



# National Fire Heritage Center Newsletter

## Message from the President

Have you ever heard the term, dancing to a different drummer? It is often used to characterize people who are behaving differently than other parties in their same group. We often forget that the opposite of that behavior is dancing to the same drummer.

For example, when everybody is pulling in the same direction, it tends to make for a very powerful influence. The military found out a long time ago that you can use drums to establish cadence. Fife and drums are a key part of our American Heritage if you just recall some of the early pictures of Americana in the Revolutionary War. However, it is also true that there are different kinds of drums. The rhythm of a gigantic base is not the same as the rat-ta-tat of the snare drum.

My reason for using this drum analogy is to focus attention on the fact that we are all marching to a drum beat at the National Fire Heritage Center but there are different drums beating at the same time.

For example, we are still continuing the membership development which is a long term goal but we are also moving at a very rapid rate in populating our facility in Emmitsburg. Some of the items that will be reported on in this document will reflect the intensity of these efforts. As you read your way through this newsletter, please recognize that what is making our Heritage Center come alive is the contributions of all of its supporters. If you have any ideas that you would like to see us be more involved with, don't hesitate to let us know.



Ronny J. Coleman



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[www.HeritageEmergency.org](http://www.HeritageEmergency.org)

There are many organizations that are doing their best to preserve the many aspects of American culture. One of the ones we just recently found out about is the Heritage Preservation. Heritage Preservation is a national non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the cultural heritage of the United States. By identifying risks, developing innovative programs, and providing broad public access to expert advice, Heritage Preservation assists museums, libraries, archives, historic preservation and other organizations, as well as individuals, in caring for our endangered heritage.

Heritage Preservation, 1012 14<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W., Suite 1200, Washington, DC 20005, (202) 233-0800

## Illinois Fire Service Institute



As long as we are talking about progress, let's discuss what is happening at the Illinois Fire Service Institute. President Coleman recently had a chance to visit with Richard Jaehne at the facility and was able to take a tour of the brand new facility that has been developed to support the Illinois Fire Service. Richard Jaehne, a retired Marine Corps Colonel serves as a Director of this facility. Boasting that they are "the oldest continuous fire college" the facility located at Urbana-Champaign Campus is among the most modern facilities serving any institute in the United States.

According to Jaehne, "the Illinois Fire Service Institute has served the firefighters of Illinois since 1925. It began as a partnership between the Illinois fire service, the University of Illinois, and elected officials to host an annual meeting for fire service leaders to share knowledge and practical lessons learned. Attended by 219 participants from across the U.S., that first meeting grew into the oldest continuous annual fire college in the nation. Through both the Great Depression and World War II, it continued to provide a unique and affordable means to share professional knowledge. World War II highlighted the need for preparedness, leading the Illinois fire service to ask for hands-on training delivered throughout the year in firehouses around the state. The University of Illinois responded and created the Firemanship Training Section as part of the Engineering Extension Program. In 1976, the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois directed that the Firemanship Training program be reorganized as the Fire Service





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Institute and afforded it the appropriate status as an independent academic institute as provide for in the University Statutes.

By 1980, the concerted efforts of the Illinois fire service led to the passage of the Illinois Fire Service Institute Act and the designation of IFSI as the Illinois State Fire Academy. Since then, IFSI has grown in both scale and diversity of programs. Instructor-conceived research into the effects of heat on firefighters led to the creation of a firefighter life safety research center. The original Firemanship Training concept of delivering short, hands-on training programs in firehouses across the state has been reborn as the Cornerstone Program reaching some 10,000 firefighters annually. At the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, IFSI began to work closely with the City of Chicago Fire Department to meet their unique and diverse training needs. Prior to an following the events of 11 September 2001, IFSI became part of the Illinois Terrorism Task Force, providing sustained leadership in the development and implementation of a coordinated homeland security training program for all first responders statewide. In FY2008, IFSI served 57,279 students from every Illinois county plus numerous other states and countries.”



In addition, Librarian Lian Ruan, provides an excellent overview of the Illinois Fire Service Institute Library. The library has been aided by a series of library services and technology grants totaling more than \$250,000 funded by the Illinois State Library. Annually, the library handles more than 4,000 reference requests. The library staffing includes a team of librarians and archivists, graduate student assistance, under graduate students and volunteers. The IFSI Library is part of inFIRE. It is considered to be one of the top three fire academy libraries in the United States. Their motto “helping firefighters do their work through training, education, information and research”.

The organization has produced a very nice document entitled the “History of the Illinois Fire Service Institute”. It is worth obtaining a copy just to read what all Illinois has accomplished since 1925.





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## Book Reviews

Fire Season: Field Notes from a Wilderness Lookout

Reviewed by Phillip Connors

For the better part of a decade, Philip Connors has spent April through August watching for smoke plumes from a mountaintop in the Gila National Forest of new Mexico.

“Fire Season: Field Notes From a Wilderness Lookout” recounts his days in the watchtower and leaves me wondering why I’m wasting my time at a desk when I could be taking this in: “The hammered mesa tops glow pale blond in the low-angled light, and glades of aspen can be seen greening up here and there in a kind of mosaic where the old McKnight Fire burned, each dense cluster at a slightly different pace – one vegetation type, a dozen different shades of green.”

After almost a century of fastidious efforts to put out every blaze they found, U.S. foresters have learned to harness and direct fire’s creative destruction. Connors, who spent several years as an editor at the Wall Street Journal, helps locate fires before they burn out of control. Some will be extinguished, some left to spread, rejuvenating the forest for plant an animal alike.

The work is simple: clock in at 9. Climb from the cabin to the lookout post. Scan the horizon for smoke every hour or so. If you see a plume, triangulate it with another fire watcher. Call it in. you may also be asked to track ongoing blazes. Clock out at 6.

The rest of the time, Connors hikes and fishes with his dog, plays disc golf, reads, naps and writes. He packs chocolate and bourbon. His wife visits. This isolation – five miles from the nearest road 0 is the opposite of asceticism. Society, with its bills, phones, gas pumps and people, is the real ordeal.

“Every day spent in a lookout is a day not subtracted from the sum of one’s life,” he writes.

Connors also keeps company with woodsmen past. He went to the New York Public Library and transcribed jack Kerouac’s unpublished diary of a summer spent aloft, including a shopping list (Beech-Nut gum and Hi Ho crackers). Norman MacLean’s “Young Men and Fire,” the story of a 1949 Montana blaze and the smoke jumpers it killed, provides a literary counterpoint to Connors’ unpretentious style.

Aldo Leopold, the 20<sup>th</sup> century forester and naturalist who led the effort to create the wilderness area Connors polices, looms above them all. With its month-by-month structure, “Fire Season” mimics





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Leopold's "Sand County Almanac" and echoes his tone – a careful observer delighting in nature and aware of what threatens it.

So it's not all whiskey and Frisbees, but the hardships place the joys – of family, wilderness, indolence - in greater relief.

The summer passes and with it the need for a vigil, unwelcome news for the author. We share his regret, as our sojourn with him concludes and we must put this charming volume aside and resume our drab existence indoors.

"A fine piece of luck for my work and leisure to be one and the same."

## **Book Review: Fire Chief**

Reviewed by Ron Coleman

Daniels, Ed, Fire Chief; The Story of a Volunteer Firefighter, copyright 2011, Charleston NC

Fire Chief: it is a title that is applied to a specific group of individuals who dedicate themselves to performing leadership in a firefighting organization. If you add the prefix volunteer fire chief, you add an entirely new dimension. Being a volunteer fire chief brings out the best in many and the worst in some. But one thing is for sure in almost all cases, there are millions of stories to be told based upon carrying that rank.

Ed Daniels has written a book that is very personal with respect to his experiences in performing in that job. Using a literary device which I will not reveal here, he draws a remarkably strong bond between his personal experience and the evolution of the events that occurred in his lifetime serving as a volunteer fire chief.

As we all know there are a lot of life stories that are converted into books. Why would you want to buy this book to add to your library? I can only answer that in a very personal way. As I read through the various chapters I had this amazing feeling of Déjà vu. Many of the things that he talked about I have born witness to myself. There were several cases where I had a real lump in my throat as I proceeded to go through the section knowing full well what the outcome was going to be at the end of the chapter.





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Chief Daniels (retired), has woven an interesting tale that may appear to be a personal adventure but in many ways contains lessons that can be learned by anyone who aspires to be in charge of other human beings who have to perform in stressful circumstances.

As went through the various chapters, I kept having reflection on my own personal experiences. The phrase “been there – done that” kept coming into mind frequently as Ed revealed both the strengths and weaknesses of what happened to him as he served as a fire chief in Colorado.

As a voracious consumer of anything with the word fire in its title, I was delighted to start Chief Daniels book. But, believe it or not, when I finished it, I was sorry. I wanted to hear more. This is a man that many of you out there can relate to. It possesses the heart, the head and the hands of what is best about serving in the role of fire chief in our communities. I would strongly recommend it for your reading pleasure.

## **Working with the Federation of Fire Chaplains**

President Coleman, following up on the Board of Directors desires to have a better working relationship with our companion organizations has worked out a Memorandum of Agreement between the National Fire Heritage Center and the Federation of Fire Chaplains. A draft agreement has been forwarded to Dr. Ed Stauffer. The memorandum has not been reviewed by the Board of Directors and therefore has not been approved but drafted to expand our role and relationship with another entity that deals with an element of the fire service that is both poignant and inevitable.

## **Bits and Pieces**

Recently President Coleman visited the Nixon Library to review the artifacts that are in possession of the library relative to the original commission on fire prevention and control. While visiting the library, he saw two pieces of evidence of fire service influence directed towards the President. The first was a white Chiefs helmet from the Alexandria Virginia Fire Department. The second was a photograph of President Nixon with Ms. National Fire Prevention of 1971-72. The recipient was Ms. Debbie Kincaid, Humboldt Tennessee's. That provoked a memory of a story once told that Oprah Winfrey was actually Ms. Fire Prevention in Nashville many years ago. Does anyone have proof of that?





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## Firehouse Cajun

The next time you are in the Emmitsburg area you might want to visit Firehouse Cajun Catering and Gifts. This facility is operated by Retired Firefighter Danny Edwards. It is located at 417 North Potomac Street, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740, 310-733-0755, [www.firehousecateringgifts.com](http://www.firehousecateringgifts.com).

## In Other Publications

The MFRI bulletin dated March/April 2011, Volume 42 No. 2, contains an article written by Wayne Powell entitled "Preserving the Written History of Fire in America".

## Fire and Ice

Fire and Ice are tales from an Alaskan Volunteer Fire Chief named Dewey G. Whetsell. He is a 34 year veteran with the Cordova Alaska volunteer Fire Department. His 40 member volunteer department provides structural marine fire protection, underwater rescue and recovery and search and rescue. Chief Whetsell is the recipient of the state's highest fire service award, the Dell Moffitt Award.

His 40 years of experience includes being involved in the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill. For additional information on this book contact Dewey Whetsell, at [deweywhetsellblogspot.com](http://deweywhetsellblogspot.com).

## Marin County Fire Service History Project

A project that we should all be looking to as a good example of the philosophy behind the National Heritage Center is being conducted in Marin County California. NFHC member, Forrest Craig and Fire Chief Tom Forster have embarked on an oral history project. They have been collecting the names of elderly retired firefighters and have established a protocol for each of these individuals to participate in a video interview. They have also been collecting information on photos, records, films and other perishable examples from the history of fire departments that exist (or used to exist) in Marin County.

They anticipate when they complete the video interviews of these veterans and leaders; they will be seeking funding to eventually share all of their results on a website.

"History cannot give us a program for the future, but it can give us a fuller understanding of ourselves, and of our common humanity so that we can better face the future." Robert Penn Warren





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## Fireboat Named After Damrell

One of the things about being a leader is that you often have the opportunity to influence the outcome of events long after you are no longer with us on this earth. A good example of this is one of our inductees in the Hall of Legends, Legacies and Leaders, John Damrell. The following announcement provides us with information about how the new fireboat in Boston is being named after him.

“The City of Boston is purchasing a new state of the art fireboat with Chemical, Biological and Radiological emergency response capability for the Boston Fire Department. This new vessel will replace the current fireboat “FIREFIGHTER” which has been in service since 1972 and does not have the capabilities needed for a modern emergency response fireboat. “Purchasing a new fireboat will greatly enhance public safety in the City and in Boston Harbor and I commend Commissioner Fraser and his staff for their hard work on this issue,” stated Mayor Thomas M Menino.

The new fireboat will be a high speed aluminum vessel with a maximum speed of 35 knots (approximately 40 MPH) and will be capable of pumping 12,000 gallons of water per minute. “The new fireboat will be more than twice as fast as FIREFIGHTER and will be able to pump twice as much water,” says Commissioner Roderick Fraser, “it will also have state of the art navigation systems as well as water jet propulsion and is designed to operate in a chemical or biological contaminated environment. This boat is light years ahead of the current fireboat and will greatly enhance our response capability anywhere in Boston Harbor.”

The new fireboat will be 69 feet long, and will be built by Metalcraft Marine, Inc. of Kingston, Ontario, Canada. Metalcraft Marine specializes in designing and building high speed custom aluminum work boats. It has recently built fireboats for Seattle WA, Tampa, FL, Miami, FL, Jacksonville, FL and the State of Rhode Island. The City received two grants from the Department of Homeland Security for \$2 million towards the construction of this vessel with the remaining \$2.2 million funded by the city through the Fire Department’s capital plan.

The vessel will be named “John S. Damrell” after the former Chief Engineer of the Boston Fire Department who battled Boston’s Great Fire of 1872 and who later became Boston’s first Inspector of Buildings during the 1880’s. Damrell was instrumental in bringing great improvements to the fire service as well as being instrumental in creating modern building codes at the national level. The City expects to take delivery of this vessel in August of 2011”.





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## Donations

Through the diligent efforts of Shane Ray and Vickie Pritchett the National Fire Heritage Center now has the ability to accept donations with credit cards. If you go to the website and go to the tab labeled “donation” you can click the credit card provision and receive a donation form in the email.

## Losing Our Legends

### Dieter Heinz

It was with great sadness that FIREScope recently mourned the passing of Dieter Heinz.

For those of us who were privileged enough to have learned from this great mentor who was affectionately referred to as the “Father of Haz Mat” he influenced our careers and our lives in an incredibly positive way.

Dieter Heinz was an Analytical Research Chemist, Educator, Curriculum Developer, Author, and Professional Speaker. He was a pioneer in the field of Hazardous Materials; and developed an instructed one of the first Hazardous Materials classes ever offered in the State of California in the early 1970s.

Dieter developed and authored the 5-step Field Identification Method which allows Haz Mat responders to quickly identify ‘unknown’ liquid and solid Hazardous Chemicals; and he was an accredited instructor for Federal and State Agencies, in addition to covering all branches of the U.S. Military; Air Force, Army, Navy, Marines and CNG Civil Support Teams/WMD.

### 343 + 1

Dave Hubert and the California State Firefighters Museum have initiated a fund raising project that involves a tribute coin. Note: this is not a Challenge Coin. It is a tribute coin. The 343 stands for those who perished on the day of the event and the + sign stands for those firefighters and other public safety personnel who are still suffering long term injury and consequences of September 11<sup>th</sup>.



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## 343 for 343+ Tribute Coin Program

*One Time Exclusive Offer for Fire Service Collectors*



**California State Firefighters' Association** (CSFA) and the **California FIRE Museum** (CFM) have put together a Tribute Coin to commemorate the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of September 11, 2001 tragedy. There will only be 343 coins minted to pay tribute to the New York Firefighters. The reason for the PLUS (+) on the coin is to represent both the New York Firefighters who died on 9-11 and those who are still dying from the effects of the tragic 9-11 2001 event.

Net proceeds from this Tribute Coin sale will go to support the California FIRE Museum and

Safety Learning Center in Orange County who plan to include a 9-11 memorial at their completed site.

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This colorful, 2 ¼ inch coin is highly polished, gold plated, bright epoxy clear coated, and sequential numbered (1-343). ***This "Limited Edition" Copyrighted Tribute Coin offer is a true collector's item...***

***Don't miss this one time opportunity! The sooner you order & pay for the coin the lower the sequential number you will get. Coins #1 and #343 are reserved. Orders for Coins 2-50 will be available to individual orders only. Coins 51-342 will be available for multiple coin orders. Sorry, no credit card payment available.***

Tribute Coin cost (each)	\$ 100.00
Tax 8.75 % (each)	8.75
Shipping & Handling	4.95
<b>TOTAL single coin cost</b>	<b>\$113.70</b>
Shipping for each additional coin	1.00





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Commemorative Tribute Coin Order Form			
<b>Name</b>			
<b>Fire Department\Organization</b>			
<b>Shipping Address</b>			
<b>Phone</b>			
<b>E-mail</b>			
<b>Coin Cost (\$100+8.75 tax+4.95 shipping =\$113.70) each coin</b>	<b>Number of Coins</b>	<b>TOTAL ENCLOSED* =</b>	<i>*add \$1 shipping for each add'l coin</i>
Please make your check or money order payable to: <b>California FIRE Museum</b> and mail order to: California FIRE Museum, 10 Oak Canyon Trail, Coto de Caza, California 92679. Contact Dave Hubert, (949) 589-2444 or, <a href="mailto:dhubie@cox.net">dhubie@cox.net</a>			

*Disclaimer: While this numbered coin is exclusively limited to 343 numbered coins, other commemorative products may be available to fund the California Fire Museum activities planned to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the terrorist attacks on 9-11-2001, the sacrifice of the Firefighters who gave their lives on that day and the ongoing consequences of those first responders who continue to suffer.*

### The Firefighter Collectors Quilt!

We have now produced our 2<sup>nd</sup> year firefighter quilt. Tickets are still available. The cost is \$5.00 per ticket or 5/\$20.00. Tickets will be available at the Board Meeting. Any member that wishes to acquire tickets in advance can forward an email to President Ron Coleman at [ron@fireforceone.com](mailto:ron@fireforceone.com). You will be issued the tickets through the mail.



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Due to low turnout at our booth at FRI, we will probably keep ticket sales open longer than through the Board Meeting to assure adequate revenue. Jack McElfish was our lucky winner last year.



## Remembrances by Robbie

The 1982 history of the Lancaster, Pennsylvania fire service lists the 15th president of the U. S., James Buchanan, as an active member of the Union Fire Co. No. 1 of that city from 1813 to 1839 and an honorary member from 1839 until his death in 1868. Friendship Fire Co. in Alexandria, Virginia lists President Washington as a founding member but President Buchanan was probably the only president to have active-long term membership in a fire company. Robert Fulton, the father of the steamboat inventor, was also an active member of Union No. 1 joining in 1760 when the company was organized.

The Triangle Dairy Fire Department located outside Boise, Idaho provided free fire protection to the community for years. Dairy employees, many of whom lived nearby, were the active firefighters. The dairy provided this coverage as a public service.

Receivers of their services were reported to be embarrassed if they invited firefighters in for coffee and milk or cream from another dairy was on the kitchen table. Ref. personal visit by JCR.

Little attention is given to the conflagration that struck Mobile, Alabama on May 21, 1919. Starting in a trash pile, the fire extended to a grocery store, then houses, consuming 200 homes leaving 1,200 homeless. The entire Mobile department was helped by fire departments from Biloxi and Pascagoula, Mississippi. As a result of the fire a law was passed requiring all houses to have tar shingles instead of





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wooden ones. Ref Mobile Fire Dept. Centennial Book, 1988. Yet, today wooden shingles are considered to be "the ultimate" in many jurisdictions.

An interesting phenomena relating to movement of major city apparatus to another major city in the early 1900's is that it was much faster than it would be today on highways if loading time on railroad flat cars is not counted, just the city to city transfer on express trains. This was true with Savannah, Georgia apparatus going to Jacksonville, Florida and New York equipment going to Baltimore, both in the early 1900's.

Probably the same with Biloxi and Pascagoula going to Mobile.

In the mid-20th century era a number of privately owned fire departments served unincorporated areas around major cities in Tennessee. Some were named for the communities they served, others for the owner of the department. Most required annual subscriptions in order to receive their services. Several offered police as well as fire services but for a different price. Most were staffed by full time personnel, some of whom went door to door on subscription drives. Although this type operation aroused critics it was all that was available to the citizens they served.

## Financial Report

The National Fire Heritage Center is pleased to report we had an ending balance for the month of February of \$11,259.01.

## Hall of Fame

Vice President Bill Killen, has made a recommendation that we established the National Fire Heritage Hall of Fame. In order to do that, the Board of Directors will need to adopt a criterion for the program and create a nomination process to make it a reality. At a past board meeting, several board members "brainstormed" a list of individuals who might well qualify for receiving this form of recognition. A teleconference will be held prior to our April 7<sup>th</sup> meeting at the Congressional Fire Caucus Institute to finalize the process. In doing his research to develop this program, Bill Killen has developed a prototype of what one of these entries might look like. We are including it for your review as a member. Any suggestions about how to make this program viable and contribute to the fire service legacy process,





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please feel free to forward your suggestions. The following is a report from Vice President Killen about the project:

“The acknowledgement and reception from the fire and emergency services communities on the establishment of the Hall of Legends has been positive and quite encouraging. Numerous organizations as well as leaders from the broad and various fire and emergency services organizations lauded the National Fire Heritage Center’s Hall of Legends initiative.

Ten nominations for the Class of 2011 have been received and submitted to the selection committee for review. The officers and board of directors will ballot on the nominees in July with announcement of the Class of 2011 inductees to follow.

The Hall of Legends will be a “virtual hall” maintained on the NFHC website and also at the NFHC office in Emmitsburg. Long term plans are to develop a Hall of Legends electronic presentation that can be viewed at the NFHC office, conferences, meetings and special presentations to the fire and emergency services disciplines. The NFHC website is undergoing a number of updates and improvements and the Hall of Legends is currently on schedule to be posted by 1 October 2011.”

## **The Fire That Changed Everything**

A cliché is any expression that gets overused through repetition. Yet I found an example the other day where maybe that is not so true. I was recently researching a book called “the Fire that Changed Everything” written by Russell Ashe from Williamstown Vermont. When I typed it into the internet, an entire series of fires came up under that title. They included the title of the book I was looking for but also a narrative of the Triangle Shirtwaist Company Fire and Our Lady of the Angels Fire. There were some pretty interesting and informative articles.





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What would a fire facility be without its companion dog? This is Buddy, who accompanies Dick Jaehne on his rounds every day at the Illinois Institute of Fire Safety in Urbana-Champaign.





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## **National Fire Heritage Center**

*An Archive for and about America's Fire Services and Fire Protection Disciplines*

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