

# *The* **Bulletin**



*Publication of The Illinois Firefighter's Association, Inc.*

**Volume 67, Number 2**

**March - April 2013**

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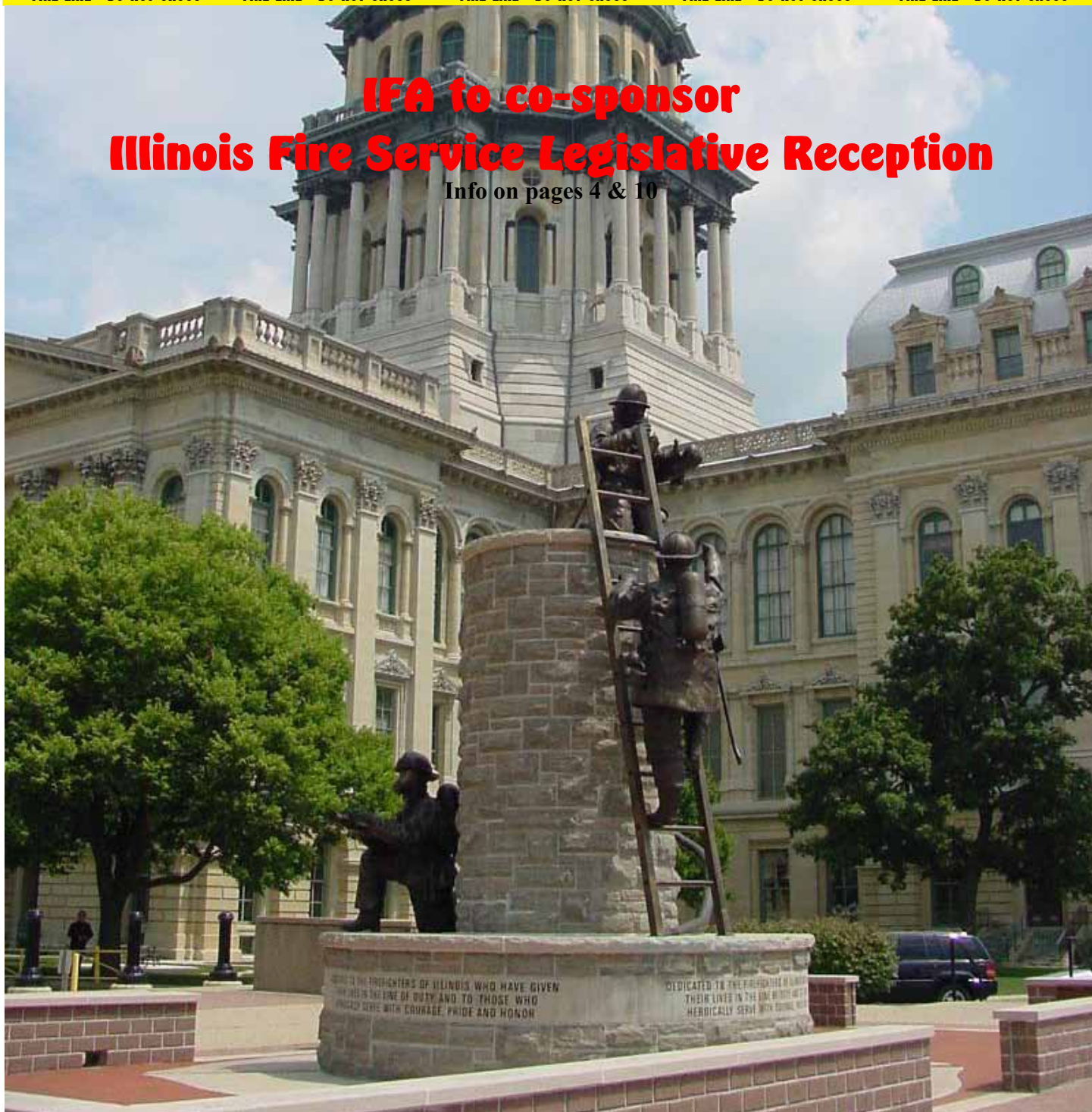
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## **IFA to co-sponsor Illinois Fire Service Legislative Reception**

Info on pages 4 & 10



## The Bulletin

March - April 2013

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## Table of Contents

Bulletin Going Digital.....	9
Chaplain's Corner .....	8
Dept. Spotlight - East Dubuque ...	12
IFA Dues Past Due .....	17
IFSI Update.....	14
IL Fire Service Legislative Rec ...	10
Legal Issues.....	20
Legislative Update .....	4
President's Message .....	3
Recent LODD .....	7

## Index of Advertisers

AEC.....	24
Alexis .....	19
California Casualty .....	9, 18
GNC Training.....	18
Howling Heros .....	22
NIFSAB .....	10
SCBAS, Inc.....	11
Steve Meyer Consulting.....	6
Towers Fire Apparatus .....	23
VFIS .....	17

## Bulletin Deadlines:

**January 15, March 15, May 15, July 15,  
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## Mission Statement

Dedicated to the advancement of the Fire Service by providing leadership. The Association will proudly support the community of firefighters in Illinois through education, training, benefits and information networking at the local, state and national levels.

## President's Message



Dear Fellow Firefighters

It's open legislation season at our State House and we are in full swing watching and waiting to see what new legislation passes. We are pushing a bill through that would support the Down and Dirty DVD program. It would be supported by the income tax check off when you file your income tax. We are hoping that this would continue to sustain that program in the years to come without using our foundation funds.

We are also supporting many other bills and initiatives that have a direct affect on our members that other fire service organizations are trying to get passed. This year, we are partnering with the other fire service organizations with the Legislative Day and Reception booked for April 16th. The evening reception will be at the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel starting at 6 PM. Come out and meet the legislators.

We currently are pushing to increase our membership. All of our directors are going through our membership list and trying to contact the non-members. We need your help in getting the word out, the benefits that we do provide, if utilized, could more than pay your annual dues. In most cases, departments just are not realizing what they are missing. We want to continue to provide the much needed grants and scholarships to all our members. In today's economy, we are all looking for ways to save money but missing the boat by not being an IFA member, could cost you money.

I want to touch on the two hatter topic again, that appears to be generating issues in Illinois. Many of the IAFF locals are mandating that their members get off their home town volunteer fire departments. Many of those firefighters have served on their home town departments long before they were ever a career firefighter. In some cases, their own brotherhood went against them with threats. Some have stated that they were doing their fair share and standing up for what they think is right. In some cases, the locals have negotiated language in their employment contract forbidding volunteering in their home community. Now, a firefighter could be fired for volunteering back at home. The Safer Grant forbids this type of language if they were to apply. I believe there is an ulterior motive behind what they are trying to accomplish, which only will hurt the fire service in general. At our last board meeting, we decided to stand up for those who wanted to continue to volunteer in their home community. We will do whatever is necessary to make sure volunteering at home remains strong, even if we must pass legislation mandating that desire. We do not want a division drawn between volunteer and career but that decision was made elsewhere.

We lost another firefighter a few weeks ago along side an accident scene on a interstate highway. The weather and the road condition were reported as bad. This type of condition plays a major role during firefighting/rescue operations. I do not have the final report on just what contributed to the firefighters death and the others factors that were involved. Again, this is a dangerous place to work during these types of conditions, let alone, a clear dry day. As a reminder, firefighters have the right to shut down traffic or do traffic control until police arrive. I would give great thought before arriving to a scene to make sure traffic is aware of your presence and that notice should be back away from that accident scene according to posted speed limited, visibility and road conditions. Many times, I have had to place an emergency vehicle back a half mile until law enforcement has arrived. Again, I do not have the details, but I do want to remind everyone of the dangers that we all operate under alongside a roadway.

*God Bless and be Safe*

*John Swan President IFA*



The Bulletin

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Margaret Vaughn, IFA LOBBYIST

## **LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION IN SPRINGFIELD SET FOR APRIL 16<sup>th</sup>**

There are over 40 brand new faces at the Statehouse this year. A record number of new legislators were sworn in back in January due to this being the first election cycle since the redistricting, which takes place every 10 year based on the census results. To get better acquainted with the new legislators as well as continuing to build relationships with the veteran legislators, IFA has decided to join forces with several other fire service organizations in hosting a legislative reception on Tuesday, April 16<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Abraham Lincoln Hotel located 701 E. Adams in Springfield. We hope to also have the fire sprinkler demo trailer in front of the Capitol during the day so legislators, staff, and others can become better educated on the benefits of sprinklers. The sprinkler trailer was parked in front of the Capitol last year and we did over 50 burns. We also ran out of material to burn as well as fuel but educated a lot of people in the process.

## **FIRE CAUCUS BREAKFAST**

A short breakfast meeting was held recently at the Capital Complex cafeteria to recruit House and Senate members to the Legislative Fire Caucus and to elect officers. Rep. Don Moffitt (R-Galesburg) and Rep. Carol Sente (D-Lincolnshire) were elected co-chairs. Legislators also received a packet of the bills the IL Fire Services Association agreed to at the fall Summit at Motorola. IFA joined with forces with several of the other fire services organizations in defraying the cost of the breakfast. Please encourage your local legislators to join the Fire Caucus.

## **SB 1545 - INCOME TAX CHECK-OFF for FIREFIGHTER TRAINING**

State Senator Mike Noland (D-Elgin) sponsored legislation on behalf of IFA to create a state income tax check-off to fund the production and distribution of the essential firefighter training "Down and Dirty Program" DVDs. For the past decade IFA Foundation has been providing substantial funding through grants to IFSI to make the training DVDs program possible but because of the downturn of the economy IFA is looking for alternative funding opportunities and came up with the idea for the income tax check-off. There was a similar tax check-off that the Iowa Firefighters Association worked to pass and they had joined forces with the Red Cross to help in their marketing efforts to spread the word on the check-off. It is important that the income-tax check off goes hand in hand with a statewide marketing campaign because a minimum of \$100,000 must be raised or the entity is no longer allowed on the tax return. The legislation passed unanimously out of the Senate Revenue Committee but we are thinking of possibly joining forces and amended the bill to include the Red Cross since they have a similar bill and we might have a better chance of not only getting on the return as well as raising more money with the combined marketing efforts. A final determination of which entities make it on the tax return won't be made until the end of session after the legislative leaders review the number of entities seeking to be included on the return and the actually slots available (there are a maximum of 15 slots on one time on the and the majority right now are already taken).



## The Bulletin

### **Below is an overview of the fire service legislation and its latest status.**

#### **HB 945 Short Description: RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT IFA - Opposes**

##### **House Sponsors**

Rep. Sam Yingling

##### **Synopsis As Introduced**

Amends the Fire Protection District Act. Adds a Section regarding rural fire protection districts. Provides that rural fire protection districts shall be governed by an elected, rather than an appointed, board of trustees consisting of 5 members with 4 year terms. Provides guidelines for 7-member elected boards to transition to 5-member elected boards. Provides for the continuation of terms of trustees appointed or elected prior to the effective date of this amendatory Act, as well as for filling vacancies. Further provides for the election and terms of trustees elected after the effective date of this amendatory Act. Provides nomination requirements for trustees. Effective immediately. – **House Floor 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading**

#### **HB 1206: PROP TX-MABAS PROP EXEMPT – IFA Supports**

##### **House Sponsors**

Rep. Carol A. Sente-Donald L. Moffitt-Elaine Nekritz-Dennis M. Reboletti, Barbara Flynn Currie, Kathleen Willis, Ed Sullivan, Jr. and Linda Chapa LaVia

##### **Synopsis As Introduced**

Amends the Property Tax Code. Provides that all property owned by the Executive Board of the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System that is used for the public purpose of disaster preparedness and response is exempt from the taxes imposed by the Code.- **House Floor 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading**

#### **HB 2247 Short Description: FIRE PROTECT CHIEF APPOINTMENT -IFA Supports**

##### **House Sponsors**

Rep. Patrick J. Verschoore

##### **Synopsis As Introduced**

Amends the Fire Protection District Act. Provides that no person shall be appointed to the position of fire chief who has been convicted of a felony in Illinois or convicted in another jurisdiction for conduct that would be a felony under Illinois law, or convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude. Effective immediately. **House Floor 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading**

#### **HB 3133 Short Description: SCH CD-SUBMIT SCH FLOOR PLANS – IFA Supports**

##### **House Sponsors**

Rep. Jack D. Franks

##### **Synopsis As Introduced**

Amends the School Safety Drill Act. With respect to the report produced after the annual review required to be conducted by a public school district, requires the report to report any renovation or addition to a school building or a change in the floor plan, any emergency and crisis response plan, or any evacuation plan of a school building and acknowledge that there has been submission of a change in floor plans, an emergency and crisis response plan, or an evacuation plan to the local fire department, the local law enforcement agency, or other emergency responders. Provides that, within 30 days after completion of any renovation or addition to a school building or a change in the floor plan, an emergency and crisis response plan, or an evacuation plan of a school building that modifies a previously approved emergency crisis response plan at least 60 days prior to the annual review meeting required to be conducted by a public school district, the school board or its designee shall contact the local fire department, the local law enforcement agency, and other emergency responders to set up a meeting to review any changes in procedures and protocols affected by building modifications as a result of renovations, additions, or changes in floor plans, an emergency and crisis response plan, or an evacuation plan. Effective immediately. **House Floor 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading**

#### **HB 3233 -Short Description: FIRE PROTECTION-TAX LEVY – IFA Supports**

##### **House Sponsors**

Rep. David R. Leitch-Frank J. Mautino-Donald L. Moffitt-Mike Bost

##### **Synopsis As Introduced**

Amends the Fire Protection District Act. Provides that on and after the effective date of this amendatory Act, a fire protection district may propose, by referendum, a special tax levy not to exceed .40% of the value of all taxable property within the district as equalized or assessed by the Department of Revenue for ambulance services. Effective immediately.

##### **House Floor 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading**

## The Bulletin

### **SB 1417 Short Description:** FIRE PROTECTION OPEN BURNING – IFA Supports

#### **Senate Sponsors**

Sen. Michael Noland

#### **Synopsis As Introduced**

Amends the Fire Protection District Act. Provides that the fire chief of any fire protection district may fix, charge, and collect fees associated with the fire department extinguishing an open burning that is prohibited due to atmospheric or other conditions. The fee may be imposed against any person causing or engaging in the prohibited activity, or the owner of the property on which the open burning took place. The total amount collected to compensate the fire protection district shall be assessed in accordance with both the rates provided in another Section of the Act and the fire chief's determination of the cost of personnel and equipment utilized to extinguish the fire. Effective immediately. **Senate Floor – 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading**

### **SB 1474 Short Description:** FIRE PROTECTION ACCESS BOX

#### **Senate Sponsors**

Sen. Terry Link

#### **Synopsis As Introduced**

Amends the Fire Protection District Act. Provides that the board of trustees of any fire protection district may, by ordinance, require the installation of an access or key box if: (1) a structure is protected by an automatic fire alarm or security system or access to or within the structure or area is unduly difficult because of secured openings; and (2) immediate access is necessary for life-saving purposes. Further provides that an ordinance enacted under this Section may specify the type or class of structure that must install an access or key box, but may not apply to single family residential structures. Effective immediately. **Senate Floor – 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading**

### **HB 1349 Short Description:** FIRE PROTECTION ACCESS BOX – IFA Supports

#### **House Sponsors**

Rep. Timothy L. Schmitz

#### **Senate Sponsors**

(Sen. John M. Sullivan)

#### **Synopsis As Introduced**

Amends the Fire Protection District Act. Provides that the board of trustees of any fire protection district may, by ordinance, require the installation of an access or key box if: (1) a structure is protected by an automatic fire alarm or security system or access to or within the structure or area is unduly difficult because of secured openings; and (2) immediate access is necessary for life-saving purposes. Further provides that an ordinance enacted under this Section may specify the type or class of structure that must install an access or key box, but may not apply to single family residential structures. Effective immediately. **Passed House – Sent to Senate**

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## **Recent Illinois Line of Duty Deaths**



FF Christopher Brown  
March 5, 2013 (age 39)  
Hudson Fire Department

Chris was a 12 year member of the  
Bloomington Fire Department and  
a 3 year member of the Hudson  
Community Fire Department

### **THE FIREFIGHTERS PRAYER**

*When I'm called to duty God  
wherever flames may rage  
give me strength to save a life  
whatever be its age*

*Help me to embrace a little child  
before it is too late  
or save an older person from  
the horror of that fate*

*Enable me to be alert  
to hear the weakest shout  
and quickly and efficiently  
to put the fire out*

*I want to fill my calling and  
to give the best in me  
to guard my neighbor and  
protect his property*

*And if according to your will  
I have to lose my life  
bless with your protecting hand  
my children and my wife.*



# Chaplain's Corner

Kevin Coffey - IFA Chaplain

## Called to Serve

How did you become a member of the fire service? The circumstances surrounding any one of us and how we found ourselves on our particular fire department are infinite. Perhaps, firefighting was in your family, or perhaps you just had a fascination with the lights and sirens of passing fire trucks since you were a child. Maybe, it was presented as an option at a high school career fair. It might be that you witnessed the towers fall on 9-11 and you just knew that the fire service was your destiny. And probably common to us all was a desire to help people in their times of emergency need.

Then, there was a pathway you had to pursue to get into the fire service. There were classes to take, trainings to attend, skills to master, exams to pass, and certifications to accomplish. There may have been a physical agility test, a background check, and an interview process. And then one happy day you officially put on the firefighter uniform for the first time – you had been assigned to your fire department – whether volunteer, paid-on-call or career.

So, here you are in the fire service and specifically a member of the *(insert your dept.)* Fire Department. I'd like to suggest to you that through the many circumstances and efforts that have brought you to the fire service, from a faith viewpoint there is one over-riding reason that you are where you are at – *God has called you*. The Bible says: *"I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received"*. So you are invited to embrace the awesome spiritual reality that at sometime, somewhere, somehow, God pointed at you and He said "I call you to the fire service!" And that call is to your fire department right now at this time in your history. Now, if you are like most of us humans, you want to know how – with all the independent decisions and efforts that you put into attaining your fire service position – that all along it was God's calling that landed you where you are at. Well, I'll tell you – I don't have a clue. Our calling from God is embraced by faith, and faith is a gift God gives along with His invitations to believe.

I have compiled a list of Faith-Affirming Invitations for Firefighters out of my own fire service experience, and this is the first: **God invites the firefighter to embrace his/her work in the fire service as a calling from Him.** So you are hereby invited – invited by God – to a faith that recognizes that He is the source of your fire service calling. And since He is the one who has called us, the Bible tells us to *"serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do"*. If you would like a complete list of the Faith-Affirming Invitations, just send me your email address and I'll get them out to you. As always, if I can be of any help or encouragement to you or your fire department, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Kevin Coffey, IFA Chaplain (815-457-2007, kc9526@yahoo.com)



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various Illinois Fire Service Organizations  
(including the IFA)

**April 16, 2013**

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# The Bulletin

## East Dubuque Fire Department

### Fire Department History

The East Dubuque Fire Department was organized in 1885. Three fires stand out as the most memorable that we have responded to. The first was a marina fire in the early 1980's that damaged numerous boats and docks. The interesting fact about this fire was that the majority of firefighters responded from a wedding reception for the fire chief's daughter and some were in tuxedos. Then in 1994 one building exploded in the downtown area and burned down a building next to it. The third fire was our only industrial manufacturer fire when the Chicago Dubuque Foundry burned down in 1996. Throughout the course of this fire we had approximately 45 fire departments assist.

### Current Activities

The East Dubuque Fire Department provides fire, rescue, & EMS first response service to the East Dubuque community and surrounding area. Due to our proximity to the Mississippi River we also do surface rescue, cold water rescue and dragging operations on the river and back waters. The fire department's apparatus consists of a command/first response vehicle, 3 engines, 1 squad, 1 boat, 1 air trailer and a 1939 engine which members of the department built. We operate out of 2 fire stations due to the fact that our city is divided by a busy east/west railway system.

The East Dubuque Fire Department is in the process of implementing a written testing and interview program for the positions of Engineer, Lieutenant, Captain, Assistant Chief, & Chief. All of the line fire officers are in the process of obtaining certification in the Blue Card Incident Command System. We conduct a 4 week fire prevention program in our public elementary and Catholic grade schools. We also stand by on the first day of school with our fire apparatus to remind people they need to slow down in the school zones. We conducted a yearlong process of working toward and implementing a 3 year Strategic Plan for the department. The department started the process with the assistance of Chief Craig Haigh in 2011 and implemented it in the spring of 2012.



Above: Station #1

Below Station #2



Above: First Day of School Below: Joint Training



Below 1939 Fire Truck



**The Bulletin**  
**Department Roster**  
Fire Chief/EMTB Joe Heim

Assistant Chief Tom Lange  
Assistant Chief Training/EMTP Mike Burds  
Captain/EMTB Mike Stone  
Captain Tony Lutgen  
EMS Captain/EMTB Kelly Peacock  
Lieutenant Dan Steines  
Lieutenant/EMTB Adam Roth  
Lieutenant/EMTB Nick Williams  
Engineer Mike Bigelow  
Engineer Michael Frank  
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FF Andrew Jones  
FF Bob Largent

FF Brandy Schmitt  
FF/EMTP Doug Merkes  
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FF John McCarthy  
Candidate FF/EMTB Kaitlin Frank  
FF Ken Lange  
FF/EMTB Manny Alvarado  
FF Michael McCarthy  
FF Mitchell Trotman  
FF/EMTB Mollie Roth  
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# Illinois Fire Service Institute Updates

Roger D. Lunt, Deputy Director



## Mark Your 2013 Training Calendar

- “Down and Dirty” Fire Explorer and Fire Cadet Training  
Galesburg Fire Department, April 13, 2013.  
Quincy Fire Department, May 11, 2013  
All training sessions are scheduled 8:00 AM through 5:00 PM.  
Registration forms located on the IFSI website.  
Contact IFSI East Central Representative for greater details, Tim Meister, 217-202-4760
- Tazewell County – MABAS 42 Fire School, May 4-5
- Management IV, Lockport – May 6-10
- All Hazards Position Specific – Planning Section Chief, Sauget, Illinois May 14-17
- 89<sup>th</sup> Annual Fire College, June 6 – 9.
- 11<sup>th</sup> Annual IFSI Explorer-Cadet Fire School, June 27-30
- Management IV, Marion, August Weekends (contact Fire Officer Prog. Director Lew lake 217-300-1808)
- Management II, Mt. Vernon, September Weekends (contact Fire Officer Prog. Director Lew lake 217-300-1808)

## IFSI Fire College

Registration will be open on April 8, 2013.

This year will be the third year for the event being held entirely on our campus. IFSI’s Fire College is still one of the most economic training opportunities available to departments. The classes include many of our core classes, as well as a repeat of a few of the new topics added last year. Register early because many of the classes fill quickly. Online registration is still the fastest way to register and your best bet to get a seat in the classes you want.

## IFSI Explorer-Cadet Fire School

On June 27<sup>th</sup> through the 30<sup>th</sup> we will conduct another annual Explorer-Cadet Fire School. This will be the 11<sup>th</sup> consecutive year that explorers and cadets representing fire departments from across the county come to the IFSI campus for hands on training. Tuition has been reduced to \$220.00 for those staying in dorms and \$175.00 for those not staying in dorms. This registration reduction is possible as a result of funding support from the Illinois State Marshals Office.

## Explorer-Cadet Field Training

Explorer-Cadet Field Training sessions have been a true success! We had an excellent turnout on November 3rd in Frankfort and at Scott Air Force Base in March; and we are geared up for two more upcoming events in Galesburg on April 13th, and Quincy on May 11th. This grant funded training has been an important opportunity thus far, and if the funding is there gain next year, we will look forward

to expanding our locations. This one-day training is key in introducing aspiring young firefighters to a hands-on firefighting skills lab, in which they will be educated on fire hose and appliances, self-contained

breathing apparatus, search and rescue, ladders, forcible entry, and hand tools. The objectives for this training will continue to follow the NFPA 1001 and Illinois OSFM Basic Firefighter objectives

## Cornerstone Program

The Cornerstone Program continues to be the best way for IFSI to deliver classes at no-charge to fire departments around the state. IFSI’s Regional Representatives are the conduits for class requests and information about training programs. Please applies when requesting a Cornerstone-funded class.

- Host department submits a completed IFSI Cornerstone Request for Training (RFT) form. One RFT per training topic.
- **NEW** A department can request the same training session, repeated, to accommodate shift and work schedules of neighboring departments. Repeat training sessions require multiple RFTs.
- **NEW** The number of approved RFTs per department is determined by meeting hosting requirements and the available



## The Bulletin

funding for training within the region.

- With a focus of training firefighters, Regional Representatives will manage their budgets to reach as many firefighters as possible.
- IFSI will mail a training Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to the fire department that is requesting training. The requesting fire department must return the signed MOA.
- **NEW** The requesting fire department must invite other fire departments and appropriate response agencies to the training, and cannot deny other fire department access to the training.
- **NEW** Cornerstone training must be attended by a minimum of 15 attendees per session (training session example: 12-hour class over the next three nights is three training sessions).
- Cornerstone training sessions should be 70 – 80% hands-on training.

### **Exam Retakes and Student Grades**

Many of IFSI's courses have end-of course exams associated with them. In order for students to complete the course they must pass the IFSI end-of-course exam with a minimum score of 70%. In some instances, a student may not pass the initial attempt at the exam. This will result in an email being sent to the student stating they did not pass the exam, and to complete the course the student must sit for a retake of the IFSI exam. Retakes can be scheduled by contacting the IFSI Curriculum and Testing office at (217) 244-8340.

Passing the IFSI end-of-course exam is important for several reasons. First, passing certain IFSI exams will result in meeting the Office of the State Fire Marshal's (OSFM) certification requirements, and in many cases the requirements of the ProBoard. Second, for those IFSI exams that are not approved by the state, in order to sit for the OSFM certification exam, the student must pass the class. In order to pass the class the student must pass the IFSI exam. If a student fails an IFSI exam, the exam **MUST** be retaken through IFSI. Challenging and passing the OSFM exam will not result in completing or passing the IFSI course or exam.

Students can access their grades for end-of-course exams through IFSI's website by logging into the "Resource Center" and selecting the "My Account" tab. If the student passed the class, there they will be able to print off their course completion certificate(s) approximately six weeks after the last day of the class.

### **Ag Rescue Training Fund**

The Illinois Fire Service Institute has established the Ag Rescue Training Fund to support the Ag Rescue Program. With support from individuals, businesses, organizations and corporations, the Ag Rescue Program can be sustained and expanded to meet the growing needs from training in rural areas and farming communities. Access to more training on modern equipment and new information on farm hazard issues will assure that firefighters are better prepared. For more information on the Ag Rescue Training Fund and how to become a Partner in this extremely important training program contact Dennis Spice, Director of Corporate Relations at: 217-898-6507 or by email at: [dspice@illinois.edu](mailto:dspice@illinois.edu).

### **Upcoming Online Classes**

Technical Rescue Awareness (TRA) begins May 1: This short class required by the OSFM for firefighter certification. The class helps firefighters identify the rescue situation, its specific hazards and initial company operations to be performed. The course fee is \$25. Hazardous Materials Awareness begins May 1: This is a pre-requisite for HazMat Operations, which is a required course for OSFM certification. The class takes eight hours to complete. The course fee is \$25.

Fire Origin and Cause Awareness begins May 1: This class is an overview of the needs and requirements to conduct fire scene investigations and specifically provides a clear definition of the roles of the initial first responder. There is no fee for this course.

Online course information and registration can be found on the IFSI web site under the ONLINE LEARNING tab.

### **IFSI Leadership Exercise**

On February 23<sup>rd</sup>, twenty-eight volunteering Fire Officers and Firefighters from eight Illinois departments participated in a special leadership development and decision-making beta-test exercise at IFSI. The exercise design focused on testing effective methods of pressurizing decision-making and creating friction for the Leader in a live-burn fireground scenario. Selected Incident Commanders were challenged to successfully demonstrate leadership and decision-making ability under pressure without needed information while in an uncertain, changing environment. The volunteers had varying ranks, experiences and skill sets which contributed to the uncertain decision-making environment of the IC.

## The Bulletin

The exercise required rapid assessments, aggressive decision-making, and reassessment while simultaneously challenging the Incident Commanders ability to anticipate and think on his feet. The ability of an Incident Commander to rapidly Observe, Orient, Decide, and Act on a continuous cycle was tested to the fullest.



Without the volunteer participation of the following departments, which included

time, hard work and patience, the pilot Leadership Exercise would not have been possible.

RSP&E Fire Protection District Roseville

Urbana Fire Department

Taylorville FD

Champaign FD

Paxton FD

Godfrey Fire Protection District

Savoy Fire Department

Edge-Scott FPD

### **How to Register for a FEMA Student Identification Number (SID)**

National Fire Academy students interested in applying for on-campus (10-/6-/2-day), off-campus (10-/6-/2-day) and NFA Online courses need to register for a FEMA Student Identification Number (SID). This number is used in place of a Social Security Number and is obtained through the Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP). Applications for NFA courses that do not include a SID will not be processed. To obtain a SID

1. Register at <https://cdp.dhs.gov/femasid>
2. Select "Need a FEMA SID?" on the right side of the screen.
3. Follow the instructions to create your account.
4. You will receive an email with your SID. Save this number in a secure location.

### **Illinois Fire Service Institute Regional Representatives:**

Northeast Region:	Randy Schlichter, 847-343-4039
East Central Region:	Tim Meister, 217-202-4760
Chicago Metro Area:	Richard Stack, 773-988-0259
Central Region:	Jim Vaughn, 309-275-2499
Metro-East Region:	John Nichols, 618-973-2059
South Region:	Tim Bragg, 217-962-1597
Northwest Region:	Ray Palczynski, 563-468-8385

*The Illinois Fire Service Institute Regional Representative can be your important link to bringing State Fire Academy training to your Fire Department.*

## As of press time, the following departments dues are past due.

Barry Fire Protection District  
Barstow Fire Protection District  
Beckemeyer-Wade Fire Protection District  
Brighton Betsey Ann Fire Prot. Dist.  
Bushnell Fire Protection District  
Carbon Cliff Volunteer Fire Dept.  
Carroll Fire Protection District  
Christopher Fire Department  
Collinsville Fire Department  
Country Club Hills Fire Department  
El Paso Fire Protection District  
Garden Homes F.P.D.  
Gibson City Fire Prot. District  
Glen Ellyn Vol Fire Company  
Greenfield Fire Prot Dist  
Herrin Fire Department

LaMoille Fire Protection District  
Lynwood Fire Department  
Maroa Countryside F.P.D.  
Mattoon Fire Department  
Medora Fire Department  
Metamora Fire Department  
Midlothian Fire Dept.  
Mt. Pulaski-Phoenix Fire Department  
North Maine Fire Prot. District  
Reddick Community F.P.D.  
Riverside Fire Department  
Roodhouse Fire Prot Dist  
SIBLEY VFD / Sullivant Township F.P.D.  
Vandalia Fire Department  
Waterman Community Fire Prot. Dist

To pay dues contact the IFA Secretary Treasurer Kerry Federer

PO Box 77 - Glen Carbon IL 62034

Phone/Fax 618-882-4783 - Cell Phone 618-830-3961

email [secretarytreasurer@illinoisfirefighters.org](mailto:secretarytreasurer@illinoisfirefighters.org)



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# **Updating an Old Friend: Recent Changes to the Open Meetings Act**

by Brian J. O'Connor  
Ottosen Britz Kelly Cooper Gilbert & DiNolfo, Ltd.

What do boards of trustees for fire protection districts -- as well as boards of fire commissioners, firefighter pension funds, and foreign fire insurance -- all have in common? They are "public bodies" subject to the Illinois Open Meetings Act ("OMA", 5 ILCS 120/1 *et seq.*). Trustees, chief officers and staff who provide support to the various boards affiliated with their fire protection district or municipality need to be aware of and comply with OMA's requirements. On July 19, 2012, the Governor approved Public Act 97-0827 which made two significant changes to OMA effective January 1, 2013.

### ***Resolutions and Ordinances***

The first change requires that posted notices and agendas for board meetings at which final action will be taken on any resolution or ordinance include "the general subject matter" of the resolution or ordinance. The intent of the agenda is to advise the public of the intended business of the board at the meeting. Both Attorney General's rulings and decisions by Illinois courts have noted that an agenda entry such as "discuss/pass ordinance" (or "resolution") is not sufficiently descriptive. This change codifies those rulings into the Act. (5 ILCS 120/2.02(c)) For example, while an agenda entry such as "Resolution – discussion/action" is not sufficient, a more descriptive, but not unnecessarily lengthy, entry would be enough. An appropriate agenda entry should seek to describe the action to be considered by the board, *i.e.* "Resolution Regarding Closed Session Minutes – discussion/action" or "Review and Possible Action on Resolution Adopting Prevailing Wage Rates" or "Action on Resolution Making the Truth In Taxation Finding."

### ***Notice / Agenda Availability***

The second OMA change requires that the notice and agenda of a public meeting be continuously available for the public to review for 48-hours immediately preceding the meeting. There have been reports of situations in which a public body has skirted this issue by posting the notice and agenda where it is not readily viewable by the public, such as posting the notice and agenda on a Friday evening in the interior of the building for a meeting scheduled for the following Monday evening; this would be contrary to the second new requirement. Compliance with this second change might be accomplished, for example, by posting the notice and agenda on the interior window of the building's entry doorway, or, alternately, in an externally mounted bulletin board that is publicly accessible. (5 ILCS 120/2.02(c))

This change also permits posting of the notice and agenda on a website maintained by the public body for the 48-hour pre-meeting period. Note this posting option is different from the requirement to post minutes on a website where that website is maintained by a full-time staff member of the public body. (5 ILCS 120/2.02(c) and 2.06(b))

### ***Effect of Failure to Comply***

Finally, a failure to ensure that the notice and agenda availability requirements are met may result in invalidation of any meeting or action taken at that meeting, unless the non-compliance is due to actions outside of the control of the public body.

Trustees, chief officers and staff members who are responsible for the preparation and posting of notices and agendas need to be aware of and comply with these new requirements. In sum, officials must make sure the notice and agenda for public meetings are:

- Complete, accurate and descriptive;
- Posted not less than 48-hours before the meeting; and
- Posted at the public body's corporate offices and the location of the meeting in a place that is accessible to the public for not less than the 48-hour period before the meeting.



## **The Bulletin**

### **Other Open Meetings Act Reminders**

These recent changes present a good opportunity for fire department trustees, chief officers and staff members to refresh their knowledge on a couple other changes under OMA.

#### ***OMA Training***

OMA's Sections 1.05(a) and 1.05(b) require completion of the on-line Public Access Counselor's (PAC's) certification for "Open Meetings Act designees" (5 ILCS 120/1.05(a)) and elected/appointed members (5 ILCS 120/1.05(b)).

Section 1.05(a) requires completion of the PAC's on-line certification within 30 days after being selected to serve as an OMA-designee. While that section also requires annual training for all OMA designees, it is silent as to the details of the required annual training, such as when, where or how much annual training is required. Presumably, annual completion of the PAC's on-line certification combined with filing the certificate of completion with the board would suffice. OMA-designees attending professional conferences and seminars should obtain certifications or written proof of OMA training attendance, and file copies of the certifications or proof with their fire department.

For elected and appointed trustees, Section 1.05(b) requires that members holding office/position on any public body complete the Public Access Counselor's Open Meetings Act online curriculum during calendar year 2012. Hopefully, all trustees have complied with this requirement. Any new trustees elected or appointed on/after January 1, 2012, have 90 days to complete the same training. Section 1.05(b) trustee training is only a one-time requirement, and copies of certificates of completion must be filed with the local government.

#### ***Timeline on minutes***

OMA's Section 2.06(b) requires a public body approve the minutes of its open meetings within 30 days after that meeting or at the public body's next regular meeting, whichever is later. This requirement was added by P.A. 96-1473 which became effective January 1, 2011. That change also required that minutes of meetings open to the public be available for public inspection within 10 days after the approval of the minutes by the public body. (5 ILCS 120/2.06 (b))

#### ***Public Comment***

Additionally, P.A. 96-1473 added Section 2.06(g) to OMA which requires any person be permitted an opportunity to address public officials at their open meetings under the rules established and recorded by the public body. (5 ILCS 120/2.06(g))

### **A Final Note on Required Training – the Freedom of Information Act**

Lastly, a public body is also required to designate one or more persons to serve as the board's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) officer(s). (5 ILCS 140/3.5(a)) Much like the OMA-designee, the designated FOIA-officer(s) must complete the PAC's on-line training program within 30 days after being selected to serve. (5 ILCS 140/3.5(b)) FOIA-officer(s) also require annual training, but Section 3.5(b) is silent as to the details of the required annual training. Presumably like OMA, completion of the PAC's on-line FOIA certification by a FOIA-officer combined with filing the certificate of completion with the board would fulfill this requirement.

**Brian O'Connor** has been an attorney with Ottosen Britz Kelly Cooper Gilbert & DiNolfo, Ltd. since 2004. Mr. O'Connor works closely with Bob Britz, who is the current general counsel for the IFA. Mr. O'Connor has presented at various fire service events such as Illinois Alliance of Fire Protection Districts and the Northern Illinois Alliance of Fire Protection Districts conferences and training sessions, as well as to a variety of local fire service related organizations. Additionally, he has authored many articles for various fire service publications and organizations. Mr. O'Connor can be contacted by email at [boconnor@ottosenbritz.com](mailto:boconnor@ottosenbritz.com).



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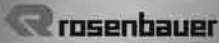
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