MFRI Director Steven T. Edwards Receives Lifetime Achievement

With 50 years in the fire service, Steven T. Edwards has served in leadership positions at the national level and has lead the Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute as the Director for the past 25 years. In Mr. Edwards’ final months as Director, he has been given two extremely prestigious awards. This past September, the North American Fire Training Directors (NAFTD) presented Mr. Edwards with the first-ever NAFTD “Lifetime Achievement Award” recognizing his 25 years of service to the organization, including his four years as their president. Mr. Edwards shared, “I was surprised and very appreciative of this honor from the membership of NAFTD. It is always gratifying when you are recognized by your peers and I have much respect for the work that NAFTD members do each year.”

This past October, the Board of Directors of the National Fire Heritage Center (NFHC) met in Emmitsburg, Maryland and elected Mr. Edwards to the Hall of Legends, Legacies and Leaders for his service as Director of the University of Maryland’s Fire and Rescue Institute and Past Chief of the Prince George’s County (MD) Fire/EMS Department. The National Fire Heritage Center Board of Directors established the NFHC Hall of Legends, Legacies and Leaders (HLLL) in 2010. The HLLL provides individual recognition of significant contributions and distinguished service to the fire and emergency services mission.
After 25 years, this will be my last Bulletin article as the MFRI Director. I have used this opportunity over the years to inform instructors and students of the progress and new opportunities within MFRI. It has been a very good venue to speak to instructors and students, as with such a large statewide system that can be difficult.

I really would like to recognize and thank the many individuals and organizations that have worked with me in improving emergency service training in Maryland for the past 25 years. That would be very difficult as there have been numerous people who have provided counsel, assisted, or just jumped in and made something happen to make our organization better. So, while I cannot name individuals, please know that I have deeply appreciated each of your contributions.

Everything that has been accomplished during my tenure as Director has been a joint effort inspired and implemented by the outstanding faculty, staff and field instructors of MFRI. This has been coupled with the strong support by the many statewide fire, rescue and EMS organizations who have worked with MFRI toward continuing the excellence that Maryland is known for nationally.

When I came to MFRI in 1993, my plan was to work here for perhaps five years and then move on. After being here and witnessing the expertise and excellence of the people who make MFRI successful, I never wanted to leave. It has been a true honor and privilege to serve as MFRI Director and to be a part of such a great organization.

Thank you for the many opportunities afforded to me. It is not an understatement to say that I have enjoyed coming to work every day for 25 years. I will leave knowing the future of MFRI will continue to be one of which we can all be very proud.
IN MEMORIAM

Instructor Jack “Randy” Krob

Jennifer Williams, Public Relations Specialist, Institute Development Section, MFRI

On August 30, 2017, Jack “Randy” Krob passed away following a tragic motorcycle accident. Randy was a beloved instructor for the Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute for over 18 years who had an extraordinary passion for training. Students described him as a “tough” instructor, but appreciated it because they knew he only wanted the best out of them. Randy was the top-rated industrial instructor from January to June 2017. When he was not teaching classes in the Southern Maryland region or helping out with duty nights at Headquarters, Randy loved traveling with Special Programs. Recently, he helped teach Shipboard Firefighting in San Diego, California. If there was ever a need for an extra hand for a burn evolution, it was always known that Randy was only a phone call away.

Randy joined the Greenbelt Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad, Inc. Company 35 as a teenager and served as Chief, Trustee, Life Member, and currently held the rank of Captain. He was described as a “great friend and firefighter,” by those who knew him. Randy was a guy you could always count on. Even on September 11, 2001, Randy responded with Company 35 to the Pentagon following the plane crash.

Randy loved riding his motorcycle and was part of an organization known as the Red Knights International Firefighters Motorcycle Club. The Red Knights worked together as a fraternity of firefighters to project a positive image of motorcycling by educating others and partaking in charitable events.

Out of all the amazing things Randy devoted his time to, he truly cherished time spent with his wife, two children, step daughter, five grandchildren, and of course, his dog that he treated like his own child. He will be greatly missed.

MFRI Provides BWI Ground Transportation and Logistical Support for National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend

This past October, MFRI was once again able to provide the much-needed transportation for the families of the 95 fallen firefighters honored at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend. Although much of MFRI’s support mission remains in the background, it is an honor to have the opportunity to participate in this significant event and contribute to its success. Over the course of the weekend, MFRI transportation vehicles traveled approximately 3,554 miles transporting families to and from the airport, hotel, Mt. St. Mary’s University while tending to other local needs. A MFRI box truck and cargo van were also utilized for logistical support throughout the weekend’s events.

This transportation continues to reflect the partnership between MFRI, the State Fire Marshal’s Office and the Maryland Fire Chiefs Association, who all provided drivers for this event. The State Fire Marshal’s Office also provided their BWI office as a transportation management, staging and rehab area for drivers. Active MFRI transportation drivers included MFRI full- and part-time personnel: Andy Levy, Judy White, Susan Schell, Jeana Panarella, and former State Fire Marshal Bill Barnard. Drivers from the Maryland State Fire Marshal’s office included State Fire Marshal Brian Geraci, CJ Giblin, Ken Bush, Joe Walters, Brad Childress and Melissa Decker. In addition, Andy Levy and Bill Barnard served as drivers for the MFRI cargo vans. Great appreciation goes out to Andy Levy, MFRI’s North Central Office Regional Coordinator and this event’s Transportation Planner/Coordinator. Family members served expressed deep appreciation for the personal care that was provided by MFRI and its partners.
The Maryland Fire Service Personnel Qualifications Board Presents 150,000th Certification

Ron Hassan, Manager, Technology and Certification, MFRI

On August 7, 2017, the Maryland Fire Service Personnel Qualifications Board (MFSPQB), which began operations in 1988, presented its 150,000th certification. The honor went to Kimberly Quathamer of the Hurlock Volunteer Fire Company, who was certifying for Firefighter II. Previously, Ms. Quathamer had been certified in Hazardous Materials Awareness, Hazardous Materials Operations, and Firefighter I. The presentation of the 150,000th certification was made by MFRI’s Assistant Director Larry Preston during the Dorchester County Firemen’s Association meeting at the Eldorado-Brookview Fire Department. The certification issued to Ms. Quathamer was endorsed by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (Pro Board) and the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) and will be entered into the international registry of each organization. This registration of the certification will make the training received portable between participating jurisdictions.

MFRI Provides Fire Safety Demos at UMD Fall Semester Welcome

Jennifer Williams, Public Relations Specialist, Institute Development Section, MFRI

To kick off the new semester, University of Maryland always hosts a “Fall Welcome” for incoming freshman to meet different groups on campus. Each year, MFRI partners with the University of Maryland’s Fire Marshal’s Office to teach campus fire safety. Special Programs’ William Dobbin and Field Instructor Norman Wines gave several exciting demonstrations of how residential fire sprinklers work. Using the MFRI sprinkler trailer’s live-fire demonstration, they reminded students about the importance of not tampering with or hanging anything on the sprinklers in their dorm rooms. Tim Delehanty and the Logistical Support Section students worked together in order to get college students through the MFRI maze trailer so they could get a feel for crawling through a dark, smoke-filled hallway. Many students shared that they had no idea how difficult it could be and they were glad that they took advantage of this opportunity.
MFRI Launches New Learning Management System

Angela Bennett, Manager, Institute Development Section, MFRI

The Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute is happy to announce the much-anticipated launch of the new and improved learning management system (LMS).

The Absorb LMS replaces the campus-administered ELMS/Canvas system that had been a source of frustration for instructors and students alike over the last several years. The new system is integrated with a number of existing MFRI applications, including student registration, the instructor database and the transcript system, all of which allow for greater automation of the work processes involved in course administration. Additionally, the new LMS allows for the delivery of more sophisticated and enhanced course content, greater online interaction between students and instructors and detailed reporting features that allow for better tracking of online work.

These features promote a student-centered approach to blended learning by creating a learning experience whereby the learner interacts with other students, with the instructor and with course content through thoughtful integration of online and face-to-face environments. The online classroom is an extension of the face-to-face classroom and instructors are able to leverage online course components to help enrich the face-to-face classroom and ultimately promote student success.

At this time, the Fire Officer series has been converted to the new blended learning format using the Absorb LMS. In addition, a number of stand-alone online courses have been released or are pending release in the Fall/Winter 2017.

For more information or to register for the Absorb LMS Training for Instructors, please visit www.mfri.org.

MFRI Statistics for Fiscal Year 2017

Emergency Services Programs
Field Operations 1,324
Special Programs 253
Company Drills 119
Seminars 60
Total: 1,756

Students by Discipline
Fire 7,984
EMS 6,501
ALS 1,103
Rescue 2,847
Management 4,904
Hazardous Materials 1,734
Specialty 3,077
Company Drills 1,638
Seminars 1,292
Simulation Center 3,067
Total: 34,057

Students by Program
Field Operations 26,114
Special Programs 5,013
Company Drills 1,638
Seminars 1,292
Total: 34,057

Students Hours by Program
Field Operations 764,480
Special Programs 54,272
Company Drills 4,914
Seminars 5,741
Total: 829,407
MFRI Offers New Tactical Emergency Casualty Care Course [TECC]
Jennifer Williams, Public Relations Specialist, Institute Development Section, MFRI

The new Tactical Emergency Casualty Care course (TECC) is based on the principles of Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) and meets the guidelines established by the Committee on Tactical Emergency Casualty Care (Co-TECC). The course teaches civilian tactical EMS; any EMS practitioner called upon to respond to a mass casualty or active shooter event. This 16-hour course covers topics designed to decrease preventable death in the tactical situation. Topics include: hemorrhage control; surgical airway control and needle decompression; strategies for treating wounded responders in threatening environments; caring for pediatric patients; and techniques for dragging and carrying victims to safety. Due of the nature of this course it will only be offered at MFRI HQ, MFRI Regional Training Centers and select approved facilities. This course is currently listed under the Advanced Life Support Section on MFRI.org, but is open to all responders. Take advantage of this exciting new course by registering online today!

Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) Visits MFRI
Jennifer Williams, Public Relations Specialist, Institute Development Section, MFRI

MFRI often has visitors from other countries who are curious about its training and high-tech equipment. This past October, the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) came all the way to headquarters in order to exchange information and experience in training and education with MFRI. The MSB, steered by the Swedish Government, is responsible for issues concerning civil protection, public safety, emergency management and civil defense as long as no other authority has responsibility. After being welcomed by MFRI’s Assistant Director Larry Preston, Assistant Director Pat Marlatt presented an overview of the design of MFRI’s training facilities. Angela Bennett, Manager, Institute Development Section, gave a presentation on the learning management system and MFRI’s E-learning programs. The group then toured the facility and training grounds. MFRI Instructors Mike Kernan and Mike Baker went through a scenario using the simulation center and its newest software. The group was intrigued by all of the Sim Center’s training tools and capabilities. Michael Cox, Manager of the Logistical Support Section allowed the group members to take turns using MFRI’s newest driver’s training simulator made by DriveSquare™. Lastly, the group had the chance to discuss their experience and also hear more about MFRI’s research and development system to continually improve training and student success.

Jennifer Williams, Public Relations Specialist, Institute Development Section, MFRI

The 2017 Mid-Atlantic Life Safety Conference, sponsored by the Fire and Burn Safety Coalition of Maryland (FABSCOM), was held September 26 at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory, Kossiakoff Center, in Laurel, Maryland. This year, there were 12 workshops that covered a variety of topics including fire investigation, cancer in the fire service, code enforcement, bleeding control, hoarding, recognizing the signs of human trafficking, and more.

Over 200 attendees came together at the noon luncheon program, the highlight of which is the presentation of the annual Life Safety Educator of the Year award, this year presented in its new form for the first time as the John C. Spiker Sr. Excellence in Life Safety Educator of the Year Award. This year’s recipient was Kimberly L. Smith of the Riviera Beach Volunteer Fire Company. Serving in fire prevention for over 13 years, Kim is now the Chairperson and has obtained the official S.A.F.E. program training, as approved by the Anne Arundel County Board of Education. There are numerous opportunities to make a difference through fire prevention in Riviera Beach’s first due since there are six schools and numerous daycare centers within a three-mile radius. Through her many years of experience as a firefighter, fire instructor, and mother, Kim is extremely capable in this position and can even run a demo by herself if need be. She can narrate the program, dress in full firefighter PPE, and even drive the fire engine to the demo so that every experience is unforgettable. Kim is responsible for coordinating resources for many different demos outside of the everyday fire prevention and narrates many of them such as the annual Prom Promise demonstration at Northeast High School.

Kim had the unique opportunity to work alongside John C. Spiker for years and shared the same passion in trying to help educate children in the use of 911 and the emergency response system, and prevention of emergencies. John’s legacy lives on through Kim’s dedication to making sure children remember what to do to prevent an emergency and what to do if they have one. Congratulations to Kim on this well-deserved acknowledgement of her outstanding efforts.

MFRI Receives Pro Board Re-accreditation

This past July, the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (Pro Board) visited Maryland for MFRI’s five-year accreditation review. This review is extensive and covered MFRI, the MFSPQB and several of the local fire training academies that make up MFRI’s system. As one would expect, MFRI did very well with no requirements and many compliments about the quality and statewide nature of its certification programs. This is the direct result of the hard work and dedication to this effort by many people at MFRI.

Thanks to Bob Rose and Ron Hassan of the Technology and Certification Section, which has the primary responsibility for this program. They are strongly supported by many others within MFRI. Field Programs, Institute Development Section, and Special Programs also have a large role and responsibility in this effort. In addition, Assistant Director Larry Preston has a substantial role at the state and national level regarding fire service certification programs.
During the weekend of August 19-20, MFRI’s Public Relations Specialist, Jennifer Williams, provided a Stop the Bleed demonstration during Delaware State Fire School’s Camp Fury to over 40 participants. This camp for teen girls between the ages of 13 and 17 originated in 2009 in Tucson, Arizona with local fire departments that were both run by female chiefs. Camp Fury is designed to expose teen girls to a variety of areas in the emergency and public service sectors, especially opening their eyes to career path opportunities that may usually be in male dominated fields. The speakers at the camp were from the areas of fire, rescue, hazmat, EMS, as well law enforcement and emergency management, and allowed the campers to experience a variety of hands-on skills. MFRI hopes to bring this camp to Maryland in the near future.