

# THE OLDE



# FIRE BELL

SUMMER 2008

GULFCOASTSPAAMFAA.ORG

SINCE 1975

## JACKSON SWAP AND SHOP

BY JIM AND CHERYL MCGEE

The Annual Jackson Michigan Fire Apparatus Swap Meet and Flea Market was held on April 26th, 2008, hosted by—as usual—the Great Lakes Chapter. Several members of the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter journeyed to Jackson for the fire apparatus flea market and to visit Ken Soderbeck's Hand-in-Hand fire apparatus restoration shop (see page 2 for photos). Traveling from TGCC were Chuck & Marla Buschardt, Jim & Cheryl McGee, Raleigh Johnson & son, Raleigh Johnson, and Tim Treadway.

The flea market started early for the Texas crowd. "You don't travel this far to miss out on the 'good' stuff, and so we were there early," explained Jim McGee. Exactly how "early" is confidential but be assured that if you arrived at opening time, "we've already completed half our shopping." To be accurate, the flea market starts when the first vendor and first buyer arrive in town the day before. Chuck has been known to complete his shopping list the evening before the meet. "You simply get the best selection," added Chuck. "I've already bought two nozzles from next year's event." Talk about advanced purchasing!

(continued on page 2)



Jackson MI Dealer displaying fire equipment for would-be buyers. The annual Jackson fire flea market represents one of the best in the US



The Michigan Firehouse Museum is located in Ypsilanti, Michigan, in a historic firehouse constructed in 1898. Museum founders Howard and Norma Weaver purchased the firehouse in 1999 with the vision to establish a museum. The facilities were recently expanded. It houses an impressive array of vehicles from the surrounding areas



Ken Soderbeck's latest restoration is a 1930 Seagrave Model 6-DAT pumper #53970 from Upper Arlington, Ohio. It was on display at his annual open house following Jackson Fire Flea Market

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### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Future meeting dates:** Monday evenings at 7:00 pm on October 20th and November 17th (no meeting in December) at the Community National Bank on Bellaire
- **Upcoming Events:** Deer Park Fire Prevention Parade, Saturday Oct 4th. East Texas Chapter (Tyler) Muster October 25—26th
- **Southern California Chapter** will be hosting the 2009 Winter SPAAMFAA conference February 25-28th in Pomona, CA

## CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES IN SUMMARY

BY CHERYL MCGEE

The following is a summary of the Summer monthly meetings:

**July meeting:** Eight members were present. Chuck and Marla announced they would be driving to SPAAMFA National 50th Anniversary in Syracuse (the only members of

the club to attend). Clinton requested the officers' names and addresses to renew the charter. Copies of the Spring Newsletter were handed out. Big Dave celebrated his birthday with cake/ice cream furnished by Clinton..

**August meeting:** Attendees

discussed participation in upcoming Tyler Muster in October. Fuel money from the treasury was authorized. Voted to dress in light uniforms and caps. Information about Johnson Space Center Fire Prevention Week October 10 was reviewed (event cancelled due to Hurr. Ike).

**September meeting:** Cancelled due to Hurricane Ike, but we'll be back in full swing in October. We are happy to report that as of the time of printing, no major damage was sustained to any building or vehicle, including the Hobby warehouse!

## JACKSON (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

One of the most important part of this trip is catching up with old friends, exchanging fire stories - who caught the BIG ONE; fire that is; who needs what part for their truck, and which trucks changed hands.

Cheryl added to her much loved fire grenade collection with not one but two fire grenades! Tim purchased enough hose and air packs to outfit his own fire department. Raleigh Johnson and son were ecstatic

to find a number of items for their '21 ALF including a hand-cranked siren. Chuck found some pump and starter parts for the '20 Seagrave.

The Houston gang also made the traditional Saturday evening rest stop at Ted's Firehouse Pub for refreshment and to inspect the latest firematic adornments. A stop was also made at the Michigan Firehouse Museum in Ypsilanti. See TGCC website for more photos.

The visit to Ken Soderbeck's

shop was delightful as usual. There are always interesting projects occurring, and it is always educational to see the master at work. This trip

included viewing a couple of steamers in mid-restoration as well as a beautiful Seagrave #53970 pumper nearing completion.



Left: Photo of Ken's Seagrave restoration. Right: One of the many rooms at Ken's Hand-in-Hand shop. How many items can you identify in the photo? See TGCC website gallery for additional photos.

## HOUSTON FIRE MUSEUM

Need something to do on a boring afternoon, or visiting for the first time? The HOUSTON FIRE MUSEUM is located at the old Fire Station No. 7 on 2403 Milam Street and can be reached by calling (713) 524-2526. Fire Station No. 7 was the very first fire station built by the Houston Fire Department after it went fully paid in 1895. It was opened in 1899 as the first paid fire station for the City of Houston. The two bays housed Steamer No. 7 and Hose Wagon No. 7, each of which was pulled by two horses. The

station remained active until a new Fire Station No. 7 was built in 1969. The station was proclaimed a fire museum by city council in 1977. Preservation of old Fire Station No. 7 as a fire museum began in 1980. Today, the Houston Fire Museum has been completely renovated and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

As activities at the Fire Museum outgrew the old fire station at the turn of the century, the Board of Trustees decided to build a new Fire Museum one block away on Main Street and

Hadley. The old museum will still remain as part of the Fire Museum, and the old museum will be renovated to look as it did in 1899 when it was built, together with an old steamer and hose wagon. The museum has antique apparatus on display, a work-

ing pull-box to feel the thrill of receiving a fire call, a prized collection of fire service artifacts, and other special exhibits. Hours are Tues-Sat 10-4. Admission is \$3 for adults and \$2 for children. Ya'll come on by and enjoy Houston hospitality!



Details about the Texas Fire Museum at old Station No. 7 can be found on [TexasFireMuseum.org](http://TexasFireMuseum.org). Photo - Houston Fire Museum Website.



## EDITOR'S NOTES

Some notable events in the most recent edition of *Silver Trumpet* are worth highlighting. Congratulations to the Virginia Chapter for achieving their 30th Anniversary. Our best wishes to this dedicated group. Many more!

Also, a changing of the guard. Best wishes to the Rodger Birchfield and Scott Rollins in their new assignments as *Silver Trumpet* and *Engine! ~ Engine!* editors, respectively. Both are from the Indiana Chapter. Ken Buohl and Steve Hagy have done a great job and are step-

ping down in 2009. TGCC's very best to all!

It is with great sadness we report the passing of Joe Gay's mother, Catherine, 98, on August 23rd. Joe is a founding member of the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter. Catherine lived her entire life in the Houston area, most recently West University Place. She was a retired HISD school teacher and a volunteer at St Luke's hospital until last year. Our sympathies to the entire family.

The dog-days of summer were

upon us, which made it a great time to head north. Although few in number, TGCC was represented at the Syracuse 50th Anniversary by Chuck and Marla Buschardt. See separate article and website for photos. Steve Dalpe visited Chip Lytle and Bill Darrow of Ohio, and Steve Hagy of Kentucky, on a number of matters supporting his Fox Reg. 9056 restoration. (and to relocate a 1926 Sea-grave from upstate NY—stay tuned for future article).

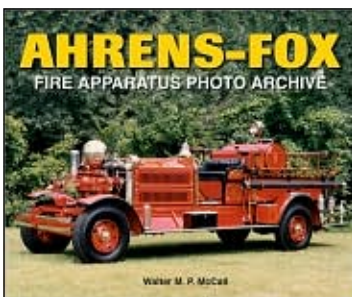
Couple musters and events in October to definitely mark on

your calendars. The annual Deer Park Fire Prevention Parade is Saturday Oct 4th. Registration and line-up open at 0830 in the DPHS South parking lot with the parade starting at 1000. The parade ends on 13th Street at the Jimmy Burke Activity Center, with a box lunch for all participants. Contact Mark Turvey for more details. Also, East Texas Chapter (Tyler) Muster on October 25 and 26. A number of the TGCC gang will be attending. Let's put the trucks to work after Ike's battering!

## ON THE BOOK SHELF

BY STEVE DALPE

Now on sale is Walt McCall's 2008 *Ahrens-Fox Fire Apparatus Photo Archive*. This book marks Walt's 10th Iconografix appearance and yet another book



about the cult-like devotion to the Ahrens Fox Fire Engine Company of Cincinnati Ohio. Some earlier books include *Ahrens-Fox Album* by John Sytsma and *Ahrens-Fox: The Rolls-Royce of Fire Engines* by Ed Hass.

Probably Walt's most famous book is the *American Fire Engines Since 1900*—the bible for fire buffs and restoration addicts. In 2007, he published another landmark, the

*Encyclopedia of American Fire Engine Manufacturers*. For SPAAMFAA members, Walt was also the editor of *Engine! ~ Engine!* for 25 years.

In this book, Walt pulls from his extensive photo collection and several other notables to show the very best that Ahrens Fox manufactured during its motorized period. With its front mounted piston pump and chrome spherical air chamber, the Ahrens Fox

piston pumper has symbolized an era of distinctive manufacturing with high aesthetic appeal. The Fox's always seem to draw the biggest crowds at musters. Walt gives just due to Ahrens-Fox's midship and rotary gear pumps, as well as tillers and other one-offs..

This is definitely a book that you'll want to add to your collection.

## LINCOLN CELEBRATES INDEPENDENCE DAY— TWICE!

BY JIM MCGEE

The award-winning 1941 Amercian LaFrance 700 Series [ex- York PA's Lincoln Station] celebrated Independence Day not once but twice, at both the morning Friendswood and afternoon Nassau Bay parades. Driven by Jim and Cheryl McGee, Lincoln and celebratory participants had a great day. Mark Turvey was also present at Friendswood with his C Series '76 Ford, FMC body & John Bean pumps (both volume (750 GPM) & high pressure (70 GPM - 600 PSI)), and a 389 CID gas V8 with 5-speed standard transmission. Bill, Kathy, and Renee Wilcox were present for the events but gave their truck the day off. Friends loaded both trucks for the duration of the parade, dispersed between the other floats. Since the Lincoln was not "officially" registered for the parades, it did not return with any awards to brag about. Oh well, there's always next year!



## EMPIRE STATE ADVENTURES

BY CHUCK BUSCHARDT &amp; STEVE DALPE

Gulf Coast Members drove a whopping 7000 miles and completed two round trips to New York, in support of SPAAMFAA initiatives.

Chuck and Marla Buschardt represented Texas Gulf Coast Chapter at SPAAMFAA's 50th Anniversary National Convention and Muster held in Syracuse NY, from July 30—August 2 sponsored by the Central New York Chapter. They were the sole participants from TGCC this year. En route, the Buschardts drove their red Ford F-350 via Massachusetts to pick up Ray and Debbie Pond.

Always the avid collector with a keen eye, Chuck noted his priorities were different this year. "I took it easy on the purchases. Although the flea market selection was good and the prices reasonable, I actually bought very little. I was more interested in capturing photos of



events and participants, and renewing acquaintances." The Buschardts met Keith Franz president of SPAAMFAA (see photo above), Harvey Eckhart, and past president Ed Peterson (now runs archives) from PA. Bob Sullivan was present with his Ahrens-Fox Lady Warren #5, instructing unidentified youth on piston-pumper mechanics. In the next



photo below, John Harrison stands in front of his 1971 Maxim Model S 1000 GPM pump. SPAAMFAA founding



member Dick Horstmann's white 1928 Seagrave made an appearance. All in all, approximately 130 trucks participated in the events, drawing one of the largest collections in years. Chuck commented, "couple of my top pieces were the rare Canadian Thibault with Magirus ladder, ex-Chicago Mack also with Magirus ladder, and the first American LaFrance motorized Reg #1." Photos of these and



more vehicles can be seen on the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter Website.

Keeping with tradition, Chuck noted "I did manage to buy a rare and working Whiting light (his major find for the event!). I picked up a couple books, a rescue saw for ALF ladder truck, and some misc. hardware for one of the Macks back in Houston."

On the return trip, the Buschardts stopped at Rochville, Maryland to pick up a Lycoming Straight 8 engine that had been overhauled. They also salvaged a 8V-71 Detroit Diesel from a 1976 Hahn.

Chuck raved at the excellent job of documenting the history of SPAAMFAA, and the wonderful job CNY Chapter did

hosting the events.

Tagging not too far behind, Steve Dalpe traveled to the Great Lakes and back in 7 days. The first part of the journey included transporting Chip Lytle's 1913 San Angelo's Ahrens-Fox Model A chassis 1000 miles from Dallas to Kettering OH, in time for the Miles Greenwood Open



House. From there, business was held with Bill Darrow to obtain hard-to-find Ahrens Fox to support the restoration of 9056. Finally, Bill and Steve traveled to



Warsaw NY to relocate a 1926 Seagrave that served Tonawanda NY some 80 years earlier. The vehicle was delivered to Bill's property near Dayton where it will reside for couple months. While in Dayton, there was much benchmarking



to be done, like photographing Bill's 1935 Seagrave registration 80240 ex Troy E-4 Model 12.JW.220T.



## CHICAGO MUSTER: WINDY &amp; FUN

BY TOM McDONALD

On Saturday, June 14, 2008, I attended the long-running Chicago Fire Muster and Flea Market, hosted by area fire buffs and held at the CFD Training Division headquarters building on the one-block-long DeKoven Street just south of downtown (the very site of the former O'Leary residence where Illinois' most famous cow allegedly kicked over an oil lamp starting the Great Chicago Fire of 1871).



My partner in crime that day was none other than Mike Pack (photo below, right), Chicagoan by birth, as well as my long-time friend, chief of my volunteer fire department near Houston, and co-author of a fantastic new book, *History of the Chicago Fire Insurance Patrol 1871-1959*. Mike and his co-author Keith Seafield (photo below, left), also a Chicagoan but now a Miami/Dade fire lieutenant,



ant, purchased a booth at the market and sold more than a couple of cases of books that day (hopefully worth their whiles).

The event seemed well attended. The

weather was hot and sunny, but, by mid-day, the wind picked up to levels one would expect in a city nicknamed "windy."

After touring the market booths and finding a few books to my liking (I already owned a copy of the insurance patrol book), I retreated to the comfort of an available chair at the Pack/Seafield booth. As the wind picked up, I was treated to a show, as well, at no extra charge.

It appeared the masters of the booth next door to "ours" had brought numerous pieces of literature, but little to tie them down with. As such, when the wind started whipping around the corner of the four-story academy like a gale at the beach, the pages would begin to fly. One of the booth's attendants who appeared most in charge (or who cared the most) scampered about dutifully retrieving every one of the pieces of paper as few people in the area offered any assistance. I was of massive help, of course, retrieving sheets for him that fell within range of my left hand...while seated (my right hand was for my coffee cup).

Well, this went on for over an hour...literally the same routine every minute or two. This guy was really working up a sweat, wearing a long-sleeve shirt and tie, no less!! It got to the point that I had to excuse myself to go inside to use the restroom, not to pee, but to laugh my sides to the splitting point.

As far as apparatus displays at this event, I would have to say this year did not measure up to previous years. This was probably the third time in twenty years that I had been to this event. At each of the previous two musters I attended, there were many more antique rigs than there were this year. In fact, the best year I ever went, the event had a demonstration of

an old CFD water tower and the famous "Big Mo" turret gun truck. Two or three engines pumped into both rigs and the photo ops were amazing. Not



so much this year. There was only a small pumping demonstration with a couple of antique engines. The static apparatus displays at the event leaned heavily toward modern rigs rather than antiques.



One of the more popular attractions at the event was touring on O'Leary's antique rig, complete with siren blowing.

On-duty CFD crews did roll up throughout the day in a nice assortment of modern rigs, including Squad 1, a technical rescue support unit, an engine, and a ladder company. There were also a few antique rigs on static display, but relatively few compared to previous years.

All in all, it was a pleasant event, but it did fall short of my expectations formed from my previous attendance.

## CHRONICLES 9056: THE CFD YEARS

BY STEVE DALPE

The year was 1938. It had been a decade since Cincinnati had purchased a pumper from Ahrens-Fox. By the mid 20's when the motorization of Cincinnati's department had ended, Fox purchases declined perhaps for reasons stated in last month's report. Things were about to change. Perhaps due to excellent performance of Ahrens-Fox in the great flood of 1937, or perhaps to the collaboration with Seagrave to deliver a centrifugal pump, Cincinnati's own Ahrens-Fox won the 1938 order for three trucks.

Ahrens-Fox registration numbers 9055, 9056, and 9057—nearly identical trios—were delivered to Cincinnati FD in December 1938. 9056 was assigned shop #25137 and Engine 37. Top photo right shows the three Engines (left to right) 37, 49, and 38 lined up in front of Cincinnati's Union Terminal, a favorite place for photos during this period. The trucks had 750 gpm centrifugal pump and 100 gal tank. These are the only Cincinnati trucks from Fox to have centrifugal Seagrave pumps.

Station 37 is located on River and Lileinthal Streets, and to this day looks very much like it did when it

was first built. In the center vintage photo, Station 37 crew stands proudly in front of 9056: shown are Lieutenant Robert Schinaman; Firefighter Ronald Hizer; Firefighter James Eversole; and Firefighter Carl Troeger.

In 1954, Engine 37 was reassigned to Station 7 and served the remainder of its Cincinnati service in quiet existence. On the bottom photo, note the number 7 on the front bumper. In 1962, it was sold to nearby Point Pleasant Volunteer Fire Department where it served until 1980.

These Fox's construction were rather unique for Cincinnati: they contained rear window with subway-style handles, closed cab design, four-wheel air brakes, rotaray, and kiss-style front bumper design. Despite their success, it would be another decade before Cincinnati would order its last set of Fox's.

References: Edward Hass: *Ahrens Fox On the Home Front Engine! ~ Engine!* 1978-1. Photos from Steve Hagy, Ed Effron, Carl Troeger, and Michael Wilger collections. The Cincinnati Fire Department History website.



## JOIN SPAAMFAA TODAY

Founded in 1958, the Society for the Preservation and Appreciation of Antique Motor Fire Apparatus in America (SPAAMFAA) is an international educational and historical society. We are a non-profit organization, dedicate to preserving, restoring, operating, and enjoying the fire-fighting apparatus that have become an exciting part of our heritage.

Our society has regional chapters that sponsor year-round musters and other activities. The national Con-

vention/Muster, co-sponsored each summer by the Society and one of the chapters, includes several seminars and meetings on various topics related to the hobby.

You'll receive the society's publications. These include a roster listing all members and apparatus, the quarterly inter-chapter newsletter *Silver Trumpet*; and the illustrated, award-winning quarterly magazine *Engine! ~ Engine!*. We also provide a source list to help you to research, repair, and restore your antique fire engine. There is also an extensive library available to mem-

bers for their restoration quest. The society officially recognizes firefighting apparatus 25 years of age or older. We accept rigs of all kinds, however you don't need to own a rig to become a member. Come join us for fun as we preserve and operate the fire engines of yesterday. In the Houston Area, we have a working museum and fire truck restoration facility located near the Houston Fire Dept. Training Academy and Hobby Airport, on Braniff Street. Complete the application on page 7 and Join Us today.

## 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

Texas Gulf Coast Chapter of SPAAMFAA  
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*To stimulate and cultivate interest in the restoration and  
preservation of antique fire apparatus*

## TGCC HALL OF FLAME: TREADWAY'S 1981 MACK CF



Tim Treadway operates this 1981 Mack Model CF, ex Madison NJ. It has 1250 GPM pump and 500 gallon tank. The truck was one of the featured vehicles at the 2008 Texas Gulf Coast SPAAMFAA Pumpnic.