

HOT TOPICS

October 15, 2001

Volume 1 – Issue 5



The power to unite is stronger than the power to divide. United we stand!

The Events of 9 – 11 By Assistant Chief John Tomaszewski

In the July issue of Hot Topics I wrote an article titled, The Threat of Terrorism; Real or Imagined. Unfortunately as a result of the events of 9 – 11, every American now knows that the threat of terrorism is a reality and that our lives will never be the same. What does this mean for the fire service of the future and how has this tragedy impacted our careers here in Delray Beach?

The events of 9 – 11 will change the fire service forever because we have always been and will always be the first on the scene when these incidents occur.

We have to develop our relationships with our partners in law enforcement and emergency management. We must become more vigilant when we go about our business of responding to emergency incidents. We need to be ever mindful that an incident might not be what it appears to be on the surface. We need to constantly look for clues that something else might be going on at an emergency scene or possibly even in our day-to-day contact with the public.

As it has been reported in almost every newspaper in America, a number of the perpetrators of this incident stayed in our community, ate in our restaurants, worked out in our gyms and used the computers in our library. Going about the planning and preparation for their cowardly acts without notice or detection by anyone in the community.

We have all been trained in the, Emergency Response to Terrorism: Basic Concepts. If you haven't reviewed that material in a while, I would encourage you to do so. Pay special attention to the Appendices in the back of the Student Manual. Get on the Internet and read the Terrorism Annex to the County and State Emergency Management Plans, and the Federal Response Plan. Most of all, practice what we have learned on every call.

Asst. Chief John Tomaszewski

Administration News

By Ellen P. Wickert

Telestaff News – The lead implementation team went to the Annual Telestaff Conference in California. We met many departments using Telestaff and many more in the implementation phase. Everyone had positive comments regarding the program. The program saves the Battalion Chief time by scheduling many changes automatically. The Fire Fighters/Paramedics like the system because it is fair and consistent and they can request time off without all the paper forms.

EMS Transport Billing Information – The total E.M.S. transport revenue for the fiscal year was \$1,156,776.40. This includes the billing for Highland Beach transports. We achieved an adjusted collection rate of 102.96%. We had a total of 4,919 billed transports. Chief Koen says, “thanks for all the hard work to secure this record achievement”.

Remember if patient has Medicare ask if it is an HMO, if so what HMO and a possible diagnosis. Insurance will not pay Altered Mental Status – need a better possible diagnosis, ie., any other medical problem.

The entire Administrative Staff ex-



Staff Assistant Collyn Katri

tends a heartfelt welcome to Staff Assistant Collyn Katri who joined our team on September 24th. Collyn is no stranger to the department as many of you might remember from the clinic. Please extend her best wishes in her career here at the Delray Beach Fire Department.

WELCOME ABOARD!

We extend a hearty welcome to new hire



Firefighter/Paramedic Kurt Lewis & Family

Fire Fighter/Paramedic Kurt Lewis who started with the Department on September 17th. A special badge pinning ceremony was held on Friday, September 21st and Kurt was presented his badge by Asst. Fire Chief Mike Wigder-son. Kurt's wife, **Cindy**, his son, **Kurt Jr.**, and other family members were also in attendance. Much success to you in your career in the Fire Service.

CONGRATULATIONS!!!!

Congratulations are extended to **Victor Williams** on his recent promotion to Lieutenant Paramedic Training. We wish you the very best in your new position and future endeavor.s.



*Lt. Victor Williams
Lieutenant Paramedic Training*

BABY NEWS!

IT'S A BOY! IT'S A GIRL!



Congratulations to **Paramedic Darren Gurley** and his wife, **Christine** on the birth of their son, **Cameron Michael**, who weighed in at 6-lbs., 4-oz.;

Also, congratulations are extended to **Lt. Patricia Dunkelmann** and her husband, **Bill** on the birth of their second daughter, **Heidi Lynne**, who weighed in at 7-lbs., 11-oz.; Their oldest daughter and proud big sister is **Danielle Lou**.

GOD

BLESS

AMERICA...

Fire Safety News

by Assistant Chief William Adams

AWARDS PRESENTATION



Several news stories recently have talked about how Americans seem more willing to help each other since the events of 9-11. On October 16, 2001 our Department will be recognizing city employees, and individuals who have demonstrated caring and concern for others even before that day in September. The quarterly Awards Presentation will begin at 9 AM in the training rooms upstairs. Everyone is invited. Now, more than ever, this program could have a positive impact on our actions and attitudes toward others.

FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

Lt. Hal Knabb has a full schedule of classes as Fire Prevention Week begins October 7- 13. This year's theme is *Cover the bases and Strike out Fire*. The program identifies ways to reduce fires and injuries due to cooking, heating appliances, and electrical wiring. It also reminds us of the value of having working smoke detectors and changing the batteries once a year or when the audible indicator "chirps". Contact Lt. Knabb for educational handouts.



PENSION ISSUES

CHANGE IN DROP INVESTMENT OPTIONS COMING SOON



Within the next few months, members of the Police and Firefighters Retirement System will have additional investment options when entering the DROP plan. At its September meeting, the board selected Gabriel, Roeder, Smith, Co. (GRS) to

serve as third-party administrator for the DROP. Once this program is in place, members entering the DROP will be able to invest their pension payments in a variety of mutual funds that meet their individual needs. Members who are currently in the DROP will be given the option to switch their DROP accounts to this new self-directed program or leave their accounts in the pension plan.

Participants will be able to change their choices if they desire and to take advantage of on-line performance reports and financial planning tools. The online programs will even help members make decisions on whether to enter the DROP or not based upon individual variables and scenarios.

The board is hoping to have the contract with GRS completed within a month. GRS will then provide on-site informational programs and assistance. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

FEDERAL LAW CHANGES

Several changes in the federal laws concerning retirement plans will be going in to effect January 1, 2002. These changes are part of the "Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001". According to the President of the National Conference on Public Employment Retirement Systems, "this revision in the tax code represents the biggest public sector pension change in NCPERS' 60 year history." Among other changes, the bill increased the amount that can be contributed to 457 plans, and provides more flexibility in how the money is withdrawn at retirement. If you are a participant in the ICMA 457 plan you received information on this in the mail. I have an analysis of the provisions prepared by NCPERS in my office for anyone who needs information.

One provision of the new law allows for the use of 457 monies to buy-back time served in the military toward your pension with your present employer, *if that plan provides for such benefit*. According to our pension attorney, our plan does not address buy-back of time and any change would have to be negotiated.

Chief Bill Adams, Chairman

Training and Safety Division

by Division Chief Russell Accardi

I would like to recognize all of the work *Lt. Mike Twigger* performed while serving in the Training & Safety Division. Mike's contributions have had a significant impact on the quality of training provided to our personnel during this time. We wish Lt. Twigger great success in his new responsibilities on "C" shift. The training & Safety Division would like to welcome and congratulate *Lt. Victor Williams* who has assumed the position of Training Lieutenant.

Special Operations:

Lt. Shawn Beckowitz and Lt. Mark Reynolds traveled to Sanford, Florida to attend a liquefied petroleum and natural gas course hosted by Florida Gas Transmission Company. This class took place at their training facility. Since this is a common emergency response. The Lieutenants agree that this class would be beneficial for the entire department. Look for future opportunities to attend this training class.

Some Special Operations responses for September included:

On September 12, 2001, Delray and Boca's HazMat team ran a regional call into Boynton Beach for an underground diesel tank that was damaged by construction workers causing diesel fuel to run into the Intracoastal.

Training Schedule

October 3rd – 5th

Dive Training
Divers Only – -Location TBA

October 10th – 12th

Biological Hazards & Responder Safety
Model 6 @ Fire HQ

October 17th – 19th

Haz-Mat
Techs Only @ Fire HQ

October 23rd – 27th

County Wide High Rise Training
Model 15 @ Fire HQ

October 31st

BTLS
Model 12 @ Fire HQ

To The Members of The Delray Beach Fire Department:



Words cannot express the roller coaster of emotions that I have experienced since September 11, 2001. Many of you have come forward to offer me your thoughts and your prayers. Many of you have offered, "Whatever you need, Jim, we will make it happen ."

The Delray Beach Fire Department and its members are an important part of my life. On behalf of the Tabek Family, I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for all of your support. Please keep doing what you do best. God bless you and your families.

***Love,
Jim***



From the Chief's Desk

When I reflect back to the events of September 11th, I ask myself “what did I *really see* live and what do I *think I saw* as it occurred”. With all the visuals, including the continual replays on every screen, and on the pages of every paper and magazine, our senses become overloaded and numbed. I can only imagine what the families of the Fire Fighters and Police Officers in New York must feel, because they live it over and over everyday. ***May God bless them all!***

Here at home, it has been far from normal. We have been involved with some form of activity related to the events in Washington, New York and Pennsylvania almost constantly, and at every turn. First there was the activation of our EOC and initial deployment changes to try to be prepared for increased responses and “the unimaginable”. Security issues were considered for our personnel, facilities and equipment. Meetings with the City Manager, Police officials and Department heads were held to coordinate our municipal activities in conjunction with those at the County EOC. Even an old fire horse came running to lend a hand. Thanks ***Larry G.*** for helping to set up the EOC and man the phones.

We made every effort to check with our personnel on and off duty to see if anyone needed assistance. We found that some folks were stranded in North Dakota, Memphis and Boston and were trying to get back home. ***Fortunately, all made it back safe – eventually.*** There were personal losses too, and our sympathy is sent collectively and individually to the members of the ***TabEEK family.*** Jim, our prayers are with you and yours.

The community rallied in the face of this terrible day and began to show how much they cared and how much they wanted to help. Phone calls started coming from municipal officials, “children showed up at Fire Stations with their savings in their piggy banks” (See photo top right), cards and notes were given to Fire Fighters by children and seniors, and then the boot drive kicked off that raised over ***70,000 in***



Delray Beach alone and more than 1.2 million dollars just in Palm Beach County, and local school children raised money to help the children in New York. Editorials were written calling on the community to realize the importance of the duty and dedication of public safety professionals. More recently, the community hosted the “***Night of Pride***” at the Tennis Stadium and Old School Square with over 750 city officials, citizens, Fire Fighters and Police Officers in attendance.

In a very determined way, the Bi-annual Redmond Heath and Safety Symposium took place as scheduled in Phoenix, and a group from Delray



Beach including ***Mike Wise, Ilene Rose, Richard Murphy, Jim TabEEK*** and I attended. It was the first conference group to come to that city in almost two weeks following the events in the northeast. The conference was very well attended – the largest ever. It was also evident that a statement

was being made by IAFF by not canceling the symposium – ***terrorists won't win in the United States.***

Around the world, expressions of concern and sympathy have been extended to Fire Fighters and their families in the United States. I am told by friends who were overseas in mid-September that flowers and candles were being placed in front of fire stations in Scotland, England and Germany as expressions of mutual loss and condolence. It truly is a big family out there, and it is an honor to be part of it.

We are especially glad to have ***Russ Accardi*** and ***Ed Cagnin*** back home with us – safe. They have had a set of experiences that no one would want, but ***they represented you with distinction and honor in New York.*** ***Let us all take a moment each day*** to remember those who died there, ***not in sorrow, but with pride.*** Let us use this same moment to call upon the very best in ourselves to serve the public with the same level of dedication as the “***351***” at ***FDNY.*** Let's make ***THEM*** proud!

Just in case, we are brushing up on recent departmental training on biological and chemical weapons and basic hazardous materials scene safety. It is the ***basic stuff and training*** that will keep us out of harms way and best prepared to do our job related to the more perverse incidents we may have to face. The good news is – the PPE we have assigned is very effective to serve as protection in the event of most incidents.

Lt. Roger Hardin seems to like his ***NEW*** and ***BLUE*** class B shirts, and so do others that I have spoken to about the uniform changes. There will be a new class A uniform as well, but the details are still being finalized. Thanks for your cooperation as we upgrade the quality of our uniforms as well as the public appearance aspects of our work and dress clothing.

Kerry B. Koen

Halloween Safety Tips

Halloween can be “Spooktacular”



Halloween is an exciting time for children. They use imagination and creative ability to pick out the “perfect” costume.

The kids get all dressed up and call their friends. Parents take photos that somehow always come out at the most embarrassing moments and they haunt you for the rest of your life. In the process of all this fun and excitement you probably didn't notice your parents were following some simple safety guidelines. After all, Halloween should be scary and exciting not scary and unsafe. To help you on your way to a “Spooktacular” Halloween, the Delray Beach Fire Department would like to provide you with some simple safety tips:

- Be sure to accompany children at all times.
- Be sure that children can be seen easily. Costumes should have bright colors or be easily seen in the dark by people driving in cars.
- Keep children on sidewalks if they are available.
- Purchase costumes, wigs, and accessories that have a tag indicating that the material is flame resistant. This will help in case of contact with an open flame.
- Keep torches or candles (pumpkins) away from the walkway in front of your house during this event. Sometimes children will bump these torches or candles by accident causing an unnecessary danger that can be avoided.
- Carry flashlights, glow sticks or attach battery powered lights to the costumes to make the child very visible from the road.
- If possible, use make-up instead of

buying a mask. Children will be able to see better, preventing any tripping.

- Tell children not to eat any candy until it has all been checked by you for safety.
- Do not give out any homemade or unwrapped treats to the children.

Have a wonderful “Spooktacular” evening of scary and safe fun!

Lt. Patricia Dunkelmann

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN DELRAY BEACH?

by Bill Rego
Special Events Coordinator

October 20th

American Heart Association's Annual Heart Walk, 7:30 a.m. – Siemens ICN, Inc., 900 Broken Sound Parkway, Boca Raton, FL, 3 miles – City of Delray Beach sponsored event. Fire Fighters have been the #1 contributors for the past 2 years. Let's keep up the good work!

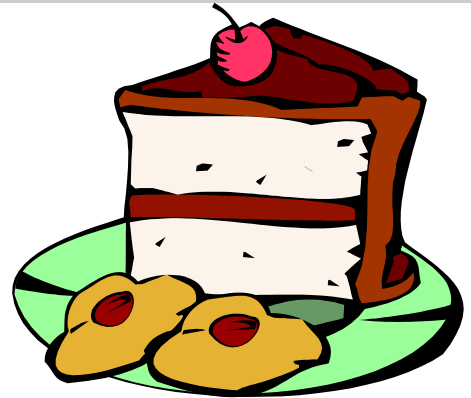
9th Annual Fire Fighters Recognition Dinner, Dancing, and Awards Program will be held at the Elks Club in

Delray Beach at 7:00 p.m. until midnight.

November 10th

Palm Beach County Council of Fire Fighters Annual Chili Cook-Off, Lake Worth...Taste some of the wildest chili's you could ever imagine. **Local 1842** will be there to defend last year's title of **Best Chili** over all, along with the other locals from Palm Beach County. Food, live entertainment, spirits and Fraternal gathering.

[Recipe of the Month](#)



Sprite Pound Cake

3 Cups of Sugar

3 Sticks of Butter

6 Eggs

3 Cups of All Purpose or Cake Flour

3/4 Cups of Sprite

3 Teaspoons Lemon Flavoring

Cream sugar and butter until smooth. Add one egg at a time and beat. Add flour and stir. Combine Sprite and Lemon flavoring and mix into batter until smooth. Bake at 325 degrees in a bundt pan for 1 hour.

Dust with powdered sugar or serve with favorite topping.

Anonymous Fire Fighter

Thought Of The Month



Greatness is not in where we stand, but in what direction we are moving

Unknown

HIS-tory by Chief M.B. Wigderson

How I Came To Work For The City of Delray Beach.

Chief Wigderson's journey through time continues this month. Let's see what happened next.

Mike Malinowski, Al Damato and Rick Lee were all recently discharged from the military service and were looking for career opportunities in the area. Mike or "ski" was nervous energy, capable of doing almost anything. He was mechanical, he worked on both cars and boats (for years he would maintain my 1970 Firebird in his backyard shop), and he was always part of our construction crew that would help remodel homes, trim trees, install yard sprinkler systems and lay sod, build swimming pools and decks or replace roofs of fellow department members. Whenever we got a crew together to replace someone's roof, we could have easily picked up one or two more jobs in the neighborhood. We had a number of department members who had dump trucks (Ryncarz, Pittman, Hull, & Bush) that helped do many of our home improvement projects and by our last roof we were using pneumatic tools, thanks to Tom Mook. Our best time was at Dennis Wondra's house, 1800 sq. ft. including Florida room, complete new shingle roof in two (2) days. Mike was also quite athletic. He and Don Oakes were the best slalom water skiers I have ever seen. They could both drag their elbows in the water making turns. I was the spotter one day and I kept calling out he's down, only to have him pop back up when Don cut the engine. Mike also played short stop on our softball team and was known for his arm. I played catcher and dreaded his throws to home plate. Al's nickname was Radar, due to his similarity in looks to the character on the TV program M.A.S.H.; He never liked being called Radar, and would tell you so, in later years he became Uncle Al. Al moved to Delray to get away from the rat race in New Jersey, and to be closer to his parents who lived

here in Delray. Rick Lee came from up state New York he had been with the Military Police in the service and traveled the world. His ability to remember names and faces was uncanny and on more than one occasion has proved useful to our department. Our Minimum Standards Class would teach us the basics of firefighting, how to use the tools and equipment to extinguish a fire properly. We learned first aid training from Capt. Ed Dalton who was with the Police Dept. and had the reputation of delivering more babies than anyone else in Delray Beach. We had to memorize where all the equipment was located on the vehicles as well as the streets and subdivisions names, addresses of parks, landmark buildings, and condominiums throughout the City. We were also given copies of the department rules and regulations as well as the union contract to read. Our daily schedule included physical fitness training, checking out the equipment list for emergency vehicles assigned to Central Station, or Fire Station #3, if we were training at that station for the day. Capt. Jackson would methodically go through the course study guide so that he could check off that we had received the prescribed training that we must have in order to receive our certificate. Capt. Jackson did his job well, for we all passed the state exam. Our daily routine was designed to split up the work fairly between the three shifts. On Monday, we would check out our assigned equipment and apparatus (Monday check out) everything out of the compartments, checked out and cleaned, including the compartment. Then we would wash all the staff cars, followed by all the apparatus. We would line them up on the West side of the station and play car wash. Wash, dry, and vacuum, just like the car wash. Then we would mow the lawn and do the edging and trimming. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, we would check out our assigned equipment and apparatus and do whatever training was

planned for that week. On Friday, after our morning routine of equipment and apparatus, we would clean the station from top to bottom; kitchen, bathrooms, living quarters, office and sleeping quarters. Washing, scrubbing everything, if it didn't move, you cleaned it, even under stoves and refrigerators. Captain Roseke would show you how to clean a toilet if he thought you needed it. On first Friday, in addition to our normal routine, we would strip, wax and seal the terrazzo floors and on the fourth Friday, we would also do windows and screens. Saturday routine included washing the apparatus room floors and cleaning out the closets and sometimes detailing the apparatus. On Sunday, we would do our morning routine of equipment and apparatus and like Saturday plan on a big brunch of bacon, eggs, sausage, grits and if you were lucky enough to be stationed with Don Webb, homemade buttermilk biscuits. We were quite proud of our department's ability to be completely self-sufficient. We had carpenters, painters, electricians, mechanics, contractors, cabinet makers, air conditioning technicians, masons, auto-body repair, lawn maintenance companies, exterminators and drywall installers, all working for our department. If we needed to remodel the station, we did it! If we wanted to build or remodel a truck, we did it all with help from our resident labor. On the second Thursday night of the month we would have training for the volunteers. It was called "Caps and Badges" and the few volunteers we had left in 1972 would arrive around 6:30 PM for training and at 7:30 PM there would be a meeting of the Association. All members would check in showing their caps and badges to the secretary. This was the business meeting for our department where we discussed what activities would be taking place for the upcoming months.

To be Continued

The distribution of our next newsletter is November 15, 2001. All News articles should be turned into Cecelia Shade in the Administrative Office on or before November 1, 2001. Deadline for turning in news articles will be November 1st at 5:00 p.m. We hope that you have enjoyed this issue of "Hot Topics" and we look forward to producing our next new and exciting issue.

TO:

Departmental Anniversaries

William Rego	October 2	29 yrs.
C. Roger Hardin	October 1	24 yrs.
James Dalton	October 1	22
yrs.Charles Stravino	October 8	22 yrs.
Antonio Ojea	October 23	12 yrs.
Robert Creasman	October 1	11 yrs.

Congratulations to our personnel who have reached 10 or more years in their careers in the Fire Service. We wish you much success in the future...



Reality Check By Lt. Hal Knabb

"I want you to notify our Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), that we are monitoring the situation at the World Trade Center and at The Pentagon. We are opening the E.O.C. here at Headquarters and the CERTS' will be notified if their services are needed." Those words were spoken by Chief Koen to me the morning of September 11, 2001. "The World Trade Center", "The Pentagon", and our "CERT" in Delray Beach all somehow related in an attack of terror? I left Chief Koen's office that morning in a state of disbelief. Any moment, I was sure, I would be waking up at home thinking, "that was a strange dream". But of course this was not a dream. Our nation was under attack. Notification of the CERT was not diffi-

cult. Already that morning members of the team were at Fire Headquarters working on their radio system. This group listened patiently as I related Chief Koen's emergency advisory. They calmly reassured me that they were prepared to help in any way they could. The group recalled similar feelings of anger, anxiety, and anxiousness with the signature event of their generation: Pearl Harbor. They reassured me, "*We will get through this. We have been here before*".

Many of the members of our CERT are also members of the so-called "Greatest Generation". Their experiences, persistence, and determination in good times and bad are well documented. The community of Delray

Beach and the Delray Beach Fire Department in particular are fortunate to have this invaluable resource. The CERTS' "*can do attitude*" and "spirit of volunteerism" is commendable. God Bless the CERTS and God Bless America!



Delray Beach Fire Rescue CERT Program Coordinators
Firefighter Kenneth Thompson/Lieutenant Hal Knabb