



The Blaze

A Publication of the Idaho State Fire Commissioners' Association

3rd Quarter 2017

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Well, summer is underway and I hope everyone is having a great summer. I am sure everyone is deep into your budget planning and trying to maximize the tax dollar against the ever-growing costs of running your department with efficiency and excellence. One area in planning is to look at the use of grants, vehicle/equipment loaner programs within the state, GSA used vehicles as well as working together with your neighboring districts in the sharing of any expenses in joint training opportunities. This not only stretches the valuable tax dollar, but also provides a good return for the taxpayers.

This year, many fire districts will have up to half of their Fire Commissioners up for reelection. In many areas, just getting someone to become interested and to run is extremely difficult. In other areas, you have several people running for the same seat. As we continue to serve our Districts, a few questions to consider:

1. Are we effective?
2. Are we putting in the required time/learning to do the job to the best of our ability?
3. Is it still fun?
4. Are we aiding or hampering growth within our district?

In addition, you may be considering as well the following other factors of; juggling of demanding work schedules, family commitments, personal health and the ever-changing climate of the fire service. With these areas in mind, are we serving with the taxpayer's best interest in mind? Is our service delivery models based on available resources or do we have agenda's? Now that I have posed these questions, I encourage you to have some good conversations with those around you. Remember Iron sharpens Iron!

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Continued ... President's Message

Legislation; the legislative team has been working with the Associations Attorney and based on last year's input have drafted some changes and are look forward providing you the status once legislation begins. We definitely will be sharing these at the upcoming conference.

After a couple more months of summer, which will be behind us shortly, we will be back in Boise for our 2017 Annual Conference. As in past years, we again are offering new and exciting classes based on memberships requests and current trending topics affecting all fire districts. Watch for the upcoming agenda and mark your calendars for November 16-18, we hope to see everyone there.

In closing, I hope everyone has an enjoyable rest of the summer and a nice fall. We will see you at the conference in Boise soon.

Sincerely,
David "Rudy" Rudebaugh
President, ISFCA

Lack of Fire Protection, Get Involved!, *Doug Mayne, Secretary/Treasurer*

The Mountain Home Rural Fire District recently had a situation that brought to light the importance of rural fire protection.

A small subdivision just out of the fire district had a house fire. We were called to extinguish the fire. The home owner was told that they were out of the district and that we would not respond. This subdivision has been asked on several occasions to join our fire district and have declined. It is a shame that for the tax assessment of less that \$100.00 per year, these home owners would decline fire protection. The BLM was called in to protect their adjoining property and through mutual aid agreements paid us to come and protect other structures. There was only one structure lost in this case.

At our next Rural fire district meeting, a group of home owners from this subdivision approached us to join the fire district. It is unfortunate that there has to be a disaster for property owners to see the value in having fire protection.

We as rural fire commissioners should encourage property owners outside and adjacent to our districts to join and be protected by our Rural Fire Districts. No one wants to see a loss of property or life.



The Importance of Good Community Relations!!! , Wayne Cavender, Region 1 Director

As the title would suggest, it is very important for our local fire stations to maintain a positive presence in each community they serve. Whether large or small, rural or city, 'neighborhood' stations should be filled with neighbors and friends or at least acquaintances. People who are known around and are friendly and, by the way, *are willing to risk their lives for ours!!*

Maybe Stations in small towns have an easier go of it being a 'presence' in an area where there is not so much 'presence' around. Like cities, but I think that even in a city there is still a neighborhood there, *somewhere*, maybe a lot of them. It just may be harder to define.

There are plenty of occasions for interaction. Perhaps a school nearby, or a youth center, or a church. Or how about a Fire Station??!! Everybody loves those. We work in one of the biggest attractions going!!

In Naples, ID, home of **South Boundary Fire Protection District (SBFPD)**, there is not so much 'presence'. We have a General Store/Post Office, a restaurant/bar, a saw mill, an elementary school, a cluster of homes and a Fire House. And more folks spread across the local country side.

When we put up a new station some years ago, it included a small kitchen and community room. It's good for firefighter's mtgs, commissioner's mtgs, CPR training, Friday Soup Kitchen, Naples Helping Hands, Food Bank on Thursdays, a weekly Martial Arts class, a weekly worship service, our yearly Christmas party and/or for just stopping in for a cup of coffee.

In the winter, next to the Station, the firefighters assemble an ice rink from bales of straw and a large tarp. Behind that we 'sell' Christmas trees for donations. Next door to the Station is Naples Elementary School, K-5. **SBFPD** is always a presence at fire drills and fire prevention classes. The fence between the two has a gate for emergency access, both ways!!

On the last half day of school we have what we used to call 'Field Day', like a giant recess!!! The PTA has activities for the kids, bounce houses, fun games, etc, and **SBFPD** had a truck and a tender set up for the kids to spray water, at each other and at targets. (See the fun on our Face Book page; South Boundary Fire Protection District.)

We also offer scholarship opportunities for college-bound seniors.

I could go on, but you get the idea. Not everything we do will work for everyone. But every area will have possibilities for 'community'. Find out what yours are. It promotes good will, makes good friends **AND** . . . youngsters may grow up wanting to be FIREFIGHTERS again!!!

Updates from your Executive Director, *Krystal Hinkle*

First and foremost, thank you to all of our Member Districts for continuing to support the only organization in the state to help provide training and legislative support for Elected Fire Commissioners. Without you, we wouldn't be able to provide educational classes, changes to legislation and an amazing upcoming conference.

This year, we unfortunately put on one successful training class. Two of our other classes were cancelled due to low attendance. In order for the organization to continue putting funding towards education, we need participation. We take the guidance from you Members on what additional education you would like to see, but didn't get the attendance to offset the cost of our speakers and video presentations. If you would like to see additional training next year, please bring your ideas to this year's conference. We will be discussing the future of ISFCA heavily. If you are unable to attend, please email the office your feedback.

Speaking of the conference, we are extremely excited to bring a jammed pack agenda to all of you amazing Elected Officials, Fire Chiefs and support staff. As always, we try to dip into different areas that will excite everyone from around the state.

Attached with the Blaze, you will find the agenda (subject to change) and this year's registration forms. Please note the deadline for the hotel and for submission of your registration forms. These are important in guaranteeing your reservation at The Riverside Hotel.

Also attached, please find a Nomination Form for "Outstanding Commissioner" for your region. Every year at the conference, we try and acknowledge the outstanding work of your fellow Elected Officials. We understand that being an Elected Official is not easy, the hours don't out way the compensation, but the selfless duties you perform deserved to be acknowledged. Please have your nomination submitted by October 15, 2017.

Lastly, we have a few pieces of legislation that will be discussed at the conference during our Legislative Session. If there are any areas of concern that you would like for the association to look at before the conference, please submit those ASAP.

We look forward to seeing everyone at this year's conference in Boise on November 16th through the 18th. Please stay safe and enjoy the rest of your summer.

Are you Firewise?, *Les Preader, Region 4 Director*

Summer is moving very quickly. It's hot and a challenge to be outside, and school will be starting soon. Have you considered doing some "indoor homework" to learn about how you can help protect your home from wildfires? I strongly recommend the website www.firewise.org. It is a wealth of information right at YOUR fingertips. After you access the website, drill down via the title "Wildfire Preparedness > Home and Landscape". The interactive modules are informative and you could include your children, or grandchildren, in this learning process. This allows them to become part of your "eyes" in looking for landscape situations to resolve in "creating a defensible space and examine your home ignition zone". If they're old enough, they can even help you in clearing the home ignition zone.

Take this opportunity with your children (or grandchildren) to discuss what you are doing "together" and why it is "important". And when you're done or need a break, maybe you can make some homemade ice cream or eat popsicles! Enjoy the transition from summer into the fall and winter seasons.

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