

# **FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR**

## **AWARDS CEREMONY**

26th Annual Event

November 23, 2015



## **2015 “Firefighter of the Year” Award Recipients Alphabetically by Fire Department**

*The Governor and the Secretary presented 43 awards: two Norman Knight Awards for Excellence in Community Service, one Excellence in Leadership Award, ten Individual Awards for Meritorious Conduct, eight Group Awards for Meritorious Conduct to teams of firefighters and 22 Medals of Valor to individual firefighters. The State Fire Marshal’s award was presented to three groups outside the fire service who have made a significant contribution.*

### **BOSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT**

#### ***Group Citation for Meritorious Conduct***

### **BOAT ACCIDENT & RESCUE**

**Lieutenant Charles Popp  
Firefighter Isaac Florez**

**Firefighter William Benevelli  
FF/Pilot Brian Henry**

On May 30, 2015, the Boston Fire Department Marine Unit responded to a boating accident off of Spectacle Island. A pleasure boat appeared to be dead in the water with several people yelling for help. Upon arrival, the Marine Unit found a woman with a severed limb and other injuries on the swim platform. She was transferred to the on scene Coast Guard vessel to have Firefighter William Benevelli apply a tourniquet.

Fire Lieutenant Charles Popp, Firefighter William Benevelli, and Firefighter Isaac Florez transferred the patient in a Stokes basket from the Coast Guard boat to the Fire Department boat. Marine Pilot Brian Henry did an excellent job of steadying the fire department vessel during the difficult process of transferring the patient from one floating vessel to another in broadside winds and choppy seas. Firefighter Benevelli and Florez worked to calm the woman as they quickly assessed her multiple injuries and wrapped her in a blanket as treatment for hypothermia. The Boston Fire Department Marine Unit crew provided rapid treatment to stabilize the patient under frantic conditions as she began to go into shock from excessive blood loss and multiple life-threatening injuries.

### **BOSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT MASSPORT FIRE-RESCUE DEPARTMENTS**

#### ***Individual Citations for Meritorious Conduct***

### **FENWAY PARK BATTING INJURY**

**Lt. Joseph Minehan, Boston Fire**

**Lt. Richard Shea, Massport Fire**

During a Boston Red Sox game at Fenway Park, a batter’s swing broke the bat sending its barrel into the stands where it struck an unsuspecting fan. Boston Fire Lieutenant Joseph Minehan and Massport Fire-Rescue Lieutenant Richard Shea quickly were on scene in

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moments with a medical supply bag. They found a woman bleeding profusely with traumatic injury to the head and face and immediately worked to control the bleeding.

They extracted the patient from the stands onto a gurney positioned on the field. They quickly recognized the most expeditious route to the ambulance was across the infield and requested the Red Sox on duty physician, Dr. Ed Almond, to obtain approval.

According to media sources, the fan sustained multiple head and facial fractures as well as a serious brain injury but is expected to recover. Lieutenants Minehan and Shea were the first responders to initially aid the woman and were integral members of the medical team. The rapid response, exemplary emergency medical skills and teamwork aligned to save a life.

### **BOURNE FIRE/RESCUE & EMERGENCY SERVICES**

### **VEHICLE FIRE & SHOOTING INCIDENT**

#### ***Group Citation for Meritorious Conduct***

**Chief Martin Greene, ret.  
Lt. Gilbert Taylor  
FF/P Holly Kuhn  
FF Timothy Young Sr.**

**Deputy Joseph J. Carrara Jr.  
FF/P Alexander Heikkila  
FF Robert Ronayne  
FF Timothy Young Jr.**

**Lt. Thomas Swartz  
FF/P Nicholas Reis  
FF Steven Marzelli  
FF/P Matthew Langler**

On February 5, 2015 after 2:00 a.m., Bourne Fire/Rescue & Emergency Services responded to reports of a fully involved car fire. Firefighters found the burning vehicle parked across the roadway blocking access to the fire hydrant.

There was a suspicious object on the snow next to the fire hydrant. It looked like a 2-liter soda bottle with items inside and was wrapped in wires. It appeared the scene may have been booby-trapped to injure first responders and the State Police Bomb Squad was called.

Bourne Fire & Rescue staged approximately 50 yards away from the fire and was preparing to use the deck gun to extinguish the fire, when a 9-1-1 call was received reporting shots fired and people injured at the nearby Round House Road condominium complex. As police responded to the condo, gunshots rang out from the woods and a responding police officer was wounded.

The scene had grown exponentially dangerous and complicated for civilians, firefighters, police officers and emergency medical services. No one knew how many shooters there might be. Firefighters were directed to pull back from the vehicle fire and along with responding mutual aid ambulances from Wareham, Falmouth and Sandwich Fire Departments were staged down the road from the condo complex.

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### **BOURNE FIRE/RESCUE & EMERGENCY SERVICES & FALMOUTH FIRE/RESCUE**

### **RESCUE OF GUNSHOT VICTIM**

#### ***Individual Citations for Meritorious Conduct***

**FF/P Matthew Langler, Bourne Fire/Rescue**  
**FF/P Randy Koslowsky, Falmouth Fire/Rescue**  
**FF Russ Ferreira, Falmouth Fire/Rescue**

During this extremely dangerous incident, the members of Falmouth's Ambulance 35 and two members of the Bourne Fire Department together successfully removed and cared for a resident of the condominium complex suffering a gunshot wound. A second victim had already succumbed to her injuries. At the time that Firefighter/Paramedic Matthew Langler of Bourne Fire, and Firefighter/Paramedic Randy Koslowsky and Firefighter Russ Ferreira of the Falmouth Fire Department entered the building, a police officer had been shot, there were possible improvised devices hindering access to the building, and an unknown number of shooters in the woods. With complete disregard for their own safety and focus on their patient, these three firefighters rescued the woman and transported her to Falmouth Hospital.

### **BOURNE FIRE DEPARTMENT OFFICER**

### **RESCUE OF WOUNDED POLICE**

#### ***Medals of Valor***

**Lt. Dana Dupuis**  
**Lt. Richard Emberg**

**FF/P Shawn Silva**  
**FF/P Michael Berthiaume**

A routine call quickly became an extremely dangerous incident, then medical rescues of both a civilian and a police officer. One of multiple gun shots from the woods managed to wound Police Officer Jared McDonald. No one knew how many shooters there might be or where they were located yet.

At the risk of also becoming victims, the crew of Bourne Fire and Rescue Ambulance 135, Lieutenant Dana Dupuis, Lieutenant Richard Emberg Firefighter/Paramedic Michael Berthiaume and Firefighter/Paramedic Shawn Silva responded from the staging area to rescue the wounded police officer. They removed him from the extremely dangerous and hazardous scene to Bourne High School where he was transferred to a helicopter and med-flighted to Rhode Island Hospital. Their prompt and careful emergency medical treatment and transfer helped to ensure his survival.

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### **BROOKLINE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

#### ***Medal of Valor***

#### **Captain John Teahan**

On the morning of January 1, 2015, Brookline Fire Alarm received multiple calls for a fire in a fully occupied 3-story apartment building at 114 Davis Ave. Upon arrival, Ladder Company 2 saw heavy smoke pouring from numerous floors of the fully occupied apartment building and fire emanating from the basement windows. Captain John Teahan of Ladder 2 and Firefighter Thomas Francis forced entry into a common stairwell and then into the first floor apartment. They were met with zero visibility and high heat. Unknown to the captain, the fire was not only consuming the basement contents and attacking the structure; it had made its way up the basement stairs and was burning through the first floor door. Once through, the fire would have an unrestricted pathway to the entire structure.

As Captain Teahan and FF Francis moved forward, they encountered excessive clutter along with heavy smoke. Despite the overwhelming obstacles faced they continued forward over mounds of debris, room to room, towards the front of the building. Captain Teahan made the decision to split up to cover the first floor more expediently. Utilizing a thermal imaging camera, he found a prone individual on a couch and singlehandedly removed the victim to the outside rear of the building by crawling back through the apartment and all its dangers. Captain Teahan's leadership, quick actions and instinctive decisions made the woman's survival possible. Under extreme conditions he performed in the highest tradition of the Massachusetts fire service.

### **CHELSEA FIRE DEPARTMENT**

#### ***Individual Citations for Meritorious Conduct***

#### **FF David Bishop**

#### **FF Bryan Bermudez**

On August 8, 2015, a distraught man jumped from the Tobin Bridge and was caught by safety netting for constructions workers. Chelsea Police restrained the man intent on completing his suicide attempt as Chelsea Firefighters David Bishop and Bryan Bermudez used a portable ladder to climb down to treat the man who had several broken bones and was bleeding profusely. A Stokes basket was lowered down and these firefighters prepared him to be safely lifted up to the lower deck by other Chelsea and Boston units and taken to hospital. Firefighters Bishop and Bermudez helped prevent the victim from further harming himself and stabilize a chaotic situation.

### **APARTMENT FIRE RESCUE**

### **BRIDGE RESCUE**

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### **CHELSEA FIRE DEPARTMENT**

*Medal of Valor*

#### **FF Miguel Acosta**

Early on the morning of February 7, 2015, the Chelsea Fire Department responded to a fire in apartment building with reports of a woman trapped on the third floor. Engine 2 advanced an attack line to the third floor up the interior stairway. Tower Ladder One's crew forced open the apartment door and started to search for the victim in the front of the apartment. Firefighter Miguel Acosta from Engine 2 moved past the hose line alone and under difficult fire conditions. He found the semi-conscious woman in a corner of her bedroom at the very back of the apartment. He dragged her down the hall and out of the apartment where others removed her to a waiting ambulance. Firefighter Acosta's aggressive search for the victim undoubtedly saved her life.

### **APARTMENT FIREw/RESCUE**

### **CHELSEA FIRE DEPARTMENT**

*Medal of Valor*

#### **FF Janine Romano**

Around noon on November 22, 2014, three alarms were quickly struck for a fast moving fire in an old Victorian. While interior crews struggled to advance hose lines, the crew of Tower Ladder 1 worked to vent the gable roof. The captain had stepped off the platform to open up the last section of roof and lost his footing just as he was returning to the platform. Firefighter Romano's instinctively assessed the dangerous situation and the fact that her captain was about to fall 40 feet with nothing between him and the ground. She reached out from the platform and grabbed him as he slid by and assisted him back onto the aerial platform saving him from life threatening injuries if not death.

### **FIREFIGHTER RESCUE**

### **CHELSEA FIRE DEPARTMENT**

*Medal of Valor*

#### **FF Angel Arrieta**

On Sunday, December 21, 2014, the Chelsea Fire Department responded to a fire in a one-story apartment that was a converted garage attached to a 2-story main building. There were reports of people trapped inside; the scene was chaotic with civilians attempting to enter the building and conduct their own rescues. The windows were boarded up and the front door heavily fortified delaying entry by the crew of Ladder 2 and Engine 2. Firefighter Arrieta found a man trying to enter a side door and prevented him from doing so. Donning his SCBA he entered the side door, crawling under heavy smoke

### **APARTMENT FIRE w/ RESCUE**

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to search for trapped occupants in zero visibility and without the protection of a hose line. Ventilation by other crews lifted the smoke enough for Arietta to see what he thought at first was a pile of clothes just off the kitchen. He quickly realized it was the person he was looking for and dragged him towards the side entrance where other firefighters assisted in the rescue and paramedics were able to revive the man. The kitchen experienced flashover shortly after the victim was removed. A few seconds later and there would have been no chance to save the man.

### **FRAMINGHAM FIRE DEPARTMENT**

#### ***Group Citation for Meritorious Conduct***

### **HOUSE FIRE w/ RESCUE**

#### ***Rescue 1***

**Lt. Joseph A. Mazzola**

**FF Jose F. Rubio**

**FF William R. Petro**

On March 4, 2015, Framingham Fire Dispatch received a 9-1-1 call reporting a house fire at 6 Cornell Road. Extreme cold weather and significant snow storms had plagued the area for days and at least two feet of snow covered the ground. The crews of Engine 1, Engine 2, Engine 7, Rescue 1, Platform 1 and the deputy responded. The Engine 7 crew found a working fire upon arrival with fire venting from the rear of the single family ranch home and heavy smoke pouring from all openings. They advanced toward the fire area with a hose line through the front door trying to contain the fire and simultaneously conduct an initial search with a thermal imager for a reported victim trapped inside. They did not find anyone in the main area of the house.

The crew of Engine 1 took over the primary search for the victim without benefit of hose lines in heavy smoke and heat conditions. On a bedroom floor, they found a large unresponsive man behind a partially opened door and began to extricate him from this difficult position.

Lieutenant Joseph A. Mazzola, Firefighter Jose F. Rubio, and Firefighter William R. Petro arrived on scene as Rescue 1. They entered the structure to assist in the search and met with Lieutenant John P. Farrell and Firefighter Joseph A. Ahearn from Engine 1.

The location was cramped and partially blocked by the bedroom door and the extreme smoke and heat conditions made it difficult. Both companies worked as a team to skillfully and successfully remove the victim to safety. EMS personnel were waiting to begin patient care and the victim was transported initially to the Metro-West Medical Center for stabilization and then moved to Mass. General Hospital for more definitive care.

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### **FRAMINGHAM FIRE DEPARTMENT**

#### ***Individual Citations for Meritorious Conduct***

### **HOUSE FIRE w/ RESCUE**

#### ***Engine 1***

**Lt. John P. Farrell**

**FF Joseph A. Ahearn**

Lieutenant Farrell and FF Joseph A. Ahearn of Engine 1 assumed responsibility for the primary search for a victim trapped in a house fire on March 4, 2015 at 6 Cornell Road in Framingham.

Their search was conducted without hose line protection or the availability of a thermal imager while Engine 7 concentrated on fire suppression. Their search patterns took them along the floor in heavy smoke and heat, towards the bedroom areas of the home. Using their years of experience and training, while working in extreme conditions, they found an unconscious man on his bedroom floor partially wedged behind the door which made it difficult to extricate him.

With the assistance of the members of Rescue 1, they used brute physical strength and personal rescue webbing to skillfully and successfully remove the victim to safety.

By displaying composure and versatility to make quick decisions, their efforts under extreme conditions resulted in a life saving effort. The man was able to make a full recovery.

### **FRAMINGHAM FIRE DEPARTMENT**

#### ***Group Citation for Meritorious Conduct***

### **CAR SUBMERGED WATER RESCUE**

#### ***Engine 1***

**Lt. Robert Morrison**  
**FF Ted Lima**

**FF Joseph Curtis**  
**FF Joel Sexton**

**FF Jose Funes**

#### ***Platform 1***

**Act/Lt. Dave Peters**

**FF Trevor O'Leary**

**FF Edward Rokes**

#### ***Rescue 1***

**Captain John Schultz**  
**FF Brian Morgan**

**Lt. Mike Cantin**

**FF Jeff Casale**

#### ***Engine 3***

**Captain John Tremblay**  
**FF John Sulfaro**

**FF Ted Dones**

**FF Dan Harding**

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### ***Dive Rescue 1***

**Lt. Jose Delgado**  
**FF James Madden**

**Lt. Vincent Zanella**  
**FF Joseph Neiberger**

**FF Mike Espinosa**  
**FF Steve Seariac**

### ***Fire Dispatch***

**FF John Ford**

**FF Orlando Gonzalez**

On June 6, 2015, the Framingham Fire Department was dispatched for a water rescue. Lieutenant Robert Morrison reported a car overturned and almost completely submerged with only the rear wheels and bumper exposed above the water line. While searching the car, personnel heard a faint cry for help and made physical contact with the lone survivor whose head was in a small air pocket in the rear of the car. Acting Deputy Mark Leporati assumed command and requested additional manpower and activated the Dive Rescue Team.

Captain John Schultz set up a variety of rescue tools along with a rescue sling and winch. Once the vehicle was stabilized, members began the process of extricating the survivor who had to be removed through the rear of the car. Gaining access to the trunk, the crew used spreading and cutting tools systematically to cut through the vehicle. The survivor had been in the air pocket for approximately three hours and was hypothermic and extremely fatigued from keeping her head in the small area. Crews had to work in chest deep water and from the side of the boat in order to conduct this rescue. Overall, the full team worked for approximately 50 minutes to remove the victim and conducted a successful rescue under extreme circumstances.

## **LAWRENCE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

## **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

### ***Norman Knight Award for Excellence in Community Service***

#### **Lt. Patrick Delaney**

Lieutenant Patrick Delaney has been instrumental in the Lawrence Juvenile Fire Setters School since 2003 and has developed this local and once little known program into a key resource in the Merrimack Valley Region. Over 400 youngsters with a history of inappropriate fire behavior have successfully completed his 10-week program in the past 12 years. None have been known to repeat their use of fire.

Children from neighboring communities such as Methuen, North Andover, Haverhill, and Andover have been enrolled in this program. He has gone out of his way to make the program work not only for the cities and towns around but to make sure the pupils are able to move on in life, to learn from their mistakes and to grow. He teaches his students to grow not only with life lessons but encourages them to pass those lessons on to their friends, to make better choices or avoid peer pressure where it doesn't belong.



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The key to his success with youngsters as a teacher is the ability to modify and adapt his lesson plans to each one individually, including students with special needs. Lieutenant Delaney has taken young children and youths into his heart as well as his program. They know he believes in them and is there for them throughout their lives and that may be the true secret to his success. He takes a personal interest in the lives of the young people and spends countless hours in follow up meetings with teachers, parents, and the juvenile court. He takes the time to serve as a mentor to them and the students themselves choose to keep in touch with him.

He has an incredible ability to connect with children and the parents he educates with understanding and compassion. His community service has been integral in making the City of Lawrence a safer place in regards to fire and life safety. Lieutenant Delaney is a positive role model for youth, always encouraging youth to do better for themselves and to take responsibility for their actions. Every firefighter should strive to be as devoted to their career, community and family as Lieutenant Delaney is, always looking for ways to better and be involved with the community.

### **LOWELL FIRE DEPARTMENT**

#### ***Medals of Valor***

**Captain Brett Dowling**  
**Lt. Mary Stelmokas**

**FF Marc Poirier**  
**FF Michael McGuire**

**FF David McNeil**  
**FF (now Lt.) Ryan Carroll**

### **MULTIPLE RESCUES AT FATAL FIRE**

At 4 a.m. on July 10, 2014, someone was pounding on the doors of the Branch Street fire house in Lowell, as the first calls of a structure fire started coming in. When Engine 2 and Ladder 2 turned on the street, they saw the large building only a block away from the station was already fully engulfed.

Upon arrival, Captain Dowling reported occupants were jumping from and hanging from the windows on the side of the building, and there was a jumper lying in the street. He ordered ladders to be placed on the side to rescue people trapped on the third floor. He and Firefighter David McNeil advanced an attack line to the rear of the building, where they knocked down heavy fire on the exterior porches and then advanced their line up the exterior stairs as far as possible before they were stopped by extreme heat and exploding fireworks.

Firefighter Mike McGuire saw what looked like a child with blue pajamas in a third floor window and positioned Ladder 2 so that he could get the aerial to two sides of the building if needed. Lieutenant Stelmokas and Firefighter Carroll removed ground ladders from the rear of the ladder truck and began rescue efforts. Firefighter Carroll climbed the aerial ladder and started his way to the tip as Firefighter McGuire was raising it. Firefighter Carroll removed two children

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through the heavy smoke and brought them to safety. He took two more occupants from the window then climbed onto the sill of the window and swept his arms into the smoke and was able to grab one more. All members of this family were rescued by Firefighters Ryan Carroll and Mike McGuire and minutes later the window was fully engulfed by fire.

Ultimately this fire claimed the lives of seven people and was the greatest single loss of life in the Commonwealth in over a decade. Without the efforts of these firefighters to properly position the ladders, to aggressively get the aerial ready for rescue and who risked their own lives to extricate five people from a burning building, this fire could have claimed many more lives.

### **MARBLEHEAD FIRE DEPARTMENT**

*Medals of Valor*

### **FIRE WITH RESCUE**

**Lt. Grant Glavin**

**FF Eric Ridge**

**FF Mark Borowski**

On March 24, the 911 Dispatch Center received multiple calls for a reported structure fire. Lieutenant Glavin of Engine 2 arrived within minutes and was confronted with heavy fire showing from the second floor window of a 3-story apartment building. Residents were standing in the street yelling to the engine company that the second floor occupant was still inside. One had tried to get to him, but was beaten back by the smoke. Lieutenant Glavin immediately struck a second alarm as he and his crew prepared to make entry into the building. Without the aid of an attack line, Lieutenant Glavin, FF Eric Ridge, and FF Mark Borowski made their way up a very narrow, smoke filled stairway. When they reached the second floor, they forced the door to the apartment and found an unconscious man lying on the floor behind the kitchen door. He was breathing but severely burned and seriously injured. The rescue was difficult due to the size of the victim and the narrow winding stairway that they had to maneuver down. When they brought the victim out, a Paramedic unit was waiting. The victim had received first and second degree burns to over ninety percent of his body and heavy smoke in his lungs. The fire victim was transported to Mass. General Hospital and seven days later he succumbed to his injuries.

### **MELROSE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

*Individual Citation for Meritorious Conduct*

### **BUILDING FIRE w/ RESCUE**

**FF Robert McVoy**

On February 23, 2015, off-duty Melrose Firefighter Robert McVoy of Ladder Company 1 saw smoke coming from an occupied building on Broad Street in Peabody. Firefighter McVoy immediately called 911 to report the incident and then approached the building where fire and smoke could be seen coming from the second floor.

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He ran into the building to alert the occupants. With smoke filling the second floor unit, Firefighter McVoy assisted the resident and his dog to safety prior to the arrival of the Peabody Fire Department and made sure there were no other occupants, and then updated them on the situation when they arrived. Firefighter McVoy proved once again, that firefighters are never truly off-duty.

### **NANTUCKET FIRE DEPARTMENT**

#### ***Group Citation for Meritorious Conduct***

**FF/EMT Beau Barber  
FF/EMT Kevin Ramos**

**FF/EMT Nathan Barber**

**FF/EMT Dave Pekarcik**

### **HURRICANE AND FLOOD RESCUE**

On January 27, 2015 at the height of winter storm Juno, Firefighters Beau Barber, Nate Barber, David Pekarcik, and Kevin Ramos donned cold water mustang suits and rescued residents trapped in shore front cottages. Hurricane force winds, sub freezing temperatures, low light and flooding conditions causing multiple electrical, fire, and hypothermia hazards for both firefighters and residents.

In all eleven people were safely evacuated by these firefighters who risked their lives in the extreme conditions of the raging storm as they carried them to safety using small non-motorized watercraft. The conditions demanded that these firefighters improvise and adapt to the evolving conditions and work for an extended time period without relief and in restrictive protective gear.

### **PALMER FIRE DEPARTMENT**

#### ***Group Citation for Meritorious Conduct***

#### ***Palmer Fire Department***

**Capt. David Pranaitis  
FF Shawn Doran**

**Lt. Sean Reynolds**

**FF Devan Beane**

### **FATAL APARTMENT FIRE w/ RESCUE**

#### ***Three Rivers Fire Department***

**Lt. Benjamin Duby**

**FF Michael Frydryk**

**FF Patrick Austin**

On a snowy February 9, 2015, the Palmer Fire Department received a dispatch of a reported structure fire. At the same time, people were banging on the fire station door reporting the fire with people possibly trapped. There was heavy fire; many occupants exited through thick choking smoke.

Captain Pranaitis and Firefighter Beane advanced a 1-3/4" hand line to the interior first floor hallway on one side while Lieutenant Reynolds and Firefighter Doran advanced a 1-

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3/4" hand line to the other. Both crews encountered extreme heat and heavy smoke conditions but their efforts contained the fire preventing further extension. Lieutenant Reynolds and Firefighter Doran located a victim of the fatal fire on the floor.

At the same time, a couple was found to be trapped in a half-basement apartment and the woman was seen at the window gasping for fresh air. Lieutenant Duby and Firefighter Frydryk removed the windows to gain entry and rescue the couple who could not get out on their own. They were able to quickly extricate the man but despite several attempts, the physically disabled woman was unable to exit through the window. Firefighter Austin placed a rescue air mask on the woman to help her breathe while Lt. Duby and FF Austin searched for another way out but with the heavy smoke conditions, the basement window was still the only viable option. As time wore on and conditions worsened, the three firefighters were forced to change out SCBA bottles in the room, until the occupant could be placed in a Stokes basket, secured, and removed through the window. This was challenging due to the high snow piles, small window opening, and the angle needed to complete the rescue. Firefighters both inside and outside the building worked to together to orchestrate this difficult rescue.

### **REVERE FIRE DEPARTMENT      RESCUE & LOSS OF FAMILY MEMBER FROM FIRE** *Medal of Valor*

#### **Senior Deputy Chief Christopher Bright**

On a frigid February 21, 2015, Revere 9-1-1 received a report of a building fire "next to 77 Reservoir Ave". The incident commander, Senior Deputy Chief Chris Bright was very familiar with the address as his two elderly uncles lived in this house and he grew up right next door.

Smoke was visible from nearly a half mile away and first arriving Engine 4 found heavy fire in the rear of the building. There were no reports of anyone escaping the fire.

Deputy Chief Bright directed personnel to the first floor of the dwelling where his 85-year old Uncle Dennis' bedroom was located. He knew that his other uncle, 77-year old James, usually stayed in the room in the rear of the basement level and flames were issuing from the two rear sides of the building. Deputy Bright forced his way through the rear basement door where he faced extreme heat and smoke that had banked down to one-foot above floor level. Without wearing self-contained breathing apparatus or benefit of protective hose line, he made his way groping along the floor, and found his uncle James still lying in his bed and dragged him out to the rear door, to waiting medical help.

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All attempts to rescue his other uncle were thwarted by the heavy fire conditions despite repeated attempts. Arriving firefighters did not know that five second floor occupants had escaped and made repeated attempts to search for possible additional victims. Deputy Chief Bright's valiant efforts under extreme personal duress with complete disregard for his own personal safety under hazardous conditions, allowed him to save his uncle James from untenable conditions.

### **SAUGUS FIRE DEPARTMENT**

#### ***Excellence in Leadership Award***

### **EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP**

#### **FF Gregory Cinelli**

Since joining the Saugus Fire Department, Firefighter Cinelli re-joined the Navy as a reserve and completed five combat tours of duty. He spent six years away from his family and is the department's most decorated war veteran. After Firefighter Cinelli retired from the Navy due to injuries, he passionately looked for a cause to help firefighters, police, and EMS providers with the tools to cope with the emotional scars of war. Firefighter Cinelli obtained a service dog from a military family non-profit called *Shepherds for Lost Sheep*. He has trained vigorously with Val and they provide an outlet for veterans to heal. Firefighter Cinelli is a member of the Metro-Boston Critical Incident Stress Management or C-I-S-M team and responded to the Boston Marathon bombings. Firefighter Cinelli donates his time to the Onsite Academy's RESTORE Program that helps police, fire, and EMS providers that are dealing with emotional trauma. He has raised \$20,000 for the purpose of training individuals in all aspects of CISM. Firefighter Cinelli's leadership is an example for all. His passion to give back, without receiving remuneration is unmatched. He received the Tomas R. Linskey Award of Merit, the Saugus Fire Department's highest award for service at the firefighter Sunday Memorial.

### **TAUNTON FIRE DEPARTMENT**

#### ***Medals of Valor***

### **MOBILE HOME FIRE w/ RESCUE**

#### **Captain Matthew Arruda**

#### **Private Joseph Santos**

On June 29, 2015, a structure fire broke out at 207 White Oak Terrace, inside the Leisure Woods mobile home park.

Captain Matthew Arruda and the crew of Engine 3 were the first to arrive on the scene and saw heavy smoke and flames on one side and the roof. Resident Cliff Phillips was frantic to reach his wheelchair-bound wife trapped inside so Captain Arruda and Private Joseph Santos quickly made entry, without a protective hose line, and proceeded deep into the building forced low by heavy smoke and heat banking down from the ceiling. Captain

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Arruda opened the bedroom door and found Cynthia Phillips incapacitated on her bed. Together, Captain Arruda and Private Santos worked to remove the disabled woman down the long hallway under worsening conditions. They were met by the crew of Engine 1 who had a hose line and helped them to remove the woman who suffered smoke inhalation.

Captain Arruda and Private Santos showed great courage entering an extremely hazardous atmosphere without a hose line for protection. Mobile home fires are always treacherous and fire behavior in these types of structures is often unpredictable.

### TURNERS FALLS FIRE DEPARTMENT

#### *Group Citation for Meritorious Conduct*

#### *Turners Falls Fire Department*

Deputy Chief John Zellmann    Captain Todd Brunelle  
FF Luke Hartnett                FF John Grace  
FF Cooper Grace

### TECHNICAL RESCUE

FF Michael Currie  
FF Justin Bittner

#### *Greenfield Fire Department*

Captain Jesse Phelps            Lt. Andrew Eisch  
FF Allen Baker

FF John Martin

On July 17, 2014, the Turners Falls Fire Department responded to Farley Ledges on Route 2 in Erving to rescue a man who had fallen 30 feet from a cliff and lay one-half mile into the wooded area. Given the nature of the victim's injuries and his location, Captain Zellmann called for the Turners Falls/Greenfield Fire Technical Rescue Team to help extricate him.

Technical Rescue Team members set up anchors for a main line and a belay line. Other members assisted in C-Spine immobilization, back boarding and securing the victim into a Stokes basket and started to remove him down the mountainside. During the lengthy descent, technical rescue personnel had to make several changes of direction using pulley systems, traverse large rocks, faced 40 to 70 degree slopes, hot, humid conditions, and sandy and unstable ground. Once at the base of the mountainside several fire departments helped to carry the victim in a Stokes basket to a waiting ambulance. Eventually he was life-flighted to UMass Medical Center. He has recovered from cervical injuries, bone fractures, and dehydration.

The team's careful movement, spinal immobilization, packaging and gentle handling during the extrication of the patient contributed to his full recovery.

# FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR

## AWARDS CEREMONY

26th Annual Event  
November 23, 2015



### TURNER FALLS FIRE DEPARTMENT

#### *Medal of Valor*

#### **Deputy Chief John Zellmann**

On May 7, 2015, Greenfield Fire Department received reports of a man calling for help in the Connecticut River below the General Pierce Bridge floating down stream and approaching the bike path bridge in Turner Falls. Turners Falls Deputy Chief John Zellmann located the victim nearer to the Deerfield side of the river. The deputy alerted all units that we would be out of communications, donned his personal flotation device then ran across the bike path bridge and down the riverbank. The victim was approximately 30 feet from the shore and the current made only his head visible and he did not respond. Capt. Zellman quickly assessed the risks and made the decision to enter the 62 degree water that was flowing at 20,000 cubic feet per second and swim to the victim and bring him to shore, saving his life. Firefighter Michael Currie entered the water's edge to assist Deputy Zellmann. The victim was removed from the water and secured to a backboard, collared and transferred by Greenfield Fire to a waiting ambulance for transport to a medical center. Deputy Zellmann exemplified courage and professionalism and his actions went above and beyond the call of duty and he risked his own life to save the victim.

### SWIFT WATER RESCUE

### WESTWOOD FIRE DEPARTMENT

#### *Group Citation for Meritorious Conduct*

#### *Westwood Fire Department*

**Chief William Scoble**

**Deputy Michael Reardon**

**Capt./EMT Steven Lund**

#### *Engine 2*

**Lt./P Andrew Mahan**

**FF EMT/P Gerard Smith**

**FF EMT/P Neil Martino**

#### *Ambulance 1*

**FF EMT/P Anthony Burke**

**FF EMT/P William Little**

#### *Ambulance 2*

**FF EMT/P Ronald Kolozie**

**FF EMT/P Robert Kilroy**

#### *Engine 5*

**Captain/P Richard Cerullo**

**Lt./P Luigi Molinaro**

**FF/P Christian Pierce**

#### *Norwood Fire Department Ambulance 2*

**FF/P Brian Donoghue**

**FF/P Paul Ronco**

### RESCUE TRAUMA VICTIM

On May 8, 2015, Westwood Fire Department was called to extinguish a small campfire in an area known as Satan's Kingdom. One girl had suffered minor injuries from an aerosol can that exploded and was led out of the woods.

# **FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR**

## **AWARDS CEREMONY**

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Westwood Captain Steven Lund arrived first and was led by police several hundred feet up a steep incline, through a heavily wooded area to the fire scene. He determined that the campfire was contained and could be handled by a 2 ½ gallon pressurized water extinguisher.

With only the light from his flashlight and the small amount from the campfire, he could see several large outcroppings of rocks and boulders, and what appeared to be steep drop offs. He thought he heard a “snoring noise” coming from the woods. Captain Lund scanned the area with his flashlight and continued to follow the sound. Within seconds, he discovered an injured teenage girl who had fallen 20-25 feet off the cliff. He scaled his way down to her and determined that she had suffered life threatening injuries. She was lying against a large rock, unconscious, bleeding and had labored respirations. He maintained the patient’s airway, stabilized her neck, and radioed dispatch to notify med flight and called for Westwood Ambulance 1 and 2.

Engine 2 members Lt. Andrew Mahan, FF/EMT-P Gerard Smith and FF/EMT-P Neil Martino arrived and began advanced life support treatment. The crews of Ambulance 1 and Ambulance 2 brought the Stokes basket and additional life saving equipment into the scene over the same difficult terrain that has no trails or roads. Within in a short time, additional Westwood resources and Norwood Ambulance 2 arrived. The girl was secured to a long spine board and placed in the Stokes basket. EMTs used a bag valve mask to assist her breathing.

This was an extremely difficult and dangerous rescue/extraction that needed to be completed in a timely manner if the victim was to have any chance of survival. Rotating crews of eight personnel at a time carried the Stokes basket, while other members removed branches, cleared brush, and provided lighting to assist with the extraction. The patient was transported by ambulance to the Children’s Hospital in Boston.

## **WESTWOOD FIRE DEPARTMENT**

*Medal of Valor*

### **Captain Steven Lund**

The extraordinary actions of Captain Lund in this same incident deserve special recognition. His attentiveness to his surroundings resulted in finding a victim that no one realized was there. He assured that sufficient help was called for at the beginning of the incident, performed initial lifesaving skills, and expertly commanded the overall incident which directly lead to the survival of the victim.

## **RESCUE TRAUMA VICTIM**



# FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR

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### WORCESTER FIRE DEPARTMENT

*Norman Knight Award for Excellence in Community Service*

### COMMUNITY SERVICE

**Lt. Annmarie Pickett**

**FF Jeffrey Spring**

Lt. Annmarie Pickett and FF Jeffrey Spring make up the Worcester Fire Department's Community Risk Reduction and Public Education Division. Together they deliver fire education to school children through the Student Awareness of Fire Education or S.A.F.E. Program and to older adults through the Senior SAFE program. In addition, they provide hundreds of workshops reaching thousands of people in every age group in between. They conduct neighborhood sweeps after terrible fires, install smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and conduct home fire safety visits. They have forged partnerships with the housing authority, hospitals, colleges, and other city agencies. More importantly they have built equity within the fire department and changed the way line firefighters view community risk reduction.

#### **State Fire Marshal's Award**

- Rev. James Tilbe, Massachusetts Corps of Fire Chaplains
- Charlie Popp, Statewide Peer Support Network
- Hayden & Valerie Duggan, On-Site Academy

The Mass. Corps of Fire Chaplains along with the Massachusetts Peer Support Network and the On-Site Academy created and manage a system that promotes the health, fitness, and well being of the Massachusetts fire service. The safety and health of the fire service has served as a cornerstone of my tenure as State Fire Marshal.

#### **Massachusetts Corps of Fire Chaplains**

The 1999 Worcester Cold Storage Warehouse fire was an awful incident that took the lives of six firefighters. Fire chaplains from around the state responded to support the firefighters recovering the bodies of their fallen comrades. From those dark days emerged the more formal network of the Massachusetts Corps of Fire Chaplains.

The Corps provides training for its members and facilitates chaplain mutual aid for large scale or long-term incidents. Chaplains are trained to provide counseling to firefighters and are part of the critical incident stress management teams. Chaplains are also able to assist individual firefighters with issues affecting home or work. Their motto is "serve those who serve."

#### **Statewide Peer Support Network**

Massachusetts has a network of 17 Critical Incident Stress Management or C-I-S-M teams staffed by specially trained public safety volunteers and clinicians. They are coordinated through the Massachusetts Peer Support Network. These teams are designed to provide

# **FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR**

## **AWARDS CEREMONY**

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crisis intervention to help keep public safety personnel working and safe and to suggest referrals to clinicians where appropriate. Anyone can reach out to a team out of concern for themselves, a co-worker, a shift, or an entire department.

The Department of Fire Services provides support for training and some operational needs, but all the members are dedicated volunteers.

### **On-Site Academy**

The On-site Academy is a special place of healing for public safety personnel temporarily overwhelmed by the stress of their jobs, what they have seen, and what they have been through. It is a non-profit residential treatment center with specially trained counselors. Since 1992, over 3,000 emergency personnel have been helped at the On-Site Academy. The staff spent many days assisting first responders in the aftermath of these terrible tragedies: the Oklahoma City bombing, the Worcester Cold Storage Warehouse fire, New York City after 9/11, and the Boston Marathon bombing. The academy runs a program for the survivors of those killed in the line of duty called WINGS, and a program for firefighter combat veterans called RESTORE. It is also a training center for other helping professionals in critical incident stress management.