

Line of Fire

Winter 2010 Edition, NC State Firemen's Association Newsletter

Letter from the President - R. Scott Alderman

2010....Where has it gone?

By the time this newsletter makes it to you the holidays will be in full swing and we will be getting ready to start a new year. If you are like me, 2010 has gone by in the blink of an eye. My wife, who is a New Year's baby, comments regularly how the years seem to go by faster the older she gets. Note I said the older "she" gets and not me!



As we closeout 2010, it's a good time to take a look back at what the association has been doing this past year:



The NCSFA's State Firefighters' Legislative Day occurred on June 1. We were very well received by the legislators and the NCSFA received great feedback on the effectiveness of this event. The NCSFA will be hosting the next State Firefighter's Legislative Day on May 17, 2011. Mark your calendars now!!! This year it is very important that we reach out since we had many new legislators elected during the November elections. The more local firefighters' we have in attendance that can sit down and meet with their respective representatives, the more effective our message.



The South Atlantic Fire-Rescue Expo was held in August with record number of attendees (3000) and an outstanding keynote, "Johnny Gage." We look forward to seeing you August 11-13, 2011 for the next SAFRE. Hands on preconference workshops will be held on August 10.



The N.C. Firefighters' Fund board of directors has begun meeting and working on fundraising efforts. The goal of the fund is to be a charitable arm to the NCSFA for funding of scholarships, training and wellness of firefighters' and their children. The fund is a great "end of year" tax deductible donation. To make a donation to the fund at anytime please send donations to the following address:

N.C. Firefighters Fund
323 West Jones Street
Suite 401
Raleigh, NC27603

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Roster Renewal deadline is
December 31st!

Letter From the President - R. Scott Alderman

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A new software program called iMIS has been developed for NCSFA roster management, scholarship applications and fundraising efforts for the N.C. Firefighters Fund. You will see the new program in action when you report your rosters for the 2011 year. This program was created to address the issues Chiefs' and administrative staff were having with our out dated software.



The NCSFA began work on developing the NCSFA Emergency Services Retirement Plan. This plan is for career employees of non-profit fire departments who cannot join the N.C. Local Government Retirement System. In this newsletter you will find an article about the retirement survey the association is conducting. If you are a combination department please take time to complete the survey. – <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NCSFARetirementPlanSurvey>



The NCSFA Executive Board and the NCAFC Executive Board held a joint meeting in October to discuss issues facing our industry. The items discussed include: Community College fee waivers, political involvement in a national and state level, and residential sprinklers and technology to prevent cooking fires. In this newsletter you will find a resolution adopted by the NCSFA board supporting high-end heat regulation technology for stoves. Common coil stove elements can be replaced with a heat regulated element which regulates the temperature of the element and can save energy. We proudly join the NCAFC in supporting the modification of state and federal agency regulations to allow for this new fire safety technology to be utilized and will promote it by whatever means necessary in an effort to reduce or eliminate stovetop cooking fires.



The Gateway Conference was held November 3-5. Sixteen organizations and agencies were represented at this year's conference. The purpose of the Gateway Conference, is to facilitate a meeting among the leaders of North Carolina's Emergency Services, to foster consensus on key major issues facing our industry and develop a vision for working towards those issues in a consolidated manner. A report for the conference will be posted on our website by the end of the year.

These are just a few items the NCSFA staff and board have worked very hard on this past year. We are proud to serve you and we look forward to accomplishing more for our members in 2011. May God bless you and your family this holiday season and I wish you a safe and prosperous new year!

Yours,

R. Scott Alderman

Retirement Plans

Retirement Plans for Non-Governmental Entities

The goal of this program is to provide a format where individual non-governmental fire departments may adopt a retirement plan for their employees. This program will provide a master plan and trust where a department joins in the program sponsored by North Carolina State Firemen's (NCSFA). The plan will use a defined contribution approach and will be managed by the NCSFA Executive Board. Advantages of this plan include lower management cost, restricted choices, no up front cost for past service, and local departments have individual selection of their portfolio.

The plan is a tax-qualified retirement plan subject to the qualification rules of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC). This plan will qualify under IRC 401(a) and 401(k). The plan will allow for participants to make pre-tax deferrals and it is anticipated that participants will be given investment control based on a menu of funds.

Centralized control by NCSFA assures the best practices to benefit our members and pooling of assets allow investment within institutional investment funds which have lower expenses. This approach also allows leverage when selecting professional managers for investments and management of the master plan and trust. NCSFA will also have the needed resources to assist local departments in benefit design of their portfolio.

The plan will be offered to all member fire departments that are not governmental entities. The plan may be made available to other emergency service entities at a later time to accumulate additional assets. NCSFA, as the sponsor of the plan, controls who is allowed to participate in the plan. Each department will set its own participate rules for its employees. However, the employees must meet certain rules to be eligible. Federal law does not allow non-employee volunteers to participate. Simply stated, an employee is a person receiving a W-2 and working more than 1000 hours per year.

It is now time for NCSFA to market the plan and identify potential participants of the plan. The target start up date is July 01, 2011. With that, we need to survey our membership for potential participants. Please take time to complete our survey of potential participants by accessing the following website – <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NCSFARetirementPlanSurvey>. We need the data compiled no later than March 31, 2011.

Questions can be directed to the NCSFA Office at 1-800-253-4733. The Staff will direct your question to the appropriate person for a detailed answer.

Roster Renewal

Its time for Roster Renewals for 2011! We sent them out the last week in November and everyone should have theirs by now. If you have not received yours please contact our office, 800.253.4733 or membership@ncsfa.com.

It is important to note that we will not be sending new membership cards until your department is paid in full.

Also, be on the lookout, your membership cards will have a new look to them this year.



Western Directors Report - Kevin Gordon



Training and education is necessary at levels of an organization if the job is to be safely and effectively completed. The level of training or education required to perform a given set of tasks varies with the task and the personnel assigned to them.

The level may also vary with the organization's depth of commitment to excellence, high quality of service or products and safety. The health and well-being of emergency responders, which is important in all aspects of organizational operation, is generally regarded as the single most important reason to train.

The terms training and education have been used throughout the fire service without any explanation. Although their exact meanings are much debated by educators, the definitions guiding the use of the two terms are as follows:

- **Education** is the process of delivering essentially academic knowledge. Adult education is generally delivered in traditional and nontraditional settings by institutions of higher learning and is part of a program of study that leads to a degree or certification granted by an accredited degree-granting institution.
- **Training** is the process of delivering essentially vocational skills and knowledge. Training is delivered through either traditional or nontraditional settings modalities by a broad spectrum of institutions and generally results in the achievement of a certain training objective, which may or may not be part of a program of study leading to a certificate. Certification is a measure of competence vouched for by an entity that is licensed or accredited to issue the certification.

The National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) adopted a policy position that all volunteer fire departments should establish a goal to train all personnel to a level consistent with the mission of the fire department, based on the job performance requirements outlined in *NFPA 1001: Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications*. The NVFC is committed to ensuring that volunteer firefighters have an appropriate level of training to safely and effectively carry out the functions of their department.

In January 2010, the NVFC printed a white paper entitled, "*Volunteer Firefighter Training*." In this white paper the NVFC identified three broad areas that constitute major challenges for volunteer fire departments with regard to training personnel:

- **Time Constraints** - "As individuals find themselves with less free time available, devoting their nights and weekends to obtaining firefighter training and certification is becoming increasingly difficult. Training and certification delivery methods must be calibrated to minimize the time demands that they place on volunteer firefighters."
- **Resource Constraints** – "Volunteer fire departments are often located in communities that have small tax bases and/or high poverty rates. Expanding the availability of low- and no-cost training opportunities for volunteer firefighters is essential."
- **Leadership** – "The individuals comprising the leadership in many volunteer fire departments came up in the fire service during a time when most training was performed informally within the fire department. Drawing on decades of experience, many of these individuals view the modern training standards and requirements as unnecessary. Gaining the buy-in of volunteer fire chiefs and officers regarding the importance of training and certification is critical."

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An on-going strategy of the North Carolina State Firemen's Association (NCSFA) is to "encourage training opportunities that employ the most up-to-date trends and technology in firefighter skills, health and safety, and relevant fire service issues." The NCSFA will pursue the following objectives in support of the above mentioned on-going strategy:

- Seek input from the three regional associations on what support is needed from NCSFA.
- Identify the training programs, schools, and educational opportunities that will benefit the NCSFA membership.

The NCSFA will utilize the three regional directors to help identify where the biggest NCSFA involvement will help promote training and education of its members. I would like to survey the Departments of the Western Region with the following question: **What can NCSFA do to help promote your training initiatives?** Please email me at ksgordon@carolina.rr.com with any responses/suggestions.

I am willing to meet with the individual local Associations if you would like a presentation/discussion of the benefits and initiatives of the NCSFA. A partial list of the current initiatives include: iMIS online rostering, 401K program, supplemental retirement plan, and the new 501(c)3 corporation. I also encourage each of you to continue your support of the Fire Fighters Walking for Fitness (<http://www.ncdoi.com/OSFM/FireAndRescueCommission/FFWalk.asp>) and the NC Fire Service Emergency Response Plan (<http://www.ncafc.com/erp.htm>).

The next meeting of the Western North Carolina Association of Fire Fighters (WNCAFF) will be held January 19th, 2011 at the Charlotte Fire Department Training Academy, 1770 Shopton Road. The remaining 2011 meeting schedule is as follows: April 20, Cherokee County; July 20, Morganton (Forestry Service); and October 19, Tryon Fire Department. Please join me in congratulating Chief William Hunt (Shelby Fire and Rescue) in his recently election as 2nd Vice President to the WNCAFF. The 2011 Officers are: President Scott Burnette, 1st Vice President David Bullins, 2nd Vice President William Hunt, Secretary Anthony Penland, Treasurer Dean Coward, and Past President Tommy Blanton.

In closing, I would like to wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Please do not hesitate to contact me (ksgordon@carolina.rr.com or 980.722.3305), any of our board members, executive director or staff in the office in Raleigh if you have questions, comments or concerns. Be safe in all you do as you serve those who depend on you.

SCHOLARSHIPS

There is good news for firefighters who are members of the NC State Firemen's Association and their children who are graduating seniors in high school. It's almost time to begin applying for the 2011 scholarships and grants!

The NCSFA knows how important getting an education is these days. The rising costs make it difficult to afford, but the good news is that we want to help. Each year we give away \$124,000 in scholarships and grants to our members. It's just one more benefit we offer to our more than 51,000 members.

It's simple, if you are a firefighter who is a member of the North Carolina State Firemen's association then you and your children who are graduating seniors in high school are eligible to apply.

Please visit www.ncsfa.com on January 1, 2011 for more information or to apply online.



Piedmont Director's Report - Tommy Cole



As I sit here preparing this article for our newsletter we are only a couple of days away from celebrating Thanksgiving and preparing for Christmas. What a busy time this becomes for most of us and while we always seem to be worn out during this time it has to be the best season of the year. Each of us will hopefully share meals and fellowship with our families over the next several weeks and probably see family members that we don't get to see throughout the year. This is also a time to give thanks for all we are blessed with and for me that includes family, friends and the fire service. I have been blessed with a wonderful family who continues to stand by me through the good and bad. I have also been blessed with a very close group of friends who have supported me through it all as well. And then there is the fire service ... I just completed my 20th year of service and have had the opportunity to serve with some of the best men and women in the world. Men and women who put their lives on the line every day to keep their communities safe. I am also very thankful for the opportunity to represent our firefighters as the President of the Piedmont North Carolina Firefighters Association and as the Piedmont Director on the NCSFA Executive Board.

As President of the PNCFA I want to reach out to the roughly 400 departments that make up the Piedmont district. We need you! We currently have 110 of the 400 departments as members of our association and it is our desire to have many more. Your participation and involvement is the key to the success of our association. If you would like more information about the PNCFA please visit www.pncfa.org.

I would also like to introduce you to the other board members of the Piedmont North Carolina Firefighters Association and let you know how they serve you on other boards and associations. Our **1st Vice President is Ron Fowler**. Ron is Chief of the Monroe Fire Department in Union County and presently serves on the Executive Board - NC Association of Fire Chiefs and as the NC Director - Southeast Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC). Our **2nd Vice President is Doug Cline**. Doug is an Administrative Officer with High Point Fire Department and the Assistant Chief of the Ruffin Volunteer Fire Department in Rockingham County. Doug is the 1st Vice President of the Southeast Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and is a well-known fire instructor throughout the nation including monthly articles/Podcast on www.firehouse.com. Our **Southern Director is Brian Cox**. Brian is Chief of the Guil-Rand fire Department in Randolph County and presently serves on the Workers Compensation Fund Board. Our **Northern Director is Steve Neal**. Steve is Chief of Fire District 13 in Guilford County and has previously served on the NC Fire/Rescue Commission and as President of the NC County fire Marshal's Association. Our **Treasurer is Ed Brinson**. Ed is Chief of the Fairview Fire Department in Wake County and has previously served as President of the NC Fallen Firefighters Foundation. Our **Secretary is Billy Colley**. Billy is Chief of the Parkwood Fire Department in Durham County. And last but not least is our **Past President Len Needham**. Len is Chief of the Bahama Fire Department in Durham County and is presently the 1st Vice President of the North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs. These are some of the finest men that I have ever had the privilege to serve with and I can assure you that they work hard for you each and every day.

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The PNCFA looks forward to another successful year in 2011. We are currently planning another educational seminar in the spring by hosting the VCOS "Beyond Hoses and Helmets" class. Look for more information in early 2011. Our next quarterly meeting will be held on January 26, 2011 at the new Lewisville "West Bend" Fire Station # 13 (Forsyth County). NCSFA President, Former Past President PNCFA, and Fire Chief Scott Alderman has graciously invited to his new sub-station for Steak and Shrimp. If you are a member of the PNCFA or if you are interested in becoming a member this is the meeting for you.

As I end, I encourage each of you to stop and give thanks for the many blessings of our lives. Please also remember the men and women of our military that will continue to fight for our freedom and our safety throughout the holiday season.

Stay Safe and Happy Holidays,

Tommy

Tommy Cole
Piedmont Director – NCSFA
Tommycole3@gmail.com

**Scholarship
Application
Deadline is
March 15th**



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NCSFA Resolution



Resolution Supporting Available Technology for the Purpose of Reducing Fire Loss and Personal Injury from Stovetop Cooking Fires

WHEREAS: Cooking equipment is the leading cause of residential fires and home fire injuries in the United States; and

WHEREAS: Unattended cooking is the leading factor contributing to cooking fires; and

WHEREAS: Electric ranges are the leading type of cooking equipment involved in these fires; and

WHEREAS: Unattended cooking and combustibles too close to the cooking surface, such as towels, paper products, etc., are major contributing factors to these fires; and

WHEREAS: Cooking fires are the leading cause of home fire injuries, these fires accounted for 40% of all reported home structure fires and 36% of home civilian injuries; and

WHEREAS: Education and code enforcement alone have not yielded the desired results when it comes to eliminating cooking fires; and

WHEREAS: Tested affordable technology for electric coil ranges now exists to drastically reduce the number of these fires and burned food incidents by reducing the high end temperature at which burners operate with no appreciable difference in cooking times or quality; and

WHEREAS: High-end heat regulation technology currently available can reduce the amount of energy used by the range by as much as 50%;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That the North Carolina State Firemen's Association supports this cooking "fire prevention" technology and further supports a modification of state and federal agency regulations to allow for this new fire safety technology to be utilized and will promote it by whatever means necessary in an effort to reduce or eliminate stovetop cooking fires.

Adopted this 18th day of November, 2010

Attest:

Chief R. Scott Alderman, President

Paul F. Miller, Executive Director



Executive Director's Report - Paul Miller

By the time you read this article Thanksgiving will have come and gone and Christmas will be just a few days away. We hope that all of you had a blessed Thanksgiving and time to enjoy your family and friends. We hope that Christmas will bring you peace and joy, and the New Year will bring abundant blessings to you and your family.

By now each of you should have received the roster renewal information for your department. We hope you like the new look. This is the first time you have seen our new database system which we have been working on for about one year. The system is called iMIS and is currently being used by fire associations in California, New York and Texas. We hope you will enjoy working with iMIS and that it will help us to better serve you. This is a new beginning and a great time to help us clean-up any problems that might exist with your roster. Remember spoiled data that is input in the system will not go away and will always come back tainted. Please take a few extra minutes to correct bad addresses, correct misspelled names, add or delete persons if needed and double check all other data. If we start with a clean, correct roster, future problems will be eliminated. We know you will appreciate this and so will all of the office staff.

Our new retirement system is taking shape and still on track to begin July 1 of 2011. This program is being designed for our non-profit fire departments that cannot participate in the local government retirement system. The master plan is being designed as you read this newsletter and the plan administrator and investment company are working with our team to put the new program together. This is an exciting time in the life of the NCSFA, and we know many of our members will benefit from this new program. Please take time to complete the retirement survey found on the NCSFA website <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NCSFARetirementPlanSurvey>

Do not forget to go to our website, www.ncsfa.com, in early January and find the information on our scholarship program. Program information, application forms and other information on the scholarship and grant program will be online. Please note the deadline for filing scholarship and grant applications. You must submit your application by March 15th, or you will be disqualified. We are working hard on developing new programs and should be ready to introduce them in 2011. We are always searching for ways to benefit our members and expand our programs. During the year you will hear about efforts underway to generate funding for our new 501(c) (3) corporation known as the N.C. Firefighters Fund. Funds generated will be used to expand our scholarship program and other benefits. If you should be asked if the N.C. Firefighters Fund is a legitimate organization please assure citizens that it is and tell them about the good work this money will do.

We look forward to working with all of you in the New Year and God Bless you all. Please call us if you have any questions or we can be of service to you.



Paul F. Miller
Executive Director

Important Dates

2010

December 31 Rosters Due - NCSFA Office

2011

**January 1 Scholarship Application Process Opens Online
www.ncsfa.com**

March 15 Scholarship Application Deadline

**April 1 South Atlantic Fire Rescue Expo Pre-Registration Opens Online
www.southatlanticfirerescueexpo.com**

August 11-13 South Atlantic Fire Rescue Expo



North Carolina State Firemen's Association

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Raleigh, NC 27603
www.ncsfa.com

