



FULLY INVOLVED

Volume 2, Issue 3

SUMMER 2010

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Chief's Desk	1
Milestones	1
An Easy Task	2
Firefighter Olympic Silver	3
AFD Firefighter Team Advance To Next Round	3
The Rest of the Story	4
Local 1044 News	5
AFD Auxiliary News	5
Weather & Bullets	6
AFD Belt Buckle Honoring 125 Years of Service	7
Poetry In Motion	7
Pull the Hook	8
Tailboard	8

FROM THE CHIEF'S DESK

As I write this article I am thinking of the budget workshops that were just completed. As most of you know, we had a proposal before the City Council regarding the implementation of our Paramedic First Responder Program. It was encouraging to have the entire City Council voice their support of this level of EMS delivery and their willingness to provide financial support. As with many new budget initiatives, we did not get everything we asked for but we have the necessary tools and resources to initiate this program soon. I am also mindful of the price so many have paid to get us to this point in time. For those who are currently in the Paramedic class, I realize you have spent many hours....a lot of those hours during your off-duty time....to develop the skills and knowledge to work at this much higher level of EMS. And for the family members of these students, you have also had to be patient with all the interruptions and cancelled events as a result of their clinical, classroom and/or study times. I am grateful to all of you for your

commitment to this program.

And to all the other members of the Abilene Fire Department- I know this has been a very difficult year. With the budget challenges, the furloughs, the shuffling of companies and equipment to accommodate the Paramedic training, this has presented some challenges that we are not accustomed to facing. However, just like we do on an emergency scene, we adapt and do whatever is necessary to face the challenge....and you have done just that. Thank you.

From the "Rescue One" services we provided over 35 years ago, to the Paramedic services we will be providing soon, the Abilene Fire Department has come a long way in the EMS arena. This could not have happened without the vision and efforts of both our current department members and those who came before us.

Thank you, Ken

KEN DOZIER
FIRE CHIEF

MILESTONES

Remembering...Retired Fire Marshal Billy J. Mooty was born to Luther and Ruby Mooty December 23, 1926 in Abilene, Texas. In 1944 he graduated from AHS and joined the US Navy, made Seaman 1st Class and served until 1946. Bill joined the AFD April 5, 1957, promoted to Lieutenant October 1, 1961 and Fire Marshal May 23, 1978. He retired from the Fire Department June 29, 1981 and continued serving the City of Abilene as Fire Marshal until August 31, 1987 and then Municipal Court Bailiff until retiring January 1, 1993. Bill was predeceased by his parents, his son, Michael; grandson, Billy; one brother and two sisters. Bill is survived by his wife (LaVern) of 61 years, a daughter, Diane Elkins and husband, Randy; one sister, Patricia Miller and husband, Wayne; two granddaughters, and eight great-grandchildren.

Leaving Abilene/AFD...FF/EMT-I Jason King's last day was June 2nd where he was assigned to A-Shift on E6. Jason joined our department May 29, 2007. He and his family moved to the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex to be closer to medical facilities for their Whitney.

Retirement...FF/EMT Larry D. Ross joined

the department January 25, 1983 and he worked his last shift July 7th on A-Shift E-6. Larry said he was going to become a cowboy and buy some land in Hawley. We wish him the best!

Promotions...LT Jay Tabor (8/1/10) & LT James Campbell (8/15/10) filled vacancies left by Guy Turner and Randy Doan, respectively.

EVT Certification...ARFF II - EVT Stephen Hughes

TCFP Certifications...Advanced – LT Randall Scaff; Masters – FF Tye Brooks

35-Year Service Award...FF William Warren (9/30/75)

Our Family is Growing... Congratulations!

Jeremy & Leah Wolfe welcomed Jack David to their family on Father's Day.

J and Keri Sanders welcomed Kinley Grace to their family on July 22nd at ARMC. She was 7 lbs. 1oz., 19 ½ inches long.

David & Lindsey Clark welcomed Riley Brienne to their family on July 29th.

Caleb Fullerton & Sarah Biggs were married July 9.

We want AFD families to stay in touch with us and with each other by letting us hear from you. Send your stories, pictures, and questions to us at:
abifire@abilenetx.com
(325) 676-6676

Guest Contributors

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- LT Greg Goettsch
- FF Scott Riggins
- FF Ernie Locke
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AN EASY TASK

It was probably somewhat naïve for us to believe it would be an easy task to replace our Fire Safety Trailer with a new site-built facility. Our original thoughts were that we could have a metal building erected at Safety City, some air-conditioning, some walls, a little paint, some cabinets, and a smoke machine, and we could have a new Fire Safety House for somewhere around sixty thousand dollars. We were confident that some foundation would simply cut us a check and we would be building within the month.

To make a long story short, things got a little complicated. Bids came in at almost a quarter of a million dollars and our grant was turned down. Although we were discouraged, we were also determined that we could raise the money and complete this project.

Our determination paid off. In October of last year, our new Fire Safety House opened its doors and classes began. What started off with an idea of a simple metal building where we could teach our message to kids, ended up as one of the most beautiful little fire stations anywhere. The kids and parents love it. School teachers are in awe of the technological and innovative way we designed our programs and classrooms and then disguised it as a fire station. Fire educators from across the state heard of our new programs and have come to visit. They all agree Abilene Firefighters have set a new benchmark on how to implement a fire safety program. Looking back, this project was an easy task. All you need is an officer with the organizational and management skills of Randy Doan, the reputation of Abilene firefighters, and the generosity of the citizens who believe in us because of our service. And a whole lot of blind stumbling luck.



We wanted our new Fire Safety House to look like a fire station. Old Station 2 at South Fifth and Butternut was our inspiration for the exterior design.



The back wall of our engine room was designed to look like a house. Inside is our Fire Safety Bedroom and the Fire Safety Kitchen. The special effects are so realistic that parents often ask "Are you sure this building isn't actually on fire?"



What a perfect place to showcase our 1926 American LaFrance fire engine. Our engine room serves as our main classroom. It can comfortably accommodate 50 kids and 20 adults.

**FF GARY HAMNER
PUBLIC EDUCATION**

OLYMPIC

This year's Firefighter Olympics were held in Lewisville, TX. Every year, FF's from across Texas get together and compete in various sports. These include bowling, softball, volleyball, weight lifting and several others sporting events. A great time is had by all meeting other FF's, competing against them and having bragging rights for the year.

This year, Abilene FF's participated in bowling and softball. The softball team was able to win their first game but then ran into a wall. They were beaten their next two games and were out of the brackets. The AFD bowlers were a little more fortunate. In the Singles competition, LT Steve Brasel won a bronze medal in his division. In the team event, FF Jessy Horton, FF Jared Harding, LT Steve Brasel, FF



Patrick Schuessler and LT Sam Hightower won the silver in their division. The team qualified for the medal round in the fourth position. They had to bowl and win two games including a three frame tie breaker in order to advance to the gold medal game. In the gold medal game

against South Lake, everyone was pretty worn out, and despite a valiant effort ended up losing and bringing home a silver medal.

Congratulations and thanks to those that made the trip. I would like to encourage you to contact someone who participated this year and make plans to go to Round Rock next year. I promise you'll have a great time.

LT SAM HIGHTOWER
E1/B SHIFT



Fire Report

Fire at Street No. Box 123 Chestnut & 3rd
 Date: June 12, 1932 Time: 12:37A-12:48A
 Name of Owner: Isom Harris
 Address of Owner: Abilene Hotel
 Occupied by: Abilene Hotel

Cause of Fire? Smoking in bed
 Place of Origin? Mattress in room IF ROOF STATE TYPE
 Confined to Place of Origin? Yes
 Extended to Other floors? _____
 Extended to Adjoining Property? _____
 Extended Beyond Adjoining Property? _____
 How Was Fire Extinguished? Pitcher of water
 Did Sprinklers _____
 No. of Sprinkler Heads Open _____
 Were inside Stand-pipes available? _____
 No. of Hose Leads Used? _____
 If Cause Suspicious State Why. _____
 Building Occupied as A Hotel
 Class of Building 2 Story Brick
 Interior Finish 10 Blks

Ext. Fire	Held in check	Fail
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CONTRIBUTED BY
FF SCOTT RIGGINS, E5/C SHIFT

AFD FIREFIGHTER TEAM ADVANCE TO NEXT

On Saturday, August 7th five Abilene Firefighters traveled to Lubbock, Texas to compete in the Scott Firefighter Combat Challenge Relay. As many as 25 teams were scheduled to compete in this particular event and traveled from cities such as El Paso, McKinney and Farmers Branch. According to the Challenge website, "The Challenge seeks to encourage firefighter fitness and demonstrate the profession's rigors to the public. Wearing "full bunker gear" and the SCOTT Air-Pak breathing apparatus, pairs of competitors race head-to-head as they simulate the physical demands of real-life firefighting by performing a linked series of five tasks including climbing the 5-story tower, hoisting, chopping, dragging hoses and rescuing a life-sized, 175 lb. "victim" as they race against themselves, their opponent and the clock."

This was an exciting competition and only the second time a team from Abilene has competed in this particular event. Friday, August 6th our Abilene Team conducted their final practice at the Fire Department's training facility, D.C. Musick Field.

Team Abilene finished the first round with a time of 1:44:62, qualifying them for a spot in the finals. Around 2 PM, they were able to shave ½ second off their previous time, but failed to qualify for the next round. However, this time was good enough for Team Abilene to qualify for the next phase of the competition and will compete in Florida in October. For further information about the Challenge, refer to the website at the following link: <http://www.firefighter-challenge.com/>



L-R, FF Jared Harding, Floyd Watkins, LT Marty Sanders, FF Aaron Barr, & LT Derek Briggs

LT GREG GOETTSCHE
TECHNICAL SERVICES

THE REST OF THE STORY

Sandy Gilbert, sister of Capt. Jerry Medley, shared a touching firefighter story called “Am I A Fireman Yet?” The story begins in Alberta, Canada as the story of a six year old boy named Billy who was suffering with terminal leukemia. Local firefighters heard about Billy’s wish to become a firefighter and they provided him with the opportunity to be an honorary member of the Calgary Fire Department.

This is a touching story and if there was ever a need such as this in Abilene, I could picture any one of our own firefighters touching the heart of a young “Billy.” The huge heart for caring that our firefighters possess gives them an indescribable capacity for caring. After reading the story it reminded me of other stories I have received. After some internet detective work and with the help of Snopes.com the original story was discovered. The story has traveled the globe for many years being attributed to fire departments from Queensland, Australia to Calgary, Canada and everywhere in between. The names and the fire departments change but the circumstances and more importantly the heart of the firefighters remain consistent. The story is so fitting in describing the compassion of firefighters it could be said of almost any department.

So is the story true? After locating convincing evidence and first hand accounts from reliable sources, it appears to be indeed true. The story was originally published in a book called Chicken Soup for the Soul. Frank “Bopsy” Salazar a 7 year old boy who lived in Phoenix, Arizona was diagnosed with terminal leukemia. There were three things Bopsy wished for: to be a fireman; ride in a hot air balloon and go to Disneyland. There were some special people who made Bopsy’s wishes come true and Bopsy became the first recipient of the Make A Wish Foundation.

The Make A Wish Foundation describes the account this way:

“The first wish-granting team started with the Phoenix Fire Department, which made him a full uniform, including turnouts and a helmet. He joined Engine 9’s ladder truck; the crew let him blare the horn and douse cars with the 75-pound hose. At the end of the day, the firefighters pinned his official firefighter’s badge on his uniform, making Bopsy the city’s first honorary firefighter. Bopsy returned to the



hospital after his trip to Disneyland. As he slept in his third-floor room, someone knocked on his window and opened it. Five of his fellow Phoenix firefighters climbed through using the ladder on the truck parked below. Bopsy shared a few laughs with his friends before going back to sleep with a smile on his face. Later that evening, Bopsy passed away – but not before seeing his fondest wishes come true.” (From www.wish.org - The First Wish)

In a December 2002 article from the Phoenix Fire Department newsletter 'FireWorks,' Phoenix Fire Engineer Bob Walp describes the events first hand.

“Bopsy’s mother called to say the doctors thought Bopsy would die that day. I was crushed but I told her I would be right there. I went to St. Joseph’s Hospital and met his mother outside the room. I then talked to the hospital staff, called my Chief and had Ladder 1C-Shift come to the hospital. We put the ladder up to the third-story window and I climbed up and into his room-followed by five other fellow firefighters who knew Bopsy. We put him with IV into a wheelchair and took him down to the ladder truck. On the side, it said “Bopsy 1” where the “Ladder 1” sign was posted. We talked and took lots of pictures for an hour or so, and then the ladder truck went back to the station. I stayed for several hours talking and just sitting in Bopsy’s room, and later that evening, he passed away. It was so sad.

The next shift, I was back at work and the crew on Ladder 1 went to the funeral, where we were pallbearers. Bopsy was buried with his firefighter gear.”

You can read the entire article at: <http://phoenix.gov/FIRE/bopsystory2002.pdf>

Bopsy died in 1981 yet versions of his story are still alive. Most striking to me is the story of the firefighters who loved Bopsy. While the names change and even the location of the events one thing that remains the same is the enormous capacity of love in a firefighters heart. I have no doubt the acts of care and compassion you offer every day will live on in the lives of so many people. Thank you for all the ways, big and small, you put this capacity to love into action with your families and in our community.

CHRIS HALE
FIRE CHAPLAIN



LOCAL 1044 News

Hope the end of summer is finding everyone well. The summer has undoubtedly been busy for most, with family activities including

baseball, softball, basketball, football, soccer, swimming, lacrosse, rafting, cricket (not the kind that is chirping under your chair), family reunions and other sweaty activities (I apologize if I left your favorite event off the list.) Some of my favorite stories shared around the table are stories about family activities that happen during the summer months. I feel these are the times in our kid's lives that we remember and they cherish the most because we get to spend all this quality time together. That being said, isn't it time for school to begin?

Congratulations to the candidates for Lieutenant that scored the highest on the written test and assessment center. Looks like a great group of future officers!

We are approaching the busiest time of year for Association activities. On Saturday, August 7th we had our Annual Association Picnic which was great (pictures of fun). Some more activities to mark on your calendars.

- September 2nd- Set-up day for Chili Super Bowl
- September 3rd- Cooking Day
- September 4th & 5th- Chili Super Bowl

We could use as much help out there as possible this year, as we will be cooking the entire pot of chili. Twice as much work or twice as much fun, however you want to look at it. Don't worry about RSVP, just show up and we'll find you a job.

The *pink fire trucks* will be returning to Abilene this year. The date will be **October 18th**. Mark your calendars! Last year we had an incredible turnout for this event. This year we are hoping for an even bigger crowd to greet the trucks as they pull into Abilene. We will also be coming out with a 2010 *pink t-shirt*. There have been some great design ideas shared about this year's shirt and if you have any you would like to share feel free to call or e-mail an e-board member.



Good Times From the 2010 Annual APFFA Picnic



**FF ERNIE LOCKE
APFFA TREASURER
E2/B SHIFT**

AFD AUXILIARY

Check out Firehouse Chef Episodes on the web at: www.abilenefiredepartment.org

Summer time is coming to a close and the Abilene Auxiliary is about to start holding monthly meetings again! We will meet the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm at Station 1 in the training classroom. Our first meeting back will be September 14th. We would LOVE to see new faces with new ideas!

We will soon be getting ready to help out with the World's Largest Chili Bowl in Buffalo Gap and the 3rd Annual "Guns 'n Hoses" event out at the APD training field. We will also be discussing new fundraising ideas so we can continue to support our firefighters and our community. The meetings are very laid back but to-the-point as we ALL have families and small children to get home to! We really hope to make this year great! Hope to see you there!

**RACHAEL BARR
AFD AUXILIARY PRESIDENT**

WEATHER & BULLETS

I happened to be in the role of PIO the day the roof blew off Station 4. After the interviews aired on TV, someone approached me the next day and said something to the effect of, “You looked almost giddy doing that interview about the roof blowing off Station 4.” For those who know me well; any topic of severe weather peaks my interest to say the least. As a matter of fact, for 24 years I’ve been saying, “the sky’s falling, the sky’s falling” to anyone who’d listen about severe weather. I’ve said we’ve dodged several weather bullets for years but our day is coming. Well, our bullet finally hit Station 4. (Now this of course is if you disregard the rumor about a bullet hitting Station 7 that was tied to some type of Christmas ornamentation.) To the dismay of Station 4 crewmembers only the roof was damaged and not the whole station. I can just imagine what the crew was saying when they pulled back up to the station as they were returning from a run. “Say, what’s that on our roof?” “I don’t know but it looks like a...roof.” As I said before, we’ve been lucky for many years, as major storms have headed straight for Abilene only to split at the last minute and go around. For this incident, it was really minor damage all things considered. If the roof had completely let loose, it probably would have landed on four pretty new pickups sitting in the parking lot. Maybe we should go back to the “good ole days” and send spotters out in the brush trucks. This way we could have actual witnesses when indeed the sky does fall.



Pictures of storm damage at Station #4



JOEY KINCAID
DIVISION CHIEF

AFD BELT BUCKLE HONORING 125 YEARS OF SERVICE

In 1986, the Abilene Fire Department celebrated 100 years of service to their community. One of the ways they commemorated the occasion was with a one-time issue of a belt buckle. It has Centennial written on it, a helmet and axe, the Texas flag, and a few other items that make it unique to our department. Any on-duty firefighter wishing to have one could purchase it for a small price.

Next year will mark the 125th anniversary for AFD. What a great time to reissue another commemorative buckle to honor the milestone. Fire Chief Dozier has given authorization for the new buckle to be worn on duty just like the centennial buckle. The plan is to have two or three designs finalized and voted on by AFD members. This will be a one-time issue. The buckles will be available for purchase before this year is over. It is too soon to estimate the cost at this time but should be very affordable. These buckles will also be available to retirees. This project has been moving along with help from many AFD members to arrive at the final design. Thank you for your input. My hope is that the next newsletter will contain a photo of the finished product.

Watch your email for further information.

CAPT JIM MOORE
T5/C SHIFT

MAY RETIREMENTS

Assistant Chief Alan Plumlee, Lieutenants Guy Turner, and Randy Doan retired within a few weeks of each other. At their receptions there were moving and funny moments: reflections, stories, videos and who would have thought Randy would inspire poetry.



FF Gary Hamner recited a poem he wrote to honor Randy and we thought if you missed it, then you might enjoy it today.

Randy, Randy, Randy....

Our friendship started over a quarter century ago; even in rookie school we thought you were old. You've decided to retire, drift off to obscurity; taking care of your mother-in-law and draw social security. But let's talk of your career, your glory and flubs; like how you got started as "Sprocket and Hubs". Your crime fighting legend was meant to inspire; but you are leaving us with three lieutenants, who can't even spell the word "fire." Just kidding guys, someday it'll be your turn, in the mean time can you at least figure out — What makes things burn? A few solved arson cases, wouldn't that be dandy? Hadn't seen one of those, since you lost Randy. The bad guys all in jail, your legend grew bigger; we now have a fire safety house built and paid for by digger. Gizmos and gadgets meant to educate and bedazzle; your technological wizardry leaves me in a frazzle. Programs and computers only understood by Doan; I can't even figure out how to turn the TV on. And now you are leaving, you have a new vision; are you sure its safe to leave me without supervision? To whom shall I turn when advice I must seek; the chaplain or the captain who calls me a geek? Oh sure, I've got Capt. Robin of course Chief Joey; twelve months I got left, won't this be a joy. Joey's realigning my duties asking if I mow grass; perhaps I should tell him—but I think I will pass. So thanks a lot old friend for leaving me in such a lurch; I know where to find you—Lawn Baptist Church!



SPECIALS	
1-1	FIRE OUT
2	TEST ON LINE
2-2-2	SECOND ALARM TO FIRST FIRE
3-3-3	THIRD ALARM TO FIRST FIRE
5-5-5	SECOND ALARM TO SECOND FIRE
6-6-6	THIRD ALARM TO SECOND FIRE
4-4	TRUCK NO. 1 REPORT TO BOX FOLLOWING
4-4-4	TRUCK NO. 2 REPORT TO BOX FOLLOWING
5-1-5	ENGINE NO. 1 REPORT TO BOX FOLLOWING
5-2-5	ENGINE NO. 2 REPORT TO BOX FOLLOWING
5-3-5	ENGINE NO. 3 REPORT TO BOX FOLLOWING
5-4-5	ENGINE NO. 4 REPORT TO BOX FOLLOWING
5-1-1-5	ENGINE NO. 5 REPORT TO BOX FOLLOWING
7-1	BOOSTER NO. 1 REPORT TO BOX FOLLOWING
7-2	BOOSTER NO. 2 REPORT TO BOX FOLLOWING
7-7	SEND GAS AND OIL TO BOX FOLLOWING
5	SEND AMBULANCE TO BOX FOLLOWING
6	SEND POLICE TO BOX FOLLOWING
1-1-1-1	ATTENTION: CALL HEADQUARTERS
8-8	FIRE AT STATE HOSPITAL; Engines No. 2 and 3 Booster No. 2 Truck No. 1 WILL RESPOND ON FIRST ALARM (Report at Power Plant on Arrival if You Can't See the Fire)
9-9	FIRE AT AIRPORT on Clyde Hwy.; Engines No. 2 and No. 3 Booster No. 2 Truck No. 1 WILL RESPOND ON FIRST ALARM

'Vintage' AFD Bell Alarm Code System

“PULL THE HOOK!”

Some of you reading this know exactly what this means, while others may be scratching your head, saying, “pull the hook?” Many years ago when I was young and beginning my firefighting career – to hear the words “pull the hook,” I knew we were being called to a fire. We have come a long way from those bunkers, SCBAs, engines and trucks. Boosters were our front line firefighting equipment, two men on a booster, two on an engine and one man on a ladder truck, my how things have changed and evolved and the safety of our most important asset our firefighters. Yet to hear the words, “pull the hook” could cause a young rookie’s adrenaline to pump.

Years ago street alarms were strategically placed around the city. If there was a fire in a neighborhood from a street alarm box all the person would have to do is go and pull the lever down on the alarm. This would send a signal to dispatch and sound a series of bells indicating the box number and also a ticker tape would

tap out the box #. It would also ring in the district station nearest to the alarm box. We had to memorize all the streets in the city, and box numbers and their locations. At times there was an actual fire and other times, especially around 3:30 in the afternoon on school days, it was kids pulling the alarm on their way home so they could see the fire trucks. In either case companies would respond hot to the location. Once on the scene a size up took place and if smoke and flames were showing a call was made to dispatch saying “pull the hook,” which meant upgrade this to a general alarm!

Before the days of 911 a citizen would call the seven digit phone number to report a fire. Based on information dispatch received from the caller would determine whether or not they would ‘pull the hook’ making it a general alarm fire. Once the hook was pulled three bells would ring in each station on the Station Gong. This alerted all stations a general alarm was in progress. Dispatch would make one call that would go to each stations dedicated fire phone. They repeated the address over and over again until each station answered the phone. Dispatch would know by lights on the switchboard that all stations had been notified. Once the stations received the address, the firefighter answering the phone would tell everyone else in the station. If the alarm was in your district you would go and if not you would go back to mopping floors or watching a movie.

After the incident was completed and the fire was ‘tapped out,’ dispatch would once again pull the hook and this time the bells on the Station Gong would ring 1-1 indicating the call had been completed.

A lot has changed over time, better equipment, better safety, and better communication – and some terms remind me of the days of being young and eager to be on the end of a nozzle. Hearing the term “Pull the Hook!” takes me back to those days.



AFD's Hook

CAPT JERRY MEDLEY
ASSET MANAGEMENT

FROM THE TAILBOARD

It was quite a summer so far. Kids out of school, vacations, travel, trips to lake and pools just to stay cool. This summer Gary Hamner invited me to go MDA Camp or what I thought was a vacation. Some of you have participated in this camp and many of us have raised money through the MDA 'Fill the Boot' campaign. I remember as a child almost 40 years ago, Dad would be off work and we would spend the weekend watching the Jerry Lewis telethon for most of the weekend. We only had three television stations to choose from and the other two stations were fuzzy. We would watch – Jerry would introduce big name acts of the time like Charro, Dean Martin, Frank Sinatra, Red Skelton, and the Smothers Brothers. I knew it was entertaining and they were raising money to help kids, I didn't understand why.

Working with 'Fill the Boot' brings an awareness of the muscular dystrophy

problem and some of the hurdles these children face. It also helps with providing money for desperately needed research. This summer I was privileged to work along side some amazing counselors, namely Gary Hamner, and some even more amazing kids. I didn't really know what to expect going to camp and to tell you the truth I was anxious and a bit scared.

We trained learning how to lift, care for and effectively communicate with campers, so we could help them enjoy their week.

The campers arrived in buses. Electric wheelchairs were taken out of a semi. The kids were so excited. This is the place they can be where they are truly among their peers. No one looks at them funny or asks questions because everyone knows what it is like to be in their shoes. The courage these kids have day in and day out sometimes simply to survive is remarkable.

All of these children require special care and many need 24 hour care. Every

night at camp I was wakened by my camper who needed to be turned every hour to ease his pain.

After one short week I was exhausted – a sobering, joyful exhaustion. I thought I would encourage and help them, instead I left being encouraged and inspired by these kids and especially by their parents (who get one week of respite because of the camp). These parents plan their lives accordingly – not sleeping, countless doctors visits, wheelchair accessibility concerns and the list of every day living issues goes on. The parents are the heroes – stories of consistent courage and compassion.

LT Derek Briggs, LT Marty Sanders, & FF Gary Hamner, and many others have made it a habit to go – not on vacation but to a place of blessed work.

I am thankful I had the opportunity to go and looking forward to the next MDA camp.

CHRIS HALE
FIRE CHAPLAIN