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TRUMPET

A PUBLICATION OF THE MOBILE FIRE-RESCUE DEPARTMENT - ESTABLISHED 1888

Merry Christmas

INSIDE FEATURES

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Flag Pole Dedication

"Quality Professional Services Delivered with Compassion"

TRUMPET

An official publication of the Mobile Fire-Rescue Department.
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The Trumpet welcomes your questions and/or comments. To submit photos, articles or comments call (251) 208-2857 or e-mail: huffman@cityofmobile.org

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Our Mission

The Mission of the Mobile Fire - Rescue Department is to identify and respond to community needs in order to deliver an effective and efficient system of service which minimize risk to life, health, and property from fire, trauma, acute illness, and hazardous conditions.



On the Cover

Training Staff and Recruits participate in Live Burn Exercise on MLK Ave.

Cover Photo By: Steve Huffman

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The History of the Fire Helmet

If you gave each retiring firefighter the opportunity to take one piece of equipment with them into retirement, they would choose their helmet. There is no greater symbol of the American fire service than the traditional fire helmet. People wear helmets every day for a variety of reasons; construction workers, motorcycle riders, football and baseball players, and they all share a very similar type of helmet. None of these remotely resembles the fire helmet.

The helmet worn by the earliest American firefighters was indeed made of leather, but its similarity with the traditional helmet ends there. The first firefighter helmets were stove pipe type helmets similar to the hat made famous by President Lincoln. This helmet was made of rigid leather. The front of the helmet was painted with the name of the company the wearer belonged to. It did afford the wearer with some protection, but it was sadly lacking in several areas. The fire service lumbered along with this stove pipe type helmet until 1836.

Jacobus Turck of New York City is credited with inventing the first fire cap around 1740. It was round with a high crown and narrow rim and was made of leather. Improvements on his design were made by Mathew DuBois, who sewed iron wire in to the edge of the brim to give the helmet shape and strength, and provide resistance to heat, moisture, and warping. The leather helmet as it is known today came from a very modest and non-fire related beginning. Although the year the traditional fire helmet was invented is mired in speculation and debate, it is generally agreed upon as sometime between 1821 and 1836.

A Volunteer New York City Firefighter by the name of Henry Gratacap, who had been a luggage maker by trade, changed the whole design. In doing so, he invented what we refer to as the traditional American fire helmet. Gratacap designed this helmet to be absolutely functional.

The reinforced conical dome was to protect the head from falling objects, the tall front shield was designed to break windows, the strange brim design was to capture water and redirect it to the rear of the helmet where it could cascade harmlessly off the back of the coat and not down the collar. This long rear brim could also be used to protect the wearer from intense heat. The helmet would be worn backwards and the firefighter would place his chin on his chest and the heat would be deflected away from the face. Tillermen often wore the helmet like this when responding in heavy rain or snow to give their face a little protection from the elements. This helmet was snapped up by firefighters as soon as it hit the market. You were not doing the job if you didn't wear a CAP.



During this time, two brothers named Cairns were operating a metal badge button and insignia business in New York City. The Cairns Brothers are credited with

the idea of mounting an identification badge to the front of Gratacap's helmets; today these are known as front pieces.

The two companies operated cooperatively until Gratacap's retirement sometime in the 1850s, when the Cairns & Brother legacy was born; Cairns & Brother has pioneered firefighter helmet technology ever since. Cairns & Brother's commitment to protecting lives is evident in their "systems," where engineered components synergistically work together for unparalleled protection in harsh environments. The original OSHA compliant leather helmet, it is individually hand shaped, hand trimmed, and hand stitched to meet the strenuous demands of today's most dangerous profession – firefighting.

Although not a required component of the helmet, those who truly live the tradition wear a brass eagle adornment that graces the top of the helmet and secures its front piece. In our simple, childish way, we always believed that the eagle adorning our helmet meant something special, maybe the spirit of

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Amtrak survivor revisits disaster site

On September 21, 1993, Amtrak Train No. 2, the Sunset Limited, proceeding from Los Angeles to Miami, made a normally scheduled stop in New Orleans. Siobhan O'Reilly, a resident of England and her traveling companion boarded the train on their way to their final destination in Key West, Florida. The train was delayed 34 minutes for repairs and departed New Orleans at 11:34 p.m. It arrived in Mobile at 2:30 a.m., where it stopped for about three minutes to drop off and pick up passengers.

At 2:45 a.m., in a dense fog, which reduced visibility to almost nothing, the towboat Mauvilla wound up in the Big Bayou Canot instead of the Mobile River when it attempted to find a place to tie off to shore and wait for the fog to lift. The Mauvilla struck the CSXT railroad bridge which crosses the Bayou at that point. The towboat pilot was unable to see the object which he hit; he thought he had run aground.

The girder span of the bridge had been displaced 38 inches to the west; this caused the east girder to protrude into the path of the Sunset Limited.

After departing Mobile, the Sunset Limited continued on its journey to Miami. Traveling about 72 miles-per-hour, the Sunset Limited struck the displaced bridge girder and derailed on September 22, 1993 at 2:53 a.m., with 220 people on board. The ensuing crash caused the submersion of two passenger cars and fire



to break out in a dorm-coach car, the baggage car, and a fuel cell. Forty-two passengers and five train crew members died, 111 passengers and crew members sustained injuries, and 62 people escaped without injury.

O'Reilly was one of the fortunate ones that survived. She was asleep in the passenger car that was left dangling over the edge of the remaining portion of the bridge (see picture below) She was

awakened by a shaking motion. People were falling out of their seats; she saw fire and heard people screaming. She escaped by making her way to the back of the car.

O'Reilly said she'll never forget the hospitality and love folks showed her all those years ago.

17 years later O'Reilly decided it was time to come back to Mobile in memory of those who died and for closure of her own.

The crew of the Phoenix fireboat took her to the bridge on October 6. There, she placed a bouquet of flowers on a concrete piling next to the railroad tracks on the very same trestle her car was dangling from, in memory of those who died. She stated "It was an amazing trip for me and one that I can never really say thank you enough for. It has helped to stop the nightmares and has also helped me to accept the guilt I felt for so many years of surviving, when so many didn't."

Special thanks to the 3rd shift crew of the fireboat for a tremendous job of helping O'Reilly find closure by taking her to the crash site. Thanks also to the 2nd shift crew that made last minute preparations the day before and to Chiefs Dean and Pappas for giving the approval to make this happen.



Trumpet

In Memory of those that gave...

On Saturday, September 11, 2010 Mobile Fire-Rescue held a service in memory of the victims of 9-11 as well as those firefighters from Mobile that made the ultimate sacrifice.

The service was held at Tapia Station. The Honor Guard posted colors, a last alarm bell ceremony was conducted and a memorial wreath was placed at the site by Assistant Chief Billy Pappas and Chaplain Ed Connick.



Photos Provided By REBECCA KRAFT



Flag Pole Dedication Ceremony



Photos Provided By **KATHRYN SKIPPER**

Mobile Fire-Rescue was the benefactor of a generous donation by Lodge 1 of the Woodmen of the World Life Insurance and Fraternal Society. The group held a flag and flagpole dedication ceremony at department's Supply Warehouse/Bureau of Fire Prevention offices on Old Shell Road, Saturday, September 11. Kathryn Skipper, President of the Lodge was the Master of Ceremonies.

The Korean War Veterans Color Guard provided the flag raising.

The Woodmen of the World members, through their 1,600 lodges, conduct volunteer and fraternal activities that benefit individuals, families and communities.

Over the past 63 years, Woodmen of the World members have presented more than 2 million American Flags to schools, churches, parks and other nonprofit organizations. The Woodmen also present American Patriot's Handbooks to schools, libraries and newly naturalized citizens, as well as American History Awards to students who excel in the subject.



The optimist proclaims that we live in the best of all possible worlds; and the pessimist fears this is true.

-- James Branch Cabell



Open House Station 18 October 23, 2010



Firefighter Safety

Seatbelts

By Steve Pegram—Pegram is the chief of the Goshen Township (Ohio) Fire and EMS Department. He holds an associate's degree in fire service and is currently pursuing bachelor's degrees in fire administration and organizational leadership. Pegram serves on the executive board of the International Society of Fire Service Instructors and was one of the original near-miss program trainers.



Case Study: Report No. 09-479

"...the engine left the road and struck a ground pad transformer...crashed into a telephone pole, shearing it in half and ripping the officer's door off...proceeded approximately 300 additional feet up the middle of a paved public road before coming to a stop in the middle of the road...all five members of the apparatus were seated and using seatbelts at the time of the collision. After extrication, the pump operator and officer were transported to a Level I trauma center for evaluation. Both were treated and released within 24 hours of the incident...The three firefighters in the crew compartment...were treated, released and have since returned to duty. The engine...was destroyed in the collision...Anyone reading this report should view it as an opportunity to save their life and the lives of the crewmembers by demanding compliance with all safety rules including the mandatory use of seatbelts."

Comments

Seatbelts save lives, again. The reporter and the rest of the crew virtually walk away from a high impact collision because they are wearing seatbelts. The message is clear, concise and complete: Wearing seatbelts protects you and your crew from death and serious injury.

There is little doubt that this incident was discussed as a likely occurrence when the crew reported for duty. However, the department's strong safety culture stressed the likelihood of a crash by taking into account factors such as: human error, the law of averages and the need for periodic driver performance assessment.

Discussion Points

- Why don't firefighters "buckle up" given that 25% of all LODDs are the result of vehicle collisions and most of the firefighters killed were not wearing seat belts?
 - How would you characterize seatbelt compliance in your own department?
 - Should there be a "velvet glove" or "sledge hammer" approach to seatbelt compliance?
- Discuss the pros and cons of each method.
- What are your state motor vehicle laws regarding seatbelt use?

- Who is responsible under your state motor vehicle laws if someone in the vehicle is not wearing a seatbelt?

Tips

- Visit www.firefighternearmiss.com. Click on "Search Reports." Enter "seatbelt" or "seatbelts" in the Keyword Search text box. You'll find more than 75 reasons to reinforce wearing seatbelts.
- Visit the Resources Page of www.firefighternearmiss.com. Look under "Reports for Training." You'll find a pdf file containing seatbelt reports.



Hard Core

Fire and emergency service members rely on physical strength for many aspects of their jobs. The foundation for strength is rooted in the core musculature of the body. Daily training of core muscles will decrease your risk of injury.

Missing Link

Shoulder injuries are common in the firefighting profession. Too often, training of this joint doesn't go beyond the superficial deltoids. Training should focus on creating a stronger, more stable shoulder joint. Exercises should involve internal and external rotation to train rotator cuff muscles and rowing motions to strengthen the posterior shoulder girdle.

Helmet

Continued from Page 1

American enterprise, or onward to victory. We were wrong. The eagle, it seems, just happened, and has no particular significance at all. Long, long ago, around 1825 to be exact, an unknown sculptor did a commemorative figure for the grave of a volunteer fireman. You can see it in Trinity Churchyard today; it shows the hero issuing from the flames, his trumpet in one hand, a sleeping babe in the other, and on his helmet, an eagle. Firefighters were not wearing eagles at the time; it was a flight of pure fancy on the sculptor's part. But as soon as the firefighters saw it, they thought it was a splendid idea and it was widely adopted. It has remained on firemen's helmets ever since.

Innovations to the original design of the helmet have been relatively slight. A suspension system was added, a liner to protect the neck and ears and eye shields are about the only changes. Manufacturers have tried aluminum, plastic and even rubber, but the New Yorker helmet has remained virtually unchanged through approximately 174 years of faithful and steadfast service. The New Yorker helmet retains the same look and quality that generations after generations of firefighters have relied upon. If you ask the average firefighter what kind of helmet they prefer, they will most likely answer the leather. One hundred and seventy four years after its invention. The Gratacap is still the helmet of choice for American firefighters.





Firefighter of the Year

Matt Waltman

Firefighter of the Month

SEPTEMBER - Gary Holbein - Captain, Bureau

OCTOBER - William Edwards - Driver, TC04

MFRD brings home the trophy

On Saturday, September 18, fire departments from around the region, as well as the state, met at Trione Sports Complex in Daphne to compete in the first ever Tournament of Hoses Softball Competition.

The purpose of the tournament was to raise money for Gulf Coast oil spill recovery efforts and to raise awareness for Lending Outreach to Victims of Emergencies.

The tournament was an all day double elimination format and all the fire departments involved played extremely hard. At the end of the day, when the dust settled, Mobile Fire-Rescue Department and Daphne Fire-Rescue Department were the only two teams left to compete for the championship trophy. Mobile Fire defeated Daphne 15-2 to bring home the trophy and win the Tournament of Hoses Championship.

Congratulations to the following personnel who represented our department in the tournament; Todd Machen, Mike Voloshik, Robert Wilkins, Dale Shaw, John Black, Mike Tipp, Jerry Garrett, Gerry "Pop" Morgan, Andy Morgan, Richard Harris, Phillip Nelson, Bud Cook, Roger Nelson, Martin DeMouy and Ken Keller.



On behalf of Ryan and myself I would like to give the firemen (Tapia Station) that made my son very happy, a great big thank you. I cannot express how much it meant to me that you would take time for my son and you will forever be in my heart.

Thank you,
Christy Varnado

Retirement



District Chief
Ronnie Morgan
20 Years Service
Retired 10/01/2010
District 2

Congratulations and We Wish You Good Luck upon your much earned retirement and future endeavors!



HAPPY THANKSGIVING



Dates to Remember

November 2 - Election Day
November 7 - Daylight Saving Time Ends
November 11 - Veterans Day
November 25 - Thanksgiving
December 1 - Hanukkah Begins
December 7 - Pearl Harbor Day
December 25 - Christmas
December 26 - Kwanzaa Begins
January 1 - New Year's Day
January 17-Martin Luther King Day



MOBILE FIRE-RESCUE

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