

4<sup>th</sup> Quarter  
2023

# Fire Line Newsletter

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## *From the Desk of Your Fire Chief - Fall of 2023*

As we move into the final quarter of 2023 and with the anticipation for much cooler weather upon us, we at Fond du Lac Fire Rescue look forward to some great activities and events that will take shape over the next few months.

The biggest upcoming event and one that FDLFR looks forward to every year is National Fire Prevention Week. Starting October 8<sup>th</sup> through October 14<sup>th</sup> Fond du Lac Fire Rescue will be recognizing fire prevention week with initiatives and events. This year's focus is on cooking safety, by providing important steps people can take to help reduce the risk of fire when cooking at home, keeping themselves and those around them safe. Make sure to **mark your calendars and come out to celebrate on Tuesday October 10<sup>th</sup> as we will be hosting an Open House at the Public Safety Training Center (760 N. Rolling Meadows Drive)**. This family fun event will be packed with numerous activities, demonstrations and booths.

Providing education and fun for people of all ages. Additionally, throughout the month we will be at all of the Fond du lac schools performing fire escape drills and providing education to the 5<sup>th</sup> graders on the importance of Exit Drills in the Home (EDITH). This time of year is an excellent opportunity for our FDLFR family to provide important fire and life safety education to the public.

As we roll into November, we will once again be implementing the "Keep the Wreath Green" campaign. This campaign runs from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day.

Each of our three fire stations will display a beautiful wreath on the outside of each building. The wreaths will be lit with green bulbs. Anytime a fire is reported in the City, a green bulb will be removed and replaced with a red bulb. As you drive by your local fire station and see the wreaths, it should serve as a reminder to be fire safe through the holiday season. Every year there are a large number of fires that occur during this time of year. This program is a reminder to everyone in our community to use proper care while celebrating the holiday seasons.

In addition to the above events, FDLFR will be involved with the following initiatives; Halloween safety tips while the "trick or treaters" are out and about, Thanksgiving safety tips about deep frying, as well as kitchen safety, Red/Gold Kettle Campaign, and various other events within our awesome community.

Fond du Lac Fire Rescue Family is committed to the safety of our community and citizens we serve and will continue to strive to make Fond du Lac an excellent place to live, work and play.

*Until next time, be safe!!*

*"Your Fire Chief"  
Chief Erick Gerritson*

## ...Acting to Save

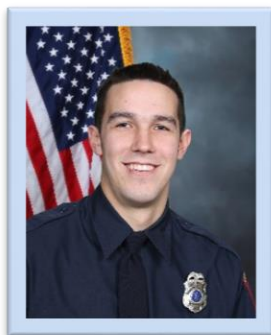
Types of Calls:	August 2023	August 2022	Year to Date (2023)	Year to Date (2022)
Alarms Involving Fire	7	8	79	85
Fire Mutual Aid Given	0	0	15	7
Fire Mutual Aid Received	0	0	1	2
Other Calls (False Alarms, Service Calls, etc.)	130	107	949	715
Emergency Medical Calls	541	575	4310	4328
Paramedic Intercepts	7	11	48	61
Interfacility Transports	27	42	345	314
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>678</b>	<b>690</b>	<b>5338</b>	<b>5128</b>
Fire Inspections Completed	283	215	2332	1871
Defects found during Fire Inspections	92	178	868	961

### CONGRATULATIONS!

Your hard work and dedication to Fond du Lac Fire Rescue is truly recognized and appreciated.

**THANK YOU!**

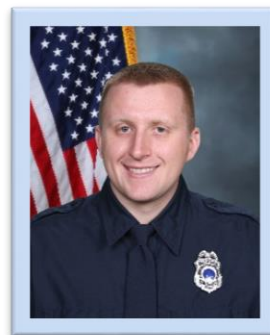
*Firefighter/Paramedic Max Blitzke – 5 Years*  
*Firefighter/Paramedic Zach Mueller – 5 Years*  
*Firefighter/Paramedic Connor Knaus – 5 Years*  
*Firefighter/Paramedic Noah Kreilkamp – 5 Years*



**Max Blitzke**  
Hire Date: 11/12/2018



**Zach Mueller**  
Hire Date: 11/12/2018



**Connor Knaus**  
Hire Date: 11/12/2018



**Noah Kreilkamp**  
Hire Date: 12/3/2018



# EMS is Life!

By: Assistant Chief Garth Schumacher

## Fall Program

Fall is upon us and as I write this article, I can already smell the pumpkin spice in the air and the sight of leaves falling from trees. I hope that everyone has a safe and enjoyable fall season before the snow flies.

Seeing as it is fall, I felt it would be a fitting time to talk about some developments we have been working on regarding our falls coalition. DC Roberts, CRR Specialist Mildebrandt and I have been meeting with various members of local organizations on rolling out a fresh falls program. As you know in the past, this program did not end up working due to COVID and changes within the ADRC organization. As of our last meeting we have involved members from Aurora healthcare, SSM Healthcare, the ADRC, County health, the senior center, to name a few. As this program progresses we will be adding more contacts in the goal of making this program as successful as

possible. Wisconsin ranks the highest in the nation for falls that lead to fatal outcomes. Last year we responded to nearly 1400 fall related calls, of these, there were several critical injuries that led to poor mortality for the patient. If we can lower the amount of recurrent falls, that is that many less times that we will have to respond, a drop in admissions to the hospital and less nursing home rehabilitation that will be needed. The program this time around will be incorporating a component where safety items will be installed to those referred to the program and where the need is identified.

Referrals will be made through the Community Risk Reduction division of FDLFR as well as the EMS office. SSM will also be referring to the ADRC and in time, the plan is to have other entities that can contribute to the success of the program to be involved as well. Through

these partnerships, it will be important for the members of Fond du Lac Fire Rescue to aid in referring patients who experience a fall by documenting it well in the patient care report and notifying us of recurring fall patients.

We have an aging population within our response area, which will certainly benefit from a successful falls reduction effort. It is vital that we can identify these patients, obtain referral permission and follow up with these patients. The goal is to keep them out of the hospital, nursing home and to keep them in their own home where they can remain independent.

In the past and even today, I think there is a stigma that if you are referred to the ADRC or another organization due to a fall that "they will put you into a nursing home". That reasoning could not be further from the truth. The goal as mentioned before is to get the appropriate help and support for the needs of each patient. Keeping

patients from recurrent falls will definitely help in turning the tables on our current mortality rates in Wisconsin from falls.

In your responses to these calls, please make sure to properly document so that we can follow up with the people that could benefit from these programs. If you know someone that could benefit in your personal life, referrals can be made to the ADRC for these people as well. It only takes one fall to change the course of these patients' lives, please do all you can to support them by seeking referrals where necessary.

*Until next quarter, stay safe!*

**Older Adult Fall Prevention**

**DID YOU KNOW?**

 1 in 5 falls causes serious injury

Falls account for 25% of all hospital admissions 

 Medical costs for falls are \$31 billion annually

Source: CDC.GOV



**Talk to your doctor** 

**Check eyes at least yearly** 

**Check medications** 

**Exercise strength & balance** 

**Reduce clutter & tripping hazards** 





Surrounded by colleagues, family and friends Matt Simon was recently sworn in as Lieutenant for FDLFR by City Clerk Maggie Hefter and pinned by his wife Angela. Congratulations Lt. Simon!



Welcome to the newest member of the Fond du Lac Fire Rescue family – Mason Jahn. Mason completed his internship at FDLFR and now has been hired as a member of the department. Welcome!



AC of EMS Garth Schumacher recently accepted a donation of stuffed animals from the Sons of the American Legion. These animals comfort children that are affected by trauma or hardship. We thank Legion Post 75 for their donation.



With school back in session, several groups have made their way to FDLFR for station tours. Crews enjoy sharing what a day in the life of a firefighter is like with the visiting students.

## ~ October ~

**Andrew Behnke \* Garth Schumacher \* Jake Fisher \* Carter Aisbet \*  
Noah Lorenz \* Andy Aird \* Clare Wolf \* Brian Munson \* Tyler Kuske \* Mason Jahn**

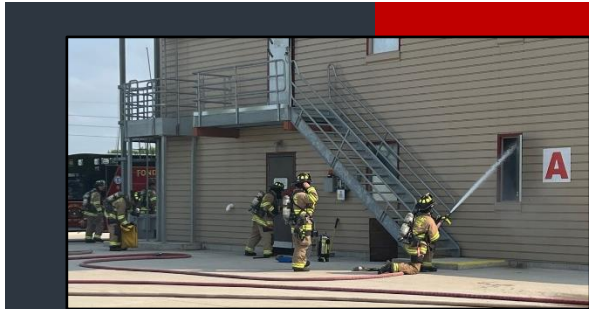
## ~ November ~

**Andy Golla \* Nick Fahrenkrug**

## ~ December ~

**Brian Winter \* Jodi Peterson \* Nick Czaja \*  
Bobby Scott \* Eric Rebedew**





# Well-trained people are the best defense against fire.

By: Assistant Chief of Fire  
James Knowles III

## Creating a Needs Assessment through Fire Company Training

We often think of the training environment with sitting in a classroom during a formalized training session or gathered as a big group to conduct the given type of training. While these concepts provide good training opportunities, they are not the foundation blocks that builds success. A fire company level needs-based training are the foundational blocks that allow the opportunities to find success and failure when it comes to performing tasks at an emergent incident.

Company level training should begin with a needs assessment by the company officer to determine the current knowledge, ability, and skill level of each crew member. Typically not a formal process, this assessment should occur on every alarm. At the completion of the alarm / call, the company officer should note what went well versus what did not and address the

information through a form of training – a group discussion, a training drill, or a training refresher to ensure that any performance gaps are minimized or eliminated on the next call. A needs assessment is also determined during general conversations and during employee performance reviews. A formal training or drawn-out training session is not required; a 15-minute discussion or drill would serve. The training should be based off agency policy, procedures, EMS protocol, and/or NFPA standards and consists of one or two training objectives that directly addresses the identified need. For example, the needs assessment identifies that a firefighter was unable to properly tie a clove hitch to hoist a tool at a fire scene. The training objective to follow would include: Utilizing a utility rope, each firefighter shall properly tie a clove hitch to a

10-foot pike pole under 30-seconds. The objective meets the needs assessment and should ensure improved crew performance at the next incident.

Plan the training out and let the crew know that the subject is a learning opportunity. Failure in the training environment is acceptable until subject mastery is achieved. The training environment should not be restricted to the firehouse. If you have the opportunity to review immediately after mitigating an incident, take the time to execute the training and improve your crew. A great example includes after a patient has been removed from a vehicle involved in an accident and is in care of EMS, take an opportunity to discuss extrication tactics on the vehicle if the patient was originally pinned in the front passenger seat. The objectives would include

review of unique vehicle safety features and the areas of the vehicle where specific cuts can be made.

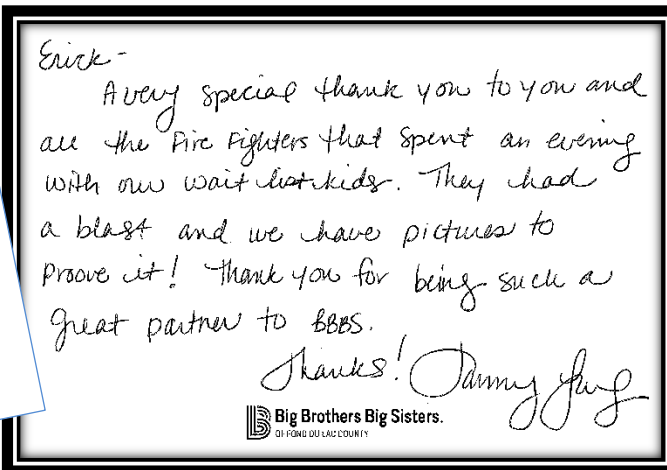
Upon completion of the company level training, an evaluation should be conducted to determine if the training had any effect, both positive and negative, or needs to be modified. Evaluation at the company level should be based upon improved performance, skills, abilities, and knowledge. The evaluation should also consist of an alignment of behavior to agency policy, procedures, EMS protocols, and NFPA standards.

Company training is the core foundation of fire service training. It may not get the glamour compared to other training opportunities, but it sets the tone and addresses the skills needed for company success.

*Take all opportunities to improve your crew!*

### In Their Own Words...

This section of the newsletter features a note or card received from the people we serve. Whether it is during an ambulance call, fire call, or a public education assignment, the members of Fond du Lac Fire Rescue are always dedicated to making their contact with area residents a positive experience.





# Community Risk Reduction & Life Safety

By: Division Chief Jason Roberts and  
Community Risk Reduction Specialist Jennie Mildebrandt

Did you know that cooking fires are the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries?  
Cooking safety starts with YOU.

Pay attention to fire prevention.



FIRE PREVENTION WEEK™

fpw.org

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The Community Fire Prevention Open House is fast approaching. Fond du Lac Fire Rescue hopes to see everyone come out to enjoy a number of great demonstrations and free activities for community members of all ages. We hope to see you on October 10<sup>th</sup> at the Public Safety Training Center. The flyer below has more information, check it out!

This year's National Fire Protection Association theme is "Cooking Fire Safety Starts with You". Fond du Lac Fire Rescue responded to 37 cooking fires in 2022 and so far have had 17 cooking fires in 2023. In 2021, Federal Emergency Fire Administration (FEMA) noted 170,000 cooking fires in homes resulting in 3,000 injuries, 135 deaths and nearly \$500 million dollars in property damage. Fires are causing significant injuries and damage prior to fire department arrival because of the materials used in producing the products around us and the speed of which they burn. This makes it even more important to take necessary steps to prevent and/or mitigate these events. Here is a short list of things citizens can do to protect themselves and their property:

- Maintain a 3 ft. toy, pet and kid free zone around stove/oven.
- Never leave the stove unattended.

- Maintain a clean and clear cooking surface.
- Utilize a timer when cooking.
- Have a fire extinguisher readily available.
- Avoid all distractions and impairments while cooking.
- Have a lid close to the stove to cover a pan when necessary.
- Maintain functioning smoke alarms.
- Attempt to reduce the heat if a fire incident occurs (turn off burner or unplug the appliance).

This awareness to cooking safety will reduce the risk in our communities during some of the busiest cooking and baking periods of the year (Thanksgiving and the Winter Holidays). In recent years, the use of deep fryers and smokers have become popular. It is important to remember to use these appliances outside and allow a cooling process to occur prior to returning them to the garage.

When a cooking fire happens, no matter how big or small, please call 911. The burning process could be occurring even when the flames are no longer visible (walls, outlets, exhaust fans, etc.) Additionally, the fire department is able to quickly ventilate the building and prevent exposure to the byproducts of combustion.

*Have a Safe Cooking Season!*

The Winter Season is approaching. It is important to prepare for the elements and take action to prevent avoidable slips, trips and falls. Fond du Lac Fire Rescue has been averaging **over 30** fall related responses each week. Fond du Lac Fire Rescue has been working to follow-up with these individuals and connect them with the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) and their primary care providers. With these connections, it's our goal that they can be provided an assessment and resources to help them stay in their home and live a healthy, injury-free lifestyle.



Please follow these guidelines from the Mayo Clinic to prevent falls:

- Have a discussion with your care provider to review recent falls, medications and have an assessment to determine what may be causing them.
- Continue moving to maintain balance, flexibility and muscle strength.

- Always wear shoes that fit properly and are non-skid to avoid slipping and maintain comfort.
- Be sure there is adequate lighting and avoid physical obstacles that could impose a fall hazard.
- Utilize assist devices (Handrails, walking devices, grab bars, raised toilet seats, etc.)

It is important to prepare our homes, vehicles and bodies as the cold season approaches. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has a lot of great bilingual resources to remind us of how to be safe during the winter months. The link is provided below.

<https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/features/winterweather/index.html>

Fond du Lac Fire Rescue and the Community Risk Reduction team wishes all a healthy and safe winter season. We hope to continue to see you at community events or out enjoying one of the many outdoor activities our Fond du Lac community has to offer.





## COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10<sup>th</sup> from 4:00pm-7:00pm

## FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

Public Safety Training Center located at:  
750 N Rolling Meadows Dr, Fond du Lac

Palmer Doll

Alliant Energy

Ahern fire sprinkler

Search and Rescue  
exercises for kids

Hands-on fire extinguisher

Department of Natural  
Resources Wildland Fire Safety  
and Protection

Water Rescue

Rental and  
homeowner's insurance  
information

Paul Davis burn cell

Free fire safety  
materials

Rural water supply and  
Master Streams

# Cooking safety starts with YOU.

Pay attention to fire prevention.™



FIRE  
PREVENTION  
WEEK™

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