



# FLASHPOINT

Newsletter      Maine State Federation of Fire Fighters

Summer 2020

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## Membership:

**Your current MSFFF membership expired on June 30<sup>th</sup>, but membership benefits have been extended until 8/31/20 at midnight. Be sure to send your 2020-2021 membership to your County VP as soon as possible!**

For detailed information about membership benefits, visit our website at:  
<http://www.msfff.org/benefits.html>

Join NVFC! Click the following link for more information!  
<http://www.nvfc.org/join-nvfc/>

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### **Advertising with the MSFFF:**

The Maine State Federation of Firefighters is pleased to offer exclusive annual advertising opportunities to select businesses. If you work with a vendor who would benefit from advertising with us, send them here for all the information they need:

[http://msfff.org/images/PDF/RateMarketingSheet\\_MSFFF\\_2018.pdf](http://msfff.org/images/PDF/RateMarketingSheet_MSFFF_2018.pdf)

### **County News**

## *Androscoggin County*



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## Durham Fire Rescue:



Durham Fire and Rescue would like to recognize the newly hired Per Diem hired on during a very dynamic time in Public Safety. Please help welcome CJ James (EMT-B), Devin Plant (FF/EMT) Bobby Mitchell (EMT not pictured) and Regina Venezia (FF/EMT)

## Lisbon Fire Department



The Lisbon Fire Department would like to congratulate Firefighter Ryan Robitaille for his promotion to the rank of Lieutenant. Lt. Robitaille is assigned to the ET Smith Hose Company.

Lt. Robitaille, has been on the department for over 11 years, starting his career as a Junior Firefighter. He was also the Engineer of Engine 1 and recently has been in an acting officer capacity.

# *Freestock North:*



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## **Caribou Fire Department:**

Caribou Fire Department responds to garage fire



On June 16<sup>th</sup> around 1840 Caribou Fire Department responded to a reported garage fire on the Bog Rd. in Caribou. Upon arrival crews found a fully involved detached garage that was spreading into the woods behind it. Crews were able to knock down what was left of the garage however were faced with a 3 acre woods fire over rough hilly terrain. Crews worked diligently through the 94 degree heat to contain and extinguish the woods fire in 3 hours. Crews were assisted on scene by Fort Fairfield Fire, Limestone Fire and the Maine Forest Service.



## Caribou Fire Department responds to 2 brush fires in one day



On May 14<sup>th</sup> Caribou Fire Department responded to Rt. 161 in Woodland for a reported grass fire that was spreading to the structure. Crews responded with E1, E2, T4 and 10 members. Upon arrival crews found a mulch bed on fire that was spreading up the siding of the house. A quick knockdown by initial crews kept this fire from spreading to the rest of the house.

A few hours later crews were dispatched for a reported brush fire that was spreading towards several houses on the Van Buren Rd. in Connor. Upon arrival crews found a large slash pile on fire that had

spread to the grass and was endangering several homes. Quick work by initial crews stopped the spread to the houses. Crews worked to extinguish the slash pile. CFD was assisted on scene by Van Buren Fire department and Maine Forest Service.



## Fort Fairfield Fire Department:



Around 0640 on June 28<sup>th</sup>, Fort Fairfield Fire responded to a reported hay fire in a storage Quonset. Upon arrival crews found a large amount of large hay bales on fire inside a storage Quonset. Crews worked with employees to use equipment to pull out the burning hay and extinguish the fire. Cause of the fire was determined to be spontaneous combustion of the hay bales. The damage is estimated at

over \$40,000. Fort Fairfield Fire was assisted on scene by Easton Fire, Presque Isle Fire, and Caribou Fire.

### Fort Fairfield responds to house fire

On June 10 Fort Fairfield Fire responded to a reported house fire at 16 Cogswell St. Upon arrival crews were met with a fully involved garage fire that was spreading to the house. Crews were faced with windy conditions that spread the fire quickly through the rest of house. The house is considered a total loss. Crews were assisted on scene by Easton Fire, Presque Isle Fire and Caribou Fire.



**Fort Kent Fire  
Department:**

Fort Kent Fire responds to house fire

On June 18<sup>th</sup> Fort Kent Fire department responded to a report of a structure fire at 35 Hall St. The department responded with more than 20 members, 3 engines, the Tower Ladder and heavy rescue truck. Upon arrival crews found smoke and flames coming from a second floor window. Crews were able to quickly knock down the fire and stop the spread into the attic. North Lakes Fire and Rescue provided station coverage.

**St. Agatha Fire Department:**

St. Agatha Fire responds to camper fire

On May 13<sup>th</sup> at 1740 hrs St. Agatha fire responded to a camper fire at 252 Cleveland Rd. Crews responded with 18 members and all trucks and were on scene within 10 minutes. Upon arrival crews found a fully involved camper. The camper was overhauled to fully extinguish the fire.



*Arroostook South:*

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LOSAP funding didn't make it through the special session and is on hold until the legislature goes back into session.

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## **Hiram Fire Department:**





## HIRAM'S FIRST FIRE TRUCK RECEIVES SOME WELL-DESERVED TLC

The 1937 Dodge Brothers Buffalo in the Hiram village station is the apparatus upon which the town's fire department was founded. The town ordered the truck in March 1937 from the Buffalo Fire Appliance Corporation and took delivery on July 27 for \$3455. The truck has been stationed in Hiram village ever since.

For years, the '37 was the only piece of apparatus in town and it responded to every fire in Hiram as well as the surrounding towns. The truck served for nearly 50 years as a responding unit into the mid-eighties when she was officially retired to parade duty.

During the Fires of '47 she was used extensively, pumping water from the Saco river all day and night to supply firefighting efforts and is credited with saving homes and businesses in Hiram village from the fires that burned much of the neighboring town of Brownfield.

Several years ago, Hiram Fire Department formed a committee to consider how best to maintain and preserve the truck. We discovered that perhaps the premier fire apparatus restoration service in the country is located right here in the state of Maine.

Firefly Restorations in Hope, is a hidden gem that does breathtakingly detailed museum quality restoration and refurbishing of prized vehicles and equipment, specializing in steam powered fire apparatus. Owner Andy Swift recommended a preservation process rather than a total refurbishing to save the original paint and gold leaf and maintain the well-earned character that came with its long history of service.

His team did an outstanding job. The faded dull red paint was cleaned, sanded and buffed back to its original color and shine. The gold leaf was touched up and cleaned where needed and the whole body was then clear coated, and the results are amazing!

The mechanicals were all serviced as well. Every system was repaired and brought back to original operational specs. The original wood ladder was cleaned and varnished, saving each

scar mark as badges of honor. A few of the trim pieces were re-chromed, and non-original equipment was removed. The truck now looks and runs as good as it did back in the in the 1940's. We just cannot say enough about the quality of the work performed by Firefly and recommend that anyone with an interest in historical apparatus look them up online to see photos of their incredible work.

We now feel sure that our beloved '37 will be here in Hiram for its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary and beyond. We thank the team at Firefly and we are proud to have helped preserve this important piece of Hiram Maines Fire Service history.

B. Pyburn  
Hiram FD

### **Mexico Fire Department:**



John Baker purchase our 1975 American Lafrance ladder truck several years back.

The truck was used to raise money and awareness for heart defect research. Mr. Baker has been the sole driver. The truck has 19,500 mile now, serviced every year and housed inside. He is open to offers but is looking for around 5K. The money from the sale of the truck will be used to continue their mission on heart defect & research.

The truck is in Leon NY about an hour south of Buffalo, still runs and drives very well.

For more information contact John Baker at 716-485-1197





Mexico Fire had four of their own graduate this year. (Left to right, top to bottom) Kody Moretto from Dirigo High School. Kenny Hill, , Sean Gould from Mountain Valley High and Noah Stickney, from Mountain Valley High School. Noah Stickney received his diploma a few days early because he had to be in Texas for basic training for the US Air Force.

**RumFord Fire Department:**



Congratulations Lieutenant Keith Bickford on your 25 years and 1 month of service! June 30th was his last day as career member of Rumford Fire and he intends to stay on the call force in the meantime!

*Penobscot North*



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### **GFD Training Article July 27, 2020**

Georgetown Fire Department resumed live, in-person fire training on a warm clear evening on the last Monday of July. This was the first live training for the department since March and the majority of the members were in attendance. The topic was vehicle extrication and vehicle fire suppression. GFD pumper tankers 1 and 3 along with GFD ALS ambulances 1 and 2 were on

scene. The session started with extrication of two department members from a late model Volvo using extrication tools including the Hurst hydraulic spreader, ram and cutters. By the time the victims were freed from their predicament, the car was pretty well demolished but good training was had by all! Following extrication practice, hoses lines were run from the

engines and, after several evolutions of fire suppression, the vehicle was burned to a crisp! GFD plans to continue live training for the rest of the year.

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**Jonesboro Fire Department:**

**JONESBORO** – Fire destroyed a home on Looks Point Road Sunday afternoon.

The fire happened just before 4 p.m. at 19 Looks Point Road.

Fire Chief Michael Schoppe said someone nearby called emergency crews and the homeowners weren't aware there was a fire until the firetrucks arrived.

Schoppe said when they got to the scene a wood shop was fully engulfed in flames and the fire had spread to the garage. He said it quickly spread to the house.

The two people who lived there were able to get out safely.

Schoppe said the main part of the house is still standing but there is extensive damage.

He said the homeowner did have a wood fire going in the workshop and that it appears that is where the fire started. Source: Fox 22 News



**Perry Fire Department:  
PERRY, Maine —**

The Maine Fire Marshal's Office said a man was killed Sunday morning in a fire in the Washington County town of Perry.

The fire was reported at about 6 a.m. at a home at 62 Golding Road.

Officials said they believe the victim is Bradford Preston Jr., 32, who lived in the home.

Preston died of smoke inhalation, but officials said more work is needed to establish a positive identification.

His body was located in a hallway outside of his bedroom.

The house is owned by Phyllis and Robert Murray, who also live there, but were staying elsewhere Sunday.

Investigators said the fire started in the home's ceiling. Source: wmtw8

*York North*



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### **York Beach Fire Department**

### **York Beach Fire captain retires after 48 years by Deborah McDermott**

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YORK BEACH, Maine – Capt. Mark Gay is a firefighter's firefighter, said York Beach Fire Chief Dave Bridges. Weaned on firefighting as a teenager, Gay is a "tradition person" who values musters, weekly bingo and community service, and who loves the profession so much



he has assumed local, county and state leadership roles over the years.

"His dedication to fire service – whether York Beach, York Village, York County or the Maine State Federation of Firefighters – is next to none. He always gave 105, 110%," said Bridges. "He's made such a significant contribution, for not just one year or two years, but 20 years, 30 years. I could go somewhere for something altogether different than firefighting, and lo and behold, there's someone who knows Mark. It's amazing how many people know him and he knows."



After 48 years of service to the York Beach Fire Department, 37 as a full-time firefighter, Gay officially hung up his turnout gear last Friday to begin his retirement. Perhaps unsurprisingly, though, he will continue as an on-call firefighter for who knows how many years to come.

“There’s such a great bunch of guys here,” he said one recent morning, greeting volunteer and fellow retired firefighters who come in daily for a cup of coffee and some camaraderie. “And it’s a lot of fun until the bell rings, and there’s a fire.”

There have been some memorable ones during the years he’s been at York Beach – like the night the Ocean House burned to the ground in 1986.

“I was working that night,” he said. “Back then, there was no 911, and people called the station directly. At 4 a.m., the phone rings and a neighbor said the Ocean House was on fire. I looked out the kitchen window and I could see it. The flames were visible from the station.”

The building was under construction at the time and no windows had been installed, “so nothing was stopping the fire from spreading. The place was rocking by the time we arrived.”

Perhaps the most concerning event for him personally was a morning house fire on Clark Road that he responded to with his son, now full-time York Village firefighter Jon Gay. “We heard there may be someone inside, so we went in, crawling around. No one was in the bedroom but we saw a glow under the closet door. When we opened it, black smoke poured out and I knew what was coming, “Gay said of the conflagration that soon erupted there. “I said, ‘We have to get out of here.’”



That Jon followed his father into the firefighting service may have come as a shock to no one. He's the third generation of firefighters in the family. Gay's father, Robert, joined the York Beach department around the time of the Great Fires of 1947, when much of northwestern York County went up in flames and about 180,000 acres of land burned statewide.

"My father worked at the shipyard and was driving part-time for Roger Young Oil. I remember him telling me that they emptied the truck of oil and put water in and sent them to the fires," Gay said. Gay himself joined the York Beach Fire Department as a volunteer when he was 18, along with some of his friends. Four years later, he was appointed a lieutenant, and he never looked back.

Early on, he said, he became involved in the Maine State Federation of Fire Fighters, and the York County Fire Fighters Association, and was soon assuming leadership roles in both organizations. He rose to the rank of president of the York County organization, a position he held for 12 years, and executive vice president of the MSFFF.

He said he's most proud of several initiatives he spearheaded during his tenure with the organizations. In 1985, he chaired the MSFFF state convention, which was held in York Beach – and which held him in good stead when he was the firefighter representative to the York 350th Anniversary Parade in 2002.

He said he is proud of his work on the state Firefighters Memorial on the statehouse grounds in Augusta. "It took 20 years for us to raise in the neighborhood of \$50,000 for it. Each county did some sort of boot drive, where people could throw money into a firefighter's boot. If you had a parade, you'd have firefighters walking alongside it with a boot. I would talk to each different fire department in York County and see if they wanted to do something. I'm probably most proud of that work.

It was erected in 1997, and there's a service every October, which Gay dutifully attends.

The firefighting service is not the same as it used to be, he said. Younger volunteers have family obligations, and the training requirements for firefighters has become more stringent. "It gets tougher to get people to join. We have one guy who goes to the high school and tries to build interest. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't."

As he looks forward to his retirement years, he said he really doesn't have any grand plans. He wants to put an addition on a house he recently bought ("in York Village!" he says with a laugh). And before

the coronavirus hit, he had planned to take a trip on Route 66. “That’s been put on the side burner for now, but I may do that at some point.” And don’t be surprised to see him at fire scenes as he segues back into a volunteer role.

Bridges said Gay will be missed on the full-time staff. “Dedication,” he said. “When you think of Mark, that’s the word you think of.”