



Fire Rescue News

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Support Services has both new projects and a new home.**
- **Notes from the Chief**
- **Fire Rescue personnel participate in regional USAR training**

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North Battalion News

The North Battalion has remained ever vigilante with continuing education as proven by activities over the past three months. Considerable time has been spent primarily training on rope technician, hazardous materials, and extrication disciplines. At least once a month, in cooperation with the Training Division the crews have been able to demonstrate these disciplines at the FCTI grounds performing drills or going to the junkyard and cutting apart cars. Vertical and horizontal stokes lowering and rope transfers and chorine emergencies are only an example of the drills conducted.

Speaking of training, all fire training over the past couple

of months paid off the night of August 12 when everything fell apart. A summer afternoon thunderstorm swept through the Ponte Vedra area with heavy lightning striking all over. Just after the storm hit, E-1, L-1, E-10, R-10, and B-1 were all paged to a commercial structure fire with reports of smoke inside the structure.



Rope Training in progress

Just after dispatch, E-10 and R-10 diverted to a confirmed structure fire with flames showing in the Marsh Landing subdivision. Due to all the other apparatus responding to the commercial structure fire, E-10 and R-10 were responding with automatic mutual aid from Jacksonville Beach. While E-1 and L-1 were dealing with a gas station full of smoke, E-10 and R-10 were dealing with an 8000 square foot residence full of smoke. Besides E-10, R-10, L-1, E-1, B-1, County 2, Rehab/Air-10, Jax Beach E-22, and the Jax Beach ladder. Crews from E-18, E-12, Sqd-17, and R-17 also paid a visit. As it happens, both incidents were mitigated with minimal damage to the occupancies and of course no injuries to any of the crews on scene.

Support Services is Keeping Busy

In case you've missed us, the EMS billing office has moved to the Dispatch Depot (3149 Ponce de Leon Blvd.) Suites 9 & 10, which are on the far right side of the complex. This move was necessitated by the growth of the County, with Personnel and Risk Management waiting to move into the building we just vacated, so that the Court can move some of their staff in to Personnel's old digs. The move was practice for us, as we anticipate moving the entire Department into our new Administrative Headquarters in about 18 months.

The Union membership has recently approved the articles that were reopened this year in contract negotiations. Changes for FY07 include a 4% Cost of Living Adjustment in addition to your merit step increase that accompanies your annual evaluation of effective.

Also, the donation of sick time to the Union Time Pool, cleaning up of some language in the Holiday Time article, and increasing the Paramedic Certification Pay to \$1.00/hour.

On the budget front, we are in good shape after facing several rounds of cuts. All requests for critical equipment and supplies have survived. Other highlights of the FY2007 budget include a new Quint, a new Ambulance, new Extrication Equipment, 2 new (replacement) Engines, 28 new firefighters, a new training officer and 2 new Inspectors.



From The Chief's Desk

Fire Station Construction Update



**SJCFR Chief,
Robert V. Hall Jr.**

Some projects seem to take an eternity to bring to fruition, so finally seeing our construction projects moving is heavenly. (Get it?) Behind the scenes efforts are paying off and you can, and will see a lot happening in the years to come.

If you haven't been north on A1A lately, take a ride. The new Station 9 is well under construction and completion is planned for the fall. I understand that requests for this station have already begun and a few unethical bribes have already been rejected by several battalion chiefs. Fishing, surfing and other amenities are available prior to and immediately following your shift.

I am finally getting closer to vacating my double-wide. Plans for the new Fire Rescue Headquarters at FCTI are complete and construction should begin in November. If the project stays on schedule, completion is scheduled for November of 2007. The building will be built to hurricane standards and has been verified to be at 33 feet above sea level.

If fishing surfing and the beach isn't your thing, then consider a round of golf following your shift at the World Golf Village. The plans for this station are complete and construction is expected to begin in November. The staffing, rescue and quint,

have been included in this year's budget.

Currently, negotiations for properties at Pine Island Road and US 1 North, Watson Road and US 1 South and property on a new road in the northwest that hasn't even been built yet are currently underway. And finally, those assigned to Stations 5, 6 and 10, do not lose faith, because there is hope for a better life. I have met with an architect and your renovation plans are in progress. So load the family in the car and take a ride. There's a lot happening beyond your station.

QA Corner from Lt. Leddy



The Zoll system is in full swing. It has been a fairly smooth transition with some bumps in the road, and the occasional pot hole. Over this past quarter, the overall Quality Assurance is looking better. Reports are being reviewed faster and more efficiently as everyone is getting into the rhythm of the system with the exceptions of some glitches. The QA communications reporting flow sheet between Billing and the QA Office is working very well. **The past quarter, the QA office saw less peer reviews; this is good news. We are doing things right. Keep It Up!!** We are still having



some documentation errors—**Officers review those reports before syncing!!**

The Patient Assessment training has been going very well. We will continue to work on this important foundation skill. This is a company function, so train and review this skill at your station. I will be sending out an evaluation form in the near future, please fill it out to help better the training you are receiving and to help improve the training officers. It has been a fun training session!! Any suggestions for further medical training are always welcome.



Fire Rescue Participates in Regional USAR Training

Florida Light Technical Rescue Team 316 (LTRT-316) is the designation given to us by the state of Florida for our Urban Search and Rescue Team (USAR). The state requires that we maintain a roster of at least 18 people, with the ability to deploy personnel when the need arises. Currently we have 19 certified members on roster with more on track to complete the required training in the near future.

During the last quarter, 12 more people continued the steps in completing the rigorous training set forth by the State of Florida. Over the past 2 months, these people have completed 3 of the 5 required classes. Confined space rescue, trench rescue and heavy vehicle machinery extrication. These were



SJCFR participates in both confined space and extreme-case extrication training as part of the USAR series.

all completed in the blistering heat of July and August at the Jacksonville Fire and Rescue (JFRD) training academy.

The classes were hosted by Jacksonville Fire and Rescue's Task Force 5 USAR team at Florida Community College of Jacksonville (FCCJ). All personnel that attended both gained a new perspective in the aspects of technical rescue as well as an opportunity to hone some of the skills they already know.

Note: Special thanks to SJCFR Lt. Hank Epperson for his contribution to this story both editorial and through pictures.



Get Ready to "Fill the Boot" for MDA

Well guess what, its time to "Fill the Boot" for the MDA.

Each year the department participates in several different charity programs in the county, but probably the most visible and well know one is the "Boot Drive" to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA).

So September 1-3 from 9AM—2PM St. Johns County Firefighters will line the street corners of numerous intersections around SJC in an effort to raise funds for the MDA.

The MDA coordinator for SJCFR is Eng. Mike Dietrich, who has been working hard with the MDA and Chief Hall over the past few weeks to get all the details in line for this years boot drive.

Firefighters have partnered with the MDA for the past 50 years. SJCFR supports the MDA by allowing our members to collect while on duty and display fire apparatus. It benefits our department by allowing us to join with a worthy well known cause. Overall, the partnership allows the community to see that we not only save lives through our efforts as a profession, but also through our involvement with the MDA.



Eng RJ Sluman does his part in support of the MDA.



Eng. David Franklin working hard for the MDA

The MDA provides multiple services to those suffering from neuromuscular disease on the First Coast. They provide assistance with wheelchairs and communication devices, clinics at Nemours Children's Hospital and Mayo Clinic and, of course the MDA summer camp.

So this year make sure you make time, both while on duty, and also while off duty to "Fill the Boot".

This year we will have personnel stationed at the intersections listed below.

- A1A and Solano Rd.
- A1A South and SR 312
- Main St. and SR 207
- SR 13 and Racetrack Rd.
- I-95 and CR 210
- SR 16 and US 1
- Old Moultrie Rd. and SR 312

We will be at these locations Sept. 1-3 2006. Contact Mike Dietrich for exact times at the locations and for on duty scheduling information.

Last year SJCFR raised \$38,000 for the MDA. This year we have raised that goal to a very attainable \$45,000, although since we did not have a spring drive, we are really going to have to work hard this Labor Day weekend to make it happen.

Good Luck and BE SAFE!!



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SJCFR Lt. Marc Grabert during a training burn in the FCTI burn building.

Operations Update “District Assignments?”



SJCFR Operations Chief, Carl Shank

Each year at this time, goals and objectives are developed within the Operations Section for the new FY. These goals help to keep us on track, providing a framework of productivity that is easily measured. Some of the goals that we set at the beginning of FY 06 include:

- Add additional firefighters to specific engines.
- Ensure officer accountability.
- Emphasis on the safety of our personnel.
- Utilization of grant money to purchase new SCBA's.
- Job proficiency through district assignments.

You get the general idea, with these being only a few of the many goals we have set and strived to achieve in FY06. One of the goals mentioned consisted

of job proficiency through district assignments. But what does this mean?

Simple, the expectation placed upon us by the citizens we serve is for a FULL service, multi-dimensional, multi-tasking department that can skillfully handle their bad day, no matter the reason. Understand this—no public safety agency today can have a one-dimensional approach to protecting the public.

Considering the concept of multi-dimensions, conventional wisdom should tell you that if you don't use your skills, you lose them. Your two primary job elements are medical provider and firefighter. Can you really achieve your highest potential for both elements working on

one apparatus? Can you maintain learned skills without ever seeing the right tools or apparatus? Slow stations versus busy stations—do they provide the same level of opportunity? Our department today has the ability to develop a strong two-dimensional, primary mission approach in EMS and firefighting throughout Operations using a district assignment concept. Additional elements such as hazmat, USAR, extrication, tanker support, aerial ladders and marine rescue will add depth, and provide avenues for you to branch out in your profession. Never before has there been this much opportunity to broaden and enhance all areas of our department.