

# FIRE LINK

• COLORADO • IOWA • KANSAS • MISSOURI • NEBRASKA • NORTH DAKOTA • SOUTH DAKOTA • WYOMING •

## The Next Generation

by John Mullin, President

The Fire Service will continue to face challenges long after this present economy turns around, after residential sprinklers are an accepted way of life and even after Line of Duty Deaths become an extremely rare occurrence (and this last one can't come fast

ning. "We have a large department and we expect 25 percent of our workforce to retire in the next five years. Most of those who will retire are our senior officers. What is your plan for replacing these leaders?" she asked.

"Give a promotional test," I replied.

*"The ultimate responsibility of a leader is to facilitate other people's development as well as his own."*

*Fred Pryor*

enough). It is leadership that will get us through our present crisis as well as those challenges we face in the future. Our task is to ensure the development of those future leaders.

I recently applied for another job. While I am pleased with the position I currently have, I was intrigued by the potential of greater challenge. The interview process was grueling, but I was feeling pretty comfortable, even confident during the experience. I thought I did great. Evidently, the assessors didn't and I was not offered the job. I cried like a baby. And then I re-assessed my performance.

The question from the assessors that caused me the most problem (but not the only one) dealt with succession plan-

Maybe I should have given that question more thought.

There are many resources that we can tap in order to develop our future leaders. IAFC has developed the Company Officer Leader Symposium. The National Fire Academy is still "best value" in attaining quality education. Many States sponsor Fire Officer Certification. All of these are good.

Recently, I was reminded of a no-cost tool. A Fire Chief from a Denver Metro department called and asked if I would be willing to host one of his Lieutenants for a day. His Lieutenant would shadow someone in my staff for eight hours to obtain a different perspective, get ideas on different ways of doing things. I assigned the Lieutenant to my

Operations Officer. After he finished his tour, I talked with him. I was surprised how valuable the Lieutenant thought this experience was for him. We were the fourth department that he had visited and he had developed an extensive list of ideas that he would bring back to his own department. I think his development was far more than just new ideas to bring home. This experience expanded his vision. And we are always in need of visionary leaders.

I want to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and I hope that you are all looking forward to the adventure of a New Year.

God bless us, each and every one. ■



### Calendar of Events

#### Colorado Fire Chiefs

December 2, 3, 4 • Keystone, CO

#### Commission on Fire Accreditation Workshop

January 5, 6, 7, 2011  
West Des Moines, IA

#### North Dakota Fire Chiefs

February 24, 2011 • Bismark, ND

#### Missouri Fire Chiefs

February 25-27, 2011  
Big Cedar Lodge • Ridgedale, MO

#### Wyoming State Chiefs

April 2, 2011 • Casper, WY

#### CFSI

April 6-7, 2011 • Washington D.C.

#### Iowa Fire Chiefs

April 12-14, 2011 • Ames, IA

#### MVD Conference

July 13-15, 2011 • Wichita, KS

#### IAFC - FRI

August 23-27, 2011 • Atlanta, GA



Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy New Year!

# Citizen Assist Program

by Richard Gist, Ph.D., Principal Assistant to the Director, Kansas City, Missouri Fire Department

We've all met them—folks whose 911 calls come from a real need for help, but not really the kind we're equipped to deliver. Maybe it started as a variation of "I've fallen and I can't get up" but you find on arrival a person whose needs and condition seem to require a level of home care that just isn't being provided.

Maybe it's a "frequent flyer" whose multiple calls are an indicator that basic care needs aren't being met and we're having to fill a gap we're not set up to fill. Maybe it's a call that brought you into a situation where social services assistance is required for problems outside our fire and EMS mission. Maybe it's something you know ought to be dealt with but you don't know who ought to deal with it. The Citizen Assist Program provides Kansas City area fire and EMS providers a resource they can activate quickly and simply to pick up the ball and help those callers get the assistance they need.

Firefighters and EMTs see people in contexts that most helping professionals no longer see. We come to help them where they are, squarely in the middle of whatever difficulties their lives contain. As a result, we see the problems that

surround whatever problem led to their call. All too often, though, there seems to be little we can do to help. We carry defibrillators for malfunctioning hearts, respirators for struggling lungs, bandages for open wounds, and splints for broken limbs—until now, we've had no tools for shattered hopes, struggling

living, malfunctioning systems, and gaping tears in the fabric of care. More than \$1 million has been provided by REACH, the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to fund its growth and expansion over three years. Operation of the program has been moved to United Way of Greater Kansas

City's regional 211 program to provide a wider range of expertise and help secure its future.

The program has already served more than 1,250 citizens in need and its utilization rate is growing steadily as other regional jurisdictions have entered the program. In the overwhelming majority of cases, system reliance has been drastically curtailed after the first referral—so much so

that providers sometimes call to ask if CAP social workers have updates on "frequent flyers" they used to see almost daily. Their "disappearance" is almost universally due to very positive outcomes: A formerly bedridden morbidly obese client in one jurisdiction is now ambulatory, working from home, and caring for his children; a severely disabled and addicted former caller graduated from college in May. In many cases, appropriate home care and proper medical equipment have eliminated the need to call 911 for help. A direct feedback system lets referring firefighters and EMTs learn the result of their intervention in very close to "real time," helping turn encounters that once contributed to frustration and burnout into a rewarding part of the job.

KCFD is proud to have received the IAFC International Award for Fire Service Excellence for this project and is anxious to share it with other fire and EMS agencies. For more information, contact Dr. Gist at (816) 784-9242 or e-mail at richard\_gist@kcmo.org. ■

*We carry defibrillators for malfunctioning hearts, respirators for struggling lungs, bandages for open wounds, and splints for broken limbs—until now, we've had no tools for shattered hopes, struggling lives, malfunctioning systems, and gaping tears in the fabric of care.*

lives, malfunctioning systems, and gaping tears in the fabric of care.

Just a couple of years ago, calls like this typically ended with saddened but helpless heroes doing what they could to stabilize whatever problem brought them there and then leaving with a gnawing sense that they were stranding people in a situation that would only get worse. Repeat calls were the norm. But in Kansas City, there's now another tool on the rig. With one simple request, firefighters can activate a remarkable program to bring social workers and community health nurses to meet these callers, sort through their many needs, and start applying the resources our community has to offer to begin turning their situation in a better direction.

The Citizen Assist Program was conceived by Dr. Richard Gist, principal assistant to KCFD Fire Chief Smokey Dyer, as a way to allow firefighters and EMTs to turn their observations into action. Initiated as a partnership between KCFD and the Visiting Nurse Association with pilot funding from the REACH Healthcare Foundation, it has now grown into a metrowide program

## Fire Link Correction

Last issue, the *Fire Link* ran the wrong name and information for the Iowa State Director. Please change the contact to:

**Chief Don Cox**

Box 65320 Ashworth Rd.  
West Des Moines, IA 50265  
Phone 515-222-3420  
Fax: 515-222-3379  
don.cox@wdm-ia.com

# Notes from South Dakota State Fire Chief's Association Annual Conference

by Chief Mike Maltaverne

Chief officers from around the state of South Dakota gathered in Chamberlain for two days to meet one another, network, discuss emerging issues and hear from retired Houston fire captain Larry Damrell (keynote speaker) who gave a lively presentation on leadership and the importance of strategic planning for the fire service. South Dakota being a very rural state with a population of less than 800,000 offers fire chief's very unique challenges and this forum was a great opportunity for fire chiefs to gather and share ideas and solutions to similar issues.

In attendance was IAFC MVD President John Mullin from Littleton, CO who spoke on the current status of the

IAFC's Missouri Valley Division and benefits of becoming a member. Also in attendance was Crosby Grindle, NFPA NW Regional Director, to do a presentation on the latest reports issued by the NFPA in the last year and offer his assistance to the Association.

A great deal of discussion took place about HB 1216 that was passed during the 2010 South Dakota state legislative session. This bill essentially removed the decision making authority from the local municipalities to adopt a residential fire sprinkler ordinance for single family dwellings. This was a blow to those growing communities within the State that were seeking a proactive approach to added fire protection through the adop-

tion of a residential fire sprinkler ordinance. It was agreed upon by those in attendance that the Association needed to be heard on the state level when matters of fire safety were in question.

Other topics included:

- Emerging issues in EMS
- Report from SD Fire Marshal Al Christie
- Report from Crosby Grindle (NFPA NW Regional Director) on recent reports from the NFPA
- IAFC MVD report from SD Rep. Mike Maltaverne (Rapid City)
- Round table discussion on Residential Sprinkler Ordinances led by Tim Behlings (Rapid City) ■

## Update on the Wyoming Fire Chiefs Assn's Assistance to Firefighters SAFER Grant

In 2009 the Wyoming Fire Chiefs Association received an Assistance to Firefighters SAFER Grant in the amount of \$998,730. This grant has the specific goal of increasing the number of appropriately trained volunteer firefighters throughout the state, thus improving response times, and increasing the number of personnel arriving on first due apparatus.

Since receiving the award in 2009, the grant has provided the following recruitment and retention results:

- 256 Individuals have received immunizations and/or physicals
- Radio spots and advertising around the State of Wyoming
- Establishment of a web-site location where people can submit their information if they are interested in volunteering
- 44 "leads" sent to local fire departments of people interested in volunteering
- 45 Individuals given college scholarships covering books, fees and tuition
- Helped establish and support an

explorer post program in Sweetwater County

Paid registration/tuition for the following:

- 366 individuals who attended Cody Fire School
- 89 individuals who attended Wheatland Fire School
- 62 individuals who attended the Northern Wyoming Wild Land Fire School
- Covered the travel expenses of 26 individuals who attended Riverton Mid-Winter Fire School
- Covered the travel expenses of 12 individuals who attended the Northern Wyoming Wild Land Fire School
- Covered expenses of over 90 individuals to attend practical firefighter training at the Wyoming Fire Academy
- Covered all expenses for three separate live fire Positive Pressure Attack courses
- Paying for the majority of expenses for the 2010 Chief Officer Symposium

Planned expenditures for the grant prior to its closure in April include:

- Covering the registration for all volunteers attending the 2011 Mid-Winter Fire School and Northern Wyoming Wild Land Fire School
- Covering expenses for the 2011 Chief Officer Symposium. This includes the delivery of an Everyone Goes Home Train the Trainer Course
- The continuation of scholarships, physicals, and immunizations

The Wyoming Fire Chief's Association and the fire service throughout the State appreciate and thank the State of Wyoming Fire Marshals' Office for its administration of the grant. I strongly urge all fire service personnel in the State to take advantage of this very rare and exciting recruitment and retention tool before it expires on April 29, 2011. Spread the word of this grant and the need for more firefighters to the citizens in your communities so that we can increase the number of trained volunteer firefighters in the State of Wyoming. ■

# Professionalize Your Fire Department for \$75

by Gary E. Curmode, Fire Chief, CFO/CMO/EFO, Sedgwick County Fire District, Sedgwick County, KS

The economy has been in a downward spiral. How does the fire service respond?

It is imperative that the fire service continue to be progressive, even when the economy and citizens are demanding to cut taxes. There are several ways to do this:

- Improve your ISO (Insurance Services Organization) rating
- Increase your customer service
- Increase training – Training is an investment, not an expenditure. One idea learned at a seminar, training school, or conference can reap benefits of several thousand dollars or more in cost-effective programs and safety.

The Commission on Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) sets up a framework for a fire department through a book called FESSAM. There are 43 total criteria, each of which is further broken down into 253 detailed performance indicators. Many agencies are skeptical, wary, afraid, and intimidated by this process. You should not be. It is a valuable tool that a fire department can invest in for about \$75 a year. This is a framework, a blue print for a fire department. No matter whether it is a one station or multi station fire department, it is the model that all fire departments

should strive for.

If all 31,000-plus fire departments in the U.S. followed this manual, the foundations for all fire departments would be stronger, and they would be more accountable to the citizens they serve. Regardless, if you are a professional volunteer, professional combination, or a professional career department, this can be an improvement for your department. It is worth the money and time to professionalize your fire department. Even if there is no desire to go through accreditation, this manual has performance benchmarks that set the standard for fire departments to strive for.

This economy is uncertain, but progressive leaders in the fire service look at it as an opportunity. In the not-so-distant past, the fire service could rely on tradition and the support of its citizens. While those are still important, our citizens are demanding data on our responses (standards of cover), a five-year financial plan, a risk analysis plan, a strategic plan, and ways to measure the efficiency of their fire department. They expect and deserve the same information as private industry is expected to provide. Fire chiefs may need to go to their community groups to “sell” the need for a professional program to evaluate and improve the fire service deliv-

ery system in their jurisdiction.

Anyone can find the funding for this superb program. It is estimated in the next five years, that fire departments will lose anywhere from 20 to 30 percent of the funding from their budget, if they do not professionalize more than ever. This includes expanding customer service in both emergency and non-emergency response(s) in fire and the EMS delivery system.

Hopefully, this article has motivated you to explore this process further, and will show your constituents what a fine service you provide for the dollars committed.

For information go to [www.publicsafetyexcellence.org/agency-accreditation/about-accreditation-cfai.aspx](http://www.publicsafetyexcellence.org/agency-accreditation/about-accreditation-cfai.aspx) ■

## News from Iowa

by Chief Don Cox

The Iowa Association of Professional Fire Chiefs held their Fall Conference in Ames, Iowa on October 13th and 14th, 2010. New Officers were elected- Don Cox (West Des Moines) remained as the current Past President and will continue to serve as the MVD Director for Iowa. Newly elected President Bob Platts (Mason City) and Director Terry Jackson (Marion) were appointed to the Iowa Board of Officers. The Chiefs worked on their 2011 legislative agenda and will once again, be closely monitoring the Home Builders’ Association for potential negative residential sprinkler activity. As always, an active “round table” discussion ensued where Chiefs from around the State of Iowa shared ideas or events that others can learn from. The Iowa Fire Marshal’s Office has launched an aggressive smoke detector campaign (100 years and 100 percent) and many departments throughout the state are installing smoke detectors for residents that still need them. ■

### NEW MEMBERS

#### A BIG WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

- Chief David Luers – Fort Dodge, IA
- Assistant Chief Steve Bailey – Independence, MO
- Deputy Chief Bill Pater – Derby, KS
- Fire Supervisor Bruce Brazzle – Westmoreland, KS
- Assistant Chief John Niehaus – Rapid City, SD
- Battalion Chief Neil Rosenberger – Golden, CO
- Chief David Schipper – Le Mars, IA
- Battalion Chief Jeff Helm – Sioux Falls, SD
- Assistant Chief Brian Hendricks – St. Louis, MO
- President Randall Sullivan – Northglenn, CO
- Chief Tyler Lambert – Woodland Park, CO
- Chief Christopher Thompson – Carthage, MO
- Chief Randy Leach – Mesa, CO
- Battalion Chief Russell Austin – Breckenridge, CO

# News from Colorado

by John Bales

Greetings from the Rocky Mountain Region and Colorado. Colorado was very proud to host the 2010 Missouri Valley Fire Chiefs Conference in July in Colorado Springs. It was a great conference and our thanks go to the Colorado Springs Fire Department for hosting the conference. Congratulations to our new Missouri Valley President Chief John Mullin of Littleton, CO. We look forward to seeing all of you again in Wichita, KS in 2011.

Just when we thought it was safe to go all out for economic recovery, along come our friends who placed three initiatives on Colorado November's ballot that will severely cut taxes, eliminate public debt, and reduce auto registrations. Members of the Colorado State Fire Chief's Association know that Amendments 60, 61, and Proposition 101 are bad for the State's fire departments.

Amendment 60 is a constitutional amendment designed to limit how taxes are raised and greatly reduces property taxes, including those used to fund fire departments. The loss of these tax dollars will mean the lack of proper funding for fire apparatus, safety equipment, and greatly reduce the ability to pay for firefighters in a state that is already well below the national standards for firefighter staffing.

Amendment 61 is a constitutional amendment measure that would make sweeping changes in how the state and local governments can use and issue debt. It would limit the amount of debt issued by local governments, require all local debt to be approved by the voters in a November election, and require local governments to cut their tax rates equal to the average annual debt payments as debts are repaid.

Proposition 101 is a proposed statutory change that would reduce the State income tax, various motor vehicle fees and taxes and fees on telecommunication services. When fully implemented, the provisions of the this proposal would reduce State income tax revenues, State and local revenues from a range of sales taxes and vehicle fees, and State

revenues from telecommunications charges and fees.

The Colorado Fire Service cannot afford this massive blow to safety. These cuts are far too extreme and could jeopardize the communities we are so proud to serve.

On September 11 we were once again reminded of the tragic loss to our country and the fire service as we once again remembered the 343 members of FDNY who perished on that date. In honor of 9/11 the State of Colorado had various events scheduled. Two of those events were:

- Colorado Rockies Firefighter Appreciation Game. A portion of the ticket sales went to the Colorado Fallen Firefighters Foundation.
- The 2nd Annual 9/11 Memorial Firefighter 14'er Challenge. On Mount Quandary, CO, we remembered the fallen heroes of 9/11 in a uniquely Colorado way by hiking one our most challenging and beautiful scenic areas and met brothers and sisters from many area fire departments. All proceeds for this event went to the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. For more information go to: <http://www.firefighter14er.com>

On a final note, the Denver Fire Department named a new Fire Chief to replace retired Chief Jim Sestrich. Nineteen-year veteran Assistant Chief Eric Tade took over on October 1, 2010 as the new Fire Chief.

Many of you have met Chief Tade during the two FRI conferences held in Denver in 2005 and 2008. Eric was the Denver Fire Department liaison to both of those conferences and a part of the IAFC's convention planning group. On a personal note I have known Eric for 35 years and can still remember when I coached him in youth football for three years. We wish him well in his new duties and know he will be an active member of the Colorado State Chief's and the Missouri Valley Division of the IAFC. Congratulations and well wishes to Chief Sestrich and his family on an outstanding fire service career. ■

## 2011 Winter Fire School

The University of Missouri Fire and Rescue Training Institute's (MU FRTI) Winter Fire School is the premier annual fire service event and plays host to the largest gathering of emergency professionals in Missouri. Addressing the issues and challenges that are critical to all emergency services, Winter Fire School provides in-depth workshops and courses for individuals in their profession.

MU FRTI's Winter Fire School, world-class Equipment Exposition will be held at the Holiday Inn Select Expo Center. More than 100 exhibits of the latest emergency response products, services, technologies and solutions will be on display. Get your questions answered by professionals on apparatus, turnout gear, extrication tools and much more.

<http://mufrti.org/winterfs11/>

## Save the Dates!!! Wichita Conference

Plan to attend the 69th annual conference of the Missouri Valley Division of the International Association of Fire Chiefs. The host of the 69th conference is the "All American City" of Wichita, Kansas. July 13-15, 2011 we will gather to promote fire service leadership from the "Heart of America." The 2011 conference will feature industry leading speakers across the country. Save the date today and look for additional information in the March Newsletter. ■

# “Go for the Gold”

by Gary E. Curmode, Fire Chief, CFO/CMO/EFO, Sedgwick County Fire District, Sedgwick County, KS

Somewhere in everyone's past, people had a vision, a dream, a wish, to go to the Olympics, the Pan American Games, or the World Cup as a participant. Very few can achieve that in sports. But even if you are an adult now, that opportunity is there every year. Interested? Want to go? Want to achieve that medal?

Here is how! Your professional goals, your personal goals, your fire department goals, can be that medal that you receive every year. Set challenging benchmarks, finalize that strategic plan, meet and even surpass those goals you have set. If you even have a measurable degree of success, you did not fail...you succeeded that much. Review, modify, try again. You got your medal.

Steps/Goals to reach that medal may be a multitude of things:

**Firefighters**

- Know your FF1, FF2 skills; become certified
- Know your answering district, your equipment, your apparatus
- Become IFSAC certified in driver/operator
- Complete your fire science certificate
- Complete your Associates degree

**Lieutenants/Captains**

- Continue to gain experience from your alarms that you respond to: EMS, Fire,

Haz-Mat, Technical Rescue, Water Rescue

- Complete supervision and management courses
- Continue to build upon your AA degree
- Become a CPSE, Fire Officer (FO) credentialed officer working towards your B.A. degree
- Attend National Fire Academy and Emergency Management Institute classes

**Division Chiefs**

- Complete the B.A. degree, start towards your Masters degree
- Consider the EFO (Executive Fire Officer) program at the NFA
- Credential in CPSE, CFO, CMO programs
- Continue to build upon your practical “hands-on” experience

**Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal/Fire Chief**

- Never stop learning! Get involved!
- Become an IMT member (Incident Management Team)

All firefighters, all ranks, each of the goals that you set, you can medal! Many times when the pay incentives are not there due to budget constraints or a poor economy, the pride is still there, and such an overlooked tool, as your performance evaluation, still requires maximum effort to excel. When a person does this, it is very satisfying within, and very worthy

of the Gold Medal. Set the bar high, challenge yourself to be a better firefighter/fire officer each and every year of your career.

The fire service is dynamic and always in a state of flux. Be part of that change. You owe it to your fellow firefighters, your department, your elected officials, and especially your citizens.

When you succeed on these goals, celebrate and savor the win, the victory. Enjoy it, remember the hard work it took to achieve, and then put it on the trophy shelf. Why? because tomorrow starts anew, and success cannot be achieved on past laurels.

Every year I set goals on my personal health, fire department drills and simulations, strategic plan of the Fire District, and career development. I stand on that Award stand many times a year, but the difference is there is no audience, no filled track stadiums, no TV/radio/media – just me, myself, and I. I visualize that medal being placed around my neck. That motivates me on my other goals.

So, in 2011, why don't you join me on the awards stand at the Olympics? Completion of any goal is a medal by itself. Good luck, and I wish you continued success. ■

## MVD 2nd VP 2011 Candidates

Any MVD member in good standing can run for the Office of 2nd VP of the Missouri Valley Division at the 2011 MVD Conference in Wichita. Members must file with the Division Secretary by March 12, 2011. Chief Gary Curmode of Sedgwick County, KS is the only announced candidate for the Office at this time. [See June 2010 *Fire Link* for Chief Curmode information] ■

### Iowa to Host Commission on Fire Accreditation International Workshop Series

*West Des Moines (Iowa) will be hosting a Workshop (3 days) in January put on by the Commission of Fire Accreditation International. The workshop is required for any department wishing to enter the Accreditation process or have personnel become peer assessors. It is also a great workshop if you are “thinking” about accreditation because you will know exactly what will be required after completion.*

**Self Assessment Workshop – January 5-6, 2011**  
**Standards of Cover (Basic) Workshop – January 7, 2011**

**Workshop Registration Fees & Location**

**Self Assessment Workshop (2 days) \$495**  
**Basic Standard of Cover Workshop (1 day) \$325**  
**Both Workshops (3 days) \$650**

**Fire Station #17, 1401 Railroad Ave., West Des Moines, IA 50265**  
**Contact Fire Chief Don Cox**

**For registration information: <http://publicsafetyexcellence.org/news>**

# News from Nebraska

by Chief Bill Bowes

The Nebraska Fire Chiefs Association met in mid-October in Chadron. We were honored to have the Missouri Valley Division President, Chief John Mullin.

Chief Mullin spoke with the conference attendees and had the opportunity to visit individually with many Chiefs there. Our thanks to him for taking the time to visit the Cornhusker state.

Here is a summary of topics covered during the Association's meetings:

- The procedures and policies for conducting prescribed burns are in the process of changing under state law. The Legislature is reviewing the matter and we expect modifications to be introduced in the next legislative session in early 2011. The State Fire Marshal's Office is involved in the process.
- Because of state budget concerns,

the State Fire Marshal has been forced to reduce the services it provides and cut positions. This ultimately will have an impact on the fire service statewide. The Association will be working to convince lawmakers of the importance of the training and expertise that the office provides. The Training Division of the SFM is busy conducting several NFA Direct Delivery classes across the state in addition to the regular classes they teach. The work this office does is crucial to all fire departments in the state, but especially so for the smaller rural departments.

In other state news, the Legislative Committee dealing with the adoption of the 2009 IRC held a public hearing on Friday, November 19. During the last session, a bill was introduced to remove the

residential fire sprinkler portion of the code and to prohibit its implementation statewide. The fire service and related industries banded together and mounted a vigorous argument in opposition to this bill. Fortunately, the bill did not make it out of committee. There was an interim study approved that was charged with answering several questions about the impact of the code on the housing industry. Several pro-sprinkler groups devoted a great deal of time and energy to put a report on the study questions together for the committee. The hearing on the 19th gave both sides of the issue a chance to verbalize their positions. We expect that the home builders will once again try to get a bill through that will gut the code. We'll work hard to prevent that from happening.

We in Nebraska would like to wish everyone a very safe holiday season and especially a Merry Christmas! ■

## Fire Rescue Group Purchasing Organization Benefits all Fire Service Members

by Jack Taylor

Greetings from your FRGPO representative. Just a quick reminder that the benefits of the Fire Rescue Group Purchasing Organization are available to ALL fire service members, not just members of the IAFC or the Missouri Valley Division. The FRGPO provides the linkage to vendors of a variety of fire service related products from office supplies to protective gear to vehicle tires. All prices are competitively bid or publicly awarded contracts.

A couple of exciting things are happening since we had our meeting in Chicago at FRI. First is the updated website. It is more attractive and user friendly for your convenience. Go to [www.fire-rescue-gpo.com](http://www.fire-rescue-gpo.com), get your login and password to get started. Once in the site, you will be able to see the various vendors represented and the products offered. There is no cost for membership and, again, it is available to every fire service member.

You may or may not be aware the MES offers reduced pricing on Morning Pride protective gear through the FRGPO. Just

recently, MES was also awarded the contract for Scott SCBA's. This is a real opportunity to save money on protective equipment.

Supervised Fuels has a new contract with FRGPO. They will help fire departments review their previous three months' fuel purchases to determine the amount of savings that could be realized through participation in their contract.

For those of you who purchase items through Grainger or would consider using the Grainger contract, they will now require you to sign a "Grainger Contract Participation Form." This will eliminate any confusion that some have experienced with getting the FRGPO pricing. You can cancel the contract at any time. It is just a means of ensuring you get the proper pricing.

Finally, remember the Sprint cell phone contract. Sprint provides a tremendous savings on cell phone plans and equipment, and, the pricing is extended to the family members of the FRGPO member.

The FRGPO is a great asset in saving

your budget dollars. In addition, a portion of the money from your purchases comes back to the Missouri Valley Division. In turn, the Division provides stipends to the State Chief organizations for professional development.

If you have questions, please contact me at 620-343-4275 or [jtaylor@emporia-kansas.gov](mailto:jtaylor@emporia-kansas.gov). Have a great, safe holiday season! ■

### YOUR ANNUAL REPORT

The MVD web site has a new category titled "Members Annual Report." Send your current electronic Annual Report (pdf) to the Division Secretary and he will have it posted on the web site. This will give all members a source of information on what other departments are doing. Send Your Annual Report to [merwick1@aol.com](mailto:merwick1@aol.com)

## Missouri Valley Division

P.O. Box 80003  
Lincoln, NE 68501

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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.

# Sharing Resources

by Sandra K. Schiess, 2nd Vice President MVD

William Markgraff announced his retirement. He had over 55 years in the fire service and has been a long time, active member of our division. I personally served the largest portion of my fire service career under his influence.

On November 18 the Independence Fire Department, the department I now have the responsibility of leading, honored those that had retired over the last 12 months with a reception. Eleven firefighters, a mix of captains and fire equipment operators left our ranks to start new adventures. Collectively 343 years of experiences and training are no longer available to guide the decisions, sometimes life and death, that must be made each day both on emergency response calls and to shape our future as an organization. These decisions will now be made based on the legacy of these people filtered through the knowl-

edge, experience and training of those that remain. While these decisions will be based on a legacy of the past and a filter of current expertise they will be driven by a vision of the future.

These are challenging times. Reports from our region include shifts in the political winds from fire labor to management or vice versa, fire code adoption once a local decision now having battle lines drawn at the state legislative level to remove the local authority (specifically residential sprinklers but opening a door that will be hard to close), ballot issues with language that changes the financial resources the fire service has depended on to meet their mission and hiring freezes and layoffs offset by an occasional report of a record large recruit school suddenly being approved.

Those reading this article are responsible for how these challenges will be met. Make no mistake the vision we have

or don't have will drive our decision making. We have been shaped by those that went before us. We have our own knowledge and experience. Will the vision we have formed and communicated drive the right decisions to leave a legacy that will be a foundation for those that will follow? I don't believe it will unless we work together, share our knowledge and reach out more to those that will follow. We are part of an organization with this as its stated mission. There will be many conferences and meetings this year that will be opportunities to share and hone a local, state, regional and national vision for life safety. Attend these meetings and conferences, do your part by bringing those that may succeed you and by sharing the challenges that are being faced and the resources that are available. And remember the most valuable resource is human. Share your resource. ■