

# FIRE LINK

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## From the President

by Steve Westermann

As the first article prepared for the Fire Link as your president, I must say that I am humbled and honored to serve you for the coming year. I appreciate all the support and I pledge to you that I will not only work hard for the Division, but that I will fairly represent the Division's positions and viewpoints.

Over the past couple of years, I have enjoyed representing the Missouri Valley Division at several IAFC functions. While we have said this for several years, and at the risk of sounding rhetorical, I must repeat that we, as a Division, are well respected at the national level and looked upon for our position on various issues. At the current time we are one of only two divisions who have completed a strategic plan. We are constantly approached about how our annual conference can be so successful. I will strive to keep us in that leadership role.

We are entering our third year of refining our Strategic Plan. The final draft will be available by FRI in New Orleans and will be on accessible on our Web site. (Please visit our Web site and give us your comments or ideas.) We have greatly expanded the plan, particularly in the areas of membership services and communications. Two particular areas of focus are on our Public Education and EMS sections. If you are not a member of these sections and would like to be included, please

contact Chief Rick Beatty of Grand Junction (CO) FD for the EMS section and Deputy Chief Chuck Thacker of the Grandview (MO) FD for the Public Education section for more information.

I have also committed to attend each state conference in order to strengthen the ties between the Division and the State organization. This commitment not only helps fulfill the Division's strategic plan but also fulfills a goal of the IAFC for the Division to serve as the liaison for communications. I look forward to visiting your state's conference and the opportunity to see friends, meet new faces, to network, and promote the Division's goals.

I would also like to take this opportunity and extend my sincere thanks to Chief Mark Young and all of the Casper Fire Department for a wonderful conference. They did an excellent job of providing a well-rounded educational program and several fine networking opportunities. We also welcome Chief Young to the Board of Directors as Wyoming's State Vice President and Chief Clint Petersen of the Ames FD as Iowa's representative to the Board. We look forward to working with both of you. I would also be remiss if I did not extend our sincere thanks and best wishes to Chief Bob Taylor and Chief Frank Magsamen for their many years of service to the Missouri Valley Division. We appreciate your time and service to the organization and wish you both well in all your endeavors.

In closing, I urge all member to submit any news from your state to the Division's secretary, Mike Merwick. While we only publish four newsletters a year, we would like to enhance our Web site with fresh "new news" in a more timely fashion. Thanks again for your support. □



## Calendar of Events

**September 20 - Gering  
Nebr. Municipal Fire Chiefs**

**September 28-30 - Osage Beach  
Missouri Instructors Conference**

**September 28 - Graham Ranch  
Wyoming Fire Chiefs**

**October 4-6 - Branson  
Missouri State Chiefs'  
Conference**

**October 17-20 - Breckenridge  
Nat'l Society of Ex. Fire Officers**

**October 18-21 - Hays, KS  
Kansas Assn. of Fire Chiefs'  
Conference**

**October 20-21  
Iowa Fire Chief Conference**

**October 30-31  
Iowa Assn. of Pro. Fire Chiefs  
(also Febr. 2002)**

**November 17-18 - Pierre  
So. Dakota Chief Conference**

**Nov. 29-Dec. 1 - Breckenridge  
Colorado Fire Leadership  
Challenge**

**January 4 - Riverton  
Wyoming Fire Chiefs**

**February 22 - Bismark  
No. Dakota Fire Chiefs**

**April 5 - Riverton  
Wyoming Fire Chiefs**

**May 30 - Dickinson  
No. Dakota Fire Chiefs**

**June 6-9 - Pierre  
So. Dakota State Fire School**

# Casper – A Great Conference

The Annual MVAFC Conference held in Casper was super. The Casper Fire Department and the City of Casper went out of their way to make everyone feel welcome and at home.

The outstanding opening ceremonies with the Color Guard and comments by the host city set the tone for the Conference. What could be better than opening remarks from our favorite Chief, Smokey Dyer, who gave the keynote address on "Things We Can Learn from a Dog."

The other speakers, Daniel "Boone" Gardiner, Dennis Oniel, Steve Westermann, Rodney Slaughter, and John

Buckman, all provided ideas and information to the attendee. During the two-day conference, a highlight of the speakers was new MVAFC President Steve Westermann who surprised the audience by speaking in a FLAK VEST on the 1710-1720 hot topic.

Other highlights of the Conference were the New Member Orientation, the Rodeo Outing, the Barbeque, the

Buffalo Chip tossing contest, tour of the American LaFrance facility

## Conference Highlights:

- Membership passed a resolution to congratulate Casper on a great Conference.
- Membership approved the update of the MVAFC Constitution and Bylaws.
- Membership passed resolutions thanking Bob Taylor and Frank Magsamen for their service on the Board of Directors.
- Membership passed a resolution supporting the Women Chief Fire Officers and diversity in the Fire Service.
- Membership passed a resolution endorsing Nick Russo for 2nd VP of the IAFC in the year 2002.
- Warren Hanks gave a report on the status of the Fire Code development. No resolve between NFPA & ICC, IAFC Code Committee to make recommendation to Board in August, 2001.
- International Director Pottberg reviewed the position statements of the MVAFC and membership moved to approve the positions.
- Stipend was used the past year by Colorado, Kansas, North Dakota, and Iowa.
- Pub Ed Section is seeking more membership and will continue to jointly host a yearly conference. Information will be shared with other departments through the Internet and the FireLink newsletter.
- EMS Section Chair Rick Beaty of Grand Junction, Colorado, is seeking more membership, development of an EMS brochure, development of an Annual Meeting, and continued coordination with the IAFC EMS committee.

in Casper and the hospitality room that gave all attendees the opportunity to socialize and meet other Chiefs and Vendors.

The conference had 175 attendees and 30 vendors who did a great job of making the conference memorable. The conference was special for many when long-time friend and Secretary of the MVAFC, Chief Don Young, was introduced. Don was also proud of the host chief, his son, Mark.

The Casper Conference ended with a banquet and the swearing in of the new officers: President—Steve Westermann; 1st VP—Ron Brown; and 2nd VP—Andy Rocca. THANKS to Chief Mark Young and the Casper Fire Department for a super conference that will be remembered for a long time. □

## In Memory of Chief William Stewart

Chief William Stewart, long time Chief of Fargo, North Dakota Fire Department, and a dedicated leader in the Fire Service at the local level, the Division, and as an International officer, died on July 29, 2001.

Chief Stewart served as a MVAFC Division Officer; as International Director of the MVAFC in 1974 and 1975; served as IAFC Director at Large in 1975-1976; served as MVAFC International Director 1977-1978-1979; and served as International Treasurer of the IAFC in 1980-1981.

The gratitude of the MVAFC members is shared by all who have benefited from Bill's leadership and service to his community and to the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

Our sympathy and prayers go out to his wife, Mavis, and their family. □

### MVAFC Officers 2001-2002

President – Steve Westerman, Blue Springs, Missouri  
 1st VP – Rob Brown, Castlerock, Colorado  
 2nd VP – Andy Rocca, Iowa City, Iowa

### New State Vice Presidents

Wyoming – Mark Young, Casper  
 Iowa – Clint Petersen, Ames

# International Director's Report...Bob Pottberg

The Missouri Valley Division continues to be very active. Attached to this report you will find our updated "Position Statements" which outlines our position on various items of concern. We continue to encourage all divisions to develop similar documents, as this would help everyone on the Board and within the Divisions understand the thoughts of each Division.

The MVAFC continues to work on our Strategic Plan and the draft will be ready by our Division meeting at the IAFC conference. Our plan is supportive of the IAFC plan and that plans developed by the individual states within our division should support the Missouri Valley and IAFC plan.

In our position statement, we addressed the requirements to serve on the IAFC Board of Directors. I strongly believe that members of the Board should be five-bugle active chiefs of department. The leadership, expertise and integrity of our organization are dependent on this level of leadership.

The annual conference of the MVAFC was held on July 11-13 in Casper, Wyoming. The Casper Fire Department did a fantastic job of putting on the conference which included a great educational program.

At the Annual Conference the mem-

bership passed a resolution supporting the actions of the IAFC Board of Directors in reference to NFPA 1710 and 1720. The resolution further resolves that the IAFC Board acted in the best interest of the fire service.

The following is a partial list of activities I have been involved in since the last annual conference:

- Attended a retirement reception for Chief Buck Hartley of Shawnee, Kansas and presented him with the IAFC Life Membership pin.

- Presented an IAFC report to the Heart of America Metro Fire Chiefs Council on 4/24/2001.

- Attended the second half of the IAFF/IAFC leadership/partnership seminar at Big Cedar, Missouri on 4/30 & 5/1, 2001.

- Attended the IAFC Board meeting in Anaheim, California on 5/13-14/2001.

- Attended the NFPA meeting on 5/16/2001.

- Attended the retirement reception for Chief David Stonitsch and Asst. Chief Bill Hale in Osage Beach, Missouri on 6/9/2001.

- Attended the MVAFC Annual Conference in Casper, Wyoming, July 10-13, 2001.

Thanks to all Division Members and their work and support of the Division and IAFC. □



## \$10 MILLION FOR RURAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS

The Department of the Interior, which operates the Bureau of Land Management and the Park Service, plans to distribute an additional \$10 million to rural fire departments after the devastating wildfire season last year. The Rural Fire Department Assistance Program allows fire departments serving less than 10,000 people to apply for up to \$20,000 each toward training, equipment, and fire prevention. Interested rural fire departments should contact the nearest U.S. Department of Interior branch office. For general information on these and other federal grant programs, NFPA members may call the Congressional Fire Service Institute (CFSI), (202) 371-1277.

## ROD JUNIEL NAMED DENVER CHIEF

Roderick "Rod" Juniel, a 26-year veteran of the Denver Fire Department, has been named fire chief by Mayor Wellington Webb. Juniel has served in five of the department's six divisions during his career. The Denver Fire Department has about 900 firefighters. His appointment took effect on April 9.

## NEBRASKA UPDATES NFPA 58 ADOPTION

The Nebraska state fire marshal has adopted the 1998 edition of NFPA 58, LP-Gas Code. After a year-long process, the 1998 edition of NFPA 58 became effective on January 29. For information, call the Nebraska State Fire Marshal's office, (402) 471-2027. □

## Board of Director Meeting Highlights

- Board reviewed request of Nick Russo to have MVAFC endorse him for IAFC 2nd VP.

- Board discussed the role of the State VP in providing services to the membership. Hold two conferences in their State each year. One topic from IAFC and one local topic. Invite all Chief Officers in the State both Volunteer and Paid to attend.

- Board wanted the update of the Conference RFP to be posted on the Division Web site.

- Board discussed the new Display

Booth and encourages each State to use the Display booth at their state meetings. Secretary will ship Booth to the City where meeting is held.

- Board wants to get the LINE OF DUTY DEATH program from the IAFC on a disk and put the program on the Web site for departments to use.

- Board directed Secretary to list all members on the Web site.

- Board to have the draft proposal of the Strategic Plan for the membership at the New Orleans Conference. □

# ***CPSC to Announce Voluntary Recall of 30 Million Sprinkler Heads***

**F**airfax, VA—The Consumer Products Safety Commission is expected to announce the voluntary recall of 30 million fire sprinkler heads.

Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL) conducted operational testing on field samples of certain Model GB series fire sprinklers with O-ring water seals manufactured by Central Sprinkler Co. of Lansdale, Pennsylvania. UL found that these sprinklers may not operate because of leakage or may require a higher water pressure to operate than is available in some buildings.

Central Sprinkler Co. will make a

formal announcement regarding the voluntary recall. The company will simultaneously launch a Web site dedicated to answering questions about the recall at <http://www.sprinklerreplacement.com/>. Central Sprinkler Co.'s sprinkler recall hotline is 1-800-871-3492.

In 1998, CPSC ordered the recall of 8.4 million Omega brand fire sprinklers manufactured by Central Sprinkler Co.

Fire departments need to develop a plan to address this issue within their communities. The plan could include contacting each sprinklered building

listed in the department's archives.

Central Sprinkler Co. also will work to inform the fire service community about the recall. Central Sprinkler Co.'s main Web site is [www.tyco-central.com](http://www.tyco-central.com).

Although this recall is problematic, the IAFC fully endorses the use of fire sprinklers. Fire sprinklers have been in use for more than 100 years and are widely recognized as the single most effective method for fighting the spread of fires in the early stages. □

## **Retired State Vice Presidents**

*Bob Taylor—Wyoming*

*Frank Magsamen—Iowa*

## ***FEMA Begins Awards for \$100 Million in Fire Grants***

**T**he Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced the initial awards which are part of more than \$100 million in grants that will be distributed by FEMA through September 30. The first awards are for training, to be followed by grants for vehicles, firefighting equipment, personal protective equipment, wellness and fitness programs, and fire prevention programs.

More than 19,700 fire departments – volunteer and career – applied for grants this year, submitting requests totaling almost \$2.98 billion.

A list of grant recipients is posted on the USFA Web site at [www.usfa.fema.gov/grants](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/grants).

The first four rounds saw combined funding for all states in the Missouri Valley of \$3,715,585. More rounds will take place through the end of September. □



## **Nebraska Meeting**

**T**he Nebraska Municipal Fire Chiefs Association is meeting September 20 in Gering, Nebraska. Steve Westermann, Missouri Valley Association, has accepted an invitation to come to the meeting and will speak about the business of the MVAFC in the morning session. He will also give a presentation on the NFPA standards 1710 and 1720. The presentation is scheduled for 1:30 on the 20th. □

**MVAFC Web Site —**  
**[www.mvafc.org](http://www.mvafc.org)**  
**Check out the MVAFC Web site. There is more information than you care to know.**

# KC Fire Chief Gets More Than Just Sales Tax Win

by Steve Penn, Columnist

One endorsement that emerged amid the August elections in Kansas City went virtually unnoticed.

It was the vote of confidence for Kansas Fire Chief Smokey Dyer. Dyer has been fire chief for only ten months, yet he's pulled off something other Kansas City fire chiefs couldn't. Dyer was able to clearly articulate the needs of the Kansas City Fire Department to City Hall and to the public.

And in the name of public safety, voters heeded his message.

On August 7, voters, by 54 percent to 46 percent, passed a sales tax to improve the Fire Department.

In my opinion, the results clearly showed public support for the new chief. "Plans are moving ahead," Dyer told me. "Getting all this done will be a big job. But I'm pleased with where we're going."

Dyer said consultants have been hired to help select the computer-aided dispatch system that best suits the department's needs. The consultants will be sending out requests for proposals to prospective software vendors soon. As for hiring personnel, Dyer already has a process in place.

Although 135 firefighters will be hired as a result of the sales tax, Dyer plans on hiring an additional 175 firefighters over the next five years to fill current and future vacancies. Right now, the department is down 50 positions.

"There will be a lot more new faces around here," Dyer said.

The selection process is different now. The department is in the midst of conducting interviews for an eligibility list, names of qualified candidates that can advance to the pre-apprentice phase.

New recruits must pass a written test and an oral interview. Current applicants held interviews with department administrators Wednesday and Thursday. More interviews will be conducted today and next week. The best

candidates will be selected to fill the current department vacancies, as well as the 135 slots created as a result of the sales tax. The key to Dyer's success is the changes he is making in the training regime.

Beginning in September, training will be divided into two sessions. The first, called the pre-apprentice phase, will take eight weeks. Potential cadets must pass another written and practical test, pass a first-responder examination administered by the Kansas City Health Department and pass a physical ability test. Only after pre-apprentices pass those tests can they advance to the final eight weeks of training. That's where cadets learn how to wear equipment, climb ladders and use hoses.

Dyer has worked to make sure that the testing and training eliminates any discrimination and thus produces a more diverse work force.

Plans to improve existing fire stations also are moving ahead. An architect has gone over each of the existing stations, determining individual needs. "We already know what buildings need

to be razed," Dyer said. "We know what buildings need to be rehabilitated. We know which ones are a higher priority."

Now Dyer must determine the logistics behind the capital improvements. "We still have to determine which stations we can take out of service and still provide an adequate response," Dyer said.

In five years, Dyer wants to be able to measure the effect the sales tax money has on fire operations. Dyer wants an annual report generated that will show how the sales tax money affects response times, fire protection and emergency medical care.

Probably Dyer's greatest skill may be his ability to find common ground with the powerful firefighters union. That's not easy. Not when Dyer has other issues. He must persuade workers to steer clear of incidents that might cast the department in a negative light.

Dyer seems to have a grasp of all the issues facing the Fire Department. And in an amazingly short period of time. □

To reach Steve Penn, call (816) 234-4417 or send e-mail to [spenn@kcstar.com](mailto:spenn@kcstar.com).

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## West Overland, Missouri 1710

by Chief Wally Dawson

The Missouri State Fire Chiefs are very supportive of NFPA 1710. We must understand that these are standards and not statutes. It is up to each department to run a risk analysis and call load to see if they meet or exceed the standards which are set in NFPA 1710. Everyone's concern is four person manning but there are also other components to this standard that also must be addressed by each fire department.

The West Overland EMS and Fire Protection District recognizes that NFPA 1710 will result in dramatic changes in our industry. We are in the process of reviewing closely the standards set forth in NFPA 1710 and it is

our intent to provide maximum benefits for persons and properties in our district which will be efficient and cost effective.

I am in the process of finishing our policy in response to NFPA 1710. I would be more than happy to share this policy with other departments if they so choose.

I know that there are chiefs who oppose NFPA 1710, but we must remember that the International Fire Chiefs adopted 1710 and it is essential that we show our support to the International for their wisdom and understanding of this standard. □

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.

## **United States Department of Transportation announces the Haz Mat Safety Assistance Team**

**D**OT's Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA) has a comprehensive safety program to promote the safe transportation of Hazardous Materials by Air, Highway, Rail, and Water. This program is aimed at preventing an accidental release and being properly prepared should a release occur. This program relies on compliance with the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR) to prevent releases and on Emergency Planning and Training to mitigate the consequences of a release.

RSPA established a Hazardous Materials Safety Assistance Team (HMSAT) to make industry aware of the regulatory requirements to help businesses find the resources needed to comply with the HMR, and to provide technical assistance to the Emergency Response and Planning Community. Regulatory Compliance and Emergency Preparedness begin

with Awareness and Training.

HMSAT members are located in each of RSPA's five regions as well as Washington, DC. They are available to offer assistance and advice on any mat-

ters related to Hazardous Materials Transportation in any mode.

Additional information is available on the web site—<http://hazmat.dot.gov>.

□

### **Hazardous Materials Safety Assistance Team**

**Rich Keyworth**, Transportation Specialist, Central Region, Suite 478, Des Plaines, IL 60018, (847) 294-8589, Fax (847) 294-8590; Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota

**Pat Romero**, Transportation Specialist, Western Region, Suite 320, Ontario, CA 91764, (909) 483-5624, Fax (909) 483-5636; Wyoming

**Walter (TAY) Rucker**, Transportation Specialist, Southwestern Region, 2320 LaBranch Street, Suite 2118, Houston, TX 77004, (713) 718-3950, Fax (713) 718-3952; Colorado, Kansas