

August 2005

HOT SPOTS



Independence Fire Department

**Hot Spots
Returning!
We're Back.....**

In this edition:

- New Fire Chief
- Fire Dept. Future
- Stand Down for Safety Observed
- Cert Training

C O N G R A T U L A T I O N S !

TO
Mr. & Mrs.
Rick Winship
who delivered
twins in July.



RETIREMENTS

Captain Stan Arnold-
7/10
Fire Inspector Don
Hessenflow-8/19



NEW FIRE CHIEF AP-



City Manager Robert Heacock has appointed Sandra Schiess as the new Fire Chief for the City of Independence.

Chief Schiess has been Interim Chief since December 2004 and succeeds Fire Chief Larry Hodge. Prior to being named Interim Fire Chief, Schiess served as the Deputy Fire Chief of Administration and Services since 2002.

Schiess began her career in fire in 1978 as a fire fighter in Columbia, MO. She served as Fire Engineer, Lieutenant, Fire Captain and Division Chief as well as assignments in Emergency Response, Prevention, Training and Administration.

Chief Schiess describes herself as traditional in that she would like to see participation and inclusiveness within the department on a day-to-day basis.

She credits the taxpayers with possibly making her goals easier to attain than her predecessor since there are more funds available. Her goals for the department include more training, better equipment and resources to make this department state-of-the-art in its response to the needs of the community while insuring the safety and well being of the fire fighters.

Chief Schiess' decision-making process is based on 1) the community's well being, 2) the best interest of the department and 3) what works for the individual fire fighter. She believes that because of these points, there are probably times when she may appear harsh to others.

In her "spare" time, this busy woman has helped to raise four sons, boats, camps, reads, loves to learn

about anything, and would you believe it...makes soap?!

This special edition of *Hot Spots* is our introductory newsletter to reintroduce ourselves and tell you we're back. Our purpose is to provide news and stories of interest that pertain to those directly associated with the fire department in an entertaining way. You can help us attain this goal by submitting anything you consider newsworthy, appropriately humorous, or "kudos" for a deserving fellow employee. Items can be sent to Chief Inspector Joy Musquiz or Georgie Waldrop in Fire Prevention at Station 1. Thanks in advance for your cooperation and participation!

The Fire Fighters' "Spotty" Friend



Dalmatians actually have a recorded history in Dalmatia, a province of Austria off the coast of Venice. They are shown following chariots in early Egyptian art pictures.

The Dalmatian's love for accompanying horses on the road is an inbred instinct. He has what seems to be a natural calming effect on horses. They became known as "coach" or "ladies" dogs because they were trained to run alongside women's carriages. It was during the era of horse-drawn fire

apparatus that the Dalmatian would become forever associated with the Fire Service. The fire house horses were spirited horses and spent hours either waiting inside the fire house for a "call" or at the scene of a fire.

There were reports of Dalmatians running between teams of horses rushing to a fire call. In either situation, the dogs were a comfort to the horses and were good at guarding the team, equipment and personal property at either scene.

There are numerous reports of how the Dalmatian has rescued fire fighters or victims. They are still found today in many fire houses in England, Canada and the United States. Because of their loyalty, the Dalmatian continued in the Fire Service once the horses were replaced with mechanical apparatus.

CERT TRAINING DAY

Submitted by Judy Sturgiss

GREAT JOB, Independence Fire Fighters....

For the very successful citizens' disaster EXERCISE DAY, which was held Saturday, July 9, at Blue River Community College.

For those unfamiliar with the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training, it is a program authorized and sponsored by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to teach citizens how they can effectively prepare for emergencies in their own homes, and how they can safely help in their homes, neighborhoods, and larger community during a wide-scale disaster when first-responders are overwhelmed with calls.

One misconception that should be put to rest: CERT volunteers are NOT intended to replace fire fighters on a scene or get in their way. Spontaneous volunteers appear at many emergency sites, and CERT

trains citizens what they can and should not do until professionals arrive. We are all aware of some emergency calls that really do not require professional response. Knowledge gained by CERT volunteers may help them handle these small emergencies, thereby eliminating the need for professional response. We believe it's true that everybody loves a fire fighter, and persons who have completed the CERT training have a healthier-than-normal respect for the work you do and the circumstances under which you are often called to duty.

Since September 2003, Independence Fire has presented CERT training to over 200 citizens. Fire fighters involved with the training are Tom Collins, CERT Coordinator; Rick Andrews, Bill Anderson, Mark Carrick, Missy Lothamer-Dusha, and Shalom Shoaf. John Green was indoctrinated in the program during the July 9 exercise, and Richelle Basgall added reality to "injuries" through her application of moulage to about 50 volunteer victims.



Wyandotte County, Central Jackson County, Higginsville, and a private CERT program called Allied Barton Security Services, Glenaire, Missouri.

Eighty CERT volunteers participated in the day of refresher training and advanced workshops. Fire suppression and cribbing skills exercises took place outdoors during the hot afternoon, and a mock tornado strike indoors allowed for exercising search, triage, rescue, and medical ops skills. Fire fighters brought Pumper 5 to the site and CERT volunteers got the feel of dousing targets with a real fire hose. For people not in the professional fire response field, this was a great experience.

We were pleased to welcome people from other CERT programs in Platte and Clay counties, Kansas City-KS-

Our instructors did a tremendous job working with 50 volunteer "victims" and guiding 80 people through four exercise stations in the two-hour exercise. We initially were hoping that at least 15-20 people (at most 40) would participate in the mid-summer exercise, but as registrations kept arriving and we approached 80 participants, a lot of last-minute planning took place on how we could manage a successful exercise day. So kudos to the CERT instructors-they did a fantastic job! As people filed out of the college at the end of the day, we heard them say over and over, "Thanks for a great day. Let's to this again. Soon."



Now when you put people through a hard work routine on a Saturday, and a hot one at that, and make them sit through workshops and then go outside and work some more, and you get such a ringing endorsement, THAT's a sign of a successful day. And it generates even MORE respect and admiration for the job you all do every day.

Future of the Fire Department

by Chief Inspector Joy Musquiz

On July 20, Fire Administration and Union representatives met to discuss a five-year plan of action for the future direction of the Fire Department. The meeting began with the Fire Chief sharing her thoughts of revising the mission statement and having a logo that could provide both Fire Department personnel and the public with a memorable image of the Fire Department. A time table of six months was proposed for developing methods to gain input from the field and pursuing implementation of that plan. The meeting continued with a list detailing five areas of priority:

I. Fire Prevention and Public Educa-



a record of the mileage is kept and when that vehicle reaches its established maintenance mileage, the vehicle is called in for service.

The Fire Prevention Bureau is expanding its commercial inspection program to include Home Occupation business on a voluntary basis. It is also directing its educational programs toward a more diverse audience. Additionally, it will continue in the development and implementation of its juvenile fire setter intervention program by partnering with the Missouri State Fire Marshal's Office in establishing a state wide data base for offenders.

The Training Division provided information concerning the remodeling of the training room. This remodel would accommodate equipment used for simulated fire training

- II. Emergency Medical Services Full-time EMS supervisory position
- III. Span of Control For Fire Operations Assistance for Shift Commanders
- IV. Haz Mat
- V. Technical Rescue

The view points expressed will aid the Fire Administration in considering all aspects when making decisions that affect the Department as a whole.

and upgrading the Emergency Operations Center. The Training Division is setting up a library for each station within the next month and has scheduled a 2-year in-house training program of basic fire fighting skills to insure the Department meets and can document the required ISO fire fighter continued training requirements.

The Public Safety Committee discussed their review of fire and police CAD software packages. Their recommendation will be available in a couple of days.

Administration discussed projects that



The Chief Officer over Maintenance discussed maintenance issues for trucks and vehicles. Chief Jones stated that the move to the Chrysler Building is in the works, although a definite date cannot be set until the concrete floor is removed and repoured to provide a level work surface. Oil changes and preventive maintenance checks will be done by Public Works employees while any apparatus repairs will be conducted by the Fire Mechanic. The tracking of maintenance for the trucks and department vehicles will be accomplished through tracking fuel records by computer. Each time a vehicle is fueled,

- I. Looking for land to build the new training facility
- II. The remodeling of fire station #1 to include the HVAC system in the budget year of 2005-06
- III. Completion of new #7 fire station in the spring of 2006
- IV. Land acquisition for a new #4 station to begin in the budget year of 2006-07
- V. Tearing down of old #3 fire station and building the new one on the same site in 2007-08

The meeting, which included a lunch provided by the Department, lasted through the afternoon hours with ideas, opinions, and thoughts being shared on all sides. The gathering concluded with strategic goals in mind and with the attitude that "change for the better" will succeed when everyone makes a contribution towards that goal.



PROMOTIONS

Captain Paul Yotz-Station 9
C Shift
FEO Robert Athearn-
Station 10, A Shift

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE
EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH!
TOM WADE—Fire Prevention

NATIONAL STAND DOWN FOR SAFETY OBSERVED

The Independence FD observed the call by the International Association of Fire Chiefs on June 21, to concentrate on safety. The campaign began as a result of the number of fire fighter deaths this year which was up as compared to the same time last year.

Asst. Chief Curt Sevage and Asst. Chief Dennis Kleyh visited each station, observing a moment of silence for those who have lost their lives. Safety issues were

then discussed. All department activities were suspended for the day except emergency responses. The exercise concluded with a second moment of silence.



You May Be A Fire Fighter If.....

....you have ever had a passionate disagreement on the **BEST** color to paint a fire vehicle.

....you run towards a dangerous situation and not away from it.

....you have ever uttered the words "I can break the door if you need me to, Cap," **before** actually testing to see if it is locked.

....your idea of ventilation is done with a chainsaw and not a Bag-Valve-Mask.



CODE QUESTION....

Question:

I was dispatched to an apartment building on an "open burning" incident. When I arrived I found an apartment resident barbecuing approximately 10 feet from this apartment building. Is that a code violation?

Answer:

No, neither the Fire Department nor the Fire Code says that occupants of multi-family dwellings **cannot own or operate barbecue grills**. What the International Fire Code does say is that a person cannot use any barbecue grill that cooks through the use of an open flame on a balcony or under a covered overhang if they live in a "multi-family dwelling." Apartment dwellers are permitted to own and use grills, provided that the grills are operated at least 10 feet from the building. Using grills at least 10 feet from the building significantly lessens the potential for a major fire to occur as well as the potential for significant property damage. Neglect or improper use of the barbecue grill could result in damage to the user's apartment as well as the apartment of neighbors in the building. Unfortunately, barbecue grills, whether charcoal or propane fired, are a serious hazard when not used or stored properly. Many people have neglected to monitor them while cooking and whole blocks of apartment units have burned to the ground as a result. Some apartment and condominium complexes have addressed this matter through the creation of specific areas in the community where barbecue grills can be safely used and stored.

News from a Fellow Station in British Columbia

Flaming Squirrel Falling From Power Line Causes Brush Fire

OSOYOOS, B.C. (CP) - Fire fighters are blaming a flaming squirrel for starting a small brush fire in Osoyoos on Monday. Firefighters were called to a fruit packing operation in the Okanagan city orchard after a squirrel on a power transmission line caught fire, fell into the brush below and sparked the blaze. This situation is not, however, unusual. "This identical incident has happened on the same pole one or two times a year for the past several years," said Osoyoos fire chief Ross Driver.

"A squirrel is always found at the base of the pole, dead and burnt," he said. Driver said a pumper truck and a bush truck attended to the small fire but nearby residents had put the fire out before the firefighters had arrived.



UPCOMING EVENTS...

There will be a Full City Exercise of the Emergency Preparedness Department on September 7 in the Training Room at Station 1.

"This will be a tabletop exercise discussing communications: getting more familiar with our resources, capabilities, and just getting to know one another **BEFORE** an emergency should occur," says Mark Widner, Manager of Emergency Preparedness.

Did you know.....

Henry Carner has the longest record of service for the department at 34 years?