

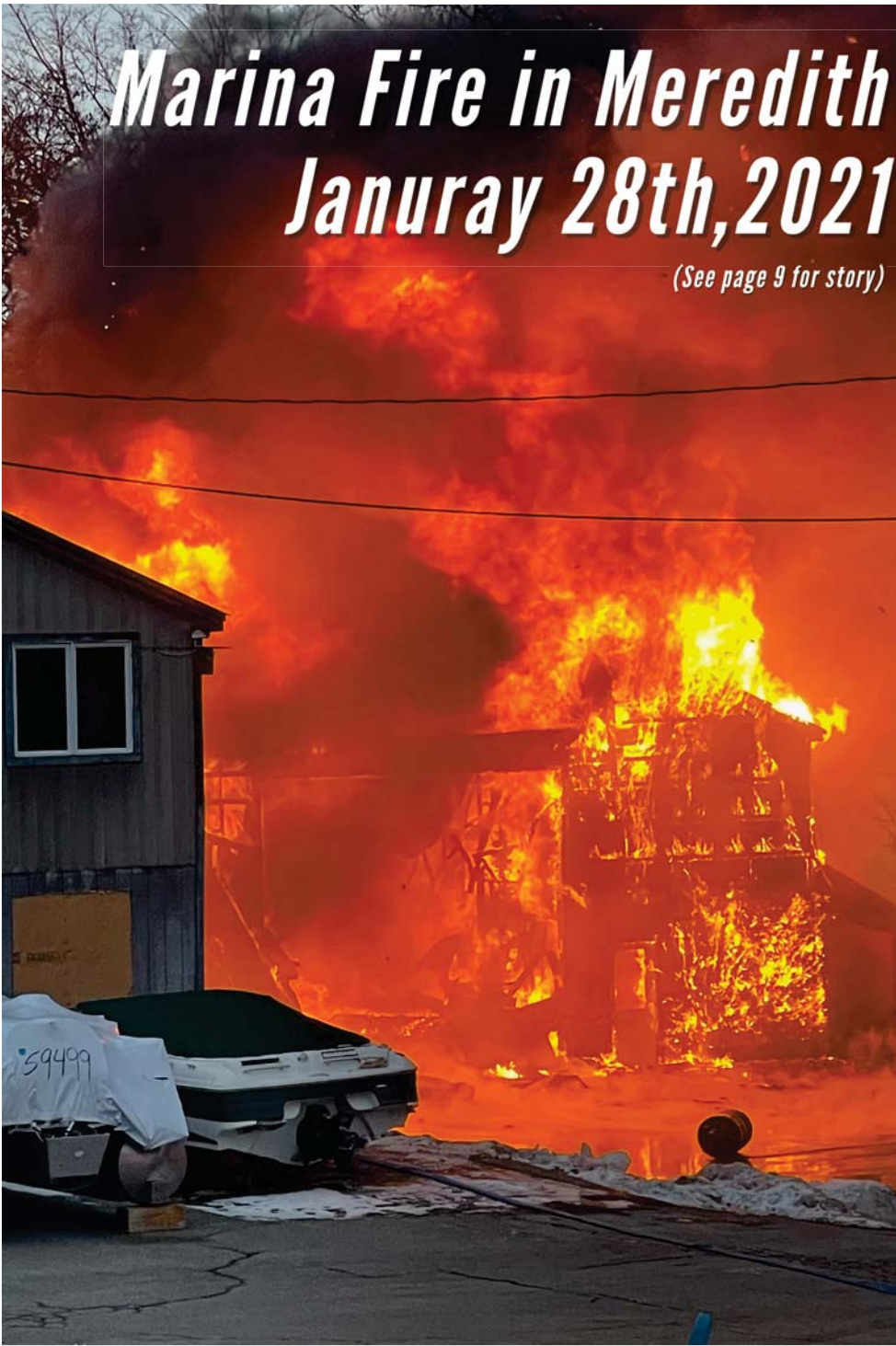
THE RURAL HITCH

A Quarterly Publication of the Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Association



Marina Fire in Meredith Januray 28th, 2021

(See page 9 for story)



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From the Chief...

Jonathan M. Goldman, RPL



Like the different seasons of the year, each quarter brings different levels of activity to the forefront of LRMFA operations. During the first quarter of 2021, we continued to work with our member communities to manage the current COVID19 pandemic. From all accounts, it appears we are certainly closer to the end, and the light at the proverbial end of the tunnel can be seen. As an agency, and as part of the emergency communications profession we worked very hard with multiple agencies to eventually get our dispatchers vaccinated as part of phase 1B. This afforded the opportunity for vaccination to each employee if they wished to obtain it. LRMFA along with the NH Emergency Dispatchers Association worked closely with multiple agencies and associations, to advocate on behalf of the state's emergency communications personnel to achieve this. Continuing to engage in assisting the State of NH in its fight against COVID19, LRMFA has entered an Emergency Management Directive with HSEM, and has assigned Lt Kevin Nugent, and Lt. Erin Hannafin to a special project working with HSEM to onboard corporate pharmacies and providers in anticipation of them being eligible to receive vaccination supplies, and vaccines to administer to the public through their storefronts. We are honored and excited to continue working with our partners to end the COVID19 pandemic. Other LRMFA staff members are also able to now work with HSEM and 2-1-1 to assist in taking calls and working with NH residents through the vaccination process.

LRMFA, continues to work towards the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) Agency Training Program Certification. ATPC is a certification of each agency's recruiting, hiring, new hire, and continued education training program.

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The Rural Hitch

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Swiftwater Rescue Level I provides rescue personnel with the fundamentals needed to stay safe while working in or around swiftwater/flood environments. This 28 hour course is delivered in three blocks. Block one includes interactive lectures and dryland operations. Block two and three are spent on the river. Students gain knowledge in hydrology and river classifications, size-up, site control and scene management. Practical skills include self-rescue, swiftwater swimming and fundamentals of shore, boat and in-water rescues. Additionally, students are introduced to the basics of paddle boat handling and the fundamentals of rope rescue including mechanical advantage and anchor systems. This course has been independently evaluated to meet the requirements of the NFPA 1006 Chapter 12 Swiftwater

Dates: May 14, 2021—May 16, 2021

Time: 08:00—18:00

Location: Franklin Fire Department

59 W. Bow Street

Franklin, NH 03235

Tuition: \$250 per person

CREF: 2321SRI0447

Registration

Registration in advance is required. Please register at

<https://nhfa-ems.com/events/swiftwater-rescue-level-i/>

Registration Opens: Monday, March 29, 2021 08:00

Registration Closes: Wednesday, May 12, 2021 16:00

Class size is limited to 24 students



All registrations and medical release documents will be handled by NH Department of Safety, Division of Fire Standards and Training & Emergency Medical Services. Invoicing will be through the LRMFA Training Division. Please wait for an invoice from the LRMFA Training Division and do not submit payment to the fire academy.

Continued from Page 2

Any agency that applies and submits documentation proving that they meet 111 individual standards. The application and supporting documentation are confidentially peer-reviewed, and either returned for clarification or rejected. When returned for clarification the submitting agency can submit only one more time, and only needs to submit additional supporting documentation on the standards that were in question. As part of the supporting documentation needs to include proofs such as curriculum, testing methodology, and training records proving the standard is met. There are only currently two agencies in NH that have received ATPC certification: Derry Fire Communications, and the NH Bureau of Emergency Communications (9-1-1).

As part of anticipating ATPC certification, LRMFA instituted a robust Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement program in 2018. The LRMFA QA/QI is only one of a handful in NH and involves monthly random call reviews, as well as certain high-risk, low-frequency calls that are automatically flagged for review. During the review process, overseen by the Training Lieutenant, Lieutenant Erin Hannafin each call is individually reviewed according to agency policy, procedure, and industry best practices. Calls are reviewed by individual Dispatcher, shift, and the team. LRMFA is excited to announce that for the month of February, all calls that were reviewed were received and dispatched in 59 seconds or less, and were compliant with agency policies, procedures, and industry best practices at a level of 90% or greater.


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The LRMFA Computer-Aided Dispatch Team (CAD) headed up by Lt. Dave Parker, and members Deputy Chief Paul Steele, and Dispatcher Derrek Trempe have been meeting weekly, and actively working with RapidDeploy, our new CAD vendor to build out our new cloud-based CAD solution. We are currently on track for a late spring deployment. The new CAD platform will pave the way for those agencies wishing to fully integrate Mobile Data Terminals (MDT's). The new system will also allow for integration with third-party applications, such as ImageTrend, and Emergency Reporting.

During the first quarter of 2021, Dispatcher Dave Avery resigned, to take a position with Salem NH Fire Alarm, and we wish him well. With Dispatcher Avery's vacancy, we're excited that Per-Diem Dispatcher Chris Conway, accepted an offer for full-time employment. Dispatcher Conway was just about done with his training program as a Per-Diem and was able to move right into the vacant spot. Chris is doing really well adapting to full-time status, and many of you may know him as he is also a member of Center Harbor Fire Department. LRMFA would always prefer to promote from within, and in that same vein Dispatcher Brian Searles has been promoted to the rank of "Reserve Officer." As a Reserve Officer, Dispatcher Searles works his regular shifts as normal but is eligible to also work in place of Lieutenant if needed. This promotion demonstrates our trust in Dispatcher Searles' skills and his development as a Dispatcher. When working as a Reserve Officer, Dispatcher Searles supervises the shift and takes on the responsibilities of Acting Lieutenant.

Additionally, we have added a new section to the Rural Hitch. Many of you know Meghann Hempel, who is retired from the Laconia Fire Department very shortly after starting her career. Meghann is well respected throughout the region for her commitment and dedication to fitness and a healthy lifestyle. Meghann has recently begun to operate her new business, "Brain, Body, and Mind." Her business works with people who desire health and fitness coaching, as well as preparing for CPAT. Meghann has committed to writing a Health and Wellness article for each edition of the Rural Hitch. As Meghann's business begins to grow, she will also be experimenting with some hands-on boot camps for our members and may speak at one of the Training Divisions quarterly training. She has some great ideas, and we are excited to see where she goes from here. I have always wanted to have a health and wellness section in the "Hitch" as it is a subject that should be at the forefront of everyone's mind, from a brand new firefighter to a Chief Officer. If our people aren't healthy, it is our citizens and those we are sworn to serve who pay the price. For those who know me, you know my picture is not in the dictionary under Health and Wellness However I look forward to learning a lot from Meghann, and her articles as we move forward.

As I write this, the birds are chirping, the sun is shining, "ice out" has arrived, and spring is in the air. We can all agree that we are ready to have a great spring and summer. As we move into the 2nd quarter of 2021, we are excited to see what the rest of the year brings for both LRMFA and the Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid District as a whole. We will be continuing to serve the member agencies, and public and providing professional, emergency telecommunications services. We will work to "go live" with the RapidDeploy CAD system, and transition into what will hopefully be a better spring and summer than 2020. 

Respectfully,
Jonathan M. Goldman, RPL
Chief Coordinator

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The advertisement features a central graphic of a radio tower with signal waves emanating from it, set against a background of blue geometric patterns. To the right of the tower are logos for several partner companies: tait communications, MOTOROLA, KENWOOD, L3HARRIS™, TELEX, EFJohns n JVCKENWOOD Group, ZETRON, and ICOM. At the bottom center, the email address info@allcomm1.com is displayed.



Laconia Fire Department dedicated its new Engine 5 to the memory of Lieutenant Michael Shastany who passed away in January 2020. Lieutenant Shastany proudly served the Laconia Fire Department for 24 years retiring in 2010. This new engine is a 2021 Sutphen and will run out of the Laconia Fire Department-Weirs Beach Station.

Gilford Fire Battles Early Morning 3rd Alarm Building Fire

On the morning of February 1, 2021, at 0316 Gilford and Laconia companies were dispatched to a reported building fire at 271 Weirs Road. The fire was reported by an occupant, who awoke to smoke detectors sounding and smoke in the home. All occupants were able to leave the building, safely, prior to the fire department's arrival. Based on a report of "fire showing" from Gilford Police, a 1st alarm was requested while the fire departments were still responding. Laconia's Engine 2 from the Weirs Station arrived on the scene to find fire showing from an ell between the main house and the garage. They immediately stretched a line and knocked down the fire. Gilford's Engine 3 arrived and stretched additional lines into the building. Crews were able to stop the fire as it began to extend into both the main house and the garage. The overhaul was extensive as many ceilings and walls had to be pulled and cut to access numerous void spaces that contained hidden fire. A water supply was established at Misty Harbor's Barefoot Beach and tankers shuttled water to the scene. 2nd and 3rd alarms were requested for additional manpower. Firefighting was difficult due to the building construction and also icy conditions due to the cold weather.

The large residence was occupied by 5 people and had hard-wired smoke detectors, throughout. Chief Stephen Carrier stated, "This was a great stop. Unfortunately, there is a lot of damage, but the home was built in 1830 and it has been renovated and upgraded a number of times. These are tough buildings to fight fire in. Smoke detectors alerted the occupants and provided early notification - giving us a chance to stop the fire before it became even worse.

3 Engines, a Tanker, an Ambulance, a Utility, and 2 Command Vehicles responded to the scene from Gilford along with an engine, a ladder, and 2 Chiefs from Laconia. Additional Mutual Aid was received from Belmont, Meredith, Tilton-Northfield, Sanbornton, Franklin, Alton, Barnstead, Center Harbor, Holderness, New Hampton, and Loudon. Gilford Police assisted at the scene; as well as NH DOT and Gilford DPW. Sandwich and Meredith EMS covered the Gilford Station and handled a medical emergency in Town during the fire. Red Cross was contacted to provide housing assistance to the displaced occupants.

There were no injuries and no damage to any other buildings or vehicles. Damage is estimated to be at least \$350,000. The cause of the fire is under investigation. There was significant fire damage to the dwelling and a rear apartment. Fire also extended into the second floor and attic of the main house and the upper level of the garage. There is extensive smoke and water damage throughout the structure. Chief Carrier also stated, "We really appreciate the support from our mutual aid partners. This was a labor-intensive fire in very cold weather. Everybody pitched in and did a great job." Most companies were clear of the scene by 0730 hrs. One engine remained on the scene to continue to check for hot spots.



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The new 15 Forestry 1 is now in service. Built on a Ford F-550 chassis it has 400-gallons of water, 12-gallons of Class A foam, 250 feet of booster line and 800 feet of 1.5" forestry hose on reels. It carries hand tools for 10, a leaf blower and chain saw as well as additional hose in backpacks.



Moultonborough 15F1 In Service

It was designed and built by Department personnel and replaces a 35-year old truck. In addition to forestry calls it will be used for service calls and trees and wires drop incidents.



Laconia Fire Department Honors Two Members for Outstanding Effort While Performing a Lifesaving Act

On January 6th, 2021 Laconia Fire Department recognized two 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 the 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.



MEREDITH BATTLES 2ND ALARM MARINA FIRE

The LRMFA Communications Center, staffed by Lt. Ricky Fowler, and Dispatcher Brian Searles received multiple telephone calls reporting a fire in Meredith at the Meredith Marina on January 28, 2021, at approximately 1644. As 14C1 Chief Jones approached the scene, he reported heavy smoke and fire could be seen from a distance. He requested the first alarm, and once on scene reported the 50' X 50' building was fully involved. Meredith 14E1 arrived shortly after Chief Jones and began to attack the fire. A second line was deployed to protect the exposure, which was a storage building, just a few feet away.

Once on scene, 14E4 established a second water supply, and laid in 800' of 5" line from Mill St. Three additional hose lines were deployed from 14E4 to support the fire attack. Meredith 14E3 was assigned to the rear of the building to begin extinguishing several boats that were being stored outside of the building and had begun burning.

Chief Jones 14C1 called for a second alarm at 1700 due to concerns about the amount of fire load, and weather conditions. The fire was declared under control at 1803, and all mutual aid companies were released by 1945. Meredith companies remained on scene until 2239. Mutual Aid companies assisting Meredith during this incident were Laconia, Center Harbor, Moultonborough, Holderness, Gilford, New Hampton, Bristol, Belmont, Ashland, and Plymouth at the scene. Sandwich covered the Meredith downtown station, while Ashland also covered the Meredith Center station.





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GILFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT BATTLES FIRE AT SAMOSET

Gilford companies were toned to a fire alarm activation at Samoset Condos on Lakeshore Road. Prior to responding, Lakes Region Mutual Aid re-toned the incident (to include an engine and ladder truck from Laconia) as a building fire. They advised that an occupant was reporting smoke showing from one of the units. A 1st alarm was requested while the fire departments were still responding. Gilford's Engine 3 arrived to find smoke showing from one of the middle units of a 4 unit, 2 and a half story wood framed, residential condominium. After determining an access point a hose line was stretched into the building. Crews were able to knock down the fire as it began to extend upward in the wall between the 2 middle units. The overhaul was extensive in the wall between the units and in the attic. A water supply was established, but not used, at the Samoset cistern near Lakeshore Road. Tank water was able to extinguish the fire.

The 2 middle units were not occupied at the time of the fire. The 2 end units were, and occupants are able to stay in their units tonight. Chief Stephen Carrier stated, "To stop a fire in the middle units of a 4 unit condo is quite an accomplishment. Everyone did a great job. The alarm system provided notification; a backup call from an occupant reporting smoke; and, great teamwork on the fireground limited the spread of the fire." 3 Engines, a Tanker, a Rescue, a Utility, and 2 Command Vehicles responded to the scene from Gilford along with an engine, a ladder, and a Chief from Laconia. Additional Mutual Aid was received from Belmont, Meredith, Tilton-Northfield, and Alton. Gilford Police assisted at the scene. Center Harbor and Franklin covered the Gilford Station during the fire. Evergreen Property Management and Samoset Board members assisted at the scene, as well. There were no injuries and no damage to any other buildings or vehicles. Damage is estimated to be at least \$300,000. The cause of the fire is under investigation. There was significant fire damage to one unit. The fire burned in the wall space between the 2 middle units. There was less fire damage in the adjoining unit, but extensive smoke and water damage. The 2 end units remain habitable, and the occupants have chosen to stay in place.



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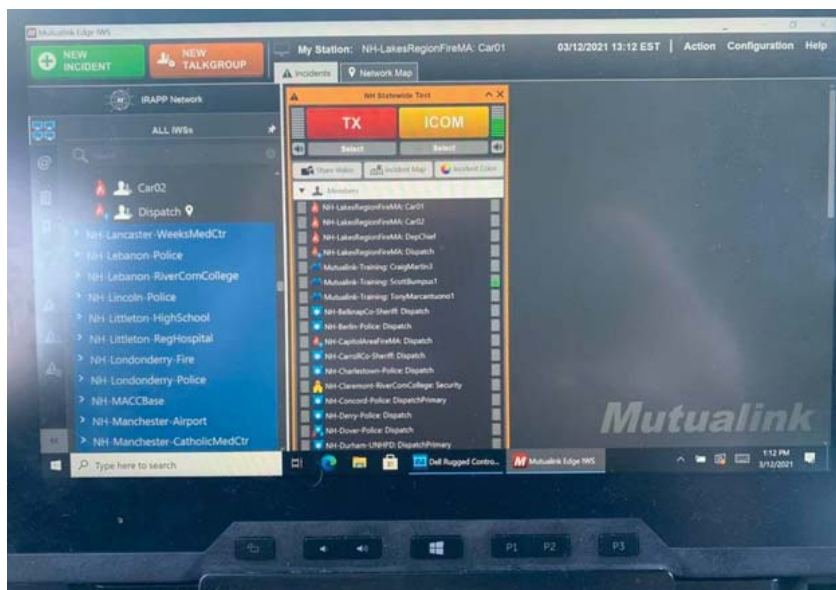
Connecting Communications Centers, Responders, and Others

In late December, the State of NH, utilizing COVID19 dollars was able to deploy Mutualink to all major dispatch centers in NH. The technology is also deployed at multiple other sites to include colleges, universities, National Guard sites, hospitals, and schools. Mutualink in New Hampshire brings interoperability and situational awareness to the next level.

With Mutualink deployed throughout the state it allows physical locations and field units to easily share radio, voice, video, and data between field units, dispatch centers, and other critical infrastructure between each other, and with multiple other entities. User networks are easily established amongst one or two users, to as many as one may need to mitigate an incident.

Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid has been provided this technology and has it installed in the Communications Center, Car1, Car2, and the cell phones of C1 and C2. We have also been able to interconnect LRMFA CH1, and LRMFA CH7 to the system. LRMFA Dispatchers have participated in statewide exercises each Friday in March where they along with other users in the state have shared radio resources, files, photos, and video assets.

At a recent fire in Laconia, we were able to stream live video back to the communications center. This tool will be invaluable during large-scale incidents, or weather events where situational awareness within the communications center will be critical in allowing the communications center personnel to better direct additional responders or anticipate their needs as incidents progress. A single person, with a cell phone or vehicle-mounted computer with a webcam, would be able to patrol an entire area doing damage assessment and stream the video back to a room full of the command staff, or the State EOC if needed. During large scale, multiple-day incidents, multiple dispatch centers, or multiple agencies will be able to create an "incident" within Mutualink, and then from one agency video resources or CCTV assets be able to stream that single feed of video to multiple agencies in one simple platform.



Even on a daily basis, routine communications between two dispatch centers, or amongst several routine communications can occur via a Push To Talk-style intercom within the system. From a Continuity of Operations perspective, with the right equipment and training, one dispatch center could forward their telephone calls to another dispatch center, and through Mutualink allow access to their radio systems across counting, across the state, or even across the country.

brain, body & mind.

COACH MEGHANN HEMPEL



As a first responder, you signed up to serve. It's your job, duty, and commitment. You take care of everyone while enduring the most challenging circumstances and stressors that are thrown at you, and yet you still get the job done, always. If you aren't taking the time to take care of yourself how do you plan on being your best for your loved ones and your community? How long will you be able to stay in this chronic state of fight or flight and not think it's going to impact your health and wellness? There's no sugar coating this one... it's only a matter of time until it catches up to you.

Your life and the life of others legitimately rely on your physical and mental well-being. I'd like you to take a quick moment to reflect and ask yourself whether or not you are confident you could drag your brother, sister, or a victim out of a burning building and make it out alive? Are you confident you could control your breathing and hold your air long enough to preserve your bottle if you're trapped, and have to call a Mayday? I hope and pray you don't ever have to encounter either one of those scenarios. But you must never get complacent and always be ready.

The selfless career that you chose in the fire service demands more from you than the average job, therefore you no longer have the choice to be average. Doing the extra work is essential. It's crucial that you're holding yourself to a higher standard, not only for you, but for your family, friends, and community.

As a firefighter, when it comes to living a long vibrant life, the odds are unfortunately against you. The high demands and chronic stress of the job, sleepless nights, and exposures to endless toxins, can add up throughout the years and be detrimental to your health. Not only do these contributing factors accelerate the aging process, but they also create a breeding ground for the early onset of chronic illness. Consequently, doing everything you can to reverse the ill effects of the job should be a top priority.

I understand that life can get extremely overwhelming and finding the appropriate work-life balance can be hard. Many of you are juggling multiple jobs, have families, and are trying to do it all. Unfortunately, burnout can become inevitable if the cards aren't played right. My wish for you is a life full of happiness and longevity not just now, but also long after retirement. In order for that to happen, it's imperative you're taking care of yourself mentally, emotionally, and physically. You owe it to yourself, and you deserve that! Being superhuman isn't always easy, but you are a superhero!

If you feel like you've been neglecting your health, I encourage you to start prioritizing it today. Health is wealth, and without it you have nothing. With that being said, in the next three issues of the Rural Hitch, I will provide you with guidance and strategies on how to live your best life yet. By implementing big, bold, lifestyle improvements you may just end up saving a life, and that life could be yours. Stay safe my friends, I look forward to talking to you again soon!

Biography from the Author: My name is Meghann and I'm so happy to be here! Life took a little detour, and I am now a retired firefighter/AEMT at the age of 32 due to an on-the-job injury. Although I lost my entire career I was afforded the opportunity to recreate myself and turn a negative situation into a positive one.

I'm a survivor of a traumatic brain injury, a recovering fitness and food addict, and a certified health coach and certified personal trainer on a mission. My deepest pains, struggles, and hardships have become my driving force to improve myself and empower others to do the same. I'm beyond honored to be in this space to share my passion for health and wellness with you in the months ahead.



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Our main service vehicle is a 2019 CV515 International with a Heavy Duty Service body w/crane, which is set up with an air compressor, motor oil, transmission fluid, gear lube, chassis grease, product delivery pumps and reels, tools and a more than modest inventory of replacement parts. Our fully- equipped road service vehicle is ready to handle your service needs in the station, or on the road. Staffed by EVT certified technicians.



Rumney Fire Department hosts area departments and New England Fire Training

The Rumney Fire Department recently hosted a multiple evolution training with New England Fire Training. Members from Rumney, and Firefighters from NH, Vermont, and Rhode Island trained together in search and rescue, man down mayday, limited access, room, and contents search training, door breaching, instructed by New England Fire Training. The training was designed for both the trained firefighter and the newest firefighter challenging them to use their skills in a controlled environment with multiple evolutions on several different props.

Fire Operations from the Telecommunicator's Perspective

By: Kellie Regan and Brian Searles

I think everyone can agree that there is nothing more exciting than when word gets out there is going to be live-fire training. The best way to really understand the true feel of the heat, the low visibility of the smoke, navigating your way through the layout of an unknown building, is to get yourself in there. The same aspect applies to those on the other side of the radio. The fire service has a vocabulary all its own. When a company arrives on the scene and gives a scene size-up of "...On scene, 2-story wood frame, fire showing from the A-B corner of the first floor with smoke pushing from the second floor; start the 1st alarm". Even though that message is getting repeated back from the dispatcher and the requests are being fulfilled, someone with no previous fireground experience and are not familiar with the terminology used or the process of responding to fire calls is asking themselves "What does that mean?"

Understanding the information being relayed on the radio is just as important for the dispatchers to know as it is for the companies in the field responding to the scene. Terms such as stretching a line, laying in, laying out, and setting up/dropping the rural hitch are frequently used terms that may not make sense to someone outside of the fire service. The ability to attend these types of training can be just as valuable to the dispatchers as it is to the responders in the field. Providing that firsthand experience of looking at the apparatus, watching the fire behavior, and seeing the crews working, builds the knowledge as well as the confidence for someone that has not seen this in the past.

Every department is different, and they do things differently, it is a huge advantage when you can get up close and see these differences in person. Being a dispatcher is more than just answering the phone, sending responders to calls, and making notifications. We feel a responsibility for the men and women of these departments and ensuring that they all have the information they need to keep their scenes safe for everyone involved.

Trust is a large part of what the fire service survives on. The trust that everyone involved in the incident is doing their job to the best of their abilities and their training. Trust is built from knowing each other and working together. Although we work together day in and day out neither side gets the opportunity to meet the faces of the voices on the radio. Attending training events allows that opportunity for the crews to meet and increase the comradery between the dispatchers and the companies in the field.



On Saturday, March 20, 2021, Moultonborough Fire - Rescue hosted a live burn training at 109 Red Hill Road. Dispatcher Regan and Dispatcher Searles were invited to attend as representatives for Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid but more importantly, this provided a huge opportunity for Dispatcher Regan to learn about the fire scene. Dispatcher Regan came to us from the United States Air Force and was previously a dispatcher at Tufts University. Without any previous fire experience, she had the ability to take this day and see in person the crews from Moultonborough, Center Harbor, Sandwich, and Tuftonboro operating as they would during an emergency event. In addition to watching the crews operate, Dispatcher Regan had the opportunity to see real fire and smoke behavior from the outside of the building. And through this, the chance to meet the responders that she talks to on the radio and establish that relationship with the field responders.

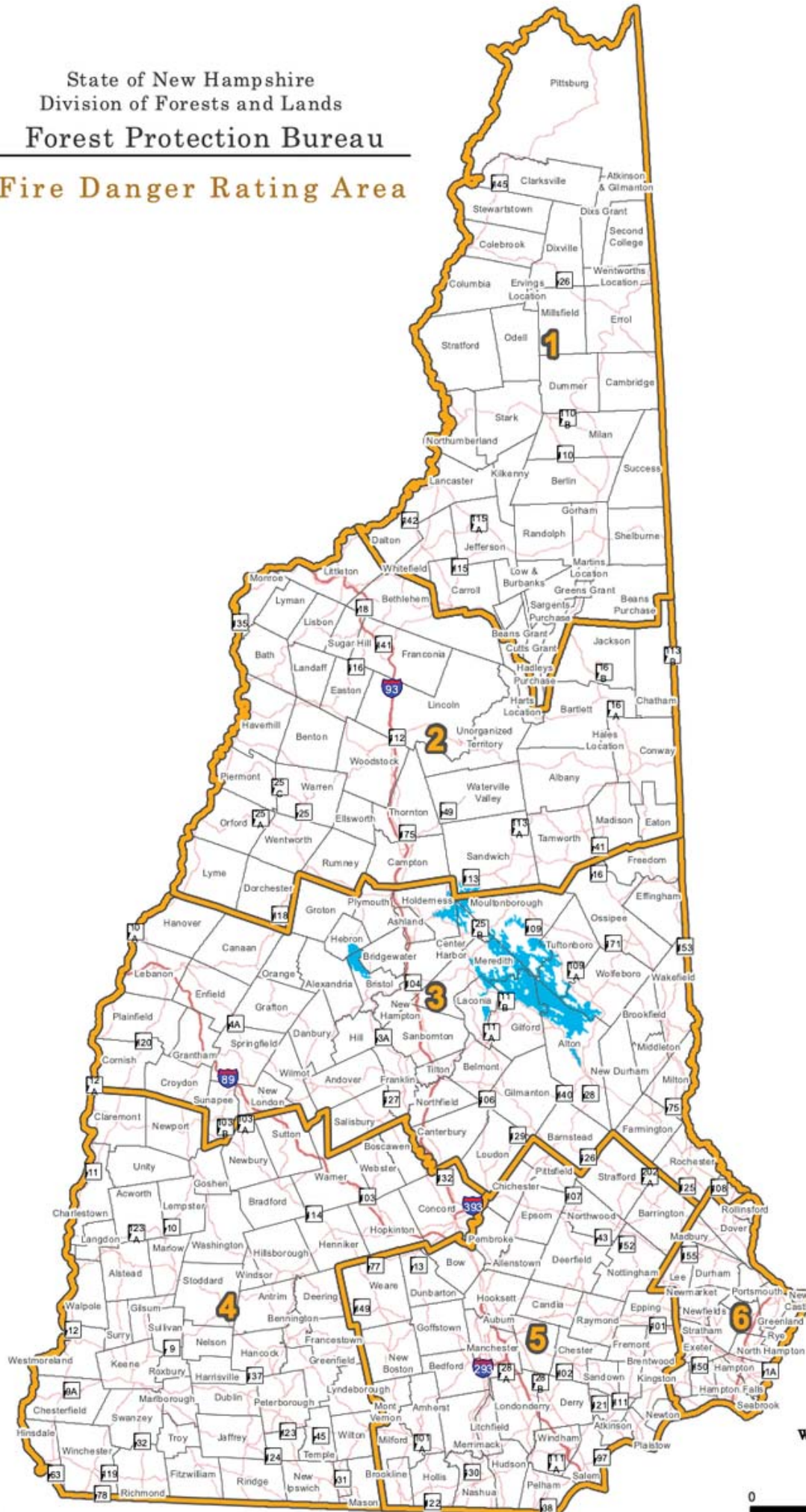
Thank you to Chief Bengtson for the invitation and Chief Goldman and Deputy Chief Steele for making the logistics work to allow us to attend this valuable training. There were a lot of things learned that can be used to produce a better product for our responders from the dispatch side of the radio.



This is a picture of Strafford's new 25A2. This 2020 Type 1-AD Lifeline ambulance on a 2020 F-550 Chassis from Specialty Vehicles Inc out of Plainville, Massachusetts is now the second ambulance in Stafford's fleet.



State of New Hampshire
 Division of Forests and Lands
Forest Protection Bureau
Fire Danger Rating Area



0 20 Mile

CELEBRATIONS

We want to take this opportunity to Congratulate Al Poulin on his appointment to Fire Chief for Barnstead Fire-Rescue Department. Chief Poulin has been the acting Deputy Chief for the Department for the last year. Chief Poulin brings over 37 years of experience to the Department. With over 37 years on the job Chief Poulin brings with him an immense number of skills, experience, and knowledge in the Fire and EMS profession. Chief Poulin has been a Barnstead resident for over 40 years and looks forward to serving the residents of Barnstead.

On behalf of the Belmont Fire Department, Chief Michael Newhall wishes to announce the retirement of Firefighter / Paramedic Gina Harris on April 1, 2021. Firefighter Harris joined the career ranks at the Belmont Fire Department in 2004. Gina began her career in 1996 with the Tilton Northfield Fire Department, before moving on to Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid. Gina was instrumental in building the student program at BFD, and shaped the minds and careers of many fire students. Thank you for your service. We wish you a happy retirement princess!

It is with great pleasure that the Franklin Fire Department announces the promotion of Alex Green to the rank of Captain/Paramedic. Alex will become the new "B" Shift captain on April 4th, 2021. Alex's military service and previous experiences will make him an excellent member of the Fire Department's management team. Firefighter Green began his fire service career in 2016 and has proved to be a valuable member of our department.

It is with great pleasure that we are announcing the promotion of Firefighter Aiden O'Brien to Master Firefighter and Fire Alarm Superintendent. Aiden has served the City of Franklin for over three years and has been able to find success by applying knowledge that he has gained from his previous experiences with the Hooksett and Tilton-Northfield Fire Departments. Firefighter O'Brien will assume his new role on April 4th, 2021.

The Franklin Fire Department would like to announce the retirement of Captain Bruce Goldthwaite. Bruce's last day with the City of Franklin will be on March 31st, 2021. Captain Goldthwaite has been instrumental for the last 19+ years, helping the Franklin Fire Department and Lakes Region grow. Bruce's demeanor, work ethic, and care for the Franklin community will be missed.

Franklin Fire Department welcomes FF/AEMT Cyle Moore on January 24, 2021.

Congratulations to Laconia Fire Department and Lieutenant Heidi Beulac. Effective 1/31/21 at 0700, FF/AEMT was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. She is assigned to Platoon 1, Weirs Station (E5/L2). Lt Beulac has served the Laconia Fire Department for 10 years. She has an AS from LRCC and a BS from PSU.

Congratulations to Laconia Fire Department Lieutenant Jeff Desrosiers on his retirement. Lt Desrosiers has worked at LFD for 25 years as a Firefighter/Paramedic and as a Lieutenant. Most recently serving as Lieutenant for Platoon 2, Central Station.

John Beland is the 2020 recipient of the Alida Millham Leadership Award. Recognized for his exemplary leadership and expertise during the COVID-19 pandemic. John is the former Gilford Fire Chief and LRMDA Deputy Chief. He has served the LRMFA District Selflessly his entire career, and we wish to congratulate him on this award.

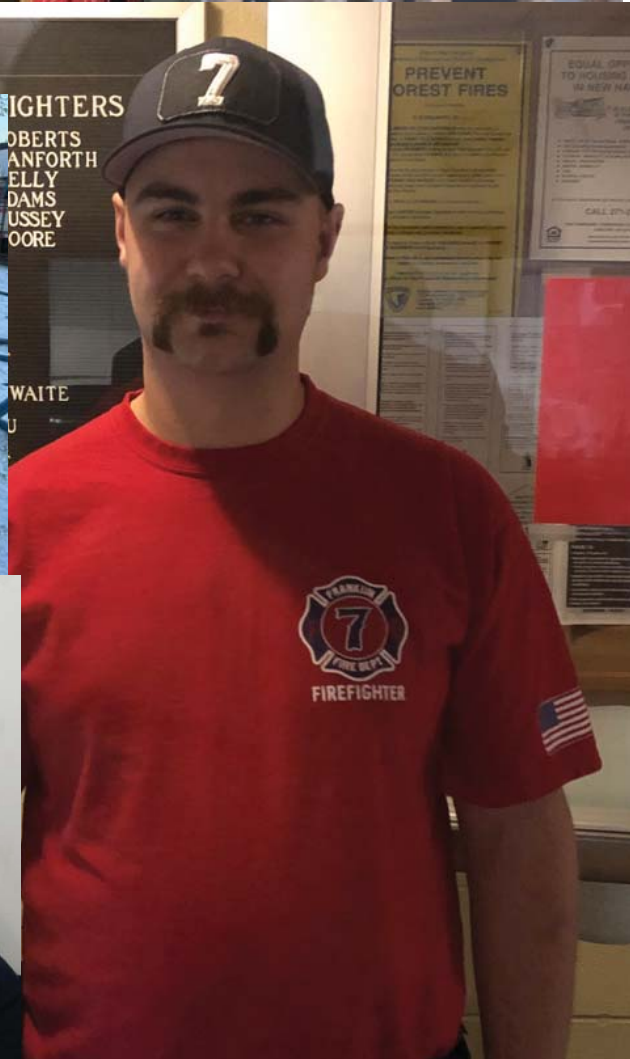
Dispatcher Conway was hired at LRMFA as a per diem dispatcher and while in training was promoted to a full-time dispatcher. Dispatcher Conway comes to our center with significant knowledge of the area as he is also a captain with the Center Harbor Fire Department.

With the acceptance of a SAFER Grant TNFD has added four new FFs to its staff. This brings the on-duty line compliment to one captain, one FF/EMTP, and two FF/AEMTs. The four new FFs are Travis Gosine, Zachary Marcou, Ryan Pelow Theodore Partington. TNFD also hired Ryan O'Hara FF/EMTP who filled a vacancy. Ryan came to TNFD from the Bedford NH FD with 7 years of experience.



**Congrats!!
John Beland
recipient of the
Alida Millham
Leadership Award**







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A CHANGE IN STRATEGY

By Chief Ken Erickson (Retired)



One of the more difficult decisions for an Incident Commander is to change strategy. This usually entails going from an offensive to defensive attack. A fairly tough decision for any fire officer is when to say enough and pull a retreat. There can be tremendous pressure not to change - from other officers and firefighters. "We've almost got this Chief" is a comment I have heard many times during my career. Pulling firefighters out of a building can be perceived as a sign of weakness. Too bad. You get paid to make tough decisions. Not changing to a defensive strategy can result in serious injury and even death to firefighters. And it seems more common today, that even after a good save, the building is torn down.

We have two basic attack strategies: an offensive attack, and a defensive attack. A transitional attack, in my opinion, is an offensive attack. The other major strategies are making rescues, protect exposures, confine the fire to the smallest area, extinguish the fire, conduct overhaul, ventilate, and conduct salvage (RECEOVS). The first five are in order of priority. Vent and salvage can be implemented as needed, or when appropriate.

There are many reasons to change from offensive to defensive. One of the most common is when your resource needs far exceed what is on-scene. In this situation you must start defensive unless there are lives in danger. Remember, once the occupants are out of the building you are primarily working for the insurance company. Are your actions really going to make a difference? There is nothing wrong with suppressing a fire from a safe position. Your main priority should be to operate as safely as possible. It is not your fault if you do not have enough people, or equipment, or water to make an aggressive offensive attack. Always go with safety in mind. Think of your firefighters as your children. As more resources arrive on-scene you can transition to an offensive attack.

Some of the other reasons to change to defensive attack are:

- The building is well-involved and there are no life hazards. Go defensive. Don't risk your firefighters for a loser.
- Your crews cannot locate the fire in a timely manner. If you cannot find the fire then no water is getting put on the fire and conditions are worsening. It used to be an old rule that you had 20 minutes before you thought about bailing out. That no longer applies because of light weight construction as well as the fire load and heat release rates. If you can't find the fire within a few minutes then you need to pull your crews out and start an alternative attack. It may require an outside attack for a few minutes to get the upper hand and then you reassess if it is okay to go back inside. It may require cautious ventilation, with hose lines deployed and ready to move. As the fire building is vented the fire's location will be easier to determine. You must have the hose lines in place and ready to hit the fire.
- If your crews cannot gain access to the building or fire area you need to watch conditions closely and think about hitting the fire from the exterior. Getting water into the heated atmosphere is what is important. A solidly locked door, or a fence surrounding a building, or a fire in the cellar are all reasons for delayed access. Get water on the fire from the path of least resistance.

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- If smoke is getting darker, thicker, denser, or increases in velocity you are getting ready to experience a very rapid change in fire conditions. Flashover is happening, or possibly a backdraft. If water is not flowing up toward the ceiling, then back out. This is an extremely dangerous condition. The only solution is to cool the atmosphere (the smoke). Venting will not release enough heat to prevent flashover. Venting will intensify the flashover. Cooling is the only alternative.
- Water problems are a concern for all of us. Laconia is very fortunate to have a great water system. However, hydrants are not spaced close together. And there are areas with no hydrants. When cities and towns have a water system, they in turn have many large buildings and many densely built areas. So even with good hydrants you can have water issues. If you arrive with just tank water and no back-up is close by then you need to protect your crews by hitting the fire as hard as possible. Knock down the fire and slow its progress; then consider going in to finish the job. It is unsafe to make an aggressive interior attack with a poor water supply, or with no back-up crews. In areas with no hydrants, it is wise to load up the initial alarm with several Engines as well as Tankers. This can easily put 4,000 gallons of tank water on-scene, which is a solid water source.
- Any time you have a fire that requires many resources, and you don't have those resources on hand, then you must consider a defensive attack, or a change from offensive to defensive. No department in the Lakes Region arrives on-scene with an overabundance of resources. Laconia sends six firefighters to the downtown area and can get about nine more within 10 minutes from Gilford, Belmont, and Weirs Station. That's probably okay for a single-family home, but it's not sufficient for anything bigger. They never hesitate to pull another alarm.



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Firefighter owned and operated

- Anytime you have a "bad feeling" about this fire, or it's simply a "Bad Building", go defensive. Trust your gut instincts. This is about protecting your firefighters. Think of them as family members. Is it worth putting my family at risk to fight this fire? The only time we should engage in high-risk fire attack is when lives are in danger.
- If you have no crews in stand-by then you should probably go defensive or limit the actions of the crews. Most of us never have a Rapid Intervention Crew (RIT) available in a timely fashion. I always tried to have a crew of two firefighters ready to move in any direction. They were not RIT. They could go anywhere to make conditions better or safer. You should always have at least a 2-person crew available in stand-by. (Interesting to think that larger departments would find the idea of a 2-person stand-by crew as unthinkable. They would want at least a 4-person company).

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- Any time fire gains access to void spaces, especially in lightweight construction, or if the building has unprotected steel, you need to quickly assess the operation. If the hose stream is not knocking down fire then pull the crews to a safer area. This may not result in a defensive attack, however, pull them back to a safer spot – behind a fire rated wall, in a protected stairway, etc. If you cannot hit this fire in the void quickly and get to all four sides to cut it off you must start backing away from the fire area.
- If you cannot properly vent the building, and crews are not making forward progress you will probably need to go defensive. You can let the fire self-vent and then reassess the attack. Or hit the fire with master streams to quench the fire. To continue to push firefighters in an untenable position will only result in injuries.
- It is very difficult to go offensive after you have started defensive. Consider how much water you have just poured into the building. Is it draining out, or is it accumulating inside. 10 minutes with a 2 ½" hose will place more than 20,000 pounds of water somewhere in the building. Another issue to consider is the hose stream doing structural damage. There is a difference between starting defensive versus transitional. Transitional attack is essentially an offensive attack starting from the outside.
- If the fire is getting ahead of, or above of your crews and you cannot cut it off quickly then start planning to go defensive. In this case, you'll need enough crews for multiple hose lines. The attack line, a back-up line, the line for the floor above, the line(s) to cut off the fire horizontally.
- A working cellar fire that cannot be vented, or you cannot get fast access – go defensive. There is no good way to fight a cellar fire. The best attack is from the same level – a bulkhead door, or a walk-out basement. Otherwise use any window available to cool the atmosphere and slow the forward progress. If you must go in from the first floor be very careful and have a RIT in place prior to going in. This is one of the most dangerous points of attack – above the fire. You'll need sufficient resources to push the attack hose line, and support the attack with back-up and fresh crews. Plus, you'll need crews to check for extension.

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- A MAYDAY will almost always result in pulling some crews out of the building. None of us will in all likelihood have adequate crews on scene to handle a MAYDAY and continue the attack. If the firefighter in trouble cannot be quickly found and removed then the attack must continue. If the attack is not continued, then the fire will continue to grow and produce more smoke and heat and threaten all firefighters inside.
- You suspect a building collapse.
- If a ceiling collapses that is a sign of structural deterioration. Do not ignore it. It could be caused by fire damage, hose streams, the weight of water, or is the structure moving.
- Fire extending, or threatening adjacent buildings require a defensive attack until you stop the forward progress of the fire. Then you can reassess and decide if an offensive attack is okay. Priority is to confine the fire and protect the exposures.

Trust what you see from the outside over what the crews inside are telling you. They have very limited vision and usually have some level of tunnel vision.

Anytime you change strategy you must conduct a roll-call and determine that all personnel are accounted for.

If you change to a defensive attack it is best to shut down smaller hose lines and place master streams into operation. This moves the firefighter further away from the building and increases the knockdown capability. One portable deck gun will far surpass the capability of multiple small handlines.

During my 39 years in the fire service I have witnessed dozens of building fires that we pushed crew's way too far and made what we thought was a great save, only to have the insurance company come in a week later and tear the building down. This is becoming very common in this day and age because of the concern of lawsuits over contaminated buildings and the cost to repair older buildings.

Protect your firefighters at all costs. 

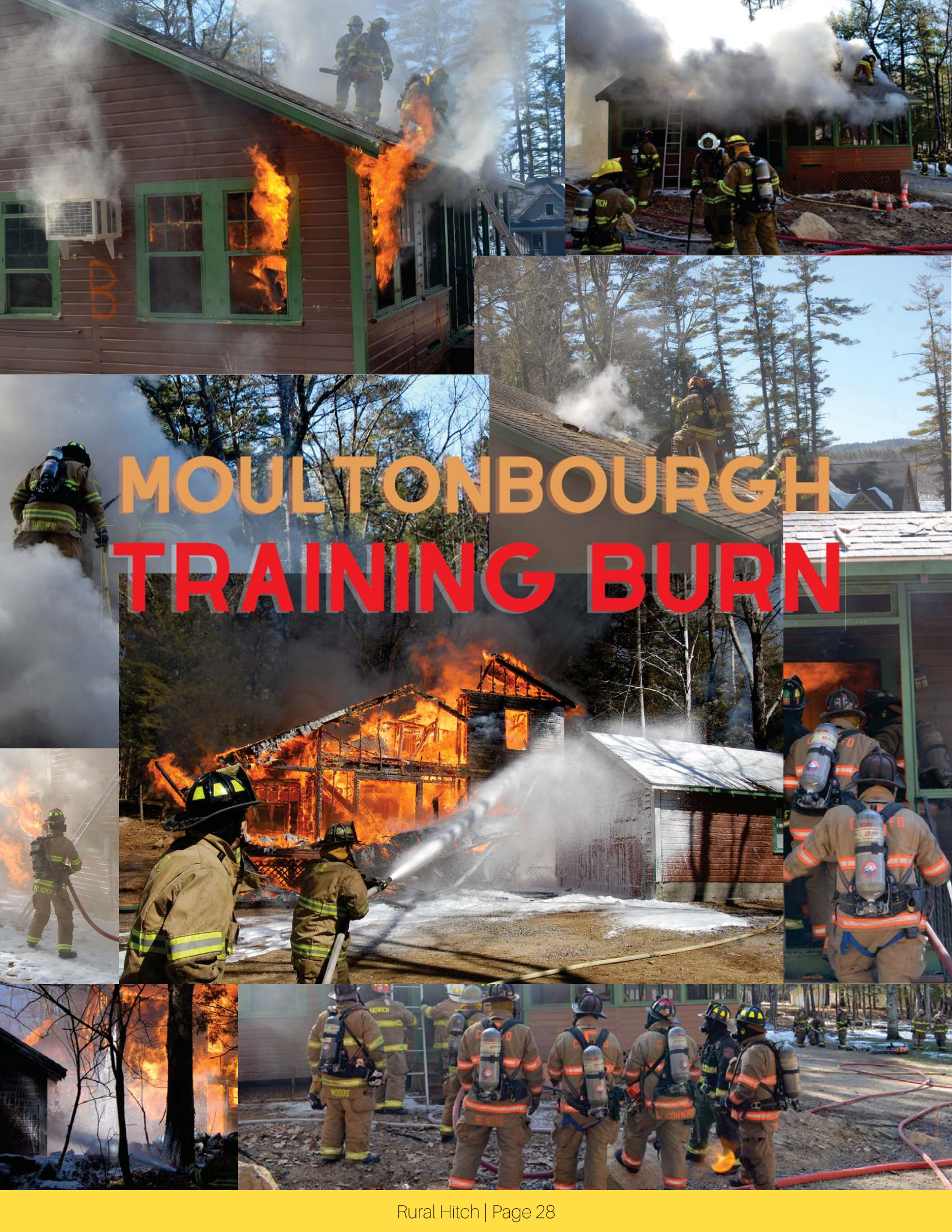
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MOULTONBOURGH TRAINING BURN

MOULTONBOROUGH TRAINING BURN

-Chief David Bengtson

Since 2009, the US Fire Administration has reported a decrease in fires, but a 90.6% increase in property losses over the same period. As fires have decreased, the opportunity for firefighters to get “on the job training” has decreased as well. Many departments, including Moultonborough Fire Rescue, have struggled to find realistic training for its members. A combination of environmental and safety concerns has significantly reduced the prospect of conducting live burns. In December of 2020, following the abatement of asbestos, Moultonborough Fire Rescue received permission to train in, and ultimately provide the demolition of, a house on Red Hill Road, along the shoreline of Lake Kanawatka.

The acquired structure was a two-story, type 5, unprotected wood-frame structure in excellent condition. Built in 1975, the 1,300 square foot house featured three bedrooms, two baths, a large living room, kitchen, and a ¾ wrap-around porch. It had a long roof with a reasonable pitch on the front of the building, making it ideal for vertical ventilation operations. The condition of the building, its interior and exterior layout made it an ideal training opportunity, very similar to many of the homes in Moultonborough’s response area. However, it also had a significant exposure issue with a single-car garage located 10-feet from the opposing wall and 6-feet from the porch.

Initially, the property owner was amenable to the possibility of losing the garage when the house was being burned. After finding that land-use regulations would not permit a new structure in the same location, it became apparent that saving the garage would be a priority if the burn were to come to fruition. Moultonborough has used CAF’s since 2012 and has had an excellent experience with exposure protection using compressed air foam, though never with a building this close to the fire building. With similar conditions existing in multiple locations around town, it was decided that proving that the department could provide exposure protection would become part of the training exercise. The objectives developed for the live burn training were Using this opportunity to determine the appropriate application and consistency of the foam and how often it would need to be applied to maintain the protective blanket of foam.

Members of the Department then began planning to create twelve burn evolutions with teams conducting fire attacks, backup lines, search, RIT, and vertical ventilation operations on every evolution. Each burn was pre-built to allow for evolutions to keep moving throughout the exercise and limit downtime. They determine water supply requirements for the burning building and the exposure, and a water supply plan was developed using 15 Tanker 1 and the porta-tank with 15 Rescue 3 supplying the backup lines. A burn date was set for March 20th, with firefighters from Moultonborough, Center Harbor, Sandwich and Tuftonboro participating. A short per-burn safety briefing, covering means of egress, known hazards, and the evacuation plan.

On scene, teams were divided up into groups by town and given a group number. Using a whiteboard each group was assigned a task with one group being in rehab on each evolution. Upon the signal, if the Ignition Team led by Lt. Woods and Littleton Fire Chief Mcquillen and assisted by Littleton Lt. Hartwell and Firefighter Ross, each group was deployed to fire attack, ventilation, search, back-up line, and RIT. Operations were conducted to simulate actual fireground operations with companies reporting completion of assignments, location of victims, and extinguishment of the fire.

Objectives for the training session were:

- Perform an interior attack with the appropriate attack techniques for the location of the fire. Communicate ventilation requirements and changing conditions to command.
- Conduct a search and rescue as a member of a team in obscured vision conditions locating all victims and removing them.
- Perform vertical ventilation on a structure as part of a team and retreats from the area when ventilation is accomplished.
- Protect exposures and landscape near and around the structure from ignition using hose lines and compressed air Class A foam.

During operations, Engine 1 served as the primary attack engine. Rescue 3 supplied the backup line and the supply line to Engine 1. The tanker supplied the porta-tank. Approximately 5,000-gallons of water were used during the entire session. The bulk of it being used to foam the exposed building when the main structure was being burned for demolition.

The protection of the exposure building (garage) was a success. The application and reapplication of a CAF's foam layer for approximately 30-minutes resulted in no damage to the garage. Some paint was bubbled, but all windows remain intact and undamaged. Inspection of the interior of the building with a thermal imager found the wall on the burn building side to be 100°.

Moultonborough Fire Rescue thanks the Sullivan family for donating their building for valuable training, Chief Mike Mcquillen, Lt. Tom Hartwell and Firefighter Quinton Ross of the Littleton Fire Department for their assistance, Stewart's Ambulance for providing an ambulance, and the Center Harbor, Sandwich, and Tuftonboro Fire Departments for their participation and reliable mutual aid.



LAKES REGION MUTUAL FIRE AID STATISTICS

	<i>Month</i>	<i>Admin</i>	<i>Emergency</i>	<i>Incidents</i>
2021 First Quarter	January	1209	2314	2115
	February	1310	2300	2057
	March	1753	2604	2250
	<i>Total for Quarter</i>	<i>4272</i>	<i>7218</i>	<i>6422</i>
	<i>Avg/Day</i>	<i>47.47</i>	<i>80.20</i>	<i>71.36</i>
2021 Second Quarter	April			
	May			
	June			
	<i>Total for Quarter</i>			
	<i>Avg/Day</i>			
2021 Third Quarter	July			
	August			
	September			
	<i>Total for Quarter</i>			
	<i>Avg/Day</i>			
2021 Fourth Quarter	October			
	November			
	December			
	<i>Total for Quarter</i>			
	<i>Avg/Day</i>			
2021	<i>Month</i>	<i>Admin</i>	<i>Emergency</i>	<i>Incidents</i>
	<i>Total for 2021</i>	<i>4272</i>	<i>7218</i>	<i>6422</i>
	<i>Avg/Day</i>	<i>47.47</i>	<i>80.20</i>	<i>71.36</i>

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