

A Note from the MFSI Director

This being the MFT&E - MFSI 75th Anniversary year, we planned a weekend of instructor development and a celebration banquet to honor those that have gone before us and those that go above and beyond to support training activities here in Maine each year.

We also have addressed the damage to our equipment with a formal signed memorandum that was endorsed by the Maine Fire Service Leadership. We have to be responsible stewards of these state owned fire training assets. You will notice some changes when you request equipment, MFSI Support Services Staff will be inspecting and documenting any damage to ensure our equipment is in a state of readiness. Please, if you see any issues or receive a trailer in poor condition, kindly email Deputy Director Jim Roy and Support Services Supervisor Ray Bishop so we can get this addressed as soon as possible.

We will be offering train-the-trainers on our props and equipment to help eliminate improper use or set up more on that this winter as we plan for the spring.

This issue of The Bugle's Echo is dedicated to the victims and Emergency Responders of the Lewiston Mass Shooting. We are all in shock and deeply saddened by this tragedy.



We are here and will remain here for all affected by this event.

*Sincerely,
Director
Jim
Graves*



*Celebrating 75 Years of Service
1948 - 2023*

THE BUGLE'S ECHO

MFSI November - December 2023 Issue II



*(left to right) Robby Gross, Steve Willis, Jim Graves, Gerry Gay, Jim Roy, Sherm Lahaie
at the 75th Anniversary Instructor Workshop Celebratory Dinner*

Record Breaking Certification Numbers for MFSI This Year

MFSI and our fire service training partners have shattered certification records that have been in place for many years. 472 was the mark, however this year to date already 560 firefighters have tested and achieved certification at some level. There are many more programs to test in November. The numbers are projected to climb over 600 for 2023. This milestone is only possible because of you.

MFSI thanks all its training partners, municipal, county and associations groups that assist in the fire training mission in Maine. The Maine Fire Commission had requested more state funding and has received it to continue this momentum and do more each day to train our state's firefighters.

An Alliance of State Agencies

MFSI, Maine State Fire Marshal's Office, Maine Forest Service and Maine Bureau of Labor SafetyWorks! signed an agreement to collaborate on Fire Training opportunities and information sharing. On October 16, 2023 at the Maine Department of Labor office in Augusta all participating State Agencies officials or department heads gathered to sign in official capacity of the alliance the document.

For a photo gallery of fire training,
visit mfsi.me.edu/about-us/gallery

MFSI State Fire Instructor Recruitment 2023 Update

We received 26 applications for MFSI State Fire Instructors during the latest recruitment cycle. Sadly, only 12 participated in the process. We will be bringing on a few of these folks to assist us with our mission. They will be introduced upon completion of the MFSI State Fire Instructor Orientation Academy this winter. MFSI will not be hiring for the foreseeable future. Our roster is currently at 85, not including this latest round of hires.

Maine Fire Service Institute Celebrates 75 Years of Fire Training in Maine with MFSI State Fire Instructor Workshop Weekend

The weekend's event began with housekeeping, PPE inspection, respiratory protection updates, policy updates and ended with an organizational overview with Director Graves. MFSI State Fire Instructors trained on several fire training props and trailers to become proficient with them in support of local training efforts. The new Red SCBA Air Management Maze Trailer, and the new Forced Entry Trailers were spotlighted.

At the celebration dinner, speeches from Robby Gross, Sherm Lahaie, Steve Willis, and Director Jim Graves recalled the history of Maine Fire Training and the steps and decisions that led to the organization's establishment after the 1947 wildfires. We also recognized a few State Fire Instructors that consistently go above and beyond normal capacity in their respective regions.

Mission Award

Senior SFI Donald Robishaw

Mentorship Award

Senior SFI Darren Woods

Drive Award

SFI Alan Stewart

Rising Star Award

SFI Francis "Mike" Surdick

Hidden Talent Award

Senior SFI Chris Poremby



Photo Credit: Bisi Cameron Yee photo from Lincoln County News

MFSI Celebrates the Retirement of Walter Morris and 17+ Years of Service

In 1975 Walter Morris joined the Village Fire District of Monsey, New York nestled in Rockland County. Walter's father served as the fire chief so it was evident that Walter would rise through the ranks and one day become the Chief of the Department himself. Walter fell in love with the job and his passion for it guided him to earn an Associates Degree and still the passion burned within, as Walter earned his Bachelors in Public Safety Fire Science at Mercy College. Eventually Walter earned a Master's Degree in Fire Protection Management from John Jay College.

In 1980 Walter along with his lifelong friend Andy Fredrick were hired as instructors with the Rockland County Academy after serving ten years in that capacity Walter was hired as the first full time instructor supervisor and program coordinator to support training in Rockland County. Walter had always had a Maine connection with family in Raymond. In 2004 Walter purchased a vacation home in Jefferson, thus laying down his own Maine roots. In the summer of 2005 he attended as a guest a Lincoln County Maine Fire Chiefs Association meeting where he was made aware of the changes in fire training in Maine and came to understand a position was available in the near future. Walter applied and was hired as a Training Program Manager and started his career here at MFSI in January 2005 moving his family to Maine. In the past 17 plus years, Walter has dedicated his time and energy to the passion that he has always had burning within.

Early on, Walter Morris recognized that the organization needed to market itself to rural Maine. In his words, "*MFSI is Maine's best kept secret*". Some of his career accomplishments include:

- Organized and developed MFSI administrative and operational policies.
- Helped coordinate Fire Officer development and the Maine State Fire Officer Academy.
- Set the foundations of the regional fire training facilities - a plan that MFSI continues to support well into the future.

Walter enjoyed watching young fire service professionals that have the passion for the fire service grow and even become fire service professionals and leaders in communities throughout Maine. Walter told Director Graves, "*I really enjoyed giving all my knowledge to the students and then seeing them grow into fine fire service professionals*".

Walter has agreed to stay with MFSI as a SFI and assist with programs when available.



Fire Instructor I & II

The Augusta program is underway and progressing well. MFSI will hold a program in Hancock County beginning in mid-January. The program flier will be out by mid-November.

We are also working on a “frequency of delivery model” for the five largest populated counties. We want to get into a rhythm for planning purposes. More to come on this in the future. Meanwhile, we will try and deliver three programs per year as long as the budget can support them.

Live Fire Instructor Instructor-in-Charge

This program is also full. We have 18 candidates and will be partnering with the City of Bangor Fire Department to deliver this State of Maine Certification program. We thank all that applied and made this very important program take place.

Upcoming Regional Firefighter Skills Exams

11/4 Aroostook County
11/6 Yarmouth
11/19 Yarmouth

FDSOA Pro Board ISO NFPA 1521 Certification Programs

We had a couple successful programs with our partners with the Fire Department Safety Officers Association (FDSOA).

To learn more about these programs, visit their website at fdsoa.org.

Completed Programs:
Incident Safety Officer, Bangor
Health & Safety Officer, Augusta

Upcoming Program: **Health & Safety Officer in Westbrook (upcoming 11/7-11/8)** There is **still time to register**.



Fire Officer I

The Oxford/Androscoggin County delivery was cancelled due to low enrollment. Kennebec County is being planned for the winter of 2024. Similar to the Fire Instructor programs, we are working on a “frequency of delivery model” for the five largest populated counties. More to be shared on this in the future. Meanwhile, we will try and deliver three programs per year as long as the budget can support them with ease.

Fire Officer II

Academy planning underway for late spring 2024 we are planning a four-day residential program at the University of Maine in Farmington. Much more to come in the future on this exciting program.

Fire Officer III

The planning for this program has come up against some issues that are beyond our control. We will seek other options moving forward. We will be writing an RFP and submitting it to other agencies that offer Fire Officer III & IV.

VFIS EVDT/EMSVO Train-the-Trainer

September’s program that was postponed due to Hurricane Lee has been rescheduled. Dates and location listed below. This program is a train-the-trainer which is designed to teach the necessary instructional methodology in order to successfully deliver the program.

November 11th & 12th, 2023 from 08:00 – 17:00
Eastern Maine Community College
354 Hogan Road Bangor, Maine

Upon completion, an instructor kit will be provided. The flier can be found online at mfsi.me.edu and contains additional program details and the required registration form.

Please note: if you are an MFSI State Fire Instructor and you are interested in participating in this program, please contact John Churchill at jchurchill@smccme.edu or 207-844-2074. As always, please don’t hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Future Plans for VFIS EVDT/EMSVO

We will do all we can to bring VFIS back in 2024 and continue our collaboration and networking.

MFSI Props & Equipment Damage Memo

We have established a Task Force to look into the issues with regard to damage to our state fire training assets. We are taking steps to minimize the damage and will make incremental improvements to see these assets last as long as possible.

SCBA Air Management Maze Trailer Repair Update

We have been working very hard to get the Black SCBA Air Management Trailer back out in the field to support firefighter training and have found some new hope with a total rehab plan. It has been quite the process, but we will get this done. We hope to see the unit back in the spring of 2024.

Train-the-Trainers: New Car Fire Prop & SCBA Air Management Maze Trailer

We are currently working on dates for the Red Maze and the new car fire prop for next spring. If you are a municipal fire instructor, state fire instructor, training officer, please check back for these fliers. Sign up and get qualified on these valuable training props!



Car Fire Prop Training – Boothbay, ME 10/18/23

Maine State Fire Instructor Profile William “JR” Wallace

When JR was young, he watched his uncle and cousins run out of the house on Thanksgiving Day as the fire whistle blew. For those of you who are of a younger generation, before the app ‘I am Responding’ and pagers, local firefighters were alerted to a fire by a siren, whistle or horn to emergencies.

When JR was a junior in high school, his family suffered a house fire and the home was a total loss. In 1997, when his brother-in-law joined a local volunteer Fire Department, he urged JR to join, as he thought it would be something he would enjoy. *“It was not long after that it consumed me,”* said JR. *“I realized it could possibly be a career path forward so I began the journey of collecting knowledge and insight into the profession.”*

He then completed his Firefighter I & II and EMT-B programs. JR spent many years in his hometown fire department in various roles and left as a Captain when promoted in the City of Lewiston. *“I felt it was necessary to focus on providing the best service I could to the firefighters and citizens of Lewiston.”*



JR Wallace instructing Basic Pumps in Fryeburg, ME Spring 2022

“I was hired in Lewiston in 2002. I spent ten years on various companies when I was promoted to Lieutenant and placed on Engine 7 out of Central Station. I spent ten years on Engine 7 as a Lieutenant when I was promoted to Captain of C shift.”

My area of interest in teaching is pumps and water supply. “The fire department is centered around water and its supply, without it we cannot fulfill the mission”. I also believe it is a very misunderstood topic in the Fire Department. I am a very hands on mechanical guy. Information on pumps, water delivery and general apparatus operations was slow to come for me. When you're young, in the Fire Department the “driving” was left to the senior members of the department.

We are lucky to have folks like JR sharing their knowledge, experience and abilities with the Maine Fire Service through training efforts.

Maine Fire Service Protection Commission

Regional Firefighter Grant Program Several programs are coming to a close and folks are getting ready to test before the cold winter sets in. We have also begun the announcement process with the fire commission and the flier should go out by late November.

Regional Live Fire Training Facility Grant Program With recent funding we will be planning and preparing the 2024 Live Fire Training Grant Process. The funds will not start coming in until after July 2024, thus we will plan to award perhaps late Fall of 2024. More information to follow. We are so very fortunate to be able to potentially provide two or three more facilities regionally in Maine for fire training purposes.

Maine State Weekend Each year, Maine is allowed to choose five (5) Maine State Weekend Programs delivered on campus at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, MD. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet other Maine firefighters and pay our respects to our state's fallen firefighters at the memorial service. Our Maine State Weekend Coordinator is Paul Froman. Check back in January of 2024 for specific information about the opportunity to attend the upcoming weekend on April 27-28, 2024.

NFA Six-Day Planned for May 2024, we are excited to have been awarded a Command and Control of Incident Operations. MFSI is eligible to apply through our Training and data exchange Program (TRADE) group which consists of FEMA Region 1 (New England). Dates: May 13-18, 2024
mfsi.me.edu/events/command-control-ics-6-day-nfa-o0312-at-mfsi/

Executive Fire Officer and Managing Officer These are prestigious programs offered by the National Fire Academy and we strongly recommend applying for these programs. Several Maine State Fire Instructors hold these certifications. The application period for acceptance into the EFO Program will be open Jan. 1, 2024 to Feb. 29, 2024. Applications will be capped at 500; therefore, applicants are encouraged to apply early. For more info, visit the URL: www.usfa.fema.gov/nfa/programs/executive-fire-officer/

NFA Courses & Programs Explained

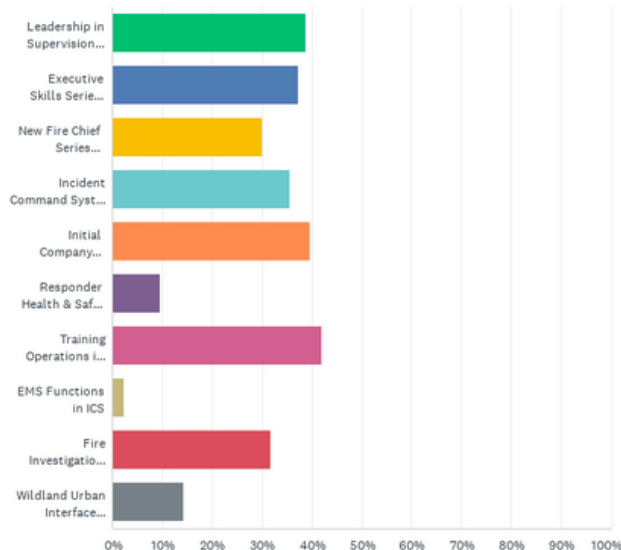
NFA In-State Programs MFSI is working with local fire departments to sponsor in-state National Fire Academy (NFA) programs, taught by MFSI's qualified NFA Instructors. Each year, MFSI applies for \$20,000 in funding from the US Fire Administration to support local NFA programs.

Each year, Maine is allowed to choose four (4) programs that are typically delivered in March and September. These programs are different because they are instructed by out-of-state National Fire Academy Instructors that come to Maine to deliver programs.

Hand-off Programs Maine State Fire Instructors that are qualified to deliver National Fire Academy Programs in the State of Maine. We are limited in the programs that we can deliver.

Online Programs The National Fire Academy offers many online programs for your convenience free-of-charge.

On-Campus Programs We encourage any State of Maine fire service member to attend the National Fire Academy, you are allowed one free on campus program per year. The only cost is the meal ticket.



NFA Course Call Results
In light of the recent survey results, Director Graves will be working to assist in delivering "Training Operations in Small Departments" as time allows.

Upcoming NFA @ MFSI - March 9th & 10th, 2024

MFSI will host two National Fire Academy programs in Brunswick. For info, visit mfsi.me.edu/events/categories/continuing-education/

- Preparation of Initial Company Operations (PICO)
- Executive Skills Series: Exercising Leadership to Facilitate Adaptive Change

Note: These programs were planned before the NFA Survey was conducted. They will be taught by qualified NFA Instructors that are sent to Maine to assist us in providing an outside perspective.