

## *From the Director's Desk*

The Governor's Office recently announced the appointment of Larry Matkaitis as the new Illinois State Fire Marshal. We congratulate Marshal Matkaitis and offer our support to help him and the Office of the State Fire Marshal successfully fulfill their statutory duties and support all Illinois firefighters and fire service organizations statewide.

Last fall, the Illinois Fire Service came together and worked with the State Legislature to restore the Cornerstone Training Grant Program funding for 2010. This would not have happened without leadership from the Illinois Firefighter's Association, State Fire Marshal's Office and all of the members of the Illinois Fire Services Association to bring the issue to the attention of key legislators from both political parties. Representatives Lisa Dugan and Don Moffitt partnered to bring the issue to the floor during the Veto Session and to gain support for appropriation of \$475,000 to fund the Cornerstone Program in 2010. As I write this, Cornerstone class registrations have flooded into IFSI and we look forward to a very active training season this spring. Since 2000, this program has substantially underwritten IFSI training programs for volunteer fire departments and fire protection districts (FPD) and significantly contributed to the training programs of paid departments. In the current legislative session, we hope to make Cornerstone a statutory IFSI mission and automatically transfer the funding for it directly from the Fire Prevention Fund to IFSI at the beginning of each fiscal year. This would not have happened without your voice telling your local elected officials and state legislators what Cornerstone and other state-provided training means to you and your department. Thank you for your continuing support.

Winter Fire School was well attended and, by the student comments, well received. We had almost 300 firefighters attend. I want to thank all those who attended, including our instructors from across the State, our staff who helped make it happen, and Eddie Bain for his work to coordinate



the School. Clearly Winter Fire School is a significant part of the annual training program for a number of small, rural and volunteer fire departments and Districts. Our hope is that next year we may be able to partner with the Illinois Association of Fire Protection Districts to offer courses relevant to trustees for these same districts. If you have any other ideas to improve the Winter Fire School please send them to us.

*Richard Jaehne*  
Director

The new Learning Resource and Research Center construction is well under way and we expect to have it available for Winter Fire School next year. As part of the project we intend to create a Memorial Hall honoring the history and traditions of the Illinois Fire Service and those firefighters who gave their lives in the line of duty. We want to offer an opportunity for every firefighter, department and others to be part of this memorial, so we have created a Memorial Paver Brick program that will enable those who desire to have a permanent part of the State Fire Academy. We offer them in 2 sizes (4" x 8" and 8" x 8") with laser etched letters alone or with graphics. If you are interested please visit our web site

<http://www.fsi.illinois.edu/>



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The Illinois Fire Service Institute Newsletter is the official publication of the Illinois Fire Service Institute, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The Newsletter is published twice a year and is solely an educational and advisory aid to the fire service and individuals working to establish and maintain a fire safe environment in Illinois.

Opinions expressed in the Illinois Fire Service Institute Newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official opinions of the Illinois Fire Service Institute unless otherwise noted in the article.

The Illinois Fire Service Institute will consider for publication articles or items of interest to the fire service of Illinois and encourages materials from all fire-related professions for consideration.

Persons interested in furnishing articles, should forward materials to: IFSI Newsletter, 11 Gerty Drive, Champaign, IL 61820 or E-mail information to Terri Hopper at [hopper@fsi.illinois.edu](mailto:hopper@fsi.illinois.edu). Please include appropriate graphics or digital photos.

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Our website has the most current class information

**[www.fsi.illinois.edu](http://www.fsi.illinois.edu)**

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***Want your own copy of the IFSI newsletter?***

***Ask to be added to the mailing list by email to Terri Hopper ([hopper@fsi.illinois.edu](mailto:hopper@fsi.illinois.edu))***

***OR***

***A copy is available on our web site.***

The new calendar year is off to a busy start. Class requests are rolling in, so don't wait to request or enroll in a class.

Thanks to the efforts of many fire organizations and individuals, the legislature and Governor restored the Cornerstone funding. Thus, we are again able to offer many classes at no cost to the local departments. Thank you for your help with this. We have added many new classes to Cornerstone, so contact our Regional Reps, instructors, or our website for information, and to request a class. Remember you can quickly check the map on the website to see what classes are already scheduled near you.

The new year also brings several personnel and role changes at IFSI. First, Barry Wagner retired in December after almost a quarter century as our Facilities Manager. We thank Barry for his years of dedicated service. Bob Foster has taken over as Facilities Manager, and Gary Gula will be looking after our fire apparatus under Bob. Jeff Lattz will be running our entire Breathing Air program and Mark Berg will take on additional transportation coordination duties. Eric Barnes is assuming more equipment inventory control responsibilities.

Duane Bales will be retiring in April. We hate to see him leave, but hopefully we'll get him back on a part-time basis as a Field Instructor. Three Field Instructors will assume Duane's program duties. John Nichols will be our new Regional Rep handling Cornerstone and other classes in the Southwestern Region. Dave Newcomb will take over the Agricultural Program and Joe Drennan will take over the Vehicle/Machinery Program.



We welcome Char Mitchell who has joined us to look after grants and help with other business office financial functions.

*David F. Clark  
Deputy Director*

The new Learning Resource & Research Center building is coming along. I urge you to become a part of the project by investing in an engraved paver brick in the Memorial Plaza to honor a special firefighter, your fire department or your individual fire company. Information about the paver brick options and affordable prices is available on our website. I suggest you submit your order ASAP this spring so your memorial paver can be included in the first group put in place when the building is finished later this year. We plan to add additional bricks to this permanent firefighter memorial each year at Fire College.

Work is progressing on Fire College which will be June 3-6, 2010. Registration will open in early April, so be watching our website for information and details.

The sea-land containers have arrived for our new trench rescue prop which will be finished as soon as the spring weather allows. It will have various widths and depths of trenches. Similarly, we are waiting on weather before constructing the street-scape prop.

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## *IFSI to partner with Parkland College for credits*

Through a partnership with Parkland College in Champaign, Illinois, most IFSI classes will receive college credit. Some courses can help complete a College degree or Certificate program, and others help provide continuing education units (CEU's). Students not currently enrolled in Parkland's AAS program, can contact Parkland to participate directly in their program, regardless of where the student lives. Their web site is [www.parkland.edu](http://www.parkland.edu).

### **Parkland credit can apply to other colleges**

College credit will be given through Parkland College, however this credit may apply to your current degree or certificate program at your local College or University. Go to the Parkland web site and request a copy of your transcript. Providing your Parkland transcript to another College or University can allow for a transcript audit

*continued on the next page*

# Table Talk

Mac  
McCastland  
Associate  
Director

Let's talk about some new beginnings hitting the blocks this spring. Danica is driving for Jr. in NASCAR, HazMat and TRT are all swimming in the same pool at IFSI!

She got wrecked in her first outing, but we are going to keep our program off the wall and above the double yellows. SOTP is the new program at IFSI. Special Operations Training Program rolls all the specialized training under one roof – the house divided is no longer!

Late in 2009 the concept of bringing HazMat and TRT into a single program was run up the hill and given the blessing. Ray Palczynski was named to be the SOTP Program Director, with each subdivision running under a Program Manager.

One of my main responsibilities at IFSI is oversight of the portion of the ITTF/HSG grant that funds the deliveries under SOTP, so I will still be involved, actually more involved, as I become more familiar with the people and methods of how the other programs are delivered.

We needed to reduce the number of offerings of grant-funded classes this year from four to three in each of the Operations and Technician levels. This move was dictated by the reduction in funding coming through the Homeland Security Grant. Late last year we made an effort at conducting one-day training sessions

at some of our Regional Training Centers. These Regional Readiness Evolutions (RRE) were well received, but the major problem was the lack of funding. This is an issue that will be addressed at budget time.

Another shift that came our way was the move from a training event to an exercise for our annual validations.

This move required a complete change in the paperwork administration required to meet all of the federal requirements associated with the conducting of an exercise.

In order to ensure compliance, the ITTF Training subcommittee created an Exercise Committee to oversee the Validation Exercises. I co-chair that Committee with the MABAS Exercise person, Mike Graves. Mike is retired Army E-9, comes with no preconceived notions and is good to work with. A major shift in the Validation Exercise will be in October of this year when the Validation Exercise will cover a five day period, and will put HazMat and TRT Teams together – yes, TOGETHER – to handle an event. It is a concept that will move this event toward real life.

Well I guess these ramblings should fill the amount of space I need to occupy, so I'll strike out.

Stay Safe,  
Mac

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## College credits *continued from page 3*

and the inclusion of courses towards your degree.

### **Some earlier IFSI classes may qualify**

Parkland College is able to do a review of transcripts and offer Academic Proficiency Credit for Fire Officer I and Fire Officer II courses at IFSI. A proficiency exam will be necessary. Courses taken at Parkland at the time of delivery of the same course at IFSI will be eligible for conversion; however, most of the classes will not be eligible for "grandfathering." To learn about specific classes, contact Parkland College.

### **Taking classes at IFSI can qualify for an AAS degree**

IFSI courses can fulfill the bulk of the requirements toward an Associate's in Applied Science Degree in Fire Service Technology or a Fire Officer 1 Certificate in Fire Service Technology program through Parkland College. Some additional General Education Core Courses will be required to complete either program, and these may be available online. Requirements at other Colleges or Universities may be different.

All approved IFSI training after July 1, 2010 will be available for transcript review through Parkland College. Students can provide the Parkland transcript to other schools for transfer.

See photo on  
page 23.

# *Challenging Pro Board Certifications*

The most common question I have received since IFSI became Pro Board accredited is “How do I become certified?” The answer depends on where and when you took your training, and what certifications you already hold.

The Pro Board is the Board for Fire Service Professional Qualifications. They are an international group that accredits agencies to ensure that the agency’s testing, evaluation and certification methods meet a national best-practices model. IFSI became accredited in April of 2009, and has been adding levels to our original accreditation since that date.

The first thing to determine if you can challenge IFSI’s exam for Pro Board certification, is to identify where you received your training and when. If you took an IFSI course, for example, FAE, after IFSI became accredited for that course (April 2009 for FAE), and you took the IFSI end-of-course exam and practical, all you need to do is contact IFSI and let us know you are interested. We will verify your training record and send you a form to complete and return to IFSI. There is a fee of \$15 to become Pro-Board certified and a check for that amount must accompany your application to IFSI.

If you took a non-IFSI course but are state certified through the Illinois Office of the State Fire Marshal, or if you took an IFSI course before we were accredited to certify individuals in a given subject area, the process is different. In these cases, you will need to take a “Challenge Exam” to be eligible for certification. These exams are offered twice a year in Champaign and consist of both a written examination, as well as a practical skills evaluation for subjects with practicals. The fees for these exams range from \$75 to \$150, depending on the number of IFSI staff required to administer the practical exams. For groups of six or more, testing may be contracted at your agency if specific conditions are met. Once an individual successfully completes the Challenge Exam for a given subject, they are eligible to apply to the Pro Board for a certificate, again by submitting a form and fee to IFSI.

*Do you need to become Pro Board Accredited?* That depends on where you are

in your career and where you hope to go. A primary benefit of Pro Board Certification is that the training is recognized by the Department of Defense. As it was explained to me, for persons working, or desiring to work on a U.S. military installation, a Pro Board Certificate is the “coin of the realm” needed to satisfy employment conditions. It is this reason why IFSI completed the arduous and detailed process to become one of 55 Pro Board accredited agencies in the world.

If you are going to leave Illinois and travel to another “Pro Board State,” having these credentials ensures greater portability of your certifications. It is not a perfect system, and it is voluntary for states and agencies to choose to participate, but it is a step towards national certification. In this way, Pro Board Certification is very similar to what a National Registry of EMT Certificate is for EMS – a more portable record of training.

*One important closing note.* Some IFSI classes lead to Illinois OSFM certificates. Some IFSI classes lead to Pro Board certificate eligibility. Some classes can lead to both; others may only be good for only one. For example, IFSI delivers a 40-hour Fire Officer I program that meets Pro Board, but the class does not meet the requirements for Illinois OSFM certification. Conversely, our Illinois OSFM Fire Officer I courses do qualify an individual for Pro Board certification, depending on when they completed the courses.

I am sure that there have been questions floating around about what Pro Board is, and in which levels of certification IFSI is accredited to certify individuals. Challenge exams only add a new level of complexity to IFSI’s delivery of Pro Board certifications.

This is a new process for all of us, but one that is allowing IFSI to provide training for members of the Illinois military that formally had to leave the state for training. Please visit [www.theproboard.org](http://www.theproboard.org) for additional information on the Pro Board itself, or contact me directly at [brbrauer@fsi.illinois.edu](mailto:brbrauer@fsi.illinois.edu) for help with specific Pro Board certification questions.

*Brian R. Brauer  
Assistant  
Director*

# ***86th Annual Fire College - Register Now***

*Brad Bone  
Fire Fighting  
Program  
Director*

As I am writing this article, I am looking out the window of my office at the snow on the ground, which makes it seem odd to be talking about Fire College registration for this year. However, the truth is that it will be here faster than most of you realize and you need to start thinking about it now. We will kick off the 86th Annual Fire College on June 3rd and I wanted to share a few bits of information with you.

Since the economic situation has not improved much over the past year, IFSI has taken every measure to keep the fees the same as last year. Fire College continues to be one of the best educational opportunities, as well as one of the best values for your departments' training dollars. Training is one of the most significant factors in reducing firefighter injuries and fatalities, and Fire College is one of the most cost-effective ways to address the safety issues that training can correct.

This Fire College will still offer a wide variety of courses from Entry Level Recruit to several Leadership courses. Please look through the course menu at [www.fsi.illinois.edu](http://www.fsi.illinois.edu)

as soon as you can and get your registration in before the classes you want fill up. A few classes have been added to address current issues in the agricultural industry and a trench hazards Awareness level course will highlight IFSIs new trench prop. The First In Officer class will be on site, taking advantage of the new Streetscape prop, which is designed to present tactical and strategic challenges that the first-in officer might encounter in a typical downtown setting. I hope that you are able to find the course that meets your needs.

Lastly, please be sure to read the entire Fire College brochure carefully! There are some important changes to the registration process that you need to know about, as well as information as to when and if you need PPE. I would hate to see you miss out on the nation's oldest Annual Fire College because of a registration error. We look forward to seeing you and providing you with a challenging four days of quality, cost-effective training.

## ***Important Fire College Dates***

April 5	Registration Begins
April 30	Last day to register without a late fee
May 21	Last day to cancel without penalty
May 28	Last day to advance register
June 3	On site registration and check in

***Don't miss the best training value in the Midwest. Complete class listings are on the IFSI web site.***

***[www.fsi.illinois.edu](http://www.fsi.illinois.edu)***

## *East Central Region Report*

As reported in the Fall 2009 newsletter, the Cornerstone funding had been swept from the Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal's budget and IFSI's no-cost fundamental training for small combination and volunteer fire departments came to an abrupt end. A part of the Illinois Fire Service Institute's mission – dating as far back as the 1950s – it was placed on hold with an indefinite restart time. The Fire Service Institute is dedicated to providing these hands-on training classes; however, we at the state fire academy would have to recoup all costs related to the training at local departments. Even in this economy, some departments were able to fund IFSI instructors for training. Many others found that “you don't know what you've got 'til it's gone” – lyrics of an old song that resonated with them.

As more and more departments submitted requests for training and we were unable to provide them at no cost, questions began to come in about departmental involvement in the Cornerstone Program. Numerous departments and associations began to look into the number of classes, locations, students, and student contact hours their organizations were involved in with these grant-funded classes. Many realized they were getting a great value for their investment in time. Most did not realize the extent of funding required if they had to pay the entire cost of the class themselves. After crunching the numbers and documenting the organization's involvement in Cornerstone classes, paying the full costs for their personnel would have exceeded their training budgets, and in some cases, their entire annual budget. As many IFSI Field Staff have experienced at the conclusion of a class in a small rural department when the Chief or T/O has passed a helmet around to collect money to refuel the rigs, the need for the Cornerstone funding was magnified. Many fire service organizations worked together and found a way to reinstate the Cornerstone funding for this fiscal year and are working to make the

program a permanent part of the budget. (House Bill 5412.)

For those in the East Central Region, five additional Light and Fights were added to the calendar. Upcoming Light and Fights offer individual firefighters or fire fighting companies a one-day hands-on, live-fire experience at no cost.

The East Central Region April Cornerstone program includes classes in Agricultural Emergencies (Chebanse), Leadership Principles (Urbana), Routine Emergencies (Kankakee Township), Basic Auto Extrication (Reddick) and Rapid Intervention Team Operations (Mansfield). In May, instruction is being offered in New Car Technology and Stabilization (Altamont), Rural Engine and Tender Operations (Paris), Building Construction (Watseka), Large Vehicle Extrication (Essex) and Grain Bin Rescue (Marshal). June will finish up the fiscal year with an Advanced Vehicle Rescue in Mahomet, Fire Behavior and Smoke at the Northern Piatt FPD and Fire Service Vehicle Operator in Papineau. Numerous departments from Martinsville, Sullivan, Altamont and Pontiac have classes under consideration so check IFSI's web site for updates in your area.

The fire service in the East Central Region has embraced the Cornerstone program and I am sure by the time this is being read the region's share of funds will have been mostly committed. I suggest if you wish to hold a class in the future, pick dates after July 1, and encourage folks to speak up about the program if you feel it is an important part of your region's fire service training plans.

*Greg Fisher  
Cornerstone  
East Central  
Region*

***To find out what Cornerstone classes are available in your area, visit the IFSI web site at [www.fsi.illinois.edu](http://www.fsi.illinois.edu).***

# *From the Northwest Territory*

*Ray Palczynski  
Northwest  
Regional  
Representative*

January shot out of the gate like a “rocket sled on rails.” With the return of the Cornerstone funding, class requests continue to come in at a fast rate. My January update flyer was close to two pages long! Be sure to check your email and look at the IFSI web site to take advantage of classes not only in the Northwest Region but all over the state. All of the regional reps are equally busy.

Since we had a six month dry spell with no Cornerstone classes, I thought it might be a good idea to remind departments about a few of the requirements they have when requesting a Cornerstone-funded class. We need to have a minimum of 15 students from at least two different fire departments in attendance for the class. Each regional rep does his best to spread the funds equally among his counties. It is realistic to expect one or two classes a year from the cornerstone program. Some locations host classes on behalf of a larger region. This practice works great when it comes to attendance. A class with only 15 students doesn't balance against the grant nearly as well as a class with 30.

If you have a department nearby with a training site or a classroom facility, we would like to take advantage of those valuable resources. Cornerstone is not

intended to take the place of your training division, but to add to yours. Please allow us four to six weeks when requesting classes. If we have to line up props in addition to instructors it may take every bit of six weeks to line up a date where all the pieces fit together.

Many of the departments in the 24 counties I represent have been very active requesting training. Others have not. I'd like to be able to provide and deliver quality training over all of the Northwest Region counties. If you have never requested training through the Cornerstone program, now is your chance. We have updated the courses offered and expanded the topics. Many classes are hands-on intensive, augmented by some classroom time. Some subjects are interactive lecture classes. These are great during the cold weather months. Check out the Cornerstone class opportunities at [www.fsi.illinois.edu](http://www.fsi.illinois.edu).

If you would like me to attend you regional, county or association meetings to share in more detail the training opportunities the Illinois Fire Service Institute has to offer, please let me know. You can contact me at [rpalczyn@fsi.illinois.edu](mailto:rpalczyn@fsi.illinois.edu). I'd be glad to stop by for a visit.

***Stay safe.***

# *Cornerstone Chicago Metro*

*Jim Streu  
Chicago Metro  
Regional  
Representative*

Many departments have asked if Cornerstone classes are back and covered by a grant. Yes, they are. All the classes that are on the Cornerstone menu are available and ready for scheduling. They are excellent core classes funded by the Cornerstone grant money and additional classes are offered at an affordable cost. In addition, Leadership I, II, III, and Incident Safety Officer classes are available and are National Fire Academy certified classes. These are 12- to 16-hour classes that can be delivered on weekends to assist the part time personnel.

We have been working diligently on updating the Fire Officer curriculum in

order to meet all current NFPA standards and Pro Board standards for Fire Officer qualifications. This has been ongoing, and the new curriculum will be implemented in the 2010 series of classes.

***Regional Field Staff Meetings.*** This year we are going to continue to hold regional field staff meetings in our local areas. These meetings replaced the annual meeting. Please keep an eye on your email for future meetings. Communications for these meetings will be sent out by Illinois Fire Service Institute email notification.



# Goin' South

Training is in full swing now in the southern part of the state with Cornerstone classes filling our schedules. If there is a training program that your department needs, please submit a Request for Training for it as soon as you can as dates and instructors are being committed quickly. Remember to invite your mutual aid companies to train with you to maximize safety and procedural concerns. Don't forget the "Light & Fights" are a great way to practice fire fighting skills, work on certification practicals, or fine tune incident command procedures. "Light & Fights" are not just for the new firefighter. They can be scenario based to fit your need as a Safety or Fire Officer, not just as a firefighter.

Fire Officer I programs are being established throughout the state. The St Louis Metro East area is again hosting a Fire Officer I program beginning this spring. The classes will be held at differ-

ent fire departments throughout the Metro area. Another program is continuing in the Effingham area in central Illinois. Williamson County Fire will again host a program beginning this fall in southern Illinois. This summer, Fire Prevention Principles and Management III will be offered at IFSI on weekends. Please continue to check the website for additional classes and information regarding the Fire Officer Program. A 40-hour Fire Officer I & II program will be offered this summer at IFSI in Champaign. These classes meet the curriculum for Pro Board certification.

I would like to thank all the Field Staff that have worked so hard with the Cornerstone and Fire Officer Programs this past winter and spring. Thank your families for the sacrifices they have made while you were training others. Your assistance has made the firefighting profession much safer and more efficient. Thank you!

*Les Albert  
Southern  
Regional  
Representative*

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## Cornerstone Regions

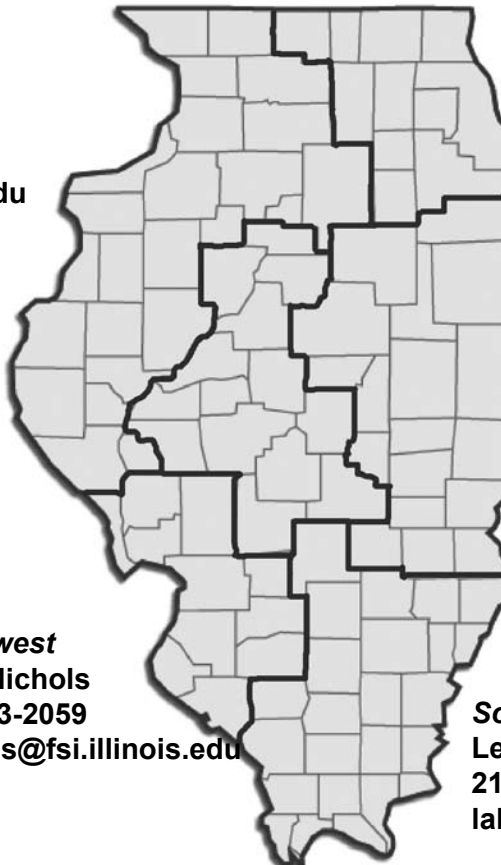
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# Cornerstone Central Region

Roger Lunt  
Central  
Regional  
Representative

In the Central Region there are two types of meetings that ask attendees to travel to a hosting fire department. One meeting is asking representatives of area fire departments to attend an agenda-guided discussion of training needs in the area. I call these Training Forums. While area Field Instructors are notified and welcome to attend, the focus here is on area fire department training needs. It is their participation that provides value to this one- to two-hour meeting.

The second type of meeting focuses on providing Field Instructors information that they should have to support the training needs of area fire departments. This agenda driven meeting may last two to four hours. These meetings are labeled "Regional Field Staff Meeting."

In the Field Instructor meeting, discussions center on budgets, scheduling and accommodations. Because we now have over 500 field instructors across the entire state, IFSI decided regional meetings made more sense than the historical annual meeting in Champaign.

Over the past year-and-a-half, there have been several regional Field Staff meetings

around the state. In the Central Region, regional Field Staff meetings have been hosted by the Taylorville Fire Department, Peoria Fire Department Training Center and the Riverton Fire Department. The agenda was consistent with other regional field staff meetings yet offered information unique to the Central Region.

The goal of serving instructors through these regional meetings is to bring the IFSI field representative up-to-date on IFSI achievements, changes and future goals, and to offer an opportunity to network with other instructors and your IFSI Regional Representative.

Though attending regional meetings has not been a requirement, it should be considered important to instructors, IFSI and to the service of Central Region fire departments. A great deal of pertinent information is discussed and made available to those attending.

The Illinois Fire Service Institute is determined to meet the basic and ever changing needs of the Illinois Fire Service. These meetings are scheduled to aid each of us in our role of IFSI instructors.

Jim Streu  
Fire Officer  
Program  
Director

## Fire Officer Programs

The Fire Officer classes that used to be advertised on the Southern Kane Training Association web site are now scheduled with registrations being taken by the Illinois Fire Service Institute. This series of classes will be held at two different locations. Some of the classes will be at the Geneva Fire Department location and some will be at the Batavia Fire Department. The winter /spring classes are currently going on and

the classes' locations are at the Batavia Fire Department. Please check the IFSI web site for dates and locations.

As in the past, the instructors for the Fire Officer classes are IFSI field staff and meet all Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal standards for certification.



**To find out what classes are available in your area, visit the IFSI web site at [www.fsi.illinois.edu](http://www.fsi.illinois.edu).**

# *Out in the Field*

The 2009 harvest season proved to be a great challenge to farmers who tried for weeks to get their crops out of the field. Grain was harvested at a higher than ideal percentage of moisture, making it necessary to dry down grain to an acceptable level of moisture. Because of the moisture, we will see a higher level of Mycotoxins in the bins. What are Mycotoxins? In laymen's term, they are poisonous chemical compounds that develop in the grain bins and then circulate in the air with the grain dust. As we work in or around the bin, it is possible to inhale this fungi, which can cause adverse effects on our body quickly or adverse effects which take a longer gradual time. Here are some of the ways Mycotoxin is created:

- Putting grain in the bin with a higher moisture content and leaving the grain in the bins for a while before drying – longer than three days unless it is in a sealed storage unit.
- Poor cleaning and treating of the empty bins before putting the grain in.
- Putting damaged grain in the bin where insects are already working on the grain.

All three present great possibilities. Some of the reactions to Mycotoxins we might encounter are:

- Respiratory problems
- Cough/sore throat/irritation
- Burning/watery eyes
- Shortness of breath

We have no idea what we are inhaling while working around that bin so we must use some sort of breathing protection, anywhere from a simple paper mask to an SCBA.

The other problem firefighters can encounter in a grain bin emergency is the bridging of

the corn, again due to moisture content. There likely will be a lot of crusting on the surface as farmers start emptying the bins – voids will occur under the crusting. Farmers will get in the bin to try and break the crusting and get entrapped. I'm afraid we are going to see more incidents in the coming months.

*Duane Bales  
Ag Program  
Director*

Check the website for Ag Rescue and Grain Bin classes that are scheduled in your area or talk to your Regional Representative and schedule one.

## ***A Report from the Field***

"On Monday, the 16th MABAS 48 TRT, along with six other agencies performed a successful grain bin rescue. An owner-operator of a family farm had entered the top of a 30 foot diameter by 35 foot high bin to retrieve a dropped tool. He became engulfed up to his neck. The local fire department was called. After one hour, the local department called for a county technical rescue box. (The department had no formal training in grain bin rescue).

"After two hours, the subject was freed and is back at work.

"Techniques and skills taught by FSI through the Cornerstone Training Grain Bin Rescue Program were instrumental in this successful rescue.

"This was the second grain rescue in a year for MABAS 48."

*Jason McMillan  
Associate Field Staff Instructor*

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## ***Upcoming Ag Awareness Program in Decatur: June 25 - 26 Macon County Fairgrounds***

An Agricultural Awareness event is planned for Macon County on June 25 - 26, 2010. FFA and the general public are welcome to attend on Friday night. On Saturday, fire departments are invited to participate in real-life rescue scenarios. Expect PTO, tractor rollover and grain bin exercises to dominate the activities.

# *Hazardous Materials Program Update*

Ray Palczynski  
Special  
Operations  
Training  
Program  
Director

The calendar doesn't seem to recognize any down time when it comes to hazardous materials baseline training in Illinois. As soon as the holiday season had passed, hazmat classes began. Right now we are all the way into July for new 40-hour class bookings. Be sure to check the website regularly as classes are constantly being added to the list.

I used the term "baseline training" in the last paragraph and wanted to take a minute to explain its use. When a responder is going through his or her initial or first time training classes such as Hazmat Awareness, Operations, Tech A or Tech B, or any other SWMD rescue classes, these classes are referred to as baseline training. Any training subsequent to this training is called maintenance training. Back in the day maintenance was called "refresher" training. I know refresher is still a good word in EMS but in the rescue programs we are differentiating the two types of training using the word baseline and maintenance training. This language is more in line with federal terminology.

Speaking of rescue training programs and common language, the hazardous materials program has married with all the rescue programs under one moniker. All of the SWMD rescue training is now under the umbrella of the Special Operations Training Programs or SOTP. I will serve as SOTP director, plus I will

continue to manage the hazardous materials programs. If you have any questions about any of the Statewide Weapons of Mass Destruction Special Operations Training Programs (SWMD SOTP) please direct them to me or Mac Mc-Castland.

The Hazardous Materials Awareness class is a hot ticket item at this time. This eight-hour foundational class is delivered in one session. The state certification OSFM-recognized exam is given at the end of the class. If you need a HazMat awareness class please submit your request no later than 30-days in advance of when you want the class. As with any other class request please be sure to provide three possible dates. This class is also available online at no fee.

Our next hazardous materials validation exercise takes place April 7 and 8. We anticipate a full ten teams will participate in this exercise. In October, five additional teams will be invited to participate in a multi-jurisdictional exercise. Entities and response teams that will be participating include but are not limited to HMT, TRT, IMT, IMERT, ILEAS and DPW resources. Validations from 2010 on will likely be multi-jurisdictional since that is more representative of what would happen in a real world event. This will be a new experience for the emergency responders of Illinois.

*Also from Ray*

## *From the Northwest Region to the Northwest Territories*

For three weeks in late October and early November, IFSI Instructors Bill Clossen, Steve Barr and I had the privilege of teaching the IFSI created Hazardous Materials Operations class in a train-the-trainer format in Alaska. It was a great experience and we got to see places none of us had ever experienced before. The sun didn't come up until about 0930 each morning and it got later each day. Aside

from that they were having a mild early winter so zero to six below wasn't a big deal. The people were great and we all ate our fill of salmon and halibut.

Our first week was in the city of Anchorage, where we instructed members of

the Anchorage Fire Department along with members of the Army's CST team stationed at Fort Richardson. There were firefighters from Wasilla who, in addition to their duties at home, work in the oil fields on the northern slope – not a large area on an angle, but rather a region of Alaska. There were also firefighters from Barrow, Nikiski, Palmer and Soldotna.

After a week in Anchorage we drove the 300+ miles to Fairbanks. There we taught firefighters, oil workers and law enforcement personnel. Cities and places represented in this class were Fairbanks, North Pole, private industry and Eielson Air Force Base. It snowed continually the first three days we were there yet only amounted to nine inches. Then it dropped to six below zero; but it was a dry

*continued on page 14*



## *40 Years - From One Jungle to the Next*

Forty years ago, on January 1, 1970, 6 a.m. – it was the time I had been anticipating for over a year. The plane departed Saigon and I was on my way back to the states with a brief stop in Hawaii. We landed in Hawaii on December 31 at 11:50 p.m. and we celebrated New Years again, then it was on to San Francisco. On January 31, 1970, I was discharged from the U.S. Marine Corps and took a job in advertising at a Fortune 500 company in St. Louis. Six years later I took the entrance test at a local fire department and got hired a few months later. I'll always remember the comments from people at the St. Louis company, "Why would you want to be a fireman?" I answered that I was going to die at an early age with the current job's rat race. Little did I know the hazards of a firefighter.

The first structure fire I went to, flames were shooting out the roof so the captain ordered that I pull the booster line and shoot water on the roof. As a rookie, I later asked him what the benefits of doing that were. He answered, "None, but we need to be shooting water as quickly as possible so the spectators think we are accomplishing something." Soon we put crosslays on our engine and I'll always remember the first time I pulled one at a structure fire. I got in trouble for pulling a 1-½ instead of the booster line, because now we have to reload the hose instead of pushing a button to roll the line up.

In vehicle extrication, I was taught to find the Nader bolt and get the port-a-power in 6" above or below and start spreading.

Never cut a hinge. The standard then was to use the cutters 20 percent and spreader 80 percent. We used hacksaws to do cutting and never thought about a recip saw. My how times have changed.

Folks, the fire service is based on tradition but it can't be based on "that's the way it has always been done." Building materials are changing, products are constantly changing and "improving," and we keep getting additional responsibilities added to our jobs. The fire service must keep up on what is happening and reevaluating our tactics and strategies in our responses. One of the ways is through training and education. Take a look just at the extrication side. If we tried to use our tools the same way we did in the 70s, 80s or even the 90s, a lot of the time we wouldn't get the job done or it would be unsafe. Vehicles have changed and tools have changed. And we have to change our tactics to meet the challenge of our jobs. Let's not sit back and be complacent. There might be better ways to get something accomplished.

Once I made the decision to be a firefighter I've never looked back nor regretted the decision. Also, working here at the Fire Service Institute and the education I've received from those of you around the state and across the country is something that I never dreamed of accomplishing. My thanks to meeting and working with many of you over the years. It has been enjoyable and educational but retirement is looking good also.

Thank you.

*Duane Bales  
Vehicle Rescue  
Program  
Director*

***Duane Bales announced his retirement from IFSI, effective March 31, 2010. Still, keep an eye out for him.***

# Winter Fire School

Eddie Bain  
Fire Investigation  
Fire Prevention  
Program Director  
and Winter  
Fire School  
Director

The 15th Annual Winter Fire School held in Champaign in January was host to almost 300 firefighters and officers. Eight sessions were offered this year along with a bonus Saturday evening presentation. Instructors this year were premier staff and field staff from the Illinois Fire Service Institute, Chicago Fire Academy and the National Fire Sprinkler Association. Class sessions focused on leadership development, fire ground management, fire fighting tactics, fire prevention, fire fighter heat stress research, and hazardous materials training opportunities.

Joe Gasparich, IFSI Homeland Security Program Director and Nokomis Fire Chief, presented the Saturday evening program. The “Small Town, Big Fires” topic provided outstanding experiential information for the 110 attendees. Students were able to ask questions and build networking opportunities about “mutual aid” programs and other tools that small departments can develop to help manage large incidents. They were also able to see the important positive results of thinking and planning ahead for such serious incidents in their communities.

Winter Fire School was supported this year by Stan’s Sportsworld and US Safety Products. These vendors had great items for purchase and provided everyone with opportunities to visit with other school attendees. A new sponsor for the program this year was the NICOR natural gas services company. We appreciate their willingness to step up and support Winter Fire School. It seems most appropriate that this energy services company would choose to support this wintertime program.

Also this year Winter Fire School served as a training opportunity for another group in Illinois. Two members of the Illinois Incident Management Team were able to shadow, support and work with IFSI staff to earn training credits for their continuing certification. These professional managers helped manage Winter Fire School by learning from the event and then providing positive supportive input.

I know that everyone is weary of winter. But now is a good time to save the date for next year’s Winter Fire School – Saturday, January 29 and Sunday, January 30, 2011. Mark your calendars and watch for details next fall. Thank you for your interest in and support of Winter Fire School.

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## *...to the Northwest Territories (continued from page 12)*

cold. Kinda like the dry heat in Arizona. Yea right! Cold is cold and six below is cold.

After the class in Fairbanks we drove back to Anchorage to catch a flight to Juneau. In



Juneau we instructed members of the Capitol City Fire Department, firefighters from Ketchikan and one firefighter all the way from Dutch Harbor. If you know the TDC program “Deadliest Catch,” you know Dutch Harbor.

Our hosts for this trip were three members of the Alaska Division of Fire and Life Safety. Director Jodie Hettrick was our main point of contact and host in Anchorage. Bill Hedrick was our host in Fairbanks. Bill runs the training for the northern part of the state – where -65 degrees in the winter is normal. We learned that you have to treat your hydrants with a glycerin mixture in the winter in Fairbanks. That was an experience. Todd Kollar was our contact in Juneau, where it rained every day and reminded me of the pacific northwest. Its

*continued on page 17*

[www.fsi.illinois.edu](http://www.fsi.illinois.edu)

# *eLearning Courses: Answering your Questions*

Greetings. I continually receive questions about the IFSI Online courses. I would like to use this article to respond to some of the most frequently asked questions.

With budget constraints in this current economy, online training offers an economic alternative to meet your training needs. As most of you know, our Cornerstone funds can only provide a finite amount of courses. That said, many of the online courses that IFSI offers are free of charge and the same courses that are delivered in the field. If you are looking for certification or just wanting a good refresher, IFSI online courses are sure to meet your training needs.

## **Technology and the Student**

One of the first questions I receive is, *"I am not real good with the computer, what will I have to know or do?"*

When designing the IFSI online courses we take into account that not everyone is a computer expert, and that there are areas of Illinois that are limited with slow connection speeds. We design all our courses so users in remote areas can access and participate in online instruction. We use a web page classroom that is easily downloaded and navigated. If you can open regular web pages such as Yahoo, and point and click your way around, you will have no problem navigating the IFSI classroom. If you have a computer that is three years old or newer and you have an email account, you are in good shape to take an online course.

## **Course Work**

*"What kind of work is involved in taking an online course?"*

While learning materials differ from course to course, this is what you are expected to accomplish in your online course.

- Complete course reading assignments.
- View online media presentations.
- Complete student activities (Some courses have activities, while some do not. Homework is emailed to your instructor for review and comment).
- Participate in online question and answer forums, or in some cases a live chat session.
- Complete end of unit tests or final examination.

For those courses, such as FF II and Fire Apparatus Engineer, you will have practicals to complete. These can be completed at your fire department. In some cases you may have to come to IFSI for a weekend to participate in a practical session.

*Rich Valenta  
E-Learning  
Program  
Director*

## **How Long Do the Courses Last?**

*"Do I need to be online at a certain time and how long do I have to complete the course?"*

Course lengths vary. For most Awareness courses such as HazMat Awareness and Tech Rescue Awareness, you have about 30 days to complete your work. For courses such as Fire-fighter II (FF II) and Fire Apparatus Engineer (FAE), the length is about 10-13 weeks per module. Awareness level courses allow you to work at your own pace. The only requirement is that all your work is completed within the 30 day time period. FF II and FAE have live chats. For these courses you can expect to be online once a week with your instructor. Beyond that, you work at your own pace to complete your weekly subject studies.

## **What about Testing?**

All courses will have a final exam. A few are delivered online right from your computer. Most have a paper test. These tests are administered locally in accordance with the OSFM testing requirements. Your instructor will work with you to process all the necessary paperwork so you can take your exam.

## **Where can I Find Information on the Online Courses and How do I Register?**

Finally I hear, *"Where can I get information on the course and registration?"* Simply go to the link below. You can find specific course information. Registration links are provided when selecting each course description.

<https://www.fsi.illinois.edu/content/virtual%20campus/courses/>

Thousands of firefighters have found the IFSI online courses an effective way to meet their training needs. Give it a try. You will find the experience a rewarding way to complete your fire service training.

***Take care and see you online.  
Rich***

# Explorer – Cadet “Hands On Training” Fire School

Greg Fisher  
Explorer-Cadet  
Fire School  
Coordinator

Does your department or district have a fire service oriented youth group such as Cadets, Explorers, Junior Fire Fighters, Venturers, C.E.R.T. or Vocational Education program? Do the youth train with turnout gear and SCBA? If that’s the case...have we got an event for you!

Since 2003 the Illinois Fire Service Institute has been sponsoring a Hands On Training – Live Fire School for youth groups based in or sponsored by fire service organizations such as municipalities, fire protection districts, fire departments, and vocational technical education systems in Illinois. The event has experienced enrollment from organizations throughout the United States and Canada as a project that, for the most part, cannot be duplicated in other fire training venues.

**What’s the event all about?** HOT training! Hands On Training develops skills in self contained breathing apparatus, ground and aerial ladders, hose loads and advances,

rapid intervention team techniques, and much more.

**My youth are new at this.** Bring ‘em on! If you’ve never been to this event, the first 12 hour session is all about the fundamentals and receiving the baseline training needed to enter a live fire environment. We build on the basic skills.

**My group has been there before.** These folks start right out on live fire evolutions utilizing stand pipe operations, a simulated restaurant fire, forcible entry in live fire, plus a variety of other live fire scenarios.

**What do we do in the evenings?** The fee includes a single evening auto extrication section, OR three evenings of truck company operations, OR three evenings of basic pump operations as optional activities. If the young folks are too tired after a long day of fire fighting, the Activities and Recreation Center is available for swimming, basketball, volleyball, and a four story climbing wall.

**What else does the fee include?** Besides the four days of hands on training each participant lodges in the dormitory and all meals are included beginning Thursday with dinner through Sunday lunch. Bed linen and towels are provided in the double occupancy dormitory style rooms and showers. Healthy snacks will be provided throughout the drills and evolutions. Each student will be able to download and print a certificate for a minimum of two classes and more if they choose to take advantage of the evening classes. Lastly, each participant will receive a t-shirt and gear bag with the school’s HOT logo and a water bottle for use throughout the HOT evolutions.

**What’s required and what should I bring?** Prior to arrival, an up-to-date physical exam meeting or exceeding the respiratory fitness physical mandated by OSHA or the Illinois Department of Labor is required. **For the dormitory**-toiletries, personal medications, flip flops for the shower, favorite pillow, etc. **For the drill ground**-full turnout gear that fits, a properly maintained SCBA and fitted mask, knee pads, NO SHORTS, NO SLEEVELESS SHIRTS, and a drive to get dirty and to learn.

Go to [www.fsi.illinois.edu](http://www.fsi.illinois.edu) to download the brochure and registration form.



**June 24 - 27, 2010**  
**Illinois Fire Service Institute**  
**Champaign Illinois**



# Remembering an Advocate for Working Together

In January I traveled to Metropolis to attend the funeral of Mr. O.D. Trautman. Mr. Trautman served as the Emergency Management Coordinator for the City of Metropolis and Massac County for many years. I have seldom met someone who was more genuine and cordial. However, that is not why I have decided to include my thoughts about Mr. Trautman in this article.

O.D. as he was well known to his friends and associates, was a pioneer in the cooperation of the various emergency services and the private sector partners that he worked with and had access to. It was hard to say “No” to O.D. when he made a request of you. One reason you couldn’t deny his requests was that he was someone that you liked being around and working with (and the food was pretty darned good too). But the other reason was that you knew that the requests were legitimate requests for help and an opportunity for genuine networking between emergency service professionals. O.D. knew that there were no distinctions between emergency response groups when it was time to work for the citizens.

As members of the fire service and emergency response community, we al-

ways state that we are “part of the team” and that we work “hand in hand” with our emergency response brethren from law enforcement, EMS, emergency management, public works, public health and others. While this is a wonderful concept, the reality is that in many situations we adopt a “we/they” philosophy. When O.D. set up a training class, an exercise or a meeting in Metropolis, the organizations that came to the event did work closely together under O.D.’s watchful diligence.

O.D. also was able to work with private sector resources to help emergency responders get what they needed. He received one of the first grants for earthquake preparedness in Illinois and he always kept a watchful eye out for grant and private sector dollars to help his emergency responders.

As the funeral procession left the church that day, a Metropolis engine led the procession. This was a fitting tribute to a man who lived the ideals of emergency response collaboration and service to the citizens. May every community in Illinois be blessed with an O.D. Trautman, as I’m sure he has another mission in a better place. May he rest in peace.

Joe Gasparich  
National  
Incident  
Management  
System (NIMS)  
Program  
Director

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## *...to the Northwest Territories (continued from page 14)*

geography, glaciers and forests were incredible.

Over the three week period we had 45 students. It was a great experience for all of us. The students were genuinely interested in advancing their HazMat response capabilities. They shared with us experiences we will never have in the Midwest. Since the delivery of these classes we have been asked to share our curriculum with the rest of the “lower 48” and all the provinces in Canada. Currently we are working on sending another instructor to Alaska to do a TTT on our Hazmat IMS class.



# Building Corporate Relations

Dennis Spice  
Director of  
Corporate  
Relations

A new networking tool was added to the Institute's website this past year. It allows discussion by individuals involved in industrial fire and safety about industry issues with members of our Forum. If you have not received an email from Dennis Spice asking you to join the group, then you may request membership to the Forum list server by going to our website under Corporate Relations and clicking on **Industrial Training Discussion Group**. This is a great way for you to communicate with your peers. You can ask questions and share information using your current email account. It is convenient, safe and secure. We hope you will continue to use it to ask questions and provide

information about your industry. We also hope that fire departments that protect industries will join the Forum and share their issues and ideas.

Our Industrial Forum was postponed last year due to lack of registration. A Forum has not been scheduled this year due to the current economic situation. Thus, we encourage you to use the Industrial Training Discussion Group to share ideas with your colleagues.

The mission of the University of Illinois Fire Service Institute is *to help firefighters do their work through training, education information and research*. We would like to thank, again, the following companies for their support of that mission.

- 
- Abbott
  - AEC and Holmatro+
  - Ajax Took Works
  - Ansul
  - AMKUS+
  - BankChampaign
  - Caterpillar+
  - Dobbins, Fraker, Tennant, Joy and Perlstein
  - Draeger+
  - EMC and Genesis Rescue Systems+
  - GROWMARK
  - harVestco
  - Illinois Association of Fire Protection Districts Foundation
  - Illinois Farm Bureau
  - Illinois Fertilizer & Chemical Association
  - Illinois Firefighters Association
  - Illinois Propane Education and Research Council+
  - Jimmy John's
  - Mitsubishi Motors North America+
  - NICOR
  - RiverNorth Capital
  - Seagrave
  - Stan's Sportsworld
  - State Farm Insurance
  - Streamlight, Inc.
  - Task Force Tips+
  - Wal-Mart Stores
  - Walt Lambech Fire Protection Equipment
  - W. S. Darley

**+ These companies have obtained the Platinum Level of sponsorship by providing \$20,000 or more in cash or gifts in kind donations.**

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The financial cash support and gifts in kind, like that provided by the companies listed above, makes it possible for IFSI to train more firefighters and to assure that they have access to the most up to date facilities, props and materials. This also includes our new building, the Illinois Fire

Service Institute Learning Resource and Research Center, which will house an expanded library, an Illinois firefighter memorial hall, laboratory space, and an EOC training area.

*Individuals* as well as companies can help us fulfill our mission. You can

*continued on the next page*

play an important role in delivering training and building safer communities by becoming an IFSI Partner or referring us to companies in your area so that we may introduce them to the Illinois Fire Service Institute.

The IFSI Fund has been created to support our training efforts. It is easy to help. Go to our web site at: [www.fsi.illinois.edu](http://www.fsi.illinois.edu) push the **Donate** button and choose the program you would like to support at IFSI. You will receive step by step instructions on how to donate to the University of Illinois Fire Service Institute by credit card. Even a \$20 contribution will provide *over one hour* of firefighter training!

**IFSI takes pride in guaranteeing that 100 percent of every donation will be used to directly support firefighter training, education and research programs.**

Gifts may be fully tax deductible. IFSI is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and will provide full support documentation for all donations.

If you would like to learn more about the Industrial Training Discussion Group, industrial training opportunities for your company, or how to support IFSI training, research and education programs through donation to IFSI, please contact Dennis D. Spice, Director of Corporate Relations at 217-359-0671 or by email at: [dspice@fsi.illinois.edu](mailto:dspice@fsi.illinois.edu).



*Duane Bales presents Judy Weigand, vice president of AMKUS with a plaque honoring the company's continued support of IFSI.*



*Debbie Archer receives recognition for AEC and Holmatro's support of IFSI's training programs. The plaque was delivered in late February by Duane Bales and Dennis Spice.*



*Duane Bales presents a plaque to Joe Simon, president of EMC. The award recognizes EMC and Genesis Rescue Tools as supporters of IFSI.*

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# Library Updates & Highlights

## Library Reference Services

### Accessing NFPA Codes and Standards

The library recently acquired the print edition of National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) *2010 NFC Codes and Standards*. As part of the reference collection, this latest edition is only available for on-site use in the library. For off-site patrons, the IFSI Library can send photocopies of NFPA codes and standards to your local public library at no charge. The normal loan period for this Interlibrary Loan service is 45 days, but it may be extended if you request a renewal. NFPA codes and standards can be accessed *free of charge* as read-only documents on the NFPA Web site. To access these resources, click on the "Codes & Standards" button on the blue menu near the top of the NFPA homepage ([www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)).

Registered users (including NFPA members) can sign in, while unregistered users should click on the "Create an Account" link. *Creating an account is free.*

IFSI program directors and field instructors are notified about revisions and updates to NFPA codes and standards as part of the IFSI Library's New Titles email notifications.

If you need help accessing the read-only

codes and standards available on the NFPA website, would like to borrow a photocopy of a code or standard through interlibrary loan, or have questions about these resources, please contact the IFSI Library by phone (1-800-437-5819 or 217-333-8925) or email ([fsi@library.illinois.edu](mailto:fsi@library.illinois.edu)).

Visit the IFSI Library online at <http://www.fsi.illinois.edu/content/library/> to view other services and resources that are available to you.

Lian Ruan  
Head Librarian

**2010 Public Engagement Symposium.** On March 3, Archivist and Metadata Librarian Adam Groves joined IFSI Director Richard Jaehne and e-Learning Program Director Richard Valenta for a presentation during the 2010 Public Engagement Symposium at the University of Illinois. The presentation focused on how IFSI actively engages the community by developing and delivering innovative hands-on, classroom-based, and e-learning training programs. The presentation also highlighted the IFSI Learning Resource and Research Center. The Symposium is sponsored by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Public Engagement and the Office of Continuing Education.

## IFSI China Programs

In November 2009, IFSI Director Richard Jaehne and Lian Ruan traveled to China to visit a number of organizations and cities to further develop the IFSI China programs.



Photo of group in Dalian China

In January, eight visitors from the China Three Gorges Corporation, Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Beijing Global Safety Technology Co. Ltd., and Tsinghua University's Center for Public Safety Research participated in a Public Safety Emergency Training Program at IFSI.

The delegation also visited the Illinois State Emergency Operations Center in Springfield.

Lian Ruan  
China Program  
Director



The Tsinghua Three Gorges delegation pose in front of IFSI main offices.

Also in January, Jinan University Library received an Elsevier Foundation grant award for a proposal entitled "*Developing a Service-Oriented Database of Cases of Emergency Management.*" IFSI's head librarian, Lian Ruan was invited to serve as an advisor and partner for the project.

# Start – and Stay – Hydrated on the Fireground

Gavin Horn  
Research  
Program  
Manager

Denise Smith  
Health & Safety  
Research

As a profession, we are well aware that fire fighting often involves performing strenuous work in a hot environment while wearing heavy and restrictive PPE. Working under these conditions results in dehydration, which significantly affects human performance, hastening the onset of muscular fatigue, increasing cardiovascular strain, and interfering with cognitive function. The Illinois Firefighter Life Safety Research Center has completed a research project to quantify hydration status of firefighters in the field and study measurements that can be made in the field by the Fire Service.

As part of this project, we studied the hydration status of 35 firefighters who were completing hands-on live-fire training at the Illinois Fire Service Institute Champaign campus. This portion of the study required determination of hydration levels prior to beginning training, and then measured how hydration status changed after three hours of training. While several different measures of hydration status were studied, the estimation of urine color is one that may be easily done by firefighters themselves to approximate their current hydration level. A standardized color chart with values ranging from one to eight can be found online, but the basic idea

**As a point of comparison, if an NCAA athlete produces a urine sample of greater than four (i.e. significant or serious dehydration), they are not allowed to compete in weight controlled sports.**

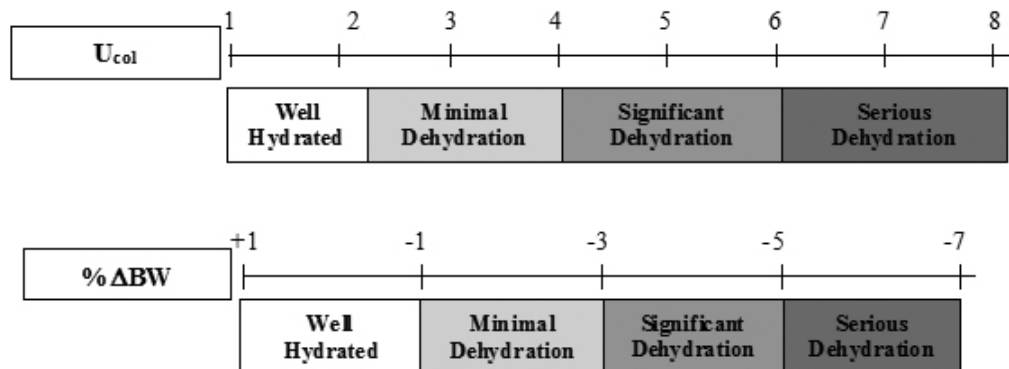
is that the darker the urine, the greater the level of dehydration. Guidelines on the severity of dehydration (developed by the North American Trainers Association) are shown below.

From the samples produced by this group of 35 firefighters, we measured an average urine color of 5.7, indicating they were “significantly dehydrated.” A full 40 percent of the group

was “seriously dehydrated,” while another 46 percent were “significantly dehydrated.” Alarming, only six percent (two out of 35 firefighters!) would be considered “well hydrated.” As a point of comparison, if an NCAA athlete produces a urine sample of greater than four (i.e. significant or serious dehydration), they are not allowed to compete in weight controlled sports.

The problem of dehydration becomes even worse as a result of training. While 94% of our firefighters arrived to the training exercise in some state of dehydration, after training they additionally lost an average of 2.7 pounds (1.4 percent) of body weight. This weight loss represents a loss of body fluid. Sixty-three percent of the firefighters lost more than one percent of their body weight, 26 percent lost more than two percent of their body weight during the firefighting training (suggesting a potential adverse affect on performance); while nine percent lost more than 3 percent of their body weight over the training exercise (possibly leading to increased risk for exertional heat stress). Again, this loss of body fluid occurred in addition to the dehydrated state in which the firefighters began the day.

It is important to note that this study does not attempt to determine the maximum amount of dehydration we might encounter on the fireground. In fact, the night before the study, each participant was reminded to drink enough hydrating fluid and throughout the training participants were strongly encouraged to hydrate. The situation could easily be much worse than what we observed here had fluids been difficult to obtain. Furthermore, we collected our data on a relatively cool autumn day in Illinois. Data collected during the summer months may tell an even more frightening story.





## College Credits

On March 15, IFSI and Parkland College formalized their agreement to offer students college credits for fire fighting classes taught at IFSI. Pictured left to right: James Ayers, Chairman of the Parkland College Board of Trustees; Tom Ramage, President of Parkland College and Richard Jaehne, Director of IFSI.

The complete story is on pages 3 and 4. More details will be posted on IFSI's web site at [www.fsi.illinois.edu](http://www.fsi.illinois.edu) and the Parkland College web site: [www.parkland.edu](http://www.parkland.edu).

## Here's your opportunity to invest in the new Learning Resource and Research Center

Simply visit the IFSI web site, click on the IFSI Memorial Plaza Paving Bricks link under Quick Links at the bottom of the home page.

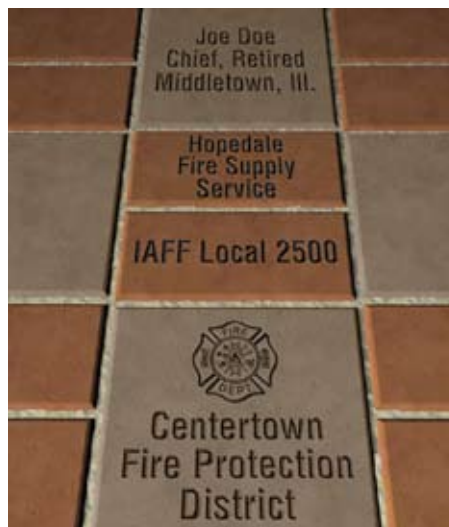
Information is also available from Harry Clore at [hclore@fsi.illinois.edu](mailto:hclore@fsi.illinois.edu)

### Four Levels of Sponsorship

Masonry paving bricks are offered in two sizes. Logos can be added as noted:

- \$125 for a 4 x 8 paver with inscription
- \$250 for a 4 x 8 paver with inscription and logo
- \$500 for an 8 x 8 paver with inscription
- \$750 for an 8 x 8 paver with inscription and logo

Your inscription can be up to three lines of text (six lines on the 8 x 8 paver) and 20 characters per line. State-of-the-art laser technology will be used for engraving your message. Logo art is subject to approval by IFSI.



### Your Opportunity to Support Illinois Firefighters

A prominent feature of the new Learning Resource and Research Center will be Memorial Plaza, a brick walkway surrounding the high-traffic approaches to the LRRC and Firefighters Memorial Hall.

Individuals, businesses and organizations can be a permanent part of the building and IFSI's work by sponsoring paving bricks in the Plaza. A limited number of bricks will be available and can be personalized with engraved messages.

With your inscription, you may choose to memorialize a fallen firefighter, honor a friend or family member, or identify yourself or your organization as a supporter of IFSI. An engraved paver can also be a unique, meaningful and lasting gift.



### Become a Partner in the LRRC

Your sponsorship of a paver in Memorial Plaza will distinguish you as a friend of the Illinois Fire Service Institute and a partner in the new Learning Resource and Research Center. Most important, your contribution is an investment that will help us continue improving the safety and security of emergency responders and the citizens they serve.

### To Reserve Your Memorial Plaza Paver

Order online on the IFSI web site:

[www.fsi.illinois.edu](http://www.fsi.illinois.edu)

Or contact Harry Clore at IFSI by phone:

**217-244-6359**

Or email:

[hclore@fsi.illinois.edu](mailto:hclore@fsi.illinois.edu)

Or mail the enclosed order form to Harry

Clore, 11 Gerty Drive, Champaign IL 61820.

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ILLINOIS FIRE SERVICE INSTITUTE  
Learning Resource & Research Center

# Memorial Plaza

A Lasting  
Tribute To  
Those Who  
Serve & Protect

*Look inside for  
important information*

# 86th Annual Fire College

June 3-6, 2010  
Champaign-Urbana, Illinois

