

# FIRE LINK

• COLORADO • IOWA • KANSAS • MISSOURI • NEBRASKA • NORTH DAKOTA • SOUTH DAKOTA • WYOMING •

## President's Report

by J. Robert "Rob" Brown, Jr.

In the last decade, many have come to grips with the simple fact that the fire service "is" America's front line of domestic defense. Prior to September 11th, many fire chiefs had migrated into dual role positions in their community as both the Fire Chief and Emergency Manager. The events that unfolded on September 11, 2001, once again demonstrated to the American people that in the initial hours of the attacks, the American fire service was "the first responder."

Within days of the attacks, President Bush championed efforts to strengthen the defense of our "homeland." Within weeks, "Homeland Security" was born and becoming a household name. As the Federal government began the arduous process of changing authority and responsibility of many long-standing federal agencies and merging these agencies under the umbrella of one "Homeland Security Department," many of the States were trying to follow the federal lead by doing the exact same thing. And the fire service response to these moves? We got on board.

In fact, at the federal level and in many States, the fire service pushed the process forward calling for more integration between fire/EMS, law enforcement and emergency management agencies to enhance exchange of intelligence information as well as scene interoperability. The fire service has long been a champion of integrated incident management systems and in information sharing and we have welcomed the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). However, as of late, the fire service has had to fight hard to see to it that traditional fire service programs at the federal level are not buried in agencies with no knowledge or concern for the fire service. Chief Westermann (MV International Director)

and I met with several legislators in Washington, DC, on our recent trip to the Congressional Fire Services Institute's Annual Dinner. Probably our most fruitful meeting occurred with Senator Talent where we were able to discuss our opportunities and threats concerning the new DHS. Senator Talent is a true friend of the fire service and vowed to work on our behalf to see to it that programs such as the Fire Act are not disturbed and that Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP) money finds its way past the state emergency management agencies and into the hands of the first responders. But the message was clear – ALL of your Senators and Congressmen need to hear from ALL of you on this matter.

As a side bar to all of this, President George W. Bush has announced his intention to nominate C. Suzanne Mencer of Colorado to be Director of the Office of Domestic Preparedness, Department of Homeland Security. Currently, Sue serves as the Executive Director of the Department of Public Safety for the State of Colorado. She previously served as a Special Agent and later a Supervisory Special Agent with Federal Bureau of Investigation.

I have had the pleasure of working with Sue on Homeland Security and Fire Service issues during my tenure as President of the Colorado State Fire Chiefs. Many of you who attended last year's Missouri Valley Conference in Castle Rock, CO, will remember Sue as our Banquet speaker. She is a true supporter of integrated public safety, a true friend of the fire service, and she is an excellent choice to head the Office of Domestic Preparedness.

As I pass the torch to Chief Andy Rocca, I wish you all the best and I thank you for your support and trust, and I hope to see all of you at our 2003 Annual Conference in Kansas City, Missouri in July! □



## Calendar of Events

June 11-13, 2003  
MVD Public Education Conference  
Topeka, KS

July 9-11, 2003  
MVD Annual Conference  
Kansas City, MO

July 27-August 1, 2003  
Colorado Fire Mechanics  
Emergency Vehicle Maintenance  
Academy  
Greeley, CO

August 22-25, 2003  
IAFC – FRI  
Dallas, TX

October 16-19, 2003  
Kansas State Fire Chiefs  
Arkansas City, KS

July 14-16, 2004  
MVD Annual Conference  
Sioux City, IA



# *International Director's Report*

by Steve Westermann

Thanks to the Missouri Valley Division and the Missouri Association of Fire Chiefs for sponsoring my trip to the Congressional Fire Services Institute Dinner. It was a memorable trip for several reasons. First and foremost was the fact that in the 31 years that I have been wearing a uniform, I have never been shown or received the amount of respect that I received on the streets and in the halls of Washington, DC, on this trip. Everyone from the security guard at the door to the tourist to the elected officials all reinforced the positive reasons why we do what we do. It was a distinct honor to be in uniform.

We were able to do some valuable work with the elected officials, I met with seven Representatives and two Senators over the two days and along with all of the other fire service contacts that were made, we came away with a couple major victories. All of the elected officials were very knowledgeable on the FIRE Act but were shocked by the news of the Fire Academy's canceling classes and the proposed elimination of the Fire Administrator's position. By the time that Secretary Ridge spoke at the dinner on the last night, we were able to reinstate the classes at the National Fire Academy and secure the Fire Administrator's position as a Presidential appointment, thus making it a key point position for the nation's fire service. Secretary Ridge also came extremely close to saying that the Fire Act would remain the same for next year. While President Bush did include funding for the FIRE Act in the '04 budget, it is slated to be moved to the Office of Domestic Preparedness where the intent was to open the monies up to all first responders and send it through the state emergency management agencies first. Secretary Ridge, in his comments, stated that the FIRE Act process was a good one, and should stay the same. Our hopes are that the process will stay the same, even though the department handling may be different. We will continue to monitor that process.

The last item on the agenda was to discuss hazardous materials placarding. DOT, for security or anti-terrorism reasons, have proposed the removal of all hazardous material placarding. While some advances in the conversations have occurred, final decisions have not been made yet. We are working on some compromises that would change some placarding, we are making headway and we do not foresee total removal.

## **Government Relations Report**

For homeland security reasons there is a strong push to remove all hazardous materials placarding. While we have gone on record opposing such a move, the IAFC has also recognized that there may be some areas that we can compromise.

The small pox initiative has been severely slowed down, in part due to disagreement at the federal level between the two parties. There is legislation being discussed that answers questions of liability and compensation in the event of an adverse reaction.

The sprinkler industry, in light of recent fires, has prepared draft legislation for a sprinkler tax credit for those businesses that retrofit their properties. This legislation also includes an increased depreciation schedule to assist the building owners.

While we were able to keep the FIRE Act at the USFA this year, next year will be a much bigger and much more formidable fight. The FY04 budget is currently being heard and includes \$500 million for the FIRE Act. The intent is to have this funding to through the Office of Domestic

Preparedness (ODP) which will in turn issue the money as block grants through the states, taking off at least a fourth of the money as administrative costs.

The SAFER Act has been reintroduced through SB 544 and HR1118. This would provide \$7.5 billion to hire 75,000 firefighters. Because of the price tag of the current war effort and resulting reconstruction of Iraq, this bill will face an uphill battle.

In February of this year, President Bush issued HSPD-5 which requires the establishment of a national incident management system. This project has been assigned to the US Coast Guard, which uses essentially the same system as the fire service.

The National Strategy for the Physical Protection of Critical Infrastructures and Key Assets can be downloaded at the following web site: [www.whitehouse.gov/pcipb/physical.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/pcipb/physical.html). The document is 83 pages long and identifies the emergency services as one of the nation's critical assets. If anyone is fighting budget battles, it could be a good resource for the protection of your department.

## **Missouri Valley Report**

I had the opportunity to give a report to the IAFC Board on the MV Division and made a case for other divisions to take the time to conduct a strategic planning session and how it has helped our division focus. I discussed the policy book, the position statements, name change, and division logo. We are definitely still a leader in the parent organization.

It continues to be an honor to serve you in this capacity. If you have any questions, or are in need of any assistance, please don't hesitate to call. □

## **Want to host a MVAFC Conference?**

**Cities usually work with their Chamber of Commerce to host an Annual Conference. The next open year to host a conference is July 2005. If your department and city is interested, go to the web site and look at the RFP to get the requirements for hosting a conference.**

# MISSOURI VALLEY AT FRI FIRE RESCUE INTERNATIONAL 2003 DALLAS, TEXAS – AUGUST 22-25

THE MISSOURI VALLEY DIVISION HOTEL IS THE HYATT

*Missouri Valley members should share this information with spouses or significant others on partners' activities in Dallas. There is much more information at [www.IAFC.org](http://www.IAFC.org).*

Join more than 500 partners for fun, learning and networking. Your partner registration includes the Partners Brunch, workshops, all activities in the partners hospitality suite and the Presidential Celebration. In addition, you can attend the general sessions and explore the exhibit floor. The Partners Program will be held at the Wyndham Anatole and the Convention Center.

#### Home Depot University

Are you a weekend warrior? Have you started a project you can't finish? Do you know which end of a hammer to use? Arm yourself with knowledge –come join us for "Home Depot University" and learn the nuts and bolts of do-it-yourself home improvement! This program

will offer you friendly down-to-earth instruction on practically every design topic including decorative painting techniques, hanging wallpaper, using drills and actual hands-on faux painting. This is your chance to learn from the experts, have fun and take home some useful information!

#### Joint Partners Program The Fine Art of Small Talk

Join Debra Fine, a former engineer, now nationally recognized as a speaker and author for her entertaining, educational, and interactive presentation. Participate with other fire chiefs and their partners for a session focused on improving our conversational skills. Together we'll laugh, learn and leave with insightful and informative tips and techniques. Learning objectives include: gaining the tools to break barriers, develop rapport and prepare for successful conversation; developing the ability to make every encounter, professional or social, a comfort-

able, one, to turn every conversation into an opportunity for success; feeling more at ease at parties, banquets, receptions and networking events.

#### Partners Brunch Dare to Repair Julie Sussman and Stephanie Glakas Tenet Hosted by Susan Bruegman Sunday, August 24, 2003

Come hear the great advice from the authors of *Dare to Repair*, a non-nonsense guide written to demystify the home-repair world. After realizing that most do-it-yourself repair books were written for men, Julie Sussman and Stephanie Glakas-Tenet collaborated to write a repair book just for women. *Dare to Repair* is a do-it-yourself book that covers 75 common home repair tasks. The writers assume you have little to no experience in the home repair world, and lead you through each job to the finest detail.

## Kansas City Resolutions

**If any member of the MVAFC has an action they would like the membership to act on at the Kansas City Conference, they should mail that resolution to Resolutions Chairman Chief Larry Donner at 1805 33rd Street, Boulder, CO 80301 or email to him at [donner@ci.boulder.co.us](mailto:donner@ci.boulder.co.us)**

**NOT LATER THAN JUNE 15, 2003**

## FRI-Dallas

The Missouri Valley Division will hold our Luncheon at the Dallas Convention Center on Saturday, August 24, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Tickets can be purchased from State Vice President now. Get your tickets for you and your significant other to be assured of a seat at the luncheon.

**MVAFC Web Site:  
[www.mvafc.org](http://www.mvafc.org)**

## Economic Crisis Guide Mailed to IAFF Locals

The IAFF staff has released a hands-on guide to help affiliates make it through challenging economic times. Copies of "Surviving Economic Crisis" have been mailed to each affiliate. Additional copies may be obtained by contacting the Department of Labor Issues and Collective Bargaining at [laborissues@iaff.org](mailto:laborissues@iaff.org).

The guide was developed in response to the swelling numbers of IAFF Affiliates across the United States and Canada facing layoffs, staffing reductions, by attrition, station closings and many other critical issues.

The publication gives detailed instruction on effective approaches to successful problem solving. It tells affiliates how best to respond to threats to response systems, personnel, collective bargaining agreements, pension, health benefits, compensation, leave and hours of work. Action plans are also provided for various situations, including valuable lists of resources for protecting members. □

## Helpful Advice for Conversion with the News Media

**1** Remember the three "C's" to control the media: be **confident, consistent, and comfortable**.

**2** **PREPARE.** Practice two or three key messages. Rehearse the answer to the question you absolutely don't want to be asked.

**3** Always answer the final question, "Is there anything I haven't ask you yet?" with one of your key messages.

**4** Don't go off the record.

**5** Never repeat a negative.

**6** Answer the question the way you want. If you think the

reporter is asking you to comment on something controversial, bridge back to your key messages.

**7** Accommodate the reporter. Respect the interview times and deadlines. Return calls, even if the answer is, "I don't know, but I'll check."

**8** Don't guess at answer. If you don't know the answer, say you don't know.

**9** Don't make a bad answer worse. If you are rambling or starting to answer poorly, interrupt yourself and say, "I'm not giving you a very clear answer, let me start over."

**10** Never say, "No comment." □

## Colorado Fire Mechanics' Association proudly announces our 14th Annual Emergency Vehicle Maintenance Academy July 27-August 1

Once again the Academy will be co-hosted by the Aims Community College in Greeley, Colorado, the Union Colony Fire Department and the Colorado Fire Mechanics Association. Greeley, Colorado, is located on the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains just east of the Rocky Mountain National Park. Denver is one hour to the South and Cheyenne, Wyoming about an hour to the north by car. Steeped in western tradition, this rural community offers plenty of diversion for all. The classes offered are designed to provide current information for maintenance, service, and repair of today's Emergency Vehicles

and equipment. Classes are filled on a first-come, first-serve basis. Please include first, second, and third choices as classes have minimums and may be canceled due to lack of enrollment. No students will be enrolled without complete registration information and payment. Enroll early as some of our offerings fill up early on! **Registration deadline is June 30, 2003.**

For additional information, contact us at:

720.865.3850 (Jay) or  
303.478.4091 (Mike)

E-mail [tlkschneider@aol.com](mailto:tlkschneider@aol.com)  
[www.co-fma.com](http://www.co-fma.com)

### Web Sites of Interest

[www.firetimes.com](http://www.firetimes.com)

[www.NIST.gov/public\\_affairs/releases/wtc\\_05-07-03.htm](http://www.NIST.gov/public_affairs/releases/wtc_05-07-03.htm)  
(this is a report on World Trade Center)

[www.harbeck.com/life.htm](http://www.harbeck.com/life.htm)  
Newsletter for Fire Officers

## Membership

Help strengthen the Missouri Valley Association of Fire Chiefs and the IAFC by becoming a member of the 2003 Hook & Ladder Club

It's not too late to participate in this year's campaign but the deadline is fast approaching. The 2003 Hook & Ladder Club ends on June 30, 2003.

Take a moment to think about your colleagues who would benefit from membership in the IAFC. As you know, the IAFC has something to offer everyone from a recently promoted officer to a seasoned veteran.

Recruit just one new member and you will receive an exclusive Hook & Ladder Club pocket-sized message padfolio. Other great prizes will be awarded to members who recruit five or more new members at Fire-Rescue International 2003 in Dallas. "Recruiter of the Year" will receive a custom-made solid bronze axe!

Visit [www.iafc.org](http://www.iafc.org) to download membership applications. For more information, call Amy Hultman at 703.273.9815 x327 or e-mail her at [ahultman@iafc.org](mailto:ahultman@iafc.org). □

## Missouri Valley Elections

International Director Steve Westermann filed for reelection for the position of International Director for a three-year term and was unopposed. Congratulations, Steve, and thanks for all the great work you do for our Division.

Wyoming State Vice President Mark Young filed for election to the position of 2VP of our Division and ran unopposed. Congratulations, Mark, and we look forward to your service to the Division.

**STATE VICE PRESIDENT** – Each State will elect a Vice President for their State for a three-year term at the KC Conference. Elections are done by a State Caucus at the Conference. □

## Hometown Heroes Survivors Benefits Act

On Friday, May 16, the Senate passed S. 459, the Hometown Heroes Survivors Benefits Act of 2003, which was sponsored by Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT). The House of Representatives is considering identical legislation, H.R. 919.

The Hometown Heroes bill extends the current Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) Program to public safety officers who die as a result of a heart attack or stroke within 24 hours of being on duty, responding to an emergency or participating in a training exercise. Heart attacks and strokes represent a significant risk among public safety officers, accounting for near-

ly half of all fire fighter deaths each year.

The House bill, which was written by Rep. Bob Etheridge (D-NC), has more than 200 co-sponsors. However, it is critical that we get more co-sponsors for this legislation in order to demonstrate the overwhelming bipartisan support for this bill to the leadership of the House of Representatives.

The IAFC is requesting that all of our members write to their respective member of the House requesting that they sign on as a co-sponsor of H.R. 919, the Hometown Heroes Survivors Benefits Act of 2003. □

## Code Update

The Life Safety Code Committee of the IAFC will hold its Election of Officers on August 24, 2003, at the IAFC conference in Dallas. The committee is currently at work reviewing and making recommendations to the IAFC board on proposed Code Changes.

The NFPA and IAFC have been meeting to discuss drafting a MOU between the two organizations to give Fire Chiefs more input into the code process. If successful, the IAFC will have structured input into both the ICC and NFPA code processes.

The ICC and the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) have

jointly developed a memorandum of understanding for the purpose of describing the activities and arrangements between the parties necessary to facilitate their mutual interests in promoting the development, adoption and use of the International Codes, and related products and services. This agreement is meant to further the shared goals of both organizations to improve public safety, including the safety of first responders, in the built environment. The Missouri Valley Division will have the opportunity to appoint a representative to ICC committees. □

## Group Purchasing

The Missouri Valley Board is currently reviewing a proposal to join the Western Fire Chiefs FIRE-GPO program that provides discounted purchasing of supplies and equipment by departments who are members of the IAFC. Information will be available at

the KC Conference for departments interested in pursuing this option. Departments in the Western Fire Chiefs' Association have saved thousands of dollars by being members and utilizing this contract. □

**Missouri Valley Division**

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The Missouri Valley Association of Fire Chiefs is dedicated to supporting professional development of its members through educational, leadership, and networking opportunities, while serving as a liaison between State Chiefs' organizations and the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

## New Members

### A Big Welcome to our New Members

Chief Tom Fleming, Norwalk, Iowa  
Asst. Chief Tim Kolies, Rapid City, SD  
Batt. Chief Charlie Neubert, Eureka, MO  
Asst. Chief Elsa Tuttle, Central Jackson, MO  
Chief Eddy Hancock, Laurie, MO  
Div. Chief Charles Witt, Columbia, MO  
Asst. Chief J. Timothy Bonner, Southern Stone City, Branson West, MO  
Chief Daryl Evans, Elizabeth FPD, Elizabeth, CO  
Chief Michael Osborn, Leadville, CO  
Director Robert Lovate, Cimarron Hills, Colorado Springs, CO  
Chief Robert Slambaugh, Security FPD, Colorado Springs, CO  
Chief Don Bodene, Evanston, WY  
Asst. Chief Austin Worcester, Wentzville, MO  
Batt. Chief John Gamble, Chanute, KS  
Batt Chief Jerry Jones, Chanute, KS  
Batt. Chief Andrew Moffett, Chanute, KS  
Chief Dennis Phillips, Topeka, KS  
Chief Kirk Schuster, La Vista, NE

Chief Richard Minor, Platte River Power, Longmont, CO  
Dep. Chief Nicholas Laurice, Cripple Creek, CO  
Batt. Chief Bill Arington, Springfield, MO  
Asst. Chief Mark Rohfling, Omaha, NE  
Reg. Manager Dominick Kass, Riverside, MO  
Chief Fire Inspector Joy Musquiz, Independence, MO  
Chief Mark Hasheider, Cape Girardeau, MO  
Asst. Chief Jeremy Young, Buckner, MO  
Chief Bob Olime, Sterling, CO  
Asst. Chief Bret Kelcham, Worland, WY  
Fire Protection Engineer Marc Sampson, Longmont, CO  
Mark Bruning, Colorado Springs, CO  
Laramie County Fire District #1, Cheyenne, WY  
Deputy Chief George Platts, Mason City, IA  
Deputy Chief Lee Stevens, Raymore, MO  
Chief Jake Archer, Ozark, MO

## IAFC COMMITTEE SECTION AND BUSINESS MEETINGS

### Thursday, August 21

1-4 p.m.: Professional Development Committee  
3-5 p.m.: Constitution, Bylaws and Resolutions Committee  
4:30-6:30 p.m.: Apparatus Maintenance Section; Elections Committee

### Saturday, August 23

Noon-2 p.m.: Fire and Life Safety Section; Hazardous Materials Committee; Wildland Fire Program; Policy Review Task Force  
Noon-5:30 p.m.: Human Relations Committee  
1:30-4:30 p.m.: Terrorism Committee; Health & Safety Committee  
2:30-4:30 p.m.: Communications Committee; Transportation Emergency Rescue Committee; Industrial Fire and Safety Section; Code Correlating Task Force  
4:30-5:30 p.m.: IAFC Business Meeting

### Sunday, August 24

9:30-11:30 a.m.: EMS Section; volunteer & Combination Officers Section  
11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.: Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Section  
1:00-3:00 p.m.: Federal and Military Fire Service Section

### Monday, August 25

11:00 a.m.-Noon: IAFC Business Meeting