

# Instructor's Dispatch

A Newsletter of the Commission on Fire Prevention & Control

## Connecticut Fire Academy's Rescue Week



Picture taken by Program Manager Jim Carroll

During the first week of November the Connecticut Fire Academy presented Rescue Week. This five day event featured eight training programs covering a full range of technical rescue topics. Programs included Rescue Shoring; Estimating Weight in Technical Rescue; Breaking and Breaching Concrete and Cutting Steel; and Handling Rescue with High Pressure Air Bags. The transportation rescue area included Heavy Vehicle Rescue and Advanced Vehicle Extrication. A new area of rescue training was introduced with a training program on Large Animal Rescue presented by an area veterinarian who serves on the State Animal Response Team.

Rescue Week also featured a new program titled Rescue Challenge which allowed trained rescuers to band together as a team to face several rescue scenarios such as a victim entangled in a railroad car and a victim impaled on fence posts. One hundred thirty one students either learned new rescue skills or refreshed their skills in the fields of technical rescue. The steady stream of positive feedback from both students and instructors indicated that this

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Commission on Fire  
Prevention & Control



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Speaker: Lieutenant Michael Ciampo

**"Be careful of  
"get  
homeitus" ...in  
firefighting and  
baseball, it ain't  
over till its  
over—be sure  
what you think is  
the end is really  
the end."**

**By Alan V.  
Brunacini**

## Truck Company Operations: A Hundred Things To



The Seminar Series titled *Truck Company Operations: A Hundred Things To Do* was held Friday October 15, 2010. The presenter was Lieutenant Michael N. Ciampo FDNY. The seminar covered the numerous truck company operational tactics and tasks that must be accomplished. On every fire ground there are always numerous truck company operational tactics and tasks that must be accomplished for a successful firefight. Often, due to limited manpower and resources the truck company firefighter must adapt and overcome to handle many of the situations that arise. Many of us call them "Tricks of the Trade" but are they really just "tricks"? In this lecture, the students learned street-smart truck company skills, tactics and tips in forcible entry, ventilation, and portable ladder operations that will help them perform their job more safely and effectively.

### Instructor Biography

Michael N. Ciampo is a Lieutenant in the FDNY; previously he served with the Washington, DC Fire Dept. He also a 4<sup>th</sup> generation volunteer Firefighter serving with the Wyckoff, NJ Fire Dept. He has a B.A. degree in fire science from John Jay College of Criminal Justice, NY. He is the lead instructor for the FDIC Portable Ladder & Truck Company Essentials classes.

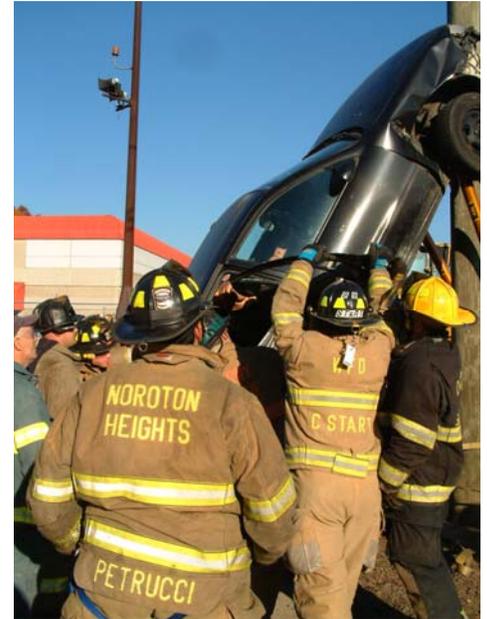
## Recognizing Members Of Our Staff

Danbury F.D. Training Officer Mark Omasta wrote regarding the delivery of a Rescue Technician-Trench class this past July. He stated "All of the instructors were knowledgeable and well versed with the subject and were able to deliver a solid program.....The nineteen (19) students and our department appreciates the effort put in by the instructors and the examiners." Thanks to Al Bassett who coordinated and taught in the program along with instructors Jim Plaster, Joe Nadeau, Tony Leca, Rocco Fierravanti, Clint Haverkamp, Rich Alfes and Mike Donovan.



Jeffrey Morrissette, State Fire Administrator

## Connecticut Fire Academy's Rescue Week



Pictures taken by  
Program Manager Jim Carroll

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event was well received and points to Rescue Week being run again in 2011. All the instructors involved gave extraordinary effort which is greatly appreciated as well as the support received from several rescue equipment vendors.

We also received assistance from the staff of the New England Disaster Training Center (where several scenarios were conducted) and members of Local 478 Operating Engineers. Everyone's efforts are greatly appreciated.

Jim Carroll, Program Manager





## It's Greek To Me! Part II

When I got out of Army Security in 1967 I was twenty-four, had flunked out of college on a four-year, full-ride scholarship, had had a non-stellar four years in the military, and—except for Thor Heyerdahl's *Kan-Tiki*; had never read a book. I was constantly “in over my head,” people were constantly “talking over my head,” and I was constantly depressed “in my head.” When someone would say something I didn't understand I would just retaliate with “It's Greek to me!”

At twenty-four, in college, in class amidst over-achieving teenagers, I decided the problem was mine and that it centered around my weak vocabulary. I realized I was getting the gist from the context and was coping, but I was not excelling. I was just functionally literate, getting by, and was becoming marginalized by society due to my inadequacies. My solution was simple, never pass up a word I didn't know.

Later, in a paleography course (I had to look up that word!) I learned that there had been an entire society that had been in my same position. Medieval monks, many of whom had gravitated to monasteries just to survive, often had to copy books. They were scribes, in *scriptoria*. A bunch of Bartleby scrivener types. In class we became CSI's and learned how to figure out exactly how specific mistakes crept into individual manuscripts. And we found out that they invented “It's Greek to me!”

Marginally literate by classical standards, these monks glazed over when they came across Greek in ancient manuscripts. Rather than simply learning the Greek alphabet—true knowledge of a language was not necessary for copying—the monks simply wrote “GREEK” (read, “It's Greek to me!”) and then moved on to the next Latin word in the manuscript.

Are you someone who waves the “It's Greek to me!” flag when confronted with innovative technology, new gadgets, digital demons? Are you a boss who doesn't honor innovation and who isn't trained by your employees so you can talk to them in their language? Or are you a leader who puts in the time and effort to learn from those who need you to understand? Or is all of this just GREEK!

Frederick J. (Fred) Cowie, Ph.D.

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**“You will keep getting what you got, if you keep doing what you did (Einstein said a standard definition of insanity is doing the same thing and expecting a different result).”**

**By Alan V. Brunacini**

## Not The Kind of Publicity We Want

The Connecticut Fire Academy often goes out of its way to allow media access to our facilities, classes, students and instructors. The broadcast and film industry has used our venue and classes (both staged and real) to create training and general information recordings. The print media often wants to shadow a particular student due to distinctive ethnicity or gender.

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## Request For Proof Of Insurance

Thank you to those that have already supplied your insurance information. But due to frequent policy renewal cycles, this information must be current. Therefore, every time you renew a policy a copy should be shared with our Business Office.

Our Business Office requires that if you claim mileage reimbursement while using your personally owned vehicle (POV) on state business; then you must have on file in the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control Business Office a copy of your current policy with coverages.

Some of you may have claims that are being held for payment until such time that you submit your proof of coverage and policy limits that meet or exceed minimum liability of \$50,000/\$100,000 and \$5,000 in property damage or, in lieu thereof, a minimum of \$100,000 for liability for bodily injury and property damage. You may fax a copy of your coverage to the attention "Business Office" at (860) 654-1889). Thank you for complying with this routine requirement.

Adam D. Piskura, Director of Training  
Connecticut Fire Academy

## Not The Kind of Publicity We Want

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We have always accommodated these requests with the goal of promoting the good work that occurs here. Ultimately, the citizens and taxpayers of Connecticut learn of the return on their investment in taxes. How often can you actually see what your tax money is spent upon?

Unfortunately we recently received a complaint from an out-of-state resident about the behavior of a group of Connecticut Fire Academy Instructors in a local restaurant. This individual was so disturbed by their demonstrations of repeated vulgarity, discussions that included discrediting ethnic groups and attention getting displays, that he contacted the State Fire Administrator as he learned about our organization after Googling our Web Site. This is obviously; not the kind of publicity that we want.

He identified these people because they were wearing CFA logo wear restricted solely to our instructors. He admonished us and made comparisons to private business and industry employee department. Beyond the embarrassment, our public institution is now held out as obnoxious, racist and unnecessarily crude in public. One of the first concerns stated after learning of this display was; I wonder what the locals (CT residents) think? Similar as our out-of-state complainant I would suppose.

Please understand that this behavior can not be repeated. When wearing any item identifying you as an employee, please conduct yourself in a manner that reflects respect of our citizens, regard for all individuals, and discuss professional matters in normal tones without inflectives.

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**"Always hedge your bet  
with the fire...better to  
be too big, instead of  
too small".**

**By Alan V. Brunacini**

## Not The Kind of Publicity We Want

**"The very worst fireground plan is no plan (the next worse is two competing plans".**

**By Alan V. Brunacini**

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Work group socialization is encouraged. However; we request that you consciously think about who you are representing to an ever more observant public. As with all personal choices, perhaps it is best to simply remove or cover up our logo wear. In these stressful times of unemployment and reduced income, we need to be ever mindful of what messages we are sending to those who pay our salaries and fund our activities.

It is surely easy to cut funding to an institution that has employees that denigrate its citizens or behaves inappropriate in public.

Our occupation does not yield a license to be disrespectful to anyone.

Adam D. Piskura, Director of Training

## The National Pink Heals Tour

Staff at the Connecticut Fire Academy Left to Right:  
Program Manager Mark Salafia  
Storekeeper Robert Myjak  
Deputy Director Mark Lewandowski  
Program Manager Jim Carroll  
Program Manager William Trisler  
State Fire Administrator Jeffrey Morrisette  
Executive Secretary Yvonne Lewis  
Certification/Practical Skills Coordinator Ed O'Hurley  
Certification Registrar Denice Fortin



On October 28<sup>th</sup> members of Connecticut Fire Academy Recruit Class #46 and Commission on Fire Prevention and Control staff proudly joined the East Hartford Fire Department (EHFD) and numerous other departments state and nationwide in supporting the National Pink Heals Tour. The tour is a traveling program designed to increase awareness of cancers and promote support for all women who are or have been battling this terrible disease.

Two members of the EHFD volunteered their time to join the 2010 Tour and drive one of the pink fire trucks for several weeks in September and October as they toured the South-eastern US, visiting countless cancer-centered hospitals, community events designed to support those suffering from cancer, and met hundreds of people. The support from fire and

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## The National Pink Heals Tour

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police personnel throughout South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas was outstanding. Eventually the goal was to bring that same level of support, commitment, and honor to Connecticut.

We thank the EHFD for their leadership in promoting increased cancer awareness and support for those impacted by this disease.

### Certificate of Appreciation Presented to Instructor Steve Coulon



Left to right: State Fire Administrator Jeffrey Morrissette  
Adjunct Instructor Steven Coulon  
Chairman Peter S. Carozza, Jr  
Director of Training Adam Piskura  
Picture taken by Program Manager Jim Carroll

Instructor Steve Coulon was recognized and presented a certificate of appreciation by the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control for going above and beyond in assisting firefighters in dealing with Post Traumatic Stress from an incident many years ago.

This came about while teaching a Fire Officer I class earlier in the year and proves that the Connecticut Fire Academy Instructors, with their own experience and education provide to their students more than just lecture and PowerPoint guidance in class. They are sincerely concerned with the welfare and future of the Connecticut first responders who are our future leaders and protectors.

Instructor Coulon recognized that assistance may be needed while listening to student presentations during the Fire Officer I class. A student described dealing with a forced bail-out of an attic for three firefighters which could be classified as a life threatening and life altering event.

After speaking privately with the student to see if intervention would be received favorably by these firefighters, Instructor Coulon took it upon himself to follow-up and made contact with the FDNY Counseling Unit. Instructor Coulon contacted Chief of Safety Steve Raynis who just happened to be with Commissioner Cassano at the time and both approved out of department assistance.

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**“Whoever coined the phrase “...fight another day” was a smart buckaroo”.**

**By Alan V. Brunacini**

**"Safe firefighters  
are smart  
firefighters".**

**By Alan V. Brunacini**

## **Certificate of Appreciation Presented to Instructor Steve Coulon**

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It should be noted that in Instructor Coulon's previous career, he was a career Fire-fighter and retired as an NYPD officer who specialized in Safety, having trained the original FDNY "Safety Battalion" and following classes of Chief Officers as well as investigating first responder accidents and fatalities, including motor vehicle accidents with Police, Fire and EMS.

The three firefighters went to the FDNY in New York City and received the best assistance available, to quote one of the recipients "I felt like I had been cured of cancer".

To quote instructor Coulon ... "I consider this success to be one of the high points of my career. In my view our role as Instructors encompasses much more than just "teaching". I am proud to work for the Connecticut Fire Academy for many reasons, one of which is the opportunity to help students in many different ways. If I were not working for the Connecticut Fire Academy, I would not have been able to accomplish what we did with the Greenwich Firefighters".

In my opinion as a program manager, this award represents not only a "Thank you" and "Job well done" to Instructor Coulon but that all the CFA Instructors are in their positions to bring about favorable, positive change and education to our First Responders present and future.

Few people see and recognize the difference our men and women of the adjunct faculty provide on a daily basis and I want to say "Thank you" to all of them. Thank you Steve Coulon and Thank you Connecticut Fire Academy instructors

Eric B. Munsell  
Program Manager

**Letter From Chief Siecienski  
to Instructor Steven Coulon**



**FIRE DEPARTMENT**

May 20, 2010

Steven Coulon, FSI  
181 Quinnipiac Avenue  
North Haven, Ct. 06473

Dear Steve,

I would like to thank you for your benevolence in working with several members of our department and the FDNY Counseling Service Unit. The intervention you coordinated was both professional and accommodating to our men.

The firefighters from Greenwich that participated had been participating in other counseling programs both uniformed and civilian since 2003. All three found the time spent extremely helpful.

We will continue to support our personnel in whatever manner they need, but let me say that I am personally grateful for the resources and time you extended. It is with continued pride that I serve within the fire service, individuals of your caliber reinforce that decision.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Peter J. Siecienski".

Peter J. Siecienski  
Fire Chief  
Greenwich, Connecticut 06830  
203-622-3951

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We're on the web  
at: [www.ct.gov/cfpc](http://www.ct.gov/cfpc)

State of Connecticut



### Agency Mission

To prevent or mitigate the effects of fire and disasters, either natural or manmade, on the citizens of the State of Connecticut. This objective shall be accomplished through the development and delivery of state-of-the-art educational programs designed to meet nationally recognized standards, certification of individuals to such standards and maintenance of up-to-date resources for use by fire service personnel, public educators and other first responders.

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