EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S RAMBLINGS

Where were you and what were you doing on the morning of September 10, 2001? It is my guess that many of us cannot remember the exact details of what we were doing at that time, on that day. In 1959, singer Dinah Washington won a Grammy Award for her recording of “What a Difference a Day Makes (Twenty-Four Little Hours).” The lyrics of that song never rang truer than they did on the morning of September 11, 2001. Each one of us remembers exactly where we were and what we were doing on that morning. In just “twenty-four little hours,” the world we knew on September 10 was changed forever.

That change came at the expense of the 2,845 people who perished on that day at the Pentagon, in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, and at the World Trade Center in New York City, including 411 emergency responders who responded to the World Trade Center incident. The societal and emergency preparedness/response changes following that day were swift and bold. Many tasks that were previously thought to be routine, such as commercial air travel, were no longer simple or routine. Federal emergency response-related agencies that had historically operated independently were merged into the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). DHS would soon develop a National Response Plan that provided direction on how incidents of all types should be addressed and handled in the future.

Ten years have passed since the tragic events of September 11, 2011. In the broad spectrum of life, there are two things that we must do today in response to this tragedy. The first is to remember and honor the people who died, were injured, or responded to those incidents on that day. Many of those responders who worked at the scene of the World Trade Center continue to suffer the effects of their exposure to incident by-products that have resulted in serious illness and death in the years following the incident. The second thing that we must do is to be better prepared to prevent or respond to these types of events in the future.

IFSTA and FPP are doing our part in both of these areas. On July 10, 2011, we dedicated a display containing a piece of steel from the World Trade Center. This piece of steel was presented to IFSTA and FPP by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey in recognition of our long history of providing training materials to prepare emergency personnel to respond to all types of emergencies. The World Trade Center display is located in the lobby of our main office building, next to a piece of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building from Oklahoma City. These pieces serve as a staunch reminder to all employees and visitors of our mission.

Our mission, each and every day, is to develop the training materials that best prepare emergency responders to safely and effectively respond to everything from the most routine to the most catastrophic incidents imaginable. This mission has not wavered over our 78-year history, and it continues to inspire our efforts into the future.

I would like to conclude this edition of my Ramblings by shifting gears and recognizing an important member of the IFSTA/FPP family. On July 31, 2011, Dr. Karl Reid left the position of Dean of the College of Engineering, Architecture, and Technology (CEAT) at Oklahoma State University and returned to faculty, following more than 25 years of service as the Dean. By returning to a faculty position, Dr. Reid continues his remarkable record of 52 years of service to OSU.

IFSTA and FPP operate within the College of Engineering, Architecture, and Technology (CEAT) at Oklahoma State University. We are thankful for Dean Reid’s unwavering support during the past 25 years. We wish him and his wife, Dr. Verna Lou Reid, all the best as they move to the next step of their journey together.

Keep the faith!

Michel A. Wieder
Associate Director, FPP
Executive Director, IFSTA
Celebrating Through Honor and Respect

By Chief Dennis Compton

It will be my honor and privilege to once again attend the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend in Emmitsburg, Maryland, October 15-16, 2011, with several thousand other people. During this weekend, there will be a combination of sad, refreshing, and even uplifting emotions. It is also a time when fire service conflicts and challenges are set aside. This weekend provides a time and place for the entire fire service community to come together to honor its brothers and sisters who have lost their lives in the line of duty. It is an opportunity to show respect and give support to their families, friends, and fellow firefighters. This memorial reminds us how fragile life can be as we celebrate the healing power of love.

The United States Congress created the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation to lead a nationwide effort to formally remember and honor America’s fallen firefighters. Since 1992, the nonprofit foundation has carried out those responsibilities, as well as managed programs to assist their families and fellow firefighters. The Foundation is a partner with many other fire service organizations participating in a concerted effort to prevent firefighter line-of-duty-deaths and injuries. This year, the National Memorial Service will honor the firefighters who lost their lives in the line of duty during 2010. With these names added, the plaques surrounding the Memorial (which was established in 1981) will contain the names of more than 3,500 fallen firefighters. The Foundation is actively working to expand the Memorial Site in an effort to honor those who lost their lives in the line of duty prior to 1981.

The Memorial Weekend will include special programs on Friday and Saturday designed specifically to support and assist the families and coworkers, a beautiful candlelight service on Saturday evening, and the National Memorial Service on Sunday morning. The services are incredibly moving for all who attend or watch on national television. They serve as an opportunity for the entire fire service and others to come together to honor those who were lost, support their loved ones and fellow firefighters, and recommit to the ongoing national effort to reduce the number of firefighter line-of-duty deaths and injuries that occur each year. The families will be presented with flags that have been flown over the United States Capitol and the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial, as well as a special medal and a rose. Attendees of the services include the families, coworkers, members of Congress, Administration officials and other dignitaries, members from throughout the fire service and our affiliated organizations, as well as Honor Guard and Pipe and Drum units from across the country. It’s truly amazing to witness the many volunteers and other workers who come together and contribute their talents to make the Memorial Weekend happen successfully.

If you have never attended the National Memorial Service, perhaps you should make a point to do so this year in October. Our nation’s firefighters make a commitment day-in and day-out to protect others from the ravages of fire and many other life-threatening hazards. Each year, people gather at the National Memorial in Emmitsburg, Maryland, to pay tribute to those firefighters who paid the ultimate price in the performance of their duties. We also owe that message of honor and respect to their families and coworkers and to all who make up this wonderful, diverse group we call the fire service.

About the author:
Chief Compton served as the Fire Chief in Mesa (AZ) for five years and as Assistant Fire Chief in Phoenix (AZ) for twenty-seven years. Compton is the Past Chairman of the Executive Board of the International Fire Service Training Association (IFSTA). He is currently the Chairman of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Board of Directors. Compton is also a well-known speaker and the author of several books as well as many articles, chapters, and other publications.

Mobile Technology and How It Impacts the Fire Service

By Alan Jacobson

Enter any fire station in the U.S., and you will undoubtedly find firefighters who have mobile devices. Nearly all will have cell phones, while others will have iPads®, Smartphones, and in some cases, fire trucks are equipped with PCs. As this technology has entered into the profession, views on its use are quite diverse. However, there are two things most can agree on:

1. Technology is here to stay.
2. The use of technology will continue to grow.

One technology that is growing is the use of mobile apps to provide information for both training and incidents. These apps range from those that provide information about hazmat placards to calculators to determine appropriate pump pressures and foam application rates.

For some, these apps provide a great way to train. Others will argue that depending on this technology for on-scene work is not appropriate and that firefighters should know these calculations and perform them in their heads. While I cannot solve this debate, I can positively say that I frequently see firefighters carrying numerous plastic reference cards on their jackets, and when quizzed on the amount of foam needed for a 300 sqf spill with 3% solution that is 2” deep, there are few that can accurately determine the right amount of foam that will be needed (94 gallons). If one of these firefighters happens to have an app that can calculate this and realizes that they do not carry the needed amount on the apparatus at the scene, it seems that having the app is a positive thing. Based on this information, if they call for some additional foam, I would say that technology is providing a better outcome. These apps are certainly here to stay, even if the App is used only for training and to help new firefighters understand the relationships between nozzle size, flow and pressure, or how changing the size and depth of a spill affects the amount of foam and water needed.

Firefighter Calculator

Android: https://market.android.com/details?id=com.a2app.firecalc&feature=search_result

About the author:
Alan Jacobson is a paid on-call firefighter with the Pittsfield Township Fire Department. His primary duty is that of a husband and father of two boys and in between that and fire fighting, he is an executive at Ford Motor Company. After approximately 20 years of EMS and 10 years of fire fighting experience, and significant IT experience outside of the fire service, he began creating Apps. Most of the real technical knowledge contained in his first App, Firefighter Calculator, is from the far more experienced firefighters and officers of Pittsfield Township Fire Department that graciously provided pointers.
9-11 and the Impact on Fire Service Training
Ten Years Later
By Eriks Gabliks

Many of us remember watching the breaking news on September 11, 2001, showing the World Trade Center in New York City on fire. Moments later, live broadcasts showed a plane crashing into the World Trade Center tower. After the confusion about exactly what had happened, we now knew that this was not a high-rise fire, but a deliberate act of terrorism. Within minutes, we saw media coverage of the Pentagon on fire with a plane inside the building. We heard reports that a commercial passenger plane was hijacked and was heading toward Washington, D.C. but had crashed in a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Each of these events was horrific, but each also showed the professionalism and commitment of the local fire, EMS, and law enforcement agencies that responded to the challenge at hand.

What many people may not remember is that this was the second terrorist act against the World Trade Center. The first took place on February 26, 1993, when a truck bomb was detonated in the parking structure of the North Tower. The 1993 incident resulted in the death of six people and injuries to more than 1,000. The response by the City of New York Fire Department was equivalent to a 16-alarm fire. As a result of this incident, the United States Fire Administration (USFA) published The World Trade Center Bombing: Report and Analysis 1993, articles provided by Fire Engineering. The articles in this document described all aspects of the incident, including fire and EMS operations, building construction features, lessons learned in each area, and actions that have been taken to improve the facility since the 1993 incident. This document included a wide variety of training topics for command staff and firefighters. Sadly, this incident showed that the United States was not immune from acts of terrorism and what was once a concern, primarily in other countries, was now a reality within our borders.

As a result of the 1993 World Trade Center incident and the 1995 bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, a number of federal agencies such as the National Fire Academy (NFA), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the U.S. Department of Justice developed training programs for our nation’s first responders. In 1998, the USFA/FEMA provided state fire training agencies with grants to help provide training in their respective states to prepare both career and volunteer firefighters for events that involve a new term in our fire service vocabulary, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). This initial effort was successful, but we found we were only scratching the surface for what would happen on 9-11.

The events that unfolded on 9-11, and the days and weeks after, would provide the nation’s first responders with a list of challenges that could occur in any location at any time. Those challenges would include incident command for major and protracted incidents and response to incidents involving chemical, biological, radioactive, nuclear and explosive (CBRNE) substances. Other challenges also included communications, interoperability, common terminology, credentialing of personnel, and many others. The tragedy of 9-11 resulted in a number of congressional hearings on Capitol Hill which provided a comprehensive review of the events that took place that day, the responses of federal, state, and local providers, as well as the challenges they faced. One outcome of these hearings was the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in March 2003, which brought together 22 separate federal agencies into a single Cabinet-level agency. President George W. Bush would also issue Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 5 which established a single, comprehensive, national incident management system (NIMS) to manage domestic incidents.

Some of the challenges brought up during the congressional hearings were already being addressed in a number of communities and states. The events of 9-11 necessitated that fire, law enforcement, EMS, and allied public and private sector organizations at the local, county, state, and federal levels work together more closely than ever before. These efforts were supported by a variety of grants that were made available by DHS for training, equipment, prevention, planning, and other purposes that would help communities be prepared for a terrorist attack if one were to happen.

On the federal level, the NFA was already well known to the nation’s fire service and was developing and delivering classes in partnership with state fire training agencies. Some new federal organizations entered the arena to provide assistance to fire-rescue personnel based on the growing concern that chemical, biological, explosive, radiological, or other hazardous materials will become terrorists’ weapons of choice. In June 1998, the Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP) opened its doors in Anniston, Alabama. On March 31, 2007, the Noble Training Facility (NTF) was integrated into the CDP training center. In 1999, the former Noble Army Hospital was converted into a training site for health and medical education in disasters, to include both acts of terrorism and man-made disasters. The NTF is the only hospital facility in the United States dedicated to training health-care and hospital professionals in disaster preparedness and response. In addition to these training venues, training classes were exported across the nation for regional delivery. All of these organizations are a resource to fire-rescue agencies and provide training free of charge.

At the state fire training level, 9-11 has had both positive and negative impacts. The negative impacts have been the increased demand for training without any additional funds given to state fire training agencies for delivery. This was, in some cases, exacerbated when local fire departments received DHS grants for the purchase of specialized equipment only to find when it arrived that no provisions were made for the training that was going to be needed to make firefighters proficient in its use.

The positive impact has increased opportunities for training classes and in some cases, access to funds. For example, the Kansas Fire and Rescue Training Institute had been working to achieve stable funding for its programs for a number of years. In 2004, the legislative assembly granted permanent funding for the Institute through the state’s Fire Insurance Premium Tax. The events of 9-11 heightened everyone’s sensitivity to the rigors and dangers encountered by firefighters every day and the reality that the men and women (both career and volunteer) who serve our communities need to be trained to meet the challenges they will encounter. Since the funding mechanism for the Institute changed, the number of students attending training classes has grown by more than 400%.

Another positive example is the Oregon state fire training program within the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSS&T) that has worked with the state Office of Emergency Management to obtain a $250,000 grant. This grant will provide over two dozen FEMA All-Hazard/All-Risk Incident Management Team classes specific to fire, law enforcement, emergency management, and allied command staff. These trained personnel will serve on teams at local, regional, and state levels. DPSS&T is also working with the Oregon National Guard to construct a one million dollar urban search and rescue (USAR) training venue at its 212-acre Oregon Public Safety Academy in Salem, which will be used by members of the Guard’s Civil Support Team (CST) and CBRNE Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) and the State Fire Marshal’s Office Regional

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Resource One Improves Convenience and Efficiency of Online, Traditional, and Blended Learning
By Margi Stone Cooper

The view from the fire service training classroom looks a little better these days. That’s because training can take place from a backyard, public park, or anywhere a person chooses to connect to the internet, thanks to Resource One, IFSTA’s new Moodle-based virtual learning environment.

Moodle (an acronym for Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) is server software that rivals the commercially available Desire2Learn and Blackboard learning management systems (LMSs). Like other LMSs, Resource One (r1.ifsta.org) provides a portal to bring together different web-based learning tools. But what Resource One offers is that it not only is flexible. For the fire service, this means that instructors can use Resource One as a tool for augmenting traditional face-to-face classroom and firefighting instruction, hosting courses that are strictly online, and everything in between.

The various blended or hybrid approaches to learning are particularly appealing because they provide for a wide range of instructional design options. The ability to include video, social media, and other web technologies allows for even greater teaching innovation. At the very least, this means that no two training courses have to look the same. But in the broadest sense, Resource One provides a way to adjust to an ever-changing landscape.

Certainly online learning cannot replace face-to-face skills instruction that must take place in order to adequately train firefighters. However, Resource One can be used to facilitate learning and fill the gaps. The site can serve as a record for everything that occurs in a traditional classroom. Students stay in the loop because they have access to course materials. They still take notes, but they’re able to pay attention to the material without having to worry about writing down every detail.

Key elements in blended online training include instructor feedback and student interaction. Students need to have the sense that they are in a “class” and not simply working through a series of modules on their own. The flexibility of Moodle allows instructors to design activities that not only effectively teach the content, but also encourage student participation.

As online learning continues to grow at the post-secondary level, high schools are adopting online learning to prepare students for college. Moodle has been adopted across the country—and throughout the world—to improve learning and teaching at public schools, vocational schools, colleges and universities, and continuing education centers, for students ranging from kindergartens to doctoral candidates. Thus, LMS technology is often familiar to today’s fire academy recruits. As those who are currently in the fire service are exposed to online learning, they will not only become more comfortable with online training, they will also expect it.

Teaching a Moodle-based course is not necessarily easier than a teaching a traditional course—it’s just different. Students still have questions that need answers, sometimes they fall behind and need to be coached, assignments must be graded and returned, and progress must be monitored just as it would in a traditional class. Fortunately, it’s fairly easy to get the hang of Moodle, even for those who do not consider themselves to be tech-savvy. The worldwide popularity of Moodle means that there are thousands of videos, manuals, and other documentation on the web about using Moodle.

When making the switch to online learning, one can expect some growing pains. Most instructors say they feel a little intimidated at first, but they become much more comfortable with Moodle the more they use it. Although there are parallels between a traditional and virtual classroom, when planning your first online course be aware that some traditional classroom techniques will no longer work in an online environment. Trying to force a traditional class into an online setting will not work. Students will become bored and will not complete the class.

To get a feel for what a Resource One classroom may be like, visit r1.ifsta.org and first create a user ID and password. Once you’ve logged in, click the Course Demo tab. There, you can view a few of the course features available in Resource One. Instructors can rearrange course elements, hide any of them from students, or add their own content.

Instructors who adopt IFSTA or FPP manuals or online courseware for their training may have access to Resource One at no charge. For more information, email marketing@osufpp.org or call 800-654-4055.

About the author:
Margi Stone Cooper is the Electronic Products Project Coordinator for FPP. She has 20 years of experience in adult and career education. She holds current teaching credentials and has two undergraduate degrees—one in education and the other in graphic design—as well as a master’s degree in mass communications.
IFSTA and OSU Fire Protection Publications Debut World Trade Center Artifact

The International Fire Service Training Association (IFSTA) and Fire Protection Publications (FPP) at Oklahoma State University debuted an artifact from the World Trade Center at the annual IFSTA Validation Conference on July 10, 2011, in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The artifact is a five-foot piece of steel that was salvaged from the debris following the collapse of the World Trade Center (WTC) towers on September 11, 2001. A representative of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, owners of the WTC, contacted IFSTA Executive Director Mike Wieder in late 2010 to offer a piece of the building to IFSTA and FPP. This offer was made in recognition of IFSTA and FPP’s 78 years history of providing training manuals and instructional materials to the firefighters who responded to the WTC disaster, as well as other fire and rescue service agencies and personnel all over the world.

The artifact has been mounted in a custom display case that was designed and constructed by Rod Brakhage, owner of WHEELDOCK, Inc., of Stillwater, OK. The materials for the display were donated by Greg Nixon, President of Precision Tool and Die of Ponca City, Oklahoma. Electrical lighting was installed by John Myers, a worldwide training specialist for Kicker Audio Systems that is also located in Stillwater. All of their time and materials were donated for this project.

“Being entrusted with this sacred piece of history is a humbling honor to be bestowed upon IFSTA, FPP, and OSU,” noted IFSTA Executive Director Mike Wieder. “The members of IFSTA and the staff at FPP are extremely dedicated to the training and safety of firefighters and other emergency responders. Horrible tragedies, such as those that occurred on 9/11, only strengthen our resolve to continue our mission.”

The WTC artifact was displayed at various locations in Stillwater for the 10-year anniversary of 9/11. ESPN featured the artifact during its broadcast of the OSU/Arizona football game at Boone Pickens Stadium on September 8, 2011. It was then moved to the OSU Library for the 9/11 memorial service held on September 9, 2011. On September 11, 2011, the display was moved to the city of Stillwater library for a special service. Following these events, the WTC display was moved to its permanent location inside the FPP office building on the north side of the OSU campus.

Hudiburg and Austin Awards Presented at 2011 IFSTA Validation Conference

The International Fire Service Training Association (IFSTA) and Fire Protection Publications (FPP) awarded the 2011 Everett E. Hudiburg Memorial and Marvin Austin Distinguished Leadership Awards at the 78th Annual IFSTA Validation Conference held in Tulsa, Oklahoma, on July 10, 2011. The Everett E. Hudiburg Award is given by the IFSTA Executive Board to recognize an individual who has made significant contributions to fire service training and education. The Marvin Austin Distinguished Leadership Award is presented by the staff of FPP to recognize significant contributions to the IFSTA Conference and validation process.

The 2011 Everett E. Hudiburg Memorial Award was presented to Chuck Burkell, Executive Education Programs Specialist at the National Fire Academy (NFA). In this role, Chuck manages the executive education programs sponsored by the NFA, including the Executive Fire Officer program (EFO). Chuck is generally regarded as the father of EFO since he was instrumental in its creation and has been the coordinator for over 20 years. During that period, more than 3,000 fire officers have completed the program and thousands more have completed at least one of the courses that make up that program.

Chuck is also responsible for the United States Fire Administration’s (USFA) role in the Harvard Fire Executive Fellowship Program. Deputy Superintendent Robert Neale of NFA has referred to Chuck as “the founder of the USFA role in the Harvard Fire Executive program.” This program provides an opportunity for senior fire executives to attend a three-week residence program at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government where they learn about leadership and governance from some of the best known leaders in local, state, and federal government.

Chuck has an associate’s degree from Cuyahoga County Community College, a bachelor’s degree from the University of Akron, and a master’s degree in Business from Mt. St. Mary’s College. In addition to his position at the NFA, Chuck has also served as an Associate Professor in the Graduate Business Program at Mt. St. Mary’s for 16 years.

The 2011 Marvin Austin Distinguished Leadership Award was presented to retired Battalion Chief Frank Cotton of the Memphis (TN) Fire Department. Frank retired from the Memphis Fire Department after 27 years of service, including many years in its training division. He presently serves as a governor-appointed board member with the Tennessee Commission on Fire Fighting. He is also an adjunct faculty instructor for the National Fire Academy (NFA) in Emmitsburg, Maryland, and University of Tennessee-Martin Institute in Public Safety. He is a University of Tennessee Center of Government Training Municipal Specialist in the areas of public safety, municipal management, and personnel management.

Frank has attended the IFSTA Conference since 1997. He has served in nearly every role within the IFSTA organization, including three terms (nine years) on the IFSTA Executive Board. Frank has been an outstanding advocate for IFSTA in Tennessee and beyond. He has provided sage advice to many FPP and IFSTA members over the years. He truly is an example of the spirit and dedication of the IFSTA organization and family.
2012 IFSTA CALENDAR WINNERS

Photo by Dawn McGee, Deer Park, Texas.

Photo by Bill Tompkins, Bergenfield, New Jersey.

Photo by Mark A. Crowley, Sultan, Washington.

Photo by Dawn McGee, Deer Park, Texas.

Photo by Jamie Walters, Camden, Arkansas.

Photo by Bill Tompkins, Bergenfield, New Jersey.

Photo by Kimberly K. Mullen, Wailuku, Hawaii.

Photo by Debra Wake Field, Crescent City, California.

Photo by Bob Esposito, Pennsburg, Pennsylvania.

Photo by Bill Tompkins, Bergenfield, New Jersey.

Photo by Rob Daniel, North Richland Hills, Texas.

Photo by Lisa Winn, New York, New York.

Photo by Jay K. Bradish, Bradford, Pennsylvania.

CALL FOR ENTRIES
2013 IFSTA/FPP FIRE SERVICE CALENDAR PHOTO CONTEST
DOWNLOAD YOUR ENTRY FROM AT IFSTA.ORG
MUST BE POSTMARKED BY APRIL 30, 2012
On Tuesday, August 30, 2011, thirty company and chief officers from the Military Fire Department of the Federal District in Brasilia, Brazil visited the IFSTA/Fire Protection Publications headquarters on the campus of Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma. The group was given a presentation on the history and current operations of IFSTA/FPP and also a tour of the facilities. There were initial discussions regarding the translation of IFSTA/FPP materials into Portuguese, and follow-up discussions will be held upon the group’s return to Brazil.

This group included the leaders and students in an officer development program that is conducted by their fire department. Part of the program involves an international component, and the group decided to travel to Oklahoma because of the variety of fire-related programs and points of interest at Oklahoma State University and in Oklahoma City. The group also chose to visit Oklahoma based on the recommendation of Captain Thiago John, a member of their fire department who is currently enrolled as a full-time doctoral student in the OSU FEMP program. In addition to the tour of IFSTA/FPP, the group met with faculty from the OSU Fire and Emergency Management graduate program (FEMP), toured the OSU Emergency Operations Center, and visited the Oklahoma Fire Museum and Oklahoma National Memorial sites in Oklahoma City.

This visit comes on the heels of a recent visit to IFSTA/FPP by the Directors of the National Fire Association and National Fire Academy of Chile. These organizations are also working on a translation agreement for the use of IFSTA materials in their country.

These visits strengthen the view of IFSTA and Fire Protection Publications as the recognized leader in the development of high-quality fire service training materials around the world.