

March 2014

OMNI CEDO DOMUS

Vol 12 No 3

Email the Editor: <u>Ricky.Brockman@navy.mil</u>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Women's History Month
- Combs Cartoon
- <u>Last Alarms</u>
- ► <u>TCOoO Update</u>
- 2013 Navy F&ES Awards
- <u>Navy F&ES Hall of Fame</u>
- Lifetime Achievement Award
- Back in the Day
- Chief's Clipboard
- FPWG Corner
- On the Job-Lemoore
- Call-In Humor
- On the Job-Oahu
- Wellness Corner
- SA Matters!
- ► <u>SLICERS</u>
- MFFHF News
- On the Job Keyport
- <u>Useless Knowledge</u>
- ▶ <u>New Guide</u>
- Shopping Humor
- EMS Strategic Plan
- ESAMS Update
- Navy F&ES POCs
- <u>News Distribution</u>
- Job Links

The Biggest Issues Facing Women Firefighters Today By Cheryl Horvath

What are the issues women firefighters face today? It's an easy question to answer as the issues are the same as they have been for the 30-plus years that women have been trying to serve in one of the oldest and most honorable professions.

Although it has been two years since I stepped down as president of the International Association of Women in Fire and Emergency Services (iWomen), I still hear the problems. In some cases, I even witness these same issues. Here are a couple of samples.

Recently a young firefighter contacted me regarding problems she was experiencing at her fire department. For the sake her privacy, we'll name this young women Carol.

Carol's story

Carol is the only woman firefighter on her job — the previous women firefighter quit years ago. Carol has been on the job for four years, having served previously for another department before she moved to a different part of the country (a more urban area) for personal reasons. And before we decide to pass judgment on the "personal reasons" part, think about a gal following her guy as a personal reason since that is the case here.

Carol was well respected at her previous department and very competent, never receiving a negative performance evaluation or any other type of performancerelated correction.

During her short time at her new department, she has been ordered to discontinue studying for a college degree on-duty; has been judged as ineffective when she has taken the initiative to ask clarifying questions after emergency responses or decided to take on additional training on her own at the station; and has been told by other male firefighters that some of the officers in the department are "out to get her."

Carol has an extremely pleasant, cheerful personality, which in the past has enabled her to get along with everyone. Unfortunately, she is feeling that some now judge her pleasant personality as a sign of weakness. Oh yeah, did I mention that Carol is a fitness freak?



Supporting the Fleet, Fighter, and Family



Editor (Cont.)

Back to Table of Contents



Carol is thinking about leaving the service, despite the fact that she absolutely loves being a firefighter. She is depressed and feels like she has no one to turn to since she is the only woman on her job. Carol walks into the station every day uncertain of who will help her at work or who will attack her.

The unfortunate norm

I have listened to so many similar stories in the last 20-plus years that I have been in the fire service.

I found more than \$2.5 million awarded in damages the last five months in a 5minute search. These are for the women who had the support to step up and fight, which many more women do not have.

These are also three out of four women who are no longer firefighters — 75% of this small sample are no longer firefighters. The time, effort and money that their fire departments spent recruiting and training these women is wasted; these are public funds, by the way. These are the same public funds that are being spent to pay off the lawsuits.

And fire chiefs still ask why they cannot recruit women.

Some departments may be able to fool their public in to thinking these issues are not occurring in their jurisdiction. And in some fire departments across the country, that may be the case.

To those fire chiefs, and more importantly, fire officers who are accepting responsibility of the actions and attitudes inside your firehouses, and making the appropriate course corrections, thank you. You are few and far between.

Combs Cartoon



Back to Table of Contents

Wrong Answers



Last Alarms

Back to Table of Contents



TCOoO Update



Back to Table of Contents

Last Alarms

The USFA reported 31 deaths to date in 2014. The following line of duty deaths were reported since we published our last issue:

Bruce Britt Columbia, MO

Homer Harrell V Orange City, FL

Roger Tome ♥ Kennedy Space Center, FL

Gregory Barnas Wallington, NJ

Jerry Campbell V Nashville, TN

Steven Knaus Villowick, OH

Kevin Bristol • Peekskill, NY

Bobby Mollere • Star Valley, AZ

Jeffery Bayless • Anchorage, AK

Jamie Peite 🔹 Ironwood, MI

Joseph Bove, III • Spotswood, NJ

Wayne Jeffers • Ramer, AL Tom Stevens, Sr. • Lawrenceburg, IN

Edwin Wentzel Youngwood, PA

2014 Totals

- ♥ 23 (74%) 🚍 2 (6%)
- Indicates cardiac related death
- ➡ Indicates vehicle accident related

Taking Care of Our Own

Check with your Fire Chief if you wish to make a leave donation. There are currently 24 DoD firefighters in the Taking Care of Own program.

Name	Location	Point of Contact
Joey Tajalle	NAVBASE Guam	Julie.Quinene@fe.navy.mil
Dana Picard	Westover ARB, MA	Diane.Lessard@us.af.mil
Billie Edwards	March ARB, CA	Melinda.Miller.2@us.af.mil
Wilson Humphries	USAG Camp Parks, CA	Alexis.A.Rivera8.civ@mail.mil
Peter Giles	Kirtland AFB, NM	Curtis2.Ray@kirtland.af.mil
Christopher Lumpkin	Fort Belvoir, VA	Joyce.R.Peck.civ@mail.mil
Chris Burke	Fort Wainwright, AK	David.Halbrooks@us.army.mil
Christopher Matthews	Portsmouth NSY, NH	Marc.J.Smith@navy.mil
Annie Sands	Altus AFB, OK	Nils.Brobjorg@altus.af.mil
Mark Davis	JB Langley-Ft Eustis, VA	Dale.E.Hankins.civ@mail.mil
Michael McClure	Niagara Falls, NY	Peter.Stein@us.af.mil
Russell Reynolds	Niagara Falls, NY	Peter.Stein@us.af.mil
Richard Jefferson	Kirtland AFB, NM	Curtis2.Ray@kirtland.af.mil
Thomas Trost	Wright Patterson AFB, OH	David.Warner@wpafb.af.mi
Eric Schafer	Eglin AFB, FL	Kevin.Remedies@eglin.af.mil
Jeff Noel	Ft Campbell, KY	Charlotte.M.Epps.civ@mail.mil
Stephen Garman	Fort Detrick, MD	Katherine.M.Szamier-Bennett.civ@mail.mil
Robert Meola	DES Susquehanna, PA	Henry.Hoffman@dla.mil
David Gill	NAS Fort Worth JRB	Allen.Almodovar@navy.mil
Melvin Wilson	NAS Fort Worth JRB	Allen.Almodovar@navy.mil
James Johnson, Jr.	NWS Indian Head, MD	Mike.Carroll@navy.mil
Phillip Booren	MCB Quantico, VA	Raymond.Loving@usmc.mil
Brandon Fines	Fort Belvoir, VA	Erika.M.Nieves.civ@mail.mil
Dana Woods	NAS Oceana, VA	Marc.J.Smith@navy.mil









Navy Fire Chief of the Year (Navy only) Mr. Bruce Kramer Navy Region Northwest Regional F&ES



Back to Table of Contents

ho Defend Ame

Congratulations to our Navy award winners, runners up, and nominees; it was a very competitive field and every participant should be proud of their accomplishments during calendar year 2013. The Navy award winners will compete for the DoD F&ES Awards. The DoD awards will be announced by the Director, Policy Development DoD Explosives Safety Board, Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (I&E). Good luck to our Navy nominees!!

Back to Table of Contents





John L. Arruda. John began his fire service career in the United States Air Force in 1976 and was honorably discharged in 1980. John's civilian federal fire career started in Hawaii in 1980. He transferred to San Diego in1984 and advanced to lead firefighter. In 1990 John transferred to Puget Sound Naval Shipyard where he was appointed Regional Fire Chief in 2003. Chief (then Captain) Arruda was a member of the crew who rescued 21 elderly residents during a tragic apartment fire that claimed four lives. His crew was recognized with the DoD Firefighter Heroism award. John is our 26th inductee.





Augustus "Gus" Bowling. Gus's career included positions as the Regional Training Chief, Battalion Chief, and over 20 years as an instructor and trainer for EMTs and firefighters at the Maryland Fire Rescue Institute and Waldorf (MD) Volunteer Fire Department. Gus continued to work during his battle with cancer, demonstrating that he had strong will and determination even during his illness. He was truly an inspiration to the members of this department and the community. Chief Bowling succumbed to cancer on March 15, 2013. Gus is our 27th inductee.

Lifetime Achievement Award



Back to Table of Contents

Recognizing a Distinguished Career



John Robinson. Chief Robinson entered Navy Fire & Emergency Services at NSA Crane in 1989 as a Fire Inspector, served as Chief of Fire Prevention from 1991 to1995, and was selected as Fire Chief in 1995. He expanded the role of NSA Crane Fire Department to include wild-land firefighting and technical rescue and pioneered the use of ATV's in wild-land firefighting. He earned a Master's degree in public administration from Indiana University and was one of the first DoD graduates of the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program.

Back in the Day

Back to Table of Contents

American LaFrance World War II Apparatus

By Tom Shand, photo by Ted Heinbuch



During the 1940's and 50's U.S. Navy fire apparatus fleets were built by American LaFrance, Mack, Maxim, Peter Pirsch and Ward LaFrance. Sadly, none of these manufacturers are still active. During World War II, American LaFrance was one of few companies that continued to produce fire apparatus with virtually all of their production devoted to supplying the military with vehicles for use at military installations and forward operating bases.

Apparatus produced during this period had no brass or chrome plated accessories, hardware was painted black or grey, including grills and front bumpers. American LaFrance introduced their 500 series apparatus during 1938 with a large front hood, fenders and flat body panels and featured a sleek appearance when compared to vintage units produced earlier. Between 1938 and 1946 over 1,400 of these units were produced with many slated for use in the war effort as well as apparatus delivered to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Quartermaster Corps and the Treasury Department.

In 1940 the Naval Academy received an American LaFrance 500 series 750 gpm pumper with USN property number 73-01072. This apparatus was built on a 172 inch wheelbase and was powered by a Lycoming V-12 engine rated at 170 horsepower. The apparatus was initially assigned to the Naval Dairy Farm located in Gambrills, MD and in later years saw service at the Naval Academy. Shortly after the delivery of this apparatus the Naval Academy Fire Department placed a Seagrave quad and pumper in service followed by a FWD tanker unit that operated at the Naval Dairy Farm.

Fire apparatus featured an engine forward configuration with open cabs and small windshields. It was not uncommon to have apparatus built without cab doors or any type of body compartments. The Naval Academy engine was equipped with a hand pump water extinguisher, hard sleeves, play pipe nozzles and suction adapters mounted on the running boards. Foam equipment and SCBA's were carried above the fire pump with a rear step mounted booster reel.

American LaFrance produced a number of pumpers and aerial ladders for the U.S. Navy through the years, including many 700 series cab forward vehicles which would forever change fire apparatus design as these provided jump seats for the crew with improved maneuverability and safety.



Tom Shand

Back to Table of Contents

Chief's Clipboard

Back to Table of Contents



Back to Table of Contents



By Ronny J. Coleman

Have you ever heard of a blue law? That was a term that was once applied to laws that were put on the books and rendered practically useless, but nobody ever bothered to take them off the books. One of my favorite blue laws had to do with the fact that when automobiles were first created, someone with more wishful thinking than logic had a requirement that someone had to walk in front of all automobiles waving a flag in order to warn horses of the approaching vehicle. Try doing that on the Autobahn in Germany.

What makes a law blue is the fact that it was obsolete but remained on the

books. Perhaps it is time for us to ask ourselves the question of whether some of the things that we are putting into fire and building codes have been rendered obsolete over time. And, more importantly, it may be time for us to review why certain requirements are put in the code in the first place. The logic behind having an effective regulatory scheme is that you don't ask for things you don't need and you absolutely stand by your principles to make sure that you get the things that you really do need.

Why Was That Code Created in the First Place?

Recently, I was engaged in a discussion with fire prevention people who lamented about the fact that there are very few code interpreters in the business who are still in active service as fire marshals. Most of them are code readers. And, in the final analysis, some are mere paid followers of past practice and policy. It appears that with the increased level of sophistication in our codes, in many cases we have almost lost the basic reason behind each and every provision. And, with shortened career processes becoming a reality, there are fewer and fewer people ready to assume the role of fire marshal in the organizational hierarchy.

That is unfortunate because without understanding the reason for certain code provisions, one may often misunderstand the justification, and/or might make a decision to compromise on our principle, that would be potentially dangerous.

Why was the code created in the first place?

In order to examine that phenomena we have to go all the way back to the days of Hammurabi in the sands of the desert in Babylon somewhere around 1750 B.C. If you are familiar with Hammurabi's laws, he declared on stone stelae that if a building was going to be built it had to be built right, so that it wouldn't fall down and kill the occupant. His penalty for just such a catastrophic event was to execute the architect. Pretty harsh penalty, if I do say so myself!

Clipboard (Cont.)

Back to Table of Contents



Back to Table of Contents

But that was over a couple of thousand years ago. There have been many steps along the way to decrease the level of danger in buildings, but with more and more of a financial consequence to the building owner.

The Royal Architect Sir Christopher Wren, gave advice to the King of England, in the aftermath of the Great Fire of London in 1666. He stated that the city should build to a better set of building requirements. Because the fire started in a bakery, there were suggestions about business practices. Because the fire destroyed 70,000 homes there were discussions of fire resistance on exterior walls and roofs. The king listened and adopted some of the first standards for urban living in the entire world. Another bright light along the way was the

work of Fire Chief John Damrell in Boston in



10

the late 1800s. He was a staunch advocate for building requirements and could be considered to be the prime mover in getting the concept of fire and building codes introduced as a mandate of government instead of fiat by a dictator. If you look up the definition of "fiat" it states an arbitrary decree or pronouncement, especially by a person or group of persons having absolute authority to enforce it, such as "The king ruled by fiat."

Well, let's look at where we are today and ask whether we are creating and modifying codes as a function of catastrophes or other factors. Are we as code enforcement officers exercising the fiat ourselves?

What I would like to do is to ask you a series of questions about the reality of what we are requiring in the codes:

- 1. Is every code provision based upon a scientific principle?
- 2. Are there code provisions that are archaic and irrelevant today?
- 3. Does every code provision actually solve a problem?
- 4. Are there code provisions that cannot be effectively enforced?
- 5. Are some code provisions driven by products instead of need?

First thing I want to ask is that you do not send me your answers in an email. I am merely asking you to think about these questions as we move forward in the enactment of new code and standards.

In my collection of books and other papers, I have copies of almost all of the past codes that we have used to control the fire problem of this county. Each one is thicker and more complicated than the previous edition. If you line these documents up from the first series in the early 1900s to the latest editions of the codes you can witness the evolution of these phenomena. Are all of the requirements still necessary?

Clipboard (Cont.)

Back to Table of Contents



Chief Ronny J. Coleman

What I am suggesting is that we need to be more focused on the quality of this process instead of the volume of information or we are going to reach a point where the process becomes counterproductive.

Lastly, don't think that this column is anti-code in nature. What I am suggesting is that we need to make sure that the process of increasing the costs of construction do have some very specific benefits to the community and that we link the requirements back to specific risk reduction strategies by constantly asking ourselves if the code is focused upon eliminating real problems instead of hypothetical ones.



In my opinion, the code development process is becoming more complex out of specific interests instead of community interests. I know this might offend a lot of my peers and I can understand why. But, the reality is that unless we actually make buildings so that they do not place demand on the community infrastructure to continue to manually fight fires, the concept of fire prevention begins to ring a little hollow.

This column is suggesting that we remind ourselves that each component of the code is like a piece of a giant puzzle that has to be assembled every time we add a new building to the community inventory. We need to focus upon the fact that requirements accumulate, but maybe the benefits don't.

A future test of the entire system might consist of whether or not the code development process results in more and more performance requirements and fewer and fewer mandated requirements. Start weighting the code when it comes into your library and don't throw away the old versions.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Ronny J. Coleman is president of the Fire and Emergency Television Network (FETN). He is the former California State Fire Marshal, past president of IAFC, and currently serves as chairman of Board of Trustees for the Commission on Fire Accreditation, International and the NFPA Committee on Fire Protection in the Motion Picture and Television Industry. Coleman was honored as AFSA's 1989 Henry S. Parmelee Award recipient.

FPWG Corner



Back to Table of Contents

General Storage

According to NFPA *Fire and Life Safety Inspection Manual*, fire hazards that are found in storage occupancies are as varied as the products that are used in everyday life.

NFPA 1 chapter 34 <u>General Storage</u> is an excellence guide on how to properly assess the indoor and outdoor storage challenges. As an inspector it can often be very difficult to correctly evaluate the fire risk of commodities being stored.

NFPA 1 is a good tool to assist the inspector on existing storage occupancy configurations and issues.

If the storage occupancy configurations and issues have changed it is important to contact your local NAVFAC Fire Protection Engineer to assess the necessary fire protection needs and requirements posed by these changes.

On the Job-Lemoore

Back to Table of Contents





Behind the flashing lights and sirens, Naval Air Station Lemoore Fire and Emergency Services prepare for real-world scenarios during training exercises and classes.

NAS Lemoore Fire and Emergency services were put to the test March 3 when they responded to a report of two dogs trapped in a sewer well. It was time to put their confined space training into action.

"When fire crews arrived on scene, the two Labrador retrievers seemed to be uninjured at the bottom of a 15-foot well," said Fire Chief Gary Alvidrez.

After assessing the scene, fire crews strategically began atmospheric air monitoring and setting up

a rope and tri-pod rescue system. Once air levels were determined safe, fire crews lowered one firefighter into the sewer well to secure harnesses to the dogs for removal.

Our Furry Friends-Dogs Rescued From Sewer Well

"I was very pleased to see my fire crews working safely and quickly to remove the two labs out of the sewer well," Alvidrez added.

Both dogs were removed safely and returned to their owner.

"I found my dogs, they got stuck in the storm drain," exclaimed Katy Clopper on her Facebook page. "The police and firemen were wonderful. My dogs are safe after two hours."

Alvidrez said his department will continue to train for all types of emergency scenarios that can be adjusted for human or animal rescues.

"The NAS Lemoore fire department's mission of providing safety and protection does not stop with military and civilian personnel. We also look out for the best interests of our pets. I am glad to say there was not a human or animal injured during this rescue," Alvidrez said.

Call-In Humor

Back to Table of Contents



Sick Aunt

Finally, the good-natured boss was compelled to call Smith into his office.

"It has not escaped my attention," he pointed out, "that every time there's a home game at the stadium, you have to take your aunt to the doctor."

"You know you're right, sir," exclaimed Smith. "I didn't realize it. You don't suppose she's faking, do you?"

On the Job-Oahu

Back to Table of Contents

Waihe'e Tunnel Training

By Fire Inspector Angela Sanders



On Tuesday, 18 February 2014, the Navy Region Hawaii Fire Prevention Division had the privilege and honor of visiting the Board of Water Supply Waihe'e Tunnel. The Waihe'e tunnel is an active water facility managed by the Board of Water Supply. The purpose of the visit was to discuss water supply distribution systems as part of the Division's proficiency training.

The Prevention Division toured the tunnel and discussed the uniqueness of Oahu's water distribution systems in past and present time. Oahu's age, shape, and steep mountains are unique and contribute to the formation and trapping of clouds. These clouds provide the island with abundant rainfall and contribute to the islands water cycle equation.

The tour began with a walk inside the 1,500-foot dike tunnel which provides water to Windward Oahu, from Kahalu'u to Kailua. The tour included an introduction of the island's water cycle, the importance of the island's forested watershed areas, and the purpose and history of the Waihe'e tunnel.

In ancient times, the native Hawaiians drew their water supplies from fresh water springs, lakes, streams and shallow wells. The entire population of hundreds of thousands thrived through wise management of their resources. Strict laws governing water resources were enforced and eventually became the law of the land. The ancient Hawaiians learned the value of its limited resource. Water was their source of life.

In the 1800's after the Western explores arrived, the laws of the water were abolished and uncontrolled drilling led to chaos and drought. Artesian wells were abandoned and neglected and millions of gallons of water were wasted. The overall lack of extensive planning led to the absence of a reliable water system. Fire protection was minimal and the threat of waterborne disease was constant. After Hawaii was designated as a US Territory, the water system became the responsibility of the Superintendent of Public Works of the Territory of Hawaii. In 1987, the State Water Code was adopted and various layers of protection for the Hawaiian Islands waters were set.

Although today, Oahu is blessed with clean fresh water daily, we cannot afford to take our water supply for granted. We must conserve water and protect our watershed so future generations have the same precious resource we have today.

The Federal Fire Department Fire Prevention Division is comprised of civilian and military Fire Inspectors. Their goal is "To minimize the loss of life, property, and damage to the environment on all military property and installations caused by fires, through education. To promote awareness and to educate the public and military community to which we serve"



Back to Table of Contents

Wellness Corner

What You Can Do To Prevent High Cholesterol

Back to Table of Contents

Editor's note: At the time this article was published, new guidelines were being introduced by the American Heart Association and American College of Cardiology that may affect risk assessment and treatment guidelines. For questions, consult your health care provider.

High cholesterol increases your risk for heart disease. People at any age can take steps to keep cholesterol levels normal.

Get a blood test

High cholesterol usually has no signs or symptoms. Only a doctor's check will reveal it.

Your doctor can do a simple blood test to check your cholesterol levels. The test is called a lipid profile. It measures several kinds of cholesterol as well as triglycerides. Some doctors do a simpler blood test that just checks total and HDL cholesterol.

The National Cholesterol Education Program recommends that healthy adults get their cholesterol levels checked every five years.

DESIRABLE CHOLESTEROL LEVELS			
Less than 200 mg/dL	TOTAL CHOLESTEROL		
Less than 100 mg/dL*	LDL ("BAD" CHOLESTEROL)		
40 mg/dL or higher	HDL ("GOOD" CHOLESTEROL)		
Less than 150 mg/dL	TRIGLYCERIDES		

* Note: Optimal level.

A healthy diet can help keep blood cholesterol levels down. Avoid saturated fat, trans fats, and dietary cholesterol, which tend to raise cholesterol levels. Other types of fats, such as monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, can actually lower blood cholesterol levels. Eating fiber can also help lower cholesterol.

For some people, eating too many carbohydrates can lower HDL (good cholesterol) and raise triglycerides. Drinking alcohol can also raise triglycerides. Too much alcohol can cause high blood pressure, which increases the risk for heart disease and stroke.

For more information on healthy diet and nutrition, see CDC's Nutrition and Physical Activity and Obesity Program website; http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/about/ncep/index.htm.

Maintain a healthy weight

Being overweight or obese can raise your bad cholesterol levels. Losing weight can help lower your cholesterol.

To determine whether your weight is in a healthy range, doctors often calculate a number called the body mass index (BMI). Doctors sometimes also use waist and hip measurements to measure a person's excess body fat.

If you know your weight and height, you can compute your BMI at CDC's Assessing Your Weight website; <u>http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi.</u>



Back to Table of Contents

Wellness (Cont.)

Back to Table of Contents

Exercise regularly

The Surgeon General recommends adults engage in moderate-intensity exercise for 2 hours and 30 minutes every week.

For more information see CDC's Nutrition and Physical Activity and Obesity Program website; <u>http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/about/ncep/index.htm.</u>

Don't smoke

Smoking injures blood vessels and speeds up the hardening of the arteries. Smoking greatly increases a person's risk for heart disease and stroke.

For more information about tobacco use and quitting, see CDC's Smoking & Tobacco Use website; <u>http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco.</u>

Treat high cholesterol

If you have high cholesterol, your doctor may prescribe medications in addition to lifestyle changes. Controlling LDL cholesterol is the primary focus of treatment.

Your treatment plan will depend on your current LDL level and risk for heart disease and stroke. Your risk for heart disease and stroke depends on other risk factors including high blood pressure, smoking status, age, HDL level, and family history of early heart disease. In addition, people with existing cardiovascular disease or diabetes are at high risk.

You can estimate your risk for heart disease by using the 10-year risk calculator of the National Cholesterol Education Program at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's website; <u>http://hp2010.nhlbihin.net/atpiii/calculator.asp?usertype=pub.</u>

Several types of medications help lower cholesterol.

	TYPE OF MEDICINE	HOW THEY WORK	
<u>nts</u>	STATIN DRUGS	Statin drugs lower LDL cholesterol by slowing down the liver's production of cholesterol. They also increase the liver's ability to remove LDL cholesterol already in the blood. For more information, see the FDA's advice on statin risks at <u>http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm048496.htm</u> and <u>http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm293330.htm</u> .	
	BILE ACID SEQUESTRANTS	Bile acid sequestrants help remove cholesterol from the blood stream by eliminating bile acids. The body needs bile acids and makes them by breaking down LDL cholesterol.	
	NIACIN, OR NICOTINIC ACID	Niacin is a B vitamin that can improve all lipoprotein levels. Nicotinic acid raises HDL cholesterol levels while lowering total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, and triglyceride levels. Treatment requires high levels of niacin with possible side effects and so requires medical supervision.	
	FIBRATES	Fibrates mainly lower triglycerides and, to a lesser extent, increase HDL levels.	
	All drugs may h your cholesterol	ave side effects, so talk with your doctor on a regular basis. Once levels have improved, your doctor will want to monitor them.	
	Lifestyle changes are just as important as taking medicines.		

Reprinted courtesy of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. For more information, please visit cdc.qov.



Back to Table of Contents

SA Matters!

Explanations for Situational Awareness Insanity

By Rich Gasaway, PhD

Back to Table of Contents Part Two

In this segment, we continue our discussion about the seemingly insane things that firefighters do at structure fires. I use the word insane not because the firefighters suffer from a mental affliction. Rather, I use the word insane because we keep doing the same things over and over again while expecting different results.

This meets Einstein's definition of insanity and is the foundation for the use of this term in this context. Here we explore peer pressure as a contributor to the insanity.

Peer Pressure

Peer pressure is a social influence by members of a peer group that influences values, actions or conformance to peer-created expectations. One conforms to peer pressure out of a desire to be accepted (or a fear of being rejected) by the group.



Conformance also often comes with verbal encouragement and positive feedback by the peer group. Non-conformance can lead to criticism, ridicule and rejection by the members of the peer group. In the tight-knit world of firefighting, peer pressure is a force to be reckoned with.

Negative Peer Pressure

When I think of peer pressure I am immediately harkened back to junior high school and, in that fragile world of extreme social hierarchies, the need to be accepted (and liked) was top priority. This gripped by the need for social acceptance will do just about anything to earn the admiration and respect of the peer group. Those not meeting the grade are rejected, ridiculed, bullied and outcaste.

Unfortunately, as we grow up, the social acceptance hierarchy learned in adolescence lingers on in many. The need to feel accepted by the tribe is a powerful, even primitive, social goal. Unfortunately, where peer groups establish norms that include haphazard performance of duties without regard to personal safety, *create* excessive risk (emphasis on create), show little regard to personal health and wellness and shun training, those influenced by the peer group may find themselves either complying out of desire to be accepted, complying out of fear of being rejected, or complying while knowing better but too afraid to speak up.

Positive Peer Pressure

Peer pressure often takes a bad rap because it is cited as a contributing factor when peers are goaded into doing things that have bad outcomes. But peer pressure can also have good outcomes. It depends on the focus, ambition and culture of the peer group. If a peer-group establishes their commitment to safety as a top priority, compliance to safety practices become the norm and are rewarded among members of the peer group. Where peers have a balanced sense of ego and can hold their bravado in check while making high-risk, high consequence decisions, members of the peer group find it easier to tame ego and bravado.



Back to Table of Contents

What's Happening

SA Matters! (Cont.)

Back to Table of Contents



Rich Gasaway, PhD.

Back to Table of Contents

When members of a peer group are committed to continuous self-improvement, the members of the peer group train with passion and enthusiasm. Where members of a peer group realize health and wellness are critical to team success, members of the peer group eat healthy, exercise and get proper rest during non-working hours.

The Bully

I do not judge the behavior of others. Rather, I make observations and try to offer plausible explanations as to why people may, or may not, behave certain ways. The foundations for my explanations are rooted in psychology, neuroscience and interviews with first responders who have been part of near-miss, casualty and catastrophic events.

The bully strives to influence a peer group to comply with and support the bully's beliefs. The bully's favorite tools of influence are fear, consequence, ridicule, retribution and embarrassment. Those who do not support the bully are against the bully – an enemy of the bully – at least in the mind of the bully. A bully has no tolerance for discounting points of view. Name calling and beat-down are the bully's way to ensure peer compliance.

When the bully is an officer, add formal authority to the arsenal of influence. In this case, the bully has the means to create real consequence for non-compliance. Where the bully has created fear in the minds of superiors, there is little to no accountability for the bully's behavior. Often times the bully's power is a flawed perception of reality. If the peer group were to stand up to the bully, there's no foundation for the power. But, sadly, many times this does not happen and the bully reigns.

The Consequence of Peer Pressure

I recently interviewed a firefighter who was caught in a flashover. He was burned, but he lived. After looking at his gear and pictures of his injuries, I would call him extremely lucky. He acknowledged his luck during the interview as well. Through a series of questions I asked about his situational awareness and his decision making processes that let him to believe it was safe to make an interior entry at this residential dwelling fire, it became very apparent he succumbed to peer pressure. Other members of the crew were racing in with reckless abandon (without doing a 360-degree size-up) so this firefighter followed suit and raced in too. He didn't want to be rejected by his peer group for "being a sissy" (his words, not mine). The flashover occurred is less than one minute following entry. I asked him of the clues and cues of pending flashover were present? "Yes." Did he think the environment might not be safe to enter? "Yes." Did he? "No." Does he now have regret? "Yes."

Richard B. Gasaway is a scholar-practitioner with a passion for improving workplace safety. In addition to serving 33 years on the front lines as a firefighter, EMT-Paramedic and fire chief, he earned his Doctor of Philosophy degree while studying how individuals, teams and organizations develop and maintain situational awareness and make decisions in high stress, high consequence, time compressed environments. Dr. Gasaway is widely considered to be one of the nation's leading authorities on first responder situational awareness and decision making. His material has been featured and referenced in more than 350 books, book chapters, research projects, journal articles, podcasts, webinars and videos. His research and passion to improve workplace safety through improved situational awareness is unrivaled. Dr. Gasaway's leadership and safety programs have been presented to more than 35,000 first responders, emergency managers, medical providers, military personnel, aviation employees, industrial workers and business leaders throughout North America, Europe, Asia and Australia.

SLICERS

Back to Table of Contents



By Forest Reeder and Kevin Milan

programs is nothing new. The National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) and UL are producing reports based on scientific analysis of fire in the structural firefighting environment. Millions of dollars are spent, and voluminous reports are generated. The problem: Research is slow to reach the drill ground and department standard operating procedures (SOPs).

Understanding the New SLICERS Acronym

In a bold move, the International Society of Fire Service Instructors (ISFSI) published a position statement calling for radical change. This is a call to action to springboard research-based intelligence into fire service training and operations. The ISFSI position statement encourages fire departments "to adjust their tactical plans and training programs to incorporate [NIST & UL] research into their emergency response operations." With that in mind, in this article, we address just how this call can translate into action for you and your fire department.

SLICERS Basics

At the heart of this training evolution is an updated operational acronym, SLICERS, which drives us to consider the importance of an awareness of flow path and cooling during fire attack. SL ICERS directs us to conduct the following sequential activities:

- Size up all scenes
- Locate the fire
- Identify & control the flow path (if possible)
- Cool the heated space from a safe location
- Extinguish the fire
- Rescue and Salvage are actions of opportunity that may occur at any time

But before we delve into SLICERS and how it can improve fireground operations; let's first remember how research has driven changes in the past.







SLICERS (Cont.)

Back to Table of Contents



Back to Table of Contents

History Meets Innovation

The primary assumption we must first accept: Research is not an attack on tradition, nor is it a statement that we've been doing it wrong. Legacy fire service tactics and training techniques are not suddenly obsolete based on new information. Our existing firefighting tactics and best practices must be assessed. We should keep what works, discard what doesn't, and modify others to increase their effectiveness.



Evolution of this kind is not new for the fire service. Passive Rapid Intervention Teams (RITs) have evolved into proactive RITs. This evolution was driven by research, primarily out of the Phoenix Fire Department following the 2001 death of Bret Tarver, and the extensive research published by the department. The realization that RIT isn't actually rapid, and a two-person team simply isn't enough, grew from research. Today we accept this new paradigm. We've adjusted our SOPs, tactics and our training for RITs. This is a shining example of how research can, and should, translate into improved firefighting operations.

A shift in paradigm is now needed in engine company operations based on the UL and NIST research. The engine company objectives are unchanged in the new paradigm; we still locate, confine and extinguish fires. In recruit school, many of us learned to vent early and vent often to support fire attack crews. On the attack line, we were taught to "crash, dash and splash." Now we are discovering the strategic importance of ventilation, and in some cases anti-ventilation.

Our firefighting forefathers talked of controlling "draft" to control a fire. With the evolution of PPE and breathing apparatus, we aggressively engaged interior attack at the seat of the fire. Most of us grew up with the familiar RECEO VS. On every fireground, the following need to occur in priority order: Rescue, Exposure, Confinement, Extinguish and Overhaul. Ventilation and Salvage are to be completed when appropriate to support RECEO.

Today we know from clear research the importance of controlling ventilation. We must evolve our training and tactics to incorporate lessons learned from research.

SLICERS from an Engine Perspective

So exactly what does the transition from RECEO VS to SLICERS mean to today's firefighter and fire officer? To answer the question, let's distill fireground operations to basic components of engine work and truck work. Though the rivalry of trucks and engines will outlive all of us, viewing SLICERS in the context of these two paradigms clearly outlines what is the same, and what has changed.

The job of an engine company is to locate, confine and extinguish the fire. Truck companies are guided by the acronym LOVERS U (Laddering, Overhaul, Ventilation, Entry, Rescue, Salvage and Utilities). Figure 1 (p. 42) shows how engine and truck duties crosswalk to SLICERS. This article concentrates on the engine work.

SLICERS (Cont.)

Back to Table of Contents



Back to Table of Contents

The first step in SLICERS, and the element not present in the legacy protocols, is a **size-up** on all fires. This critical step involves recognizing and broadcasting current conditions, a declaration of command and a guide to action. We have institutionalized the use of ICS on ALL calls. We can certainly learn to conduct a size-up each and every time we respond. Conducting a size-up every time rather than saving it "for the big one" will institutionalize size-up into all of our operations.

A complete size-up (full 360 of the occupied structure) will allow us to determine and broadcast the **location** of the fire in most cases. This important second step, the L in SLICERS, is an overlap with the engine company legacy task of locating the fire.

The greatest departure from RECEO in the SLICERS acronym is **identifying the flow path**. This is also the most important keystone behind the concept of "thinking firefighting." Though it could be said that this is just an expansion on confining the fire, there is much more to it. We must recognize flow path and be deliberate about discussing it at every fire. Make this a part of tailboard critiques and after-action reviews. By increasing awareness you can improve perception. Outside of actual response, flow path recognition can be learned in a virtual environment. Navigate to NIST/FIRE (www.fire.nist.gov) and view as much as you can. Look at the videos of the Station Night Club Fire and the associated fire

Look at the fire models on the NIST site with an eye toward fire growth and travel. Observe just how quickly conditions change when air is introduced into the fire buildings. Make predictions on flow path and fire growth and travel when reviewing videos. Whether on YouTube or viewing videos in the training division library, each fire video reveals aspects of flow path.

The importance of identifying the problem of flow path cannot be underestimated. In the words of Charles Kettering, an influential designer with General Motors, "A problem well stated is half solved." By identifying flow path, you've identified the path to success. This may be by controlling flow path, or operating in harmony with it. The identification of flow path is an item that should find its way into every afteraction review.

In next month's article, we'll address the remaining elements to SLICERS: Cool the heated space from a safe location, extinguish the fire, and rescue and salvage.

In Sum

By building on the success of legacy fireground protocols, we push the evolution of fireground and training. Embracing SLICERS without abandoning LOVERS U and the legacy principles of locate/confine/extinguish improves success and increase safety. Rely on SLICERS to improve operations. Size up every scene to set the table for success. Locate the fire to determine your actions and identify flow path on every fire. Practice in the firehouse, on the computer, on the drill ground and at your next fire.

The bottom line: Research can save lives without killing tradition.

20

modeling. Discuss the flow path with your crew.



SLICERS (Cont.)

Back to Table of Contents



Forest Reeder



Kevin Milan

Back to Table of Contents

Sidebar: Sample Drill

Hoseline Length Estimation & Lead-Out Initial Attack Line

Overview: It is well known that the success of many initial-attack operations, ranging from car fires to structure fires, relates to how effectively the engine company is able to lead-out the attack line. This drill will emphasize these skills in order to improve your company's initial-attack efficiency.

Outcome: Develop skills necessary to estimate the amount of hose needed to mount an initial attack and to place it into operation in a smooth and effective manner.

Practice Application Suggestions

- Complete this practical exercise before conducting the drill to reinforce lead-out estimation skills.
- Have members mark the spot inside the building where they believe the assigned hoseline will reach from the engine's position. Use a chalk mark and have each member initial their estimate.
- Identify the length of available hoseline to be used for the drill.
- Obtain this length in clothesline or a rope bag.
- Attach one end of the line to the engine and lead the line into the building to see where it ends.

Drill Instructions

1. Instructor will determine the initial-attack line(s) that will be used for this session.

2. Give members instructions on department procedure for pulling line and leading out.

3. Identify an objective such as a doorway or other area to simulate fire area.

4. Identify protective equipment required for this operation and instruct members on proper use.

5. At instructor's order, deploy attack handline(s) to objective area using the number of members who would normally be assigned to that operation.

6. Using stopwatch, time the length of each trial of this drill until a satisfactory time is reached by the crew.

- 7. Re-bed hose as instructed.
- 8. Review crew performance.
- 9. Repeat as necessary.

Forest Reeder serves as a division chief with the Des Plaines (III.) Fire Department. Reeder is the Fire Officer I and II coordinator for the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association, as well as the Eastern Regional Director of the International Society of Fire Service Instructors (ISFSI). Reeder is also the co-author of Fire Service Instructor Principles and Practices (2nd ed.) He holds a bachelor's degree in Fire Department Administration and a master's degree in Public Safety Administration. He was awarded the George D. Post Instructor of the Year by the ISFSI in 2008.

Kevin Milan is president of the Colorado Fire Training Officers Association and director at large for the International Society of Fire Service Instructors (ISFSI). He is a graduate of the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program, holds a master's degree in Executive Fire Leadership, and is a doctoral student in the Fire and Emergency Management Program at Oklahoma State University. With 19 years of fire experience, Milan is the fire marshal for South Metro (Colo.) Fire Rescue Authority and is currently an instructor in the IAFC/COLS program.

MFFHF News

Back to Table of Contents



On the Job -Keyport



Useless Knowledge



Back to Table of Contents

Military Firefighter Heritage Scholarships Open

This year's Military Firefighter Heritage Foundation Scholarship program application period is now open. Application forms can be found on the Military Firefighters Heritage Foundation's website.

http://www.militaryfirefighterheritage.com/scholarship.html

This year the board elected to go with five \$1,000 scholarships, so we will have five recipient's instead of two. Last year we had 24 completed applications, so looking to get the work out to everyone and hoping that number will increase.

If you have any questions, please utilized the board member e-mail address: Boardmember@militaryfirefighterheritage.com or e-mail william.hadley.3@us.af.mil directly.

The Bird is the Word

A seagull became entangled in a piece of twine and was hanging above the ground. FF's responded and utilizing a ladder to get to the bird, safely dis-entangled our fair-feathered friend and completed the rescue.



What Song Is This From?

Another episode in a mindless distraction that illustrates the diversity of my personal music library. On occasion, I will provide a song lyric from a selection currently on my iPad and the challenge to you is to tell me what song and artist the lyric comes from. Google and other search engines are discouraged but I don't have a reason.

Name the song and artist that includes this lyric;

I'm not so glad you found me You're still doing things that I gave up years ago

E-mail your answer to ricky.brockman@navy.mil

New Guide

Back to Table of Contents



Best Practices for Emergency Vehicle Visibility



The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), supported by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), and in partnership with the Cumberland Valley Volunteer Firemen's Association's (CVVFA) Emergency Responder Safety Institute, announces availability of a guide to help emergency services departments increase the visibility of emergency vehicles to motorists in order to keep responders safe during roadway operations.

"The USFA staff is pleased to release this guide in support of our goal to reduce the number of emergency vehicle crashes and injuries to all emergency first responders," said U.S. Fire Administrator Ernest Mitchell. "We are grateful for NIJ's continued support of this effort and for the work of the CVVFA to the benefit of the fire service, EMS and law enforcement personnel at work on our nation's roadways."

Vehicle Marking and Technology for Increased Highway Visibility – A Reference Guide for Decision-Makers provides information on best practices in the application of various arrangements of emergency warning devices, creative use of retro reflective decal markings and other innovative designs - all with the intent of increasing the visibility of emergency vehicles to motorists approaching them. It focuses on emergency vehicles not covered by existing standards in this area.

"Enhancing the operational safety of law enforcement officers and firefighters is a major priority of NIJ," said John H. Laub, Director of the National Institute of Justice. "We place a premium on partnerships like this one with the USFA because they multiply our ability to prevent accidents and save lives."

"CVVFA is pleased to release the results of this project that will support the decision makers in local fire, police and EMS departments on ways to enhance the emergency vehicle and roadway operations safety of their organizations," said CVVFA President Steven L. Haines. "We are grateful for the support of both USFA and NIJ in this effort to enhance the safety of emergency responders."

Back to Table of Contents

Shopping Humor



Further information on USFA's emergency vehicle and roadway safety research initiatives may be found on the <u>USFA website</u>.

Socks

When I was working as a clerk at a sporting-goods store, a woman came up to my register with a package of white athletic socks. "Will you open this up so I can see how the socks feel?" she asked.

Reluctantly I tore open the package, and she scrutinized the merchandise. She handed me the package saying, "I'll take them."

Relieved, I started to ring her up, until she interrupted me: "Can I have another pack? This one's been opened."

EMS Strategic Plan

Back to Table of Contents



Federal Agencies Coordinate to Advance EMS

In an effort to further coordinate federal efforts in emergency medical services (EMS), the members of the Federal Interagency Committee on EMS (FICEMS) reached consensus on a strategic plan that maps action steps for federal support of optimal emergency medical services systems nationwide.

During the meeting, members collaborated on the new vision and mission statement, which provide an anchor for the strategic goals and objectives in the plan.

FICEMS vision statement: A federal interagency committee that enhances coordination and ensures the strategic alignment of EMS priorities among Federal agencies to ensure quality patient care FICEMS mission statement: Ensure coordination among Federal agencies, supporting local, regional, State, tribal and territorial emergency medical services and 9-1-1 systems, to improve the delivery of EMS services throughout the nation.

The plan also includes six overarching goals and 30 specific objectives. FICEMS plans to achieve these by coordinating interagency policies, programming and messaging, as well as soliciting and integrating stakeholder input from across the EMS community, including from the National EMS Advisory Council (NEMSAC).

At the meeting, members identified four focal areas for immediate action:

- Supporting the development, implementation and evaluation of evidence-based guidelines (EGBs) according to the National Prehospital EBG Model Process.
- Promoting standardization and quality improvement of prehospital data by supporting the adoption and implementation of National EMS Information System-Compliant systems.
- Improving EMS system all-hazard preparedness, including pandemic influenza, through support of coordinated, multidisciplinary planning for disasters.
- Working with State EMS offices to support the transition of military EMS providers to civilian practice. Many collaborative efforts are already underway, including standardization and quality improvement of data as well as the White-House's priority initiative to support the transition of military veterans into civilian positions.

As FICEMS member agencies work collaboratively toward four immediate focus areas, they will also seek the advice of the National EMS Advisory Council and other stakeholders on how best to implement the full plan over the next five years.

Established by Congress in 2005, FICEMS has coordinated Federal agency efforts to support local, regional, State, tribal and territorial EMS and 911 systems. FICEMS members represent Federal agencies of the Departments of Transportation, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Defense and the Federal Communications Commission. Additionally, a state EMS director sits on the committee.

To download the FICEMS Strategic Plan, visit; http://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/pdf/811990_FICEMS_Strategic_Plan.pdf

Back to Table of Contents





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