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Recruit Class # 49 Graduation



On May 23, 2012, the Connecticut Fire Academy graduated it's 49th Recruit Class, at the Connecticut Police Academy, Meriden Connecticut. The class consisted of 17 firefighters representing eleven (11) Connecticut Fire Departments from across the state who completed the 14-week training program. The class was escorted into the ceremony by the Connecticut Firefighter Pipe and Drum Band accompanied by the Connecticut Statewide Firefighters Honor Guard.

The Keynote speaker was Chief Marc Scrivener, of the Willimantic Fire Department, while Marc Fongemie of the Middletown Fire Department acted as the class spokesman.

The class roster consisted of firefighters representing the following fire departments:

Brookfield, East Hartford, Greenwich, New London, Middletown, Newtown Hook & Ladder, North Haven, Ridgefield, UConn Farmington, West Haven and Willimantic .

The Recruits participated in a intensive daily training at the Connecticut Fire Academy since September 12, 2011.

The Recruits focused on developing the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for entry level firefighters. Core program components which are to establish a strong desire and will for self-discipline, teamwork, company morale, orderliness and precision.

Training consisted of theory backed with extensive skill development. Additional course components include training in Hazardous Materials Mitigation, Weapon of

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The Michael C. Reilly Memorial Hard Charger Award

In honor of Michael C. Reilly fellow members of his Connecticut Fire Academy Recruit Firefighter Class # 26, along with members of the Stratford Fire Department, wanted to establish an Award to recognize future Recruit Firefighters that exhibited the same outstanding traits as their friend and classmate.



Nicklaus D. Mayo, Middletown F.D.

The effort was spearheaded by Stratford firefighter Mike Tiberio and on December 18, 2006, the first Michael C. Reilly Memorial Hard Charger Award was presented to a member of Recruit Firefighter Class # 37. The Recipient of the ninth Michael C. Reilly Memorial Hard Charger Award was presented to Nicklaus D. Mayo Middletown F.D. of Recruit Firefighter Class # 49.

Instructors' Award

This award is intended to recognize one Recruit in each class who is considered by the instructors and coordinators to be worthy of special recognition for their respective role, activities, or performance in the class.



Marc A. Fongemie, Middletown F.D.

Because Recruit Marc A. Fongemie has exemplified the highest standards of behavior and leadership as the Platoon Leader of Class 49, we are pleased to recognize him as the second recipient of this award.

***“Alleys are made for garbage trucks not fire trucks (be careful putting them there).
By Alan V. Brunacini***

Recruit Class # 49 Graduation

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Mass Destruction Preparedness, Confined Space Rescue, CPR Defibrillator and Technical Rescue.

The graduating Recruits will be nationally certified to the level of Firefighter I and Firefighter II in addition to being awarded numerous certificates for specialized training.



“Basic structural fire fighting objective: save the big end”.
By Alan V. Brunacini

You Can't Be Happy and (Fill in the Blank) at The Same Time!

Lately, one of my most popular courses has been **Stress Management in Stressful Times**. Many of my friends know I travel around the country training first responders. Yesterday morning I had coffee with a friend in a chronic stressful situation, with an ailing, failing father and other ongoing family issues, who asked me to condense my course stress course into “something I can understand” and “something I can do now”—in the fifteen minutes he had before he went off to church.

Using the two napkins that came with our bagels, I broke my course into two sections (let's call them Napkin 1 and Napkin 2). Not having the same amount time I would have in a course (he was going off to church, after all), I did not use my favorite interactive mode to take an hour to elicit responses, but rather gave him the answers that class participants

usually give to the following query: What are the emotional, physical, mental, and behavioral changes that take place when you are under stress?

There are usually more responses from class attendees, but having church-start time restraints, I filled the four columns on Napkin 1 with the following standard answers. Emotional: anger, fear, frustration, sorrow, overwhelmed, numb, etc. Physical: high blood pressure, increased heart rate, irregular breathing, exhaustion, headaches, muscle aches, sick to stomach, puke and poop and pee, etc. Mental: can't think, can't remember, can't analyze, can't be logical, can't concentrate, don't care, automatic negative thoughts, etc. Behavioral: drink too much, temper tantrums, over/under sleep, over/under eat, smoke too much, be a jerk, etc.

Hmm. This is when I ask the question: Which of these is

conducive to having a good day, being a good parent/spouse/ etc., being a good supervisor/ employee, being a decent human being, or just being happy? Or to bring home the point more effectively, I start repeating “You can't be (fill in the blank with any and all of the above) and happy at the same time!” This is when I put them on break, and when the course resumes transition to the second half of the course, or in this case, to Napkin 2. During the course, I elicit and/or explain the effects of the freeze-fight-flight syndrome, the adrenaline rush, and the sympathetic nervous system. I basically try to define or redefine stress as the strain, as the effects of all the hormonal, neurological, and neuropeptide changes taking place in an individual's body.

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“Don’t let where the fire has been distract you from where the fire is going”.

By Alan V. Bruncini

2012 June Fire School

The 2012 June Fire School was an absolute success. There were 1025 students registered and contacts day’s 1231 students for the 55 classes offered. The weather cooperated also for the most part. Student reviews were extremely positive for all the classes. In addition to the twenty-two (22) new classes there were three (3) different opportunities to participate in live burn training.

The following new classes were offered: Basic Pump Operation, Basic Hydraulics, Building Construction Materials, Components, Stress & Loads, Building Construction – A Firefighter’s Perspective of

the 5 Types, Coordinated Fire Attack Private Dwelling Fire Ladder Co. Tactics, Developing A Fire Department Wellness and Fitness Program, Engineered Fire Streams: Task Force Tips by Jim Cotrell, Federal Bureau of Investigation and the First Responder, From the Back Seat to the Front Seat and Beyond, Hydrogen for Today and Tomorrow, Initial Actions of First Arriving Company Officer, K-9 Decontamination and First Aid by Dr. Lori Gordon, Leading the Transition in Volunteer and Combination Fire Departments, Pre-Incident Planning, Rehabilitation and Medical Monitoring – NFPA 1584, SCBA – The Nuts, Bolts

and Use for Experienced Firefighters, Sprinkler and Fire Protection Systems, Traffic Incident Management at Emergency Scenes, Truck Work: From the Bottom Rung Up.

Thank you to the instructors who delivered an abundant number of hours of instruction during the five day school. The 2012 June Fire School was also supported by numerous Fire Departments through assistance with classes, loan of equipment, apparatus and allowing their firefighters to attend.

The staff of the Connecticut Fire Academy is looking forward to the 2013 June Fire School.

Robert F. Duval Sworn In Fire Chief of Atwood Hose Fire Co. on July 1st

Robert F. Duval was sworn in as the Chief of Department of the Atwood Hose Fire Company in Wauregan on July 1st.

Robert has nearly two decades with the Connecticut Fire Academy, as a Adjunct Instructor. He has informed the Academy of his intention to retire. The staff at the Academy wish him well on his new adventure.



You Can't Be Happy and (Fill in the Blank) at The Same Time!

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To my friend I just said: "Those things are the stress, or they are the effects of stress, and if you want to be happy and healthy and stay alive, you will have to aggressively deal with them. Period. No if, ands, or buts!"

Aggressive Relaxation, that's I call my stress management plan, that's what goes at the top of Napkin 2. The first word under that heading is BREATHING. You can't directly control your heart rate and you can't directly control your blood pressure, but you can directly control your breathing, and that will "entrain" and indirectly help with reducing your heart rate and blood pressure, while at the same time begin to shut down those powerful survival-related responses of the freeze-fight-flight and adrenaline rush syndromes. Breathing management is the most immediate, the most effective, the most critical and the most necessary component of stress management. It must be practiced daily, it must become an habitual ritual. Humans have

three states: excited, alert, relaxed. Our goal is to drop the excited state down to the alert state, using the same breathing techniques yoga, Zen, and meditation masters use to drop themselves from the alert to the relaxed or super-relaxed state.

We don't need relaxed when we are stress, we just need to quit being over-excited and out of control. We need to practice controlled breathing during our good times, so we have the skill, the habit, to implement during the not-so-good times!

The rest of Napkin 2 had the oft-repeated duo of diet and exercise, along with necessary additions of: A) daily or regularly doing something creative (gardening, artistic endeavors, writing, etc.); B) volunteering or somehow making the world a better place because you got out of bed; and C) practice smiling, laughing, giggling, or otherwise just being silly.

So my friend went off to church clutching his two nap-

kins. And I felt was hope for him. Why, you ask? Because he seemed to get it, that one can be silly, giggly, smiley, laugh, creative, a helper, a good breather, and HAPPY at the same time! It's his choice, it's my choice, and it's your choice, Napkin 1 or Napkin 2. Really, it's that simple, to be or not to be, happy!

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*"Sometimes the
IC must take a
deep breath and
focus to prevent
just admiring the
"magic of
combustion"
(letting the fire
hypnotize you).
By Alan V.
Brunacini*

Torrington Fire Chief John Field Retiring on July 8th

“The problem with fires (and firefighters) is that they don’t come with their own instructional manual”
By Alan Brunacini

Fire Chief John Field hung his head, holding back his emotions while members of the department he oversees, city officials and Torrington Police Administrators rose to their feet, applauding Field and his years of dedicated service.

John Field the City’s Fire Chief since April 11, 2001, announced his retirement Wednesday, June 6th, leaving behind nearly 27 years of local public services.

John Field’s self-proclaimed “opportunity of a lifetime” began in December 1985 with the Torrington Fire Department, followed by climbing the ranks, and amid a time of “department turmoil,” was appointed by the city to serve as acting chief in 2001. When John Field walks out of his office for the final time on July 8, he

will be leaving a “re-created” fire department that is “one of the best fire



departments in existence today.”

The city hall auditorium was silent as Field read through his letter; at times his voice came off shaky, but managed to complete it through deep breathes and without much hesitation. Not until the end of his declaration did Field stum-

ble on his emotions, thanking his wife and family for standing behind him through the long days, odd hours and issued holidays that come with public safety service.

After the meeting, John Field called the decision “bittersweet”, but recalled his thankfulness for the chance to serve his town. “Having the opportunity to work here, with so many great people, is something special,” he said.

John Field accepted a Coordinator position with the Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security’s Region 2, which includes 30 towns from New Haven to Middletown and Shelton to Old Saybrook.

John Field is also a Adjunct Instructor at the Connecticut Fire Academy. The Staff at the Academy wish him well on his retirement and his next adventure.

2012 Introduction To The Fire Service Graduation



“You can generally get a ladder truck built quicker than you can move one on the fireground”
By Alan V. Brunacini

On June 30th, the Connecticut Fire Academy held a graduation ceremony for the Introduction to the Fire Service Summer Cadet Camp. Thirty-three Cadets from 30 Fire Departments graduated.

Emily Parsell of the New Hartford, Fire Department who served as the class Public Information Officer spoke on behalf of the Cadets.

This was thirty time that the Connecticut Fire Academy has offered this program to youths who are Juniors/Explorers or members of their local Fire Department.

The delivery was open to youth ages 16-17 and introduces them to the fire service.

A special thanks goes out to Ian Tenney, Program Coordinator and to all instructors for a job well done with the Cadet program.

William Trisler, Program Manager

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COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION & CONTROL**

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**Ethics Statement
Commission on Fire Prevention and Control
Connecticut Fire Academy**

The Mission of the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control is to prevent or mitigate the effects of fire and disasters, either natural or manmade, on the citizens of the State of Connecticut. This Mission is 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. Towards this endeavor, all Commission employees represent the State of Connecticut and have positions of significant trust and responsibility that require them to adhere to the highest ethical standards. Ethical conduct and avoiding the appearance of impropriety are of critical importance in our relationship with members of Connecticut's fire service, the public and other agencies and private contractors. Commission employees shall acquaint themselves and comply with both the letter and spirit of all laws, regulations and policies governing professional ethical conduct.