



# The Trumpet

A Membership Publication of the Southwestern New Hampshire District  
Fire Mutual Aid System, Serving New Hampshire, Vermont and Massachusetts



## From the Coordinator's Desk

by Paul Szoc, MAC1

I just completed twenty-seven years of service with Mutual Aid and was recently reflecting on all the changes that have occurred during that time. We have added new members, expanded the area we cover, installed new technology, developed new radio sites and better communications, provided better training for employees and members, and are making plans for future improvements.

We have completed all these improvements and provided better service to our citizens and at the same time kept our assessment costs to our members at a very reasonable rate. I receive many calls from other mutual aid organizations inquiring how we can provide that level of service at such a reasonable cost to our members. Yes, rates have increased over the years and most likely will continue to increase in the future in order to provide the best possible service to the members and citizens we serve. It is through the teamwork of the staff, board of directors, members and public officials that we are able to improve our system and plan for the future.

In the past year alone we have completed many improvements to the system. In the communication center alone we have added a new computer system, installed a time synchronization system, installed an electronic wall status monitor, painted and carpeted the center and provided training for our staff. Outside the communication center we have tested and developed additional radio sites, developed a new radio shop billing system, made improvements to the command vehicle, and hired an outside agency to perform a radio engineering study of our system.

What will 2003 bring? The most important decision we need to make in 2003 is what direction we want to take on the radio engineering study report that will be presented at the Annual Meeting on April 9th. This is a decision that I strongly feel the entire membership needs to be involved in and provide the directors with vital feedback. We will be installing a  
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February 5, 2003, 1 Railroad Street,

## West Swanzey, NH Port-O-Lite, Inc.

(Woodworking Shop)

Mutual Aid from Keene, Winchester, Troy, Spofford,  
Meadowood, and Richmond



SOUTHWESTERN N.H. DISTRICT  
FIRE MUTUAL AID SYSTEM

# ANNUAL MEETING

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2003**

at

**BEST WESTERN SOVEREIGN HOTEL  
401 WINCHESTER ST., KEENE, N.H.**

## **1730 HRS. — VIEWING OF APPARATUS**

All departments with new or refurbished apparatus  
or equipment are asked to please bring it to  
the Annual Meeting to share with the members.

## **1900 HRS. — MEETING**

Featuring a  
PRESENTATION BY RCC CONSULTANTS  
ON THE RADIO ENGINEERING STUDY

**ALL DEPARTMENTS ARE REQUESTED TO BE REPRESENTED.  
THIS IS AN IMPORTANT DISCUSSION ON  
HOW WE WANT TO PLAN FOR THE FUTURE!**

**TOWN OFFICIALS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND!**

***Refreshments Will Be Served!***

# Johnson steps down after nearly two decades

By Dawn Nieters

Reprinted with permission from the Deerfield Valley News, West Dover, VT. Originally published on 02/12/03. Photo by Deerfield Valley News. www.dvalnews.com

WILMINGTON- Brian Johnson will bid farewell at the end of this month to his spot at the helm of the Wilmington Fire Department, a position he has held for the past 19 years, to seek new opportunities and challenges as Windham County's new state fire marshal.

Johnson started with the department in the junior firefighter program under then-chief Barker Willard, Sr., in 1970. "My father was on the fire department and I would always tag along down at the station," Johnson recalls.

At the time he had no idea his after school interest would blossom into a career. "I wanted to be a teacher," Johnson recalls, a calling he has been able to satisfy to some extent through outreach work in fire prevention and safety at area schools.

In 1984, after many years as a member, Johnson became the department's volunteer chief. Five years later voters would agree to fund the position, following Johnson's discussions with the town about stepping down.

"I had gone to the town, probably in 1987, to tell them I'd be stepping down as chief in February of 1988," he says. "At the time I was working 45 hours a week and spending 15 to 20 hours a week down here. I felt that I was getting further and further behind."

Johnson said he told the selectboard they could find someone to take his place and "burn them out too" or turn the job into a paid position.

Initially, taxpayers were not receptive to the proposal, Johnson conceded. "People basically said why should we start paying for it now?" The proposal passed by a slim margin at Town Meeting in 1989, and was petitioned for reconsideration. The proposal was upheld in another close vote.

A quick poll of area fire departments and the benefits of a paid employee are clear. "They're struggling," Johnson said. "To find volunteers, to keep up with the paper work and the regulations."

The paid position has also been offset by some of the revenue Johnson has been able to bring to the department, including two sizable federal grants, the most recent totaling just under \$50,000. In addition, Johnson has been able to get the town's insurance rating lowered, providing substantial savings to property owners. "There are a lot of things that just wouldn't get done without someone here all the time," he said.

In Wilmington, the number of calls has almost doubled since Johnson's tenure began. In 1988 the department responded to 110 calls, in contrast to almost 200 during the past year. In addition, regulations and requirements are constantly changing and in some cases, becoming more complicated, making it difficult for volunteers to keep up.

While the number of calls has gone up, the number of able-bodied men and women willing to commit their time to the department has gone down. Johnson notes there was actually a waiting list when he joined, while now the ranks are at 35, with some firefighters able to respond more easily than others. The total reflects a decrease of about 25% in the number of volunteers.

Johnson has continued with the junior firefighter program where he started, and says he's been pleased to train a "great bunch of kids" over the years, particularly this year's 11 junior members. "It's a great program and we've really had a wonderful bunch of kids," Johnson said.

Participants come to the department once a week after school, for one and a half hours per visit. They receive training and respond to calls, taking care of duties where permitted. The contribution, Johnson says, is significant. "They're going back and forth, grabbing equipment, changing air tanks. At a recent fire they stayed down in a brook for four hours helping us with water," he explains. "That means more firefighters available to go into a building and those kinds of things."

Johnson's new job hopefully won't involve entering too many burning buildings (though he may still do so in his spare time, since he plans to stay on as a volunteer with the department.) As Windham County's state fire marshal, Johnson will be working for the Vermont Department of Labor & Industry, conducting inspections of public buildings, including commercial and rental dwellings, to insure compliance with the state's fire safety and prevention code. As the county's only inspector, Johnson will spend much of his time on the road, and will report to the Springfield labor and industry office. With the Deerfield Valley included in his territory, local residents should still expect to see Johnson around



*Fire chief Brian Johnson completes paperwork at his desk in the Wilmington Fire Department on Monday.*

occasionally, though he acknowledges his daily lunch date with his wife will probably be reduced to a once per week event.

He'll also continue in the schools, teaching fire prevention and safety to students, a job he says he has truly enjoyed over the years. "I've always done it, since I became chief. I went to school to become a teacher and it's kind of fed the part of me that wanted to do that. And you can tell they really learn a lot," he noted.

The decision to move on was a tough one for Wilmington's chief, who says it took him four days to consider the job offer before saying yes.

"I still do enjoy it," he said. "It was a tough decision, especially because of the people in the department and knowing how much they give. And the general public, which has always been very supportive of us."

Johnson said he's leaving the department in good hands, with 16 of his firefighters level one certified. The certification requires 133 hours of training and Johnson said it's evidence of his members' dedication to the job. "I have a tremendous amount of respect for those guys," he added.

On the plus side, Johnson said he won't necessarily miss the 24-hour on call nature of the job.

"You're never gone. You always have the pager, and it reaches all the way to Keene," he laughed. "The only time you're really free from it is when you go away. You don't volunteer to work the booster booth unless your wife's there to cover."

As part of the life-changing decisions that accompany a career switch, Johnson is also considering purchasing an answering machine. "I always refused one. That may change now," he acknowledged.

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# Two Perish in West Dummerston Vermont Fire

by Tom Redin, Dispatcher 7, SWNHDFMA

Two men died in a house fire on Rice Farm Road Monday afternoon February 10, 2003. Sadly, one of the men escaped and then reentered the inferno to try to save another who was napping on the second floor. The fire was reported just before 5:00 P.M. and went to a second alarm. Fire Mutual Aid received many calls of the fire—mostly from motorists traveling on Rte. 30 looking across the West River. Upon asking dispatch for any additional information and dispatch advising the number of phone calls received and the reports, West Dummerston Fire Chief Allen Pike requested a second alarm. Chief Pike arrived in minutes on the scene of the one-and-a-half story wood-frame house and reported a working fire with possible occupants in the house. The degree of involvement of the structure upon arrival of Chief Pike made any type of a rescue impossible. The Vermont State Police Fire Investigator's preliminary findings have pointed towards a woodstove as the cause. The Putney, Newbrook, Williamsville and Brattleboro Fire Departments along with the Rescue Incorporated ambulance responded to the scene. Westminster covered for Putney; Townshend covered for Newbrook; West Chesterfield covered the West Dummerston Center Station, and Brattleboro covered the West Dummerston Station. The Salvation Army Canteen out of Brattleboro provided food and drink for the firefighters—a service that Chief Pike said was a blessing. According to reports there were no working smoke detectors in the home.

## A SOLDIER'S PRAYER

God Our Father

Help me to remain true to my ideals during my service to my country.

Help me be what is in America, the land of the free.

May I realize that I represent what our country stands for.

My uniform is a symbol of duty and valor both in peace and in war.

I take up arms to defend what all Americans hold dear: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Grant me the strength to live according to these ideals, the courage of my convictions, and the resolve to endure whatever dangers threaten.

With You at our side I fear no evil and resist every enemy, secure in the knowledge that You hold me in the palm of Your hand.

Amen.

*SWNH District Fire Mutual Aid dedicates this prayer to all the men and women serving our country, defending what all Americans believe in: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.*

# Jaffrey Police Officers Earn College Degrees

Released by Chief Martin J. Dunn

Two Jaffrey police officers completed studies towards college degrees recently, complementing the already highly educated staff of employees.

Lt. Richard Carpenter, Jr., an 18-year veteran of the agency, completed studies toward a Law Degree at the Massachusetts School of Law. Lt. Carpenter also has a B.S. Degree in Criminal Justice.

Sgt. Todd Feyrer was awarded a B.S. Degree in Criminal Justice from Franklin Pierce College in September. Sgt. Feyrer has been with the agency since 1994.

The Jaffrey Police Department employs 11 full-time officers. All officers have completed college level courses, and eight of them possess college degrees. The other officers with college degrees are: Chief Martin Dunn—B.A. Degree in Criminal Justice, Master's Degree in Administration and Education from Seton Hall University; Master Patrolman Michael Prince—B.S. Degree in Criminal Justice from Franklin Pierce College; Patrolman Craig Tucker—B.S. Degree in Criminal Justice from Norwich University; Patrolman Brendan LaFlamme—B.S. Degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Massachusetts; Patrolman Scott Dunn—A.S. Degree in Criminal Justice, B.S. Degree in Criminal Justice to be awarded next spring from Hessler College; Patrolman Scott Stevens—A.S. Degree in Criminal Justice from Middlesex Community College.

In addition to achieving formal education in a college setting, all Jaffrey police officers have completed numerous courses addressing technical aspects of advanced police procedures. Several officers have achieved recognition as police instructors or experts in specialized fields of law enforcement.

It is believed that the percentage of police officers with college degrees serving in Jaffrey (73%) ranks among the highest in the United States, and in New Hampshire in particular.

## CHAMPION FIRE CO. #5 RECEIVES GRANT

Submitted by Chief George H. Lang

On November 13th, 2002, Champion Fire Co. #5 of South Londonderry, Vt., received a grant from the Stratton Foundation to assist in the purchase of a Blitzfire personal portable monitor from Task Force Tips. The flow range of up to 500 gpm will allow us to attack fires with limited manpower. The monitor is used on a 2½" hoseline and can be deployed and operated by one person. With the rising cost of operating expenses Champion Fire Co. #5 appreciates the help received from the Stratton Foundation with our purchase of the Blitzfire monitor.

# USFA Posts Information on 2003 Grants

Courtesy of <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/grants>

Washington, D.C. —The United States Fire Administration (USFA) Grant Management staff has announced the posting of its PowerPoint presentation on the 2003 Assistance to Firefighters Grants Program. This presentation contains the slides presented at the grant writing workshops for 2003. The grant staff has posted this information so that any fire department, which for some reason cannot attend a workshop, still has access to the same information.

The most current workshop schedule can be found on the USFA Web site and it is updated often. Fire departments are encouraged to visit <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/grants> for the listing of workshops. Workshop schedules are being coordinated with State Fire Marshals, State Fire Training Directors, the 10 FEMA Regional offices, and Washington DC program staff. Fire Departments wishing to attend or host a workshop should contact their state fire officials. Additional information about the 2003 program, for example “frequently asked questions” and Program Guidance materials, will also be posted at the web site as it becomes available.

The application period for 2003 is presently scheduled to begin on March 3 and continue through April 4, however, the 2003 funding level is not yet known. For the current workshops scheduled in your area, and all current 2003 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program information, visit <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/grants>. The USFA is a part of FEMA.



## NEW DELIVERY



### KEENE, N.H.

**KEENE FIRE DEPARTMENT** has placed into service at the West Keene Fire Station, a new brush truck. It is a 2002 Ford F350 with a Lightning 15,000-lb. winch and accessories installed by City of Keene Fleet Service. Its radio was installed by the SWNHDFMA Radio Shop. The lettering was done by Mac Mackenzie. The truck will have a new slide-in brush unit with a 150-gal. poly tank, hose reel, Scotty foam system and a high pressure pump.

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## From the Coordinator's Desk

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new CAD System in 2003 that will be a great asset to the system. The large amount of data that needs to be put into the system will take a large amount of time but the investment will be greatly worth the effort and cost (see related article in this issue). We will continue to work on improvements to the radio system and communication center. The radio shop will be moving in April to a new location at 350 Marlboro St. in Keene. This is the new City of Keene Facility.

We are all facing issues with Homeland Security, budget cuts, manpower shortages and other issues. This is why it is so important for us to work together as a team to tackle these issues and build a stronger system for the future. I would like to thank everyone personally for the assistance and support they have given me over the past year. It is greatly appreciated. Best of Luck in 2003!

## ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANTS FY 2002 RECEIVED BY MEMBERS

(As of 01/27/03)

*Congratulations to the following departments for receiving grants for 2002:*

Claremont Fire .....	\$22,950
Stratton Mt. Fire .....	\$ 8,100
Wilmington Fire .....	\$49,964
Bellows Falls Fire .....	\$45,450
Westminster Fire .....	\$45,716
<b>Total Rec'd by SWNHDFMA Members ....</b>	<b>\$172,180</b>

For Information on the application process for FY 2003: <http://www.usfa.gov/grants>

# SIX-TOWN MUTUAL AID DRILL

by Joe Holmes

**September 25, 2002**—The Acworth Fire & Rescue hosted a six-town mutual aid drill focusing on the famous Church-on-the-Hill. With over forty firefighters working in concert and over 4000' of 4" LDH deployed we were able to produce a flow in excess of 1000 gpm! With the aerial from Lempster in place we flowed 450 gpm at full extension.

## The principal goals of the drill were:

- to establish a flow of at least 1000 gpm to service the center of town from the dry hydrant on Cold Pond Road.
- to achieve a functional command system for Water Supply creating a "virtual hydrant" in the center of town.
- to learn the capabilities and limitations of the Lempster aerial for the "center of town" fire scenario.
- to give participants a chance to climb the aerial.
- to conduct a walk through of the church for firefighting familiarity.
- to explain the proposed strategy for a center of town fire scenario.
- to maintain a ready reserve unit for instant response if needed during the drill.
- to conduct the drill with no injury or damage to equipment or property.

## Every goal was achieved.

Deputy Gary Stoddard from Charlestown served as our Safety Officer and kept his engine and crew available as the ready reserve team. We were tempted to put the unit into service to test another idea, but we held to the original plan and kept the unit uncommitted. Acworth's Chief Knicely maintained a detachment from the drill, so he would be able to lead any possible alarm during the drill.

Chief Baker and the Unity team started the flow of water from the pond. Chief Kercewich and his Alstead team pushed it along with two inline relays to the

Langdon's 17M1 that served as the primary "virtual hydrant." Chief Chaffee's team revealed a weakness in the plan that we have addressed. We had designed the drill so that one engine would take in water from the 4" line and utilize portatank flow from a tanker shuttle. Though conceptually a workable solution using a gated suction on one side of the engine and a gated 4" intake on the other, it did not work as planned.

Chief Tirrell and the Lempster team put the aerial in place and flowed the water coming up the line. The Acworth team with Training Officer Joe Holmes serving as IC were providing EMS services for the drill and conducting the building tours.

After all units were picked up and back in service, refreshment was provided in the church. Cindy Beattie of the Fire Barn furnished an ample lasagna augmented by a chili by Acworth's Ken Grant and items furnished by other members of the Acworth department.

For purposes of the drill, we assumed the pond near the center of town was unavailable. And we did not establish an actual tanker shuttle. These two sources would easily have doubled our available water.

With the Acworth engine now carrying 1100' of 4" line, we are confident that with the able help of our mutual aid neighbors we can responsibly serve all the public buildings and the many homes in the center of town using our "virtual hydrant" concept demonstrated in this drill.

## Joe Rescue – Practical Training Solutions

Joe Holmes

63 Mason Road

Langdon, New Hampshire 03602-8510

[joe@joeholmesonline.com](mailto:joe@joeholmesonline.com)

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## Johnson steps down

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Johnson says until the town decides how the vacant position will be handled, his officers have divvied up the highest priority duties. He added he hopes the town will see fit to continue with the paid position.

"I still believe having someone down here is important," he said. "This has never been only a 40-hour per week job. Often it's more like 60+ hours per week. It's not like I sit around here waiting for the next fire. In 13 years I've never walked in here without having something to do."

Selectboard members will discuss how to handle the vacancies, both hired and appointed, at their meeting next Wednesday, February 19. In the interim, town manager Sonia Alexander will be meeting with the department's six officers to hear their recommendations and discuss a course of action.

Assistant fire chief Richard Covey, who has served with Johnson, first as a junior member, for 30 years, says he's sorry to see the chief go.

"We've worked well together for a long time," Covey said. "There are a lot of things Brian does down there people don't know about."

Covey said the department will try to pull through without Johnson in the interim. He will serve as chief temporarily. Alexander said in a situation such as the one with which the town is faced, it's likely the structure of the department will be re-examined, but she added nothing has changed as far as the demand.

"We certainly know that the work is there and the need is there," Alexander said. "There's no doubt about that." Town officials are also sorry to see Johnson go.

"He really is wonderful. He's so competent but quiet about it," Alexander said. "He laughs when I tell him I sleep better because he's our fire chief, but it's true."

## LETTER OF THANKS

I would like to thank all those who helped the Spofford Fire Department pay last respects to our 62-year active member, "Bud" Guyette.

Thank you Chesterfield Fire Department for the color guard; Keene Fire Department for providing the flags and axes for the color guard and for the guidelines for a department funeral; Chesterfield and Hinsdale Fire Departments for providing us with ladder trucks and flags; Brattleboro Fire Department for the large flag; and Swanzy Fire Department for providing us a cover truck with a lot of personnel to cover us during the ceremony.

I would also like to thank all members of the Spofford Fire Department who put in endless hours to assure a funeral that Bud deserved and of which I'm sure he would have approved.

Since his passing, Bud has been missed. You sometimes don't realize how much people do for your department until they are gone. Bud will be truly missed, but will always be there in our hearts.

If I failed to mention anyone who provided help of some kind to us, I apologize, for there were so many who helped. Thanks to all.

Sincerely,  
Chief Stephen Buckley  
Spofford Fire Department

\* \* \* \* \*

## STODDARD DEPUTY CHIEF RETIRES

Respectfully Submitted by the Members of the Stoddard Fire and Rescue Department

The Stoddard Fire and Rescue Department announces the retirement of Deputy Chief Joseph Sarcione. Joe served on the department in numerous capacities for 30 distinguished years. His dedication allowed him to easily progress in the fire department.

As our training officer, Joe's commitment to our growth and success heightened the level of professionalism in each of our members. This was accomplished through extensive knowledge and numerous hours of preparation.

One of the ways that Joe demonstrated his love for the community was easily seen in the volunteer work he did with the school children, teaching them fire prevention and implementing the Junior Fire Department.

Joe also touched many lives outside of our community through his many years of teaching in the fire service, especially in the area of forestry.

We would like to congratulate Joe on his new appointment to the New Hampshire Fire Academy. Joe also continues to serve our community as a Forest Fire Warden.

The Stoddard Fire and Rescue Department will miss Joe and his dedication to the fire service. We wish him well in his future endeavors.

## CHESTERFIELD POLICE CHIEF EARL NELSON RETIRES

Submitted by Chief Lester C. Fairbanks

Chief Earl Nelson retired after many years of service to Cheshire County. During his career he worked for the Keene Police Department, Marlborough Police Department, Cheshire County Sheriff's Department, and Roxbury Police Department.

Earl was also chief at several police departments, including Chesterfield and Dublin. He has instructed at the New Hampshire Police Academy and was a staff member for recruit training. He also coordinated the Cheshire County Part-time Academy.

Congratulations and good luck to you, Earl!

\* \* \* \* \*

## NOTE OF THANKS TO THE MEN AND WOMEN AT SWNHDFMA

September 27, 2002

**Yours is a stressful, often thankless, job.** Amid crackles of radio and telephone traffic in a somewhat surreal and obscure atmosphere you somehow anticipate our needs during the frenzy. You regularly demonstrate courage, quick thinking and integrity in the face of emergency.

**You realize the job will never really be finished.** The tension you sometimes encounter is akin to that of a lunar mission control room. This is especially true late at night when there are fewer police officers, firefighters and EMS folks stopping in and the ambiance is more somber.

**In an atmosphere that changes from an "eye of the storm" to an intensity that would totally fray** most people's nerves, you somehow manage to keep your fingers upon the very pulse of each and every one of us in the field—receiving, prioritizing and sending appropriate assistance.

To offer a word of thanks hardly seems sufficient. Yet, we know that it is the occasional word that keeps us all going. So, from all of us in the field—to the men and women behind the scenes at SWNHDFMA... thanks once again, for a job well done.

—Hal

Hal Gordon Brown, A.D.M.E.  
Office of the Chief Medical Examiner  
State of New Hampshire - Department of Justice



- 0050 Nelson First Alarm to 38 Nubanusit Road for house fire, Harrisville pumper and tanker/ Sullivan tanker to scene
- 0101 Sullivan Tanker to scene
- 0115 Dublin Tanker to scene
- 0117 Marlborough to cover Nelson
- 0213 Keene ambulance to scene to check subject

**Nelson, NH  
December 1,  
2002**



- 0255 Keene rescue to scene
- 0320 Diluzio ambulance to scene
- 0621 Meadowood tower to scene, Marlboro ugh manpower to scene
- 0623 Dublin to cover Nelson



## Sub-Zero Weather Hampers Vermont Firefighters January 23, 2003

by Tom Redin, Mutual Aid Dispatcher 7



Firefighters from more than a half-dozen departments braved subzero temperatures to battle a two-alarm blaze that destroyed a Wardsboro vacation home Thursday night and Friday morning. Firefighters from Wardsboro, West Dover, Stratton, Jamaica, Wilmington, Townshend, East Dover and Newbrook Fire Departments all responded to the fire, which was first reported by a motorist on Newell Hill Road, a few miles away, at around 11:42 P.M. By 11:54, a second alarm had gone out on the fire. Wardsboro Fire Chief Robert Arms said that the private, unpaved road, off of Smead Road, was one lane because of the snow banks and icy conditions. "It was a pretty hard push up there," Arms added. "Even though it was a private road, the town was nice enough to come in and sand a couple of times." Nobody was in the house, a large structure at the top of the private road, at the time of the fire, Arms said. There were no injuries fighting the fire, but it was "a lot of work." Windchills reached -20 to -30 degrees at times causing some apparatus to freeze up and to return to fire stations to thaw. At this time, no cause has been determined. West Dummerston covered for Wardsboro; Winhall covered for Jamaica; Whitingham covered for Wilmington, and Wilmington provided apparatus and crews at the scene and to cover for West Dover.

# Just what is a District Fire Mutual Aid System anyway?

By Leonard Goodnow

Let's face it. Our mutual aid system is a pretty stealthy operation. Nobody really cares how or why it operates. As long as when they dial 911 and help is there within minutes, they are happy. They surely don't care that often some of this help is not even from their own municipality. They have more important things to worry about at the time.

If you asked the average person on the street about Mutual Aid, they would probably tell you they saw that a dispatcher was quoted about a bad accident or fire in the newspaper, but that is about all they know. If you ask them what kind of an organization it is, they will probably tell you it is a Cheshire County organization because they saw Mutual Aid's budget listed as a line item in the Cheshire County budget.

Well the fact of the matter is that our mutual aid organization is a State of New Hampshire chartered organization; one of three in the state. It is chartered under Title 12, Public Safety and Welfare, Chapter 154, Firewards, Firefighters, and Fire Hazards, District Fire Mutual Aid Systems, Section 154:30. Now that is a mouthful. Our forefathers named our system Southwestern New Hampshire District Fire Mutual Aid.

Let's explore the highlights of this interesting document. Section 154:30-a speaks about a mutual aid system's formation. "Whenever 10 or more municipalities within the state shall have voted to authorize their respective fire departments to render outside aid as provided in RSA 154:24-30, they may, if they so desire, form a district fire mutual aid system, which shall be a public municipal corporation." The remainder of the section talks about petitioning the state fire marshal about an organizational meeting.

Section 154:30-b speaks about how the state fire marshal will call the organizational meetings and how the organizational process takes place. "Each fire department shall send one delegate to the organizational and subsequent meetings and shall be entitled to one vote in all proceedings. The delegate shall be the chief of each fire department or such alternate as the chief may designate." It goes on to talk about the adoption of rules and bylaws to govern the organization.

It then talks about the board of directors. "The organizational meeting shall also elect a board of directors consisting of such number as they may determine. Delegates and directors need not be residents. The board of directors shall be the governing body of the system..." They are the CEO's of the organization. It goes on to speak of the rotational terms of the directors.

Section II speaks about personnel. "II. The directors shall choose from their number the officers of the system, who shall have such duties and powers as the bylaws provide. Within the limits of available funds, the directors may employ and fix the compensation of agents and other necessary personnel, who shall serve at their pleasure and have and exercise such powers and authority as they may delegate to them." In other words, the board of directors has the power to hire, fire and set the salary and job descriptions of Mutual Aid's employees.

Section 154:30-c Power and Duties. This is the meat of the organization. The complete section is presented here:

I. A district fire mutual aid system shall coordinate the services of all municipalities and fire departments belonging to it so as to provide better and more efficient cooperation in the protection of life and property within the area which it comprises and toward this end shall cooperate with other state agencies including the state and local office of emergency management.

II. A district fire mutual aid system may:

- (a) Establish plans for the coordination of all municipal services provided by it;
- (b) Within the limits of available funds, acquire and operate property and equipment, including a dispatch center;
- (c) Provide communications service, radio repair and maintenance service to its member municipalities and fire departments or persons and firms under contract with a member municipality or fire department;
- (d) Provide private fire, burglary and supervisory alarm service;
- (e) Provide dispatch and communications service for police and emergency medical services of member municipalities and fire departments or for such services as are under contract with member municipalities and fire departments;
- (f) Extend the advantages of group purchasing for services performed by it to municipalities and fire departments in the system; and
- (g) Provide and operate training programs for firefighters and emergency medical technicians.

III. The state fire marshal may render advice, recommendations and assistance to any district fire mutual aid system.

Section 154:30-d speaks of the procedures of municipalities joining and withdrawing from the system. "Additional municipalities within or outside the state may join the system... and shall be received as members subject to the approval of the board of directors." Private fire departments and municipalities without active fire departments may be admitted with voting rights as mutually agreed upon by the board of directors. Withdrawal from the system is provided for after 90 days of written notice by the municipality.

Section 154:30-e speaks about the limitations of liability of the mutual aid system.

Section 154:30-f speaks of appropriations. This is probably one of the most misunderstood sections. "Municipalities belonging to such a system may raise and appropriate money for the purpose of the system. Counties in which a system is established may raise and appropriate money for the purposes of the system..."

Southwestern New Hampshire District Fire Mutual Aid currently receives its entire funding from Cheshire County. However revenues received by Mutual Aid from alarm monitoring and the radio shop are returned to the county. Municipalities within Cheshire County pay for their portion of Mutual Aid's services directly through their county tax. Municipalities from other New Hampshire counties and all member Vermont municipalities are billed for their share of services on a yearly basis. Those funds are directly returned to Cheshire County. Cheshire

County is really acting as the "bank" for Mutual Aid. In actuality each municipality only pays for its own share of support for the mutual aid system.

Mutual Aid does not have to be funded in this manner. It could just bill all member towns both in and out of Cheshire County directly if it chooses. Mutual Aid has been funded through the county since its formation as a convenient and safe way to collect its operating funding. There have been some ongoing study issues as to whether this continues to be the best way for Mutual Aid to be funded.

Section 154:30-g is a discussion on the definition of a "private" fire department.

Section 154:30-h says that a mutual aid system may accept gifts and bequests.

And that is about it. Pretty neat stuff! As I said before, the workings of our mutual aid system are often unknown and misunderstood. Southwestern New Hampshire District Fire Mutual Aid was created in the late 1950's. It represents more than 70 municipalities in parts of five counties covering about 3000 square miles. It has been the blueprint for numerous mutual aid systems throughout the country.

Its power to its municipalities is often taken for granted. That is until something like the recent potentially serious fire at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital takes place. Within minutes, ten ambulances, a medical helicopter, a "sea" of fire equipment and about 100 firefighters were assembled. There just is no other mechanism that can bring that kind of response in such a rural area with such speed.

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# NEXT ISSUE

JUNE, 2003

**THANKS!** to all who contributed to this issue of *The Trumpet*. To those of you still thinking about sending something—all we need are some notes and your name and phone number. Just supply us with the basic information—we'll be happy to write and/or edit your articles. Of course, we delightfully accept full articles if you're so inclined. Don't forget the pictures or other artwork. They really brighten up the stories.

**NOTE!** Please, clearly print people's/manufacturers' names and other unique details so we don't misread your handwriting. Thanks.

Here are some ideas for items/articles/photos to submit for publication:

- Historical stories/photos
- Successful and unusual rescues
- Spectacular or difficult fires/accidents
- Training
- Outstanding personnel
- Fund-raising events
- New equipment and/or facilities
- Reports from conventions, etc.
- Police articles, promotions, pictures, etc.
- Equipment/tools, etc. to sell or swap
- Anything of interest to the EMS/fire/police/rescue community.

We are also looking for people interested in writing regular feature columns. Please volunteer! Or just call and tell us what you'd like to see.

## DEADLINE

FOR JUNE ISSUE

May 16, 2003

**THANKS TO ALL THOSE  
WHO HAVE SENT ARTICLES!**

Please SEND ARTICLES & PHOTOS\* to:

Sue Newell / Delta Graphics  
3 Old Chesterfield Road  
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or call 603-239-6104, or fax 603-239-6215,  
or email to [new address deltagraphics@webryders.net](mailto:newaddress.deltagraphics@webryders.net)

### ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS—PLEASE READ:

Please paste emailed articles into the body of the mail to avoid software compatibility problems. Please send photos in .jpg format at highest camera resolution. Thanks!

\*All photos will be treated with utmost care and returned in original condition. If you have photos of historical value, we will gladly arrange for hand-to-hand transfers.

# MOVING UP & MOVING ON

Promotions, Appointments, Retirements, etc.

## APPOINTMENTS

- **Chief Francis McConnell**, Jaffrey Fire Dept.
- **Chief Rick Donovan**, Rindge Fire Dept./Director of Public and Life Safety
- **Chief Jon Abel**, East Dover Fire Dept.
- **Chief William Naugle**, Peterborough Fire Dept.
- **Chief Allen Pike**, West Dummerston Fire Dept.
- **Chief Lester Fairbanks**, Chesterfield Police Dept.
- **Chief Steven Holton**, Vernon Fire Dept.
- **Chief William Farnum**, Troy Police Dept.
- **Chief James Cemorelis**, Westmoreland Police Dept.
- **Chief Garrett Chamberlain**, New Ipswich Police Dept.
- **Chief Joseph Marcotte**, Marlow Fire Dept.
- **Chief John Eccard**, Washington Fire Dept.
- **Chief Arthur Walker**, Keene Police Dept.
- **Sgt. Peter Riesenber**, Asst. Troop Commander, NHSP Troop C
- **Troop Commander Allan Welch**, NHSP Troop B
- **Patrolman Denis Abrams**, Swanzey Police Dept.
- **Patrolman Kevin Stone**, Swanzey Police Dept.
- **James Wells**, Investigator NH Fire Marshal Office
- **FF/EMT Raymond Phillips**, Keene Fire Dept.
- **FF/EMT Randy Beaton**, Keene Fire Dept.
- **FF/EMT Francis Markert**, Keene Fire Dept.
- **Deputy Chief David Pugh**, Rindge Fire Dept.

## PROMOTIONS

- **Deputy Chief Wally Weaver**, Stoddard Fire & Rescue Dept.
- **Captain P.J. Lamothe**, Stoddard Fire & Rescue Dept.
- **Rescue Captain Cindy Wilder**, Stoddard Fire & Rescue Dept.
- **Rescue Lt. Jesse Pollock**, Stoddard Fire & Rescue Dept.
- **Lt. David Gaillardetz**, Keene Fire Dept.
- **Asst. Chief Barry Kellom**, Winchester Fire Dept.
- **Asst. Chief Raymond Dingman**, Winchester Fire Dept.
- **Capt. Ryan Bourke**, Winchester Fire Dept.
- **Capt. Dick LaPoint, Jr.**, Winchester Fire Dept.
- **1st Lt. Bruce Lawrence**, Winchester Fire Dept.
- **2nd Lt. John Stephens**, Winchester Fire Dept.
- **3rd Lt. Tim Pelkey**, Winchester Fire Dept.
- **4th Lt. Francis Carpenter**, Winchester Fire Dept.

## RETIREMENTS

- **Deputy Chief Joe Sarcione**, Stoddard Fire & Rescue Dept.
- **Chief Barry Wante**, Keene Police Dept.
- **Chief Earl Nelson**, Chesterfield Police Dept.
- **Chief Stephen Black**, Peterborough Fire Dept.
- **Chief Jack White**, Jaffrey Fire Dept.
- **Thomas Norton**, NH Fire Marshal Office
- **Edwin Hodgdon**, Keene Fire Dept.

## RESIGNATIONS

- **Chief Brian Johnson**, Wilmington Fire Dept.  
(Accepted job with Vermont Labor & Industry)

# USED EQUIPMENT FOR SALE



## RESCUE TRUCK 23R1 Minimum Bid \$10,000

1988 Ford F350 4WD 7.3 diesel, 19,000 miles, A/T, twin fuel tanks, 9' Reading mechanic's body with 4' rear-entry compartment. Cab and chassis 100% rust free. Sold "as is, as shown." Sale by sealed bids. Executive board reserves the right to accept or refuse any bid. Minimum bid \$10,000. Available on or about February 1, 2003. Reason for sale: replacing it with new truck.

**Contact:** For more information call Norm Brooks (days) at 802-365-7619. To receive a bid form, contact Chief Todd Lawley, NewBrook Fire Department, PO Box 77, Newfane, VT 05345, or come to the station on any Sunday morning at 10:00 A.M.

- 8 2.2 Scott SCBA w/Wire Frames, Recent Flow Tests
- 18 Lifeguard II PASS Devices
- 10 Monitor II Pagers

**Contact:** Wilmington Fire Department, 802-464-8022.

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## In Our Memory & Prayers

*Space Shuttle Columbia Astronauts  
February 1, 2003*

*Commander Rick Husband  
Pilot William McCool*

*Payload Specialist Ilan Ramon  
Payload Commander Michael Anderson  
Mission Specialist David Brown  
Mission Specialist Laurel Clark  
Mission Specialist Kalpana Chawla*



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# A Face to Fit The Voice

by Dale Paquin



Dale Paquin is a technician at the SWNHDFMA Radio Shop. Dale grew up and graduated high school in Springfield, Vt. He then joined the Marine Corps and was trained in ground radio repair. His military service took him to Okinawa, Korea, and Japan.

Upon completion of his military service, he came back to the New England area and worked for HEW Communications doing consumer repairs. Before joining SWNHDFMA, Dale held numerous jobs: Operations Manager for Radio Shack Business Telephone Systems in Rockland, Mass.; repair tech/consultant for ALLCOMM Communications in Keene, N.H., for whom he helped with setup and maintenance of early warning systems for Vermont Yankee, Seabrook, Rowe, and Pennsylvania Power & Light power plants as well communications for public safety organizations and consumer electronics; JPS Communications of Rutland, Vt., as a radio repair technician; and finally A-Quality Telephone systems, as shop manager.

Dale is married and has three children. In his spare time he enjoys amateur radio, bicycling and hiking.



## Honors for Larry Harris

ERIC POOR/Monadnock Ledger Staff

Rindge Animal Control Officer Larry Harris has provided 31 years of service to the Rindge Police Department. He has also been the elected constable of Rindge for the past nine years. Rindge Police Chief Joe Collins honored Harris by naming him Rindge Police Department Member of the Year during a citizens' appreciation evening last week.

Reprinted with permission from the Monadnock Ledger, Peterborough, NH. Originally published on 01/16/03. Photo by the Mondandock Ledger.

## 2002 STATISTICS

### SWNHDFMA

Total Police Calls	21,429
Total Fire Calls	6,441
Total EMS Calls	13,779
Total Phone Calls	202,264
Total Radio Transmissions	635,494

### Forest Fire

COUNTY	# OF FIRES	ACRES
Cheshire	39	17
Hillsborough	108	54.5
Sullivan	20	6



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# SWNHDFMA to Implement VALOR Systems, Inc. Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD)

By Phillip Tirrell, Senior Communication Specialist

A Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system is a tool to use for public safety communications. It enhances the call taking and dispatching process, improving the flow of information between the public, the communication center, and the units in the field.

For the dispatcher, and the units in the field, the CAD system provides timely, up-to-date, detailed information about the location of an incident, the people involved in the incident, and our agency's Standard Operating Guidelines on a particular type of incident. It also provides a detailed history of all calls, events, and activities of the center.

CAD systems are not intended to replace a dispatcher's decision-making authority. As an information tool, however, the CAD helps the dispatchers make better, more informed decisions, and greatly increases the dispatchers' abilities to provide necessary resources for the public and the units in the field.

The VALOR CAD system allows several operations to be accomplished directly from the PC work station. Among them are:

- Create a call for service
- Dispatch a call for service
- Perform supplemental communications operations
- Perform administrative operations
- Retrieve information on previous events (calls)
- Generate reports on calls, events, and activities

The most common applications that we will use are creating/dispatching an incident and making database inquiries. All these tasks are built into the VALOR CAD system and are designed to be "user friendly."

Our system will include the Mapping application and we will be able to pinpoint incidents directly on an electronically displayed map of our area.

Our dispatch center has been working closely with VALOR to customize this program. We will be working with the NH E-911 Staff and VALOR, during the next year, to get our version of the CAD program up and running. All towns must make sure that their running cards, street indexes and water supply/hydrant locations are up to date. We anticipate beginning the process in the next month and once we start the process of inputting information to the data base changes will be difficult until the whole process is completed.

We are also working with the VT 911 to receive the same information that its 911 operators are obtaining. The VALOR System will be able to be used by all member agencies. NH E-911 is providing this system to us.



## The Last Response



### In Memoriam



Since the last issue, the following members have passed on. May they rest in peace.

HENRY ANGEL

12-Year Member

Weston Volunteer Fire Department

REXFORD A. BARTLETT

Retired Chief

East Dover Fire Department

LAWRENCE "LARRY" BISHOP  
Retired Peterborough Fire Chief &  
Past President of SWNH Mutual Aid

ALLEN W. BRITTON

Retired New Hampshire

Deputy Fire Marshal

PERRY CHASE SR.

60 -Year Member

Wardsboro Fire Department

LAWRENCE "BUZZ" CHICKERING  
Chesterfield Fire Department

CLIFTON "CLIFF" COLE

Retired Chief & 41-Year Member

Troy Fire Department

WILLIAM "BILL" DEWEY

Retired 25-Year Member

Westmoreland Fire Department

ROLAND "Bud" GUYETTE

Retired Chief & 62-Year Member

Spofford Fire Department

HERMAN KINNEY

Retired 25-Year Member

Charlestown Fire Department

RUSSELL RAYMOND

Retired 23-Year Member

Rindge Fire Department

Retired Special Officer

Rindge Police Department

Southwestern New Hampshire District Fire Mutual Aid System

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Listed below are the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the Board of Directors as it is now constituted for 2002-2003. Telephone numbers and e-mail addresses are provided to afford member departments a "DIRECT LINK" with your System representatives.

**Chief William Weston, President**

Bellows Falls Fire Department  
170 Rockingham Street • Bellows Falls, VT 05101  
802-463-4343 (W)  
bweston@sover.net

**Captain John Manning, Treasurer**

Marlborough Fire Department  
PO Box 442 • Marlborough, NH 03455  
603-357-6510 (W) 603-876-3904 (H)  
manning@webryders.net

**Chief Richard Busick**

Swanzey Police Department  
PO Box 9 • Swanzey, NH 03446  
603-352-2869 (W)  
swanzeypd@prexar.com

**Captain Robert Diluzio, Sr.**

Keene Fire Department & DiLuzio Ambulance Service  
49 Court Street, Keene, NH 03431  
603-352-0341 (W)  
bobd194@aol.com

**Chief John A. Mulhall**

West Dover Fire Department  
PO Box 561 • West Dover, VT 05356  
802-464-3333, x4390 (W) 802-348-7963 (H) •  
jmulhall@mountsnow.com

**Representative Daniel J. Eaton**

1 Shedd Hill Road • Stoddard, NH 03464  
603-446-3303 (W) 603-446-3535 (H)  
eatonsstore@juno.com

**Sheriff Richard Foote**

Cheshire County Sheriff's Department  
12 Court Street • Keene, NH 03431  
603-352-4238 (W) 603-352-0991 (H)  
rfoote@co.cheshire.nh.us

**Chief Robert Johnson, Vice President**

Hinsdale Fire Department  
PO Box 13 • Hinsdale, NH 03451  
603-336-5714 (W) 603-336-7461 (H)

**Retired Chief Stephen Black, Secretary**

16 Summer Street • Peterborough, NH 03458  
603-924-3651 (H)  
sblack44@earthlink.net

**Retired Chief Harry Boynton**

PO Box 235  
Walpole, NH 03608  
603-352-4232 (W) 603-756-3297 (H)  
hboynton@melanson.com

**Chief Lee Dunham**

Swanzey Fire Department  
119 Sawyers Crossing Road • Swanzey, NH 03446  
603-358-6455 (W) 603-352-4184 (H)  
cejdunham@monad.net

**David Hannum**

Putney Fire District  
Route 4, Box 1100 • Putney, VT 05346  
802-387-4674 (H)  
dbhannum@sover.net

**Commissioner Roger Zerba**

County of Cheshire  
340 Pako Avenue • Keene, NH 03431  
603-352-7188 (H)  
zerba@cheshire.net

~~~~~

**Chief Paul A. Szoc, Coordinator**

32 Vernon Street, PO Box 443 • Keene, NH 03431  
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