



## BUXTON FIRE – RESCUE

### ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET 2018

**Social Time:** Social Time begins at 1700 hours, water/soft drinks, appetizers and conversation

**Slide Show:** Picture slide show will be running on PPT projector for the duration of the event

**Dinner:** Dinner will be served at approximately 1800 hours, dessert to follow

- Prior to dinner being served Deputy Chief Jamie Grant will read the Fireman’s Prayer
- Deputy Chief Jason Grant & Deputy Redlon will assign people from each table to eat

**Opening Remarks:** Chief Schools

- I would like to welcome everyone to the 2018 Annual Banquet for Buxton Fire Rescue. I am humbled to be here tonight. With a packed house of department members, their families, and distinguished guests, you all should be proud of the turnout. When we began this event it was to not only thank the members, but also their families for what each one of them do every year to support the department.
- Special Guests tonight:
  - Selectmen: The Chair and Vice Chair of the Board of Selectmen Cliff Emery and Jean Harmon, Dennis Santilicito, and Mark Blier.
- Thank You’s:
  - There are a few people who deserve thanks for putting this entire event together: Joanne Ward and Nichole Redlon have both worked behind the scenes to coordinate the venue, food, refreshments, slide show, and awards! This is not an easy task, although they have made it look easy! Joanne and Nichole, thank you for all the time, effort, and energy you have put into preparing for this event!
    - And because I have your attention I would like to thank Joanne for the work she does everyday at the fire station. Joanne has been here for less than a year and I am surprised that we have not scared her away yet. For someone who came from outside the fire service I am sure that it has been an eye-opening experience. Joanne is much more than an administrative assistant at the station, she is a member of the team, she works with all of our employees and has a friendship with folks at town hall. She greets the public with a warm hello and always figures things out, even if it is on her own. Joanne you have been a great addition to our fire service family, thank you for keeping me out of trouble!



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- Aside from Joanne and Nichole I also need to thank all of those who had a hand in setup, pick up of food, and making this even a success.
  - I would like to thank the owner of The Barn at Flanagan Farm, **Gail Landry**. For those of you who do not know, Gail has allowed us to use this wonderful venue FREE OF CHARGE for every banquet that we have held here! I am so thankful that she has allowed us to use this facility to host our banquet.

#### Chiefs Message: Chief Schools

- I was reading an article today while preparing my message for this banquet. As I reflected through the year there are a number of the “bright shiny” things that I could stand up here and talk about, like the new fire truck at Bar Mills, or the crew who continually works on the Model T and shows it at different events, the new ambulance, the Fire Police Van, or any other widget that we buy or obtain throughout the year. We all know that there are dozens of different tools that firefighters and EMTs use every day during work that make our jobs successful. Our job is not about widgets, employees are not just a number, nor should they ever be. The members of our department are what make it successful every day.
  - Back to my Google search this morning, I searched for the definition of Family: *“a group of people who are generally not blood relations but who share common attitudes, interests, or goals and, frequently, live together: Many hippie communes of the sixties regarded themselves as families.”* Those in the fire service often call what we “have” a family. And the definition I found relates to our department and the fire service in general. Just this past week I attended a training class at the State Fire Marshal’s Office where we were discussing NFPA 101 Life Safety Code, and Captain Swenson and I were trying to figure out how to classify the firehouse as a day care facility. We were quickly corrected, because the firehouse is staffed 24/7 that the firehouse should be classified as a board and care facility. Although I mean this in a kidding manner, we are all a family, and just like the “hippies in the ‘60’s” we choose to be a part of this family.
  - I wanted more information because I already knew that the fire service is more than a job or career, for many of us it is a lifestyle. A lifestyle that is not always



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convenient and a lifestyle that is often difficult on those family members that we leave at home when attending a meeting, training, or responding to an emergency. The lifestyle that many of us live is based on a virtue of **self-sacrifice**, I found this article and thought that it was important to share with you because it sums up how I feel, and likely how many of you feel about giving of yourself to the fire service and the community:

#### ▪ 10. Self-sacrifice

- Self-sacrifice means that you are equally concerned with the wellbeing of others as much you are with your own wellbeing. Those who possess this trait volunteer their time to worthy causes. They have a natural propensity to help others and have a giving spirit. They also tend to be those we label as courageous, because they are willing to take risks and make sacrifices to help others.
- As a firefighter you will be a part of an organization whose primary purpose is to serve and protect its community. You will be involved in fundraisers for causes that don't benefit you, you will be expected to give both on and off duty and not always get paid for your time. Those who lack this mind set and are more self-centered aren't a good fit.
- This is why the fire service seeks those who exhibit that volunteer spirit and people who are involved in their communities because they want to be, not because it benefits them. One good way to measure this is to ask yourself if the fire service overnight became an all-volunteer organization, would you still get involved and want to be a part of it, or is the pay check essential for you to do the job? Also, if you have never volunteered for anything in your life you may want to re-evaluate your motives and whether or not this is the right career for you.
- Define We... We are members of the department, in a group or individuals. Working independently or as a whole, or in small groups. Our reach extends past formal settings. We are a community of people working towards the same set of goals.
- I would like to tie the thought of **self-sacrifice** together with two heart wrenching examples, that can be introduced with just two names Harry Weymouth and Tom Kennie.



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- **Harry Weymouth.** In the early morning hours of **August 2<sup>nd</sup>**, we lost a great co-worker, past chief, friend, and community member when Harry was involved in a car accident in Hollis on his way home from working a shift at the hospital. Although Harry's death was tragic and untimely I try to find the goodness in it, and I hope that all of you do as well. What I witnessed that day, week, and months to follow is much more than paying last respects to Harry, the fire-rescue family has continued to stay in contact with the family. Many of you likely know that our ambulance and our crew treated Harry that day, and I know that Harry had the very best care he could have ever had because it was our crew. The crew led by an extremely talented EMS provider as the primary paramedic and supported by a great company officer and crew, unfortunately there was nothing that anyone could have done that morning to change the outcome, only God himself could have changed the outcome.
  - The following are what is more remarkable to me, the way we treated Harry in his last minutes, the way we cared for his wife Kelly, and continue to care for them for them. While our EMS crew was treating Harry, our dispatch center notified our on-duty Chief, Deputy Jason Grant that Harry had been involved in a terrible crash also that Kelly was at home with the kids and had not been notified of the accident. He quickly got up and went with Buxton Police Department to make the notification and to take Kelly to the hospital, while someone stayed at the house where Harry and Kelly's kids remained asleep. Deputy Grant got Kelly quickly to MMC where she was able to see Harry before he passed away. She was able to see her loving husband one last time. From my understanding, and reports from the hospital, it was our crew DC Grant and Lieutenant Storey who were the pillars holding the group together at the hospital. As you may or may not know, many providers at MMC knew Harry because he was a career lieutenant/paramedic in South Portland and a nurse in the Maine Health network. Our crew was the pillar. The story does not end there, after Kelly said goodbye to Harry, DC Grant brought her home where he stood by as Kelly delivered the tragic message to their kids that their father was not going to come home. We were there. We were there the very next day when Captain Jellison became and remained the family



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liaison, handling food for the family everyday until it became too much and taking care of any need that came up. We were there when Harry was escorted home, and remained at watch until Harry's funeral, where Harry received a hero's farewell. We continue to help the family by cutting hay, splitting firewood, and getting things ready for winter, trying to help Kelly and her children find their new normal. We remain.

- **Tom Kennie.** For those of you who do not know, Tom Kennie was the Public Works Director, Tom passed away on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. Tom was more than a co-worker to me, he was a friend, one of those people “who would give you the shirt right off their back” if you needed it, and he would do it with a “shit eating grin on his face...” I met Tom during my first few weeks of work here when he came in and introduced himself and we immediately found a connection because he and I were both members of Gorham Fire Department. I think for many in the room, including the selectmen (without speaking out of turn) would admit that our relationship as department heads was one of the best around, GOOD, BAD, or INDIFFERENT. In my 6-years here our two departments went from “not liking” each other, to eating dinner at the same table during storms to working on projects together, and even hiring a joint administrative assistant. We worked well together. I would say that Tom and I had a working relationship that I might never find again, and I miss every day.
  - Tom was good at finding common ground with many of the members here and was always willing to help. When Tom fell ill with a brief illness he was a fighter and did not want to burden anyone. Yet his friends and co-workers again came together to support him and his family. When Tom passed away it was extremely hard for his crew at public works and anyone that knew him. We escorted Tom from his shop at Public Works to the funeral home on August 23<sup>rd</sup> with a crowd of people who showed up to support his wife Kim and daughter Amanda. When I learned that there would be an escort from Public Works to the funeral home I knew we needed to be involved, I called Deputy Redlon and to my surprise was light years ahead of me in getting apparatus to Public Works. I was thankful that Jeremy and Nichole Redlon came to my house to pick me up (because I was in no shape to drive), I was of the opinion that if Tom was



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telling me to do something after he died it would have a nice stiff drink, so I was just following a “perceived” order from Tom, I think he would have liked that. I think I was more pleased when Brianna Freeman opened the door of her fathers’ truck and handed me a cup of coffee and said “FV C/S right...?”, you need to drink this. I remember all the people who were there and the effect that it had on Kim and Amanda, we were there for the right reasons, and we were there because we were all family.

- Why these stories? I think that as we pass on memories of our work, the fire service, and people, stories are what make everything real. Self-sacrifice is what both of these men did for all of us, and in turn why we all gave of ourselves, and continue to give in order to support their families and their legacy. These two men are important to who we all are, they gave of themselves, unselfishly, even though their (actual) family felt the burden of them being gone, away from home to do the good work they both did.
- **Gratefulness.** There is another side to telling these stories. Although I am a part of my personal definition of “WE” I was not involved in some of the very important, intricate parts that showed the positive sides of these stories, it was other people, it was many of you in this room, and others who could not be here tonight. I am grateful for all of you and the effort, time, and care you show others when the cards are not in their favor. I am grateful for our elected officials who time and again show support for our department whenever it is that they can. I am grateful for our community, but most of all I am grateful for all the families that support our first responders.

I hope that you can understand that from the bottom of my heart I am thankful for all of you and the job that you do every day. Never stop supporting one another.

#### **Selectmen Remarks:** Cliff Emery, Chair

- Personally, Prepared Remarks

#### **Department Photo/Jackets**

I would like to personally thank Eric and Barbara Low for their gracious donation of jackets for the members of our department. Late in September, Eric called and told me that he and Barbara



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wanted to make a donation to the members of the department in the form of a job shirt or something of that nature, similar to the donation after we burned down the house in Bonny Eagle. Because of his generosity and before you all leave tonight, each of you (who contacted Joanne with a size) will receive a jacket with the department patch embroidered, as a token of the Low's appreciation for what each of you does each and every day.

We would ask that all members of the department and family remain here at the conclusion of the awards tonight for a group photo, that would be much appreciated.

#### **Awards Presentation:**

- Invite the family up with the members
- Be sure photos are taken with family

#### **Rookie Firefighter of the Year –**

Since joining the department, this individual has demonstrated an extremely high level of engagement. He has truly immersed himself into the department and has become one of the most active members. He constantly steps up and volunteers for whatever job is needed. He attends nearly all trainings and department meetings. He is a true team player and we are excited to see him grow within the organization.

It is my pleasure to present the 2018 Rookie Firefighter of the Year Award to Matt Angus.

#### **Student Live-In Firefighter of the Year –**

This individual is a hard-working student who is always giving 110 percent in everything he does. He shows determination in his studies and career goals, and never fails to be there when you need him around the station or on emergency scenes. He is always trying to better himself, whether he is working toward EMS licensure or trying to squeeze out as much training on a piece of apparatus that he can. I believe that he is a great example of what a Live-in Student should be, and he serves as a model for his younger peers that will be taking his place as senior student after he finishes his time with us.

It is my pleasure to present the 2018 Student Live-In Firefighter of the Year Award to Jacob Pixley.



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#### **Firefighter of the Year –**

This individual has been a high performer the past year for the department. He has attended most trainings, has responded too many calls and he assists the ambulance whenever he is available when they need extra help. This individual comes to department trainings and calls with a professional, positive, and can-do altitude. Although this person is not an officer, his experience and years on the department have made him a valuable asset to the department.

It is my pleasure to present the 2018 Firefighter of the Year Award to Dana Dodge.

#### **EMS Provider of the Year –**

This year's recipient has responded to 132 EMS calls in the past 12 month including some very serious calls. These patients were always provided companionate, thorough skilled care. This excellent care is always completely documented in this provider's reports. As you may know the department provides selected patients with customer surveys. Some of the comments listed on these surveys include:

“... very professional and concerning to my care”

“..Compassion for my needs has been the most important to me. There are no words to express my thankfulness for their wonderful care”

This provider developed and presented an EMS continuing education class to help improve the documentation of our calls and is a member of our QI Committee. Additionally, this provider was actively involved in the development, planning and execution of our departments first ever EMS open house during EMS week this year.

It is my pleasure to present the 2018 EMS Provider of the Year to Kate McQuillen.

#### **Fire Police Member of the Year –**

This Fire Police Member has contributed to our mission by responding to calls, assisting with the Fire-Police Van project, attending meetings, trainings, special details and assisting in the pre-planning of details.

This member has several unique qualities that include:

- A high level of professionalism



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- A thoroughness and thought process that show commitment and leadership
- Always striving for continuous improvement for self and the unit

In addition, this member provides outstanding tech support for the Fire-Police Facebook page, keeping it updated and communicating with the Fire-Police Team.

It is my pleasure to present the 2018 Fire Police Member of the Year Award to Jeannette Dodge.

#### **Officer of the Year –**

Since the time of promotion, this individual has stepped up and taken on a lot of responsibility for our department and shows us what it means to be a leader on a daily basis. Taking care of everything from mentoring employees and students, to making sure that the station doesn't run out of the things we may need on a daily basis. This person takes time to plan useful and applicable training, and also goes out of the way to help others with their own projects. This officer has quickly become one of the pillars that supports us as a whole. As a new officer and full-time employee, I am honored to have Lieutenant Nessmann as an example to follow and strive to equal.

It is my pleasure to present the 2018 Officer of the Year Award to Denise Nessmann.

#### **Flowers:**

Members are asked to take a tulip/flower for your spouse/significant other as a token of gratitude.

#### **Event Conclusion:**

Thank you all for attending this years annual award banquet. Your dedication and support of the organization is its strength! Thank you for being a part of this team!