



Battalion Chief in Action

This is the second article about the role and responsibilities of the Battalion Chief. Learn about their administrative duties and work schedule in the last issue.

Battalion Chief Barry Spain rides Battalion 2 on "A" shift. His office is located at Station 12, and he's dispatched to several types of calls including structure fires, electrical investigations, and gas leaks. He also self-dispatches himself to accidents with people pinned.

When not responding, he also monitors calls that may need additional resources, such as brush fires, or that might require a riding firefighter to be picked up at a hospital, such as shootings. *continued on page 2*



Two Alarms in North Raleigh



On June 15, two alarms were struck at 2605 New Hope Church Road. Engine 11 arrived with heavy fire showing from the second floor, attic, and rear of a two-story apartment building. They advanced inside, but were forced to retreat after encountering flaring magnesium which burned through their hose. All interior crews were soon withdrawn, as fire advanced in the attic.

Defensive operations started and Ladder 2 used a master stream. A deluge gun was positioned behind the structure, but not needed. Battalion Chief Garry Spain notes "after defensive operations, units reentered the structure. They pulled ceilings in the second exposure, and made the final stop on the advancement of the fire."



With 74° temperatures and 96% humidity, firefighters were aggressively evaluated for heat exhaustion and dehydration. One was transported to the hospital. An extra engine and ladder were requested for manpower. Dispatched at 9:09 p.m., the fire was controlled at 10:13 p.m. No civilians were injured, and 24 residents were displaced. See more photos at raleighfirenews.org. ■

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Chief Spain also monitors structure fires outside his battalion. For working fires in Battalion 1 and 3, he'll report to the scene, and assist the incident commander as an extra set of eyes on the fireground.

For working fires in Battalion 4, he'll stay in service. And if it's a major fire, he also coordinates move-ups. He'll look at his station map, and contact the available engine and ladder companies by phone.

Responding

Battalion 2 is the second busiest, with 470 calls answered last year. "I average about five calls a cycle," Spain says. With his turnout gear already stowed, he can be out of the station in 45 seconds. "I grab the rip 'n' run from the printer, get in the car, and go."

He drives himself, and sometimes has a passenger. When dispatched to major fires as a second Battalion Chief, he'll take a firefighter off Engine 12, if one is available. They'll be used as or to help the Accountability Officer.

GPS is Chief Spain's street guide, though he knows much of his battalion by heart. "I've worked downtown for 20 years, so I know how to get to most places." When responding with lights and siren, he stops at every red light. "It's the policy, and I have to set the example for others to follow."

After three and a half years as a Battalion Chief, he's learned to block out everything but the radio and the road. He listens for the size-up of the arriving unit. Building size. Fire conditions. Assignments, such as interior attack, search group, and ventilation.

He's even paying attention to their voice. "You learn to read your people. To listen if they're calm or excited. That helps tell you if something's big or small."

On Scene



Upon arrival, Chief Spain pulls his vehicle as close as safely possible. "Everything I need is in the back." Sketch board, accountability system, cheat sheets. "The key is being organized," he says.

After donning his gear, Chief Spain gets a quick briefing from the officer on the first-arriving company on which units are assigned where.

He then takes over command, and begins supervision of the incident. And he stays put. "I trust the personnel to give me good descriptions of what's happening," Spain says. "I do not need to move around."

His first priority as incident commander is rescue, to search for and rescue anyone inside. Then exposure protection, then fire control, and finally property conservation. "Those are the four command priorities."

Chief Spain's also thinking ahead. "You have to look at the big picture, and where the fire is going." If conditions worsen, he'll pull everybody out. "And they always say the same thing. 'If we had just one more minute, we could have knocked it down.'"

Accountability is also important, both for the safety of his personnel and his responsibility as Incident Commander. "What people don't realize is that I am personally accountable for them," says Spain. Thus he keeps close tabs on crew assignments. And wants his Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) alert and ready to act.

During the summer, working fires present a challenge for manpower. Companies are often short, due to vacations and other absences. On very hot or humid days, Chief Spain typically requests an extra engine and ladder.

After the fire is controlled, he calls everyone on scene together for a quick critique. And he remains at the incident until Red Cross arrives.

Chief Spain's rehab is minimal. He rests for a few minutes, drinks some water, and returns to the station. "After you have been in command at a major fire," he adds, "you even feel like you have fought the fire. It's the mental aspect."

Back at his office, he begins his paperwork. There's a shift summary to write, which is distributed internally to command staff. He reviews the report submitted by the first-arriving company. He also touches base with both the fire investigator and the city inspections office.

Then he gets back to work, and resumes his many other duties. That is, until the next call. ■

Recruits Start Academy

Raleigh Fire Department Recruit Academy 36 started at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 26. Twenty-five future Raleigh firefighters reported for duty at the Keeter Training Center.



The recruits graduate from the 30-week academy on December 18. They'll receive certifications as Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and Firefighter I and II, as well as training on technical rescue, haz-mat operations, fireground procedures, high-rise operations, rapid intervention teams (RIT), accountability systems, safety companies, engine and ladder company operations, and firefighter safety and survival.

The recruits have been divided into two platoons, with a Captain in charge of each. Four instructors have also been detailed to assist the training center staff during the academy.

EMT instruction comprise the first eight weeks, along with physical fitness instruction that continues through the entire academy. By the end of their training, the recruits will participate in live burns. ■

New Employees

These following firefighter recruits started May 26:

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Samuel T. Alston | Searcy R. Howard Sr. |
| Arturo V. Andino | Dwayne R. Krauser |
| Cedric L. Branch | Dwayne L. Maseburg |
| Jason E. Brown | Daniel R. Muller |
| Kelly C. Burns | Dexter R. Pearce |
| Corey D. Debnam | James D. Poole |
| William B. Dillard | Brian Prato |
| Kevin C. English | Leighton R. Smith |
| Daniel L. Ennis | Benjamin J. Sweet |
| Barry C. Fennell | Luis A. Urbina |
| David A. Grady | Walter F. Warner |
| Hikaru U. Hewitt | Dawn Zimba |
| Christopher C. Hodges | |

Promotions

July 3

Promoted to Captain: Shelton S. White
Promoted to Lieutenant: Melvin L. Cooley, Donovan J. Pitz

June 19

Promoted to Captain: Lowell W. Smith Jr.

May 8

Promoted to Captain: David W. Morzella and James J. Roof

Promoted to Lieutenant: Jason S. Hamilton, Charles B. Kneeshaw, Andrew B. Coley, Paul M. Wyatt

Corrections

These March 13 promotions to First Class Firefighter were omitted from the last issue:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Corey D. Campbell | Chaz M. Moore |
| Richard D. Carlson | David H. Penny Jr. |
| David B. Carroll | Daniel R. Richardson |
| Gregory R. Ceisner | Eric D. Stephenson |
| Preston K. Guidry | Glenn A. Todd Jr. |
| Alexandra O. Gutierrez | Brent A. Upton |
| Blaise E. Harris | Robert C. Vradenburgh |
| Darrell L. Harris | Phillip A. Walters |
| William T. Janke | Amber J. Wiggs |
| Ivon L. Johnson | Aaron L. Winston |
| Tarmel L. Kennion | Sandra B. Woodall |
| Caleb J. Lewis | Anthony C. Young |
| Patrick B. Marks | |

Appointments

May 8

Appointed to Fire Investigator: Lt. Grant Williams, Lt. Adam Stanley.

Retirements

Capt. Kenneth R. Bailey retired June 1 with 31 years of service.



Capt. Donald L. Carter retired July 1 with 29.3 years of service.



Lt. Randall L. Wright retired July 1 with 28.3 years of service.



Deaths

Retired Capt. Homer Bagley Williams, 89, passed away in Raleigh on Sunday, May 2. He retired in 1977 with 31 years of service.

Fire Ops 101 for City Council

On Saturday, June 5, Raleigh City Council members attended Fire Department Operations 101 at the Keefer Training Center. The event was hosted by the Raleigh Fire Department, and sponsored by the Raleigh Professional Firefighters Association (RPFPA). It was intended as "freshman orientation" to daily operations, risk, and rewards faced by Raleigh firefighters.



City Council members were escorted by shepherds during all stages of the event, which started with a fitting of full firefighter personal protective equipment. They were issued turnout coats, pants, boots, gloves, hoods, SCBA masks, helmets, and 800 MHz radios.

Classroom instruction included emergency medical technician and firefighter skill sets. They also attended demonstrations of haz-mat and USAR operations. Then lunch was served. Though the councilors were told that they had an hour for lunch, the buzzer was struck at the 40-minute mark.

They dressed and responded as Engine 14 and Ladder 4 to a simulated structure fire on the second floor of the training tower. Their objectives were to advance a charged hose line, extinguish a fire, and search, locate, and resuscitate a victim. During the final exercise, they were being instructed and shadowed by firefighters.



The event provided ample learning opportunities for the city officials. Says RPFPA President Keith Wilder, "the casual conversation between firefighters and councilors was unscripted and unabashed." They had the opportunity to speak candidly with each other.



"We often wish others, particularly our policy makers, could walk a mile in our shoes." Thus they gained a new perspective on what firefighters do, the mental and physical requirements, the technical challenges of problem solving, and even the importance of thermal imaging cameras.

The councilors were given gifts of helmets with custom shields, and display stands as provided by the RPFPA. Says Wilder, "we wanted to give them something tangible, as a way to keep us in their thoughts."

Fire Operations 101 proved an unqualified success. The council members praised the event, and suggested that it be conducted annually. They also recommended including "potential councilor candidates." The RPFPA hopes to continue this project, and develop the reputation that this event is not to be missed.



Planning for Ops 101 had been under way for over two years, with some 75 people whose work and ideas made the event possible. From RPFPA members who raised money for event funding, to those on- and off-duty personnel that served as staff, it was a true team effort.

RPFPA President Keith Wilder extends his appreciation to Fire Chief John McGrath and Division Chief Peter Brock for their support with apparatus and personnel. He also thanks Asst. Chief Danny Poole and his training center staff, who worked the event into the center's busy schedule. ■

See more photos at www.raleighfirenews.org

Grant Received For Simulator



At a ceremony at Station 1 on Monday, June 14, the Raleigh Fire Department received a check presented by U.S. Rep. Brad Miller and representing nearly \$146,000 in federal funds for the purchase of a new 40-foot, mobile, live-fire, multi-training simulator.

The funds were awarded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security as part of its Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program, and which requires a 20 percent local match.

The simulator will provide firefighters with live fire training as well as ventilation, forcible entry, standpipe, sprinkler, confined space, firefighter survival, and Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) skill stations. ❖

Budget News

As the city weathers the effects of the national economic downturn, the approved FY11 budget includes cost-saving measures across all departments. Budget changes for the fire department include delayed replacement of two engines with high repair costs and excessive mileage, delayed uniform replacement in all divisions, and delayed replacement of three and purchase of three additional thermal imaging cameras.

Other changes include removed funding for the Capital Leadership and child seat installation training programs, and reduced funding for public fire education materials.

Staff changes include the reclassification of two vacant firefighter positions to mechanics, and the transfer of seven employees from the Inspection Department to Fire Prevention. The seven inspectors had been temporarily assigned to the fire department. The Capital Improvement Program also includes FY11 funding for

\$150,000 in fire station improvements. Read budget documents at raleighfirenews.org. ❖

More Mobile Data Terminals

Engine 1 and 15 recently received mobile data terminals, with installations coming in the next couple of months on Engines 3, 4, 8, 16, and 19. When completed, each battalion will have two engines with MDTs.



Five ladders, the four Battalion Chiefs, and the Division Chief are also equipped with the units. The mobile data terminals provide access to a variety of resources, including driving directions, dispatch information, and the fire department records system. ❖

Services Division Updates

The Services Division recently completed their annual inventory, verifying every supply, uniform, equipment and apparatus in stock. Design work is in progress for fire station projects: new roofs at Stations 1, 2, 22; generators at Stations 11, 16, 20, 22, and apron replacements at Stations 3, 4, 14.

Design work is also under way for an apparatus storage building at the Support Services Center on New Bern Avenue, and preliminary design work is in progress on Station 29, to be located on Leesville Road on the northwestern edge of the city.

Water reclamation projects are in progress at Stations 6, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, and the Keeter Training Center. The Services Division will also be measuring for, ordering, and distributing over 250 sets of personal protective clothing this summer.

The division also expects delivery in early July of a 2010 Pierce Arrow XT tractor-drawn 100-foot aerial ladder, to be assigned to Ladder 4 at Station 1. ❖



New E-Mail Addresses

Fire department and other city employees have new e-mail addresses, effective April 17. The new format is **firstname.lastname@raleighnc.gov**. Old e-mail addresses using **firstname.lastname@ci.raleigh.nc.us** will continue working. ■

Retiree Day Photos

The third Retiree Day was held at the Keeter Training Center on Saturday, May 8. Attendees were treated to a barbecue lunch, along with equipment and apparatus displays. See more photos at www.raleighfirenews.org.



History Trailer Debuts

The Raleigh Fire Department Historical Society presented its new history trailer at Retiree Day. This permanent display of artifacts and information occupies a classroom trailer at the training center. Work is under way to open the trailer to personnel and visitors, and to begin collecting, identifying, and displaying more artifacts. For questions or more information, contact Battalion Chief Alan Walters at Station 23, 919-420-2395.

Photo Gallery



On June 13, Raleigh's regional haz-mat team responded to Greensboro to assist at a tank farm fire near Interstate 40. Crews were also on scene from High Point, Salisbury, and Charlotte.



Fire Chief John McGrath and Asst. Chief Larry Stanford compete at lemon squeezing at a ChikFil-A event in north Raleigh on June 8, raising money for the Wake County Burned Children's Fund.



On June 7, the Raleigh Fire Department responded to the State Capitol after an unidentified white powder was discovered in a letter mailed to the Governor's Office.



Honor Guard members lead the Fifth Annual North Carolina Fallen Firefighters Memorial parade on May 1. The parade started at St. Mary's and Hillsborough streets and ended at the Nash Square memorial.



Cockpit submersions are simulated at Pullen Park pool in April, as part of training for a new helicopter rescue program with the State Highway Patrol.



Landscaping in the front of Station 19 with "A" shift.

See more photos at www.raleighfirenews.org

OTHER NEWS



Two alarms were struck at 3800 Jackson Street on Saturday, July 3. Engine 8 was first on scene at a two-story apartment building with heavy fire in the front stairwell area. Four units were damaged.



Also on July 3, the first of three on-shift Deputy Fire Marshals reported for duty at Station 21. Their office is located at the Dillon Building, and they'll sleep and change shifts at the fire station. Their unit is designated Car 40, shown above. More information next issue.



The fourth annual National Fallen Firefighters Golf Tournament drew 30 teams and 120 players to Eagle Ridge Golf Club on June 17. Hosted by the Raleigh Fire Department, the event raised over \$7,000.

The Raleigh Fire Department is again the host agency of South Atlantic Fire Rescue Expo, held at the Raleigh Convention Center on August 11-14. Planned activities range from conference sessions to a golf tournament to a fire apparatus parade. Learn more at www.southatlanticfirerescueexpo.com. ❖

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MONTHLY RETIREE BREAKFAST

PAM'S RESTAURANT, 5111 WESTERN BOULEVARD, 7:30 A.M.
SECOND TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH
JUL 13, AUG 10, SEP 14

SOUTH ATLANTIC FIRE RESCUE EXPO
RALEIGH CONVENTION CENTER
AUGUST 11-14

Where Are They Now?



Retired Lt. Paul Averette lives in Rolesville with his wife Paulette. They have two children, both married, and four grandchildren. Though he's been retired six years, he says it seems like only six months. "For me every day is Saturday except Sunday."

Paul still works at the Progress Energy Center (Memorial Auditorium) and the Convention Center, along with several other retired firemen. He also continues to contact active personnel when extra help is needed. He's been working part-time at the two locations for 40 years.

Since his retirement in 2005, Paul and Paulette have traveled somewhere exciting almost every year. They've been to Las Vegas, Grand Canyon, Branson, MO, the Eastern Caribbean and Canada. They drove to Maine in the fall, and took their biggest trip in June, a cruise to Alaska.

Paul says his grandchildren are fans of his four-wheel ATVs. The two oldest girls can ride by themselves, but he's the designated driver for the other two. He also rides a Suzuki street bike, which he enjoys almost as much as his Hustler Zero Turn mower.

When not riding on one of those vehicles, he's still busy as the Barrel Man. "If anyone needs a barrel, give me a call."

Paul sees from two to ten retired firemen nearly every day. Like all retirees, he loves to eat. They gather at various locations in Rolesville, Wake Forest, Zebulon, and Raleigh on most days. When they arrange group meetings, anywhere from four to forty attend. He also stays in touch with retirees at the Quarter Century meetings, that he and Paulette enjoy attending. ■

Where Are You Now?

Share your stories in a future issue of the newsletter by contacting editor@raleighfirenews.org.

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

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