

THE RURAL HITCH

A Quarterly Publication of the Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Association



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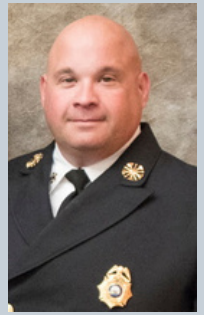
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From the Chief...

Jonathan M. Goldman, RPL



As the fourth quarter of 2020 drew to a close, the LRMFA staff continued to remain busy. 2020 was a challenging year, that no one wants to repeat, and we hope that 2021 will be better for all of us. As the year came to a close, the CAD Team; Deputy Chief Paul Steele, Lt. Dave Parker, and Dispatcher Derrek Trempe got to work with Rapid Deploy. As you may remember, the district has pivoted from deploying XCAD, which was a project that never got off the ground, to deploying a cloud-based CAD system called RapidDeploy. RapidDeploy will be cloud-based and offers a tremendous amount of technical advantages over a premise-based CAD system. The project has been kicked off, and our goal is a Spring 2021 deployment. Once the system is in and running, we will be able to work with our member agencies to deploy Mobile Data Terminals and an "MDT Lite" which is a lite version of an MDT run off of smartphones.

The communications center continues to invest in our staff with monthly continuing education opportunities, and ongoing external opportunities. Lt. Erin Hannafin began a one-year leadership program, through the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) called the "Registered Public-Safety Leader (RPL) program. The RPL program is a year-long online program that teaches students the fundamentals of leadership, how to build a high-performance team, and other components to make the student a better leader. There is one other NH dispatcher in this program with Lt. Hannafin and once completed, they will be two of only four RPL's in the state of NH. Already being an RPL, I began a program in July called the Certified Public Safety Executive (CPE) program. The CPE program takes students through a six-month online program and digs deeper into leadership theory, as well as organizational change, and influence. The course culminates with a two-week in-person capstone program at APCO Headquarters. Although the capstone has been postponed from January to April due to COVID19, once finished I will be the only Certified Public Safety Executive in NH and one of only eight in all of New England, NY, and NJ.

The District and each member community continue to manage COVID19 responses, with the record number of positive COVID19 cases in the district being 1,068 in mid-December. The State of NH is rolling out the first vaccine dosage to first responders. Although Dispatchers are not included in phase 1a of vaccine rollout, it is something that I believe is vital to the success of our public safety dispatch centers.

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The Rural Hitch

Is Curated and Published Quarterly by:
Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Association

Chief Coordinator

Jonathan M. Goldman, RPL

Deputy Chief Coordinator

Paul D. Steele Jr.

Editor

Nicholas Bridle





Brian Searles
Sales Representative

Cell: 603-691-3189 BSearles@firetechusa.com 100 Business Park Drive
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AMKUS
RESCUE SYSTEMS

Continued from Page 2

In December, I appeared on Channel 9 news advocating for the fact that Dispatchers provide a highly technical skill, and cannot easily be replaced. If there is a building fire, medical call, or even a law enforcement issue it can be dealt with by any police officer, firefighter, or EMT from surrounding areas. However, Dispatchers certainly operate with some of the same principles as their neighboring agency, it is important to understand a Dispatcher cannot just be deployed into another communications center to assist. Although there are programs in NH to assist in "mutual aid" for Dispatchers, it is not as easy as backfilling a police officer, firefighter, or EMT. I have worked with the NH Emergency Dispatchers Association (NHEDA) and continue to work with them and other stakeholders in the state to move this conversation forward. I believe that we are doing a tremendous disservice to our responders and the public we serve, by ignoring this critical infrastructure segment. As an organization the Communications Center has been very lucky, in that we have had several precautionary self-quarantine situations at the beginning, we have

in fact only had two positive COVID19 cases. It is important to note, that one of the positive cases had the potential to isolate six of our eight full-time staff. Although fortunately we only had to isolate the infected employee and their partner, it goes to show how critical one infection in a communications center can be. There have been several communications centers already, who had become so critical with their quarantines that they have had to move operations to another dispatch center. By moving operations like this, creates a workflow issue for the responders, and a safety issue for the responders and the public that we are sworn to protect. Fortunately, LRMFA and the Capital Area Fire Mutual Aid Compact have a robust joint Continuity of Operations Plan that could be implemented if either agency encountered a critical staffing shortage. Although we have table topped with CAFMAC how we would implement it in this situation, both agencies have been fortunate to not have to use it.

The fourth quarter of 2020, like all fourth quarters, saw a tremendous amount of retirements and promotions from within the district, and we would like to congratulate all of those who have retired, and been promoted.

The fourth quarter was busy with Building Fires and other responses, as it tends to be when heating season starts up.

Although 2020 changed how we do a lot of things as emergency services, there seems to be a light at the end of the tunnel, and we are all looking forward to all of the positivity that 2021 will bring for us. 🍀



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Honoring Campton-Thornton Fire Rescue's Captain Dave Lavoie

On the evening of Monday, November 9, 2020, members of Campton-Thornton Fire Rescue held a brief ceremony and dedicated a memorial to fallen Captain David Lavoie. The helmet, coat, and badge that Captain Lavoie wore, have been retired and placed into a shadow box so that he can watch over his department from a prominent spot, perched high above the apparatus bay floor. The labor and materials used to create the memorial were donated.

#DoltForDave #LeanForward



LRMFA Announces Partnership with RapidDeploy

Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Selects RapidDeploy's Nimbus CAD By Walt Kaplan, Account Manager

It's not just big state 9-1-1 agencies that are driving digital transformation efforts. In fact, oftentimes, smaller organizations are able to see a return on investment faster due to aligned leadership and agile organizations. A great example is Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid in New Hampshire, an agency that recently selected RapidDeploy's Nimbus cloud-aided dispatch solution as part of their agency-wide transformation efforts.

"We selected RapidDeploy's Nimbus CAD as part of our transformation because their cloud-native solution enables us to build a dispatch system that will evolve and grow with us," said Jonathan M. Goldman, Chief Coordinator at Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid. "Nimbus meets our needs from both a total cost of ownership and an innovation perspective." Nimbus CAD Increases Situational Awareness in Every Response Situation.

Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid provides fire, EMS, and hazmat dispatch services to 35 communities and 38 individual agencies. They cover 1,800 square miles (approximately the size of Rhode Island) with a population of about 110,000 year-round. The area is heavily recreational in all four seasons, which means that the agency also serves visitors who are in the region to ski, hike, boat, hunt, and fish. They need to be prepared for every kind of emergency situation.

RapidDeploy has built a Unified Critical Response platform that includes no-cost, third-party data integrations. The result is a solution that provides Telecommunicators and first responders with the situational awareness they need to make the best decisions in critical moments. "RapidDeploy provides uncompromised location accuracy," continued Chief Goldman. "This helps us make it safer for residents, visitors, and field responders." Transparent Pricing and Minimal Start-up Costs Make It Easy for Agencies of All Sizes At RapidDeploy, we believe that agencies of all sizes and all budgets can transform into data-driven organizations.

**Lakes Region Mutual
Fire Aid** Selects
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GILFORD FIRE GROUP 1 BABY DELIVERY



On Thursday, December 24, Gilford Fire-Rescue Group 1 was dispatched by Lt. Dave Parker and Dispatcher Dave Avery to a woman in labor. Lt. Jedd Madon, EMT Greg Trombi, AEMT Nate Lemay, and AEMT Brandon Zogopoulos responded. After speaking with the patient and realizing that she was having her 4th child, they quickly transitioned to transporting her to Concord. The baby girl abruptly made her appearance on Route 106, south, near Stone Road in Loudon. Both the baby and the mother were healthy and the delivery was without complications. This was the first field delivery for each Gilford Fire-Rescue member and from all accounts the first field delivery in recent memory for Gilford Fire-Rescue.



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Captain Gary Doucette Retires from Barnstead Fire Department

Captain Gary Doucette will officially retire from the Barnstead Fire Rescue on October 31, 2020, after an 18-year career with Barnstead Fire Rescue. He began his career with Barnstead Fire Rescue as a firefighter on April 28, 2002, and was promoted to Captain in May of 2012.

Gary also served with the Pittsfield Fire Department as a Call Firefighter reaching the rank of Lieutenant. Gary is also a Staff Fire Instructor for the State of New Hampshire Division of Fire Standards and Training & Emergency Medical Services. Captain Doucette has many fire certifications and was also a certified EMT. He retires with numerous letters of thanks and commendations from all that he has. Captain Doucette commanded several major incidents during his career, including gas leaks, motor vehicle crashes, mass casualty incidents, building fires, and so many more. He also served as the Training Officer for the department for several years.

Captain Doucette gave 100% every day and was a dedicated and professional member of this department. Gary made a tremendous difference to this department with his strong work ethic and knowledge that you can't replace. He was the epitome of a good firefighter and fire officer, and we will miss him greatly.



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Plymouth Fire and Mutual Aid Respond To Injured Hiker



At 3:23 P.M. on December 1, 2020, Plymouth Fire-Rescue responded to the Fauver East Trail off of Texas Hill Road for an injured hiker. This trail is part of the Walter-Newton and Fauver Conservation Trails Area managed by the Plymouth Conservation Commission. Captain Peck, FF Driscoll, and Student Vachon hiked in approximately one mile and made contact with the individual. After determining that the patient would need to be carried out, a second alarm was requested for manpower by Incident Commander Deputy Chief Jeremy Bonan. This brought crews from the Ashland, Campton-Thornton, Holderness, and Rumney Fire Departments as well as two Conservation Officers from the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department. The Campton-Thornton Fire Department also covered the Plymouth Fire Station. The carry-out was complicated as darkness fell. The patient was transported to Spears Memorial Hospital with non-life-threatening injuries. "We appreciate the readiness of our members, as well as all of the mutual aid companies that responded that helped make this a successful rescue." Chief Morrison.

HELP STOP BUTT DIALS



PREVENT ACCIDENTAL 9-1-1 CALLS

In 2019, NH 9-1-1 received 36,495 abandoned calls. To date in 2020, NH 9-1-1 has received 46,399 abandoned calls – an increase of roughly 1,000 calls per month! By educating and taking precautions, a majority of these calls can be avoided.

Abandoned calls happen when a caller disconnects before the call can be answered by a 9-1-1 Telecommunicator (TC). The TC is required to call back in an attempt to clarify whether the caller has an actual emergency. 9-1-1 has to assume every call received is an emergency. Some abandoned calls might be emergencies – for example, an intruder is in the home but the caller hangs up because they are afraid the intruder will hear them. Most abandoned calls, however, are accidental and can be an unnecessary drain on emergency services.

If you have a real emergency, stay on the line even without speaking so 9-1-1 can locate your call. In NH, you can text 9-1-1. When texting 9-1-1, immediately provide the location of your emergency.

In the case of accidental 9-1-1 calls, stay on the line and tell 9-1-1 you do not have an emergency. Take precautions to prevent accidentally calling 9-1-1:

- Lock your cell phone screen – eliminate pocket dials
- Do not allow children to play with cell phones EVEN old cell phones. Old phones with battery can still dial 9-1-1. Remove the battery before giving old phones to children. Talk with them so they understand the significance of dialing 9-1-1 and teach them to only call when they have a real emergency.

Share this with your community – public education is key!

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CELEBRATIONS

Jacob Fogarty, Promoted to Deputy Chief, Bridgewater

Kevin Lang, Promoted to Chief, New Hampton

Dan Chapman, Promoted to Captain, Franklin

Chris Ship, 25 Years at Laconia

Lisa Baldini, 24 Years at Laconia

John-Paul Hobby, 20 Years at Laconia

Deputy Chief Jeremy Bonan, 16 Years at Plymouth

Rick Hewlett, 14 Years at Laconia

Donald Jeremy Pickowicz, 7 Years at Laconia

Tyler Driscoll, 3 Years at Plymouth

David DiTomasso 3 Years at Laconia

Chris Yeager, 2 Years at Laconia

RETIREMENTS

Mike Drake, New Hampton

Captain Gary Hicks, Franklin, 23 Years

Captain Gary Doucette, Barnstead





Joint Hazardous Materials Response Team Drills in the Lakes Region

On Monday, October 26, 2020, members of Campton-Thornton Fire Rescue, along with the Central New Hampshire Haz-Mat Team participated in a combined training in Thornton, at the Owls Nest Golf Course. Crews "responded" to a chemical spill scenario, which eventually escalated to a response from the Haz-Mat team. This was a grant-funded training, with the purpose of testing local departments on their capabilities of handling chemical spills, while also showing local agencies the capabilities of the Haz-Mat team. A review of the drill will help shape future training.

The Central New Hampshire Haz-Mat team is a joint venture between the Lakes Region and Capital Area Mutual Fire Aid districts. The team has approximately 30 members (including 1 from CTFD) and 2 vehicles with specialized equipment. One unit is housed in Concord and the other is housed at Station 3 in Campton. The team operates on a small budget and has been predominantly grant-funded for many years. Haz-Mat team members from several agencies participated in the training, including Campton-Thornton Fire Rescue, Plymouth Fire Rescue, Tilton-Northfield Fire/EMS, and Concord Fire Department

Thanks to everyone who participated and the Owls Nest Golf Course for allowing us the use of their facility, which added realism to the event. If you are a member of a Lakes Region or Capital Area Fire Department and want to become involved in the Central NH Hazardous Materials Response team please let your Chief know. We are always looking for new members.





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Hale Qmax 2000 GPM Pump
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Dunstable MA Fire Department
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UNIT IDENTIFICATION

LT. DAVE PARKER, LRMFA

COMMUNICATIONS

The LRMFA Communications Center Operations Room is guided in its daily operations by a set of standards that have been approved by the Board of Directors. One of these standards is unit identification.

The Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Member Guide that has been issued to each of our member agencies contains a chapter that standardizes community, equipment, and personnel designations. There are three segments to these designations. The first is the Town number. The second is the unit identification letter. The third is the unit identification number. When combined, the familiar 9E3, 14R1, 7L1, and so on are created.

Because of ongoing “creativity” by personnel that is responding with this equipment, i.e., non-standard or made-up designations, the focus of this article will be on the second segment, the unit identification letter. The following is taken directly from the member guide:

Segment 2 — Unit Identification Letter

The second segment of a unit's identification number indicates the type of apparatus. All designations are pronounced in full except the letter “C”, according to the following protocol:

Designation	Definition
Ambulance	A unit designed and licensed to transport patients.
Boat	A watercraft operated by a member department.
C	An officer or member, having command authority.
Car	A vehicle used primarily for transporting personnel, communications Equipment, or other equipment used to support fire ground operations.
Engine	Firefighting apparatus equipped with a fire pump of at least 750 GPM capacity and carrying not less than 500 gallons of water.
Forestry	A vehicle that is primarily used in grass, brush, or forest fire suppression.
Ladder	Firefighting apparatus equipped with an aerial ladder, elevating platform, tower, or snorkel.
Portable	A portable radio.
Rescue	A vehicle used primarily to transport equipment and/or manpower for the purpose of removal or extrication of victims requiring fire department assistance.
Tanker	Firefighting apparatus used primarily for hauling water, with or without a fixed fire pump, and carrying more than 1,000 gallons of water.
Tower	Firefighting apparatus equipped with an elevating platform, tower, or snorkel.
Utility	Firefighting apparatus not categorized by another letter designation used to provide support services.
Warden	An individual designated by the state as a Warden, Deputy Warden, or Special Deputy Warden.

These definitions were derived from the FEMA/NIMS apparatus types and are also used within the NH Statewide Mobilization Plan. Every piece of apparatus that could be used at an incident is entered into the LRMFA CAD system using this standard for identification. When a non-standard designator is used, the CAD system will not allow the dispatcher to assign anything other than what has been entered previously into the system.

Where the use of non-standard designators mostly occurs is when ATV's, UTV's, and snowmobiles are used in a response. The list above is straightforward. These equipment types fall into the Utility category and should be identified in that manner. LRMFA has a rich history of using unit designators, and these unit designators are paramount to our mutual aid districts' standardization, during both routine, and mutual aid responses. We ask all member communities to make sure we are using the accepted standardized unit identifiers.



Recognizing the Good

This week Laconia Fire Department recognized two of our members for life-saving efforts while working at a 2nd Alarm fire on Christmas Day. Lt Jeff Desrosiers and FF Mark Bitetto were recognized for Outstanding Effort while Performing Life a Saving Act. They were awarded this for rescuing an occupant from their residence, which was above the main fire floor. They operated under heavy smoke conditions, and zero visibility to make this rescue. Congratulations to each of you for your efforts, and to all who fought this fire.



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LAKE WINNIPESAUKEE AIRBOAT PROGRAM

CAPT. PAT O'BRIEN, ALTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

The fire service exists to this day as the organization that is called when you don't know who else to call. This makes thinking on our feet and adapting to overcome a necessity to save lives and property. Conditions are certainly changing on Lake Winnepesaukee in terms of freeze patterns, I still hear stories to this day about when log trucks used to be run across the ice for logging operations on the islands. In recent years we seem to be lucky to have just a skim coating of ice on the lake forcing us to come up with new strategies to access island properties and winter ice goers.

Following several deadly ice-related tragedies on February 12th, 2017, the later established Mark O'Connell Foundation and Alton resident Ron Brown donated 2 vessels for area ice rescue use. Alton received a lightly used 2002 Alumatech Airboat that Mr. Brown used to access his island property on Rattlesnake Island as needed. The Alton Firemen's Association graciously accepted the donation from Mr. Brown and raised \$18,000 in additional funding to rebuild and optimize the vessel for winter operations. The Moultonborough Fire Department received a Hovercraft from the O'Connell Foundation which similarly is capable of traveling across fragile ice and water but both vessels have individual advantages and disadvantages in certain situations making them the perfect combination for the lake.

Notably, these vessels are not the first ones of their kind on the big lake. The Tuftonboro Fire Department pioneered the first known airboat program on Winnepesaukee in the early 2000s. Their tried and true methods and operational guidelines helped form the program for the Alton Fire Dept. and we continue to work with each other fine-tuning skills and operations.

In the development of these programs we also received instruction from NH Fish and Game and the Maine Wardens Service who also have airboat programs. We also had the opportunity to train with the Vermont State Troopers and West Ossipee fire department with their airboats. Through all of this training, we learned a wealth of knowledge but these few items stuck out:

- 1. A small group of in-tune, highly trained, and knowledgeable operators with ongoing training is essential!
- 2. These vessels must be meticulously maintained. Similar to aircraft, small issues can turn into life-threatening emergencies quickly. The domino effect is real!
- 3. The only thing that can rescue an airboat is another airboat. Agencies are encouraged and will frequently start 2 boats on emergencies, one as the rescue vessel and another as a backup. Think of being stranded on an airboat with howling wind, sub-zero temps, and dangerous ice conditions waiting up to 2 hours for a secondary rescue.

In the fire service profession, we all know seconds count, but even more so when someone is clinging to life on an ice shelf. We encourage area departments to work with the teams closest to you on training and set up automatic response cards for ice-related incidents. In the pictures attached area airboats convened for training on 12/12/20 to improve operational skills, create consistency in operations, and become more familiar with other area boats and their abilities. Combined training is organized at least once annually and many departments train at least monthly individually. Hands-on experience with these vessels is essential.

For questions, please feel free to contact:

Tuftonboro Fire Dept., Alton Fire Dept., Captain O'Brien: POBrien@alton.nh.gov, Moultonborough Fire Dept.,



The Plymouth Fireman's Association would like to thank all the community members and local businesses from Plymouth and the surrounding towns that contributed to our 2020 Operation Santa Claus program. In a year that has presented unexpected challenges for so many, your continued commitment to our program was more valuable than ever. Your generous donations allowed our program to provide not only toys but also hope and joy to nearly 100 children and their families during the 2020 holiday season.

Operation Santa Claus

Plymouth Fire-Rescue is pleased to announce the arrival of a new ambulance. The new LifeLine on an F-550 Chassis was purchased from Specialty Vehicles, Inc., and replaces a 2009 Ambulance. We have moved the replacement program for these vehicles to six years, as it is cost-prohibitive to keep them beyond that point. The new ambulance will receive communications equipment on Wednesday of this week. Once personnel has been trained on its operation and it is inspected by the New Hampshire Bureau of E.M.S., it will be placed in service.

"We are thankful for all of the hard work that our Ambulance Committee put into this purchase. These individuals included Deputy Chief Bonan, Captain Brian Tobine, and FF Driscoll. We also appreciate the support of the community on the procurement of apparatus and equipment such as this. It allows us to be able to continue to provide quality Fire and E.M.S. Services." Chief Tom Morrison.



Photographs
courtesy of Deputy
Chief Bonan





Campton-Thornton Fire

New Holmatro battery-powered extrication equipment through an AFG grant - one cutter, one spreader, two combi-tools for New Hampton

EVERY SECOND COUNTS

Help keep fire hydrants accessible during the winter:



CLEAR-AWAY ZONE

- Remove snow and ice.
- Clear a path from street to hydrant.
- Keep 1 metre clear around hydrant.



LAKES REGION MUTUAL FIRE AID STATISTICS

	<i>Month</i>	<i>Admin</i>	<i>Emergency</i>	<i>Incidents</i>
2020 First Quarter	January	1683	2241	2031
	February	1406	2401	2125
	March	1425	2196	1935
	<i>Total for Quarter</i>	<i>4514</i>	<i>6838</i>	<i>6091</i>
	<i>Avg/Day</i>	<i>49.60</i>	<i>75.14</i>	<i>66.93</i>
2020 Second Quarter	April	1320	2177	1885
	May	1496	2442	2124
	June	1525	2700	2271
	<i>Total for Quarter</i>	<i>4341</i>	<i>7319</i>	<i>6730</i>
	<i>Avg/Day</i>	<i>47.70</i>	<i>80.43</i>	<i>73.96</i>
2020 Third Quarter	July	1933	3299	2638
	August	2019	2999	2638
	September	1876	2593	2395
	<i>Total for Quarter</i>	<i>5828</i>	<i>8891</i>	<i>7794</i>
	<i>Avg/Day</i>	<i>63.35</i>	<i>96.64</i>	<i>84.72</i>
2020 Fourth Quarter	October	1444	2572	2201
	November	1392	2336	2068
	December	1712	2871	2550
	<i>Total for Quarter</i>	<i>4548</i>	<i>7779</i>	<i>6819</i>
	<i>Avg/Day</i>	<i>49.43</i>	<i>84.55</i>	<i>74.12</i>
2020	<i>Month</i>	<i>Admin</i>	<i>Emergency</i>	<i>Incidents</i>
	<i>Total for 2020</i>	<i>19231</i>	<i>30827</i>	<i>27434</i>
	<i>Avg/Day</i>	<i>52.54</i>	<i>84.23</i>	<i>74.96</i>

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Include new hires, promotions, new apparatus, department events, open training events, and more.

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