

FIRE LINK

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PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

by Jim Keating

It's really hard to believe, but here we are in the middle of the Holiday Season, 2004. This has been a very busy and successful year for the Missouri Valley Division. This has only been possible because of the sincere interest and dedication of this Association's Directors and Membership. In 2005, we will face new challenges and needs in the delivery of emergency services nationwide.

As a Division, we will strive to provide you with timely information and support necessary to accomplish your missions. As we set plans and goals to meet the needs of the future, we should consider some rather striking information related by our IAFC Director, Gary Briese, at the Strategic Planning Session held this October at Denver, Colorado.

Part of the information disseminated dealt with Fire Chief Succession within fire departments. Some facts of a recent study conclude that within the next five to seven years, 30 percent to 50 percent of fire chiefs today will be leaving their positions primarily because of retirement. The study goes on to say that, in 2004, 60 percent of the lead fire officers state they have no interest in applying for the position of Fire Chief. In comparison, in a study done in 2001, only 29 percent responded that they had

no interest in moving to such a position.

Some reasons cited for the lack of interest are high risk, poor position stability, pressure, hassles and a thankless job. So now is a good time to look within our own departments. Does your department have a mentoring program in place? Are we providing the necessary support to our officers to enable them to receive the training necessary to make the step confidently into a fire chiefs position? We are all aware that the officer training process can be a difficult, lengthy and costly procedure. In State fire officer training programs, if offered, many are inconsistent or incomplete.

Our mission, as chiefs and fire service leaders of today is to do all possible to assure that we assist in developing and promoting programs that will better prepare our leaders of tomorrow. The Strategic Planning Meeting in Denver was very well attended and excellently organized. I also was pleased that in many sections of the Strategic plans, work group identified the need to modify goals and rework strategies to accomplish current work items rather than selecting additional endeavors. Such thinking and future work to accomplish

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SEASON'S GREETINGS
and Best Wishes for a
Happy, Healthy, New Year!



Calendar of Events

January 7, 2005

Riverton, WY, 1:00 p.m.
Wyoming Fire Chiefs' Assn. Meeting

January 7, 2005

Riverton, WY, 3:00 p.m.
Wyoming State Fireman's Assn.
Meeting

January 7-9, 2005

Riverton, WY
Mid-Winter Fire School

February 10-11, 2005

Kansas City, MO
MVD Board of Directors' Meeting

February 25-26, 2005

Big Cedar Lodge, MO
Missouri Chiefs Conference

March 29-31, 2005

Ames, Iowa
Iowa Chiefs Conference

April 20-22, 2005

Las Vegas, NV
IAFC-Fire Rescue Med

April 28-30, 2005

Wichita, KS
MVD Public Education Seminar

July 6-8, 2005

Columbia, MO
MVD Annual Conference

August 11-14, 2005

Denver, CO
IAFC-FRI

International Director's Report

by Steve Westermann

It is hard to believe that another year has passed, seemingly at times, in the blink of an eye. And as all of you know, the busier you are, the quicker time goes. This past year has been like that for me, partly due to the campaign trail, and partly due to "normal business."

Fire-Rescue International is shaping up for August 9-13 in Denver. There will be a few changes that you need to be aware of. Like always, the conference will have two days of pre-conference seminars on Tuesday and Wednesday. On Thursday, there will be no opening session. Thursday will be for committee meetings, division breakfasts and seminars. Friday will be the opening session and the opening of the exhibit floor. The intent is to schedule nothing that interferes with the conference attendees' time on the exhibit floor. Missouri Valley's desire is to continue with our luncheon on Saturday. From a Board level, it is extremely hard for the officers to get to each breakfast that most of the Division's have. This way, there won't be as many other luncheons to compete for the officers' time.

There is also a special event on the streets of Denver on Sunday, August 14. Denver is hosting a Grand Prix event that will have several activities through the week, culminating in the actual race on Sunday, after FRI. All efforts have been made to make FRI and the Grand Prix complement each other, rather than compete with each other. There should not be a room problem since the rooms for Grand Prix attendees are located in south Denver, away from the conference center.

A challenge that the IAFC Board will face in the coming year is a governance issue. Currently the Board has a policy that any new sections, once they have reached the requisite number of members, may request a seat on the Board. However, all expenses will be at the cost of the section, not the IAFC. The cost may be an issue for a new section starting out, but the bigger issue is that of governance. The IAFC board currently has 16 members on it (five officers, eight divisions, three sections). The question

becomes at what number of members does a board lose its efficiency to govern. In the past, the Divisions were always the strength of the Board. With the potential of five more sections seeking seats on the Board, does that "water down" the influence that the divisions have in the Association? How should the Board operate if it becomes 21 members? I would appreciate any comments or thoughts that you may have.

Another issue that will be discussed in the Board's February meeting is what age should public safety officer benefits apply. PSOB funds were denied to a fourteen year old who was killed while riding to the fire station on his bike. The FireFighter Apprentice Act was filed at the federal level to authorize payment to the boy's parents. The IAFC has been asked to comment on the legislation in regards to the age issue. What will be discussed in February will not only be the low age, but also should there be an upper age limit. Several 78 to 80-year-old men were honored at this year's Fallen Firefighter ceremonies in

Emmitsburg. I believe all of them were on traffic detail at MVAs. Should there be an upper age limit also for PSOB and, if so, what is that magic age when we should just stay home? I would appreciate your thoughts on that issue to as I head into that meeting.

If anyone is planning a vacation in Orlando in the next year, I would urge you to stop in at EPCOT Center. Along with Liberty Mutual and the USFA's support, Disneyworld has built a fire safety interactive exhibit where 300 or so fire and safety hazards that are placed throughout a home. The visitor must then locate all of them. It is a wonderful fire prevention tool.

In closing, I want to thank everyone for their continued support. I am truly humbled by your kind words and actions. I really appreciated all the help in the campaign booth in New Orleans last August. I am very proud to be a member of Missouri Association of Fire Chiefs and the Missouri Valley Division. I hope everyone has a safe holiday season! □



Fire Science Instructor

Western Dakota Technical Institute is seeking applicants for a full-time Fire Science Instructor for our new Fire Science Program. A minimum of an Associate's Degree in a related area and at least five years experience as a structural and/or wild land firefighter with teaching and training firefighters. Training and background in course development is a definite plus. **This position is open until filled, but applicant screening will start immediately.**

Apply with an application, resume, copies of transcripts (officials upon hire) and three references to: Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, Rapid City Area Schools, 300 6th Street, Rapid City, SD 57701, (605) 394-4014.

For more information on this position and application process, visit our web site: www.westerndakotatech.org

COLORADO

by Jerry Rhodes, MVD State Vice President

Hot topics in Colorado center on the economy, federal grants, resource mobilization plan, and some outstanding education.

Statewide Resource Mobilization Plan is Operational

The Colorado State Emergency Resource Mobilization Program (CSERMP) is an all-risk system for the allocation, mobilization, and deployment of resources in the event of a disaster or local incident (other than wildland fires) that requires more resources than those available under any existing inter-jurisdictional or mutual aid agreement.

Implementation of the statewide resource mobilization database has been slow, but steady. A total of 151 fire departments (38.4 percent) have submitted complete information and 38 fire departments (9.67 percent) have submitted partial information. Law Enforcement, Public Works, and Health agencies are now loading data.

For more information, contact the Colorado Division of Fire Safety.

Colorado Information and Analysis Center

The Colorado Department of Public Safety has established the Colorado Information and Analysis Center (CIAC), which is Colorado's equivalent of a Terrorist Early Warning (TEW) Group. The Center is currently staffed on a 24/7 basis with representatives of various local, state, and federal agencies.

The mission of the Colorado Information and Analysis Center is to provide an integrated multi-discipline information sharing network to analyze and disseminate information and intelligence to key decision makers in a timely manner and protect the citizens of Colorado.

The CIAC will be preparing and distributing a daily report. This report is in addition to those bulletins and messages distributed by the Office of Preparedness, Security and Fire Safety. Unless instructed otherwise, the Division of Fire Safety will redistribute CIAC Daily Reports to fire chiefs.

FRI 2005

MVD Members mark your agency calendars for August 2005 Fire Rescue International. The opportunity to get our firefighters to this conference with minimal impact to our budget is most excellent. We are working hard to make your FRI 2005 Conference experience one to remember. There will be good deals for your firefighters who are just coming to see the most awesome fire service equipment show in the land, plus we are working with the Grand Prix of Denver for admission deals for that same weekend. IAFC Strategic Planning session was a good warm up for FRI 2005. Fire Rescue International 2005, Don't miss it.

That's it from Colorado. Keep 'em safe. □

Go-Go Columbia, MO

Keep your calendars open, July 6-9, 2005. Make plans to attend the 2005 MVAFC annual conference in Columbia, Missouri, hosted by the Columbia Missouri Fire Department.

"Show Me Leadership" in the Fire Service is the theme. The conference will be held at the Holiday Inn Select Executive Center. The rooms have been booked, and there's plenty of space for everyone. We haven't forgotten the golfers, 18 holes at the prestigious Columbia Country Club so don't forget your clubs! We look forward to seeing you in Columbia, Missouri, July 6-9, 2005!

Chief Markgraf wishes you all "Happy Holidays." □

Looking for a Challenge?

The position of 2nd Vice President of the MVD will be filled for a one-year term with the incumbent expected to move to the office of 1st Vice President the next year and then as president of MVD the third year. Duties of these positions can be found in the Division's Constitution & By Laws on the Web site.

If you wish to run, the deadline for filing with the Secretary of the Division is 120 days before the July 6, 2005, Annual Conference in Columbia, MO.

Chief Robert Dahlquist of Omaha is the only announced candidate for the 2nd Vice President position at this time. □

Fire Prevention Website

The office of National Fire Programs, US Fire Administration has a new Fire Prevention webpage up and running on the USFA website:
<http://www.usfa.fema.gov/subjects/fireprev/>

NEW MEMBERS

A BIG WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Chief Roger Bissen-Harlan, IA
Chief Michael Nessiage-Hiawatha, IA
BC Brad Goodroad-Sioux Falls, SD
BC Eric Hall-O'Fallon, MO
Chief Dave Penrod-Troy, MO
Sec. Ofcr James Zeeb-Kansas City, KS
DC Larry Copeland-Thornton, CO
Chief Roy Maruszak-Colo. Springs, CO

Chief Eric Sweeney-Evanston, WY
BC Joseph Sieverding-Sioux Falls, SD
AC Mitch Randles-Joplin, MO
Chief John Scanlon-Leavenworth, KS
DC Carl Cox-Sedgwich Co., KS
BC Katherine Ridenhour-Aurora, CO
CEO George Henrichs-Longmont, CO
BC Michael Gavin-Poudre, CO

Re-establishing the MVD/FC EMS Section

by Mike Thompson

Nationally in the Fire Service industry, the past two years or so has seen a marked decrease in published accounts of disputes between Fire Departments and private sector EMS providers. Many of these widely publicized disputes revolved around the cost and quality of service the private sector companies were and are able to provide and whether or not the fire service could do a better job providing transporting EMS in their respective communities.

There are a couple of reasons for these disputes becoming less prevalent. The first and foremost being that many of these disputes have ended with fire service agencies acquiring the responsibility for the EMS function they fought so hard to attain. There is another fact that cannot be ignored, some of these departments that fought so hard to acquire responsibility for transporting EMS are now letting it be taken out of their departments and placed with another entity with their blessing (on some level). In the last year, it has happened at both some very large departments and small ones as well. In addition, some departments both large and small that have acquired that EMS responsibility are struggling with how to provide a quality service that integrates will into what some consider to be the "traditional" fire service

mission.

We see this as the old "dog-chasing-the-car" syndrome, "Now that I caught it, what am I going to do with it?" Fire Departments of all sizes have been chasing the EMS "car" for years, and now that many of them have "caught" it, they don't know what to do with it. In many cases the private companies are not coming back, the remarkable cash flows that brought them into the EMS business to start with are just not there any more. Those cash flows will continue not to be there unless there is no one that is willing to provide the service, then communities will be forced to provide substantial subsidies to entities that are willing to provide EMS, and in that case we are likely to see the private companies reappear. The wise fire service manager would just as soon have that potential "subsidy" be part of his or her budget as opposed to being paid to a private company that is there only to reap the possible financial benefit. In an age of budget cuts, station closings and a general "do more with less" attitude by many local governments, it only makes sense that you aren't perfectly content to "do less with less." That attitude will be certain to eventually bring more budget cuts to what are essentially service-based

organizations like fire departments.

The fire service is at a critical crossroads with transporting EMS, now that in many cases we have it, can we do it?, can we do it well?, can we integrate it successfully into the traditional fire service mission? All of these questions need to be answered on a national level. This is a time when the modern fire service needs to devote more attention to the EMS issue instead of less considering that many of the private companies are out of the picture. We as an industry need to bring the same level of success to EMS that we have brought to the other things that have become part of the fire service mission over the years.

Whether you are in the transporting EMS business, just perform first response, or something in between, we are asking for your help in re-establishing the EMS Section of the Missouri Valley IAFC organization in order to re-focus national attention on these questions and discuss the many issues that revolve around fire service EMS of all types. We would ask any member that is interested to call or e-mail Mike Thompson at (605) 394-4180 or Mike.thompson@rcgov.org. □

Want to host a MVD/FC Conference?

Cities usually work with their Chamber of Commerce to host an Annual Conference. The next open year to host a conference is July 2007. If your department and city is interested, go to the web site and look at the RFP to get the requirements for hosting a conference.

Members of MVD Serving on IAFC Committees		
Communication Committee Chief Ken Hobbs—Lenexa, KS	Professional Development Committee Chief Steven Trunck—Longmont, CO	ICC Code Curriculum Marc Sampson—Longmont, CO
Constitution/By Laws Committee Chief Larry Donner—Boulder, CO	Program Planning Committee Deputy Chief Mark Lockhart—Maryland Heights, MO	ICC Code Action Marc Sampson—Longmont, CO Jeff Hudson—Shawnee, KS Roger Jensen—Iowa City, IA Gerald Ambrosecchia—West Overland, MO
Election Committee Deputy Chief Mark Bradford—Lawrence, KS	Terrorism & Homeland Security Committee Ret. Chief Ray Barnes—Aurora, CO	EMS Gary Ludwig—St. Louis, MO Dane Becker—Castle Rock, CO
Health and Safety Committee Chief Darrel Eastin—Salina, KS	CFOD Commissioners Chief Richard Carrizzo—Southern Platte Fire Prot. District—KC, MO Chief Gary Curmode—Sedgwick County, KS	Metro Chiefs Neil Svetianics—St. Louis, MO
Human Relations Committee Chief Lawrence Garcia		
Policy Review Committee Chief Rob Brown—Boone County, MO		

Update - Norfolk, Nebraska

The City of Norfolk is located on the Elkhorn River in the heart of north-east Nebraska. The area is comprised of a strong industrial and agriculture base with proud workforce and a strong work ethic. The City has recently attained a Class 2 ISO fire protection rating. The fire department was established by a group of volunteers in 1884 following a major fire that threatened the city's very existence in 1883. Today the paid and



paid-on-call department is headed by Shane Weidner, Fire Chief, with a complete staff of one Emergency Manager, two Assistant Chiefs, a Fire Marshal, three Shift Commanders, three Emergency Manager, two Assistant Chiefs, a Fire Marshall, three Shift Commanders, four Rescue Coordinators, three Fire Inspectors and 18 Firefighter/EMTs. The paid-on-call staff includes 30 Reserve Firefighters. The department also has a fully staffed Prevention Bureau of seven inspectors and technicians who manage the Planning, Zoning and Inspection services for the city.

Truck #5 is a 75-foot Smeal Aerial that was built on a Spartan Gladiator chassis with a 400 HP Detroit Diesel engine, and Allison transmission. The air-conditioned cab has an Xtreme Duty interior and seating for six firefighters. It

has a 2000GPM Waterous pump with a 400 gallon water tank and a 2001 FoamPro system with a 20 gallon foam tank. The aerial ladder includes the following features: Rescue Eyelets, Crash Protection, EMS compartment, Blue Light Rung Illumination, with mounted axe, pike pose and 16' roof ladder. The truck features an EHL Hose Bed, 10,000 watt Harrison Hydraulic Generator and all LED lighting.

Engine #6 is a Wildland Urban Interface pumper built on an International Chassis with a 200 HP International Diesel Engine and transmission. The truck was designed to interface with our rural response area and also provide coverage and hazardous materials incidents. It has a 750 GPM Waterous positive drive pump with a 500 gallon water tank and a 2001 FoamPro system. The unit has a sidewinder from mounted water turret

that is activated within the cab.

Engine#7 is a Class A city pumper built on a Spartan Metro chassis with a 350 HP Cummins Diesel Engine and Allison transmission. The cab is Extreme Duty and has seating for six firefighters. It has a 1250 GPM Waterous pump with a 500 gallon water tank and 2001 FoamPro system. The interior compartment is equipped with a full complement of advance life support EMS gear and is manned with a paramedic at all times.

Fire Station #2 is pictured in the background. The station is newly constructed and was opened for service in June of 2004. The station is a three-bay residential station manned by three firefighters, Truck #5, Engine #4 and Rescue #3 daily. It was built with wide support of the community to protect the city's growing Northern and Western edge. □



MVD Web Site

The Missouri Valley
Division web site is
www.mvdiafc.org

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

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current work items rather than selecting additional endeavors. Such thinking and future work to accomplish these goals will make the IAFC the most effective and prepared organization to meet the needs of the fire service today and in the future.

Speaking of strategic plans, the Missouri Valley Division will take an in-depth look at its plan this coming February 10 and 11, 2005. I strongly encourage you to provide your comments, suggestions, etc., to a Board

Member or State Vice President. Our work will only be as good as the input and direction we receive from you, our members. I encourage you to go to the Missouri Valley Web site and review the Division's current Strategic Plan.

Again, as we bring 2004 to a close, I want to thank the Missouri Valley membership for its continued support in making this Division the most successful in the IAFC.

The Officers of the Missouri Valley Division and myself wish you and your families a very happy and safe Holiday Season. □

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The Missouri Valley Division of Fire Chiefs is dedicated to supporting professional development of its members through educational, leadership, and networking opportunities, while serving as a liaison between State Chiefs' organizations and the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

How to be a GREAT Assessor 101

by Clint Petersen and Andy Rocca

The Iowa Association of Professional Fire Chiefs (IAPFC) and the Iowa Fire Service Training Bureau co-sponsored a pre-conference workshop entitled, "How to be a GREAT Assessor 101" on October 19, 2004. The workshop was conducted at the Fire Service Training Bureau in Ames, Iowa. The co-instructors for the workshop were Fire Chief Clint Petersen—Ames, IA, and Fire Chief Andy Rocca—Iowa City, IA. The Missouri Valley Division of the International Association of Fire Chiefs awarded a \$2,500 educational stipend to the IAPFC in order to make it possible for 50 students to participate in and complete the workshop.

The overall goal of the program was to train fire officers in Iowa to be candidate assessors or evaluators at future assessment centers. Fire departments in the state have been exchanging assessors between departments for a number of years; however, a number of chief officers have retired and it was increas-

ingly difficult to assemble a team of assessors for an assessment center.

The objectives of the program were to: 1) define the assessment center process, 2) obtain an understanding of terms used in the assessment center process, 3) develop skills in behavior observations, and 4) develop knowledge and understanding of evaluations and rating procedures, including how data are integrated by the assessment center staff. The workshop provided a detailed discussion on the determination of the skills necessary for successful performance including oral communication skills, written communication skills, leadership, interpersonal skills, planning and organizing, perception, and decision-making.

Assessing fire officer candidates for promotion has been with us for a long time. Whenever we are faced with hiring people for key positions, we attempt to evaluate them on a predetermined basis. The evaluation is usually com-

prised of at least four components: general knowledge, educational background, field experience, and actual skills and abilities. The first three components are relatively easy to evaluate and determine; however, the fourth component is much more difficult to determine. The assessment center process is designed to evaluate these actual skills and abilities. The assessment center is a comprehensive and in depth situation-based method for improving accuracy in evaluating the capabilities of existing or potential fire officers.

A special thanks to Assistant Fire Chief Bobby Mowles (retired), Oklahoma City Fire Department and Oklahoma State University for sharing his technical assistance and professional expertise in preparation for this workshop. □