

ON SCENE



FOR AND ABOUT THE EMPLOYEES OF THE JACKSONVILLE FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENT

April 2010



Under Control

JFRD and DOF Work Side by Side to Protect the Wildland-Urban Interface



DEAR FELLOW EMPLOYEE

The community we serve has had an opportunity to study and react to our budget and services since mid-February. That's when the Mayor's Office launched its series of My Jax Budget workshops and companion Web site www.myjaxbudget.com. The goal is for the public to understand how their tax dollars are used and to give input. These workshops offer structured dialogue on city finances and operations, and the Web

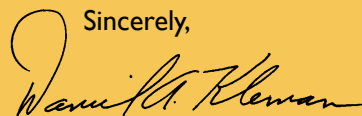
site offers details about budgets for each city department and services provided by constitutional officers, such as the property appraiser and tax collector.

As of this writing, three of seven workshops remain, and the public feedback JFRD has received has been quite favorable. More on that in a moment. Workshop participants choose to attend one of 11 different department presentations per workshop. They hear an overview from a department's representative and then participants discuss and rank their chosen department's services. They rank in terms of "must have," "should have," "nice to have," etc.

In the previous budget workshops, JFRD's services have overwhelmingly received "must have" rankings. These reactions may come as little surprise, but they are more validation that the community places a high value on what JFRD does every day. It's also refreshing to hear as we face the toughest of economic times. Our country is in a situation that is being characterized as the worst economic downturn since last century's Great Depression. Unfortunately, the City of Jacksonville is being forced to decide which "must have" services it can afford.

Next fiscal year, JFRD may not be able to maintain services at existing levels due to cutbacks, even though we are a high priority. If there is little money, even high priorities may not fare well in the budget process. You have seen the first list of JFRD cutbacks equal to 3 percent of our budget. We have also been asked to prepare another list equal to an additional 5 percent of our budget for a total cut list in excess of \$13 million. Historically, we have fared better than other city departments because of the critical services we provide, but we may have to absorb some share of reductions in order for the city to balance the budget. All of this discussion about cutbacks is discouraging, but it doesn't mean that what you do everyday is somehow less valuable.

Many fire and rescue departments are dealing with similar circumstances. The cutbacks discussion is a product of what some are calling our country's Great Recession. Public safety remains government's top priority, and JFRD is an essential part of it. The community believes that, I believe it, and our elected officials believe it, too.

Sincerely,


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Director



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Firefighter Dave Wagner (Engine 59) pulls an MVA "victim" from a vehicle during a DUI simulation for hundreds of high school students at the Morocco Temple during Teen Summit. Ladder 30's Eng. Jeff Hines and Rescue 1's Lt. Troy Jenschke are assisting. The Training Academy's Capt. Roy Hall organized and narrated the simulation.

On the cover: Engine 31's Jonathan Crews discusses a prescribed burn at Cecil Commerce Center with Barry Coulliette from the Division of Forestry.



It's all About the Weather

Barry Coulliette, Division of Forestry Operations Administrator, sets fire as part of a prescribed burn at Cecil Commerce Center. Below: Gusty winds fan flames and increase the fire's rate of spread, causing more smoke at Cecil.

Approaching Cecil Commerce Center, the heavy smoke plume resembled something from a second alarm, but this fire was under control.

"If the plan works, then it stays under control," said Barry Coulliette, explaining the prescribed burn occurring over several hundred acres of the forest surrounding Cecil Commerce Center. As the Jacksonville area Division of Forestry's Operations Administrator, Coulliette has a different perspective on firefighting. Forestry rangers and crews use different tools and terms on the job, they literally fight fire with fire, and

they keep their attention on the sky, the ground, and basically all around. At any moment, Coulliette can quote the area's latest drought index and fire weather forecast. Relative low humidity and dry conditions get his attention.

"It's all about the weather and fuel moisture," said Coulliette, who is assigned to DOF District 7 which includes Duval, Nassau and Clay counties.

Wildland firefighting is something that more and more members of JFRD are learning through training which leads to

Continued on next page.





The Training Academy's Lt. Jesse Brown cools things down at a prescribed burn at Cecil Commerce Center. Brown is the lead instructor for the introductory courses in wildland firefighting which lead to a Red Card. In the background: Division of Forestry Ranger Gilbert Vargas-Barbosa, Engine 32's Eng. Andy Dombrowski and Brush 35's Eng. Mark Peña.

Continued from previous page.

a Red Card. This credential, which is actually printed on a red piece of paper, qualifies a firefighter to operate on a wildland fire anywhere in the state. Additional training is required for out of state operations. Red Card courses cover weather, tactics, wildland fire behavior and safety. Nearly half of JFRD's members have Red Cards; another 100 are in the process. In Florida, obtaining a Red Card is now a requirement to pass minimum standards.

In Jacksonville, wildland fire training has become a focal point for a couple of reasons. When JFRD lost a lot of its senior members due to the Deferred Retirement Option Plan about five years ago, it also lost a large group who were experienced in fighting wildland fires. Combine that loss of personnel with the gain in residential and commercial development over the last decade and

you are left with a larger mingling of structures near wooded areas – also known as the wildland-urban interface. That not only poses a risk to structures when wildland fires flare up, Coulliette said, it places a premium on structural firefighters who understand wildland fire behavior and how to combat it. More than half of Duval County's land is considered to be part of the interface.

"Twenty years ago, we could fight a fire without the fire department," Coulliette said. "Now there are structures nearly everywhere in Duval County that can be threatened by a wildland fire. That's why a close relationship between JFRD and DOF is imperative."

Lt. Jesse Brown at the Training Academy is helping to add to the number of JFRD members with Red Cards. He offers the training, which is a combination of classroom, online and field instruction.

"It's a different mindset from structural firefighting because weather is a major factor and the territory to be mitigated can be massive," Brown said.

Consider for a moment how much water would be required to suppress and cool a few hundred acres. It doesn't take long to realize the value of knowing how to dig a line or create a barrier to control the spread of fire. Then there are the logistics of positioning the apparatus. Wildland firefighting may be outside, but it has its share of hazards, too. When a wind shift changes the direction a fire's moving, you can find yourself in a cloud of smoke instantly or become trapped by the fire. Then there are snags, dead trees that are still standing but sometimes fall during fires and cause injuries. Last year, 15 firefighters died in activities related to wildland firefighting or training in the U.S.

Years ago, Coulliette was closely involved in training JFRD personnel for Red Cards. Now he teaches more advanced classes in forestry, sometimes alongside Brown. These classes (S-215 and S-330) cover the wildland-urban interface and task force strike team leadership. These courses are state requirements to ride in charge of any company on a mutual aid deployment.

Like structural firefighting, wildland firefighting has become more sophisticated. The tractors that plow firelines now have air-conditioned cabs, computers and GPS. A few firetowers may still stand throughout the region, but aircraft handle the majority of district patrol work or “smoke sifting.” Foresters also rely upon aerial photography with thermal imaging to monitor over time how the surface of land has changed in terms of vegetation and development.

Another positive evolution is how JFRD and DOF have strengthened their relationship, especially since the massive wildland fires of 1998. During that long, hot and fiery summer, Coulliette recognized that local fire departments and DOF needed to become more familiar with each others’ resources.

“We weren’t working against each

other, but we weren’t working together either,” Coulliette said. “Back then, there were probably very few structural firefighters with forestry training.”

Coulliette credits Deputy Director and Assistant Fire Chief Randy White with JFRD’s heightened interest in wildland firefighting. White, who was raised on Jacksonville’s Westside and who spent the majority of his career at Station 32, has seen and responded to his share of wildland fires. While 1998 might be a distant memory to many of us, White said we cannot lose sight of our continued vulnerability to wildland fires.

“Our members who have earned their Red Cards have expanded JFRD’s capacity. They have made us a stronger and better fire and rescue department,” said White. “And now that a Red Card is a condition of passing minimum standards, I expect to see those numbers grow over time. This falls in line with our departmental goal of having all personnel Red Card credentialed.”

A recent article in the International Association of Fire Chiefs newsletter described how more fire departments are acknowledging their responsibilities and roles in wildland firefighting. The author also encouraged departments to



Engine 32’s Firefighter Joseph Stewart joins other members of JFRD in wildland firefighter training. There are three introductory courses which lead to a Red Card, a credential that qualifies a firefighter to operate on a wildland fire anywhere in the state.

maintain healthy relationships with state and federal fire officials, especially outside the realm of an actual emergency.

“The hood of your truck is no time to first have a discussion about who does what and who pays for what,” wrote Chief Jeff Johnson, IAFC’s president. “If you’re not accustomed to wildland fire response, you may be surprised at how much who is paying the bill plays into response. There’s no time to say ‘Who, me?’ when a wall of flames is rolling toward your town, and a pen is your best defense.”

Between Coulliette, White and Brown there is plenty of ongoing interaction and interest about protecting the forests and fighting wildland fires.

“As with most JFRD firefighters, I’ve got an interest in fire that I can’t seem to quench,” Coulliette said.



Controlling a prescribed burn involves constantly monitoring the line and “flapping.” It is a smothering technique using a tool equipped with a large rubber square that easily stops the fire from creeping in the wrong direction.

Getting to Know ...

Capt. Gary Kuehner

Assignment: Engine 13 (B-shift)

Hometown: Jacksonville, Fla.

Career Move: Traveled from Jacksonville to Oregon in 1993 to help open a World War II aircraft museum. While in Tillamook, Oregon, he also became a volunteer firefighter and was hooked after his first structure fire, a two-story house. Because of Tillamook's terrain, he could see the fire's glow for several minutes before arriving. "It looked like the whole world was on fire."



About Tillamook: "Somebody described it as 4,000 people and 22,000 cows." Tillamook cheese is also a big deal. Museum is still going strong (www.tillamookair.com).

More Career Moves: Returned to Jacksonville in 1995 and worked as a firefighter at Cecil Field Naval Base and then in Nassau County. Joined JFRD in 2001. Came on at Station 44. Kuehner's interest in USAR took him to Station 4 and ultimately 13.

Fast Track: Made Captain in less than eight years. "Luck," he said, adding that the timing was perfect and he had a "super-supportive wife while studying."

Being an Officer: Likes to build trust through training. "I love training and I can overtrain people. You have to know their breaking point."

His Co-workers: "I'm surrounded by people who are action-oriented. I don't ever have to tell anybody to get in the game. They're ready to go."

Family: married with one 3-year-old daughter.

Latest endeavor: Getting started on his bachelor's in public administration at Flagler College in St. Augustine.



Firefighter Matt Brown (Engine 11) hoses down Eng. Blair Bennett (Ladder 18) following the 6-mile Mud Run at Cecil Commerce Center on March 20.

Dozens of JFRD members were part of the more than 2,800 who competed in the event. Participants traversed huge mounds of dirt, ditches, culverts and other muddy spots.

JFRD had two high-placing teams in two categories. In the Uniformed Services Team category, the "Mudslinging Hose Draggers" claimed first place with a clock time of 1:15:38. Team members included: Engineers **James Heaton** and **Eric Prosswimmer** and Firefighters **Allen Hawk**, **Stephen Pullen** and **Michael Wells**. They also placed second in the Overall category which included 339 teams.

In the All-Male Teams category, the "JFRD Sons of Mudarchy" finished second out of 19 other teams with a clock time of 1:22:35. The team included Capt. **J.J. Rogers**, Lt. **Ryan Lundy**, Engineers **Joe Kinstle** and **Mike Benoit** and Firefighter **Sam Oughterson**. They placed 10th in the Overall category. For all results: www.mudrunjax.com.

PERSONNEL FITNESS



By Tom Fonger, Health and Wellness Coordinator



If you competed in last month's Mud Run, you realize there's much more to it than sloshing around in the soup. It was hard work, a test of physical stamina, a commitment to members of your team, and a willingness to plunge into a messy situation. The obstacles involved plenty of climbing, traversing difficult terrain, even confined spaces. Can you see the similarities to the rigors of your job?

For those of you who completed the race, you now know how demanding it was. I'm going to offer a few suggestions on training for next year's run. There's also some nutrition tips for your consideration year-round.

As you read this, consider how physical training ties into your job and being as prepared as you can be. This training is a departure from hitting the gym or meeting at the Training Academy for a fitness session, so you might like the change of pace. But you must also train at a pace consistent with your level of fitness. Remember, I'm eager to help with your fitness assessments so contact me with any questions or concerns.

First, you have to train for the Mud Run's 6.3 miles. This is basically running a 10k race with multiple obstacles and lots of mud and some fairly deep water. I would recommend doing as much trail running as you can. Try to find some fairly technical trails if possible. I trained at the Julington/Durbin preserve and the Jacksonville Arboretum and Gardens, and I'm glad I did. I ran mostly in the 3 to 8 mile range for training. I trained in fatigues every time to get acclimated. I also ran on some pretty sloppy days to venture out into the mud and rain as well. Plus I purchased some comfortable high-top

-and the Job

basketball shoes and broke them in for about a month. Different shoes for a different task were a fit for me.

If I were to do anything different next year, I would probably do some beach running in the soft sand and also slosh through the surf. If you could find some sand dunes to run up, that would be beneficial as well to simulate all the Mud Run course's bunkers you have to tackle. This was a great event, and it was for a good cause – the Multiple Sclerosis Society. I would highly recommend participating next year.

Pre-Workout Nutrition

Small portions and timing are key. The last thing you want to do before a run or workout is to put something into your body that is going to make you feel sluggish. Nor do you want to run on empty because you will fatigue quicker. For a better run, eat about 1 to 1½ hours before starting. You can try a glass of skim milk and a few graham crackers. Another choice is a frozen waffle with peanut butter. You can make trail mix, too (e.g., cereal, dried fruit, mixed nuts, and skim milk). We all have different tastes, so you have to experiment to find out what works best for you.

Post-Workout Nutrition

Quicker is better. Try to eat within 15 minutes of completing your run or workout. Your muscles will re-absorb the essential nutrients and restore your glycogen levels so you can be on your way to a faster recovery. Here are three simple ideas. Try low-fat chocolate milk. It has almost the perfect balance of carbohydrate, protein and fat. Brown rice pudding works, too. You can use left-over brown rice from the night before add some skim milk, chopped banana, sweetener, and cinnamon. You can also have a toasted English muffin, slice of cheese, and a scrambled egg. These are a good balance of nutrients to aid your recovery.

During a March 3 incident management team exercise in Green Cove Springs, Tower Ladder 21's Eng. Danny Fehr and Firefighter Shawn Fallon decontaminate a member of Clay County Fire Rescue. Multiple agencies participated in the HazMat exercise.



CALL VOLUMES March 2010

ENGINES (Top 30)

E28	400
E19	354
E30	354
E31	341
E10	332
E22	323
E51	315
E152	301
E25	295
E36	292
E18	289
E44	283
E24	275
E1	267
E21	266
E9	266
E32	263
E27	246
E42	239
E17	236
E34	234

E13	230
E20	228
E150	215
E7	211
E59	205
E37	197
E4	197
E12	194
E2	187

RESCUES (Top 25)

R28	351
R30	350
R31	340
R19	338
R22	337
R4	332
R34	325
R36	322
R1	320
R20	320
R24	314
R7	312

R5	310
R15	309
R17	309
R2	301
R21	287
R13	286
R25	269
R51	265
R52	263
R32	262
R35	257
R54	254
R50	228

LADDERS

L28	177
L30	171
L31	159
L44	149
L10	141
TL21	117
L34	110
L32	109

L18	98
L4	81
TL9	81
L1	80

TANKERS (Top 5)

T52	103
T28	74
T31	70
T44	62
T42	56

BRUSH TRUCKS (Top 5)

BR31	96
BR50	73
BR32	71
BR42	71
BR53	57

MARINE UNITS

M3	8
M1	8

FIRE PREVENTION

Inspections (existing)	908
Plans Reviewed	287

Inspections (new)	259
Investigations	39

FIELD CHIEFS

F3	114
R104	96
F6	87
R103	85
F9	83
R105	78
F4	73
F2	71
F7	71
F5	66
F8	46
F1	40

MONTHLY TOTALS

EMS	7,728
FIRE	1,519
NON EMR	266
Total:	9,513