



THE RURAL HITCH

OCTOBER 2007

**A publication of
Lakes Region
Mutual Fire Aid
Association**

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62 Communications Drive
Laconia, New Hampshire 03246
603.528.9111
www.lrmfa.org

Five- Alarm Fire in Danbury

Fireworks were determined to be the cause of a five-alarm fire that destroyed a large barn full of hay and lumber in the center of Danbury during the night, Saturday, Sept. 1. Earlier in the evening, people were admiring fireworks being shot off in the area. The blaze was called in at 8:45 p.m. and grew to five alarms. The following departments participated, either at the scene or as cover: Danbury, Grafton, Bristol, Alexandria, Andover, East Andover, Bridgewater, Wilmot, Hill, Hebron, Franklin, New Hampton, Ashland, Meredith, Holderness, Plymouth, Belmont, Tilton-Northfield, LRMFA, Canaan and Gilmanton. 🚒



A Wish Comes True

By Debbie Kardaseski

On August 15, 2007, I was privileged to be a small part of making a wish come true for Karah Deneau. Karah, who turned seven on July 11, is scheduled for her eighth heart surgery on September 7. She really wanted to ride in a fire truck before her surgery and, thanks to Deputy Chief K.G. Lockwood, her wish came true!

Karah's Mom, Carie, works at 9-1-1, which is located in the same building as LRMFA. Deputy Lockwood was conducting a review of how 9-1-1 and LRMFA interact when Carie noticed his "Smokey the Bear" keychain and asked if she could get one for her daughter. In the course of their discussion, Karah's situation came up. K.G. asked if there was anything else he could do and the rest, as they say, is history.

K.G. realized how important the ride was and he decided to make it happen. A phone call to Chief George Krause in Barnstead was all it took to make this little girl's dream happen. A date was set and Karah was brought to Station 2 in Barnstead for the ride of her life.

When she arrived, she was introduced to Captain Mary Reed and FF/Medic Dan Conger. Karah is a petite young lady with big brown eyes and a very serene demeanor. Looking at her, you'd never know how much hardship she's endured in her seven years.





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From the Chief...

UNDERSTANDING THE LRMFA RE-TONE POLICY

By Chief Douglas M. Aiken

In a perfect world our member departments would always have personnel and apparatus available to respond to emergencies within a minute or two of the initial tone. We all know that is not always possible and, therefore, the LRMFA Board of Directors has approved a policy for re-toning departments. I would like to review that policy so that all members of LRMFA understand how the policy works.

When an incident is dispatched and there has been no response from the department(s) toned for six minutes the incident is re-toned. A re-tone is defined as a full repeat of the alerting tones and emergency broadcast. Re-tones are initiated whenever the communications center has not received a radio transmission that one or more apparatus are responding to the incident. If three additional minutes go by without an apparatus response a second re-tone is transmitted along with a dispatch of a neighboring department.

The department(s) having jurisdiction for the incident will continue to be dispatched at three minute intervals until one of the following occurs:

- At least one piece of apparatus from the department(s) responds.
- A member of the department having jurisdiction directs the communications center to discontinue re-tones.
- A neighboring department that has responded declares the incident under control.
- A written directive from the chief(s) of the fire department(s) having jurisdiction stating that the maximum number of times that an incident is to be re-toned is four. This policy will only be initiated by the communications center if apparatus from a neighboring department is responding.

I hope this short tutorial helps you to understand how re-tones work in the LRMFA system. If you have questions you should speak with your training officer or chief. If the staff at LRMFA can assist please contact us. 🚒

THE RURAL HITCH

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Mutual Fire Aid Association

Chief

Douglas M. Aiken

Deputy Chief

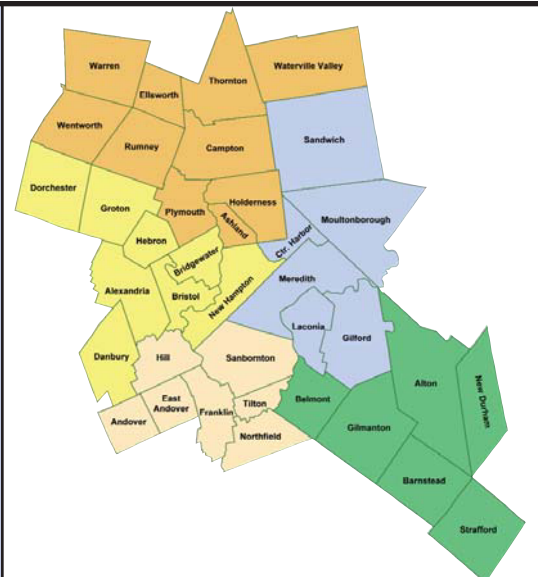
Kenneth G. (K.G.) Lockwood

Editor

Debbie Kardaseski

Email all submissions to:

debbiek@lrmfa.org



According to her Mom, Karah was born with hypoplastic left heart syndrome, which means she has no left ventricle. Additionally, she has no mitral valve or aortic passage. Her initial prognosis wasn't good, which is putting it mildly. However, she's defied the odds and fought back! The upcoming surgery is to install a pacemaker. Surgeons will cut through her sternum and attach the leads wherever they can get the best signal. The pacemaker will be installed inside her abdominal cavity.

Karah was given the choice of which truck she wanted to ride in and she picked the biggest in the station – Tower 1! She climbed up in the cab and “drove” for a few minutes. Then she checked out the “back seat.” What she really had her eye on was the bucket, so she was given the opportunity to climb up into it. She was a bit disappointed when she found out she couldn't actually go up in the air, but that was quickly replaced with excitement when she was presented with her own fire helmet – with her name on it!

Mary Reed then asked her if she was ready for her ride! After finally figuring out how to buckle such a small “firefighter” into the front seat, Dan climbed behind the wheel and the three of them were off! Karah hadn't smiled much – she's a very serious little girl – but she was smiling now!

When they returned, Karah got the chance to see all the lights flashing on the truck and was photographed in front of it.

I was able to fulfill another wish: I'd taken my motorcycle over to the station and Karah was photographed sitting on my Harley! She really wanted to go for a ride, but I had no helmet for her.

Mary and Dan presented Karah with a goodie bag full of safety information and coloring books. Through the



entire time, Karah had been carrying a small acorn and a piece of neatly-folded paper. She gave the paper and the acorn to K.G. She'd drawn a picture of firefighters for everyone as a thank you. The picture will be given a place of honor on the refrigerator in the Barnstead Station – K.G. kept the acorn!

At the end of the morning, we all felt great! A wish had been fulfilled and we realized the true value of life. Suddenly, the little aggravations we'd all been dealing with didn't seem so important. We had been privileged to meet this young lady and we wish her the very best and a quick recovery.

Since this article was originally written, Karah has had her surgery. She is recovering nicely. 🚒



Featured department...

Belmont Fire Department



Chief Jim Davis
Belmont Fire Department

03 – Belmont Fire Department

Fire Chief: Jim Davis
Address: 14 Gilmanton Road
PO Box 837
Belmont, NH 03220
603-267-8333
Fax: 603-267-3337
7:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m.
Permits available
until 10:00 p.m.
Officers: Deputy Chief Sean
McCarty
Shift Four shifts: Lt. and
Coverage: FF. 24 hours on/72
hours off.
Day FF Monday–
Friday
Apparatus: **Downtown Station**
Tanker, 2 engines, 2
ambulances, rescue,
forestry, utility pickup,
Argo
Winnisquam Station
Ambulance, 2
engines, forestry

Belmont Fire Chief Jim Davis has only been chief for six months; however, he spent three years as Deputy Chief under the leadership of Chief Rick Siegel. Chief Davis has 26 years with the department — all but five of which were fulltime. He leads a department with eleven fulltime, uniformed members and one administrative assistant, as well as

approximately 35 on-call members. The department has had fulltime day personnel since the 60s but didn't move to 24-hour coverage until 2001. In 1999, Belmont became the only fire department north of Concord with a fulltime paramedic.

The department — like so many in the region — deals with a population that fluctuates from 7,800 in the winter to well over 9,000 during the summer. The summer population is spread out in hard-to-reach places around the area's lakes, which adds an interesting component to emergency services. Additionally, Belmont is indirectly involved in events at NH International Speedway and has to deal with added traffic and related issues during races. Heavy traffic can make it difficult for firefighters and emergency personnel to get to the station in a timely manner; therefore, the Chief runs extra personnel in order to insure enough coverage during races. Belmont Fire Department is also “next in” should there be a major problem at the track.

Belmont Fire Department merged with the Winnisquam Department on August 1, 2006. Their station is located at “Mosquito” Bridge on Route 3, which gives the department quick access to the busy commercial strip along Route 3, including the Belknap Mall. Its location is ideal for timely response to incidents in that portion of town.

Like many towns in this area, Belmont has seen the number of calls double in the last ten years. Over 65% of those calls are for medical emergencies. As of Sept. 28, 2007, the department had already responded to 1,071 calls!

The townspeople are generally supportive of the department, although its request for a ladder truck has been turned down at the last three town meetings. The first year the department floated the idea, it didn't get past the budget committee. Year two, the two-thirds majority needed to pass a bond issue failed. And year three, the simple majority needed to pass a lease/purchase also failed. In those three years, the cost of a new lad-

BELMONT — CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



Belmont Fire Department — Downtown Station

der jumped \$200,000! Next year, the department will seek a used ladder truck, as well as a new ambulance to replace a 1997 model.

Fire and emergency apparatus are funded through ambulance fees. All monies collected are put into a designated account and new equipment is purchased with this capital. For many years it has been enough but, as equipment prices increase, it may become necessary to add a Capital Reserve Fund to the mix. So far, the fund has bought two ambulances, one tanker, and an engine! Future purchases planned in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) include a new engine in 2009 to replace an engine that will be 26 years old at that time.

RECENT PROMOTIONS AND NEW PERSONNEL

Sean McCarty, a Lieutenant with the department, was promoted to Deputy Chief on July 23. After going through an intensive open hiring process, which included three interviews with potential candidates, it was determined he was the best man for the job. On July 25, Greg Bavis was promoted from Acting



Belmont Fire Department — Winnisquam Station

Lieutenant to fulltime Lieutenant on Shift 4, replacing McCarty.

Mike Elkin was recently hired as a fulltime FF/EMT/Maintenance Mechanic. Mike graduated from NHCTC and had been a live-in student at Belmont while in school.

MAJOR FIRE AT MAJOR BRANDS

On January 18, 2005, Belmont experienced one of its worst fires in recent history. The Major Brands Plaza on Route 3 was destroyed in an evening fire that brought 18 (on scene and covering) departments

and approximately 150 firefighters to the scene. Despite the massive response — the fire went to six alarms — the building was a total loss. Firefighting efforts were severely impacted by the -16 degree weather. Over 13,000 feet of 4" line was used, including three 3,500' 4" lines leading from Lake Winnisquam to the fire. The cold weather froze lines quickly, as well as equipment. As fast as lines froze, new ones were laid. Amazingly enough, there were no injuries reported! The cause of the fire remains a mystery. 🚒



A scene from one of Belmont's worst fires in recent memory: The Major Brands Plaza fire, January 18, 2005.

From the Past...

The History of Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid

Compiled by Debbie Kardaseski, LRMFA

THE 1980s

The Association began the 80s decade with a balance of \$12,323.47 — substantially more than it began the 70s with! However, in ten years, all costs associated with operations had increased — and continues to increase to this day.

The Bylaws were again revised, this time to allow the secretary/treasurer position to be separated into two positions. David Huot, who had been secretary/treasurer for quite some time, spoke in favor of separating the jobs. He subsequently ended up as secretary again!

Attendance at Association meetings had declined through the years so, once again, a push was on to build interest and participation. Member departments were encouraged to avoid scheduling conflicts with Association meetings and member chiefs were asked to urge their personnel to attend meetings.

Early in the 80s, the radio building on top of Belknap was replaced. A new antenna was also placed on the mountain.

For years there had been discussion about building a structure house at the fire school and the time had now arrived to replace the burn pits. The Association still had not been able to make arrangements with the State and Federal government for long-term control over the site and was hesitant to invest any more into it without the guarantee of either ownership or a long-term lease.

The Association continued to coordinate controlled/training burns. In addition, the cascade system was expanded and made available to departments within the Association. In January, 1982, it was reported that changes made to the compressor were complete and it would not be necessary to reactivate the “Hot Air Committee.” Later in the year, as the compressor continued to overheat due to its placement in the Laconia Central Station, the “Hot Air Committee” did have to be reactivated. They were directed to find a better location for the compressor. Several months later, the system was moved to the Gilford Central Station. Shortly after the move, a high-pressure engineer inspected the equipment and it was discovered it was not in very good shape. Work began to replace it.

The State, in its infinite wisdom, decided in April of 1982 to cut funding for fire towers. The Association secretary was directed to prepare a letter and press release indicating its opposition to this move. Later,

after the budget was cut, the secretary was directed to send a letter to the Governor asking him to prohibit forest fires!

“The Rural Hitch” appeared briefly in the early 80s. Repeated requests for information fell on deaf ears and it “went out of business.” It is hoped the current “Hitch” will last longer!

Unvented space heaters became a “hot” issue in the early 80s. The market for these heaters had taken off and time and again, they were proven to be dangerous. The Association continued to educate the public about them, as well as the legislators in Concord.

In February, 1983, the Association adopted a Scholarship Policy and a Scholarship committee was appointed. The first scholarship, in the amount of \$500, was awarded to Kerry Bickford of Gilmanton Iron Works. Bickford planned to take the Paramedic Program at the Technical Institute in Concord.

East Andover joined the Association in March, 1983.

Also during the 80s, new sites were tested for transmitter use throughout the region. As the Association grew, so did the need for transmitters. New Hampshire’s mountains made communication difficult in many areas.

In October of 1984, changes were made to both the Bylaws and the Constitution.

Late in 1984, the State began the process of reorganizing the executive branch of government. Part of the proposed changes included putting the Fire Marshal’s office and State Fire Service Training under the control of the Department of Safety. The Association was not in favor of this change and would recommend to the Governor that the Fire Marshall work under the Attorney General. Association members were asked to write letters to their legislators concerning this issue. A hearing was held on March 28, 1985, which was filled with firefighters! All of the lobbying and gentle arm-twisting paid off: the Fire Service Minimum Training Standards Commission was moved to the Department of Post-Secondary Education and would remain fully autonomous; the Fire Marshal’s Office would become part of the Division of Safety Services; and the Board of Fire Control was kept intact.

Through the years, there had been many discussions about radio procedures, overuse of radios, and licensing. Firefighters were constantly reminded they needed licenses in order to keep radios in their vehicles. An ongoing problem was the unnecessary chatter during

HISTORY — CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

emergencies. At one point, it was suggested that “self-discipline in not using the radio just to hear your self talk” could be the solution to the problem!

In March 1985, the summer fire school was almost discontinued. Interest had been dropping and the Fire School Committee had met with a lack of input from member towns as to what they wanted to see offered. A motion was made at the March meeting to discontinue the school, but it did not pass — leaving the committee with little time to pull the school together. The summer Fire School did occur, but lost money. It was later decided there would be no winter or spring Fire School. Recent schools had lost money, the liability insurance had been cancelled, and support from member towns was waning. The School would begin to concentrate on smaller, local training sessions that would be more specialized.

At the same March meeting, Hebron, Groton, Bristol and Andover were accepted into the system. Later in 1985, Franklin was voted in as a member of the system.

A motion was also made at the March meeting to begin republishing *The Rural Hitch*. It was noted that news needed to be forthcoming from member towns in order for it to be successful — something that remains true to this day.

Midway through 1985 the Radio Committee reported that the radio on Mt. Belknap and the console in the Dispatch Center were obsolete and should be replaced. The cost to do so: between \$20,000 and \$25,000. The issue was passed along to the Board of Directors as it appeared money would need to be borrowed to make the upgrades. Later in that same year, the Board approved the upgrades.

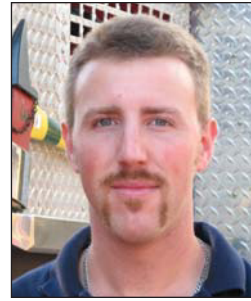
From this point forward, the minutes have disappeared! If anyone has copies, I would love to borrow them in order to finish the history. Please contact me, Debbie Kardaseski, at LRMFA: 528-9111 on Fridays or email me at debbiek@lrmfa.org.



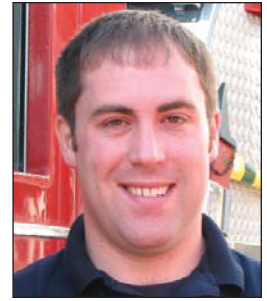
New Employees, Promotions, Retirements...



Greg Bavis
Belmont Fire Dept.
Promoted to
Lieutenant



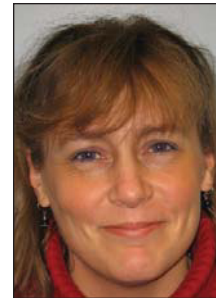
Mike Elkin
Belmont Fire Dept.
New fulltime
FF/EMT/Maintenance
Mechanic



Sean McCarty
Belmont Fire Dept.
Promoted to
Deputy Chief



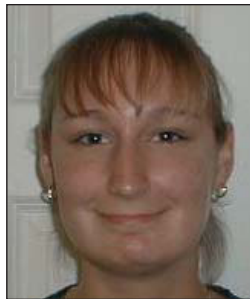
Greg Nichols
Belmont Fire Dept.
New fulltime FF/
Paramedic



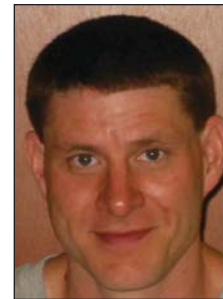
Lisa Hutchins
LRMFA
New Dispatcher



Nate Lemay
Gilmanton Fire Dept.
New FF/EMT



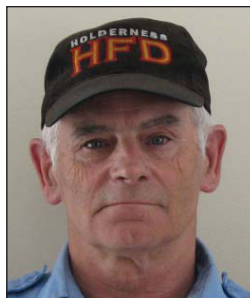
Malorie Cotton
New Hampton Fire Dept.
New FF/EMT-I



Tim Muller
New Hampton Fire Dept.
New FF/EMT



John DeSilva
Sanbornton Fire Dept.
New Chief



Dick Mardin
Holderness Fire Dept.
Retiring as Chief
(9-31-07)



Eleanor Mardin
Holderness Fire Dept.
New Chief (10-1-07)

SEND YOUR DEPARTMENT NEWS TO

debbiek@lrmfa.org

Please send information and photos of new employees, promotions, retirements, and general personnel news.

Laconia Fire Department's Dive Team: Available to Help

By Lt. Michael Shastany, Laconia Fire Department, Platoon #1, Weirs

March 11, 2003 was a day that forever changed the Laconia Fire Department. This, as most of you may recall, was the day that Firefighter Mark Miller disappeared under the ice of Lake Winnepesaukee in the Weirs. There are many theories of what happened that day to cause this tragedy, but the fact remains that it happened and from that day forward the Laconia Fire Department would be dedicated to never let it happen again.

Immediately after this tragedy, support from the local community began to pour in through donations of time and money to ensure that Laconia and the Lakes Region would realize what Mark had been working to create: a local dive team.

Laconia, the "City on the Lake," as described on the seal of the City of Laconia, had a very limited ability to provide rescue on any of the three major bodies of water that fall within the city limits: Lake Winnisquam, Lake Opechee, and Lake Winnepesaukee. They present a substantial area, equaling almost 1/5 of the total area of Laconia.

The Laconia Fire Department historically had two 12' flat-bottomed aluminum boats with 10hp outboards, one at Central Station and one at the Weirs Station. These boats were fine on flat water with no wind, but became less than adequate when there was any chop on the water or when used in wind greater than 10 mph. In the early 1990s two Zodiac inflatables were purchased and replaced the aluminum boats. These inflatables were much more stable in rough water and provided responders with a reasonable platform to perform basic rescues, but were small and limited on space to administer first aid or CPR.

On several occasions the department looked into purchasing various boats for use on Lake Winnepesaukee, but it was generally "out-of-the-budget" and all efforts failed. Early in 2001, Thurston's Marina donated a 16' Sunbird, a bow-rider with a 40hp outboard and the LFD fleet was formed. This boat was a small step above the Zodiacs, providing faster response over the water, but was still extremely limited in capacity. Two rescuers and one victim were about the maximum load it could handle.

An effort was made to obtain a surplus hull from New Hampshire Marine Patrol and that's exactly what we received. A 17' Mako that was a de-commissioned Marine Patrol boat on its last leg of life. We purchased a 115 hp 4-stroke Yamaha outboard and the boat was rigged with the new motor and new controls and placed



into service at the Weirs docks. This boat was a step above the Sunbird but was in extremely poor condition. Unfortunately, after only a year of service, an independent survey was done of the hull and it was deemed no longer sea worthy and thus condemned. The new motor and controls were stripped from this hull and it was disabled and disposed of.

After Mark's passing, Alan Lydiard of Irwin Marine took the "bull by the horns" and began an effort to obtain a reasonable boat for the LFD in Mark's memory. Donations poured in and Edgewater Powerboats of Florida agreed to manufacture a boat for the LFD at cost. Fund-raisers were held and by July of 2003, a brand new commercial grade hull with a 200hp Mercury Optimax was sitting in the yard of Irwin Marina. Members of the LFD and employees of Irwin Marina donated their time and effort to rig and prep the boat for service and a dedication was held in late July placing the boat into full active service with Color Radar, GPS, and full color SONAR. This boat was designated 13-Boat-1

All of a sudden, the LFD had a brand-new boat with no place to dock it. Watermark Construction offered to build a dock for the new boat at the Laconia Waterworks building located right next to Irwin Marine on Union Avenue. This was a perfect location as it was monitored 24 hours a day and centrally located for a rapid response from central station.

Money was also donated for the purchase of enough dive equipment to outfit the LFD Dive/Rescue Team. A

DIVE TEAM — CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

committee was formed of the original members striving for a dive team and an independent safety review committee was formed to ensure that the highest level of safety was adhered to. It wasn't easy, but the committees took their time and paid strict attention to safety in drafting SOPs for the operation of a dive team.

Once all of the safety concerns had been addressed, a private contractor specializing in commercial rescue diving was hired to train all current divers. Life Guard Systems owner, Butch Hendrics, oversaw all training provided to the Laconia Dive Team and all members became certified in the nationally-recognized "Public Safety Diver" program. Seven department members were already certified as "open water divers" and achieved "rescue diver" and "advanced open water diver" prior to taking the "Public Safety Diver" classes. By the fall of 2005, all divers had been trained in open water rescue and classes were scheduled for "under ice" training as soon as the lake was frozen. Ice training took place and the divers were certified in under the ice search/rescue operations.

The spring of 2006 brought the final preparations for the team to go on-line and available for response. A final review of ALL Standard Operating Procedures and Safety Guidelines was conducted and independent team training commenced. Training took place through May and June of 2005 and several search drills were conducted. When we felt the team was ready, independent evaluation of the team was sought from the Nashua Fire Department. The leader of the Nashua Dive Team reviewed all SOPs and Operating Procedures of the LFD team and then conducted an evaluation dive. A scenario was set, a search dive was conducted and evaluated, and the LFD got the "thumb's up" to go into service.

The LFD now had a suitable boat for operations on the "big lake" and a ton of dive equipment. The problem now was where to keep it all so it would be ready to go at a moment's notice and portable enough to travel to the vicinity of an operation. A search began for a support vehicle to house the team's gear. Finally, a used Lakes Region Linen van was found for sale at a reasonable price and in reasonable condition that would suit our needs. The vehicle was purchased, the department's mechanic gave it a "once over," and it was ready to go. Some plywood, styrofoam insulation and steel were bought and Firefighter John-Paul Hobby began crafting the

inside of this old truck into a mobile operations and storage facility for the team's gear. Now we had a pale green and white dive truck. Some red and white paint were purchased and all we needed was a place large enough to paint the beast. Finally, after an extensive search, a spray booth large enough to accommodate a linen van was found and a weekend of sanding, masking, painting, re-sanding, re-masking and re-painting (we're amateur painters) took place and a nice red and white dive/rescue truck emerged. Lights, radios and lettering were applied and the team had an operations vehicle. This truck made a transformation from an empty box to an insulated vehicle with storage for 10 divers' gear, operations desk, microwave and coffee maker, refrigerator, air conditioner, electric heat, 6000 watt portable generator and lighting.

The Dive/Rescue Truck, LRMFA designation 13-Rescue-1, enables the dive team to set up a mobile operations center in any remote location to conduct an extended search.

Shortly after completion of 13-Rescue-1, New Hampshire Congressman Jeb Bradley worked to get the Laconia Fire Department a surplus boat from the US Coast Guard. With some paperwork and a road-trip to Maine, the LFD obtained a 22', Zodiac Hurricane rigid hull inflatable with a 135hp Mercury and designated it 13-Boat-2. This surplus USCG boat came equipped with monochrome radar and a GPS Chartplotter. Once in service, the 16' Sunbird was removed from service and sold. One space at the public docks in the Weirs, next to the "Sophie C," was set aside for Fire Department docking. This is a prime location for 13B2 as the Weirs duty crew can respond quickly to the public docks and be underway within a few short minutes to any location on the "big lake."

Current LFD SOPs have the Dive Team alerted on any water rescue emergency within the LFD response area. Upon the first tone, one team leader is to make an initial evaluation of the situation and determine if the situation warrants full activation of the team. If it is determined that the team is to be activated, an additional call is toned announcing team activation and all team members gather either at the scene



or Lakeport Station, whichever is closer for them. Upon assembly, 13-Rescue-1 will respond to a location dictated by command for initial set-up and commencement of dive operations. Additional support personnel respond with both 13B1 and 13B2 to assist with dive operations.

In an effort to make other area departments aware of the team's abilities and limitations, a PowerPoint presentation has been created and has initially been given at the Gilford Fire Department as we work so closely with GFD on most water emergencies. This presentation takes about an hour and is available for any department in the Lakes Region Mutual Aid System. Included in the presentation is a tour of the 13R1, Diver's Gear Demo, a brief "tender demonstration," and the PowerPoint presentation with a questions and answers session.

It is the goal of the Laconia Fire Department to make available the Dive/Rescue Team for ANY department needing the service of divers. Due to travel time to certain areas, the rescue may be a recovery by the



time we can deploy, but it's still considered a "rescue" up to 90 minutes after initial report.

It's incredible to see that this Dive Team was created and is sustained without cost to the taxpayer in Laconia. The team is solely funded through donations and corporate sponsors who return year after year to support the efforts of the team. Without such strong support, the team would not be able to operate with such a full roster and safety would then become a concern.

If your department has any questions regarding the Laconia Fire Department Dive Team or would like to host a presentation, please contact Lieutenant Michael Shastany at the Laconia Fire Department, 603-524-6881. 🚒

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Professionalism: Where Am I?

By Kevin LaChapelle, Captain, Franklin Fire Department — A Shift

I hope my last article, *Safety: Where Am I?*, sparked a few folks into some self-motivated training. As you may remember, my previous question should be answered with some type of geographical location, ie; “AB corner — basement division.”

PART 2 – PROFESSIONALISM: WHERE AM I?

There are many definitions out there for the specific words *professional* and *professionalism*. There are also many debatable conversations of *who* is a professional firefighter. Now, now, this is neither the time nor place to discuss *who* is a professional firefighter.

The meat-and-potatoes of professionalism is really the way we conduct ourselves at work. The difference we are faced with is that we are municipal employees and, as far as the public is concerned, **we are always on duty whether volunteer, call or fulltime**. When we made the commitment to become firefighters, we made the commitment to serve in the eyes of the public. Keep in the front of your mind that our professionalism is not only judged by the public but also by our peers, our officers and — most importantly — our chiefs. **Every day you wake up while serving in the fire service, you are doing your oral board for your next position or job!**

So what is it we are being judged on? Is it our appearance while in our uniform? It could be — a uniform that is worn, torn or stained does not represent a conscientious professional. What about our knowledge, skills, and abilities? These three areas are performance-based and also factor into how we are judged as a professional. Another area of professionalism frequently judged is our character. Character could also be described as personality and is often considered a

large part of our professionalism. *Character...* I bet we have all met one or two of them in the fire service!

The IFSTA manual for Fire Department Company Officer; chapter 1, page 8, says it best.

- Learn your job, be sincerely interested in it, and be dedicated to it.
- Be loyal to the department.
- Be aggressive in the pursuit of education and training opportunities.
- Guard your speech on and off duty.
- Lead by example.
- Accept criticism graciously, and also accept praise and honor.

In recent times, a few of our area departments have been tested by taxpayers who are upset and frustrated by decisions made by the department. I call this *political terrorism at the local level*. We may not have been the one who made certain decisions; however, we are still directly impacted by local politics. My point is this: our conduct and reactions to *political terrorism at the local level* is a perfect way to judge a portion of our professionalism. Your quick retort or not-well-thought-out reaction to a taxpayer's criticism will directly reflect on your department, superiors — and your professionalism.

I will close this week's article with a quote from L. Ron Hubbard.

“A professional learns every aspect of the job. An amateur skips the learning process whenever possible.”

This article is not directed toward anyone other than those who read it!

Now ask yourself, in reference to professionalism, **Where am I?**

Stay SAFE and MAKE IT SAFE! 🚒



Three Rivers W.E.T. Team

Another resource available to the LRMFA system is the Three Rivers W.E.T. Team, specializing in swift, flood and moving water emergencies. Member agencies include Tilton-Northfield Fire Department, Franklin Fire Department, Sanbornton Fire Department and Belmont Fire Department. 🚒

Employee Spotlight...

Paul Steele



Paul Steele has worked at Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid since May 2006, when he began as a part-time dispatcher. Just a few months later, in November, he became a fulltime employee. He is no stranger to dispatching — prior to beginning at Lakes Region, he worked as a dispatcher for the Lincoln (NH) Police Department.

Paul and his wife, Colleen, are both firefighters with the Campton-Thornton Fire Department. Paul's firefighting career began in 1999 when he was an Explorer. After taking the Firefighter I course through the Fire Academy in Concord, he joined as a firefighter in 2002.

Like most of the Dispatchers here, he enjoys the schedule which allows four days off. During his time off, he and his wife like to travel. They'll pack their two dogs in the truck (the two cats stay home!) and head out to explore the area. Living in Campton gives them access to the mountains of New Hampshire but is also close enough for an easy ride to the coast.

Paul is an avid photographer, a hobby he's enjoyed for many years. A new pastime will be riding; he recently purchased a motorcycle. 🏍️

Third Quarter Statistics...

From July 1, 2007–September 30, 2007

Incidents Dispatched:	July 2007	2,049
	August 2007	2,059
	September 2007	1,738
	Total Third Quarter	5,846
	YTD Total	16,582

Resources Available:

Engines	102	Tankers	15
Ladders	9	Rescues	21
Forestry	32	Ambulances	38
Utilities	5	Fire Boats	14
Towers	3		



Statistics:

- 🚒 Began operations in September of 1971. Moved operations to our current facility in June of 2000.
- 🚒 Dispatches Fire and Medical Emergencies for 36 communities and 37 Fire and EMS Agencies.
- 🚒 Serves a population of 117,518 residents (2006 Estimate).
- 🚒 Is spread over 5 NH Counties, covering a geographical area of 1,494 square miles (16% of the area of the State of NH — 1.5 times the size of the state of Rhode Island).
- 🚒 Protects over \$20.4 billion dollars of property (2006 Valuation).
- 🚒 Has an operating budget of \$906,978 (2007 budget).
- 🚒 Has 10 full-time and 8 part-time employees.
- 🚒 Dispatched 21,295 incidents during 2006 (58.34 calls per day).
- 🚒 Dispatched 21,441 incidents during 2005 (58.7 calls per day).
- 🚒 20,001 incidents during 2004 (54.7 calls per day).

New Equipment...



Meredith. 14E2

2007 Pierce Lance. 6-man cab, 750-gallon tank, 1,250 GPM Waterous pump, 1,100' 4" hose, removable deck gun, and Holmatro portable hydraulic unit with Combi-Tool extrication tool.



Gilmanton. 9B1

16' Gillan 135, 40 horsepower Mercury outboard. Carries wet suits and dry suits. Built by Dylan Marine in Alton. No tax money used to purchase and equip.



Holderness. 12E5

2007 Kenworth T800. 2,500-gallon tank, 1,500 GPM pump, 1,000' 4" hose, 1,000' 1-3/4" hose, 800' 2-1/2" hose. At right is a close-up of the artwork on the back!



Photos...



Dorchester Old Home Day. 7-21-07
LRMFA makes an appearance.



Middle Route Fire, Belmont. 6-18-07

Bentley Road Fire, Moultonborough.
9-25-07





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Demo Deal of the Month ↓



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Allison 3000 EVS transmission
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It's all about Service !

*Lakes Region Fire Apparatus Inc
is pleased to announce, the newest addition to our staff*

Service Manager

Shawn Mulcahy

Shawn recently joined our ranks as manager of our service department bringing with him an impressive resume, which includes over thirty years of fire-fighting experience holding rank from probationary to Chief & twenty five years of service & repair from a major equipment company where Shawn specialized in engines, transmissions, as well as hydraulics and electronics all of which we repair on a daily basis.

Give Shawn a call or perhaps email and welcome him aboard! :

603-323-7117 phone or email: shawn@lakesfire.com



Thank you to all of our LRMFA customers for your years of continued patronage!



ASSOCIATION MEETING SCHEDULE

**NOVEMBER 29 @ 1900 @
SANBORNTON CENTRAL STATION**

**JANUARY 24, 2008 @ 1900 @
CAMPTON-THORNTON**

**MARCH 27, 2008 @ 1900 @
GILMANTON**

Bentley Road, Moultonborough Fire 9-25-07

Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Association
62 Communications Drive
Laconia, NH 03246

