



# FLASHPOINT

Fall 2012

Maine State Federation of Fire Fighters

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I want to start by thanking the Freeport Fire Department for a wonderful Convention. I also want to thank whoever voted for 2-year term as the Maine State Federation President.

The Federation provides benefits for scholarships and death benefits for being a paid member to the Association. We also provide the Phil Nason Scholarship, the Maine Fire Science, and EMS and four scholarships for Firefighter 1 & 2

candidate. Information can be found on the MSFFF Website or you can contact your county V.P.

We have the Lifetime Achievement Award, which is presented to a dedicated firefighter for their accomplishments throughout his or her career.

We are also involved with the National Volunteer Fire Council at the national level. For a fee of \$15.00 a year as a member of the Federation, you're entitled to the death

benefit. Information can also be found on our website or contact your county V.P.

We also contribute to the Pine Tree Burn Foundation.

We currently increased our dues from \$8.00 to \$10.00 for year 2013.

In closing, the 2013 Convention will be in Ellsworth. This will be our 50th year and they promised a good time to all.

Sincerely, Richard A. Cyr

## DURHAM FIRE AND RESCUE HOLDING GUN RAFFLE

Durham Fire and Rescue, in conjunction with Cabela's, is selling tickets for its annual gun raffle. Only 3,000 tickets will be sold at \$20 each and the odds of winning are 1 in 100.

One winning name will be drawn daily starting on Nov. 1 through Nov.

30. The winner will have choice of gun or a Cabela's gift certificate. Tickets can be purchased from Durham, Fire & Rescue at the station. Call 353-2473 for more information. Tickets are also available at the Durham Get & Go.

For more information on the raffle, call Scott St. Michel at 837-3540 or Keith Russell at 837-8748 or visit [www.fundraisers.com](http://www.fundraisers.com).

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223-8897

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# MSFFF HAPPENINGS!

**MSFFF  
Memorial  
Service**

On Saturday October 6th, 2012, the Fire Fighters Memorial Service took place in Augusta, Maine. Members from the Maine State Federation of Firefighters, Maine Fire Marshalls Office and Augusta Fire and Rescue, paid their respects to those fire fight-

ers from Maine who have died in the past year.

A precession of firefighters marched in line behind the Poland Fire Color Guard being guided by the bagpipers from the Dunlap Highlanders Pipe and Drum Corp. All firefighter march and stood before the Firefighters Memorial on State Street. Federation

President Richard Cyr welcomed the group and introduced the August Fire Chaplin Don Williams to give the opening Invocation.

A roll call of firefighters, who have died in the last year, was read by Federation Member Jeff Maker and a bell rang, symbolizing the last alarm rang after each name

was called out. Fire Marshall Joseph Thomas, Pine Tree Burn Foundation President Julie Metcalf and Alex McPhedran spoke on how the fire service has changed and that new young blood is needed to full fill the void that felted in the fire service.

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# MSFFF HAPPENINGS!

## MSFFF Memorial Service (cont'd)

Music was provided by Fireman Fred Parson and the Dunlap Highlanders Pipe and Drum Corp. and Federation members Wayne Seeley and Roger Marquis did the placing of the wreath. Augusta Chaplain Williams

did the benediction and all firefighters recited the "Fireman Prayer" to close out the service. The Poland Fire Color Guard got all firefighter in line and marched them out to the playing of the bagpipers.



## 50TH ANNUAL MAINE STATE FEDERATION OF FIREFIGHTERS CONVENTION

By Mario Moretto, Bangor Daily News

The city's population will swell next year when Ellsworth hosts the 50th annual Maine State Federation of Firefighters convention.

"It's great honor to host the 50th," said Ellsworth's deputy fire chief, Kevin DePrenger, Wednesday. "It's a big deal in the firefighting community, and I hope that all of our local businesses are happy and will benefit from the influx of people."

DePrenger said more than 1,000 firefighters from around the state will descend on Ellsworth during the weekend-long convention in September 2013. With the addition of family members, he said total attendance could top 2,000.

The annual convention usually includes a parade, entertainment, a banquet, firefighting equipment vendor exhibitions, award ceremonies and the MSFFF's annual meeting. Then there's the "fire department muster," during which departments compete with each other in a test of firefighting tasks. The city also hopes to set a Guinness World Record for most fire trucks in a parade.

Ellsworth has hosted the convention three times before: in 1975, 1984 and 1996. The city submitted its application to host the convention two years ago, according to MSFFF board member Albert Snow, a former Penobscot fire chief. Ellsworth beat out Rumbold for the

honor of hosting the 50th convention.

Snow said the conventions are an economic boon each year for the host community.

"Everybody comes," he said. "They go to stores. They eat. Everybody stays in hotels. They're probably pretty well filled up by now."

DePrenger said the department has already met with several downtown business owners to plan for the three-day event. That includes businesses that may be along the parade route and others who could see a big influx in customers.

Tony Cameron, director of the Ellsworth Chamber of Commerce, said the city should be able to handle the crowd.

"September is still a very busy month

tourism-wise," he said Wednesday. "We'll certainly see an uptick because of the firefighters convention, but I think the businesses are already prepared for large volumes."

In other Ellsworth FD news, the department has taken on three new firefighters.

Jason "Jake" Underhill of Hope, Brandon Randall of Brewer and Adam Brackett of East Millinocket all started work this month.

Two of the positions, Randall's and Brackett's, were funded by a federal grant that will pay their salaries and benefits for two years. Underhill's was funded by the city in the usual way. The hirings bring the city's full-time firefighting force to 12.

## OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS 2012

**WASHINGTON**  
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Fred Brewer CPA  
Bath  
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# MSFFF HAPPENINGS!

## Photos from the 2012 MSFFF Annual Convention – Freeport



The Freeport Fire Explorers lead the Sept. 8 parade.



The Pownal Fire Department's mascot waves from the top of the department's new tanker during the Sept. 8 parade in Freeport, part of the festivities surrounding the Maine State Federation of Firefighters' convention.  
*Photos by Paul Cunningham*



Conrad Lausier of the Pownal Fire Department cooks up another batch of homemade french fries for visitors.



Vendors filled the Freeport fire station during the three days of the Maine State Federation of Firefighters' convention this past weekend.

## **Bar Harbor Workshop Fire**

By Bill Trotter – Bangor Daily News

An early Tuesday morning fire destroyed a carpentry workshop in the local village of Hulls Cove but did not cause any injuries, according to officials.

The fire at R.L. White & Son was reported around 3 a.m., according to Fire Chief Joey Kane. He said that when firefighters arrived, the two-story structure was fully involved.

R.L. White & Son is a finish carpentry firm with a specialty in restoration and cabinetry work. Power equipment, hand tools and an extensive lumber inventory inside the 4,500-square-foot workshop all were destroyed in the flames.

"I would say [the damage will add up to] several hundred thousand dollars," Kane said. "The contents are probably as valuable as the building."

The firm's insurance company and an investigator with the state fire marshal's office were at the fire scene Tuesday morning, according to Kane. A backhoe was being used to tear down and pull apart the burning rubble in order to make sure the fire was out.

"We made a decision that the only way to deal with it was to pull it apart with the backhoe," Kane said.

Nearly 50 firefighters from Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor and Trenton responded to the fire, the chief said. Route 3 in Bar Harbor between Norway Drive and Crooked Road was closed Tuesday morning while firefighters fought the fire with a hose that crossed the highway. Local traffic was being allowed on the closed section of Route 3 from the Norway Drive end.

Michael El-Hajj, general manager of the carpentry business, said Tuesday that a connection to the island's architectural history was destroyed in Tuesday's blaze. R.L. White was founded in 1903 and had maintained in the shop an array of nearly 1,000 different cutter heads that the business used to replicate old mouldings that are no longer mass-produced. The shop building was constructed in 1928, he said.

The shop also had a large quantity of historic milled lumber, some of which R.L. White & Son had kept since it was delivered to Mount Desert Island decades ago by ship. Old-growth pine, mahogany, cherry, cedar, poplar and butternut were some of the wood varieties that could be found in the shop's lumber inventory.

"I don't see a lot of [salvageable items] here," El-Hajj said as he watched the backhoe pull out stacks of charred plywood from the rubble. "It's very sad. Much of it is irreplaceable. You couldn't buy it today even if you wanted to."

El-Hajj said the firm has 12 employees and will get back to work as soon as possible, perhaps as early as Wednesday. About 10 feet away from the destroyed shop, but apparently undamaged by the fire, is another large building that the company will be able to use

to in the meantime, he said. The firm is insured, and so should be able to replace modern equipment such as table saws, band saws, planers and other wood cutting devices that were lost in Tuesday's blaze.

"Everyone [on staff] will continue to be employed," El-Hajj said. "We'll be back in action tomorrow."

## **Fire Damages Ledgelawn Avenue Home In Bar Harbor Downtown**

By Bill Trotter – Bangor Daily News

Firefighters from three towns on Mount Desert Island responded about 5 p.m. Friday to a report of a structure fire at a single-family home on Ledgelawn Avenue.

The fire appears to have begun in a second-floor bathroom and moved into the attic space, Matt Bartlett, assistant fire chief for Bar Harbor, said Saturday.

The cause of the fire has not been determined but is not considered to be of suspicious origin.

"When I arrived there was smoke coming out of a second-floor window and the eaves under the attic," he said. "We had it under control in about 45 minutes."

One person was home when the fire began but no one was injured, Bartlett said.

Although the fire was reported to be at 85 Ledgelawn Ave., in a residential section of the town's densely packed downtown district, it was never a threat to other houses, Bartlett said. According to Bar Harbor's official online assessing database, the home was built in 1910 and is owned by Mae Corrian.

Bartlett said that damage to the house was significant but that it could be repaired. Firefighters from Bar Harbor, Southwest Harbor and Mount Desert responded to the blaze.

BDN writer Bill Trotter contributed to this report.

## **Fireplace Causes Bar Harbor Vacation Home Fire**

By Bill Trotter – Bangor Daily News

A group of people staying at a local vacation home escaped injury early Monday morning when an alarm system alerted them to a fire in the basement, according to a local fire department official.

Lyman "Joey" Kane, interim fire chief for Bar Harbor, said Tuesday that the department got an automated call about smoke detectors going off at the Schooner Head Road property around 2 a.m. Monday. By the time firefighters arrived at the home, he said, all the residents were awake and out of the building.

Firefighters found open flames in the basement where a framing timber under a fireplace on the main floor had caught fire, Kane said. They knocked down the visible flames quickly with a fire extinguisher and then put them out completely with a hose from a fire truck, he said.

Firefighters remained on the scene for hours, however, as they opened up the flooring around the fireplace and some of the nearby walls to make sure the fire had not spread, according to Kane. They were on the scene until about 10 a.m., he said.

"They had a fire going most of the weekend," Kane said of the people who were staying at the home. The 5,500-square-foot home, owned by Bear Creek Property LLC, is located on a 15-acre waterfront property. The assessed value of the property, including the house and surrounding land, is \$3.6 million, according to Bar Harbor's online assessing database.

Kane said insufficient protection around the base of the fireplace is what led to the fire. The home is insured, he added.

Kane said the home is still habitable but people staying at the house left Monday, as they had been planning to do. He said he did not know where the people are from.

Kane said the early detection system and automated remote alarm helped prevent the fire from causing more damage to the house than it did.

"I credit the detection system," Kane said. "That made the difference."

Firefighters from Trenton and Mount Desert provided mutual aid to Bar Harbor firefighters, Kane said.

Follow BDN reporter Bill Trotter on Twitter at @billtrotter.

<http://bangordailynews.com/2012/10/16/news/hancock/fireplace-causes-bar-harbor-vacation-home-fire/> printed on October 17, 2012

## Blue Hill Fire

On 8/ 15/12 at 1412 hours Blue Hill F.D. received a call to 566 Kingdom Road for a wildfire at Camp Stream Meadows. Upon arrival fire was running in the meadow grass heading east toward the woods and north upstream in the two plus mile long meadow towards camps and forest. The cause was a young individual firing a Roman candle pyrotechnic device across the brook into the meadow grass. Twenty five personnel responded from three towns and worked for six hours before the fire was declared out. Chief Robertson

## Bradford Vacant Home Destroyed by Fire

By Ryan McLaughlin – Bangor Daily News

Fire destroyed a vacant home on Jones Road in Bradford on Friday morning.

Chief Dusty Kelley of the Bradford Fire Department said crews were dispatched to the scene around 2:40 a.m., and when they arrived, the house was engulfed in flames.

"The roof had already collapsed at that point," Kelley said.

Although the home was vacant, the owners, who live next door, had been renovating the property for the last couple of years, Kelley said.

Crews from Bradford, Corinth, Charleston, Hudson and Glenburn managed to get the blaze under control in about 20 minutes, Kelley said.

Sgt. Tim York of the state fire marshal's office said a cause has not been determined. The fire marshal's office is continuing to investigate.

The home was not insured, according to York. Kelley said the fire doesn't appear to be suspicious.

## Brooklin Lightning Strike Damages Home

By Jennifer Osborn – The Ellsworth American

A Brooklin couple escaped injury Saturday after a lightning strike hit their Hales Hill Road house and started a fire.

The couple, Alan Pooley and Willow Runningwater, woke just after 4 a.m. to a loud crash.

"Willow thought a jet plane had hit the house," Pooley said. "She said it was the loudest thing she'd ever heard. I don't have any recollection of noise whatsoever. I think it was the shock. There were flames licking up the wall directly in front of me."

It was quite an effort "trying to find a flashlight because the power was off." They also had to search in the dark to find a cell phone to call 911, he said.

The lightning strike burned an electrical transformer and the telephone lines.

Once help was en route, Pooley put water on a cloth and smothered the flames.

Brooklin Fire Chief Sam Friend said the lightning traveled a wire to the television and from there went to an electrical outlet to a meter box to a phone jack.

The strike kept traveling along the side of the house, eventually blowing out a whole corner of the house, including shingles outside and sheetrock inside.

The lightning strike blew out a corner of a first-floor room, damaging appliances, including a television. An insurance adjuster has compiled a two-page damage report, Pooley said.

The couple said they are grateful to the Brooklin Fire Department for its skill, professionalism and compassion.

"I think we're extremely lucky first of all to be alive and second of all, not to be sifting through the remains of a burned-out house," Pooley said.

News.fenceviewer.com

## Buckfield Firefighter Gene Bell

The Maine State Federation of Firefighters recently held its 49th Annual Firefighters Convention. The Convention was held in Freeport with the awards banquet held on the evening of September 8.

# COUNTY NEWS CONT'D

Buckfield firefighter Gene H. Bell was the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award to a standing ovation of approximately 140 firefighters, family and friends.

Firefighter Bell has served 51 years in the Buckfield Fire Department. He has served many roles including Assistant Fire Chief and Chief from 1979-1983. Most recently Firefighter Bell has served as a Captain.

While his service as an officer has been highly commendable, his mentoring of officers and firefighters due to his tremendous experience and knowledge has been invaluable.

Gene Bell was nominated for the award by current Buckfield Fire Chief, Tim Brooks. Many Buckfield firefighters joined Firefighter Bell for his award along with his loving wife Lynda and their son Clark, his girlfriend Corina and grandson Collin.

Gene was humbled to be nominated and very honored to receive this award. Gene would like to thank Chief Brooks for the nomination as well as the Federation for the Award. He would also like to thank Firefighters everywhere for their service.



## Edmundston Structure Fire

By Monica Pettengill Jerkins & Julie Daigle – Fiddlehead Focus

Crews from four fire departments responded to a residential structure fire at an apartment building on Ferry Street in Edmundston on July 30, just a short distance east of the International Bridge near the hydro dam. Edmundston Fire Deputy Mario L'Italien said the fire fortunately injured no one.

Fire Marshal representatives in the ongoing investigation into the cause of the fire have positively identified its origin. While the investigation is ongoing, however, they are unable to say whether the fire is believed to have been accidental or not.

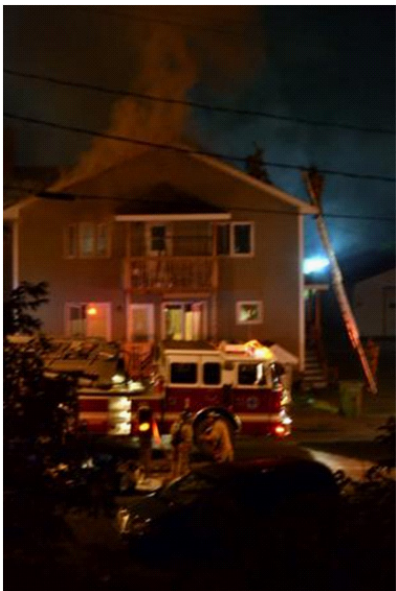


Witnesses could see flames shooting out from the back of the structure late Monday evening as fire crews from multiple departments responded to this residential structure fire on Cote Ferry Street in Edmundston

Approximately 10 tenants from the apartment building, including one young child, are now under Red Cross care, said L'Italien.

Residents in Madawaska could hear the first sirens from across the river and smell the telltale odor of smoke in the air shortly after 11 p.m. Monday evening. Soon, a cloud of low-lying smoke blanketed the river banks on the Edmundston side of the border.

Thirty firefighters from Edmundston, Madawaska, St. Jacques, and St. Basile responded to the call around 11:30 p.m. Firefighters had the fire under control about five and a half hours later, by approximately 5 a.m. The building suffered major damage, said L'Italien.



The fire deputy said the fire was a difficult one, with a second roof built on top of the original and sections of the renovated building dating from the 1950s.

Investigators have determined that the fire started outside, at the back of the apartment building, where a mattress, some rubble and some wood was located.

Because the investigation is still ongoing, L'Italien was unable to confirm whether the fire marshal's office believes the fire to have been set intentionally, or whether it is believed to have been an accident. More details will be continue to be published as they become available.



## Ellsworth Fire Department Open House

The Ellsworth Fire Department held its annual Open House on October 6<sup>th</sup> from 10-2 at the Ellsworth Fire Station. There were fire prevention activities, hand-outs, antique fire apparatus displays as well as refreshments. WNSX was on hand with a live broadcast and Sparky the fire dog made an appearance. The Red Cross held a Blood Drive in the upstairs conference room of city hall from 9-2. They reportedly received 54 units of blood.

October is fire prevention Month in remembrance of the great Chicago fire of 1871. You may be more familiar with the story about Mrs. O'Leary's cow, which allegedly started the fire by kicking over a lantern. According to Wikipedia, Mrs. O'Leary's cow was framed but it makes for a colorful story.

Fire Prevention month is the time of year when we should all remember to check our smoke alarms, clean them if necessary, and put new batteries in them. We should also remember to practice our home escape plans so that if the smoke alarm does sound, we all know what to do. We should all have a safe meeting place outside the home. The driveway or mailbox is a good location.

## Ellsworth News



Thank you to all who came to enjoy the Haunted School House at the old General Bryant E. Moore School in Ellsworth. We had a tremendous turnout this year and everyone who came through, even those who bailed out part way through, said it was the BEST Haunted School House they have EVER gone through. Thank you!! It would not have been possible without the overwhelming support and commitment from the staff working in the show. We had members of Ellsworth Fire Department, Trenton Fire Department, Penobscot Fire Department, Ellsworth Police Department, Ellsworth High School Show Choir & Drama Club, Mount Desert Island High School Students, Community citizens, and Rotary Club members, totaling approximately 55-60 actors per night. Believe me when I say; we had as much fun working behind the scenes as you all had experiencing the thrills. The expressions on many of your faces were...PRICELESS...!! All the proceeds will be used to support the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual



# COUNTY NEWS CONT'D

Maine State Federation of Firefighters convention that the Ellsworth Fire Department and Senator Hale Hose Company will be hosting next September 2013. This convention will be a huge community event where we will all celebrate with firefighters and their families from across the state.

## Calendars

Check out our album on Facebook for more pictures from the Haunted School House!!!



## Fort Kent

By Andrew Birden, Jenna Beaulieu, Monica Pettengill Jerkins – Fiddlehead Focus

Another major fire has struck a business on Main Street in Fort Kent.

Fort Kent Fire Chief Ed Endee received the call at 8:42 a.m.

The Valley Auto car dealership was destroyed this morning in a fire, leaving another hole on Main Street in downtown Fort Kent, just months after another fire destroyed a block of historic buildings around the corner from this site.

Ten fire departments responded to the call, three from Canada and seven from Maine: Fort Kent, Clair, Madawaska, St. Francois, St. Francis, Eagle Lake, Baker Brook, Frenchville, St. Agatha, and North Lakes Fire and Rescue.

Pat Theriault of Valley Auto said that everyone of their 20 employees had exited the building and was accounted for. The owners were also able to remove some equipment with the help of neighboring business owners and employees. People showed up to help immediately, no doubt with the last major fire from just a few months ago fresh in their minds. Well over 100 people from the community assisted in moving the equipment and inventory

There are no reports of injuries at this time.



**BATTLING FLAMES ON MAIN STREET AGAIN** - Firefighters douse the Valley Auto building in Fort Kent as first responders battle a major conflagration - Birden image

## FRANKLIN

We got called at 3:30 am on September 9th for house fire on 182. By the time we arrived flames were through the roof. Aid from 5 other towns had loss stop at about 7:30 cleaned up and left 9:30.

THE Fire Marshal's office is investigating the cause of the fire that leveled the 2 story home.

## Franklin

By Mario Moretto, BDN Staff – Bangor Daily News

A Main Street resident was working on a jeep inside a garage Wednesday when a stray spark started a fire that eventually consumed the garage and narrowly missed destroying his home.

Firefighters from Franklin, Sullivan, Hancock and Sorrento responded to the fire at 26 Main Street around 1:20 p.m. By the time they arrived, the garage was fully involved, according to Franklin Deputy Fire Chief Brian Abbott.

Abbott said the homeowner, Richard Havey Sr., was braze welding in the garage when the interior and seat of the jeep caught fire. Havey initially tried to put out the flames himself, Havey said, but the man's brother and son noticed the smoke and called the fire department.

"The vehicle was the initial fire," the deputy fire chief said. "In an enclosed space like that, the vehicle — with all the plastic and everything — gets going very fast."

The garage was fully involved by the time firefighters arrived, Abbott said, and the vinyl siding at Havey's home had begun to melt.

The construction of the garage made it unlikely the structure could be salvaged, Abbott said, and the roof had already begun to collapse. So firefighters focused on preventing the fire from spreading to Havey's home.

"We concentrated on getting water on the house, since

# COUNTY NEWS CONT'D

that was starting to get very hot," Abbot said. Firefighters used thermal imaging devices to ensure there was no heat trapped in the residence, then began extinguishing the blaze in the garage.

Brian Clement, Sorrento's assistant fire chief, was on scene and said the vinyl siding likely helped prevent the house from catching fire.

"The good thing is, vinyl melts before it ignites," he said.

Main Street between the Franklin Town Office and Havey's home was closed for about an hour and a half, with firefighters redirecting traffic to alternate routes. The fire was cleared by about 3:40 p.m., Havey said, and the road was reopened.



A rogue welding spark ignited a vehicle fire inside a home garage on Main Street in Franklin on Wednesday, Oct. 17, 2012.

## Franklin

The state fire marshal's offices investigating the cause of a fire that leveled a two story home on route 182 over the weekend. Franklin fire chief Robert Grindle said one the story is that the fire might have been electrical in origin. Grindle said a passing motorist alerted firefighters to the blaze about 3:30am Sunday. By the time firefighters arrived it was completely engulfed he said.

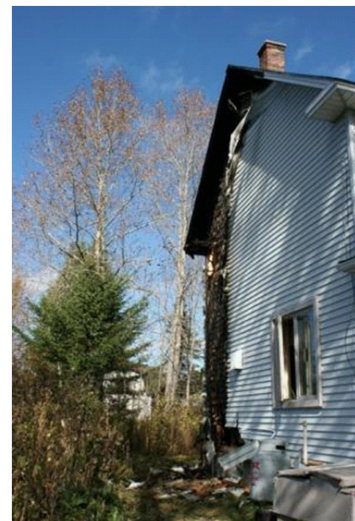
Grindle said the owner, Shane Jordan was away at the time and no one was injured. About 30 firefighters from Franklin, Eastbrook, Hancock, Sorrento, and Sullivan responded to the fire. Grindle said the fire was brought under control around 9:30am.

Story published in Ellsworth American

## Frenchville

By Jenna Beaulieu - Fiddlehead Focus

An overnight structure fire damaged a residence on U.S. Route 1 early on Wednesday, Oct. 17.



# COUNTY NEWS CONT'D

A FIRE CONTAINED - A local residence at 218 U.S. Route 1 caught fire on its rear face early on Wednesday, Oct. 17. The residence was vacant and there were no injuries to firefighters. The Frenchville and St. Agatha Fire Departments were able to contain the fire on the rear wall and the other three faces only suffered water damage. - Jenna Beaulieu image

The house may be salvageable, according to Frenchville Fire Chief Mike Michaud.

At 1:20 a.m., Chief Mike Michaud of the Frenchville Fire Department received a call informing him that the residence located at 218 U.S. Route 1 was ablaze.

"I called mutual aid right away," said Michaud. In addition to the Frenchville Fire Department, the St. Agatha Fire Department also responded.

Unbeknownst to the firefighters upon their arrival on the scene, the residence was vacant and the occupants "were staying at someone else's house," said Michaud.

Because of the possibility of residents being inside the building and with the rear wall engulfed in flames, Michaud dispatched four firefighters with air packs to search the basement, two floors, and attic of the residence.

The building was empty and no firefighters were injured during the search and rescue.



- Jenna Beaulieu image

Brenda Long and her daughter Samantha used to live in the house, but had recently moved out while it was under repair. Brenda Long's mother, June Hausman, is the owner of the residence and lives out of the area.

According to Michaud, the fire appears to have started near the kitchen stove and was likely an electrical problem.

Michaud said, "The most intense burning was near that area."

The fire extensively damaged the rear wall, but the three other faces only received some water damage, according to Michaud.

"We were able to save the building," said Michaud. "And [Long] told me it was insured."

The firefighters were at the scene until 4:30 a.m.



- Jenna Beaulieu image

"We responded with all of our equipment," said Michaud. "We had fifteen firefighters from Frenchville there and about ten firefighters from St. Agatha."

According to Michaud, four fire engines from Frenchville and three fire engines from St. Agatha responded to the incident.

## Hudson

By Nok-Noi Ricker - Bangor Daily News

Fire investigators sifted through the rubble and debris left behind from a blaze early Wednesday morning at 472 Old Town Road but were unable to determine what started the fire.

"It's going to be undetermined," Sgt. Ken Grimes of the state fire marshal's office said Thursday morning. "There is too much damage."

The fire was reported at 2:30 a.m. Wednesday. When firefighters arrived at the single-story ranch house, the roof of the structure had already collapsed and they feared that the homeowner was inside, Fire Chief Mike Simmons said after his crews had returned to the station.

# COUNTY NEWS CONT'D

"We found out she was visiting a relative in Parkman," he said.

The structure is a complete loss, the fire chief said.

## Lewiston

Early Wednesday night on October 17, 2012 dozens of people had to flee their homes when a fast moving blaze burnt three buildings in Lewiston. One of the buildings was a three story apartment building where two police officers helped the fire department out by rescuing two elderly women escape the blaze from the third floor by using ladders to get them down to safety.

When the fire was first reported the scene was chaos. People were leaving the surrounding buildings without shirts and some carrying small pets.

It took Lewiston Fire nearly Four hours to get the blaze out.

The cause of the blaze it was reported that a woman in the apartment building said that her coach was on fire and the blaze spread quickly

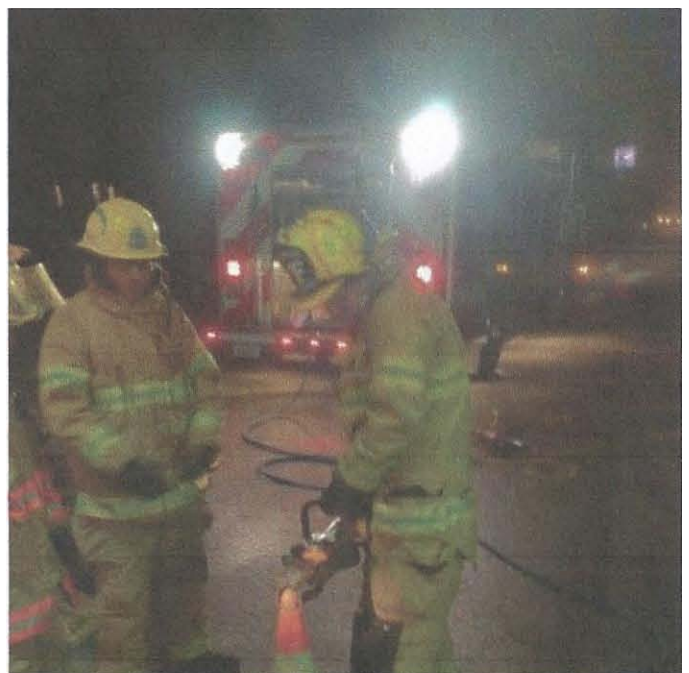
Late Sunday evening on October 21, 2012 a fast moving fire completely destroyed a storage trailer in the town of Wales.

Firefighters had the blaze under control within 20 minutes. Wales Fire Department was assisted at the scene by Monmouth, Sabattus, Greene and Leeds. Greene and Leeds was canceled before they got there.

## Lisbon Fire Dept

Monday Night Trainings ..... Members of the Lisbon Fire Department are conducting training on Monday Nights for any members that want to review skills. The trainings are low keyed and are generally hands on. Routinely a "fun" night happens and they take a different approach .... This photo is of Firefighter Blake picking up an egg with the "Jaws of Life". Certainly not something we would do at a call, but it teaches members how to gently use the tool. A mistake could be terrible .....

Firefighters responded to 65 Frost Hill Avenue on 09/26/2012 for the reported structure fire. Upon arrival an attached garage as fully involved in fire and extending into the house. Fire crews from Lisbon, Lewiston, Topsham, and Durham worked to extinguish and overhaul the fire. Crews from Sabattus and Bowdoin covered the empty fire stations during the fire.



## Madawaska

By Julie Daigle & Monica Pettengill Jerkins – Fiddlehead Focus

Madawaska Fire Department received a call at approximately 2:15 this afternoon reporting a structure fire at an apartment building on 11th Avenue according to Madawaska Fire Chief Peter Parent.

Parent said there are no injuries to report, though he believes the building housed as many as six apartments. He said several people who may be tenants of the building were on the lawn waiting when the fire department arrived.

Parent reported that they called for mutual aid from Edmundston immediately because they realized they would need the assistance.

He reported that when they arrived on the scene, they began with an interior attack, but quickly resorted to an exterior attack when they found the entire third floor of the building involved.

At this point, Parent said the department's primary concern is controlling the burn and keeping it from spreading to nearby buildings, the closest of which he said is only a few feet away.

Don Roy of Jeff's Pizza on Main Street closed his business for the remainder of the afternoon due to issues with smoke. He said the smoke combined with the heat of the day made conditions in the restaurant intolerable.

At the time of this report, more mutual aid response from neighboring communities was en route.

This is the second fire in less than 24 hours to which the Madawaska Fire Department has responded. Late Monday evening, Madawaska responded as mutual aid to another apartment building fire in Edmundston.

Fiddlehead Focus has a reporter at the scene and will provide additional information as officials make it available.



- Image courtesy of Keith Cyr

## Madawaska

By Jenna Beaulieu – Fiddlehead Focus

James Soucy of Madawaska has recently shifted gears from his town employment as a Selectman to the new Fire Chief. Soucy has been a volunteer firefighter for the Madawaska Fire Department for nine years and has served as co-captain for the last five years.

Soucy has fought some "big fires" in the past decade, including the 2009 Jeff's Pizza fire in Madawaska and the recent Valley Auto fire in Fort Kent. The Valley Auto fire was Soucy's first major fire call since he took lead of the department.

Soucy said, "There's a lot of work in being a fire chief, things I didn't know about when I was just a firefighter."

He felt the same way about his former job as a selectman. "Once you become one, you find out how all the pieces of the town fit together."

As fire chief, Soucy will be responsible for addressing the Board of Selectpeople regarding department issues and its budget. In two weeks, Soucy will present to the Board of Selectpeople and the Budget Committee his suggestions for budget cuts.

Soucy said, "The cuts won't be too significant for the department. We should be in good shape."

Soucy admits it is "very different on this side of the desk," but that he misses his job as selectman and working with the other members of the board.

"I enjoyed being selectman," said Soucy. "I was a selectman for three years."

The Madawaska Board of Selectpeople chose Soucy to fill the fire chief position after Peter Parent vacated the position in August.

Upon his resignation, Parent expressed concern that the department would suffer some loss to funding and state support because they may no longer be NIMS compliant.

To maintain NIMS compliance, Soucy plans to complete the required training. He said, "Somebody has to be trained to get all the federal grants. Once I get the training, we'll be all set."

Though Parent resigned as fire chief in August, he remains a volunteer firefighter and a deputy chief. Soucy said of Parent, "He's my second in command, my right-hand man."

"I get a lot of support from the firefighters," said Soucy.

There are about 50 volunteer firefighters in the department, according to Soucy, including five to six student/junior firefighters.

So far this year, the fire department has responded to 33 fire calls.

In addition to his employment as fire chief, Soucy is also the full-time Maintenance and Housekeeping Su-

# COUNTY NEWS CONT'D

pervisor at Highview Manor. Between the two jobs, he doesn't have much spare time.

"I don't have time to do anything fun," said Soucy. "But I enjoy my jobs, so it usually doesn't feel like work. I'm just busy."

For those rare moments when Soucy has free time and the weather holds up, he enjoys riding motorcycle with his wife.

He does spend many an evening at the fire station and can be reached for non-emergency calls at (207) 728-7716. For all emergency calls, contact (207) 728-6522 or dial 911.



**READY TO RESPOND** - Madawaska's new fire chief James Soucy has been a volunteer firefighter for nine years. He served as co-captain for the last five years before being selected to serve as the Fire Chief by the Board of Selectpeople in August. In addition to serving as fire chief, Soucy is also the full-time Maintenance and Housekeeping Supervisor at Highview Manor in Madawaska. - Jenna Beaulieu image

## Millinocket

by Dawn Gagnon - BDN Staff

Firewood stacked too close to a chimney was cited as the cause of a fire Tuesday evening that caused heavy damage to a Winter Street home, the town's fire chief said Wednesday.

That was the conclusion reached by an investigator from the state fire marshal's office, Fire Chief Tom Malcolm said Wednesday.

"Wood was piled up against the chimney flue," Malcolm said, adding that the flue had rusted out in some spots.

According to Malcolm, the fire at 26 Winter St. was reported at 5:27 p.m. by the homeowner, Kelsie Fish. When fire crews from Millinocket and East Millinocket arrived, the one-story house was filled with heavy smoke.

When they entered, firefighters found a fire burning in the basement around a wood boiler and beginning to make its way to the chimney chase and extinguished

it, he said.

Malcolm estimated damage from the fire at about \$60,000. Though most of the fire damage was contained to the basement and chimney chase areas, there was smoke and water damage throughout the house, which is insured, he said.

## New Sweden

Jenna Beaulieu - September 19, 2012 - Fiddlehead Focus

Two Northern Maine Construction 18-wheeler trucks collided with one another Wednesday afternoon on the corner of Jemtland Road and School Road in New Sweden. Only one driver sustained minor injuries and traveled by the Caribou Ambulance Department to Cary Medical Center.



Twisted and charred metal was all that remained after two Northern Maine Paving construction trucks collided in New Sweden Wednesday afternoon. - Jenna Beaulieu image

Andy Gendreau of Van Buren was driving a Northern Maine Paving truck hauling crusher dust on School Road. Philip McDougall of Caribou was traveling west on Jemtland Road in another Northern Maine Paving truck when he crested a hill and was unable to stop before broadsiding Gendreau's vehicle as he was attempting to turn left from School Road onto Jemtland Road. The Aroostook County Sheriff's Department said Gendreau failed to yield at the bottom of School Road.

According to Assistant Captain of the Caribou Fire Department Danny Raymond, "They T-boned each other."

The Sheriff's Department received the call at 3:15 and arrived at the scene immediately after the ambulance. McDougall's cab was in flames.

Sergeant Forest Dudley of the Sheriff's Department said, "There was a lot of black smoke."

## Newburgh

by Andrew Neff - Bangor Daily News

What may have been an electrical fire damaged portions of a three-story ranch house in Newburgh, but firefighters from Newburgh, Hampden and Dixmont

were able to put it out in an hour and limit the damage.

"Thanks to Hampden and Dixmont, it was a pretty good save," said Newburgh Fire Chief Glen Williamson. "I was really happy with the response we got from the other towns. It took us about an hour to put out."

The call came in around 4:30 p.m., according to Williamson, and reported a structure fire at 2498 Western Ave.

"There's some water damage and some burn damage on the second floor," he added. "The fire damage was contained mainly to one room upstairs and one wall downstairs."

Approximately 25 firefighters and seven units including two tankers assisted from the three departments.

"I happened to be nearby and when I got there, there was smoke coming out of the eaves and top windows, but no visible flames," Williamson said. "It got up in the walls and the attic."

The woman living at the home had a couple of relatives visiting, but no was injured. "She's staying with relatives tonight," Williamson said.

Williamson will meet with the fire marshal in the morning to investigate the damage and determine the cause of the fire.

## North Lakes Fire and Rescue

North Lakes Fire & Rescue purchased this 1982 pumper from Van Buren FD 10/1/12. It has a 691 twin turbo diesel engine and 5 speed automatic transmission, 1000 gallon tank, 1000 gpm pump and air adjustable driver seat.



## Northern Aroostook

Jenna Beaulieu – Fiddlehead Focus

A single-car accident injured a hunter in T14 R16, a few miles beyond the crossing that would bring travelers into St- Pamphile, on Depot Road, deep in the northwestern part of the state.

Due to the distance and road conditions to the site of the incident, it took rescue workers almost two hours to reach the scene.

Chester Maddox of Ellsworth was sitting alone in the passenger seat of a Subaru car while it was parked, and he was waiting for the rest of his hunting party to arrive. The vehicle started rolling downhill and traveled approximately 500 feet from where it was parked, landing in a small ravine off the road.

The Fort Kent Fire Department received a call for assistance at 5:57 p.m. The site of the incident was approximately 85 miles from Fort Kent. Approximately fifty miles of that road were gravel. The Fire Department arrived at the scene at 7:45 p.m. One fire engine and a Fort Kent ambulance responded.

According to Fire Chief Ed Endee, when he received the call for assistance, he placed a call out to any forest rangers or game wardens in the area that might be able to reach the site and provide directions for emergency personnel.

Game Warden Andrew Smart responded and according to Endee, "We were in communication the whole time. We knew where we were going."

Endee said, "We went out of range of our local radio service, but could communicate by cell phones that were roaming off the Canadian towers."

Maddox injured his arms in the accident and was pinned in the car, trapped and unable to exit the vehicle, but was otherwise responsive. The rest of the hunting party and Game Warden Smart were unable to open the door from the outside.

Endee said, "It was not in a life-threatening way."

Firefighters had to utilize the Jaws of Life to cut the side of the car to remove Maddox. They then carried him out of the ravine with a Stokes basket, a wire litter that first responders commonly use in search and rescue operations.

The Fort Kent Ambulance transported him to Northern Maine Medical Center, where he was later transferred to Eastern Maine Medical Center. No further information is currently available regarding the extent of his injuries.

## OLD TOWN

A fire that began in an upstairs bedroom late Saturday morning displaced an Old Town family and their four dogs, the city's fire chief said Monday.

Fire Chief Steve O'Malley said the fire at 614 Main St. was reported shortly before 11:30 a.m. by people in the neighborhood.

Though initial reports indicated that heavy smoke was pouring out of the two-story building, fire crews found flames coming from windows on the second story when they arrived, he said.

Homeowner Winnie Osnoe and her daughter were out when the fire began, he said.

Although investigators with Old Town's fire and police departments were still working Monday to determine the fire's cause, O'Malley said it was not considered suspicious.

O'Malley said the house is insured but will need some significant repairs before the family can move back in.

"The Red Cross was an immense help," the fire chief said. He said a representative of the organization's Pine Tree Chapter was in Old Town by early Saturday afternoon to make temporary housing arrangements for the homeowner and her daughter, who were put up at a local motel.

O'Malley said a friend or neighbor is taking care of the family's four dogs.

Old Town firefighters were assisted by crews from Orono, Milford and Bangor, O'Malley said. He said no one was injured in connection with the fire.

## Oxford

A local man lost his auto repair garage at 42 Old County Road to a fire Wednesday night.

Fire Chief Scott Hunter said Phil Perkins was in his house next to the garage when he spotted flames coming through the roof at about 7:15 p.m.

"He lost everything," Hunter said. The building was not insured, and he estimated the loss at about \$100,000, including tools, equipment and a box van.

The state fire marshal was expected to visit the scene Thursday morning, but Hunter said due to the extensive damage a cause may not be determined.

Perkins told him he was doing some grinding and welding in the garage in the late afternoon, but he didn't know if that sparked the blaze.

The approximately 40-by-40-foot garage was engulfed in flames when firefighters arrived. Oxford Fire Department was joined by others from Otisfield, Norway, Paris, Mechanic Falls, Poland, New Gloucester and Casco to shuttle water to the scene.



## Pembroke

Fire Marshal Investigators Digging through Pembroke

## Church Rubble by Tom Walsh

State Fire Marshal Joe Thomas said Tuesday morning it could be days before any determination is made as to the cause of a fire Monday morning that destroyed this Washington County community's First Baptist Church.

"There's pretty much nothing left," Thomas said Tuesday. "Most of the church is in the basement, and now that's filled with water, given the weather. We're interviewing people today who are familiar with the building and know where the utilities came into it. We'll have to get some heavy equipment in and dig things out as part of the process of eliminating accidental sources."

The fire at the 1865 church building on Liberty Hill Road was reported just before noon Monday. Volunteer firefighters from Pembroke, Dennysville, Perry, Pleasant Point and Charlotte went to the blaze.

Pastor Gary Kinney said Tuesday that the church's congregation, which last Sunday numbered 32, will meet Wednesday evening at his home near the church to discuss next steps.

"The church was insured," Kinney said Tuesday. "If the members want to, I presume we'll rebuild. You tend to blame yourself. I've done a lot of work on that building over the past 27 years, and I find myself wondering if it was something I did wrong."

Kinney said he now is trying to determine where services will be held for the time being.

## Pembroke

Blaze Destroys Pembroke's First Baptist Church by Mario Moretto

A fire Monday morning leveled a historic place of worship in this small Washington County town.

The fire was first reported at First Baptist Church on Liberty Hill Road at 11:47 a.m., according to Josh Rolfe at the Washington County Regional Communications Center. The center dispatched volunteer firefighters from Pembroke, Dennysville, Perry, Pleasant Point and Charlotte.

On Facebook, Pembroke residents posted photos of the fire. Multiple photos show flames shooting up into the air higher than the treeline, illuminating all that was left of the church: its skeletal, wooden frame. Black smoke is seen billowing high into the sky.

Area residents used the social networking website to share memories of the church and mourn its loss. Efforts to contact the owners of the photos were unsuccessful.

Liberty Hill Road was still closed to traffic around 4 p.m., as firefighters from Pembroke continued to run water to the site, said Pembroke Town Clerk Janice Scanlon.

No firefighters were available for comment, but Scanlon said no one was hurt in the fire. The church, built



# COUNTY NEWS CONT'D

in 1865, was destroyed by the blaze, Scanlon said. "It's completely gone," said Scanlon, who lives not far from the church. "All you can see is smoke."

Pastor Gary Kinney has led the congregation at First Baptist Church for 27 years. He said he arrived at the church around 9 a.m. Monday and left around 10:00 a.m. By noon, the church was engulfed in flames, Kinney said.

"It's a sad day," he said Monday evening. "The whole building is just flat. It went up in just a couple hours."

Kinney said no one was hurt in the fire, and that firefighters believe the blaze was caused by old wiring. The church was home to a congregation of about 35 believers, he said, and was insured.

The pastor said he hopes the church will be rebuilt, but the congregation will need to do some soul-searching before any decision is made.

"It's a little country church and it's been here for years," he said. "We're hoping to rebuild, but that's up to the heart of the people."



## Penobscot—North

From: Dave Manzo

To: Darrel Fournier Subject: Freeport MSFFF Convention 2012

Hello Chief,

I just want to take a minute of your time to say what an EXCELLENT job you and your department did last weekend. I know there is a lot of work that goes on behind the scenes and that it takes a lot of people

making sacrifices to pull off an event such as your department did. Thank you all so very much, it certainly was appreciated! I look forward to visiting Freeport again in the near future (and I am sure my wife does too). The shop owners and towns people were very friendly towards the fire fighters and I heard a lot of positive comments from many of the convention goers.

Again, my sincere thanks to you and your department for a job well done!

The N.Y. fire fighter Mickey — just listening to him put a lump in my throat — I can't imagine what he lives with everyday. True grit.

A tip of the hat to Freeport Fire and Rescue.

David Manzo, V.P. Penobscot — North MSFFF

## Penobscot

October 22nd an alert high school sophomore spotted an engaged garage fire as he was passing by on the afternoon bus. His 911 call prompted a response and quick knockdown from the first wave of Penobscot firefighters. Mutual aid volunteers from Blue Hill, Brooksville, and Sedgwick arrived soon after and spent several more hours dousing a stubborn smoldering garage loft full of old clothes and assorted "stuff". This simple garage fire became complicated when the fire marshal was called to investigate the suspicious nature of the blaze. The complication factor multiplied when a hand grenade was uncovered. The State Police Bomb Squad was called in to remove and detonate the live grenade. Penobscot Chief Dennis Robertson and several firefighters returned the next morning to douse lingering hot spots. The fire came eight days after a mid-morning structure fire call in North Penobscot. The residence fire was started by faulty wiring in a heater. Fortunately, the owners were at home an able to initiate the fire attack with an extinguisher. Penobscot's arriving pumper was able to quickly douse the fire. The homeowner and first arriving fireman were on site at the end of the unmarked, one-half mile winding drive, to direct arriving engines. Again, Penobscot received mutual aid, from Orland, Blue Hill, and Brooksville.





## Sorrento Fire Department

On Sept 21st 2012, the Sorrento Fire Dept took out of service and retired the 1953 Mack fire engine, which we had in service for 36 years. I Joey Clark was 11 years old when we got the truck and my first job for the Sorrento Fire Dept was to keep the Mack polished at all times, which I did til the day it left. After much discussion and wondering what to do with the antique truck, the members of the Sorrento Fire Dept decided to call the Far Hills-Bedminster Fire Dept in New Jersey. This is where we purchased the Mack from on Mach 23rd 1976 the original owners. Two of the original members who went to the pick up the fire truck in 1976, BuddyTrundy and Kent Hastings (they both said they almost froze bringing the truck back because it is an open cab truck). So the far hills fire chief Brian Bassett was contacted by the Sorrento Fire Dept. to see if they would be interested in receiving the old fire truck donated back to them. The contact was made and they were very interested. The approval was made between the fire departments and the town council of Far Hills-Bedminster for the Mack to be put on permanent display in their new fire state/museum in Far Hills. After several phone-call arrangements were made for Chief Brian Bassett and Lt. Matt Edwards would come and pick up the Mack on Sept 21st. A resident of Far Hills heard of this and donated his private plane piloted by Mauro Matos which flew them into Trenton airport. A towing service from New York

donated a driver and flatbed which came and picked up the truck. Members on hand for the retirement and send off of the old truck was Chief Joey Clark, Deputy Chief Dwayne Clement, Asst. Chief Brian Clement, Asst. Chief Mike Parker, firefighter Jon Mickle, retired firefighters Buddy Trundy and Kent Hastings, Safety officer Dudbridge Taylor and also on hand to see the Mack off was 60 year veteran of the Sorrento Fire Dept Casper Clark. Sorrento's town selectman and town clerk Esther Clement was also there to see the truck off. An escort was given to the Mack as it left town by all the surrounding towns of the Schoodiac area Fire Depts.



Truck and members of Sorrento Fire Dept on Sept 21st 2012

## St. Agatha

Right place, right time, local heroes come to the aid of unconscious woman

Jenna Beaulieu – September 6, 2012 – Fiddlehead Focus

Sometimes, all it takes to make a difference in someone's life is to be in the right place at the right time and to be willing to do whatever is necessary to help, even if it means stepping out of a personal comfort zone to do it.

That's what happened to St. John Plantation resident Vivian Voisine Wednesday morning as she was going about the duties of her job when she happened upon a person in desperate need of help.

Voisine is a part-time employee of St. John Valley Realty and was collecting rent payments at a housing complex in St. Agatha on the morning of Sept. 5 when the groundskeeper frantically approached her and asked her to call 911. A tenant had found another tenant, a 59-year-old woman, who lives alone, unconscious in her apartment.

Voisine called 911 and explained the situation and symptoms. The operator instructed Voisine to do chest compressions while waiting for an ambulance. Voisine, with the help of Bill Warner of St. Agatha, was able to perform chest compressions on the woman for the 23

minutes it took for Fort Kent-based EMTs to arrive at the scene.

Voisine said, "I did what I had to do. I have to credit the 911 operator. She told me everything to do for over an hour."

Ambulance Service Incorporated Assistant Director Gary Gardner said the perceived time of an hour is common in emergency events, but the actual time to reach the woman was 23 minutes, according to police logs.

Voisine had no previous CPR or first aid training. She relied on the operator's instructions and was able to take breaks by switching off with Warner.

"Thank God I had another person there to help me through it," she said.

Other than having a few sore muscles the following morning, Voisine was feeling pretty good about being able to help someone in need.

She said, "My soreness today is nothing. If I was able to help her, that's all that matters." She added, "If somebody's in need, you do what you have to do. The 911 operator told me right off that I had to take care of this, and I wanted to do it. It was all about being at the right place at the right time."

Voisine said that her heroic act was a product of the overall generosity and compassion that all St. John Valley residents would show towards their fellow community members.

Her last update on the woman's condition came on Wednesday evening around 8 p.m.

Voisine said, "They don't know what happened to her. She's on a respirator and has been transferred to Bangor. I hope it all turns out well."

## Surry

Event: A little girls wish to pay forward...

A little over 6 years ago, just before her 6th birthday, my granddaughter Sherri Hill became sick, she had a hard time moving her right foot. After a CTscan at the Blue Hill Hospital, a large black spot was located in her brain. Lifeflighted was called to transport her to Portland's Barbara Bush Children's Hospital where once landing she was on the operating table within a ½ hour.

After a successful operation, three months of radiation therapy things were looking good, but Sherri would live w/this cancer for the rest of her life. About 5 years ago Sherri and her family were granted a wish by Make a Wish of Maine. Sherri's wish was to have a money, she's loved monkeys all of her life, but because that could not be granted she picked a trip to Disneyland. The family had a great time.

The it happened again, 5 years to the week, the cancer was back, another surgery. Then this last summer

Sherri and her Mom, Amanda my oldest daughter, were talking. Sherri said she'd like to do the annual Make a Wish walk in Ellsworth this year so she could help raise money for another child to have a wish.

One thing lead to another, Sherri started a Make A Wish team called Sherri's Monkeys. I was telling some of my fellow firefighters, members of the Red Knights of Maine Chapter 3, about Sherri, her wish to raise some money so another child could have a wish.

Well the saying is you build it and they will come. The Red Knights, in conjunction with my Fire Department, the Surry Volunteer FD, started talking about a Motorcycle Ride for Sherri's Monkeys and Make-A-Wish. A date was picked, Oct 6th 2012. Media was alerted, WABI TV5 sent a crew to interview all involved and did several features on it's news broadcasts. The Ellsworth American did a feature article about Sherri and her adventure battling cancer. The stage was set...

The weather forecast wasn't the brightest but as the morning activities got started, they came. Brother and Sister Red Knights, Blue Knights, United Bikers of Maine, the Elks Rides and people that just wanted to ride for a great cause.

Over 30 bikes, over 50riders gathered at the Surry Firehouse. The ride went from the Surry Station to the Castine Town Landing, through Orland and back to Surry for a cookout. A large group of people cheered as the ride returned, and the cookout began. Local Girl Scouts scooped out ice cream, Surry FD members and friends cooked food and Sherri and the Red Knights sold raffle tickets.

When the day was done over \$1500.00 was raised for Sherri's Monkeys and Make-A-Wish of Maine. Firemen, Law Enforcement, and just plain folks had a fantastic day of fun and fellowship. As things wound down it was decided this was going to be the 1st Annual Sherri's Monkeys Make-A-Wish of Maine's Annual Ride. Please look for more information to come out as the dates and times for the 2013 Ride.

If you are interested in donating to "Make-A-Wish of Maine" in the name of Sherri's Monkey you can send your donation to : Michael Locke, Chief; Surry Volunteer Fire Department; PO Box 147; Surry, Me 04684 and I will see that Make-A-Wish of Maine gets your donation. I'd like to thank the Red Knights Chapter #3 for all their hard work, my Department, the Town of Surry and everyone else that helped make this an OUTSTANDING day! I hope you join is next year for the 2nd Annual Ride.

Sincerely,

Chief Michael Locke, Surry Volunteer Fire Department

## Van Buren

Van Buren welcomes familiar face as new fire chief

Jenna Beaulieu - Fiddlehead Focus

The Van Buren Fire Department welcomed Brian Caron

as a new fire chief in July 2012.

Caron replaced former Chief Dana Violette who had served for 10 years and decided to step down due to his full-time employment with the Van Buren Light and Power Company, according to Caron. Violette is staying on with the department as a regular firefighter.

Caron has been involved with the department since October 1992. Caron said, "I started on the department in October 1992, just out of the blue. Mr. Chanel Bouchard, a past fire chief of 40 years, had come to the grocery store where I was bagging and stocking the shelves and told me that I should go to the station that night to attend training."

He continued, "I had no idea what I was getting into. It was a full blown PUMPS 1 certification class. From there it was history."

According to Caron, he became the safety officer in 2000. After a brief stint as the safety officer, he became a captain until 2002, when he was promoted to Assistant Chief.

He remained Assistant Chief until October 2010. Fire Chief Violette created a new Deputy Chief position for him because he was "doing a lot of his leg work, setting up trainings, etc. He didn't have enough time [to do it] since he was working out of town," said Caron.

As a self-employed carpenter, Caron had more a flexible schedule and was able to attend most of the fire calls.

"I love what I'm doing," Caron said, "and it makes it a whole lot easier when you have a great team that does work together. It makes everyone as a firefighter feel good about what they do day in and day out."

Intense work of this nature, that taxes both the body and mind, requires a strong support system.

Caron said, "The most important thing that a lot of people don't realize is that when we do leave our families to attend the long night meetings and trainings and fire calls, we must have the support from our spouses or significant others. That will either make you or break you as a firefighter."

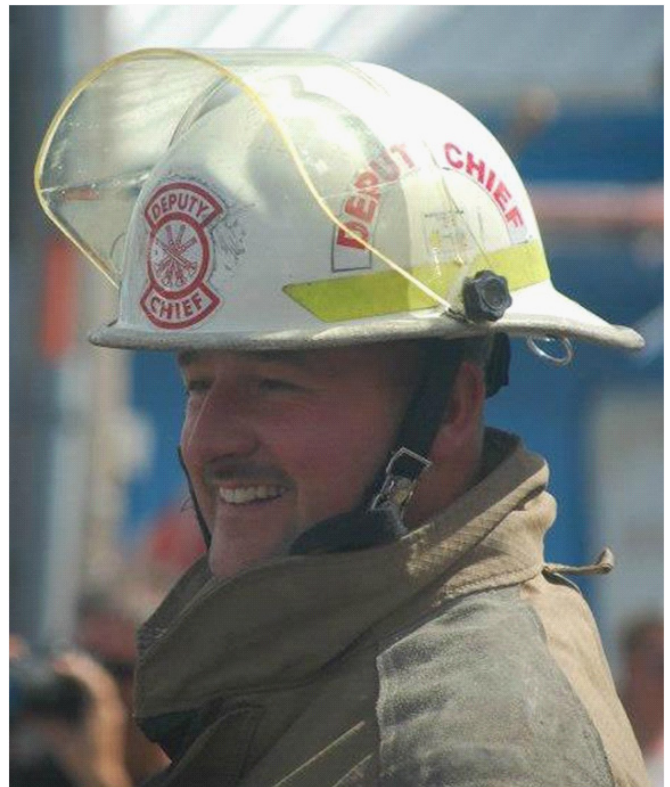
Caron's support system is very important to him. He said, "Fortunately, I have a wonderful wife of 11 years and two great daughters that support what I've loved to do for the past 20 years. I do thank them for that."

Caron is a familiar face for his fellow Van Buren community members. He was born and raised in Van Buren and has never lived outside of the town.

So far this year, the Van Buren Fire Department has responded to 38 calls. The yearly average is 50 calls. Since Caron became Chief, the fire department has also replaced a fire engine.

When Caron is not responding to calls and handling the other responsibilities of Chief, he enjoys hunting, riding his four-wheeler with his family, and being outdoors.

The Van Buren Fire Department, established in 1903, is a paid-per-call municipal fire department. Non-emergency callers can reach them at 868-2800. For emergencies, always dial 911.



**A NEW LEADER, A FAMILIAR FACE** - Brian Caron of Van Buren became Fire Chief in July 2012 after serving for the department for 20 years. A former fire chief recruited him while he was bagging groceries at a local store. He loves being a firefighter and credits his team for all working together. So far this year the fire department has responded to 38 calls. The department responds to an average of 50 calls per year. - Contributed image

## Vinalhaven

We want to thank the MSFFF for the trip to Vinalhaven. We had an excellent time this weekend. We had a guided tour of the island, a special thanks Capt. Clarence Conway for the tours of the Vinalhaven station, the island and the Steamer. We would also like to thank Jeannie Conway for all the information on where to go on the island and places to see along with the excellence company of her family and friends. We had two excellence meals at **The Harbor Gawker, The Haven Restaurant, the Sand Bar and a special thanks to Tidewater Motel & Gathering Place** for the lodging. The plane ride with Penobscot Island Air was excellent! Over all we had a great time in Vinalhaven

Sincerely, Eric & Debbie Webster

# COUNTY NEWS CONT'D

## Waterford

Nearly 60 firefighters from five Western Maine towns battled an overnight blaze that leveled a three-story home, leaving a couple and their three children homeless. "We woke up to the smell of smoke and when we got downstairs there was fire creeping up the outside wall.

MacDonald and his wife, Christina, immediately roused their three children and his sister-in-law, who was staying with the family while looking for an apartment. He said the entire family made it out before he braved going to the basement to turn on an outside hose in hopes of dousing the fire.

MacDonald said there were fire detectors in the wooden home — including one that was hard-wired — but they did not alert the family to the blaze. He said there was no electricity when he went to the basement to turn on the outside water supply, which is why he believed the hard-wired smoke-detector failed.

MacDonald said the fire was moving too fast for his garden hose and he eventually joined his family outside.

Waterford fire Chief Adrien Morin said the fire at 53 Sweden Road was reported shortly after 1 a.m. Sunday morning. He said the structure and attached building were fully engulfed by the time crews arrived on the scene.

Morin said the family lost everything as a result of the blaze. He said firefighters from Waterford were assisted by Norway, Bridgton, Stoneham and Harrison.

MacDonald said the couple moved to Sweden Road nearly six years ago and worked ever since on renovating their beloved home. In fact, both of the couple's sons were actually born in the home.

He said Sunday night he was overwhelmed by the outpouring of support from the Waterford community. He said neighbors and community members stopped by all day to help the family and offer assistance.

For Waterford Assistant Fire Chief Bill Haynes the fire was a bit more personal than most. The MacDonald's home — built sometime between 1850 and 1880 according to town records — was the childhood home of his father. It was also the home bought as a wedding gift for his grandparents, Harry and Carrie (Hamlin) Haynes, in 1915 by his great-grandfather.

Haynes said Fire Department officials hope to determine a cause of the blaze, but added it would be difficult due to the level of damage to the structure. Very little was left untouched by the flames, Haynes said.

MacDonald said his father-in-law discovered what he considers a small miracle amid the rubble and ashes Sunday. One tiny section of the home — no more than 3 feet by 4 feet — was charred by flames, but not completely destroyed. From that small section, just moments before it collapsed, MacDonald's father-in-law was able to retrieve a wedding band that belonged

to MacDonald's late father, an envelope containing cash for the month's bills and some family photo albums.

"I got everything that I needed out of that house," MacDonald said. "My loved ones are all safe, and I appreciate everyone so much more today."



## Waterville

On October 2nd, at 4:10 pm Waterville Fire Department responded for a reported structure fire at 19 Western Avenue. Waterville responded with one Rescue, two Engines and a Tower truck.

Fire Chief David LaFountain was first off one scene and reported heavy smoke showing from a 2½ story wood frame building. Chief LaFountain called for an "All Hands" and had mutual aid from Winslow Fire to also respond. The building was occupied at the time of the fire, but all occupants were out of the building upon arrival of the fire units. With shortage of man power on scene, Chief LaFountain called for Oakland

# COUNTY NEWS CONT'D

Fire for additional personal. The tenant of the apartment where the fire started was not at home when the fire broke out. Other tenants were alerted to the fire by the smoke detector. Two cats, two pet Rats and a dog was rescued from the fire.

The fire started in a second floor apartment, with heavy damage to the room of fire origin. Smoke and heat damage was sustained to other rooms and on the first floor. The fire was ruled as accidental by the Fire Marshall Ken MacMatser and Waterville Fire Investigator Lt John Gromek. They had found were multiple electrical items were plugged into an extension cord near a bed, but was not able to determine which device actually caused the fire. The building owner has the building insures, but the tenants did not have renter insurance.

No one was injured in the fire and all of the tenants have places to stay. The Red Cross came in to assist those tenants who needed to assistance.



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By James M. Dalton &  
Peter Van Dorpe

# Danger Down

Recent live fire tests reveal  
scary truth about basement fires.

# BELOW

**N**umerous firefighter fatalities, injuries and near misses have occurred in residential buildings due to a fire's rapid spread through areas with unprotected wood construction or the collapse of unprotected dimensional lumber and/or lightweight wood structural assemblies. In response, the Fire Research Group at Underwriters Laboratories (UL) completed a multi-year research project in 2012 that was funded through the National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Grant Program. Several research organizations, product manufacturers and fire-service representatives worked together on this project, including UL, NIST's Fire Research Division, Michigan State University, the Chicago Fire Department and the Phoenix Fire Department.

The study investigated the hazards associated with residential flooring systems. Its objective was to enhance firefighter safety by improving our understanding of how residential flooring systems respond when exposed to fire conditions. The research used full-scale, live-fire testing to examine fire dynamics and structural performance differences between conventional dimensional lumber and modern lightweight wood-floor assemblies during basement-fire scenarios. In this article, we provide several tactical considerations gleaned from this research project that can help firefighters operate safely during basement fires.

## The Tests

The experiments examined several types of floor joists: dimensional lumber, engineered wooden I-joists, castellated wooden I-joists, metal plate-connected wood trusses, and light-gauge steel C-joists. A series of full-scale experiments was conducted to evaluate individual floor joists, sections of floor systems, and floor systems as part of acquired structure burns. These included: 1) Structural beam experiments; 2) ATSM E119 floor furnace experiments with applied structural loads; 3) Field experiments in townhouse-style test structures; 4) Laboratory experiments in townhouse-style test structures; and 5) Floor-collapse experiments in acquired

structures. The applied structural loading, different ventilation scenarios, fuel loads, span of the floor joists, and passive fire-protection methods were controlled throughout the tests to provide important information about the impact these variables have on structural stability and firefighter safety.

### Findings

These experiments provided a wealth of data that can help firefighters better understand fire dynamics, the collapse potential of modern floor systems and perhaps most importantly, the inadequacy of traditional “predictors” of collapse. Throughout these experiments, the variables were systematically controlled. There were none of the unknowns typically encountered on the fire ground. The fire’s duration, the nature of the floor system’s construction, the degree to which the assemblies were built in compliance with current codes and best practices, the floor’s loading, etc., were all accounted for. Even so, there were no reliable or consistently repeated signs of pending collapse observed during the experiments. The historic “warning signs,” such as falling plaster, sagging floors, swinging doors, cracking glass, etc., are all late indicators under the best of circumstances; they are downright dangerous when applied to floor systems where the time between the first component failure and the system’s total collapse has been shown to be as little as 7 seconds. In addition, these and previous experiments have demonstrated that sounding the floor as you move through the building or using a thermal imager to gauge a floor system’s structural stability are not solely reliable when applied to lightweight constructed or unprotected legacy floor systems.

In addition, standard hoseline lead-outs and ventilation practices that involve advancing through the front door to the interior stairs while simultaneously venting the basement windows and the below- or at-grade doors will likely create flow paths that rapidly change the fire dynamics within the structure. These flow paths, combined with the fast-spreading fire that occurs when unprotected floor systems ignite, can place firefighters operating on the floor above in a life-threatening position with little time to react. The research clearly demonstrated that firefighters operating over a well-involved basement fire are operating in a high-risk/low-frequency environment.

### Guidelines for Making Strategic & Tactical Decisions

This research has helped clarify and quantify a great deal of the anecdotal evidence gleaned from incident reports on basement fires. It has also shone



Figure 1: Structural beam experiments.



Figure 2: ASTM E119 floor furnace experiments with modified applied structural loads.



Figure 3: Field experiment townhouse test structures.



Figure 4: Laboratory test structure.



a bright light on the inadequacy of many “rules of thumb” regarding basement fire strategies and tactics. Firefighters can use the information from this research to improve their understanding, safety and decision-making when attacking fires in one- or two-story single-family homes:

- Collapse times of all unprotected wood floor systems are within the response and operational timeframe. Unprotected (i.e., completely exposed) wood floor systems might collapse in less time than it takes most fire departments to receive and process the 911 call and respond to the scene (see Figure 5, right).
- The experiments highlighted two critical elements in sizing up basement fires: 1) identifying the exact location of the fire; and 2) assessing how well ventilated the fire area is during size up and how well ventilated it was prior to arrival. In the experiments, collapse always originated directly above the fire’s origin and the time to collapse was directly related to the amount of ventilation. More ventilation always led to faster collapse.
- Sounding the floor for stability is not solely reliable and should be combined with other tactics to increase safety. Consider creating inspection holes above and below areas of operation to monitor fire conditions that might be traveling below finished floor areas, i.e., in unprotected basement areas, within finished floor/ceiling void space areas, or above finished ceilings in spaces such as an unprotected attic areas.
- Whenever possible, inspect the floor system from below prior to operating on top of it. Signs of collapse vary by floor system:
  - ✓ Inspect dimensional lumber for joist rupture or complete burn-through (Figure 7, right);
  - ✓ Inspect engineered wooden I-joists for web burn-through and separation from subflooring (Figure 8, right);
  - ✓ Inspect metal plate-connected wood trusses for connection failure (Figure 9, right); and
  - ✓ Inspect light-gauge steel C-joists for deformation and subfloor connection failure (Figure 10, right).
- Thermal imagers may help indicate fire in the basement, but they are not reliable tools to assess the structural integrity of the floor assembly when directed at the floor from above. Flooring-system components and floor-covering materials are composed of materials that limit heat transmission through and therefore mask the fire conditions underneath or within the floor system. Experiments conducted by NIST and UL going back to 2006 repeatedly

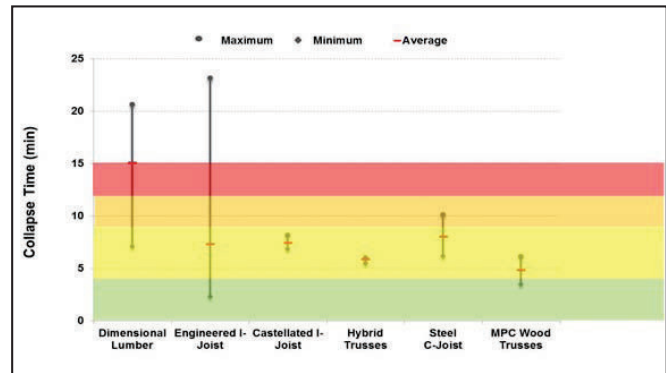


Figure 5: Maximum, minimum and average collapse times of field experiment townhouse test structure.



Figure 6: Acquired structure floor testing experiments.



Figure 7, left: Dimensional lumber joist rupture. Figure 8, right: Web burn-through and subfloor separation.



Figure 9, left: Gusset plate connection failure. Figure 10, right: Light-gauge steel C-joist warping.

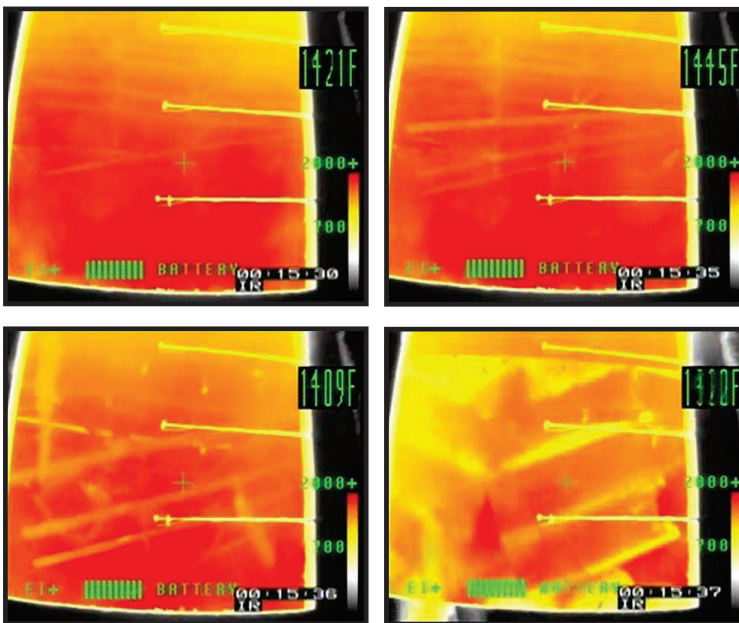
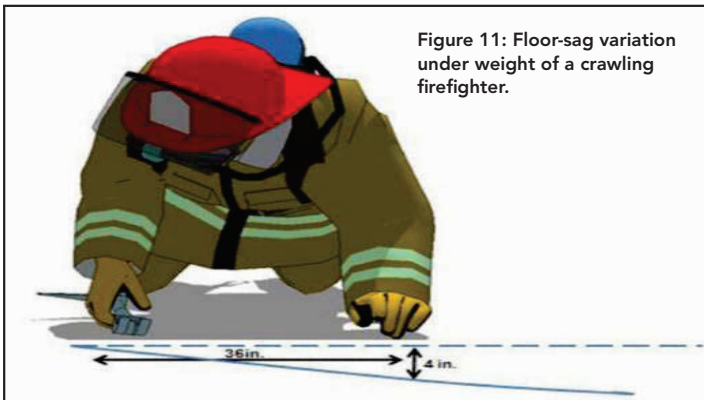


Figure 12: Metal-plate-connected wood truss progressive collapse within 7 seconds.

- demonstrate that thermal imagers cannot be relied on to assess fire conditions below or within a floor system when pointed at the finished floor from above it.
- Initiating an interior attack on a basement fire by means of the interior stairway at a well-developed basement fire can place firefighters in an extremely dangerous and untenable position. They will be in the direct flow path of superheated gasses that are exiting the doorway they opened behind them when they entered the building. Furthermore, they will likely be operating on a floor system that is at or near collapse.
  - Previous thinking has suggested that if firefighters quickly descend the basement stairs they can find cooler temperatures at the bottom. While this may have been true historically, and might still be true in the early stages of a modern basement fire, firefighters need to be armed with factual information to help them make decisions on the modern

fireground. The experiments in this study showed that temperatures at the bottom of the basement stairs were often extremely hazardous and conditions were just as untenable as they were at the top of the stairs. This flies in the face of the old rule of thumb that encouraged firefighters to quickly descend to the bottom of the stairs where temperatures were thought to be cooler (see video, below right).

- Coordinating ventilation is extremely important. Venting the basement via a window or below-grade door creates a flow path up the stairs and out through the door of entry, almost doubling the speed at which the hot gases traveled. This increased ventilation inevitably leads to significantly higher gas temperatures demonstrably capable of rapidly causing serious injury or death to even a fully protected firefighter.
- Floor sag, which is a late indicator of a significantly weakened floor assembly, may be very difficult to determine while moving through a structure. As Figure 11 (pg. 29) illustrates, a firefighter crawling above a weakening floor system may only encounter a 4-inch difference in elevation between the spread of his hands or knees. This may not be perceptible to the firefighter who is being bombarded with sensory data at the same time that most of his senses are blocked or limited by his gear and environment.
- Collapse can occur quickly and, in some cases, with little or no warning. Figure 12 (pg. 29) illustrates that during the well-ventilated townhouse-style test of gusset-plated wood trusses, the time between the initial connection failure (15:30) and the collapse of the entire floor system (15:37) occurred in less than 7 seconds.
- Charged hoselines should be available when opening up void spaces to determine if the fire has communicated to the wood structure. Fire is a pressure-driven phenomenon; a well-developed fire traveling through a floor or attic void space constructed with combustible wood can accelerate the failure of ceiling finish materials and expose firefighters below to an unexpected fire-flow path.
- Gas temperatures in the room above the fire can be a poor indicator of both the fire conditions below and the flooring system's structural integrity. Figure 13, above, illustrates that the heat and smoke conditions immediately above the fire location, but remote from the interior basement stairs, can be relatively cool. This relatively cool environment could unknowingly draw firefighters into an area directly above a well involved and comprised floor structure. In addition, rapid changes in fire dynamics can result from flow paths created by ventilating the basement and first floor of a structure. These flow paths, combined with the fast-spreading fire that results from the ignition of an unprotected wood floor system, can place firefighters on the floor above the fire in a vulnerable position with little time to react.

### Summary

It is acknowledged that there are times when firefighters may choose to operate on top of a basement fire to carry out their life-safety mission; however,

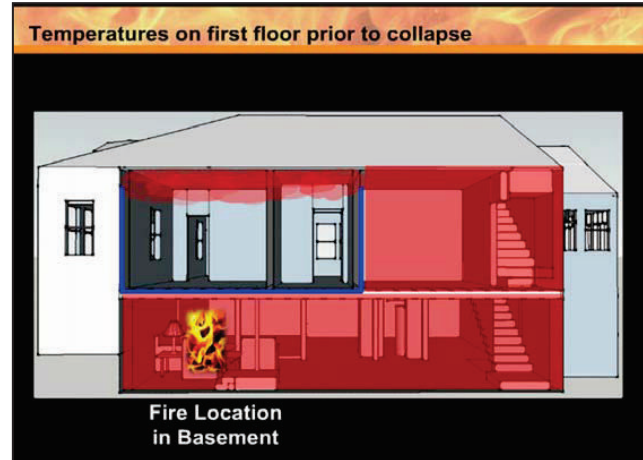


Figure 13: Reduced gas temperatures above basement fire area.



Click the image above to launch a video that shows the live-fire tests.

this decision must be made understanding the potential for catastrophic consequences. Alternative tactics, such as suppression initiated from a basement window or doorway, need to be considered in order to control or darken down the fire before committing crews above. Similarly, ventilation needs to be extremely well coordinated with the suppression effort. When a well-involved but ventilation-limited basement fire suddenly receives a sufficient supply of oxygen, it can grow too flashover conditions in well under 90 seconds. If the attack line is not properly positioned and adequately manned for immediate suppression, the fire will grow out of control and can put fire crews and civilians located above the fire in immediate, life-threatening danger. In short, this research leads us to recommend that: 1) At a well-involved residential basement fire, your aggressive interior attack should begin from an exterior position; and 2) You should delay or severely limit your ventilation until you are certain that you have already, or can immediately, put an adequate flow of water on the seat of the fire to achieve knock down.

A formal detailed report and free online training program developed for the fire service based on the information in this research project is available and can be accessed at [www.ul.com/fireservice](http://www.ul.com/fireservice). Click on "Basement Fires." **BS**



James M. Dalton, FF/EMT is currently the coordinator of Research and Development and a fire-service instructor for the Chicago Fire Department. Dalton holds an associate degree in fire science, baccalaureate and master's degrees in architecture and a master's degree in public safety administration. Dalton has served as a fire-service subject-matter expert for the Department of Homeland Security's Assistant to Firefighters Grant research programs titled, "Structural Stability of Engineered Lumber Under Fire Conditions" and "Firefighter Exposure to Smoke Particulates." He currently serves as a subject-matter expert for "Improving Fire Safety by Enhancing the Fire Performance of Engineered Floor Systems" and "Providing the Fire Service with Information for Tactical Decision Making," awarded by the Commerce Department's NIST Recovery Act Grant Program.



Peter Van Dorpe is chief of the Chicago Fire Department's (CFD) Training Division and a 32-year veteran of the CFD. He holds a bachelor's degree in fire-science management from Southern Illinois University. He has made presentations on modern fire-ground challenges at FDIC, Firehouse Expo, Fire Rescue International and the National Fire Academy. In addition to his work as a field instructor for the Illinois Fire Service Institute, he has been a lead instructor for the CFD's Fire Officer School and teaches building construction for the fire service through the City Colleges of Chicago. He has recently participated as a subject-matter Expert for UL's research on "Structural Stability of Engineered Lumber Under Fire Conditions," and NIST's "Evaluating Firefighting Tactics Under Wind Driven Conditions."

## Flammability of Modern Furnishings

Fire chief & UL senior V.P. testify about modern contents.

In the Summer 2011 issue of B SHIFTER, "Danger Down Below" co-author James M. Dalton published an article that outlined the dangers of modern furnishings. In a nutshell, these synthetic furnishings burn hotter and faster and spread more quickly, reducing the amount of time residents have to escape under fire conditions and drastically reducing the time to structural failure. The article suggested that firefighters should rethink "legacy" fire tactics when responding to modern structures with modern contents.

In July 2012, "Danger Down Below" co-author Peter Van Dorpe, chief of the Chicago Fire Department Training Division, and August Schaefer, senior vice president and chief safety officer of Underwriters Laboratories, testified at a hearing of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government on the extreme danger these modern furnishings present and the safety and effectiveness of flame-retardant chemicals today.

"I'll keep it simple," said Chief Van Dorpe. "It's stuff. And there's more stuff. And that stuff is made out of plastic with its own air supply: extruded polyurethane foam and furniture. All of this stuff is fuel, and we're packing more and more of it into the boxes we live in every day."

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to watch Chief Van Dorpe's testimony. [CLICK HERE](#) to watch V.P. Schaefer.



Have an opinion on this article and the dangers of basement fires? [CLICK HERE](#) to access B SHIFTER's new forums!