



# Lines & Leads

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**THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY FIRE/EMS DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER**

## **"PGFD CARES" RAISES \$10 GRAND TO FIGHT BREAST CANCER**

In October, the Fire/EMS Department participated in the nationwide campaign for breast cancer awareness through the purchase of pink PGFD CARES t-shirts. An exemption to the Department's uniform policy was approved, allowing Firefighters and Paramedics the option of wearing the pink t-shirt in lieu of their regular work uniform shirt for the first week of October. Participation in the program was so overwhelming that Chief Bashoor extended the uniform exception for the entire month. "Prince George's County is united in our fight against breast cancer, which impacts so many of our neighbors, family members, and friends," said County Executive Rushern L. Baker. "It is important that we take this time to increase awareness of the effect that this disease has on our community, as well as the importance of finding and beating cancer early while encouraging our residents to get proper screenings." The PGFD CARES initiative was organized by a handful of our Department's personnel to raise awareness and funds for breast cancer research. The funds raised from the purchase of the PGFD Pink T-shirts generated an amazing \$10,000, which is to be donated to the Susan G. Komen Foundation.



## **FIRE/EMS PERSONNEL "TAKE TO THE STREETS" FOR FIRE PREVENTION WEEK**



Prince George's County career, volunteer firefighters, medics and EMT's, as well as civilian members of the Fire/EMS Department, participated in many community events during Fire Prevention Week 2011. Hundreds of positive contacts were made with members of communities across the County. Fire Safety and injury prevention information and smoke alarms were distributed.



Just a few examples of the many community events attended include: Marlboro Fire/EMS Station #820 visited their local

Home Depot Store on Route 301 for their fire prevention activities. Firefighters from District Heights and surrounding communities participated in the East Colony Square Townhomes Clean Up, Green Up and Community Day. The Hyattsville Volunteer Fire/EMS Department held an Open House and 5K run. Branchville Fire/EMS Station #811, College Park Fire/EMS Station #812, Fire/EMS Department Bomb Squad and Homeland Security's Fire Safety House were at the College Park Day.



PRODUCED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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WE ARE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

## A MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF

### CAREER RECRUIT SCHOOL #44 GRADUATES

On Thursday, November 3, 2011, thirty-five members of Career Recruit School (CRS) #44 received their Graduation Certificates certifying successful completion of classroom and physical training at the Fire/EMS Training Academy. The graduation ceremony was held at the Charles Flowers High School in Springdale and was well attended by the Fire/EMS Department Command Staff, honored guests, family, friends and co-workers. Speakers included a Keynote address by Cathy Hedrick of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation.

Throughout their academy instruction, the members of CRS #44 diligently worked to raise funds through various activities including the run across the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. Their efforts generated over \$5,000 for the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. During their graduation ceremony, the members of Career Recruit School #44 made a special presentation to Cathy Hedrick for the Foundation. Immediately after they presented their check to Cathy, I surprised the men and women of CRS #44 with a Unit Citation in recognition of their benevolence and philanthropy for fellow firefighters. CRS #44 is the first recruit class to have been bestowed with this honor and distinction.

Special Achievement Awards were presented to the following students that excelled in portions of the training academy: Emergency Medical Technician Scholastic Achievement Award - Fire Fighter Michael Kiefer; Fire Suppression Scholastic Achievement Award - Fire Fighter Jonathan Di Iorio; Instructor's Award - Fire Fighter Michael Dommel; Memorial Award - Fire Fighter Jason Cruz; Fire Chief's Award - Fire Fighter Damon Sinclair. Congratulations to all, and please join me in welcoming the men and women of CRS #44 to their new field assignments!



### TRAINING ACADEMY UNIT CITATION

The graduation of Career Recruit School #44 marked the successful conclusion of three classes of recruit firefighters totaling 94 personnel completing their Fire/EMS Training in the same year. Being an alumni of the Training Academy staff myself, I recognize that conducting just one academy class at a time can be highly challenging, yet for a majority of the last year, there was more than one recruit class being instructed at the Academy at the same time. On the evening of the graduation of CRS #44, I officially recognized and commended the staff of the Fire/EMS Training Academy for their efforts by presenting them with a Unit Citation, the highest award a group or unit can receive for their exemplary performance while in the course of their duties.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT PRESENTED FIRE CHIEF'S AWARD

October 27, 2011, I was pleased to join Firefighter/Medics from District Heights Fire/EMS Station #826 at Drew Freeman Middle School on Brooks Drive in Suitland to present 7th grade student Chyna Campbell with a Fire Chief's Award.



Chyna was recognized for her actions when she called 911 to report an apartment on fire with a family trapped on the balcony. Her calm and precise instructions to the 911 call taker provided firefighters with valuable information that enabled them to quickly rescue the family and extinguish the fire.

### UNIT CITATION FOR BW PARKWAY INCIDENT

On October 11, 2011, a Unit Citation was awarded to crews from several stations recognizing actions on the scene of a motor vehicle accident on southbound Baltimore-Washington Parkway on August 13, 2011. Personnel arrived to find a single vehicle crash involving seven victims. The adults, children, and an infant, some of whom had been ejected, sustained injuries ranging from serious to fatal. Fire/EMS units responded from Beltsville Fire/EMS Station 831, Greenbelt Fire/EMS Station 835, Berwyn Heights Fire/EMS Station 814, Paramedic Unit 810 (Laurel), Paramedic Unit 812 (College Park) and the Emergency Medical Services Duty Officer.

Although there were numerous and challenging obstacles, everyone involved in this incident worked cohesively to ensure rapid pre-hospital treatment and transport to trauma centers via ground and air. This incident tested the physical, mental, and emotional resolve of even the most experienced first responder. The professionalism and unrelenting commitment displayed by all involved in the mitigation of this incident is commendable and worthy of recognition. Congratulations to all.

Marc S. Bashoor, Fire Chief

# MEET THE FIRE CHIEF'S COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

*This is the first of a two-part series of articles introducing the nine member Board of Directors of the Fire Chief's Community Advisory Council.*

## M. H. Jim Estep

The President and CEO of the Greater Prince George's Business Roundtable is Mr. M.H. Jim Estep. Jim is formerly: Chair of the Prince George's County Council where he served two elected terms; President Pro Tempore of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments; Chairman of the Board of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments; President of the International Association of Fire Chiefs; Director of the Maryland Security Council, Office of the Governor; Fire Chief of Prince George's County and Director of Public Safety for Prince George's County. Mr. Estep was named Citizen of the Year by the Prince George's Board of Trade, was recipient of the Elizabeth & David Scull Award for Outstanding Regional Leadership, COG's highest Award and The Tom Bradley Leadership Award from the National Association of Regional Councils, its highest award. In addition, Jim received the Janet L. Hoffman award for outstanding local administration from the American Society for Professional Administration (ASPA), Maryland Chapter. He is a member of the Board of Directors; Congressional Fire Services Institute, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce, Prince George's Community Foundation, and the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications.

## Pastor Orlando J. Bego

A resident of Camp Springs, Pastor Orlando J. Bego serves as Pastor of the Center Point Baptist Church in Temple Hills. Pastor Bego received his early education from the Massanutten Military Academy and continued at The University of The District of Columbia where he was awarded The James Edward Miller Chapman Scholarship for his excellence in areas of Business and Public Administration. Pastor Bego is a graduate of The Calvary Christian College earning a Bachelors in Biblical Studies with a concentration in Pastoral Leadership. He also earned a Masters of Divinity degree from the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University in Richmond, VA and is a Certified Program Coordinator and Certified Mentor from The Maryland Mentoring Partnership. Pastor Bego plays an extremely active role in his community, serving on the Executive Committee of The NAACP, Washington, DC Chapter, the Board of Directors of The Word Evangelistic Ministries, Inc, the Executive Committee of The District of Columbia Baptist Convention and the Board of Directors of The Maryland Prevention Institute and PRISM-Partnership for Renewal in The State of Maryland.

## Ollie P. Anderson, Jr., JD,

Ollie P. Anderson currently serves as President of Anderson International LLC and Chairman of the New Initiatives Community Development Corporation. A career member of the Senior Foreign Service, Anderson retired from the State Department in 1997 with over

38 years of Federal Government service, including twenty years in the United States Army and a year and a half as a Foreign Affairs Consultant to a Member of Congress. He was recently appointed to the Governor's Commission on African Affairs in Maryland. As a diplomat, Mr. Anderson served as Chief of Mission of the American Embassies in Congo Brazzaville and in Grenada. Prior to his retirement from the Army as a Lt. Colonel in 1979, he served as a Political-Military officer in the Department of Defense for six years. Anderson served two tours in Vietnam, and was awarded two Bronze Stars and the Purple Heart.

With a Juris Doctorate degree from the Catholic University School of Law, a Master's in Government from Howard University, and a Bachelor's in Political Science from Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; he has traveled to over fifty countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. A native of Mississippi and Louisiana, he and his wife, Caroline, live in Fort Washington, Maryland, and attend Ebenezer AME Church.

## Trina Denise Brown

A resident/owner in the Town of Bladensburg for the past twenty-four years, Trina Denise Brown was elected in October as a Council Member for the Town of Bladensburg. Ms. Brown is the former President of the Port Towns Community Development Corporation (PTCDC) 2009 thru 2010, and is currently a member of the Prince George's County Advisory Committee on Aging 2009 to present. Over the past six years, she has worked with the Town of Bladensburg and surrounding communities in helping implement revitalization projects to enhance the economic vitality and health and wellness of their community. Since

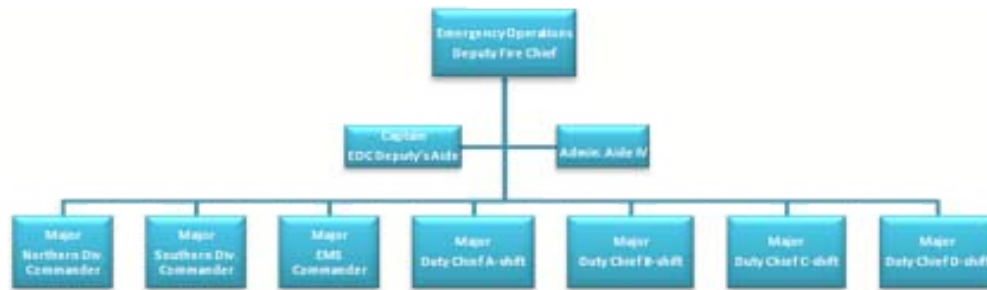
2002, Ms. Brown has work as a Senior Consultant for minority companies within the Washington Metropolitan area. She is responsible for day-to-day operations to include; implementing daily company policies, procedures and guidelines, manage complex contracts, budget management, and creation of customized tracking systems for monthly billing, as well as the design and enhancement of company visual aids and marketing materials to promote company business to the Federal and State and Local government entities.

## Isaac C. Trouth III, Ph.D.

A Bowie City Councilmember, Dr. Trouth is a thirty-two year Resident of Prince George's County. He is a retired Pharmaceutical Sales Specialist, Abbott Laboratories, BMS and holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Virginia Union University, Master of the Arts from Bowie State University and Ph.D. Madison University. In addition, he is CERT Certified, Treasurer of the Prince George's County Municipal Association and a former Member of the District II Police Citizens Advisory Council.



## A COMMAND PERSPECTIVE - EMERGENCY OPERATIONS COMMAND



Lieutenant Colonel Neal B. Dennis, a 22-year veteran of the Department, was recently promoted to the position of Lieutenant Colonel in charge of Emergency Operations Command. The Emergency Operations Command oversees 90 percent of the Fire/EMS Department's personnel and resources that respond to emergency and non-emergency service calls.

Born in Nashville, Tennessee, Neal's family relocated to College Park when he was seven. Dennis currently resides in Bowie with his wife and three children. "I believe my interest in the fire service originated with my sister, who worked for the Montgomery Fire & Rescue Service," stated Dennis, "...although my mother repeatedly reminds me that as a young lad, I often claimed I wanted to grow up to be a fire truck."

Prior to moving to EOC, Lieutenant Colonel Dennis served as a Major in charge of the Department's Professional Standards. He has served the citizens of Prince George's County in various assignments throughout his career within the Fire/EMS Department and County Government. His breadth of experience includes Special Operations, Hazardous Materials, Special Events Unit, and Chief of Staff to the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Public Safety.

Lieutenant Colonel Dennis states his short-term goals for EOC include a redistribution of responsibilities among the command staff and a thorough examination of how and where all of our field personnel are deployed. The latter goal is intended to identify our opportunities

to improve service delivery. Long-term goals include working to maintain and augment adequate levels of staffing for our stations, exploration of the concept of staffing units as opposed to stations and collaboration with our other commands to bring TeleStaff to the operating level needed to efficiently handle our resource deployment needs. Additional goals include exploration of new equipment technologies that will allow us to serve the public with the greatest efficiency. As always, everything we are attempting to improve or enhance must be predicated on safety. Safety of our personnel and citizens must remain our primary goal.

With respect to his new appointment as Commander of Emergency Operations, Dennis states, "I am looking forward to the challenges and hard work associated with the new position, and working together with the men and women, sworn, civilian and volunteer, in moving the Department forward." Dennis continued, "This position can be demanding, but I have a very supportive family that affords me the time needed to dedicate to the job to bring forth success. I believe success in this position is achieved through providing the highest possible level of quality service to the citizens and visitors of this County in the most fiscally responsible manner, without compromising the safety of Fire/EMS personnel and the public we serve." Dennis continued, "I would like to thank County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Public Safety Barry L. Stanton, and Fire Chief Marc S. Bashoor for the opportunity to continue to serve the citizens of Prince George's County in this new and exciting role."

## OPERATION WARM PROVIDES COATS FOR KIDS

On November 30, 2011, the Prince George's County Fire/Emergency Medical Services Department will join with the Prince George's County Homeless Education Office, the University of Maryland, and Operation Warm to provide 300 underprivileged children with new winter coats this year. Operation Warm, Inc. is one of the nation's largest nonprofit providers of new winter coats to children in need. Operation Warm melds its core values of accountability, excellence, integrity, innovation, respect and teamwork with the strength of its community network to reach children across the country. Their vision is that every child wearing a new winter coat is healthy, able to attend school regularly and develop a strong self-esteem. Since its inception, more than 775,000 children have received the gift of warmth, a new winter coat. Along with Coats for Kids Foundation (Combined Federal Campaign #52316) Operation Warm, Inc. will serve our MILLIONTH child by year's end; a momentous milestone.

Three hundred pre-identified public school children will receive a winter coat this year through the Operation Warm program. Staff from the Homeless Education Office have pre-identified the families in need of these coats and will select the coats at this event and deliver them to the children. This event will be the distribution of new coats to staff to deliver to children at various locations throughout Prince George's County.

Further information is available at [www.operationwarm.org](http://www.operationwarm.org).



OPERATION  WARM

## GUIDELINES FOR PROVIDING INFORMATION AND IMAGES VIA SOCIAL MEDIA

Twitter, Facebook, blogs, websites and social networks now allow us to update what we are doing, where we are and who we are with at any given moment. Through the tremendous advances in the field of communication in the 21st century, text and images instantaneously traverse across the internet providing details we want to share -- and some things we do not want to share -- with literally millions of other people.



from inside the "hot zone", including interior images of a structure, should not be posted unless permission is first obtained from both the Office of the Fire Marshal and the Public Information Officer. This policy includes hot-zone and interior images obtained by "helmet-cams." This detailed information should not be provided to media or posted on public domain websites and social networks until information has been verified and/or provided publically by the

Office of the Fire Marshal via the Public Information Officer.

It should be noted that our internal policies regarding the actions of our personnel should not be confused with the activities of members of the media and general public, who are legally permitted to document emergency scenes from a vantage point open to the public. A recent decision by the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit reaffirmed the First Amendment Rights of individuals to take images and video of incidents from areas that are generally accessible to the public.

Images of crash scenes involving injuries have become problematic for departments across the Nation. Every day it seems there are stories from across the country that detail the termination and discipline of personnel who have posted graphic and inappropriate images and detailed information from the scenes of motor vehicle crashes and other incidents that involve patients.

Generally speaking, it is in the best interest of everyone involved that images of crash scenes involving patients not be taken. While your intent may be to display the Fire/EMS Department in a positive light while performing a rescue, extrication or patient treatment, it is highly possible that family and friends of a patient could end up being adversely affected through your instantaneous publication of crash scene images. This is in no way intended to exclude images that are captured with the intent to provide hospital emergency department staff with a better understanding of the mechanism of injury; however, images of this nature should only be shared with hospital staff as part of a patient's record and then immediately deleted from the provider's device once reviewed by medical authorities.

The rapid posting of these scene images often results in law enforcement agencies and hospitals not being provided adequate opportunity to notify the family of the patient, or the next of kin. In fact, for incidents under the authority of the United States Park Police, the following request has been made, "Images recorded within emergency scenes because of the access afforded to emergency responders (and not the press or citizens) shall not be displayed on public domain websites prior to coordination with the United States Park Police."

Further, any use of photography or video captured at the scene of an incident that involves an injury is strongly discouraged. Specifically, HIPAA guidelines prohibit the use of patient's images and any identifying information. With these general common-sense guidelines in mind, the posting of images and photography by members of the Fire/EMS Department on fire scenes should be limited to those images obtained from the exterior of the structure and/or from areas that are open to the public. Any images and videos obtained

Basically, as long as any responder is not actively participating in emergency operational duties, he or she may choose to move to an area that is accessible to the general public to capture a quick picture. In this case, no prohibition exists - as long as your actions are sanctioned by your commanding officer and your absence and activities do not impede other emergency response personnel in the performance of their duties. Again, the intention of our media policy is not to abridge any individual's right to free speech. The policy is in place to protect you, the citizens we aid and this Department by ensuring we are providing correct information in a timely manner and in a consistent and reliable format.

**Prior to releasing confidential operational information in any public forum, you must first seek the approval of the Public Information Officer and/or the Office of the Fire Marshal. Detailed information about emergency scenes and incidents that should NOT be preleased without approval includes:**

- The exact address of any incident,
- Cause of a fire/crash,
- Number of occupants injured or displaced,
- Fire loss estimates,
- Any information on injuries/death covered by HIPAA.

**Personnel should never:**

- Post crash scene images that violate HIPAA regulations or images that may adversely affect a victim's family/friends or impact a law enforcement investigation. Personnel are forbidden to obtain, collect or distribute any image that a reasonable person would find upsetting or grotesque.
- Post image scenes taken within the hot zone or the interior of a structure (including "Helmet Cams") without permission from the Office of the Fire Marshal and the Public Information Officer.
- Discuss any policy, personnel issues and specific incident details to the public or members of the media without the permission of the Fire Chief, PIO or their designees.
- Post detailed incident information - Examples of detailed information includes names of personnel, cause/origin of fire, specific injuries, number of people displaced, exact address, estimated fire loss and any similar information.

## PGFD AND LOWE'S PARTNER FOR FIRE SAFETY

The Prince George's County Fire/Emergency Medical Services Department recently partnered with Lowe's of Largo, Maryland, to promote safety for local homeowners. Firefighters, paramedics and employees of the Lowe's Home Improvement store on Campus Way South teamed up to check smoke alarms, provide fire safety and information prevention material. Lowe's also provided reflective mail box numbers for homeowners that will assist first responders with a quick and easy location of exact address.



Sixteen Fire/EMS Department personnel and Lowe's employees went door-to-door on Kettering Drive providing this valuable life saving information to very grateful members of the community. Lowe's of Largo provided smoke alarms and address numbers at no cost.

Fire Lieutenant Eric Hurt of the Facilities and Resource Planning office coordinated the event with Lowe's. He stated, "We are appreciative of our partnership with Lowe's in providing the resources and staff to help us keep Safety First."

## SIMULCASTING ENDS WITH NEW 700 MHZ SWITCHOVER

Prince George's County Public Safety Communications "flipped the switch" this past week ending the simulcast of the Fire/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Department which is now fully operational on the County's upgraded 700 MHZ TDMA radio system. Over the past several months Fire/EMS apparatus have had the new radios installed and portable radios distributed to stations and support personnel. The Fire/EMS Department has been simulcasting over both the old and new frequencies during the transition period. The Fire/EMS main dispatch channel will be the only channel that can be monitored on conventional scanners on VHF 155.685.



Monitoring of the 700 MHZ TDMA frequencies is currently only capable on a GRE PSR-800 scanner that is available at select retailers.

Please keep in mind that this not an endorsement of this particular scanner; however, it is the only commercially available scanner capable of monitoring our new frequencies.

There are also web based sites that may continue to provide the ability to monitor PGFD frequencies. Again, this is not an endorsement of these sites, rather, a recommendation to be able to continue monitoring our frequencies. These sites include [www.LiveFireFeeds.com](http://www.LiveFireFeeds.com) and <http://www.radioreference.com>.

The 700 MHZ TDMA radio system and public safety communications are part of the County Office of Homeland Security. Prince George's County Public Safety Communications Center (PSCC) is the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for Prince Georges County. This means that all 911 calls in Prince George's County are routed to the center for dispatching of proper emergency personnel. PSCC consists of approximately 190 authorized personnel that are responsible for all aspects including call taking, dispatching, technical support, radio system, and personnel functions. Any questions concerning the new radio system should be referred to Public Safety Communications administration.

### MEDIC RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE IN EMS REPORT DOCUMENTATION

Congratulations are in order for Fire Fighter/Medic Johnathan W. Bender, who was recently commended by Emergency Medical Services Major Dennis C. Wood. Wood recognized Bender for his consistent excellence in EMS report documentation. In making the presentation, Major Wood stated, "Your overall actions exemplify the level of professional emergency medical care that every provider should strive for each day."

