THE
BUGLE'S ECHO

Maine Fire Service Institute | Celebrating 75 Years of Fire Training in Maine | Since 1948

This issue is dedicated to the memory of Firefighter Basil L. Curtis, Milo Fire Department LODD 1988. The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation provides peer counseling, training and technical assistance for families and coworkers of firefighters who were killed in the line of duty. They offer reference materials that build public awareness of the many contributions of the fire service.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

The winter, so far, has been kind to us, but this instills fear of snow in the early spring which can have an impact on training events. With the fire training season fast approaching, we have a large list of tasks ahead of us.

The organization is headed in many positive directions. Impressive work is being done internally and externally. Great gains have been made in equipment maintenance, train-the-trainers, documentation and increased program deliveries.

Now, we begin to focus on instructor development, raising the bar to meet the demand for training techniques and best practices for today's fire service. To that end, we plan to increase the frequency of Fire Instructor I & II and Fire Officer I deliveries around the state. Additionally, we plan to hold one Live Fire Instructor program per year to improve safety during high-risk fire training events.

A focus group met in early February to assess how well MFSI is meeting the mission and if our mission is headed in the right direction. It is overwhelming to see what has been accomplished with only 10 full-time staff and a cadre of part-time, dedicated instructors.

So, what's next? Well, we have many items to address to make MFSI the best it can be, but I believe we can rise to meet these challenges. My end goal is to turn MFSI over to the next generation better than it has ever been.

Watch for our training announcements. There are many currently in the works. Stay safe out there, we need you all.

Director Jim Graves

AS THE WORLD BURNS

The demand for fire service training essentially exploded immediately after the pandemic-induced shutdowns and closures. Not only were the demands placed upon the Maine Fire Service Institute sincere, but they also became voluminous. This, combined with an incredible demand placed upon our State Fire Instructors by their primary employers, resulted in the beginning of an awkward trend of MFSI's inability to provide requested training programs to local fire departments.

written by Frank Hammond, Jr. continued on page 3

RECORD SCANNING UPDATE

Over the past three years, MFSI staff have been working aggressively to scan our fire training records into a digital format for several reasons. First, we were running out of storage space in our office. Second, when someone called and inquired about their training records it was very time-consuming for a staff member to search multiple files to find what was needed. Lastly, we needed to bring MFSI into the 21st century.

The process will take a few more years sadly, but we have seen some very large savings in time and energy and, well, we will never have to purchase another paperclip for 20 years. Some humor there, but it is very true, going paperless will be a very positive step for MFSI and benefit the Maine Fire Service in the future.

2024 MFCA PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE IS FAST APPROACHING!

The Maine Fire Chief's Association is hosting its annual conference at Sunday River Grand Summit Resort Hotel & Conference Center, in Newry, Maine on March 27-29, 2024. MFSI and Maine Fire Protection Services Commission are co-sponsors. Visit MFCA website to register.

MFSI IS HIRING A TRAINING PROGRAM MANAGER

The TPM is a full-time position responsible for leading and supervising the delivery of training for firefighters within Region 2 (Androscoggin, Cumberland, Franklin, Hancock, Knox, Lincoln, Oxford, Sagadahoc, Waldo and York Counties).

FROM THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Just a few words as we prepare for another busy training and testing season - I hope this email finds you all in good health. I am happy to report that we launched Train-the-Trainers for our new SCBA Air Management Trailer. SFI Chris Poremby has completed several trainings in three (3) counties for other SFIs as well as municipal instructors. Please keep in mind that this trailer can only be requested if the person requesting has completed a TtT.

We will be holding Train-the-Trainers all over the state for the new car fire prop sometime after April 1st. This will also be for SFIs and municipal instructors. Everyone will be pleased to see how much easier this prop is to set up and store. There will be more TtTs scheduled, so keep an eye out for the flyers in your local communities.

As you may have heard, MFSI had a record number of certifications in 2023 and it looks like we will be working on another banner year in 2024. Given this, I have two favors to ask:

- To our State Fire Instructors - We will need your help during this busy season. I know it is a tough time of year as the months warm up and work may not feel like a priority, however we need you to step up and get us through the season.
- To everyone looking for certificates - Please be patient! As you can imagine, the paperwork can be pretty tedious and overwhelming when you are testing over 20 different Firefighter I & II programs, not to mention the Fire Instructor I & II and Fire Officer I programs thrown in for good measure.

I am extremely proud of our staff as we work through all our regular duties as well as a Pro Board re-accreditation. They are working tirelessly to make sure that we are meeting the needs of training, certification, and testing for the state's firefighters'. MFSI has top-notch folks that I am pleased to have as part of our team. Take care and be safe.

Respectfully,
Deputy Director Jim Roy

AS THE WORLD BURNS

Continued from page 1

Fast forward to the present, and the trend, potentially as it could be, continues to grow. More programs and fewer available instructors have many of our talented staff driving great distances to train those who have expressed a need to be filled by MFSI. Some fire departments and programs can shuffle their requested dates and timeframes to accommodate our instructors' schedules; many, however, can not, and those deliveries go unfilled and are soon canceled altogether. Although some organizations are fortunate to have in-house staff to provide some of the requested training, most of Maine's fire departments struggle to attain local capacity for fire training.

While some regions of the state are becoming reasonably successful in sharing resources and instructors to deliver Basic Fire Schools, Firefighter I/II Programs, and EVDT courses, many are struggling to take care of their folks' training needs locally as MFSI works to match up qualified, passionate instructors to deliver training. Add to it all the significant demands of multiple Fire Instructor and Fire Officer programs running and in the planning stages; it almost appears to be a recipe for disaster.

Life happens, families and full-time jobs have their proper demands on us all, and we have little ability to change the social-political climates we work in and under. However, the need for regular, relevant, stimulating, and qualifying fire service training still exists, and as more departments have installed proverbial revolving doors on their rosters, the demand for MFSI services is unlikely to go away anytime soon; in fact, it continues to trend higher.

While it may appear that a picture of gloom and doom is being painted, great things are being done by amazing people in this organization for the fire service. Similar to the fire departments in general, we are seeing pockets of stability and ingenuity develop with some new and newer SFIs stepping in and stepping up. No one knows how long the current and immediate future demand rate will last. However, we could all agree it will likely be here for a while. In the meantime, ask questions, throw your hat into a delivery request or two in the next twelve months, and in the end, I strongly suspect that the fire service in the State of Maine will not only 'survive' but grow more robust and more resilient, more than aptly prepared to mitigate any of the situations they are called to handle.

Feel free to reach out to me by phone, text, or email with any questions, ideas, or offers. Our mission is to help local fire departments fulfill their respective missions: we have the talent, and we all have something we can offer to assist others.

Stay low in the heat, be true to yourself, and keep loving every day you are doing the most incredible job in the known universe. *- Frank Hammond, Jr., Training Program Manager*

NATIONAL FIRE ACADEMY UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Seats Open
Register Online
mfsi.me.edu
under
Upcoming
Events

NFA 2-Day at MFSI: March 9-10, 2024
Preparation of Initial Company Operations (PICO) F0458
Executive Skills: Exercising Leadership to Facilitate Adaptive Change

Maine State Weekend April 27-28, 2024. This year's weekend is paired with the Sunshine State of Florida. The National Fire Academy Maine State Weekend Coordinator is Paul Froman - Information and registration details available on MFSI. It appears four of the five programs are running, which is really good news. SFI Mike Azevedo will be representing MFSI at the weekend program in Emmitsburg.

NFA 6-Day May 13-18, 2024. We are excited to share that we've been awarded a Command & Control of Incident Operations course in May 2024. MFSI is eligible to apply through our Training and data exchange Program (TRADE) group consisting of FEMA Region 1 (New England). Location: MFSI

FIRE INSTRUCTOR I & II

With the culmination of Augusta Fire Instructor I & II in early January and a high success rate, we kicked off Hancock County Fire Instructor I & II in Ellsworth. Future program offerings are as follows:

- Cumberland County, tentative Summer 2024
- York County, Fall 2024
- Aroostook County, Winter 2025

LIVE FIRE INSTRUCTOR INSTRUCTOR-IN-CHARGE

Plans for the next Live Fire Instructor Program is underway. Watch for a flier this spring. The program will run in Cumberland County this year.

FIRE OFFICER I

Fire Officer I was completely full in Waterville and we have made the decision to offer two programs to meet the demand. We plan to deliver the following programs:

- Fire Officer I Cumberland County, Spring 2024
- Fire Officer I York County, Spring 2024
- Fire Officer I Androscoggin/Kennebec County, Fall 2024
- Fire Officer I Aroostook County, Spring/Summer 2025

FIRE OFFICER II

Planning is underway for a Fire Officer II academy this summer. MFSI is also launching a committee of State Fire Instructors to enhance the learning and modernization of the FireGround simulations for this program and NFA Tactics & Strategies.

- Fire Officer II Academy at MFSI, Summer 2024

FIRE OFFICER III

TEEX partnered with York County Fire Administration in February at York County Community College in Wells. The program was well-attended and folks managed the heavy workload.

CURRENT FIRE FIGHTER I & II PROGRAMS ACROSS THE STATE

MFSI is setting up written and practical skills testing dates for another record-setting year. Thanks to funding administered by the Maine Fire Protection Commission, many regional programs across the state are provided instructors, textbooks, exam fees, and training props and trailers to support quality education and the development of the fire service.

Regional Programs (11)

- Presque Isle
- Katahdin Area - Millinocket
- Knox County - St. George
- Hancock County - Ellsworth
- Tri-County - Topsham
- Presumpscot Valley Fire Academy - Westbrook
- Lakes Region Mutual Aide - Readfield
- Cumberland Fire Department
- Seacoast Waldo County - Stockton Springs
- York County - Alfred/Saco
- Southern York County Fire Academy - Berwick

High School CTE Programs (10)

- Capital Area Tech Center - Augusta
- Mid-Maine Tech Center - Waterville
- Westbrook Regional Tech Center - Westbrook
- Northern Penobscot Region No. 3 - Lincoln
- Mid Coast School of Technology - Rockland
- Tri-County Tech Center - Dexter
- Foster Tech - Farmington
- Region No. 9 - Mexico
- Sanford Regional Tech Center
- Caribou Regional Tech Center

Basic Fire Schools (2)

- Lincoln County
- Waldo County

INSTRUCTOR SPOTLIGHT ERIC WATSON

"I've never had any family or friends in the emergency services until after high school. I'd planned on working construction, having no idea what this field/world involved. I initially joined the Sabattus Fire Department because of friends and the stories they had to share. After joining, I found a new purpose in life. I attend any and all training & educational opportunities I can, local and nationally.

I enjoyed the challenge and thought process of Fire Fighter I & II. So much so that I decided to head back to school for an Associate's degree in Fire Science though SMCC.

In 2011, I was hired by the City of Lewiston at the Fire department, where I've spent my entire career on either the quint or the aerial. In the spring of 2022, I was promoted to the position of Lieutenant and reassigned to Station 3's district.

I try to make myself well-rounded in many facets of the fire service. I'm involved with the regional HazMat team, and mobilize out west with the Maine Forest rangers for wildland assignments.

I wouldn't have ever been able to get to where I am today without the amazing support of my wife (Kristine) and children (Harvey and Emma). They support my constant work and training habits."

MAINE FIRE PROTECTION COMMISSION AND MFSI

Regional Live Fire Training Facility Grant Program - Funds will not start coming in until the next fiscal year and then plans will commence. More information to follow. We are fortunate to be able to potentially provide Maine with two or three more facilities regionally for fire training purposes.

STATE WILDLAND FIRE TRAINING AND BASIC FIRE SCHOOL QUESTIONS

Recently a question was brought to our attention in regards to a Maine BLS inspection on training files. It was noted that those that hold a Basic Fire School (BFS) Qualification do not have training for wildland firefighting, due to the BFS program not containing a training on this subject. Maine Bureau of Labor has agreed that if a firefighter has been trained in accordance with Chapter 21 of the current standard, and are on file with the fire department they would consider them trained commensurate with duties of wildland/groundcover fires. NOTE: If an individual firefighter has received Firefighter I, Provisional Firefighter I, Firefighter II, National Wildfire Coordinating Group S-130 and/or a State of Maine documented program taught by Maine Forest Service, the individual has received Wildland fire training.

Check out the spring list on the MFSI website under News for trainings provided by the Maine Forest Rangers. For training requests, please contact your Local Regional Ranger. Requests may not be accommodated this year due to high demand.

Please join us in welcoming the following Probationary State Fire Instructors who officially joined MFSI in January. *Back Row (left to right) Dan Brooks, Ben Caron, Andrew Guerrette, Bill Dingee Front Row (left to right) Tony Ramsdell, Vincenzo Cariofolo, Kenneth O'Bar*

REGISTER FOR UPCOMING PROGRAMS

March 9-10	NFA: Exercising Leadership to Facilitate Adaptive Change
March 9-10	NFA: Preparations for Initial Company Operations
March 27-29	MFCA Professional Development Conference
April 1	Fire Officer I - Cumberland
April 27-28	NFA: Maine State Weekend in Emmitsburg, MD
May 1	Fire Officer I - York
May 13-18	NFA: Command & Control (ICS)
June 4	Rapid Risk Recognition
June 5	Incident Safety Officer
Sept 21	NFA: Decision-Making for Initial Company Ops
Sept 21	NFA: Incident Command System and Resource Management for the Fire Service

FIRE TRAINING FOCUS GROUP

The fire service in Maine deserves opportunities to grow and excel with professional qualifications/certification. MFSI facilitated a focus group to explore what can be done to create efficiencies and to improve fire service training across Maine. A summary of findings will be published next month.

TRAINING EQUIPMENT & TRAILERS RECENTLY OUT IN THE FIELD ACROSS MAINE

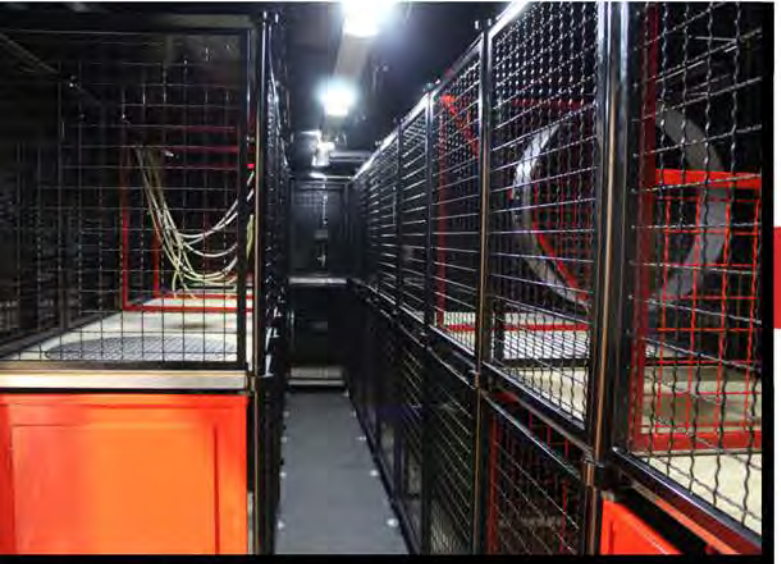
Air Cascade Trailer - Each of these trailers is equipped with 8 mounted 6000 psi cylinders piped to a SCBA cylinder fill station. CAUTION: Filling SCBA cylinders in an improper manner can be extremely dangerous. This system shall only be utilized if you have been properly trained in SCBA cylinder refill operations.

Forcible Entry (Blue) Doors - This patented door system provides the ability to force left or right-handed, opening in or opening outdoors, metal or wood jambs. All on the same door system. You can even use angle iron on the door to simulate high security apartment doors. This door allows you to use the gapping method and conventional forcible entry methods on opening-in metal jams (like on apartment doors). Hydra- Rams & Rabbit Tools can also be used. Opening-out forcible entry on metal jambs can also be used (like on commercial buildings or bulkhead doors). Also, you can use the spiking method on the wood jamb simulator (like on private dwelling doors).

Pump Cutaway Trailer - The Pump Cutaway Training Trailer consists of a custom 32' Haulmark gooseneck trailer with a tandem axle. The trailer has 2 pump cut-outs installed on roll-out trays, 1-portable generator and a LCD Monitor. The unit is equipped with interior lighting that can powered through the generator or household 110-volt electric service. The Pump Training Trailer has been designed with four stations to be utilized for training course delivery. There are four stations:

- single-stage pump
- two-stage pump
- A/V monitor and library
- pump parts and equipment cache and generator

To explore additional props and to make requests, please visit mfsi.me.edu.



A partnership with Maine Fire Service Institute

TRAIN-THE-TRAINER

SCBA AIR MANAGEMENT TRAILER

MFSI is embarking on state and municipal fire instructor trainings on our new equipment. Please contact departments to reserve a seat at a session.

Sessions are limited to six (6) participants. Every candidate will need to complete the maze in order to show proficiency and confidence along with their skill level. Failure to complete such tasks will prevent the candidate from being an approved TtT instructor on this prop. Completed trainings, as of March 1, were located at Saco, Brunswick, and South Portland fire departments and at MFSI for State Fire Instructors. Upcoming trainings:

- Augusta or Waterville, March 2024
- Houlton, April 2024
- Farmington, TBA
- Androscoggin, TBA

The Black Maze is currently under a full refurbishment at Maine Trailer in Hermon. We expect it back in late spring and to get a few more years out of the training trailer. We thank the good people of Maine Trailer for seeing the value in assisting with this very important firefighter training asset.

Train-the-Trainers for the new Symtech vehicle fire prop will follow in the spring and summer.

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SOUTHERN MAINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The mission of the Maine Fire Service Institute is to assist in the development of skills and abilities in support of Maine's Fire Service at the local, regional and state level, in collaboration with the Fire Chiefs of Maine.