



President’s Message – Ken Desmond

What is happening at the Maine State Federation of Firefighters? 2019 has been going strong on Legislative issues. The 129th Maine Legislature is going well for us in the Fire Service. We met in Augusta on March 22 and testified on LD 1014 An Act to Attract and Retain Firefighters. Good news so far and a workshop has been set for the week of April 1st. One other LD 1319 an Act to Prohibit Employer Disciplinary Action against Firefighters and Emergency Medical Services Persons Responding to an Emergency. This Bill will be on April 3rd. I plan to testify on this one also.

The other things that has kept us going is the loss of Captain Barnes of Berwick Fire and the loss of Chief Gary Sacco from Oxford Fire. I want to thank all who paid their respect at the funerals.

The risks firefighters face go beyond safety issues. Firefighting is one of the most physically activities that the human body can perform, as well as one of the most stressful. Heart attacks and cancer are the top causes of on duty firefighter fatalities. A report from the NFPA about Volunteer Firefighter Injuries focuses on the need for training and reinforcement of a safety culture to mitigate injuries and reduce the death rate.

So in closing I just want to say thanks to all Maine Firefighters and let’s be safe and that we all go home.

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For detailed information about membership benefits, visit our website at: <http://www.msfff.org/benefits.html>

Join NVFC! Click the following link for more information!
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MSFFF Board of Directors – 2019 Meeting Dates:

Next meeting will be held on June 8th at the Maine Municipal Association.

Maine State Federation of Firefighters 2019 Annual Convention

Hosted by The Western Maine Fire Fighters Association

SAVE THE DATE! Join us in Western Maine for the 56th Annual MSFFF Convention!
More information will be announced in the next few months!



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WMFA PO Box 583, Norway ME 04260

Maine State Federation of Firefighters 2019 Annual Convention

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We are planning an amazing weekend full of firefighter and guest activities. Plan to visit with us and enjoy a parade, muster, vendors, along with great food, music and dance!



**September 13, 14, & 15th
at the Fryeburg Fairgrounds**

| | |
|-----------------|--------|
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The Maine State Federation of Firefighters is pleased to offer exclusive annual advertising opportunities to select businesses. If you work with a vendor who would benefit from advertising with us, send them here for all the information they need: http://msfff.org/images/PDF/RateMarketingSheet_MSFFF_2018.pdf

County News

Androscoggin:

Androscoggin County



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Durham Fire Rescue-



After covering 6 states and 951 miles over 14 hours yesterday, the new Durham Rescue 25 arrived in town last night!! In a few short weeks, this truck will be placed in service to protect and care for the residents of Durham.

Our Apparatus Spec committee did an outstanding job selecting and designing a top notch vehicle for the town. Members of the committee (Chief St. Michel (Ret.), AC Dimock, DC

Russell, Capt. Salve, Lt. Thibeault, Engineers Scribner and Larrabee and FF Lacasse) are commended for a job well done.

As Chief, let me also offer a special thank you to the residents of Durham for approving the purchase of this vehicle. It would be very difficult for us to do our job caring for our neighbors without your support. Chief Moore (Durham Fire Rescue Facebook page)

Greene Fire Rescue-



The Androscoggin County Fire Association's firefighter of the year was presented to Assistant Rescue Chief George Farris of the Greene Fire Dept. Presenting the award is President Ben Limerick of the ACFA at the beginning of the December 12th meeting at the Sabattus Fire Dept. George is committed to Public safety and service. He has been a member of the Greene FD for 45 years. Is currently Asst. Rescue Chief and training officer, teaches CPR to local businesses and organizations and also works with United Ambulance.

Lisbon Fire Department-



After 26 years of service with the Town of Lisbon and a total of 36 years in the fire service, Firefighter Corey Chase has decided to retire from the Department. Corey came to us in 1992 after spending 10 years with the Litchfield Fire Dept. If you see Corey out and about, please take a minute and thank him for his years of service.

Lt. Blake was out at the Open Door Christian School on Friday.

Thank you Jared Blake and the Lisbon Fire Department for being a part of our Fire Prevention Week!!



Lisbon Fire Dept finished up the week with providing our fire prevention message and lessons to over 600 children at the Lisbon Community School.

If you run a daycare, private school, or home school and wish to have us come and discuss fire safety please reach out to the Fire Department.

Livermore Fire Department- For Fire Chief Donald Castonguay, sometimes it's the little things that mean the most. I like helping people. It doesn't have to be very big," he said. Castonguay, 62, was born and raised "right here in Livermore." The high school graduate joined the Livermore Fire Department when he was 20. He has been Fire Chief for about 15 years. Castonguay has completed Firefighting I and II training plus an additional 40 hours of command training. "The department does 40 hours of training per year. My file is pretty thick," he said. "The amount of training is what scares off a lot of volunteers." Castonguay felt serving on the fire department was something he could do for his community. "We're not doing it for the money. You've got to like it. Your family has to support you because you can get called out at any time," he said. One day recently he was called out at 1 a.m. for a lift assist. Those calls are to help NorthStar ambulance with transporting a larger patient through their house or down stairs. Castonguay said his best experience as a firefighter was being part of saving the mansion at the Washburn-Norlands Living History Center. "Something went right that night. Looking at the pictures you wouldn't think we



should have saved it. There was a lot of fire,” he said. For Castonguay the worst part of his job are the deaths. There have been quite a few fatal accidents on Route 4 and two house fires where someone didn’t make it out. “I was one of the first guys to get to Mrs. Goding’s house. I asked if she was out. When I was told, ‘No.’ I knew she was gone,” he said. Castonguay plans to keep doing what he is doing now. He doesn’t seek the limelight and hasn’t really thought about retirement. “As long as I can do my job and the guys still want me there, I’ll keep going,” he said. Castonguay and his wife, Jackie, live in a home he built in 1985. Their twins, Brian and Brittany, will be 30 this year. Donald has been operating Castonguay Meats since 1982.

“I’m happy where I am in a small town. People have asked if I want to be chief in a bigger town. I don’t. I would have to move. “Knowing everybody makes it more challenging. At



accidents I usually blank out who they are, do my job. Then afterwards I’ll switch and process it,” Castonguay is always on the lookout for more volunteers. He is lucky to have four career firefighters on his crew. “They’re young, go-getters. It’s a big help,” he said. Castonguay said today’s electronics help him do his job. He foresees a change in the fire service. “I’m not sure if it will be in my lifetime.

Volunteers just aren’t there. Three or four towns are going to come together with a full-time fire department,” he said. Article by Pam Harnden, Sun Journal

Livermore Falls Fire Dept-



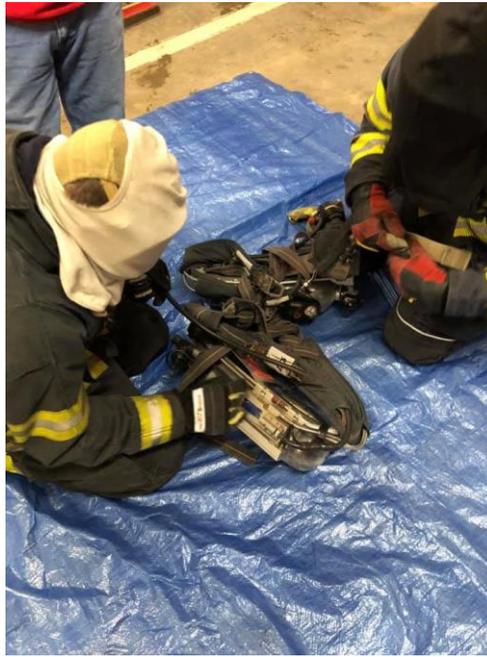
A teenager was charged with arson in a fire that destroyed a mobile home Thursday March 14th, officials said Friday.

The teen suffered minor



burns on his right foot in the blaze at 162 Fayette Road, also known as Route 17, Fire Chief Edward Hastings IV said. “The fire was caused by a juvenile playing with fire,” said Sgt. Scott Richardson of the Office of the Maine State Fire Marshal. Juvenile intake released the boy to his parent with conditions, Richardson said. The case will go through the Juvenile Court in Androscoggin County. The home is rented by Tina Sinclair, Hastings said. She had gone to an appointment and was not home when the fire started. An adult family member was visiting and was there with the teenager, Deputy Chief Scott Shink said. The teenager was checked out by NorthStar EMS ambulance personnel at the scene, Shink said. The fire was reported at 4:45 p.m. The home was in flames when firefighters from Livermore Falls, Jay, Livermore and Wilton arrived, Hastings said. Article by Donna Perry, Sun Journal We would like to present you, LFFD 2018 Firefighter of the year. This was presented to Lt Nixon Ortiz last night as seen in the photo with Chief Hastings. Lt. Ortiz has made a large impact in the fire department as well as the local community. We thank you for your all out effort for the apartment and the town we serve. Great work Lt. Keep it up and thank you for your service!

Mechanic Falls Fire Rescue-



Monday January

21st, members gathered at the station for training. This training focused on know the important parts of an air pack (or self-contained breathing apparatus that is used while fighting a fire. A little air pack training and familiarization training tonight. Knowing your air pack is important to the job.

Poland Fire Rescue-



On October 31st Chief Mark Bosse, retired today from his position as full time Service Chief. He has brought our organization to a top notch level, we thank him for his dedication and unrelenting motivation to keep us moving forward! Thank you Chief!

Sabattus Fire/EMS-



At the board of selectmen meeting Chief Veilleux officially presented members with their awards for Fire Officer of the year, Firefighter of the year, Junior FF of the year, EMS Responder of the year, and Top responder for 2018.

Pictured left to right in the group photo: Chief Veilleux, FF of the year Kyle Russell, Top responder Chad Jones, Junior FF of the year Mahala Smith, and Fire Officer of the year Assistant Chief Steve Coffey. Absent from the photo: Lieutenant Matt Conde who received the EMS responder of the year award.

At approximately 8:30pm on March 7th Sabattus Fire units responded to 40 Sabattus Rd for a reported fire. Chief Veilleux arrived to find a working fire on the second floor rear of the home with all occupants out of the building, however animals still inside.



Although the initial attack crew made entry and had a great attempt, the fire was already in the attic and void spaces. Conditions deteriorated quickly and chief Veilleux ordered the evacuation of all interior units.

About 1 hour later, crews were able to make entry to the 1st floor and rescue 2 ferrets, 3 birds, and 1 dog. Crews worked diligently and chased fire all through the second floor until

2:30am. We were faced with trucks, hoses, hydrants, and air packs freezing up and not working. We had 1 firefighter who was sent



to the hospital due to a fall on the ice.

Upon return to the station with at least 2 hours of restoring trucks to service, we received a call for carbon monoxide incident with symptoms. Most of the crews cleared both of these calls after 8 full hours of effort.

I can't thank all of the crews enough for their hard work and perseverance through this difficult subzero night.

The mutual aid departments, Wales, Greene, Lewiston, Lisbon, Monmouth, and Litchfield were tremendous helping us out during this incident.

Although the roof and the second floor is a total loss, the building is still essentially standing. To Uncle Moe's diner, who opened their doors for a warming shelter, gave us coffee. You are awesome! Sabattus House of pizza for the donations of pizza at the station, thank you, and all of the public who came out with food and drinks, thank you all!! You all made our night that much more tolerable. (Photo: Michelle Handley)

Turner Fire Dept.



Firefighters from several towns respond Sunday morning March 17th to a fire at 7 Briggs Drive in Turner. Turner Fire Chief Rodney Guptill said two dogs died in the blaze and the home was destroyed. No one was home when the fire started. Fire departments from Turner, Buckfield, Livermore, Livermore Falls, Jay, Minot and Mechanic Falls responded to the blaze, which was reported at about 11:30 a.m. The cause of the fire remained under investigation Sunday night. *Sun Journal photo by Andree*

Kehn



Turner Fire Dept. 2018 firefighter of the year. Chris

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Madawaska Fire Department



MADAWASKA, Maine — The Madawaska Fire Department is calling for potential volunteer firefighters to enlist with the local department.

Fire Chief Jim Soucy said the department posted an ad calling for volunteers in December, but had zero applications. “There is a big need for firefighters,” Soucy said.

The department, which once numbered 60

firefighters, now only has 35.

“Another 10 firefighters would be good,” Soucy said.

According to Soucy, a common misconception is that volunteer firefighters are unpaid volunteers. However, the volunteer firefighters with Madawaska Fire Department get a semi-annual stipend for what they call “paid call,” which means for every call to which a firefighter responds, they get paid for going on that call.

The prospective firemen will go to an orientation and attend the monthly trainings. Soucy said. While the trainees won’t be going into a structure fire [right away], they will help on the ground.

“That way they can learn what we’re all about,” he said. “Being a firefighter is being able to work with others in all different circumstances and being able to learn what being a firefighter is, and it really makes you a better person.”

Soucy added that training with Madawaska is “a great opportunity, so that way if you start now, it gets your foot in the door.”

Those who still want to be a volunteer after learning from the ground would then move on to training. The training courses, called Fireman 1 and 2, take about six months to complete. The first class focuses on the basics while the second deals with communications and more in-depth training information.

Once the prospective firefighter completes the course, then they would have to pass the test to be certified as a firefighter 1 and 2.

“Being a firefighter should be something you want to do,” Soucy said. “To help your community, and to raise awareness to those, like school children, to educate them and keep them safe.”

Article by Morgan Mitchell, Fiddlehead Focus-

Broostock South:



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Presque Isle Fire Department



Building Fire in Presque Isle, contained to the bedroom ceiling on the second floor



Presque isle fire department at Presque isle international airport at a recent United express flight that landed off the runway thirty four souls on board with only four needed to be transported to the hospital, members here were helping passenger off the plane after maintenance plowed a path out to the plane.

Basic Fire officer class members from Presque Isle Washburn, Easton, Fort Fairfield and North Lakes fire department, instructor chief Darren Woods.



Bridge Water Fire Department



Bridge water fire department on the scene of a large potato house fire pretty close to u s route 1 a number of other buildings and house were close by route 1 was shut down due to the trucks hauling water and the smoke blowing across the road way, Bridge water fire received mutual aid from Mars Hill, Easton, Monticello, and Centerville New Brunswick fire department.

Tumberland East



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Brunswick Fire Department.



BRUNSWICK, Maine — One firefighter was injured Wednesday night December 6th 2018 as crews from five communities battled a “stubborn” fire at a mobile home at Bayside Estates off Old Bath Road in Brunswick. Brunswick fire crews arrived at the Larry Lane home just before 9 p.m. to find “a significant amount of fire” at the front of the building, Deputy Chief Donald Koslosky said Thursday. “It ended

up traveling up the side of the building, from what we can see, and into the space between the ceiling and the roof,” he said. “Then it traveled across the mobile home.” Crews knocked the fire down quickly before poking holes in the ceiling and digging the fire out of the ceiling and roof. One firefighter was taken to Mid Coast Hospital after slipping on ice created by water sprayed to extinguish the fire, Koslosky said. The home is a total loss, he said. Two adults and two children were outside when firefighters arrived. A cat that remained in the home was rescued by firefighters. “The Elf on a Shelf is safe,” Koslosky said. “The little girl wanted us to save her cat and ‘Elfie,’ and Elfie made it to the Christmas tree and was rescued by her parents.”

Article By Beth Brogan



On Wednesday January 2nd at 4:00 in the morning Crew 3 was dispatched to 13 Swett Street for a structure fire. On scene they had fire on the first and second floor of a three story apartment building. Because of the age and construction type it did not take long for the fire to take control of the third floor. Both a second and third alarm were struck for this fire. Mutual aid from Topsham, Bath, West Bath, Lisbon, Durham and Freeport was received at the scene. Woolwich and Yarmouth covered Central Station. All occupants made it out and there were no

Firefighter injuries.



Timberland West



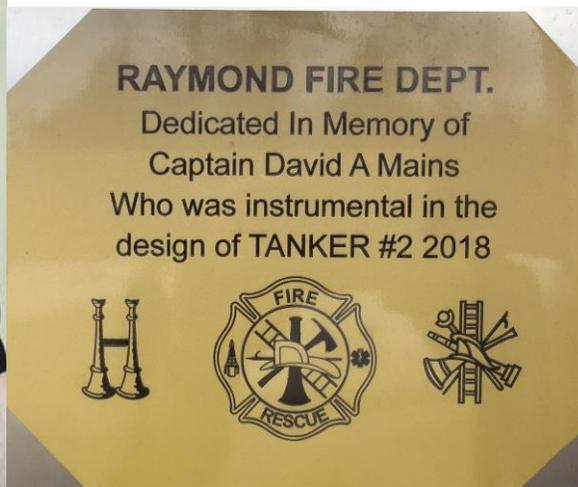
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Raymond Fire Rescue



On October 28, 2018, the Raymond Fire/Rescue Department dedicated their new Tanker Truck to Captain David A. Mains. Capt. Mains lost his life in an off duty motorcycle crash in Massachusetts on June 26, 2018. Capt. Mains was instrumental in the planning process of Tank 2 and was the chairman of the apparatus

committee. The tanker was purchased with a FEMA grant.



Casco Fire/Rescue Department



After 38 years of service to the Casco Fire/Rescue Department; Scott W. Avery retired on February 21, 2019. Scott started his fire service in 1981 as a Junior Firefighter, he was promoted many times during his career, including to Assistant Chief. Scott was a licensed EMT-B for 15 of his 38 years. Enjoy retirement brother and Thank you for your many years of service!

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Bucksport Fire Department



BUCKSPORT — About 39 years ago, a new high school graduate stopped his vehicle on a roadside to help the Fire Department put out a grass fire.

“One of the guys said something about joining and I did, and that’s the rest of the story,” said Fire Chief Craig Bowden. “I had the opportunity less than three years later to take a full-time position and I did so and enjoyed it immensely.”

Bowden has announced his retirement as chief effective Tuesday, April 9. The 58-year-old will remain on staff as a call

(part-time) firefighter/certified EMT.

“I’ve been planning on this for a few years,” Bowden said. “Eighteen years as chief — that’s long enough.”

Fire chiefs average 5 to 10 years before retiring or moving on to do other work, Bowden said.

“I don’t want anything full time,” he said. “I want to spend a little bit more time with the grandchildren and do a little bit more traveling.”

Bucksport Town Manager Susan Lessard said she hopes to meet this week with the Fire/EMS Department to discuss the opening.

“Chief Bowden has been the chief for 18 years and was the assistant chief nine years before that, and was a department member before that,” Lessard said. “This transition is going to be a significant change and we need to evaluate the best way to move forward.”

Whoever takes the post will have big boots to fill.

Under Bowden’s leadership, the Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating for insuring properties in Bucksport improved from a 5 to a 3. ISO ratings affect how much property owners pay for insurance.

“We’re one of the best rated communities — we’re one of 10 communities in Maine with a 3,” Bowden said.

The department has more than doubled its revenue from \$200,000 to \$450,000 — mostly from EMS services.

Bucksport was the eighth community in Maine to be recognized by the Maine Department of Labor for quality of training and safety issues. Bowden worked with other Bucksport departments on those issues in addition to the fire department.

Then there's the grant money.

"As chief, I got pretty close to \$1.5 million in grants — for everything from office supplies to firefighting equipment to a fire truck," Bowden said.

"We got a grant for street signage and smoke detectors for every house in Bucksport and Verona Island," Bowden said.

A grant for staffing took the department from a crew of five full-time employees to seven.

"Keeping an active roster is always a challenge for most towns," Bowden said.

Bucksport is no different.

"Most of the people who are on our department are involved in other community activities," Bowden said. "Time concerns and constraints for members of the call department are always an issue."

Aging is another issue.

"Quite a few of our members are getting up there and not able to do interior fire attacks but are still active," Bowden said. At a recent meeting, there were seven members of the department who had joined in the early '80s. The group had a combined 250 years of experience."

"It's good for the new guys to see the camaraderie and the experience," Bowden said. "We always maintained a good, solid core group. I'm hoping we leave it in good hands for future administration to step in and take the reins and keep everything in a positive direction."

Bowden is just one of seven family members in the department.

If you do the math, the department has 35 members, so the Bowden family comprises about 20 percent.

The chief's two older brothers, Stephen and Mark, joined the department in 1987, seven years after Bowden joined.

Three nephews are on the department: Jamie, Shane and Trevor. Shane is also a full-time firefighter/EMT for the town of Dedham.

Bowden's son, Jared, is also a full-time firefighter/paramedic with the city of Bangor.

The Bowden women are "heavily involved" with the auxiliary, he said.

"I didn't know what I was starting when I joined," the Bucksport native said. "I think it's worked out well for the family and it's worked out well for the community."

"We've all been involved in Little League and youth soccer and Boy Scouts and other town committees. Hopefully, we've had a positive impact on more than just the fire service."

In addition to call firefighting/EMT work, Bowden will spend more time in his woodshop.

He and wife Corinne have two grandchildren. Spending more time with them is another plan.

Advice for his replacement?

"I have always tried to instill upon the crew that we work for the citizens and we've always maintained a good looking facility and kept the equipment they bought us clean and spotless," he said.

"When we go on calls, we treat everybody with the respect we want to be treated with,"

Bowden said. "We work with the community to show them that we are concerned about the tax dollars and provide a quality service at an affordable price."

"I've always tried to impress on my crew to get all the training and education they can," he said.

Article By Jennifer Osborn, The Ellsworth America

Kennebec County



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Augusta Fire Department



December 8, 2018 Lieutenant/Paramedic Tom Freeman's last shift after 25-years of faithful and dedicated service to the City of Augusta. Thank you Tom and we all wish you the best in retirement.

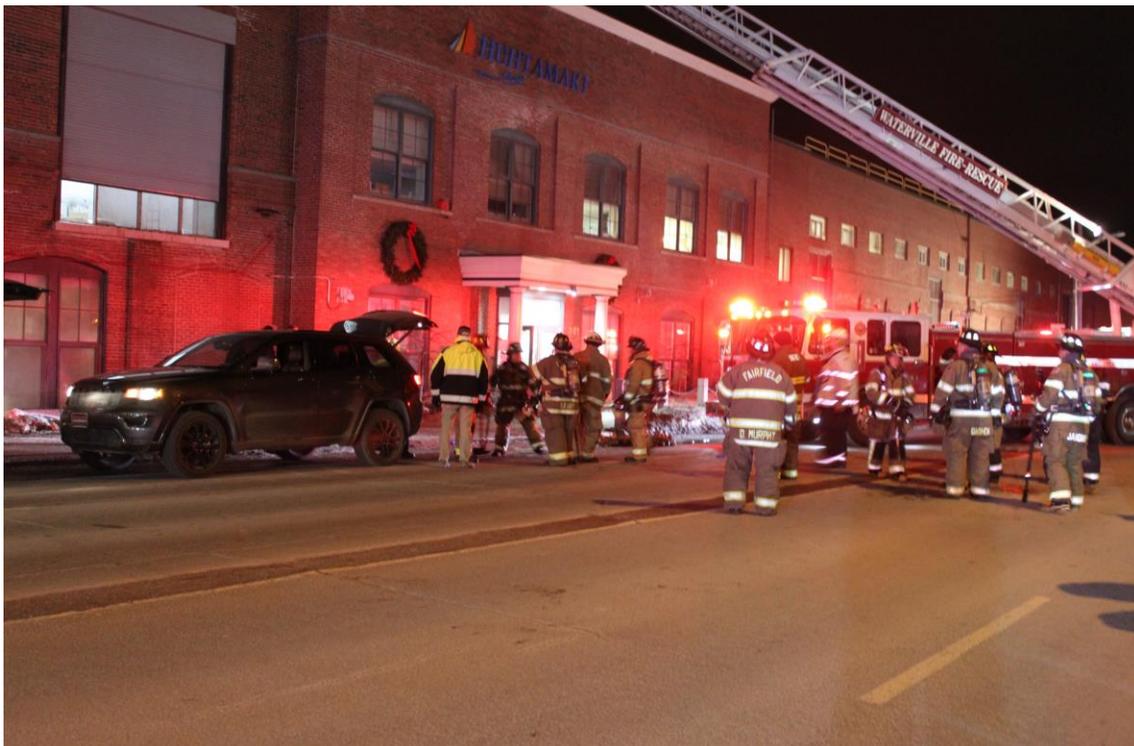
Waterville Fire Rescue



WFD would like to congratulate Fire Chief/Paramedic Shawn Esler on his recent accomplishment. Chief Esler obtained his National Registry Paramedic certification which includes the successful completion of 400 hours of class room work and 500 hours of clinical work. Chief Esler completed the course through the Kennebec Valley Community College. From all of us here at WFD,

we Congratulate our Fire Chief on his commitment and huge accomplishment.

The Waterville Fire Department received a Mayoral Proclamation from the Honorable Mayor Nicholas Isgro & our City Councilors for recognizing WFD and surrounding communities in a recent council. Thanks to the Mayor and the City Council for their continued support of the Fire Department.



The Waterville Fire Department and the Fairfield Fire Department were dispatched to the Huhtamaki Plant at 241 College Ave for a large fire that extended from the interior of the mill through the roof. Fire was showing

from the roof on arrival. Crews battled the fire through low temperatures and heavy smoke conditions.

After four alarms were struck to assemble enough crews from Winslow, Oakland, Vassalboro, Augusta and Skowhegan (set up as RIT), to help keep the fire in check and almost five hours into

the blaze, the fire was called under control.

As stated by the Waterville's Fire Chief, "We have witnessed an outstanding display of coordinated evacuation, fire attack, and a unified command presence our residents will be proud of. Our firefighters are the best in the business, always ready at a moment's notice. We summarize it with these few words, "pride in duty."

"However, without the support of our neighboring fire departments, damage would have been much more extensive or the fire may have remained uncontrolled. Our mutual aid agreements and aggressive regional cooperative effort have improved fire suppression and emergency medical services to all communities, not only Waterville. Tonight, demonstrated our efforts are paying off."

The Waterville people personally want to thank all those that responded this evening. The area Fire Chiefs and fire crews that responded performed exceptional work.

One Fairfield firefighter was injured during roof operations. That firefighter exited the roof under

his own power, was evaluated, and later taken to the hospital. I spoke with that firefighter this morning and he has been discharged from the hospital with minor injury. He is expected to make

a full recovery. To protect his confidentiality, his name will not be released by this agency. The injury was not a result of a building collapse, mayday, or other emergent event.

After an investigation was conducted, the State Fire Marshal Investigator reported a malfunction

in a dryer unit, which generates significant amounts of heat, likely caused the fire that spread quickly to the roof overrunning the sprinkler system. The cause of the fire will be listed as accidental. It is likely the damage will exceed \$1,000,000.

Knox County



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Knox County as started a new firefighter I-II class in January and the class should graduate in June, I will be instructing several of those classes. Several towns in Knox County are discussing plans to consolidate EMS in several towns due to rising costs of using North East ambulance service. We in Knox County are still working on recruiting new members for the local fire department's. Owls Head has attracted many new members and most are now in the firefighter I-II class.

Lincoln County



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On March 4th the Lincoln county fire academy started its spring Basic Fire Fighters class with a contingent of 20 students from throughout the county. With the shortage of firefighters throughout the state and country it is great to see these folks step up, it is greatly appreciated and definitely needed.



Westport Fire Department
Fire on Greenleaf Rd





Jefferson Barn Fire Claims a Dozen Animals, but Farmer Will Rebuild



A sow, its seven piglets, and four calves died, though five pigs were rescued, in a nighttime barn fire at 116 Bunker Hill Road in Jefferson, Sunday, March 17.

Donna and Andrew Finch own the property, while their grandson, Morgan Gallione, 23, of Nobleboro, owns the animals in the 16-by-24, one-story barn. The barn is a total loss, Jefferson Fire Chief Walter Morris said. The only part remaining is the metal roof.

Andrew Finch woke up to see the barn engulfed in flames and reported the fire, according to the Finches' daughter and Morgan Gallione's mother, Hilary Gallione.

The first firefighters to arrive rescued five pigs, while other firefighters deployed hose lines and began extinguishing the fire, Morris said.

"The firefighters were assisted by the residents of the property, who guided the pigs to another pen away from the fire," he said. Other animals, such as chickens and cows, were in a separate building, safe from the fire.

The name of the farm is Hidden Fortune Farm, according to Hilary Gallione. Her parents originally raised sheep on the farm, while their grandson raises chickens, cows, and pigs. He sells natural meats, eggs, vegetables, and maple syrup at a farm stand on the property.

"This has been heartbreaking to lose the animals we care so much for and a loss to us all," Hilary Gallione said. "But Morgan is persevering and working hard to rebuild – a true farmer at heart!"

"There is farm insurance, but not everything is insured," she said.

According to Morris, the fire could have started because of electrical reasons.

"Due to the damage, the exact cause of the fire remains undetermined at this time," Morris said.

"The barn was insured, so any further investigation would be conducted by the fire insurance company."

There were over 10 bales of hay in the barn, serving as fuel for the fire.

The Jefferson, Newcastle, Somerville, Waldoboro, Whitefield, and Windsor fire departments responded to the scene. The Alna Fire Department was dispatched, but turned around before arriving, Morris said.

"We all are very grateful for the volunteer fire departments and thank them for the work they did to help," Hilary Gallione said.

The Central Lincoln County Ambulance Service and Lincoln County Sheriff's Office were also on scene.

The fire started at 11:09 p.m. Firefighters cleared the scene shortly before 1 a.m., Monday, March 18.



Boothbay recently accepted the delivery of this 2018 Ram 350 to replace their aging utility truck. Body and chassis by Newcastle Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep Lights by Greenwood Lettering by Jon Marsh.

Fire Destroys Sawmill at N.C. Hunt Lumber in Jefferson, Business Plans to Rebuild



Fire destroyed a sawmill at N.C. Hunt Lumber in Jefferson early Saturday, March 30. The business will rebuild and hopes to have a new sawmill in operation in four months, though it will lay off 17 employees in the interim.

There were no injuries, according to Jefferson Fire Chief Walter Morris. Emergency medical services checked out an Alna firefighter for an unknown medical condition, but he

was not taken to a hospital.

Investigators from the Maine State Fire Marshal's Office deemed the fire accidental, according to Maine Department of Public Safety spokesman Stephen McCausland.

N.C. Hunt employees had repaired machinery inside the sawmill with welding torches Friday afternoon “and apparently a spark from those repairs started the fire hours later,” McCausland said in an email Sunday.

Morris believes the fire started earlier in the day.

“Someone thought they saw smoke in or near the walls, didn’t call the fire department, but was concerned enough that they had an employee stay late, posted a fire watch until about 9 p.m., by which point they hadn’t seen anything and left,” he said.

Anyone in a similar situation should contact the fire department immediately to investigate, according to Morris.

“We should have been called right away. We have tools, thermal-imaging cameras, we can quickly use,” Morris said.



A neighbor reported the fire. The Lincoln County Communications Center dispatched the Jefferson Fire Department at 11:58 p.m. Friday.

“Initial firefighting efforts were focused on preventing the spread of the fire to the many adjacent buildings, including the retail store, buildings containing high-voltage electrical equipment, a recently constructed dry kiln building, and several large

lumber storage buildings,” Morris said.

As of 1:30 a.m. Saturday, the fire was “contained but not extinguished,” Capt. Chris Rigaud, of the Jefferson Fire Department, said at the time.

Crews were attacking the fire from multiple sides, with teams on the north and south ends of the scene, Rigaud said. A ladder truck from the Damariscotta Fire Department was providing the “master stream” for firefighting efforts.

A tanker shuttle was set up to draw water from Clary Lake and bring it to three portable tanks at the scene. Ten trucks made about 100 trips, Morris said.

“This required a tremendous amount of coordination and demonstrated that the devotion to training and preparation of all of our local firefighters paid off,” Morris said.

The sprawling N.C. Hunt complex at 200 South Clary Road includes a retail store, which remains open. The fire will not interrupt the business’s operations at its Damariscotta store or its off-site work, which includes earthwork and transportation.

N.C. Hunt Inc. was the 13th-largest private employer in Lincoln County as of the second quarter of 2018, according to the Maine Department of Labor.

According to Rob Hunt, president and co-owner of N.C. Hunt Lumber Inc., the fire did not burn accessory buildings as initially reported. He said the mill was a very large structure. The Lincoln County Sheriff's Office shut down Route 215 during the response.



A total of 10 fire departments responded to the scene. Assisting Jefferson were crews from Alna, Chelsea, Damariscotta, Newcastle, Nobleboro, Pittston, Somerville, Waldoboro, and Whitefield, as well as the Lincoln County Firefighter Strike Team, the Lincoln County Hazmat Decon Strike Team, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, and the Maine State Fire Marshal's Office. The Bristol,

Edgecomb, and Wiscasset fire departments were dispatched to provide coverage for towns at the scene.

According to Morris, the firefighter strike team was dispatched late Saturday morning to assist as crews worked to overhaul hot spots and completely extinguish the blaze.

"The strike team helped us rotate firefighters in and out and give firefighters a break, a chance to get coffee or something to eat. They were of tremendous assistance, helped us to put up all the hose lines and get everything cleaned up," Morris said.

According to Morris, the hazmat decon team was dispatched late in the morning as well to assist with the cleanup of lubricant oil from machinery.

"There was some oil that spilled from some of the machinery. We did put pads down to contain it and pick it up, and used all the booms we had, so we called the hazmat team for additional pads," Morris said.

DEP "assisted us with the cleanup and made sure all proper precautions were taken," Morris said.

Morris expressed gratitude to all departments.

"I cannot emphasize enough our thanks to the outstanding efforts of our volunteer firefighters and first responders in Jefferson and all of our neighboring mutual aid communities," he said.



According to Hunt, the sawmill employed 30 people and 17 will be laid off as a result of the fire.

"We are trying to keep some people on, around a third to two-thirds of the crew,

about 12 people to continue to run the planer mill and dry kiln,” Hunt said.

The company will help connect employees who are laid off with government programs that provide quick unemployment benefits.

“We normally have almost 80 people on the payroll and it’s going to be down to 54-55 for a while, but our goal is trying to get back to where we were,” Hunt said.

Hunt said the next step for the company is to clean up the site.

He said the company has fire insurance and will have enough to start over.

“We’re very thankful. The firefighters were incredible. We were fortunate that most of the damage to inventory and other equipment was contained 99 percent to the mill,” Hunt said.



Hunt said the goal is to have a new sawmill in operation on the property in about four months.

He expressed appreciation for support from the community.

“There has been a huge outreach from businesses in the community. It’s been incredible. I’m very humble to receive the support we have,” Hunt said.

Hunt said firefighters asked him what his plans were when he was at the fire scene

early Saturday morning.

“I told them I was planning on selling 2-by-4’s at 7 a.m.,” Hunt said.

“We do trucking, earthwork, and have the two retail yards. We are very blessed to be diversified and that helps in surviving something like this,” Hunt said.

As the business proceeds with the rebuild, it will have to make a determination regarding three-phase electric power.

“Our facility doesn’t have three-phase power. We generate our power with generators. We’re weighing in on whether to put in a larger facility and that would need three-phase power,” Hunt said.

The closest three-phase electric power is at the Whitefield Superette, on Mills Road in North Whitefield.

“It would cost about \$1 million ... We’re working with (Central Maine Power Co.) and the government to see if there are any grants,” Hunt said. “We are trying to do that for the long term. It impacts on what we could do for the number of jobs here moving forward.”

Oxford County



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Mexico Fire Department

Mexico Junior firefighters from left to right : Kenneth Hill, Kody Moretto, (Junior FF advisor Tim Haas), Jacob Cunningham, Noah Stickney. Absent was Autumn Freeman



At our annual Mexico Fire Department meeting in February, Captain Allen Chartier was presented with the George Downs Memorial Firefighter of The Year award by Chief Jones

Fryeburg Fire Department



December 18 / 2018 the Oxford County Commissioners recognized Gerald Gay Kiesman with the Spirit of America Award, for his 71 years of service to the Fryeburg Fire Department. The first attachment is self explanatory. Second attachment in the foreground is Chief Andrew Dufresne of Fryeburg Fire Department, Gerald Gay Kiesman of Fryeburg Fire Department and county commissioner Steve Merrill.



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MSFFF Fundraising:

If you have any ideas or suggestions for fundraising for the Federation, please contact President Ken Desmond.

Once again;

The Portland Sea Dogs and the Maine State Federation of Firefighters are teaming up for an MSFFF group outing at Hadlock Field, on Saturday June 22nd, 2019. Firefighters and their families can take advantage of this opportunity to come out to a game at Hadlock Field, come down to the field at around 5:00 PM to walk around the warning track and have a group photo taken in front of the Maine Monster in left field. After the game is over, be sure to stick around for our post-game Fireworks show.

In addition to receiving a ticket to the game, a portion of all tickets sold through this link will be donated to the Maine State Federation of Firefighters.

To purchase tickets go to the link: <https://groupmatics.events/event/MSFFF0622>

Any Questions contact Clarence (Scott) Campbell Lincoln V.P.
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