

RTFPD

Richmond Township Fire Protection District Newsletter

A Quarterly Fire Department Newsletter

Issue 1 - Fall 2006

Open House - October 8

The Richmond Firefighters Association will host their annual Open House Fundraiser on Sunday October 8th from 1 to 5 p.m. A number of activities for the entire family will be happening, including the Super Raffle, set to begin at 5 p.m.

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House Number Signs

New house numbering signs are now available for \$15. These highly reflective signs will help us find your house during an emergency



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New Members Added

The department recently added two new recruits to the roster. Keven Barnes and Michael Moore, both Richmond residents. Keven and Mark will begin a year-long Candidate training program which will integrate them into the department. Both are EMT-B's and Mike is also a Firefighter 2.

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Truck 1481



Ladder Truck 1481 is the newest piece of fire apparatus in the department. Check out the recently held Truck Operations Class that was hosted by at our fire station inside this issue.

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Ambulance Fee

Did you know that Richmond residents are not charged for ambulance services? Check out page 3 for more information about this fact that makes Richmond unique throughout all of McHenry County.

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Homeland Security

Chief Gallas announced that the department was successful in its bid to receive new extrication equipment including the "Jaws of Life" with his CEDAP Grant application

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Richmond Fire: 80 Years of Dedicated Service

The Richmond Township Fire Protection District is celebrating 80 years of service to the Richmond and Spring Grove areas during 2006. Organized on February 3rd, 1926, Richmond Fire has come a long way.

February 2006 marked the 80th anniversary of the organization of the Richmond Township Fire Protection District. Richmond got its start back on February 9, 1926 when an open meeting was held in the Memorial Hall for the purpose of creating a fire department.

First Fire Chief - William Sandgren

The first set of officers were chosen to service at that initial meeting. They were: Chief, Wm. Sandgren;

Assistant Chief, Edward Stewart; Captain, Wm. Peterson; First Lieutenant, John Grant; Treasurer, Mayor Glen Stevens and Secretary, Charles C. Stewart. The first By-Laws of the department were read and accepted on April 13, 1926.

Instrumental in getting the Richmond Fire Department going during this time was the Fox Lake Fire Department. Fox Lake Fire remains a close friend of Richmond Fire.



Richmond Fire grew during those early years, acquiring the equipment they needed through a variety of fundraising resources. Things were going well until 1940, when it was found that Richmond needed a new pumper to take over the duties that the old International had performed so well. This

new pumper was a Diamond T truck with Pirsch equipment

Fire Protection District begins.

Funds were depleting around this time, and for the first time the fire department was failing to raise enough money for their new equipment needs. A meeting was held, and with some of the more influential people of the village in attendance a decision was made do what was necessary to form a Fire Protection District. The election was held on May 14, 1941, which passed overwhelmingly, and the Richmond-Burton Fire Protection District was born. The name was changed to Richmond Fire Protection District when the Spring Grove Fire Protection District was formed in 1981.

Rescue Squad Formed

In 1951, the members decided that the area could use a rescue squad, which was formed. The rescue squad operated entirely on donations from the community. The rescue squad took delivery of an E.J. Resusitator for \$740.27 on April 10, 1951. To speed up response times for rescue calls, a complete Electron Alerting System was ordered. The rescue squad continued to grow and at midnight on



December 31, 1969, took over Ehorn's Ambulance, which was donated free-of-charge to the Rescue Squad by Theron Ehorn. A new 1974 Doge Rescue Truck was ordered in November 1973, which was followed by the July 1975 purchase of a new Horton ambulance.

In May of 1981, a General Election was held and the Rescue Squad was made a part of the Fire District, to be supported by tax money. Up until this time, everything for the rescue squad was paid for entirely by donations from the good people of Richmond and Spring Grove.

Memorable Events

Throughout the years there have been some memorable events in Richmond that were handled by the department. We don't have the room to mention them all, but here are few.

Christmas Eve, 1902

A disastrous fire took place at the corner of Main and Broadway on Christmas Eve in 1902. At the time of discovery the fire had gained such headway that no hope of saving the building or its contents were entertained. The real cause of the fire was never ascertained.



Hoffman Farm Fire

A Friday night fire on August 28, 1974 destroyed a barn at the Hoffman Farm. At 9:20 pm Richmond Fire received the alarm and found the barn completely engulfed in flames. It was reported that the flames were visible from many distant points in Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin.

HELP US FIND YOU!



This picture shows the red sign in front of our fire station. The sign is highly illuminated at night for easy sight access. This helps us to find you faster during night time emergencies.

If we can't find you, we can't help you. The Richmond Twp. Firefighters Association has begun a new project to offer the residents of our fire district an address marker sign for their residence.

For \$15 a sign will be prepared and installed by a Richmond firefighter. The signs are highly visible during the day and at night. They have a highly reflective material on both sides and are fade resistant. These signs will last for years.

The signs are ideal for street side mailboxes as they can be attached directly to the mailbox post. Another option is to mount the sign directly to a small metal post. The post mount option is ideal when your mail box is not directly in front of the residences or is on the opposite side of the street. We can use the poll to mark the driveway that we should use to get to your residence.

Even though it is an ordinance to have your residence marked with highly visible numbers, there are many that are not marked properly or have their numbers obscured by vegetation.

If you want to order one of these markers, you can mail a check for \$15 made out to the Richmond Firefighters Association. Please include a piece of paper in the envelope with your name, address and phone number. We will call you to schedule and installation date. You can call the station at 815-678-3672, seven days a week between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Fire Prevention Week Open House - Oct 8th.

The Richmond Firefighters Association will once again host their annual Open House / Fundraiser on Sunday October 8th from 1 to 5 p.m. The open house will coincide with Fire Prevention Week with doors opening at 1 p.m. A number of fun activities are planned for the entire family during the afternoon. The firefighters annual Super Raffle is set to

begin at 5 p.m. Please make a point to get your Raffle Ticket. First Prize is \$4,000!

Welcome New Recruits

The department recently added two new recruits to the department roster. They are Keven Barnes and Michael Moore, both Richmond residents. Keven and Mark will begin an intensive, year-long Candidate training program which will integrate them into department operations. Both are EMT-B's while Mike is also an Illinois State Certified Firefighter 2. Mike has just returned from a one year stint in Iraq as a contract firefighter.

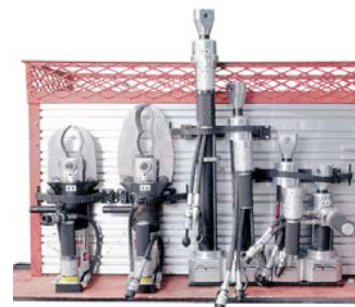
Testing for new members is typically held in May of each year. Those who pass the physical ability test, orientation, oral interviews and background checks are generally put on the roster in August. Unlike Mike and Keven, new recruits generally do not have any certifications. So the first year is spent attaining your EMS license and state firefighter certification.

If you have an interest in becoming a firefighter / EMS professional and are a district resident, mark your calendar for next May and call us to find out about the testing dates for 2007.

Extrication Equipment Headed to Richmond.

Fire Chief Rick Gallas announced that Richmond Fire was recently awarded a Commercial Equipment Direct Assistance Program (CEDAP) grant award. The Office of Grants and Training (G&T) sponsors CEDAP to provide agencies with equipment and technology to fulfill their homeland security mission.

CEDAP recognizes the importance of new equipment, education, and training to ensure proper operation and deployment of the equipment. With this in mind, training is mandatory for most of the CEDAP equipment.



In general the grant program makes all arrangements for training and when applicable pays travel and a limited per diem. Richmond will receive an entire new set of AMKUS extrication tools, including power plant, cutters, spreaders and rams. Richmond would not have otherwise been able to afford this new equipment without the assistance of CEDAP.

Corporate Fundraising A Message from the Chief, Rick Gallas

The fire department is currently canvassing for local corporate sponsors to help the department raise funds to improve the departments communication equipment. The funds are needed to purchase new firefighter pagers and add new antenna receiving station around town.



A check for \$500 is presented to the department by Laser Tech of Richmond.

Truck 1481 in Action

The fire department new ladder truck is seen in action here on a structure fire in town. The truck allows fast and safe access to the roof to provide ventilation support to the crews working inside. T81 is also capable of flowing water as seen in the bottom photo.



Did you know that Richmond residents are never charged for ambulance services? Richmond may soon be the only fire department in all of McHenry County to not charge for this service as the other department, Spring Grove Fire, just announced approved the billing of resident's insurance for ambulance transport beginning October 2006.

Our station is staffed 24-hours a days, 7 days a week with 4 personnel on duty during week days, and 3 personnel on duty during evenings and weekends. We have a minimum of 2 paramedics on-duty each shift, but often times all on-duty personnel are Firefighter/Medics. Our average reaction time (leaving the station) is about one minute, and our average on the scene time is right around 4 minutes and 30 seconds. We are a department of 43 members of which 24 hold the certification of Firefighter/Medic. Our mission is to provide the residents of our fire district with reliably quick Fire and EMS responses with a high degree of professionalism.

A few years ago the Richmond community passed a an ambulance referendum for the district and in doing so, our trustees promised that our residents would never be charged for ambulance service. Well, a promise is a promise and even though our costs of providing service continue to rise, you will always be able to freely call the Richmond ambulance to help you in your time of need.

To meet our future monetary needs, we will continue to work closely with the village to capture all impact fees due for new developments coming to town, negotiate with developers to acquire donations to help fund new equipment such as ambulances and fire trucks or acquire land for new substations that will help us handle the projected growth for Richmond. We will also continue to work with local businesses and corporations to raise funds for special projects such as our current, ongoing communications project.

We have come a long way over the past 12 - 15 months. We have grown much stronger as a department and we will continue this path into the future. I am very proud of the men and women of Richmond Fire who all share the same passion for the job and our community. Our job is simple, to provide the absolute best service to you, our district residents.

-Rick Gallas
Fire Chief

Pandemic Update

A pandemic is a global disease outbreak. An influenza pandemic occurs when a new influenza A virus emerges for which there is little or no immunity in the human population, begins to cause seri-

ous illness and then spreads easily person-to-person worldwide.

Historically, the 20th Century saw 3 pandemics of Influenza:

- 1918 influenza pandemic caused at least 675,000 U.S. deaths and up to 50 million deaths worldwide
- 1957 influenza pandemic caused 70,000 U.S. deaths and 1-2 million deaths worldwide
- 1968 influenza pandemic caused about 34,000 U.S. deaths and 700,000 deaths worldwide.

Pandemic Challenges

There are a number of challenges that we will have to face if the Avian Influenza becomes a pandemic. We will be faced with a rapid worldwide spread, an overload of our health care systems, inadequate medical supplies and an economic and social disruption to our way of life.

The Need to Prepare Early

Education and outreach are critical to preparing for a pandemic. Understanding what a pandemic is, what needs to be done at all levels to prepare for pandemic influenza, and what could happen during a pandemic helps us make informed decisions both as individuals and as a nation.

It is difficult to predict when the next influenza a pandemic will occur or how severe it will be. Wherever and whenever a pandemic starts, everyone around the world is at risk. Countries might, through measures such as border closures and travel restrictions, may delay the arrival of the virus, but they cannot stop it.

How are we Preparing

Your Richmond fire department is also looking at plans for operation should a pandemic outbreak occur in McHenry County. A proactive approach at this time, at identifying the anticipated problems that we would be faced with, such as a 30 to 40% reduction in workforce, will help us to be better able to help you during such a crisis. Check out the McHenry County's Public Health's web site for further information. The address for this site is: www.mchdprepare.info.

Fire Prevention Week

Fire Prevention week (Oct 8 - 14) will kick off with an Open House on Sunday the 8th., beginning at 1p.m. Fire demonstrations and Flight for Life will be there. Many other activities are planned for the entire family. Following the open house, the Firefighters association will hold their annual \$100 Raffle. A limited number of raffle tickets will be available for purchase at the Open House.

Truck Operations Class

On April 22, 2006 Richmond Fire hosted a Basic Truck Operations Class that was put on by the Illinois Fire Service Institute. Three instructors from Chicago Fire ran this class that focused on the specialized skills needed by a firefighter who is a part of a Truck Company.



The photos above were taken during the class that was held at a training house slated for demolition. The first photo shows Mike Rodgers, lead instructor and firefighter from Chicago Fire explaining to the class the objectives that would be accomplished at the training site. Photo 2 shows another Chicago firefighter working with the class on the roof. These firefighters are learning various techniques for cutting a ventilation hole in the roof. Photo 3 shows Richmond's Truck 1481 with the Richmond firefighters who attended the class and the Chicago instructors in front of Truck 1481. The class was attended by 36 firefighters from Richmond Fire, McHenry Fire, Wonder Lake Fire, Fox Lake Fire, and Batavia Fire to name just a few.