

# THE OLDE FIRE BELL



WINTER 2013

GULFCOASTSPAAMFAA.ORG

SINCE 1975



## ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE



On Saturday, March 16th, The Texas Gulf Coast Chapter of SPAAMFAA and The Houston Fire Museum joined the 2013 Grand Marshall Donna McKenzie to celebrate St. Patrick's Day during Houston's 54th annual parade in beautiful Downtown. "We are ALL Irish Texans" was the theme of the parade. Annise Parker, Mayor of



Houston since 2010, posed for some photographs with member's trucks. While the parade boasted a "rain or shine" event, this Saturday was one of the most beautiful days of the year. Four trucks were present, driven by Jim McGee, Chuck Buschardt, Bob Peterson, and Kathryn Peters. The staging area was along Hamilton Street next to Minute Maid Park, home of the Houston Astros. Other TGCC and HFM participants included Cheryl McGee, Bill Lofton, Cynthia King, Bill Edge, and Karen Witt.

*The Olde Fire Bell* offers its congratulations to Chuck Buschardt for attending yet another parade. With only minor exceptions, Chuck has been at every parade since 1976.

For more photos of the event, see Page 10 of this Newsletter.

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### CALENDAR

- Future meeting dates: Monday at 7 PM on April 15, May 20, and June 17 at Prosperity Bank on Belaire Blvd.
- SPAAMFAA Summer National Convention and Muster, Philadelphia, PA, July 31—August 3, 2013
- July 4th, Friendswood Independence Day 4th July Parade

## UPFRONT

Well, another quarter has passed. This edition of *The Olde Fire Bell* highlights the events in January through March 2013. The Texas Gulf Coast Chapter participated in St. Patrick's Day Parade, Houston Live Stock Rodeo Parade, Humble Pumpnic; and several members went to the Jacksonville SPAAMFAA Winter National. It was a busy quarter! *The Olde Fire Bell* salutes the dedication and commitment of its members for their hard work and participation.

Our hearts are deeply saddened by the tragic events of Bryan and West, Texas. Bryan FD Lieutenants Eric Wallace and Gregory Pickard died in February while fighting a fire. Five West FD members, one Dallas firefighter, and five emergency medical responders were killed in a horrific blast at a fertilizer plant. May they experience eternal peace. Dona-



tions for the families can be made to National Fallen Firefighters Foundation.

Congratulations to the newly weds Karen Witt and Chuck Buschardt. They tied the knot on March 17th, 2013. Many happy years to them. Sadly, about a month before the wedding, Karen's father, Tom, passed away.

We welcomed several new and/or returning members. On behalf of the entire Texas Gulf Coast Chapter, *The Olde Fire Bell* wishes them the very best.

## CHAPTER MEETING SUMMARIES

**January:** Vice-president Ken Paradowski presided over the meeting. Tom McDonald reported the merger of the Community National Bank caused an account mix-up and inadvertent overdraft; the situation was corrected. Tom also listed members that were in good standing for dues; new members that joined in Nov/Dece 2012 were not required to pay 2013 dues. Steve Dalpe reported twenty photos from 2012 events were submitted to Scott Rollins for the Engine!~Engine! muster edition. Cheryl McGee provided highlights of the Friendswood Christmas and Thanksgiving Parades. New member Kathryn Peters drove the Houston Fire Museum's 1937 Chevrolet Pumper in Thanksgiving parade. There was discussion about antique

fire truck insurance companies; members mentioned they had experience with J.C. Taylor and Condon & Skelly. A vote was taken for the date of the Moonshine Hill annual pumpnic; March 2nd received the most votes. Officer elections were postponed until next month due to Clinton Johnson's absence.

**February:** Jim McGee's motion to nominate existing officers and board members for an additional term carried. Clinton reported Tom Hair of Old Station 6 is seeking to purchase fire memorabilia from the 1920's to outfit the refurbished station. The logistics of the Rodeo Parade on Saturday, February 23rd, were discussed. SPAAMFAA and other trucks will be carrying Special Needs Children. The details of the 10th Annual Pumpnic were shared.

**March:** President Clinton Johnson thanked everyone for their participation in the Humble Moonshine Hill Pumpnic. It was the best, largest ever. A new location is being reviewed for next year's event. Bob Robertson submitted his membership application. There was discussion amongst the participants about the recent events: Humble Pumpnic, St. Patrick's Day Parade, Rodeo Parade, and Jacksonville. Chuck and Karen were congratulated on their recent wedding.; everyone stated they had a great time at the event. Kathryn Peters said the Houston Fire Museum received good press from the Rodeo Parade, and even received a personal call of gratitude. The Braniff Shop Work Day will be held on Saturday, April 6th.

*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 Bill Edge Chuck Buschardt  
Karen Witt Jim McGee Kathryn Peters

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



## TOOL BOX

### No 844

On Friday, October 26th, the Moonshine Hill IFD stood by for the arrival of Union Pacific's Steam Engine #844 with Engine 1, its 1948 Mack and Pittsburg Bureau of Fire's 1926 ALF for feaux fire protection. Engine #844 was coming from Laramie, Wyoming for the UP 150th celebration and stopped at the Humble Station to pick up dignitaries for the ride into Houston. We rang the bells upon the trucks at the trains arrival, and it rang its bell back. It was the first time a steam passenger train had stopped in Humble since 1951. Hope we don't wait another 63 years!



Steam Locomotive No. 844 is the last steam locomotive built for Union Pacific Railroad. It was delivered in 1944. A high-speed passenger engine, it pulled such widely known trains as the *Overland Limited*, *Los Angeles Limited*, *Portland Rose* and *Challenger*.

### GREETINGS, AGAIN

As you may know, I was unsuccessful for my bid for the position of Senior Vice President in the last election. Ted Edler was elected to the position of Vice President. As Ted had several years left in his term as Trustee for the Central Region, I was appointed by the board to fill his unexpired term. It is an honor to once again be your trustee. I look forward to assisting your chapters in any way that I can. If you have any questions, issues, ideas, etc., please do not hesitate to call on me. Bill Davis, Trustee-Central Region-South.

### FRIENDSWOOD APPLICATION

The City of Friendswood's Community Services Department is now accepting applications for Parade entries for the 118th Annual 4th of July Celebration. The application can be found on the City's website in the Parks and Recreation section under "4th of July". The deadline for applications is June 28th. For more information, please contact the Community Services department at 281-996-3220.

### NEW ALF

On October 12, 2012, Bill Lofton became the new owner of this 1970 American LaFrance. Bill drove to Paris, Texas, with Clinton Johnson, to take delivery. The truck is ex-Sawyer, OK and ex-Newington, CT. It has already been featured at events including HEB Thanksgiving Day Parade, Houston Fire Fest, and Humble Lighted Christmas Parade. We wish Bill much enjoyment with his new vehicle.



### HFD PICTORIAL HISTORY



My journey to produce a good pictorial history of the Houston Fire Department is almost over. In January of 2012, I signed a contract for 2000 books. We were able to pre-sell over 700 books. The project was delivered August

10th. After dividing the remaining books with my partner, there were 880 books left to sell. I gave quite a few away, to friends and family and donated 30 or 40 to good causes, and have donated a lot of the proceeds to a couple of groups. The books are 38 dollars, we accept cash, checks, credit/debit. Shipping is available which usually runs about 7 dollars. If you are in the Houston Area it can be arranged to get a book to you. This book will probably be the best "coffee table" book you ever owned. They also make great presents. You can reach me at 713-598-6125. If you know someone who would be interested in the book, please contact me. Thanks for your support. Scott Mellott.

### RESCUE HOSE COMPANY NO. 3

The identity of Middletown PA's Rescue Hose Company No. 3, 1941 ALF 500 Series, is returning one brush stroke at a time by Gene Conway of the Texas Fire Museum in Dallas. Here, Gene is shown tracing the detail on newly-painted hood panel.



## CHRISTMAS IN COMFORT

BY CLINTON JOHNSON



Chuck Buschardt, his fiancé Karen Witt, along with Clinton and Teresa Johnson (left) made the Christmas Parade in sparkling downtown Comfort, Texas the Saturday after Thanksgiving,

November 24th. Chuck hauled his 1926 ALF Pittsburg Bureau of Fire Engine the mere 250 miles to Comfort for the event. The Comfort Volunteer Fire Department was kind enough to store the ALF and trailer at their fire station for safe keeping.



The group attended the HEB Thanksgiving Parade in Downtown Houston Thursday, Thanksgiving day with two of their trucks, had dinner with their families, then left

for Comfort that afternoon. Clinton and Teresa headed to Comfort ahead of Chuck and Karen. Chuck's Mack blew a transmission hose on his way home which delayed their departure until late that evening.

On the way up to Comfort, around midnight, Chuck's turbo-charger on his truck blew up. Fortunately, he was able to limp into Fredericksburg by around 2 am. Chuck took it all in stride and the next day had a friend pull the ALF the rest of the way to Comfort. Initially, the Ford Dealership in Fredericksburg was

trying to determine if Chuck's truck, the trailer, Karen, and the ALF would ever see Houston again. Needless to say, Chuck, Karen, the trailer, and both trucks made it home safely from Comfort: accolades to the Ford Dealership in Fredericksburg and Chuck's good credit for their speedy return. None became a Hill-Country fixture. If anyone was worried about Clinton and Teresa, they had their own car and returned home Sunday for work on Monday.

All that aside, the parade was a great success. Karen and Teresa (right) decorated the fire truck and it looked great. The ALF ran as good as it looked, and with the exception of a minor electrical glitch with the lights everything went smooth.



Before and after the parade everyone got to tour Comfort's fire station. They have a really nice station with 4 brush trucks, a 2500 gallon tender, 2 engines, a rescue truck, and a ladder wagon. The ladder wagon was their first equipment purchase in 1912. It is a hand pulled American La France Ladder Wagon with an after market hand pump mounted above the front axle. The wagon is in remarkably good condition with its original factory paint. Everyone was duly impressed. Thanks to everyone at the Comfort VFD for their hospitality and for storing Chuck's '26 ALF.





## RODEO PARADE

BY CLINTON JOHNSON

On February 23rd, in a celebration of Western Heritage, Downtown Houston was transformed into a cavalcade of horses, wagons, bands, floats, and .....fire trucks! SPAAMFAA members assisted the Special Friends Rodeo Committee. SPAAMFAA, in conjunction with the Houston Fire Museum, assisted the Special Needs Community with their representation at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Parade. Kathryn Peters, Bill Edge, and Clinton Johnson representing the Houston Fire Museum and The Texas Gulf Coast SPAAMFAA supplied two of five fire apparatus used to carry members of our Special Needs Community in the Rodeo Kickoff Parade. HFM provided a 1937 Chevrolet Fire truck, donated to the museum by Brady Carruth. Clinton Johnson brought his 1948 Mack.

The Rodeo Parade is an 80 year old tradition and is Houston's largest and oldest parade. The five classic fire trucks were the only vehicles in the parade allowed to have visible rubber tires. In keeping with the old West theme, all other vehicles were horse drawn and had wooden wagon wheels.

Earlier that Saturday, thousands of runners hit the streets of downtown Houston Saturday morning for the 26th annual ConocoPhillips Rodeo Run.

Many thanks to Bill Edge and Kathryn Peters for supplying the photos of the event





SPAAMFAA SUMMER NATIONAL - MUSTER

BY C. BUSCHARDT & K. WITT





SPAAMFAA SUMMER NATIONAL - PARADE

BY C. BUSCHARDT & K. WITT





## HUMBLE PUMPNIC

PHOTOS BY STEVE DALPE



The Texas Gulf Coast Chapter SPAAMFAA, Moonshine Hill Involuntary Fire Department, held its 10th Annual Muster on March 2, 2013, at Woods Pond Park on Belleau Woods Road in Humble Texas. Below, Derek Reichle ventilates the engine compartment on his 1939 Maxim, ex-Swansea, Massachusetts, 500 GPM pump, 250 gallon tank



Top: This year's Best Ladder went to Bob Robertson's 1964 American LaFrance 75' Aerial. Bob recently purchased the truck from another Chapter member. Above, a bumper view of Derek Reichle's Maxim. Love those headlights! Derek purchased a matching license plate from local vendor. Below: Tim Treadway's 1980 Mack Aerialscope, ex Madison PA, is a routine and an impressive sight at the Muster





## HUMBLE PUMPNIC

PHOTOS BY STEVE DALPE



Congratulations to award winners: oldest truck Tim Treadway's 1926 American LaFrance, ex-Needham Post, driven by Clinton Johnson; Best Ladder 1964 American LaFrance 75' Aerial owned by Bob Robertson; Best Pumper 1939 Maxim ex-Swansea MA, owned by Derek Reichle. Many thanks also to Bill & Kathy Wilcox, Clinton Johnson, Bill Lofton, and Chuck Buschardt for supplying additional apparatus. This year's event was by far the largest and best attended; a new site is under review with more drafting positions

Above: youth, teens, adults, and members turned out in record numbers to enjoy the pleasant weather and wonderful exposition of apparatus. The water level was a little below normal, yet plenty to make the day worthwhile. Macks dominated the water front. Below, Chuck Buschardt's and Tim Treadway's CF-model Macks are shown, front drafting





## ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

PHOTOS BY JIM MCGEE AND BILL EDGE



Above: Davy Crockett inquires of Cheryl McGee about directions to the Alamo. Top Right: Green Man takes over the driver's seat of Houston Fire Museum's 1937 Chevrolet fire truck. Right: From Staten Island NY comes Chuck Buschardt's newest fleet member, 1980 Mack CF. 343 pays tribute to the 9/11 fallen heroes. Below: Bob Peterson's 75' Aerial ALF carrying passengers and the American Flag. Bottom right: Jim & Cheryl McGee and the 1948 American LaFrance Lincoln Station are a regular sight at the St. Patrick Day 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 HALL OF FLAME: BILL LOFTON'S 1970 ALF



Member Bill Lofton recently acquired this 1970 American LaFrance, ex-Sawyer (OK) VFD, pictured here at Houston Fire Museum's 2013 Fire Fest Event