orchard Street. Due to accessibility issues and overgrowth, it was quickly ruled out. He then went to assist Deputy Dolloff with water supply. The cover trucks were called upon to establish an additional fill-site and add capacity to the tanker shuttle.

At one point the Woodstock Ladder was moved because of the high heat coming from the building. Shortly after, 35 Engine 3 began to leak water from the pump area so, as a precaution, hose-lines were systematically moved from 35 Engine 3 to the Woodstock Ladder, making it the “attack truck.”

About two hours into the event, the fire was mostly knocked down. Crews began to overhaul the scene. Crews were released slowly over the next few hours, tankers were held to continue supplying water for overhaul. Depart-





ments were brought in from Lincoln and Woodstock to Tilton-Northfield and Wentworth. Overall there were 21 Engines/Tankers on scene and an estimated 60 Firefighters.

The next morning, the NH Fire Marshall's Office and ATF arrived to assist with the investigation. They spent several hours combing through the rubble, but were unable to find any evidence that lead to the cause of the fire. It is believed that the cause of the fire was electrical in nature, but was unable to be confirmed.

The owner did not have insurance, as he could not afford to upgrade the structure's electrical system to keep his policy. The loss was estimated at \$305,000. The homeowner suffered minor injuries, but is said to be doing well, and has returned to his second home in Florida.

The following were involved in the incident: LRMFA C2, Campton-Thornton, Alexandria, Ashland, Bridgewater, Bristol, Center Harbor, Holderness, Lincoln, Meredith (1 engine to the scene and 1 to cover), Meredith EMS (Cover Campton-Thornton and Waterville Valley), New Hampton, Plymouth, Rumney, Sanbornton, Tilton-Northfield, Waterville Valley, Wentworth, Woodstock. 🚒



receiver sites are being upgraded to permanent sites to receive the radio alarm signal and transmit it to a Central Station monitoring facility. LRMFA will maintain an alarm monitoring terminal to receive the alarms simultaneously with the Central Station but will no longer be the owner/operator of the receiving system. This project should be complete by late summer.

A question was raised at a Board of Directors meeting last fall regarding having the dispatchers provide the address of an incident at the time of the pre-alert. As with all operational policy issues this matter was referred to the Standardization Committee for review and recommendation. The Committee reviewed the issue in relation to the policy in place at the time and gave consideration to how calls are processed with the new CAD system and responder safety. It was the recommendation of the Standardization Committee that no address information be provided at the time of the pre-alert. The call type and address information is available at the time of the pre-alert but neither has been verified by the dispatcher by talking to the caller at that time. Speaking to the caller enables the dispatcher to verify the address, call type, and determine potential risks for responders. When the incident is dispatched those items have been verified to the best of the dispatcher's ability. The Board of Director's voted to approve the policy with the addition of language to prohibit the inclusion of address information being provided with the pre-alert.

A reminder that LRMFA has the ability to provide SCBA face piece fit testing for member departments at a maximum cost of \$150.00. I encourage departments that are not utilizing this service to consider starting to provide the face piece fit testing for your members. If you are interested contact Deputy Beland at 603-528-9111.

As always we strive to serve you well as you serve the public well.

Stay Safe!! 🚒

So what's this got to do with Firefighters? Another wonderful lesson learned.

You can spend all the money in the world on whatever, but if it doesn't work, you have essentially pized the taxpayers money away and failed to meet the goal. But forget that – in this case – if the “jet skier” turned out to be a bad guy, he could have killed a bunch of people. And Cops. And Firefighters. Stretching the imagination? Never forget.

So now break this down to the most basic level of what Fire Departments do...a FD's mission is to be ready. Ready. For whatever. Just be ready.

When we are ready, things usually work out pretty well. When we aren't, the endings often suck.

Ready for what? Whatever. Whatever someone could call 9-1-1 and say they need fixed really fast. Their bedroom is on fire. Their uncle is choking. That green stuff is leaking. People are trapped in a car. They smell gas. Their home is full of smoke – on the 19th floor.

Being ready doesn't mean sitting around waiting for the run. Ready means using all the time we possibly can before that run comes in to prepare for the run. Which run? Any run. See above.

Be it a staffed or unstaffed call or volunteer firehouse, being ready takes on numerous levels – but since the above JFK story is about EQUIPMENT being ready, we'll focus on that.

EQUIPMENT being ready. Checking Equipment. One of the most bs'ed tasks we are responsible for. Thermal imagers, JAWS, nozzles, radios, tools, bunker gear. Whatever you may need when they call you for help. And while some in our business like to just “check off” the box and not check anything – “because there were no runs since the last time it was checked” – doing that is pure laziness, dangerous, and criminal.

There was a dwelling fire a few years ago when the Captain and a FF pulled a handline off their engine to start hitting the fire. The problem was that it was missing the nozzle. They figured that out once they got to the back door to make entry. Now what? The “thumb on the hose” won't work real well like it does on the garden house, Sherlock. Another time a crew was brought in for their thermal imager – and the batteries were dead when they got inside. No, no good. No doubt you have stories of your own. You, us, me – we all do.

In firehouses doing numerous fires – the “good companies” automatically develop the need to INSURE the saw will defi-

nately start. The hoseline absolutely has a nozzle. The TIC is charged up and working. The radios work. It's because the repetitive nature makes it almost second nature. The Firefighters “get it” – and the bosses do as well. Same with busy rescue companies. Busy EMS units, etc.

The challenge is when we are not so busy (which is pretty much any firehouse, at various times) or when we use a tool infrequently (as is the case with so many tools we carry). It's easy to “blow off” the need to insure “that” tool will work each time, every time without fail. Imagine you and your crew make a run and whatever is needed to make a difference doesn't work because it wasn't checked. Maybe some members are trapped and you and your tools are expected to get them out. Oops. You transmit a MAYDAY and you forgot to check your radio batteries before having coffee. The boss needs your crew to vent the roof immediately and your saw is out of fuel. You pull up on a car fire and the booster tank wasn't filled from the last run.

Whatever it is, check it. Make sure it works. Make sure it can be counted on. It's not easy. It's easier to watch *Family Guy* or play *Angry Birds*. Make sure “whatever” works, so that when it's needed – it does work. “Whatever” is any piece of equipment on any apparatus you may have to ride on. Every tool. Every battery. Every switch. “Whatever.”

The Port Authority of NY/NJ “stumbled” on the fact that their catrillion dollar taxpayer-bought equipment failed miserably. Twice. Luckily it wasn't a bad guy that helped them find out. At least not this time. Thanks to the Port Authority of NY/NJ we are reminded of that stuff needs to be checked. Thoroughly checked. Checked as in having an “official someone” walk across the “protected” areas and see if the thing works. Nothing is “self” testing – forget that. USE the equipment in the way it's supposed to be used to make sure it works. Flow the nozzle. Start the saw. Transmit the radio. Whatever. The next to last thing any of us want, is to find out it doesn't work. The last thing you want is to find out is that it won't work when it's you that's counting on it.

Ready...Set...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Billy Goldfeder, Deputy Chief of the Loveland-Symmes FD in Ohio, has been a firefighter since 1973 and a chief since 1982. He, along with Gordon Graham, run the world's most visited firefighter safety and survival website, www.FireFighterCloseCalls.com. He can be reached at chgold151@gmail.com and on Twitter @billygoldfeder. 📧

2016 Rural Hitch Schedule

SECOND QUARTER ISSUE

Deadline: Monday, March 28

THIRD QUARTER ISSUE

Deadline: Monday, September 19

FOURTH QUARTER ISSUE

Deadline: Monday, December 26

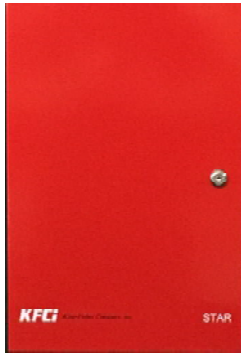
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If you would like help writing an article or need photos taken, please give Debbie Kardaseski a call at 603-344-9812.

Remember: This newsletter belongs to all members of Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid. It's a wonderful opportunity to get your information out to all departments within the system as well as over 100 other interested people. And it's FREE to members!



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Four Skills For Better Radio Communication

By Robert Avsec

LIKE ANY OTHER FIREGROUND OPERATION, RADIO COMMUNICATION TAKES FORETHOUGHT AND PRACTICE IN REALISTIC SETTINGS

The portable radio is the single most versatile piece of equipment that a firefighter or officer can carry into a hazardous situation.

Why do I believe that? Because portable radios are the primary means for:

- All responders to begin becoming informed and educated about the incident once the first firefighter or officer arrives on the scene;
- The incident commander to execute command and control activities;
- Officers and firefighters deployed to tactical assignments in the hazard area to communicate their observations and progress to the IC and to receive updated orders; and
- Personnel in the hazard area back to talk to the IC should there be a Mayday event.

For all of the above types of communication to work, however, it is imperative that all portable radios on the scene are in good working order and that all personnel are skilled and practiced in their operation.

KNOW YOUR HARDWARE

Your life may one day depend upon knowing which button or knob on your portable radio to use — and you might only have one chance to get it right. Using the incredible capabilities of today's portable radios is a critical skill, and like any other skill, if you don't use it, you lose it.

Practice often using your radio's different features while wearing firefighting gloves, especially with those features that you don't routinely use. If that day comes when you really need a particular feature of your radio, chances are you'll be in a firefight, so prepare.

Maintain the radio and its battery according to the manufacturer's recommendations. All of the major radio manufacturers have gone to great lengths to produce operating manuals and sup-

porting media. Take advantage of these to build your body of knowledge about your radio.

Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for charging the batteries. Label the batteries and keep a battery log; in the log, track each battery's life cycle. Replace a battery when it no longer holds a charge for the recommended length of time.

Carbon particles from smoke, dirty water, sheetrock dust and other fire-ground goo can quickly compromise radio functions. Compressed air cleaners, like those used to clean computer keyboards and other electronic equipment, are great for keeping microphone and speaker ports clear of debris.

Pay particular attention to contact points for remote microphones and clean according to the manufacturer's recommendations. An ordinary pencil eraser is a good tool for removing corrosion safely, so keep those contacts shiny for maximum performance.

Remember Murphy's Law. If something can go wrong, it will go wrong and usually at the most inopportune time. Carefully review and practice troubleshooting guidance provided by the manufacturer. Your ability to work through a radio malfunction on scene may be critical to your safety and that of others.

BASIC RADIO PRACTICES

Learn and master the following components of radio communication under non-stressful conditions. Doing so will greatly enhance your portable radio communication, especially when the heat is on.

Before speaking, formulate what information is being communicated and put the information in a standardized reporting template. If your organization has a standardized format for radio communications, learn it and use it consistently. An example of such a format is: [Who are you calling?] "Command [Who are you?] from Engine 26. [Where are you?] My crew is on stairwell, advancing to second floor with attack line. [CPR (conditions, progress and resources)]. Heavy heat and smoke conditions. Holding our position. Need ventilation of second floor before we can continue."

Often, ICs are overwhelmed by excess information on the radio. This is where consistent use of a standard radio-reporting format will help determine if information needs to be transmitted. Develop your radio discipline by asking yourself: Has anything changed from my last CPR report? If face-to-face communication is possible between members of a crew and the information is not needed by the IC, don't get on the radio.

Emergency scenes are heavy with noise pollution from running apparatus and portable power equipment like saws, ventilation fans, etc. Your radio might also be exposed to rain, snow or water from firefighting operations. Minimize microphone exposure by practicing shield, move and talk — shield the microphone using your hand, the bill of your helmet or your turnout coat; move away from the source of exposure, even if you can only turn your back to the source; talk directly into the microphone as much as possible, and keep the microphone 1 to 2 inches away from your mouth. If you do not have a speaking diaphragm or voice port on your facepiece, position the microphone against your lower jawbone on the skirt of the facepiece.

When speaking into a microphone use a loud, clear and controlled voice — avoid shouting. When excited, our speech is often both louder and faster. When this happens, our radio transmissions can be unintelligible and may require the IC to ask for a rebroadcast, and thus more radio traffic on the channel. If your intended receiver is consistently asking you to repeat radio communication, you probably need to work on this.

These skills can improve your radio transmissions quality, but what about the communication that comes your way? All of that noise pollution can certainly diminish your ability to hear the information that others are trying to get to you via your radio.

HEARING AID

The introduction of the remote microphone for portable radios, or collar mic, has greatly helped to overcome this chal-

lenge, but we lose that advantage when we don't keep the remote mic in close proximity to our ear.

Another useful adjunct is a set of foam earplugs; these can reduce the level of high-frequency noise from engines, power saws, operating hose lines, etc., and enable radio communications to be more clearly understood.

I found this to be true as a command officer. After I'd declared the incident under control, I would leave the noise-controlled environment of my command vehicle to do some managing by walking around. My earplugs enabled me to clearly hear all radio traffic coming over my remote mic that was clipped to the collar of my turnout coat.

Yet, technical issues can arise. You need to recognize technical problems and take corrective action to improve communications. Do not tolerate an inoperable radio when you are in the hazard area. If you cannot communicate with the incident commander, it's an accountability and safety issue. Get it fixed or get out.

RADIO POSITION

The optimal position for a portable radio transmission is at head height with the antenna in a vertical position. Not exactly the position you may find yourself when involved in fire combat operations, right?

Place your radio in the radio pocket of your turnout coat while you're crawling along the floor and this is what you have. What's the problem? The radio's antenna is far from its optimal transmitting position and some of the transmitted energy is absorbed by your body.

The result is a poor radiation pattern and a reduction in range of the radio. One solution is to move to a position where you can sit up and get the radio closer to its optimal transmitting position.

Many users do not use a radio pocket or radio case. While this certainly puts the radio in a slightly better transmitting position, it also exposes the radio to heat, smoke, water and particulates. Left unprotected, the radio may fail to operate when you most need it.

Radio cases with shoulder straps provide little protection and are an entanglement hazard when worn on the exterior of turnouts.

Good radio communications are critical for safe, efficient and effective operations on the emergency scene. How many times has poor incident communications been cited as a significant factor in NIOSH investigations of firefighter fatalities on the fire-ground?

Follow the advice I've provided here and I firmly believe that you'll have taken significant steps to minimize poor communication, and in turn, set up you and your team for fireground success.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Battalion Chief Robert Avsec (Ret.) served with the Chesterfield (Va.) Fire & EMS Department for 26 years. He was an active instructor for fire, EMS, and hazardous materials courses at the local, state, and federal levels, which included more than 10 years with the National Fire Academy. Chief Avsec earned his bachelor of science degree from the University of Cincinnati and his master of science degree in executive fire service leadership from Grand Canyon University. He is a 2001 graduate of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program. Since his retirement in 2007, he has continued to be a life-long learner working in both the private and public sectors to further develop his "management sciences mechanic" credentials. He makes his home near Charleston, W.Va. Contact Robert at Robert.Avsec@FireRescue 1.com



9-11 Memorial Stair Climb

Three members of the Campton-Thornton Fire-Rescue Department participated in the 9-11 Memorial Stair Climb on September 16, 2015 in Manchester. Shown above are, left to right, Firefighter Cory Hilton, Firefighter/AEMT Tim Muldoon, Lt. Daniel Custance, and Firefighter Cyle Moore.



LRGHealthcare

AL's Breakfast

Con-Ed for EMS and Nursing

2016 SCHEDULE

Wednesday	May 4th	Stewart's Ambulance
Wednesday	June 1	Laconia
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Wednesday	September 7th	New Hampton
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Wednesday	November 2nd	Laconia
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All Breakfasts will be from 0900-1100hrs

Any Question please contact Shawn Riley 524-6881or
smriley@lrgh.org

Regionalizing of Fire Services — Laconia and Belmont

By Laconia Fire Chief Ken Erickson

Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid (LRMFA) is one the oldest and largest, as well as most efficient regionalized dispatch centers in New Hampshire (and probably the northeast). Besides dispatching services, we also share haz-mat teams and swift water teams. Mutual Aid is probably the oldest form of regionalizing in the country. Outside of the Northeast most governments operate at the county level, including fire services. Look at Prince George, Fairfax, Los Angeles, Broward, and Orange counties just to name a few — all highly successful fire services.

It has been my opinion for my entire career (now 36 years), that fire and EMS services, in order to be more efficient and effective, need to regionalize or consolidate (I refer to just career or combination departments). I have stated this time and again during budget deliberations. Politicians keep asking us to curb or cut spending, and yet requests for services continue to increase. I have presented budgets to Councils and Town Meetings for 24 years and the common theme is always “How can we control or lower expenses?” The only method that works and at the same time continues to provide quality services is consolidation. There are limited savings in the beginning, mostly through reduction in the number of fire chiefs (salaries and benefits can easily exceed \$120,000 per chief). Obviously there are no savings if the agencies are unpaid with no benefits. The real savings come in the future through capital purchases.

The first step for most of us is automatic aid. This is a form of consolidation. I started automatic aid in 1994 in Kingston, MA. When I came to Laconia I started automatic aid with then-Chief Mike Mooney in 2004. Chief Parenti and Belmont signed on around 2012. We are now averaging 22 firefighters to a building fire in Laconia within 15 minutes of the initial call. For me, it is all about improving service and higher levels of safety for our firefighters.

Last year I was approached by a neighboring Chief to talk about consolidation. Three other Chiefs were invited to the meeting. Two of these departments were concerned about lack of resources and the inability to handle multiple calls. The discussions did not involve politicians. But we all agreed it was the best way to move forward. A point to remember is that fire chiefs cannot consolidate services. That decisions falls to elected officials. If you want to consolidate, you must invite the elected officials to the table.

In January 2015 the Belmont Chief announced he was leaving. When it became public, I approached the City Manager and asked if he wanted to think about regionalizing as now was the perfect opportunity. He contacted the Town Administrator in Belmont. She thought it was worth talking about and contacted the Chair of the Selectboard. A meeting was held in Laconia the next week with the above people, where I explained my thoughts about the process. Everyone thought this idea had merit. Belmont officials met in private to discuss this and the entire Board felt it had merit. Chief Beattie and I then met with the Town of Belmont to further talk about the concept (I had stated all along that this was a 2-for-1 deal.

Assistant Chief Beattie had to be included in the agreement). This meeting was, in essence, an interview.

Belmont voted in favor and then the Laconia City Manager brought this to the City Council. Up to this point only the Mayor was involved. The Council voted 100 percent in favor. Belmont was notified and they in turn called the deputy chief to a non-public meeting to tell him about the agreement. He was then told to schedule a department meeting for the next day. All but one person attended (who was in Florida). The Selectboard and Administrator met with the members and answered questions. At this point they introduced Chief Beattie and myself to the members. We talked for another half hour about the agreement. A senior member then suggested that the Selectboard could leave as the conversation was now operational. We adjourned to the kitchen and spent the next two hours talking about the process. There was some concern, as I suspected there would be, about changes and I stated to the group that we had worked together often over the past 15 years and most of us knew each other;

there would be no changes forthcoming.

Officially, legal documents had to be written and voted on by both communities. This took another three weeks. The agreement became public in mid-February. There were Belmont elections and deliberative sessions coming up in March. Interestingly, there was no public concern or questions raised. The comments I received were all very positive. Throughout the process I had made it very clear that regionalization was not a cost cutting measure; it had to focus on improving services. In the future it could save capital costs.

There are five methods to regionalization. We have started at the first type, which is administrative sharing — one chief/two departments. My goal, and I believe the two governments



involved as well, is to go to the next level of full consolidation. The big savings in full consolidation is a reduction in capital equipment, reduction in cost of future purchases, improved purchasing power, improved resources within the organization, improved training, and better utilization of resources. I truly believe this is the only way for the smaller segments of the fire service to survive. Look at North Hudson Regional Fire and Rescue in New Jersey. Five densely populated communities consolidated into one premier fire organization. I will say that not every community can consolidate. The larger agency must have the resources (command staff) available so the chief can cover two (or three or four) departments. As Chief of Laconia and Belmont Fire Departments I am now responsible for 25,000 residents, 13,000 living units, 56 square miles of area, 52 full-time, and 16 part-

time employees — the firefighters combined are responding to 5,500 emergency calls, and a 6-million-dollar budget. These numbers are by no means insurmountable to manage. There are at least five departments of this size in the state with one chief.

The Town of Belmont will now pay the City of Laconia 25% of the total costs of the fire chief administration costs — approximately \$78,000. Belmont will save from no longer paying health insurance for one employee and a decrease in retirement payments. They have already saved a capital item as they no longer need a new chief vehicle (\$40,000 was approved at Town Meeting). Laconia gains by increasing revenue to the amount of \$78,000; however, they will pay Assistant Chief Beattie and I a larger salary and therefore a greater amount towards

retirement. Final note, several fire departments have been consolidated for decades. Sharing a chief is a little unusual. Many school districts are regional. Many areas of the state are served by County Sheriffs or State Police. I suggest that consolidation should happen to other government agencies as well. Does every town need a Police Chief or Public Works Director? Probably not. In the end the public will decide if they like this arrangement. I am very confident this arrangement will work because the two governments support it, but, most importantly because of the caliber of people working in both Departments.

Editor's Note: This discussion of regionalization is to clarify the status of an arrangement between the town of Belmont and the city of Laconia. 🚒

*New Hampstead, NH
E-One Pumper*

*Orford, NH - Navistar 4x4
1500 Gallon Pumper*

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Check us both out on Facebook! visit us online for details.

Application Period Now Open for 2016 Globe PPE Giveaway

Globe, DuPont Protection Technologies (DuPont), and the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) have teamed up for the fifth year to provide new gear to volunteer fire departments in need. The application period for the **2016 Globe Gear Giveaway** is now open, and eligible departments can apply for four sets of CLASSIX® turnout gear for their members. Thirteen department awards will be made, for a total of 52 sets of gear. **Applications are due by June 1, 2016.**

“The Globe Gear Giveaway is helping fill a critical need for fire departments across the U.S. and Canada. As demonstrated by the amount of applications we receive each year, volunteer departments are constantly looking for ways to keep their firefighters safe while operating on tight budgets,” says NVFC Chairman Kevin D. Quinn. “On behalf of the NVFC and volunteer fire departments nationwide, I am truly grateful to Globe and DuPont for helping more and more departments provide their personnel with compliant turnout gear.”

The Globe Gear Giveaway launched in 2012 to celebrate Globe’s 125th anniversary. Globe wanted to give back to the fire service and enhance the safety and readiness of first responders. To date, the program has provided 299 sets of new turnout gear to 56 departments in need to help them improve the safety and protection of their firefighters. The first 500 applicants also receive a one-year department membership to the NVFC, compliments of Globe.

To be eligible to apply for four sets of Globe PPE, departments must meet the following requirements:

- Be all-volunteer or mostly-volunteer (over 50 percent).
- Serve a population of 25,000 or less.

- Be located in the U.S. or Canada and legally organized under state/province law.
- Demonstrate a need for the gear.
- Department or person applying must be a member of the NVFC. To help struggling departments meet the membership criteria, Globe will provide a complimentary NVFC Membership to the first 500 applicants.

“Globe is honored to give back to some of the many volunteer fire departments with limited resources by providing the most advanced turnout gear,” said Rob Freese, Senior VP of Marketing at Globe Manufacturing Company. “We’re grateful for the thousands of volunteer firefighters who protect our communities every day. They deserve the best personal protection to ensure their own safety.”

“DuPont is proud to be working together with Globe to support the NVFC again this year through this much needed gear donation program,” says Christine Christmas, North American Marketing Manager, DuPont Protection Technologies. “With our strong commitment to help protect our protectors we want to ensure that they have the right gear to focus on their job and their communities. Working with Globe we can make the best for the best—100 percent of Globe’s turnout gear is made with DuPont™ Nomex® and Kevlar® fibers providing proven protection and top performance.”

Learn more and apply for Globe PPE today at www.nvfc.org/globe-gear-donation. The deadline to apply is June 1, 2016. Winners will be announced monthly between July and December. 🚒



Campton-Thornton Rescue

Campton-Thornton Fire-Rescue participated in a technical rescue on December 2, 2105. The department had to rescue a gentleman who was pinned under a rock. The freezing rain made the situation less than ideal. The man suffered a leg injury and was taken to Speare Memorial Hospital. 🚒

Laconia, Gilford, Belmont Battle Fire at Blueberry Lane

Friday evening, January 15, 2016 at 9:23 p.m., Laconia Fire, along with Gilford and Belmont Fire, were dispatched to a reported dryer fire at 103 Blueberry Lane, Unit 7. Arriving on scene within four minutes, Captain Landry reported smoke showing from the two-story six-unit apartment building. He assessed the situation and requested a first alarm along with a mutual aid ambulance. There was an unconscious woman on the ground on the front steps. The 1st alarm called in off-duty firefighters and brought Tilton and Stewarts EMS to cover Laconia Central and Meredith Fire to cover the Weirs' stations.

The crews from Central Station stretched a 2" hose line to the apartment on fire and started immediate medical aid to the injured women. Assistant Chief Beattie arrived on scene and took Command and advised Lakes Region to alert LRGH that the patient was a Status 1. The crews knocked down the fire and started pulling sheetrock ceilings to get at the fire in the ceiling. Gilford arrived and was assigned to search the second floor. At this point, the woman was coherent enough to ask about the condition of her seven-year-old granddaughter. Immediately fire crews started another search of the apartment while LPD started looking for the girl among the crowd. Several tense minutes went by until the young girl was found inside her grandmother's motor vehicle. The woman was transported to LRGH, now in stable condition. Her husband and granddaughter went to LRGH as well.

The management company for Wingate Apartments arrived to secure the building. Preliminary damage is estimated at \$50,000. The property saved is estimated at \$300,000. The adjoining apartments had no damage and those occupants were allowed back in for the remainder of the night. Laconia crews were on scene until 11:00 p.m.

This is the third person to be injured in a fire in Laconia since January 1. We want to warn people about how fast a fire will get out of control and how toxic the smoke and gases generated in a fire can be. If you discover a fire and you cannot extinguish it within 1 to 2 minutes, then get out and stay out. Always call 911 before taking any action as it is imperative to get the fire department started. Recent studies conducted by Underwriters Laboratories show that a fire inside a building will get out of control within 4 to 5 minutes. This is a considerable change in time due primarily to the amount of plastics and synthetics in our homes. 🚒

SCBA Respirator Fit Testing Service Available From LRMFA For Member Agencies!

To SCHEDULE FIT TESTING AT YOUR DEPARTMENT, PLEASE CONTACT DEPUTY CHIEF BELAND AT 528-9111 OR JBELAND@LRMFA.ORG.

Eighth Annual North Country Public Safety Foundation Awards Honors Dropkin and Mardin



Firefighter Richard "Dick" Mardin is pictured with his daughter, Chief Eleanor Mardin.

At the Eighth Annual North Country Public Safety Foundation Award dinner, Waterville Valley Fire Captain Jeffery Dropkin was recognized for his outstanding contributions, both personally and professionally, to the North Country EMS Profession. Captain Dropkin was recognized for not only saving lives as a paramedic but many more lives as an EMS instructor.

LRMFA takes this opportunity to say job well done and congratulations to Captain Dropkin.

At these same awards, Holderness Firefighter (Chief-retired) Richard Mardin was recognized as Firefighter of the Year for his more than four decades of continued service to the Holderness Fire Department and the Community of Holderness.

LRMFA takes this opportunity to say job well done and congratulations to Captain Dropkin and Firefighter Mardin. 🚒



Captain Dropkin is joined by his wife, Wendy, his daughter Casey, and son Adam at the ceremony.

House Fire Near Elm Street School, Laconia

Laconia Fire Department was dispatched at 1:14 p.m. on January 5, 2016 to a reported house fire in the area of the Elm Street School. Gilford and Belmont also responded under automatic aid. Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid advised multiple calls were received and they could see a column of smoke from their location.

Lt. Ellingson requested a first alarm, which brought in off-duty firefighters, as well as Tilton and Meredith Fire and Stewarts EMS to cover the city. Off-duty Laconia firefighters were at the station for an EMS class so they responded with an engine and ambulance with an additional eight firefighters.

This is the second fire in four months where off-duty firefighters were close-by at school. It made a big difference in both fires.

On arrival, Lt. Ellingson reported heavy fire from a one-story ranch with attached garage. His crew put two hose lines into operation: one through the front door to cut off the fire and one through the front porch to extinguish the main body of fire.

Two occupants were outside on arrival. Both needed medical attention. The husband had burns to his head and the wife was suffering from smoke inhalation. Both had tried to enter the home to rescue pets. Unfortunately, two cats died; however, another pet was rescued by firefighters and revived on-scene.

The fire was under control within 20 minutes; however, the damage was extensive. Fire heavily damaged the front porch and breezeway, and smoke and heat damaged the remainder of the home. As the fire broke the window and entered the breezeway, the heat quickly broke a sliding glass door on the far side of the room. The heat then entered a three-season room and melted a ceiling fan and window shades, yet flames never entered the room. The fire followed the path from the breezeway into the kitchen and then started feeding on the kitchen cabinets.

A bedroom at the back of the home had the door closed and was hardly damaged. This reinforces why you should sleep with a door closed. The exterior stream knocked down the heavy fire and stopped the forward progress of the fire. Damage is estimated at \$70,000. 🚒



Above: The fire on Elm Street upon arrival.
Below: After knockdown.



Hoseline Training

Pictures from Campton-Thornton Fire-Rescue hose training on November 16, 2015 are shown below.



“Rural Hitch” Available Electronically

If you would like to receive the *Rural Hitch* electronically (and save trees and postage!), please send your email to debbie@debbiekgraphics.com.

Feel free to share your electronic copy with others. We'll add anyone to the email list who is interested in receiving the *Rural Hitch*.



LRMFA General Membership Bi-Annual Meeting To Be Held April 28

The Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid will be holding its bi-annual general membership meeting on Thursday, April 28 at 6 p.m. at the Beane Conference Center, 35 Blueberry Lane, Laconia, NH. Dinner will be a pulled pork dinner catered by Pork Eez BBQ. This year’s program is title “My Brother’s Keeper: Stress Disorders in Fire and Emergency Services.” It will be led by Deborah Pendergast, Director of NH Fire Standards and Training and EMS.

Dinner will be held from 6–7 p.m., followed by a half-hour business meeting. At 7:30 the program will begin. Spouses of emergency responders are welcome and encouraged to attend both dinner and the program.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

In today’s fast-paced 24/7 way of life, we tend to encounter more stress. We eat faster, have less time for fitness and exercise, and we spend less time relaxing. On top of everyday stress, add the occupational stress that we encounter as fire and emergency medical responders. We often suffer from sleep deprivation and are exposed to prolonged and loud noises. We also encounter organizational stress, and other physical stress, such as exposure to toxic substances and bio-hazards. Finally, most firefighters and EMTs have experienced some degree of critical incident stress or full blown PTSD. More firefighters die from suicide than any other cause, including cardiac issues. It is a well-known fact that chronic stress also increases our chances of falling victim to a myriad of cancers. We will discuss stress and how we cope, or do not cope with the effects.

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY

Deborah Pendergast (Director of NH Fire Standards and Training and EMS) has been a member of the NH Fire Service for over 23 years and for the last two years has been serving as the Director of the NH Fire and EMS Academy. She has a Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology and extensive training in behavioral health, crisis intervention, critical incident stress management and safety and wellness, as well as Labor/Management background and training. She is currently pursuing her Master’s Degree in Public Administration.

Deborah is the New England Trustee for the International Association of Women in Fire & Emergency Services, and the President of and co-founder of NH United Fire Service Women. Other professional organizations she is involved in include the Fire and EMS Foundation and the Granite State Critical Incident Stress Management Team, and she is currently the Vice President of the Board of Directors of the State Community Mental Health Organization, Genesis Behavioral Health.

To register, go to lrmfa.org or contact Deputy Chief John Beland at 528-9111 or email jbeland@lrmfa.org. **Registrations are due by April 22, 2016.** 🚒

Forestry Apparatus Rodeo to be Held on Tuesday, May 3

Campton-Thornton Fire-Rescue Department and Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid – Training Division, NH Department of Forest & Lands – Forest Protection Bureau, and the White Mountain National Forest Service have partnered to host a fun, educational evening of networking with opportunity to view the newest in wildland fire control apparatus and equipment.

The event is being held at the White Mountain National Forest Headquarters located at 71 White Mountain Dr. in Campton NH just a one-minute drive off of I93 Exit 27.

A wide variety of new and in-service forestry apparatus from throughout Central NH, along with State and Federal resources will be displayed for all to review. We are working diligently to have vendors present highlighting new equipment and technology available for controlling wildland fires. Educational static displays and demonstrations will also be offered.

Tours of the White Mountain National Forest Headquarters including the new Northeastern Forest Fire Protection Compact Communications Center will be given. NH Forest Fire Service will soon be dispatched from this facility as well. Personnel will be on hand to discuss operations of the center and the Northeastern Forest Fire Protection Compact which encompasses all of the New England States, New York State, and four Canadian Provinces.

Apparatus should arrive at the White Mountain National Forest Headquarters by 1730 hours. LRMFA-Training Division and Campton-Thornton Fire Department will be providing a hot dog/hamburger cookout dinner at 1800 hours.

Invites to display apparatus have been sent out to fire agencies in the region. If you have not received an invitation and would like to display apparatus, please contact DC John Beland at lrmfa@lrmfa.org 528-9111 or Lt. Josh Fitz jfitz@ctfr.org 726-3300 at Campton-Thornton Fire Department.



What's New...



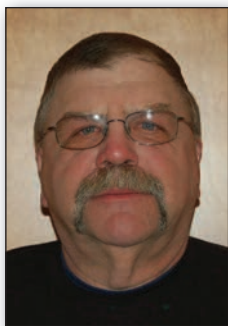
PROMOTED TO CAPTAIN

Mark Ledger
Center Harbor Fire Department



PROMOTED TO DEPUTY CHIEF

David Hughes
Center Harbor Fire Department



PROMOTED TO 2ND DEPUTY CHIEF

Jay Haines
Meredith Fire Department



PROMOTED TO CAPTAIN

David Parker
Meredith Fire Department



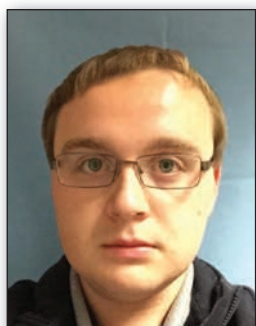
PROMOTED TO LIEUTENANT

Tyler Currier
Meredith Fire Department



PROMOTED TO LIEUTENANT

Jason Haines
Meredith Fire Department



MOVED ALONG

Matt O'Neill
Fulltime Dispatcher LRMFA Communications Center



NEW CHIEF

Shawn Mulcahy
Barnstead Fire Department



MOVED ALONG

David Parenti
Former Chief Belmont Fire Department



NEW CHIEF

Ken Erickson
Laconia Fire Department and Belmont Fire Department.

NEW FULLTIME DISPATCHER: Mike Dow, LRMFA Communications Center
Mike will be introduced to the System in our next issue, when we will interview him.



NEW APPARATUS

Hebron Fire Department – 37E1
E-One. 1500gpm Hale Pump. 2600g Tank.



What's New...



NEW APPARATUS

Barnstead Fire & Rescue – 6F1

International 4x4 Chassis. Seating for 4. 500 gpm Pump. Diesel driven high-pressure pump for pump and roll operations with controls in cab and on pump panel. Class A Foam system. Front bumper turret with controls in cab. Front and rear preconnects with two crosslays. First of it's kind in the area!



NEW APPARATUS

New Hampton Fire Dept. – 17E2

E-One. 1,500 gpm Hale pump. International chassis with five-man cab. 30-gallon Class A Foam Cell. 2,500 gallon water tank with 10" Extendable Newton Dump Valve. 350 gpm portable pump. Equipped with on-spot chains.

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LRMFA Headquarters Laconia, NH

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Fourth Quarter 2015 Stats...

OCTOBER 1, 2015–DECEMBER 31, 2015

Incidents Dispatched:	October 2015	1,900
	November 2015	1,739
	December 2015	1,756
	Total	5,395

Resources Available:

Engines	92	Tankers	12
Ladders	5	Rescues	22
Forestry	38	Ambulances	52
Utilities	26	Fire Boats	30
Towers	7	Air Units	5
ATVs	13	Command Vehicles	31

Statistics:

- 🚒 Began operations in September of 1971. Moved operations to our current facility in June of 2000.
- 🚒 Dispatches Fire and Medical Emergencies for 35 communities and 35 Fire and EMS Agencies.
- 🚒 Serves a population of 115,383 residents.
- 🚒 Is spread over 5 NH Counties, covering a geographical area of 1,494 square miles (16% of the area of the State of NH – 1.5 times the size of the state of Rhode Island).
- 🚒 Protects over \$18.8 billion dollars of property.
- 🚒 Has an operating budget of \$1,165,880 (2014 budget).
- 🚒 Has 8 full-time and 7 part-time employees.
- 🚒 Dispatched 22,072 incidents during 2014 (60 calls per day).
- 🚒 Dispatched 21,570 incidents during 2013 (59.1 calls per day).
- 🚒 Dispatched 21,504 incidents during 2012 (58.92 calls per day).

First Quarter 2016 Stats...

JANUARY 1, 2016–MARCH 31, 2016

Incidents Dispatched:	January 2016	1,911
	February 2016	1,958
	March 2016	1,921
	Total	5,790

The first quarter 2016 has seen a 3.3% increase in incidents from 2015. There was a drop in incidents during the month of January; February and March made up for it! February had a 2% increase from 2015, March had a 12% increase from 2015.

Due to the mild winter, the Communications Center saw a 45% decrease in ski area incidents during the first quarter of 2016, based on the first quarter of 2015.

2015 Statistics

Another year has come and gone and LRMFA's activity continues to increase! Our year-end totals are as follows:

Number of Incidents:	23,550
Radio Transmissions:	315,300
Calls Handled Emergency Lines:	30,589
Calls Handled Administrative Lines:	22,241

The yearly totals break down to an *average* of:

- 65 incidents per day**
- 13 radio transmissions per incident**
- 864 radio transmissions per day**
- 84 calls handled on the emergency lines per day**
- 61 calls handled on the administrative lines per day**

This boils down to a 10.25% increase in operational activities during the 2015 year!

Some of the larger incidents were as follows:

- Aircraft Crashes: 2**
- Building Fires (1st Alarm or greater): 61**
- 1st Alarm: 37**
- 2nd Alarm: 20**
- 3rd Alarm: 3**
- 4th Alarm: 1**
- Outside Fires (1st Alarm or greater): 18**
- 1st Alarm: 9**
- 2nd Alarm: 4**
- 3rd Alarm: 3**
- 4th Alarm: 1**
- 5th Alarm: 1**
- Mass Casualty Incident (1st Alarm or greater): 1**
- HAZMAT Incidents Requiring Mutual Aid: 4**



Fire Apparatus Sales & Service Since 1991



Lakes Region Fire Apparatus Recent Delivery!

**Congratulations Barnstead Fire & Rescue — Chief Shawn Mulcahy
On The Delivery of This HME Ahrens-Fox Type 3 Model 34
Urban Interface Pumper**



- ◆ International 4x4 Chassis
- ◆ Seating for 4
- ◆ 500 gpm Pump
- ◆ Diesel driven high-pressure pump for pump and roll operations with controls in cab and on pump panel
- ◆ Class A Foam system
- ◆ Front bumper turret with controls in cab
- ◆ Front and rear preconnects with two crosslays
- ◆ First of it's kind in the area!

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Email: info@lakesfire.com • www.lakesfire.com





Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Association
62 Communications Drive
Laconia, NH 03246

Department News

Send your Department News
to
debbie@debbiekgraphics.com.

Include new hires, promotions,
new apparatus, department
events,
open training events, etc.

Wall Breach Training

Campton-Thornton Fire-Rescue held a wall breach training on October 19, 2015. Below are two photos from that event.



Send Us Your Department News

Send your Department News to
debbie@debbiekgraphics.com.

Include new hires, promotions, new apparatus,
department events, open training events, etc.

LRGHealthcare Invites you to the EMS Awards Banquet 2016

Wednesday, May 18, 2016
6:00–8:00 p.m.

Dinner and Cash Bar at
The Beane Conference Center
35 Blueberry Lane, Laconia, NH



Send RSVP by May 11 to
kshastany@lrgh.org