



On the Line



Our Core Values: Pride, Respect, Duty, Unity, Integrity and Compassion.

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Upcoming Events

Christmas Party—December, look for the date TBA!

Be sure to check the pub-ed calendars for upcoming events!

Types of Fire Calls

The 67 fire calls we had in October fall into the following categories:



<u>Fire / Explosion:</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>Hazardous Condition:</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Good Intent Calls:</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>False Calls:</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>Service Calls:</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Special:</u>	<u>1</u>

“Prevention is superior to suppression!”

UFD statistics for September

Calls for service: 203 YTD: 1,978

Average response Time – All incidents: **7 minutes and 12 seconds**

Average response Time – **Emergency** incidents: **7 minutes and 1 second**

Emergency Medical Service calls: 136

Average Response Time EMS: 6 minutes and 35 seconds

Emergency: 6 minutes and 23 seconds

Non-Emergency: 6 minutes and 50 seconds

Fire related calls: 67

Average Response Time Fire: 8 minutes and 21 seconds

Average turnout per fire incident: 5 people

We **received mutual aid five times** – four times for EMS calls and once for a fire call.

We **gave mutual twice** – once for an EMS call and once for a fire call.

Birthdays:

Lance Routson	Nov 6
Joel Westendorf	Nov 7
Cody Thorne	Nov 8
Dan Birkett	Nov 12
Dennis Danford	Nov 24





Chief's Corner—Chief Jerry Holt



Making a difference...There is not much that feels better than knowing that you made a difference in people's lives. After all, that's what we are here for – to help people when they are having a really bad day. But our job doesn't end there. We can also help people without them ever knowing it – through our prevention and educational efforts who knows what fire we might have prevented or how we might have impacted others. Prevention is the key in making a difference in dealing with fires but that's a story for another time...this month's focus is on making a difference through customer service.

Over the years we have had several outstanding examples of how we have provided tremendous customer service. Some of these stories rival fire department customer service I have heard from any department. I am not talking about doing a good job – our customers expect and deserve that. I am talking about doing the “extra” things that exceed customer expectations. Like taking care of the groceries that are left in the car of a person who was involved in an accident and is getting an unexpected trip to the ER in one of our units. Like taking care of the pet of a person who was traveling through Urbandale and was involved in an accident and ended up going to the ER with no where to leave the pet. Like stacking the logs that a patient had been cutting up before he had chest pain and was unable to continue. While he was inside deciding rather he was going to the ER with us, the crew outside stacked his logs! Like helping a stranded motorist change a tire, checking on a motorist that seems to be broke down, letting a customer make a call on a cell phone, giving a stranded motorist a ride or just moving debris out of the road that we just happen to come across. There are a lot of stories and I am proud of each and every one of them. Two new ones are worth sharing...

I received a thank you note last month. The note was thanking us for a great service. It wasn't from a customer per se. We hadn't responded to a call for help, there was no fire alarm, no patient transported or a response of any kind...just excellent customer service. It seems that the note writer was traveling on I35 and had been involved in an accident. This did not occur in our territory. Once released from the accident site, they continued on their journey. As they continued their travels, they began to notice that the right rear tire was smoking. At about that same time, another vehicle pulled up and with lights flashing, motioned them to the side of the road, concerned about the tire smoking. It was Assistant Chief Cardwell who was returning from Ankeny where he had taken one of our trucks for service.

Chief Cardwell offered to assist them in taking pictures of the issue with their car, offered them a ride to a motel and stayed with them while they waited on further assistance. The note writer really appreciated his willingness to stay with them and help them and noted that while this was likely not a big deal to Chief Cardwell was a very big bless-

ing to them and an incident that they will never forget. Turns out the person being assisted was a retired Trooper...you never know who you are going to get to help!

The truth is Chief Cardwell could have easily just drove by and not taken any action. This incident wasn't even in Urbandale...just shows our ability to impact others with exceptional customer service doesn't start or end with our city limits or being limited to helping only when someone calls 911.

The other opportunity to impact someone else's life is similar in that it occurred out of our city limits...964 miles from Station 42 to be exact. Lt. Routson had the opportunity to serve as a family escort for the annual Fallen Firefighter Memorial weekend held in Emmitsburg, MD in October. Lt. Routson had the opportunity to assist last year and he knows the impact of the special weekend on the friends and families who suffered the loss a firefighter.

The weekend is special and filled with emotions and pageantry as we salute those who made the ultimate sacrifice. Having represented our department when Firefighter/EMT Mike Mercurio was recognized in 2006, I appreciate both the impact on those who have lost a firefighter and those who are there to honor our lost brothers and sisters.

Lt. Routson received a letter from the family that he escorted during the Memorial. It was a touching letter that thanked him for being a great escort for the family during the memorial and shared the story of how their firefighter had lost his life. It was a moving story of someone who had a love for the job and left a loving family way too soon.

In addition to thanking Lt. Routson for being a great escort, it was what the letter did not say...it was reading between the lines that touched me. Like most thank you notes, the writer has to be moved to action to even send a thank you note. This one was no different – while it wasn't full of accolades to Lt. Routson, it was obvious that the writer was touched by him. The letter was a way for the writer to let him know she appreciated his service. While she was thanking him for what he did, it was another opportunity for Lt. Routson to continue to provide service to this family. Having someone to write to and share his story is yet another way of allowing the family to pay tribute to their firefighter. In simply being there, Lt., Routson has touched a family very deeply.

Let's face it...customer service is easy. Exceeding a customer's expectations takes effort but it's worth every bit of blood, sweat or tears it takes to make it happen. Exceeding a customer's expectations is as much as a meaningful experience to the customer as it is to the provider. One never knows who they are interacting with or what impact “going above and beyond” might have on someone's life but rest assured, knowing that you made a difference in someone's life is as good as it gets! Thanks for making a difference every chance you get!

NFFF Memorial Weekend 2009 - Lt Lance Routson

I once again had the opportunity to attend the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Memorial Weekend this year in Emmitsburg, Maryland. It was a tremendous experience and I wanted to share some of those experiences with you.

I had been on campus for the two weeks leading up to the weekend, so the Friday leading into the weekend was spent in the City of Baltimore. I, along with some good friends, got to go to the inner harbor where they ate seafood (gross) and I ate chicken. We'll just say I tried to eat seafood once, and it "didn't go so well"....if you know what I mean. Anyway, we had an amazing view of the harbor and saw a huge yacht, which turned out to be the 47th largest yacht *in the world*. After eating, we headed to Washington D.C. where my girlfriend and I got to go to the National Air and Space Museum. For those of you who know me well, you know that I love airplanes and flying so to see all of that stuff was really neat. We then headed back to Emmitsburg for the night where I received my assignment for the weekend. I was assigned to escort the family of Brian Munz, a 24-year-old fallen firefighter from Illinois. If any of you would like to know the circumstances around this LODD, you can ask me. It was a very sad, yet very real, situation.

I met Brian's family on Saturday and we spent most of the day together. They were very nice people and they were a pleasure to meet. I also got to meet several members of Brian's department and they were a great group of guys. They had never been to Emmitsburg before so it was an honor to show them around. The ceremony was a tremendous experience and I will never forget it. I have a lot of pictures if any of you would like to see them.

Throughout the weekend, I had the chance to meet Chief Billy Goldfeder and get a photo taken with him. I also had the chance to meet several experienced Chief-level officers from Departments such as the Philadelphia Fire Department, the Boston Fire Department, and the Manhattan, KS Fire Department. Talk about networking!

As always, I recommend that if you haven't been to the National Fire Academy or the Memorial Weekend that you go at least once. I think everyone should at least go one time. It's an experience you'll never forget. Also, the NFFF has begun hosting fundraising golf tournaments every summer. Their goal is to get one in every state, and I have spoken to them about getting one in Iowa. I hope that you will participate. More information to come on this one...see ya around!

Out the door in 90 seconds...that's our goal!! Be fast – Our identified goal is 90 seconds...**we should be enroute within 90 seconds**. This requires that we minimize the amount of time from the alarm until we are enroute. **Get your gear as fast as you safely can, board the apparatus and get enroute as quickly as possible.**



Beat the clock – out the door in less than 90 seconds every time!



Safety Tip : Driving safety

From: www.firerescue1.com

Driving is one of the most hazardous tasks that we perform when assigned to fires. Because of the fact that we perform the task literally hundreds of times in the course of our daily lives, we tend to take it for granted.

Vehicle operators need to recognize their own poor driving habits and strive to develop proper defensive driving techniques. A good starting point is attitude. A positive attitude toward improving your defensive driving skills will help you achieve the necessary changes in your driving habits.

Most of what you do in operating vehicles is performed from habit. You do not consciously think about every thing you do when you drive. Rather, your subconscious performs most techniques.

It's important to remember that a bad habit is as easy to develop as a good one. Take a good, hard look at your driving habits. Are you training yourself to do the right things the right way, like fastening your seat belt, checking your mirrors, and maintaining safe following distances?



Chief's thanks...

A special thanks to those who helped out with the Honor Flights over the last few months including the planned trip on November 4th. This is a great cause and your help was greatly appreciated! Words are simply not enough for all of the work you did to make this trip possible. The Vets were so appreciative for your help and they had a tremendous time. They were really touched by the support that they experienced - and I heard more than one of them say that the support they were getting for this trip was the highlight of their life - wow! **You really made a difference in their lives.** I was told that the October flight was the biggest Honor Flight ever...and it couldn't have happened without you and your efforts are appreciated more than you could ever know. Thanks for braving the early morning hours, the long days and the cold, wet night to make a difference in the lives of so many grateful and deserving people. I know the next day was a long day for many of you and we just can't thank you enough for making that sacrifice so that others could take a trip of a life time!

Those helping: August Honor Flight – Dr. McClanahan, Jon Rech, Kyle Bissell, Cory Macumber, Joe Poschner & Ryan Schafer

October Honor Flight – Jon Rech, Dan Birkett, Lance Routson, Joe Poschner, Joe Malloy, Rod Slivers & Ryan Schafer

November Honor Flight – Julie Stuckle, Ryan Schafer, Cory Macumber, Rod Slivers, Mike Cardwell, Joe Malloy, & Joe Poschner



WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND THE DEPARTMENT...

- Construction continues on the training building...it looks like the building will be complete as scheduled in mid-November. This is an exciting opportunity and we are looking forward to some great training opportunities. We hope to have an open house in early December.
- The work continues on the specifications for the newest ambulance. We hope to get the specs out for bid in November.
- The window replacement project at station 42 is in full swing. The windows have been replaced and the work continues on the project. The sheetrock has been repaired and the painting and staining should be complete the first weeks of November.
- The request for proposals were sent to six vendors as we continue our effort to replace L415. The bids are due back on November 9, 2009 and we hope to have a decision made that week with hopes of presenting the recommendation to the City Council on Nov. 17, 2009. Delivery time will depend on the vendor and the stage of production of the unit being built.
- We received permission to fill the two open full-time positions. Derek Manser accepted a job offer and will be starting in a full-time capacity following his physical. The second position will be filling in early November.
- We are still awaiting the announcement of the SAFER grant. If we are successful in our application, we will be able to fund six positions. If our grant is rejected, we will move forward with the hiring of two new positions. We expect that grant application period to be opened in October or November with awards following review of the applications. Grants can be awarded the first month following the application period or for up to more than a year after the application period closes. I will keep you informed on the progress of the SAFER grant.

As always, if you have questions about what is going on around the department, please see your officer. They will be happy to share what's happening around the department with you!

Congratulations!

- **Patrick Comstock** for passing his EMT-PS test. Patrick is in the process of meeting his requirements for UFD and should see him soon up and running as a Paramedic Specialist.



"YOU'VE BEEN CAUGHT DOING AN OUTSTANDING JOB" LETTERS...

We continue to recognize your efforts. Whenever we receive a thank you letter, card or a phone call, we pass that along to the people involved in the form of a "You've Been Caught Doing An Outstanding Job" letter. As of October 30th, we have sent 77 letters to our personnel. The following people received "You've Been Caught" letters since our last newsletter:

- We received a thank you note thanking us for the services of one of our members...the "Assistant Chief" had helped the motorist on I80 (coming back from the Ford place in Ankeny) when they were having an issue with their car following an earlier accident. Chief Cardwell had stayed with them until other help arrived and offered to take them to their hotel – they felt he was a blessing and made the incident something that they will never forget! (Cardwell)
- We received a thank you note and a \$6 donation for the "excellent" pub-ed presentation for the First Graders and Des Moines Christian School made by Lt. Birkett, Jon Rech and Eric Ennen.
- We received an email thanking Lt. Routson for his involvement in a public education presentation for a group of Cub Scouts. The note thanked Lance for going above and beyond to help the boys meet their Scout objectives. The note states that Lance kept the boy's attention and that he is a fabulous teacher and speaker.
- We received a thank you note and picture of a tour of the station. They were appreciative of the tour and for taking the time to show them what we do and to teach them about fire safety. (Kyle Bissell, Derek Manser and Paula Merfeld)

Thanks to all of you for providing outstanding service!!

Other programs/training/projects completed by UFD in October:

Training Report: 214 hours of training were completed in October.

Fire Training: 202 hours

EMS Training: 212 hours

Prevention & Inspection Activities:

Other programs/projects:

- Completed 8 Inspections
- Completed 7 re-inspections
- Completed 2 preplans
- Conducted 8 plan reviews
- Conducted public education for 4,147 people (3,894 children and 303 adults)



Additional Training Opportunities:

The following are training classes that are offered around the state. If you are interested in any, please turn in a training request to your Officer.

IEMSA Conference: Nov 12 – 14, DSM Convention Center

Beyond Hoses and Helmets (IAFC/VCOS Class): This is a class that focuses on leadership skills beyond tactics: leadership, personal management, etc. Saturday November 21st



Member Profile...

Member Profile: Jamie Erie

Length of time with UFD: 2 years

Level: FF/PS

Why I became interested in the UFD: Opportunity to work as a professional in the field that I love to work in.

Previous EMS experience: EMT-B on Newell ambulance service for 2 years

Previous Fire experience: Volunteer FF on Newell Fire Dept for 5 years

Committees: Safety Committee, Explorer program

Family life: I'm single and living with my girlfriend Laura. I also have a Boston Terrier named Lola.

Activities or hobbies I enjoy: Fishing, camping, kayaking, and hunting

Most memorable moment with UFD: Every day is a memorable moment with A shift.

Most memorable moment outside of UFD: High School football

Favorite TV programs: Anything on the History Channel or the Discovery Channel

Favorite movies: Boondock Saints

Last book that I read: Fight Club

Words of advice for someone new getting into EMS or Fire: Listen and learn from the people who have gone before you.

What I enjoy about the Urbandale Fire Dept: An opportunity to work with such a wide variety of personalities and the ability to be a part of things that on a much larger department would not be possible.



Safety Incident:
As of November 1
189 days without a safety incident
193 days without a lost time injury



Military News...

Lieutenant Gentosi is at Ft. Benning, Georgia for Basic Training followed by Advanced Individual Training. He sent a letter dated October 17th in which he said things were going slow. He is doing well and is anxious to get things going. He had been there a week at the time of the letter and still hadn't started actual training. It seems like the Army is living up to the reputation of "hurry up and wait" and he has been introduced to some recruits who have amazed him with a lack of discipline. Lt. Gentosi is anxious to get some PT in...he said they are not supposed to PT at all until they actually begin basic.

Alana, Lt. Gentosi's wife said that she had the opportunity to speak to Lt. Gentosi and that he will be getting to come home for the Christmas holidays.

Please keep Mike and Alana in your thoughts.

You can write Lt. Gentosi at:

SPC Gentosi, Michael 111
E-Co 1-50 IN 1st PLT
198th INF Brigade
9249 Treadwell Dr
Fort Benning, GA 31905-5919



LORAZEPAM (Ativan) – New Drug in our Protocols

CLASS: Sedative, benzodiazepine

INDICATION: Seizures.status epilepticus

PRECAUTIONS: Sensitivity to drug, may cause respiratory depression

DOSAGE: 2mg SLOW IV push (longer than 1 minute). Many places require diluting the drug with 50% saline due to its viscosity so we will also. It will go like this. Draw up your Ativan, draw up matching amount of saline, inject this mixture slow IV push (longer than a minute).

WE now have 3 options for seizures. valium, IN versed and IV lorazepam. Choose wisely.

Here is a copy of its use in our current seizure protocol:

EMT-P/PS

Consider VALIUM 2 mg slow IV push, titrated for response. Maximum dose of 10 mg.

OR

ATIVAN 2mg slow IV push. Call medical control if second 2mg dose is needed.

See Appendix R of our protocols for further options

