

THE OLDE FIRE BELL



FALL 2011

GULFCOASTSPAAMFAA.ORG

SINCE 1975

CHRISTMAS TGCC STYLE

The arrival of Christmas marks one of the most cherished times of the year, and nothing speaks of Christmas more than Santa Klaus in a red fire truck (bet you thought "sleigh!" - well this is Houston and snow just doesn't happen that often on Christmas). Throughout the Houston area, TGCC'ers were busy getting their trucks ready to participate in parades and events to delight children and those children at heart.



The Houston Fire Museum hosted an open house celebration starting at 4 PM on December 9th. Jim and Cheryl McGee

brought the '48 ALF 700 "Lincoln." Unlike previous years where the McGees work their fingers to blisters, this year the truck was decorated by HFD's all-women firefighter cadet training class.



Some of the cadets forgot their task and decorated themselves! A great time was had by everyone. After the decorating, it was off to Spaghetti Warehouse for the annual Chapter Christmas Dinner. Unfortunately, the ALF wouldn't start and alterna-

tive transportation had to be provided to the Spaghetti Warehouse..

Closer to Christmas, Chuck Buschardt and Karen Witt were busy on the West Side of Houston. They attended the Wonderland at Westchase for the First Methodist Church. "An annual event I have done for the past 4 or 5 years," said Chuck. "Also, I did Santa at Heritage properties on Memorial Dr. for the 11th year, toting Santa and participating in a food drive for needy families."



The Friendswood Lighted Christmas Parade on December 10th saw both Bill & Kathy Wilcox and Mark & Nancy Turvey bring their vehicles. Notes Mark: "This year, the turnout was great, probably more than average numbers of people along the parade route. We fed into the parade from our regular staging area by the church. There was one other fire truck there from Hill Sand Company but they were way ahead of us in the lineup. Friendswood Volunteer Fire Department had their brand new Crimson pumper E-22 in the parade & it won best overall entry; they had about a gazillion lights on it!"



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

UPFRONT	2
CHAPTER MINUTES	2
AROUND THE CHAPTER	3
FIRE PREVENTION WEEK	4
HEART OF PINES	5
WINGS OVER HOUSTON	6
HOUSTON FIRE FEST	7
THANKSGIVING PARADE	8
HERITAGE 1	10
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION	11
PHOTO ARCHIVE	12

CALENDAR

- **Future meeting dates:** Monday at 7 PM on January 16, February 20, and March 19 at the Community National Bank on Bellaire Blvd.
- **SPAAMFAA Winter National, Gettysburg, PA, February 1 - 4**
- **Houston 53rd Annual St. Patrick's Parade, Saturday, March 17**

UPFRONT

The Olde Fire Bell wishes everyone a very, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Finally, the scorching heat has subsided, and it is more accommodating to take the vehicles out!

What a busy period this quarter has been; the October through December period marks the busiest three-months of the entire year, starting with Fire Prevention Week and lasting until Christmas. The Chapter did a great job supporting many communities and municipalities. Enjoy reading about them in this edition of *The Olde Fire Bell*.

Chuck Buschardt has informed *The Olde Fire Bell* that long time supporter

Denny Smith of Orange, TX, had bypass surgery in October. Following the procedure, Denny was back in the hospital with complications. We understand he is recovering at home now. Let's wish him a successful recovery. Also, Bill Wilcox is doing well from his summer hospitalization.

The Olde Fire Bell congratulates the family of Debbie Leggett on the restoration of their 1939 American LaFrance 500 Series. Read her daughter's - Cristal Vazquez's - summary on Page 10.

It's time to complete your plans to attend the 2102 SPAAMFAA Winter Conference from February 1 - 4, 2012 in

historic Gettysburg, PA. The Pennsylvania Pump Primers are in "third gear" planning a memorable event.

The Olde Fire Bell commends Scott Rollins and Mike Britt for their editorship Engine!-Engine! and Silver Trumpet, respectively. Scott and Mike do a great job to ensure the National's publications serve the needs of the membership.

The Olde Fire Bell thanks members for submitting material for the Fall 2011 Edition. This Newsletter is made possible by your contributions! A special thanks you to Clinton Johnson, Tom McDonald, Kim Stellhorn, and Jim McGee.

CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

BY STEVE DALPE

The following is a summary of the Fall 2011 monthly meetings:

October: Clinton Johnson and Chuck Buschardt reported on the events at Wings Over Houston. A total of six members were present. Clinton Johnson was recognized for his award at the Deer Park Parade for his 1948 GMC/Simms. Tom McDonald reported on upcoming Houston Fire Museum Fire Fest events. The group decided on December 9th Christmas Dinner starting at 4 PM at the Houston Fire Museum, followed by dinner at 7 PM. The trucks will transport members to the restaurant. Cheryl

McGee provided an update on Bill Wilcox's recent medical condition. Kim Stellhorn created a slide show from photographs of early club activities: 1976 Austin Parade, 1975 New Orleans trip, Engine House Pizza Company Grand Opening.

November: The group spent time discussing the upcoming Thanksgiving Parade; Mark and Nancy Turvey were present to hand out information and answer questions. The annual Christmas dinner will be at the Downtown Spaghetti Warehouse on December 9th. All are welcome to attend the Houston Fire Museum Open House that same afternoon starting at 4

PM, then load up on one of the trucks to the restaurant. The Friendswood Christmas Parade will be on December 10th; be at Station 4 around 4:30 PM to start decorating. Mark Turvey discussed possible participation in the 1940 Air Terminal Museum's Wings and Wheels event in the late Spring. Chuck Buschardt provided highlights from the East Texas Historical Fire Society's recent muster. Mark Turvey presented slide show on his recent trip to Task Force Tips in Indiana

December: No monthly meeting due to holidays

The Olde Fire Bell

The Olde Fire Bell is the official quarterly publication of SPAAMFAA Texas Gulf Coast Chapter, issued in March, June, September, and December.

The mission of the newsletter is to highlight SPAAMFAA National initiatives, to spotlight events of the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter, to foster a spirit of friendliness and of cooperation among its members, and to increase public involvement in the preservation, restoration, and operation of equipment in fire service

Acknowledgements

The Olde Fire Bell is continuously seeking input from members and guests for future editions. The editor wishes to recognize the following contributors for making this issue possible:

Clinton Johnson Tom McDonald

Jim McGee Luke Garrett Cristal Vazquez

Please send information to the webmaster at GULFCOASTSPAAMFAA.ORG, or send to editor at the address on the newsletter back page

AROUND THE CHAPTER

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT



Moonshine Hill IFD took part in National Night Out. The City of Humble Police Department utilized Clinton Johnson's 1948 GMC/Simms Engine to transport McGruff the Crime Dog to several neighborhood National Night Out activities on Tuesday, October 4th. Four neighborhood groups were visited and crime awareness and fire prevention handouts were distributed. The night ended at the First United Methodist Church with a hot dog dinner, child identification fingerprinting, and photo ops with McGruff and the fire truck.

WEBSITE STATISTICS

For the period September 2010 through September 2011, the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter received 1,930 visit, of which 1,272 were unique. The average time on the site was 2:16 minutes to view 3.2 pages. Countries of origin include Canada, Germany, France, and Netherlands. Texas generated 913 visits via 90 cities. Top 7 cities include Houston, Humble, Webster, Dallas, Friendswood, Austin, and Baytown.



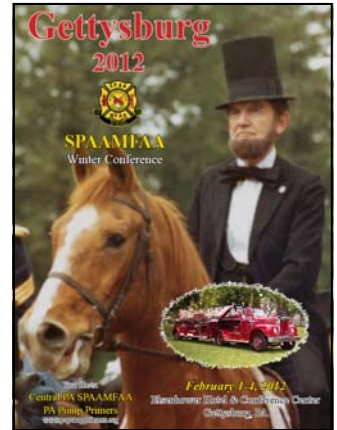
CHRISTMAS SURPRISE



All I want for Christmas is a shiny, restored fire truck! *The Olde Fire Bell* congratulates Debbie Leggett on the arrival of her personalized 1939 American LaFrance. The truck was a gift from her family. Read more about it on page 10.

SPAAMFAA WINTER NATIONAL

Make your reservations early for the Winter National SPAAMFAA conference. An invitation packet was mailed with the latest Engine!~Engine! Newsletter, or you can register on the web at <http://cnyspaamfaa.com/>. The conference will be from February 1 - 4, 2012 in historic Gettysburg, PA. The four days are packed with all kinds of exciting tours. If you're a Civil War buff, you definitely can't miss this one!



EXTREME MAKEOVER



It wasn't your typical email request for assistance. "Hi Jim [McGee]. I'm a producer from Extreme Makeover: Home Edition. We will be filming next month in the Austin area and surprising a family where Mom and Dad are both volunteer fire-fighters. They were fighting the Bastrop fires and they ended up losing everything themselves. We have a braveheart parade where we surprise the family after Ty door knocks with them. And I was hoping that it'd be really cool if some antique fire vehicles could be included in that parade. Can you help me with this or point me in the right direction? It would mean so much to the family. Let me know what's a good time and phone number I can contact you so we can discuss this further. Thank you so much! Kind Regards, Teresa Hsu, Field Producer, Extreme Makeover: Home Edition"

BODY WORK

It appears that Bill Lofton's 1951 Ford truck has undergone a little cosmetic restoration. Jason Barnett welded new metal onto the fenders. They don't sell patch panels for this model, so new panels had to be hand hammered. Jason has tremendous metal work experience, and displayed some of his custom items during the Wings Over Houston event.



FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

BY JIM MCGEE



The Deer Park Volunteer Fire Department commenced Fire Prevention Week with its annual parade on Saturday, October 8th, with a theme "Protect Your Family From Fire." Texas Gulf Coast Chapter members were present to support the festivities. The parade started at 10 a.m. from P Street, next to the Deer Park High School South Campus Stadium parking lot, and ended at the Deer Park High School North Campus. Registration started at 8:30 a.m. and - the best part! - it was absolutely free!!

Jason Barnett (top left photo) drove Moonshine Hill's Highland Engine 501 from Humble which took first place in Best Apparatus 1950 to 1980 category (ok, we won't tell anyone it's a 1948 GMC chassis!). Deer Park Fire Marshal Buddy Rice (bottom right photo) presented the award to owner Clinton Johnson. Tim Rogers of the Baytown Fire Department brought their 1947 Mack which took oldest apparatus award. Jim McGee brought the 1948 Lincoln which is quite the regular and has been the recipient of many past awards. Mark and Nancy Turvey brought their 1976 Ford/FMC (shown top right photo).

Sparky the Fire Dog was a big hit with young and old. Cynthia King, sporting her yellow rubber-duckie necklace, is shown getting a big hug from the fire canine. Thumbs up!

Many thanks to Shell and the Deer Park Fire Department for sponsoring the event and feeding all the participants.

Parade participants had the chance to compete for the top spot in one of numerous categories. These categories included: oldest apparatus prior to 1950, best apparatus from 1951 to 1980, best apparatus from 1981 to 2000, best apparatus from 2001 to present, best municipal apparatus, best industrial apparatus, best municipal aerial, best industrial aerial, best rescue truck, best hazmat truck, best ambulance, best booster truck, best command vehicle, best command van or vehicle, most unique, and Emergency Responders Choice.

HEART OF PINES

BY CLINTON JOHNSON

During the last week of November, Chuck Bushardt and I (Clinton Johnson) made a road trip to Heart of the Pines, Texas, near Bastrop. Heart of the Pines was at ground zero in the Bastrop Area devastating wild fires this past summer.

The trip mission was two fold. The Heart of the Pines lost a CF Mack Pumper in the fire and had a 1 ton booster heavily fire damaged. Chuck needed a bumper support bracket off the CF and had contacted their fire chief to see if he could salvage one. The second part of the mission was to carry up a care package of equipment to help replace some of that lost in the fire or upgrade their existing resources. The parts hunt was a bust as the truck got so hot the brackets nearly melted and were bent.

The equipment delivery was a great success. Heart of the Pines VFD operates 2 fire stations 5 trucks with about 25 volunteers. Last year their total budget was \$22,000. I still haven't figured out how they buy fuel for the trucks. Everything they have is "begged, borrowed, or stolen." New is not part of their vocabulary. On top of that, 14 of their 25 members lost their homes in the wild fires. You can not imagine the fire damage throughout that area. Fire burned right up to both of their stations but miraculously spared them.

We drove 15 miles from Smithville to Bastrop through total devastation. All the timber was gone and about 65% of the buildings. Although we traveled through a small portion of the affected area, we saw at least 1,000 cars and trucks burned as well as hundreds of homes. This was a huge area covered by thick pine forest - next year it will be prairie.

If you have any contacts with FD's or companies that might be able to help some of these small Departments affected by the fires across Texas, remember to mention them. They really need the help, and if anyone deserves it, they do.

Extreme Makeover: Home Edition gave Mizzy and Chris Zdroj and their three children a brand new home. EFC Custom Homes of Bastrop and "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" coordinated more than 3,000 volunteers to complete the construction in one week. Mizzy is an unpaid volunteer firefighter who battled the Bastrop wildfire while her own house burned. Her fellow firefighters nominated her for the home makeover.

Fire Departments also donated a new brush truck, new firefighter uniforms, and boots to a department hit hard by the wildfire. Hopefully this will be just the beginning to help the Heart of the Pines Volunteer Fire Department get back on their feet.



Heart of the Pines VFD engine lost during the wild fires



Huge masonry church totally burned out next to a plywood outbuilding that survived unscathed. Such sights are common. Go figure!



Texas Forest Service Headquarters building just north of Heart of the Pines VFD Station 1

WINGS OVER HOUSTON

BY CLINTON JOHNSON

The Texas Gulf Coast Chapter of SPAAMFAA provided a static display of antique fire apparatus at the annual Wings Over Houston Air Show, held during October 15-16, 2011. Chuck Buschardt's Lone Star Fire Museum and Clinton Johnson's Moonshine Hill IFD Museum provided the equipment for the display. Clinton Johnson, Chuck Buschardt, Karen Witt, Bill Lofton, and Steve Cooper manned the display to answer questions about the equipment and the Chapter. Chapter member Jason Barnett also had a booth selling his artwork. Jason is a renowned local artist and was selling his renditions of WWII aircraft nose art on pieces of scrap aircraft fuselage and wing covering.

During the show hundreds of visitors stopped by to see and admire the Club's Antique Fire Truck display. This was the first year SPAAMFAA participated in the Air Show. The Chapter received a lot of exposure, and I believe everyone that participated hopes we can make the event next year. We had a great time. Chuck and Clinton really got into the spirit of the event and took a flight in a vintage WWII B-24 Liberator. Clinton reportedly tried to get the plane crew to let him pilot the old bomber after showing them his Venezuelan Pilots license. Chuck said he was relieved when they would barely let him on the plane and kept him as far from the cockpit as possible.

This year marked the 27th Annual WOH Airshow. Featured performances included the Canadian Forces Snowbirds, helicopter aerobatics, the Air Force's newest aircraft, F-22 Raptor, the Red Bull Air Force Parachute Team, the Tora! Tora!, Tora! Reenactment of the WWII air power attack on Pearl Harbor, and Korean/Vietnam era aircraft.



HOUSTON'S FIRE FEST 2011

BY TOM McDONALD

Texas Chapter members were able to take several vintage fire trucks to this year's annual "Fire Fest," an all-day festival held October 22 at HFD's Jahnke Fire Training Academy. The site is very convenient for members as several of them store their rigs at a warehouse only three blocks away.

Chapter members Cheryl and Jim McGee, Ken Paradowski, Eddie Kosar, Tom McDonald, Bill and Kathy Wilcox, Bill Lofton, and Clint Johnson attended the day's festivities. The weather was gorgeous with sunny skies that were soon obstructed by a "loom-up" from a simulated tanker fire. The many demonstrations put on by active HFD crews has attracted more and more visitors over the years with a typical festival now drawing between 2,000 and 3,000 guests. This year, however, the attendance was down from 2010 by about 20 percent.

Unfortunately, the lack of attendance was most prominent during the morning hours, right when the antique vehicles and numerous current HFD trucks paraded into the site with great fanfare. The rigs paraded, though, to only about

100 onlookers. By noon, however, the crowd had picked up to normal levels and everyone seemed to have a great time.

The festival is nearly thirty years old.

It began as an annual Fire Prevention Week festival at the Houston Fire Museum downtown, held on the street in front of the museum. However, development around the museum over the past decade caused the festival to seek out more room, and the event moved to the fire academy almost a decade ago. The museum still produces the event and all net proceeds benefit its programs.



THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE

BY MARK TURVEY & STEVE DALPE



Texas Gulf Coast Chapter members joined other parade participants in the 62nd HEB Holiday Parade held on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 24th. Lineup was an early 7:30 for a 9 AM start. The trucks were in front at position #10. The parade is broadcast in Houston, Dallas, Austin, and San Antonio metropolitan areas



Making its second consecutive appearance is Moonshine Hill's Highland Fire Department Engine #501, above, owned by Clinton and Teresa Johnson. A 1948 GMC/Simms 500 GPM combination pumper. To the right, Kim Stellhorn (left) and Bill Lofton stand in front of Engine #501 awaiting the start of the parade. This year, #501 was sporting a new exterior windshield sun visor



Bill Lofton's 1952 Ford F-7/Barton American front "bumper pumper" made its Thanksgiving debut with its updated, black-fender paint job. Jason Barnett custom fit new fender sections to Bill's vehicle just days earlier. Behind Bill parades the remainder of the Chapter's trucks below the Houston Skyline. This picture was taken toward the end of the parade

Despite overcast skies, the sun made its appearance at David White's Camp David Hook and Ladder #1, shown in the background below. David makes the journey from College Station in this 1977 ALF tillered aerial ladder every Thanksgiving. David's aerial had the honorary lead spot



THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE

BY MARK TURVEY & STEVE DALPE



Thanksgiving has officially been an annual tradition since 1863, when during the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a national day of thanksgiving to be celebrated on Thursday, November 26. How fitting Jim McGee (right) drives the "Lincoln" during the parade!



Everyone of every age had a great time! The main attractions of the Houston's Thanksgiving Parade are procession of floats, giant balloon figures, marching bands, and drill teams that fill the streets of downtown Houston. The parade boasts 3,000 participants and nearly 400,000 street-side spectators

Above, Kim & Cindy Stellhorn, Zach Buschardt, and Nancy Olvera wave to the upper deck of the Houston Pavilions. "There appeared to be more participants and street spectators this year versus previous years," noted Kim. Engine 110, a 1976 CF Mack ex-Bradley International Airport, CT, is owned by Chuck Buschardt. The Parade route took the procession in a westerly direction starting at Minute Maid Park, along Texas, Fannin, and Dallas Streets, ending near the convention center. Right, several of the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter members stand in front of Mark and Nancy Turvey's 1976 C Series Ford with FMC Body and 750 GPM two-stage John Beam Pump. 1-59 overpass can be seen in the background. Daisy May, held by Cheryl McGee, is snuggly warm in one of her new outfits



IN MEMORY OF CAPT. HARRY J. PEAKE

BY CRISTAL VAZQUEZ

I was sitting around last Wednesday, thumbing through the 2010 blog book I FINALLY got finished and printed, thinking to myself, "Man, is my mom gonna love this when I give it to her at Christmas." Then my phone rang. It was my brother, Luke Garrett, calling to tell me he had gotten my mom an old 1939 firetruck for Christmas and had it amazingly restored.

A real fire truck! The fire truck was to be a gift from everybody - especially the grandkids.

Why a firetruck? My mom's dad (Papaw Peake to me), who passed away when I was five if I remember correctly, was a Jr. Captain in the Houston Fire Department. My mother has always collected items associated with the fire dept so this truck, in memory of my grandfather, was a very fitting gift.

My brother had 'In Memory of Capt. Harry J. Peake' painted on the side, along with an emblem identifying the truck as the 'Mimi Rescue', a '6' representing the number of grandkids my mom has, an angel representing my aunt, and a butterfly - which holds special significance for my mom regarding her mother (my Memaw, who passed away when I was four I believe). Each of the grandkids' names were painted along the sides. It has a ladder, hose, siren, everything.

Luke was going to give the fire truck to my mom on Saturday, he said, and she would be able to ride in it with all of her grandchildren in our hometown's Christmas parade later that day.

I was so excited! I knew she was going to love it! I loaded up the kids early Saturday morning and made the trip home to Texas to surprise her.

I realized about an hour into my trip that I FORGOT MY CAMERA!!! I was sick to my stomach. Luckily, my old friend, Sara (a wonderful photographer herself- she took my wedding pictures!), saved the day and agreed to help us out with the surprise.

I called my mom and told her that Sara wanted to use her house (mom's house, that is) as a backdrop for taking pictures of her sweet boys at 11:00. My mom said that was fine, of course - which was perfect. Now, when we drove up in the firetruck with everyone on board, my mom would be outside with Sara - who would really be there to take pictures for us!

The plan worked flawlessly! My mom was so confused and shocked and overwhelmed. It was awesome. I CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH. Thank you thank you thank you.

We all rode in the parade and my mom won First Place Truck and First Place Overall in the Parade. She had a big day. And she totally deserves it!



Top photo: The beginning! Luke Garrett arranged to buy and restore this 1939 American LaFrance 500 Series to surprise his mom. Center left: Debbie Leggett pictured with her grandchildren: Ally Garrett, Lauren Garrett, Whitney Garrett, Jacob Vazquez, Molly Vazquez, and Betsy Vazquez. Center right: Luke Garrett and Cristal Vazquez with mom, Debbie Leggett. Bottom: Grand Champion winner in Joaquin Christmas Parade

Application for Membership

TEXAS GULF COAST CHAPTER
Society for the Preservation and Appreciation of Antique Motor Fire
Apparatus in America
(SPAAMFAA)

Please mail this application with \$20 dues made payable to:

Texas Gulf Coast Chapter of SPAAMFAA

PO Box 697

Bellaire TX 77402

Name: _____ E-Mail: _____

Signature: _____

Street or Box No. _____

City: _____ State: _____ Nine Digit Zip: _____

Phone: Home: _____ Cell: _____

Business: _____ Pager: _____

How did you hear about us? Web page _____ Friend _____ Publication _____ Muster _____ Newsletter _____

Other (please specify) _____

Interests: Collecting Fire Equipment _____ Photography _____ Attending Musters _____ Parades _____

Restoration Activities _____ Helmets/Gear _____ Other (please specify) _____

Fire Department or SPAAMFAA Affiliation: _____

If you own a piece of firefighting apparatus that is at least 25 years old, please provide the following information. Attach separate sheet if multiple vehicles. Ownership of apparatus is not required to join Texas Gulf Coast Chapter

Year: _____ Make: _____ Type: (Pumper, Aerial, etc.) _____

Mfg. Model: _____ Mfg. Serial #: _____

Pump Make: _____ Pump Size GPM: _____ Tank Size: _____

Previous Owner and History of Rig: _____

Membership in Texas Gulf Coast Chapter is open to all upon application to the Board of Directors and payment of annual dues. Join today and share in the preservation and appreciation of fire fighting and antique fire apparatus.

All new members are also encouraged to join the National SPAAMFAA Chapter. National SPAAMFAA provides additional resources for restoration and insurance for all sponsored events. National Membership is mandatory for Officers of the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter

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*To stimulate and cultivate interest in the restoration, preservation,
and operation of antique fire apparatus*

TGCC ARCHIVE: DAVID CROCKETT FIRE COMPANY



Member Kim Stellhorn submitted this picture from America 76 Hose Company trip to SPAAMFAA Convention in New Orleans in 1975. Gretna, L.A. is just outside NOL. Shown in the picture are Dave Miller (glasses), Bill Wilcox, and Charlie Wilson