



Raleigh Fire Department Newsletter



Volume 7, Issue 2

Spring 2015

Snow Days in February



Ladder 4-B members return to their truck, after fighting a house fire on Lord Ashley Road on February 26.

Significant periods of snow and freezing temperatures challenged Raleigh firefighters in February with increased fire alarms, many calls for downed trees and power lines, and numerous vehicle accidents.

Nearly eight inches of snow was recorded during the month at Raleigh-Durham International Airport, with most businesses and schools closed on Tuesday, February 17, and Thursday, February 26.

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Station 29 Nears Completion



Fire Station 29 is nearing completion at 12117 Leesville Road. The single-story, three-bay facility will house Engine 29 and Ladder 9. Both will be newly created companies.

The 10,198 square-foot building includes an apparatus area with three bays and 3,971 square feet. It was designed by William Ferm Architects PA, who also designed Fire Station 28.



In other facility news, City Council approved the Harden Road location for the Station 14 replacement, on April 7. The design process for the Station 6 replacement also started in April.

The Station 12 replacement and Station 11 expansion projects are still in plans review, with a projected start in the summer or fall. The Station 5 renovations are planned to start in the last quarter of 2015, with Engine 5 relocated to Station 6 for several months.

Station 29 is planned to open at the end of April. See more photos at www.raleighfirenews.org. ■

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Closures and delays were also experienced citywide on other days, during those periods.

Fire apparatus were outfitted with tire chains to help traverse the snow and ice. Many off-duty members also arrived at their fire stations the night before the predicted snowfalls, to avoid travel problems before shift change.



Clearing snow at the training center on February 17.

Fire Alarm Activations

Low temperatures dropped below freezing for twenty-two of the month's twenty-eight days. For five days in February, high temperatures stayed below freezing.

As a result of the freezing temperatures, the fire department responded to an increased number of fire alarms associated with sprinkler system activations.

"Most of these involved dry-pipe sprinkler systems," says Platoon Deputy Fire Marshal Greg Frazier. "Those systems had accumulated water that froze."

The resulting burst pipe caused a water flow alarm, which activated the automatic fire alarm. The alarm companies called the fire department, which typically results in the dispatch of an engine and ladder company.

Modified Dispatch Assignments

During the periods of snow and ice, the fire department modified the standard run assignments. Fire alarms, for example, received only a single engine response.

For the buildings with burst pipes in the sprinkler systems, Car 420 was contacted.

"Since those sprinkler systems have to be shut off and repaired, the building no longer has automatic fire protection," says Frazier.

Car 420 responds to those, to assess the situation and provide the property owner with information on providing "fire watch" if required, by North Carolina fire code.

"Based on the occupancy type, they have to provide a person watching for fires at all times," adds Frazier.

Modified Response

One of the heaviest periods of alarm activations occurred during the snow event on February 26.

"Calls were coming in so fast, we couldn't write them all down," notes Frazier. Nor could he respond, due to road conditions.

Instead, he relied on company offers to assess conditions, report on the systems, and provide property owners with information.

"The company officers did a great job of documenting the problems."

To enhance the response to the fire alarms, Asst. Fire Marshal Charles Williams also responded as Car 42.

"We divided the city by battalions, with me answering Battalions 2 and 3, and Frazier answering calls in Battalions 1, 4, and 5," says Williams.

This helped their ability to respond to requests, contact building representatives, and enforce the fire code as appropriate.

"All broken sprinkler heads or lines were repaired within three to five days after they occurred," notes Williams.

The severe weather response in February by Car 420 (and Car 42) was effective for both the fire department and the community.

"The platoon fire marshals held the property managers or building representatives accountable for the repairs of their fire protection system," says Williams. "And they responded promptly."

Car 420 is housed at Station 16 and is staffed by platoon Deputy Fire Marshals Brian Morgan ("A"), Greg Frazier ("B"), and Michael Furr ("C").



Car 420 also performs regular scheduled fire inspections as a member of the Office of the Fire Marshal, and responds to working commercial structure fires to assist as a resource for investigators and incident commanders.

Promotions & Appointments

April 1

Promoted to Captain:

Lt. Stephen J. Corker

Promoted to Lieutenant:

Senior Firefighter Jonathan P. Bailey

March 31

Appointed to Asst. Chief of Services:

Division Chief W. Keith Tessinear

Appointed to Division Chief:

Battalion Chief J. Allen Wilson

Promoted to Battalion Chief:

Capt. J. Keith Wilder

Promoted to Captain:

Lt. Stephen M. Welch

Promoted to Lieutenant:

Senior Firefighter Caleb J. Lewis

News Updates



A new air truck was delivered in April. The 2015 Kenworth/Pierce will be added as a second mobile air unit. Air 2 will be assigned to Station 15.

Among the features are high- and low-pressure air hose reels (150 and 200-foot, respectively), for rescue tools and remote bottle filling. There's also a roof-mounted LED light tower, and side and rear awnings that will help with rehab.

Filling bottles will also be faster. The truck is equipped with a Scott Revolve Air fill enclosure, which allows two bottles to be filled while a second pair is being prepared.

Also in production at Pierce are an Arrow XT engine and Arrow XT tiller. Delivery is expected in October.

Hurst eDraulic spreader and cutting tools will be assigned to Rescue 1, and Hurst high-pressure rescue tools will be assigned to Squad 14. This is phase one of a five-year plan upgrading all existing Hurst tools from 5,000 PSI to high-pressure.

Public Utilities has provided the fire department with tablet computers, one per engine and ladder, to assist with hydrant maintenance. The fire department will perform pressure tests this year on the city's 2,000 public and 5,000 private hydrants.

Six additional tablets will be purchased by the fire department for the Battalion Chiefs.

Public Utilities is also working with the Office of the Fire Marshal to establish a multi-year plan to convert all of the city's older hydrants to a standard thread.

Recruit Academy 40 completes their six-month academy in mid-May. The graduation ceremony is Thursday, May 14, at 7:00 p.m., at Fletcher Hall at the Duke Energy Performance Arts Center.

Fireground training is being conducted at the Wake County Fire Training Center in March and April. Engine and ladder companies are participating over twenty-four planned dates.

Companies also utilized two sets of abandoned buildings for training during February and March, at the Palms Apartments on Horton Street and a trio of houses on Charles Drive. Both sets of buildings are planned for demolition. ❖



In the basement of an abandoned house on Charles Drive on March 23, crews practiced rescuing a firefighter trapped under a collapsed wall weighing over 800 pounds.

Deaths

Retired firefighter Simon Rogers Jr. passed away in Wake Forest on February 6. He retired in 1978 with 21.8 years of service.



Former firefighter Clesiastes McCullers passed away in Wendell on March 31. He left the department in 1984 with 13 years of service.



Operations

Incidents 37,507
Runs ▼ 56,546

Engine Companies

E1 1,842
E2 1,717
E3 2,696
E4 1,234
E5 1,261
E6 1,228
E7 1,935
E8 1,861
E9 1,529
E10 1,636
E11 2,303
E12 2,391
E13 1,337
Squad 14 1,639
Squad 15 2,334
E16 1,664
E17 1,309
E18 1,117
E19 2,101
E20 1,536
E21 1,363
E22 1,269
E23 1,021
E24 782
E25 759
E26 900
E27 637
E28 604

Squad 14 and 15 operate as both engine companies and special rescue resources.

Ladder Companies

L1 (Sta 4) 973
L2 (Sta 11) 2,012
L3 (Sta 17) 980
L4 (Sta 1) 2,120
L5 (Sta 22) 970
L6 (Sta 24) 455
L7 (Sta 20) 987
L8 (Sta 26) 541

Rescue Company

R1 (Sta 21) 1,057

Raleigh Fire Department Statistics



Overview

Fire Chief	John T. McGrath	Stations	27
Budget	\$53,890,343	Engines (including two squads)	28
Personnel	607	Ladders	8
City Pop. (2013)	431,746	Rescues	1
City Size (sq. miles)	145	Battalions	5

Cardiac Saves

Raleigh firefighters helped revive 32 of the 73 people that survived cardiac arrest in Wake County last year. Their early intervention, with cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and/or automatic external defibrillation (AED), is a critical part of the resuscitation process.

Training

A total 1,520 hours of instruction were conducted for fire department members at the Keeter Training Center in 2014, with 5,078 students receiving 86,835 individual hours of instruction.

Twenty-four hours of company training (fireground operations, ladder operations, high-rise operations, personal protective equipment and SCBA, and fire investigation/radio) was conducted for 2,625 students and 12,600 individual hours of instruction.

A total of 1,203 hours of continuing education (including EMT, Haz-Mat Operations, Emergency Vehicle Driver, Fire Officer I and II, Incident Command System, and Recruit Academy 39) was conducted for 2,049 students and 58,893 individual hours.

Special Operations Division team training (technical rescue, haz-mat, USAR, and Helicopter Aquatic Rescue Technician program) totaled 293 hours for 404 students and 15,342 individual hours.

Incident Types

The Raleigh Fire Department complies with the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). Incident types in 2014:

Fire (Structures, vehicles, woods and grass, etc.)	1,107	Service call (Child locked in vehicle, water removal, assist police, etc.)	2,293
Overpressure, ruptures, explosion, overheating (no fire)	91	Good intent call (Smoke investigation, controlled burn, wrong location, etc.)	4,435
EMS and rescue (Vehicle accidents, medical emergencies, etc.)	22,991	False alarm and false calls (Unnecessary calls)	5,327
Hazard conditions, no fire (Spills, leaks, power lines, etc.)	1,190	Severe weather or natural disaster	20
		Special incident type	31
		Other	22
Total			37,507

January 1 – December 31, 2014

Office of the Fire Marshal

This division is the enforcement, educational and informational arm of the Raleigh Fire Department. They perform site inspections, issue permits, enforce fire codes, and coordinate pre-fire planning for buildings and facilities within the city. They are also responsible for conducting fire investigations, and providing public fire education.

In 2014, the division performed 11,991 inspections of existing buildings, including commercial, industrial, and institutional occupancies. These activities included issuing permits and conducting consultations. The division also conducted 4,955 plan reviews and 5,977 new construction inspections.

Also last year, 123 nightclub and sports bar inspections were conducted as a joint program with the Raleigh Police Department. In addition to checking for fire code compliance, business owners are receiving education on the prevention of overcrowding.

Fire Investigation

This unit investigated 233 fires in 2014, consisting of 156 accidental fires, 46 intentional fires, two naturally caused fires, and thirty-one of undetermined cause. The causes of the accidental fires included:

Available Combustibles	13	8%	Improper Storage	8	5%
Candle	3	2%	Mechanical Failure	12	8%
Cooking	35	22%	Open Flame	3	2%
Electrical	17	11%	Unspecified Heat Source	4	3%
Heating Equipment	3	2%	Smoking Materials	27	17%
			Other	31	20%
			Total	156	

Public Education

In 2014, the Raleigh Fire Department conducted 387 education programs with 33,705 participating children and adults. These include visits to fire stations, programs initiated by individual fire companies, school and institutional programs, and activities during Fire Prevention Week. Additionally, ten episodes of FireWatch were produced for the Raleigh Television Network.

Information Technology

Staff responded to 2,465 support questions in 2014, including 174 questions submitted after business hours. The requests included 708 questions about the Firehouse records management system, 206 questions about using and accessing e-mail, and 166 general questions about systems, software, and devices.

Services

This division provides support to all divisions of the fire department, and oversees thirty-one facilities (buildings and land) including twenty-seven fire stations, a fleet of 167 vehicles (fire apparatus and support vehicles), and an inventory of supplies, equipment, clothing, and uniforms.

Over 4,600 work requests were completed in 2014, including 969 fleet maintenance and repair requests. Personal protective equipment (PPE) replacements included 600 new helmets, 600 new hoods, 700 pairs of structural firefighting gloves, and 700 pairs of rescue gloves. Every piece of self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) was also replaced, with 386 new air packs added.

Battalion Chiefs

B1 (Sta 19)	461
B2 (Sta 12)	605
B3 (Sta 8)	521
B4 (Sta 23)	299
B5 (Sta 9)	763

Division Chief

(Platoon Supervisor)

Car 20 (Sta 8)	461
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Fire Investigator

Car 401 (Sta 1)	217
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Platoon Deputy Fire Marshal

Car 420 (St 16)	993
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Special Units

Air 1 (Sta 5)	142
HM1 (Sta 2)	78
HM2 (Sta 27)	83
HM3 (Sta 8)	51

Busiest Engines

E1	1,842
E3	2,696
E12	2,391
Squad 15	2,334
E11	2,303
E19	2,101
E7	1,935
E8	1,861
E2	1,717
E16	1,664

Also Last Year

Raleigh Fire Explorer Post #108 members assisted at 28 working fires.

The Raleigh Fire Museum recorded 366 visitors, during both regular monthly openings and special events.

Photo Gallery



Raleigh Fire Explorer Post 108 conducted a live demonstration for friends and family members on Saturday, April 11, as part of their annual banquet at the Keeter Training Center.



Lightning started a two-alarm apartment fire on Courtney Lane early Friday morning, April 10. New Hope Engine 1 was first arriving. Two aerial streams were utilized.



Captain Ben Averette (Squad 14-B) was named Firefighter of the Year by American Legion Raleigh Post 1 in a ceremony on Thursday, April 9.



A child playing with a cigarette lighter started the fire that destroyed the second story of a house on Casland Drive on Sunday, March 29. First arriving was Engine 21.



After a scaffold collapse killed three construction workers at 501 Fayetteville Street on the morning of March 23, the fire department remained on scene for several hours to assist with evaluating, securing, and investigating the accident site. The command post and staging were located on South Street.



Raleigh firefighters participated in an emergency preparedness exercise at Raleigh-Durham International Airport on Saturday, March 21. The triennial drill simulated a commercial jet crash on a runway, with responders from Wake and Durham counties.

Asst. Chief Garry Spain Retires

On March 31, Asst. Chief of Services Garry G. Spain retired with 27.5 years of service.

He entered the department on February 3, 1988, leaving a job as a corrections guard at Polk Youth Center.



"I was a twenty-year-old boy overseeing other twenty-year-old boys," says Spain. "And some that I graduated with from high school."

He was hired alongside such veterans as David Feller, Keith Holmstrand (ret.), Andy Keil, M. J. Johnson (ret.), Bill Melina, Bill Parker, Kenny Perry, and Dean Taylor.

The son-in-law of retired Lt. Bobby Smith (1977), Garry was followed by his twin brother Barry, who entered the department in February 1989.

Chief Spain was promoted to First Class Firefighter in 1991 and to Lieutenant in 1994. He was promoted to Captain on Engine 16 in 1996, to Battalion Chief in 2004, and to Division Chief in 2010.



As Battalion Chief, he was incident commander on Armadale Lane (left), when seven houses burned on March 23, 2010. "When I arrived, three were already on the ground," recalls Spain.

"You could see fire in the crawlspaces of the next three, and the entire backside of the seventh house was on fire," he adds.

He also remembers it well for company officers that night. "Nearly all were Lieutenants in acting positions," says Spain, "because there was a Captain's meeting that night."

Chief Spain would spend five hours on scene that night.

His appointment as Assistant Chief of Services in 2012 brought a big change, away from Operations and into the new world of support services.

"Both [Facility Managers] Scott White and myself started at the same time," he says. "We both had to learn."

He's proud of the division's accomplishments and his

hard-working staff.

"They're so dedicated," he notes. "They work their tails off and as hard as any firefighter I've ever seen. But it's in the background and people don't see it."

The complexity of command staff decision-making is also something Spain has grown to understand.

"Every decision we make is in the best interest of the crews. A lot of thought and hard work is put into decisions that are made. That's hard for the troops to understand."

Chief Spain will remain Chief Spain, as he's the new Fire Chief for the North Myrtle Beach Fire Department beginning April 6.

"I hadn't made any plans to take a new job," he notes. "This just fell into my lap."

He saw the posting and talked about the opportunity with his wife. "This is a good move for my family and we hope folks will come visit. They'll always have a friend in North Myrtle Beach." ❖



Twin brothers Garry Spain (left) and Barry Spain (right) lead the fire department's centennial parade on June 16, 2012.

More Retirements

Capt. Jeffrey L Mullen retired with 36.6 years of service on April 1.



Lt. Marvin J. Johnson retired with 27 years of service on February 1.



Raleigh Fire Department
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Raleigh, NC 27602

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

RETIREE LUNCHEON
KEETER TRAINING CENTER
105 KEETER CENTER DRIVE
WEDNESDAY, MAY 6
10:00 SOCIAL STARTS, 12:00 NOON SERVING

RECRUIT ACADEMY GRADUATION
FLETCHER HALL, DUKE ENERGY PERFORMANCE ARTS CENTER
THURSDAY, MAY 14, 7:00 P.M.

CARDIAC SAVES CEREMONY
MEYMANDI CONCERT HALL, 2 E. SOUTH STREET, RALEIGH
TUESDAY, MAY 19, 7:00 P.M.

NINTH ANNUAL NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS GOLF
TOURNAMENT
BENTWINDS COUNTRY CLUB, FUQUAY-VARINA
MONDAY, JUNE 22 - TEE TIME IS 10:00 A.M.

MONTHLY RETIREE BREAKFAST
PAM'S RESTAURANT, 5111 WESTERN BOULEVARD, 7:30 A.M.
SECOND TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH.

MONTHLY FIRE MUSEUM OPENING
105 KEETER CENTER DRIVE
SECOND SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH, 10:00 A.M. TO 2:00 P.M.

Fire Museum News

The Raleigh Fire Museum received \$1,814 in pledges from fire department members, via the city's Workplace Giving fall campaign. Thank you for your support!

The museum is designing a new Raleigh Fire Department challenge coin to be sold as a fundraiser. The design is nearly finished. They should be available in May.

Restoration project planning is underway for the museum's two antique pumpers, a 1936 American LaFrance and a 1961 American LaFrance. Contact the museum if you would like to help, or if you have a special talent that would facilitate these projects.

Planning for another Raleigh Fireman's Ball is underway. The holiday-themed event will take place at the Raleigh Convention Center on Saturday, November 21.

Read more at www.raleighfiremuseum.org/news.

THE RALEIGH FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER IS A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FOR PERSONNEL, RETIREES, AND CITIZENS. THE EDITOR IS HISTORIAN MIKE LEGEROS. BACK ISSUES ARE AVAILABLE AT www.RALEIGHFIRENEWS.org.