



Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS



www.tnfd.org

Week of 8/16/07

Phone: 286-4781

Vision

SAFETY

PROFESSIONALISM

**CUSTOMER
SERVICE**

Mission

DELIVER:

EFFICIENT,

PROFESSIONAL,

HIGH QUALITY,

COST EFFECTIVE,

AND TIMELY

**FIRE
SUPPRESSION,**

RESCUE,

**EMERGENCY
MEDICAL
SERVICES,**

FIRE PREVENTION,

**PUBLIC SAFETY
EDUCATION, AND**

**CODE
ENFORCEMENT.**

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Chief's Message

FRI and BFD

As I write, a couple of things are on my mind. Mostly, today, the news that I first saw at 6 am that 2 Boston firefighters were killed in a fire last night at a Thai restaurant in West Roxbury. Our thoughts are with the families and the department. More on that in a minute.

FRI. That stands for Fire Rescue International. Sunday afternoon I returned from 5 days in Atlanta where I attended the International Association of Fire Chiefs annual conference. Although the area was in the midst of record high heat (104° one day!) it was an excellent conference. The meetings, the city, the education, the keynote speakers—all were excellent. I am thankful for the opportunity to attend and represent our department, our state, and the New England Division of the IAFC.

After reviewing my notes from the conference and all of the information collected in the exhibit halls, the word that stood out to me on my notepad were “polish the badge, don’t tarnish.”

Many times at these conferences the keynote speakers are motivational speakers. We have had athletes, doctors, and leaders speak in prior years. This year, Tom Bay addressed the general assembly of approximately 3,000 and eventually told us that we “have the opportunity every day to polish the badge or tarnish the badge.”

Those words struck home for me. Those words made my attendance at the conference worthwhile. I attend the conferences to support the Association, to attend meetings, to network, to garner information on products; but most importantly to get re-charged. Tom Bay’s statement has re-charged me and refocused me. I

hope it does you, as well.

How simple. Think of the image of someone, anyone wearing a badge and doing something they are proud of and bending their head down to breath a little warm and humid air on their badge and then wiping it clean. Polishing the badge! Simple!

On the other hand, how does a badge get tarnished. Basically when we don’t treat it right. When we neglect it, hurt it, not clean it. All of that leads to a dull and tarnished piece of brass.

Apply that to your work. The work that Tom Bay and countless other people hold in such high esteem. Sometimes it is almost too easy to polish the badge. Most people respect us and the work we do—the surveys continue to prove that. But what happens when the badge gets tarnished—even just a little? How hard do we have to work at polishing it to get rid of that tarnish?

Polish can be applied regularly by being nice, polite, and professional. Take the time to speak with people, reach out, and go beyond to answer their questions and let them know that we care. More polish can be gained by taking care of yourself, physically and mentally; by being the best firefighter/EMT that you can by training and studying and staying current.

So... every day, polish that badge!

When I heard about the Boston deaths my mind raced. I couldn’t remember the last time Boston lost a firefighter. I remember Steve Minnehan’s funeral in 1994—died in a warehouse fire on the waterfront searching for 2 lost firefighters that eventually made it out. Charleston... How many firefighters have we lost this year? The

instructor from Sweden that just took the US to task for too many fire deaths and the attitude that we foster in our firefighters and the public to look at our firefighters as heroes. What happened? I flipped from channel to channel to see different angles or get a different piece of information.

Although it has been slow in coming throughout the day, we know that the fire started in a Thai restaurant in some type of 6 unit strip mall. The chief was on television this afternoon and indicated that their appears to have been a fire in the ceiling. Firefighters began attacking the fire and a backdraft occurred in the ceiling void followed by the partial collapse of the roof, with a 3 ton air conditioning unit partially falling into the restaurant. The building had been evacuated. He further stated that during the investigation, it appeared that the fire had been burning for quite some time in the void based on the thickness of char witnessed.

In any case, just like Charleston, we are not here to judge. We need more information to determine what really happened and how. We are extremely saddened but want to learn how to avoid a similar situation.

What we do know is that these situations are everywhere in our community. Strip malls, especially, are notorious for concealed spaces, steel bar joist roofs, and heavy dead loads on the roof. Fires in these buildings have to be approached with caution and fought with a coordinated effort using all of your size up skills and all of your training and experience.

Please be safe and keep the BFD in your minds and hearts.

Chief Carrier

Anyone Wishing to Supply Pictures or Write Articles for Future Newsletters Please forward your materials to Chief Carrier by Wednesday of each week!

Janine has put a verification of rate of pay and certifications in everyone's mail boxes that needs to be read, signed and returned to her.

Also, call payroll will be handed out on Friday, September 21, 2007 at 2:00pm.

