

# Association of Yukon Fire Chiefs

# *Hoselines*



Fall 2005 Vol. 2005-2

Box 31353, 211 Main Street, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 5P7

## The Firechief's Banquet 2005



Of course, they didn't all speak at once. Thank heavens.

More Banquet pictures on page 10

**From the members of the AYFC Board**  
Our best wishes to everyone for the upcoming Season  
and have a successful and safe New Year

**Dennis Levy  
Kevin Taylor  
Clive Sparks  
Bob Atkinson**



### This Issue

President's Report .....	2
Secretary's Desk .....	2
Distinguished Service Medal ....	2
Long Service Awards .....	3
AYFC Conference 2006 .....	4
Brian Monahan .....	5
Fire Marshal Retires .....	8
AYFC Banquet Photos .....	10
Marsh Lake Fire Rescue .....	11
Ibex Valley .....	13
Whitehorse Fire Dept.....	14
Mendenhall .....	16
Golden Horn .....	17
"Gator 30" .....	19
Hootalinqua .....	21
Wildland Fire Management ....	22
WFM Klondike Zone .....	23
Cartoon.....	24

### Next Issue

Scheduled for Spring 2006

Whenever you find someone who is convinced they are a real wit, give them the benefit of the doubt... they are probably half right.

Hoselines is published by the Association of Yukon Fire Chiefs. Please mail inquiries to Bob Atkinson, Secretary, PO Box 31353 Whitehorse, Yukon. Y1A 5P7 Phone 867-633-3610.

President - Dennis Levy. Vice President - Clive Sparks.  
Treasurer - Kevin Taylor. Secretary - Bob Atkinson

## AYFC President's Report

It seems like it was only yesterday when we were gathered here for our AGM. I am not sure where the time goes and no doubt all of you were as busy as I was, even though part of my winter was spent playing golf and watching my oranges and grapefruit grow at our home in Arizona. In April I had a reality check when I got back home to the better part of three feet of snow in my back yard, I knew I did not miss all of winter.

From what we experienced in the summer of 04 the forecast was for a repeat performance from Mother Nature. No doubt all of your departments - and I know for sure that our department at Marsh Lake - were gearing up for a busy wild fire season. It would appear that we have had more of a normal or even less than normal fire season. I would like to thank Director Boyd and all the team at Wildland Fire Management for all the assistance they have given to all departments this season and for their effort in keeping us supplied with the tools and equipment to respond to wild fire emergencies should they occur in their jurisdiction

We have also seen several changes to some departments. It was with some regret when I learned of the departure of chief Chris Mayes from the Dawson City Fire Department. Chris was always a strong supporter of this Association. He was always willing to lend a hand, offer an opinion and recognize the fraternity of the fire family. Chris's leadership and support will be greatly missed in this organization.

I would like to congratulate Mendenhall Fire Department on their official opening and welcome to AYFC

and the fire family. I would also like to congratulate Rod Leiske on his appointment as Fire Chief and wish him all the best in the future. I would also like to welcome Jim Regimal to the Yukon fire family and his appointment as Fire Chief in Dawson City, we look forward to meeting you both at the January conference.

I would once again like to thank Rob Alexander and Al Alcock and all contributors to Hoselines. I know it is a lot of work to put this together. I encourage all of you to continue to support this publication and submit your articles for future editions. I like to take this opportunity to recognize Chief Alcock on his mission to the Southern US that was struck by hurricanes. The work that you did with the Canadian Red Cross is a credit to your department and to the Yukon Fire Service

This year's CAFC Fire Rescue Canada Training and Education Symposium took place in Richmond B.C. on Sept 18-21. It was attended by myself, Chief Sparks and Fire Marshal Holesworth. This year's theme was "Pulling Together - Its all about Relationships."

There were a number of workshops given by a number of excellent speakers. Some of the topics were - Old Problems - New Solutions which dealt with the roles and responsibilities of the incident safety officer in reducing firefighter/EMT death and injuries. Another was Fire 20/20 A clear vision for a truly diverse Fire Service which dealt with how the fire service can better market themselves to attract numbers of volunteers into the fire service.

Continued on page 4

## From the Secretary's desk

### Medal Update

The fire service medals came in finally and the ones that we had names for have been engraved and are making their way out to the fire departments for presentation. Bars have been ordered and will go out as soon as they are ready.

Wildland Fire ZPM's have started sending their info in but there are still some departments who have not sent their lists.

Let's recognize fire fighters for their efforts in their communities. Get the lists in ASAP if you haven't done yet!

Bob Atkinson

[See Long Service Awards on page 3](#)

### Distinguished Service Medal

The Klondike Valley Fire Department would like to say that we recognized five firefighter with AYFC Long Service Medals. Ron Ryant, Mike Perry, Gerry Stange, Mark Castellarin and Jeff Stephenson at the AGM in October.

Jeff Stephenson



## From the Secretary's Desk

### **Yukon Fire Service Long Service Awards**

To be awarded to members of the Yukon fire service for every 5 years spent in the service of their communities.

To qualify, a person must be an active member of a fire department in the Yukon. Only persons who were active in a Fire Department in the Yukon as of August 19,2004, will have past service (before August 19,2004) recognized.

Years of service must be spent in Yukon but are not limited to being on one department only.

#### **Broken Service:**

This would include members who are retired and spend more than three months outside the territory as well as seasonal employees of Wildland Fire Management. In these cases their actual time spent working in the fire service would be counted i.e. if a seasonal employee works for 6 months one year and 6 months the following year this would count as one year of service

#### **Active member:**

Must be actively involved in a fire department. Each Chief will set the minimum number of practices and call-outs attended to qualify.

#### **Awards**

5 Years Plaque

10 Years Medal

A bar to be awarded for each 5 years past 10 (ie 15,20,25 etc)

Fire Chiefs must send a list of all qualifying fire personnel to the secretary of the AYFC at least 2 months prior to the AGM in August so that the awards for each year can be made up and engraved.

Awards can be presented at the banquet following the annual convention and/or each Chief can present the awards for their department members in their own community.

## President's Report

Continued from page 2

Another workshop - the Development of National standards for Investigation of Marijuana Grow Ops - explained how we can protect ourselves when dealing with these clandestine synthetic drug operations.

CAFC has a number of ongoing initiatives. President Mike Eddy and a number of other board members and Fire Chiefs from some of the large centres were able to meet the Deputy Prime Minister as well as other members of parliament on what was called "Government Affairs Day Program." Members were able to present resolutions that were brought forward at Fire Rescue Canada 2004. This was the first time that we have been able to present these issues directly to our major political masters. I have a CD that we were going to show in August however we ran out of time and hopefully we will be able to show it in January.

CAFC partnered with the Fire Marshal's Public Safety Council to promote Fire Prevention Week and assist fire departments in organizing their campaigns. This year's Fire prevention week took place on Oct 9-15 and focused on the growing concern of fires caused by candles. The theme was called "Its Fire prevention Week - Use candles with care." Canadian Tire stores were also involved.

Through the efforts of CAFC the Cigarette Ignition Propensity Regulations came into effect on the 1 Oct 2005. This means that every manufacturer shall ensure that the cigarettes of every brand that is manufactures on or after October 1, 2005 burn their full length no more than 25% of the time when tested on 10 layers of filter paper. These design alterations will reduce the amount of heat generated and act as speed bumps to slow down the rate of burn as the lit end passes over them.

After 3 years our service medal is finally here. It has been a long and sometimes frustrating road. I would like to offi-

cially thank Chief Brian Pope on this endeavour because it was Brian who first suggested the idea of presenting service medals to members for their years of devotion and volunteerism. I would also like to thank the other members of the committee who helped bring the recognition to a reality.

I would again like to thank you all for your support this year. Without your support, ideas, and contributions to the Association we would not be able to hold conferences such as this and I look forward to the Future with AYFC.

Dennis W. LEVY - AYFC President

---

# AYFC Conference

23/26 August 2006

## WATSON LAKE

### Plan to attend

If you have any ideas, or topics you would like to see, please call

Dan Miller

Watson Lake Volunteer Fire Department

867-536-7442(W)

867-536-7994(H)

# Brian Monahan

By Clive Sparks



Photo courtesy of Richard Zral

How do I describe a person that I have known for forty years and worked with for nearly thirty of those years? I do not think that it is possible and I will only be able to scratch the surface of everything that those years have meant to me. Brian Monahan and I first met when we were going to Whitehorse Elementary School in the 1960s. Having listened to some of Brian's exploits at his funeral, it is no wonder that he became a member of the Fire Department. When Brian started as a Volunteer with the Whitehorse Fire Department, I had only been a member for a short period of time. We both enjoyed our time as Volunteers and would try to get to every call. Brian's Mother was living in a house at the end of Main Street and I was living in the apartments nearby. Every time the siren would sound the call for a fire, I would have

to very careful backing out of my parking space in order not to hit the Toyota Celica that was hurrying down the street to the Fire Station. It was usually a bit of a race to see who would get there first. Brian usually won and I would follow him into the Station.

When Brian became a Full-time member of the Department, he still continued to respond as a Volunteer, not only to serve his community, but also for the brotherhood and friendship that is involved in the Fire Department. It was during this time that we responded to Station #1, collected our gear, and hurried down First Avenue to begin the long battle with the fire in the sternwheelers Whitehorse and Casca. We were proud to point out to anyone we could that we were in the picture that was made into a post card of this fire.

Brian started as a volunteer in July 1972 and was hired as a Full-time Firefighter in August 1973. For the next 27 years he dedicated his working career to the Whitehorse Fire Department. Brian was promoted to Crew Captain in September 1976 and, when the position of Platoon Chief was created in July 1980 he became one of the four successful candidates. He remained in that position until February 1988, at which time he was promoted to Deputy Fire Chief. Brian was subsequently promoted to Fire Chief in February 1989, a position he held until he left the City in 2000.

Throughout his career, Brian was a dedicated Firefighter with the safety and protection of the citizens of Whitehorse as his primary goal.

Cont. on page 6

Cont. from page 5

His professionalism on the fireground could never be questioned. He was a calm, capable, and knowledgeable Fire-fighter and Officer. He took safety and efficiency seriously and was always looking out for his crew and ensuring that they were performing at the highest levels. If any of the major incidents of the 1970s, 1980s, or the 1990s are mentioned, Brian's name will almost always be connected to the incident in some capacity whether it was as a Fire-fighter (Volunteer or Full-time), a Captain, a Platoon Chief, the Deputy chief or as Fire Chief. Some of the larger fires that Brian worked on were the Riverboats, the Stephen's Hotel (across Black Street from Whitehorse Elementary School), Murdoch's Fuel (now McPherson Rentals), "B" and "C" Hangers, Better Bodies, and of course the Saan Store and the Ice House at -40°C. In between there were numerous house fire, car fires, dumpsters, and a few wildfires such as Haeckell Hill (1992) and Grainger/Logan (1998) for good measure.

During his time as Fire Chief, Brian accomplished a number of major initiatives. These include: adding permanent Deputy Fire Chief (now a Training Officer) and a Fire Prevention Officer to the Department, increasing the Volunteer staff from 20 to 30 members, spearheading the construction of the Fire Safety House, improving training levels for the Department, expanding and modernizing the Firefighting fleet of the Department including the purchase of three new pumpers, the Rescue/HazMat truck and the conversion of a pumper into the Department's first dedicated tanker. None of these changes would have happened without a professional and dedicated leader at the top of the Department.

Brian was nominated for, and was awarded the Fire Service Exemplary Service Medal while he was Fire Chief. Chief Monahan was part of the committee that chose a new Fire Marshal for the Yukon in 1991. His participation in this committee led to the hiring of Fire Marshal who brought a

breath of fresh air to the Yukon Fire Service.

Working with the Fire Marshal, Chief Monahan was part of the changes and modernization that has occurred throughout the Territory. He assisted in improving training standards for the Yukon, and was part of a cadre of instructors who provided training to Fire Departments throughout the Territory. While serving as Fire Chief, Brian was part of the committees that brought 911 to Whitehorse and the surrounding area, that developed a formal Spill Agreement among various agencies, and was a key player in getting the first Mutual Aid Agreements between Whitehorse and the surrounding Volunteer Fire Departments.

As a Fire Chief, Brian was an active member in two key professional organizations. He was a founding member of the Association of Yukon Fire Chiefs and although he never on the executive of the Association, Chief Monahan was always to serve on a committee or lend a hand at organizing training. Brian was also an active member in the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs for more than ten years. He was well respected by his peers in the CAFC and was on the Board of Directors as well as serving as a Vice President.

Even with all his professional activities and dedication to the Fire Service, Brian had a rich family and social life. He was an avid Ham Radio operator, had a passion for hunting, fishing, and camping, held a private pilots licence, enjoyed snowmobiling, riding motor cycles, and in later years took up golf with a vengeance. When Brian decided to take up an activity, he did so with total dedication. This could be seen in his ability to perform well in such activities as pool, darts, backgammon, or cards. This dedication can be particularly remembered in his passion for fiddle music. Brian bought the tools and wood required and proceeded to build his own fiddle, and then learn to play it. He would spend endless hours teaching himself a new song and when he

got it perfect, it would be added to his repertoire and he would then set out to learn another song. Brian participated in fiddle competitions and regularly played for the seniors at Macaulay Lodge. He made many friends among the musicians of Whitehorse and will be remembered by them as a competent and enthusiastic player.

Brian liked to renovate and improve his house in Riverdale. Whenever he started a major project, the temperature would drop to -30° to provide a little challenge to the work. This was not poor planning on Brian's part, it was that the summer was not long enough for all the outdoor activities as well as construction. I can remember a number of projects that started in November and had to be completed prior to Christmas. One thing about such activities, not much time was spent outside drinking coffee or sipping a beer. It was all work and get the job done.

Brian's family was important to him. He would load up the camper and boat and the whole family would go camping or fishing. He spent many weekends with friends around the campfire playing the fiddle or just telling the yarns that are so important to any camping trip. He was proud of his children and was involved in their activities. This showed through when his son Blayne was playing hockey or his daughter Rhonda was a Queen Candidate during Rendezvous. One of Brian's greatest joys was his grand daughter. When she was born you could see the glow of pride in his face. Whenever she was near him, he became a different person and his whole focus was on Katylin. The rough, gruff friend and Fire Chief dissolved with one look of a small girl.

It is impossible to put all that Brian Monahan was to me. Ever since I heard of his tragic death on Sunday November 20, I have been trying to find the right words to describe our personal and professional relationship.

Cont. on page 7

Cont. from page 6

Brian was both a friend and colleague. I learned much from both sides of our relationship. He was a dedicated professional Firefighter always looking out for the safety of his community. He carried this dedication with him wherever he went. This is certainly true in his move to Wetaskewin, Alberta where he was the Deputy Chief for four years. This could be seen in the number of members of that Department and community who travelled to Whitehorse to pay their respects and offer sympathy to his family.

I have spent the last week trying to put together in my head all the things that we did together, all the good times and sad times we had, and the fires we fought. There are too many to record here, and I will leave it up to everyone to remember their own special moments. Repeat them and trade them where possible. Chief Monahan made a difference to our Service

Some of my most memorable moments were at various fires when, even though he was Chief, it was not beneath Brian's position to drag the hose to the hydrant to ensure the water supply, or operate the pump so that an eager Firefighter was able to attack the flames. Brian also had many favourite comments. Where else would you hear: "It was as dark as the inside of a cow", or "If it cost a nickel to go around the world, I could not get out of site". I will miss him deeply and I appreciate the chance of having worked with him for nearly thirty years. The Fire Service has lost a dedicated and professional Firefighter.

Clive Sparks  
Fire Chief  
Whitehorse Fire Department



Your editors decided to fill an empty space on this page with a Season's Greetings Message

**We wish all of you the very best for the upcoming Season and have a safe, successful and prosperous New Year**



**Rob Alexander, Editor-in-Chief, Hoselines  
( Asleep on the job as usual )**



**Al Alcock, Editor, Hoselines  
( Front row right, with some of his  
American Red Cross friends in Hammond, LA )**

# Long Time Fire Marshal Retires

By Clive Sparks



Mr. John (Jack) Holesworth retires after more than forty years in the fire Service

The firefighting career of Jack Holesworth has covered the country from Nova Scotia to the Yukon. For the past 15 years we have been the recipients of Jack's knowledge and guidance while he was the Fire Marshal of the Yukon. In 1991 Jack was the successful candidate in a country-wide search for a qualified individual to fill this role. He came to us from Nova Scotia where he was serving in the capacity of Deputy Fire Marshal.

Jack had contacts across all of North America and he was not shy about picking up the phone and saying "If we pay your way, will you come and assist/teach us for free?" Without fail the answer was a resounding "YES!". It was through actions such as these that the Fire Service in the Yukon was able to listen to such people as Gene Carlson, long time editor of the IFSTA series of training manuals.

He did not stop at just bringing these people to us; he encouraged us to start an organization to provide Yukon Fire Chiefs with a unified voice.

In 1992 Fire Chiefs from around the Yukon were attending a meeting/seminar in Whitehorse and, with Jack's approval and assistance, the Association of Yukon Fire Chiefs was formed. Various knowledgeable senior government staff warned Jack that such an organization would be the "biggest pain in the butt you could imagine". In typical fashion his response was short and direct to the point – "I hope so".

Thus the Fire Chiefs of the Territory were provided with the ability to have a unified voice that would be heard by senior officials and politicians. The AYFC has proved to be a very successful organization. The Association has grown from a small group of enthusiastic Fire Chiefs to the point that it is the AYFC that now sponsors such programs such as Fire Investigation training and has provided much of the

logistical work for numerous conferences.

It is not possible for a person to work in the Fire Service for many years without some stories of their activities becoming "urban legends". There are a few surrounding Jack and the following is but one of many.

Early in his time in here, the Holesworth's purchased his condominium in Riverdale. Many of the condos in this complex were equipped with wood stoves. Jack's was such a unit. Once the weather got colder, Jack started using the stove and if it was lack of knowledge, lack of maintenance or, Jack's preferred response of "bad luck" we will never know but the fact is he had a chimney fire. By this time Jack had made friends with Brian Monahan, Fire Chief for Whitehorse, but he was not well known by the rest of the Whitehorse Department. Jack would have been alright if he had just called the Fire Department and not notified the Chief. He would have just been a

Cont. on page 9

Cont. from page 8

statistic of another chimney fire in a complex renown for its chimney fires. Jack, however, called the Chief and the story made its way through the Department like – well wild fire.

Jack's second mistake of this incident was to pick up the safety pin from the extinguisher the Department had used and return it to the Whitehorse Fire Department so that we would not have to buy another. The safety pin was saved and a suitable plaque was designed and presented to Jack during the social evening of the first annual January meeting of Yukon Fire Chiefs (amid sufficient libations so that everyone enjoyed the story).

Jack's influence on the Fire Service here will be remembered for many years to come. It was through Jack's efforts that the VFDs started to receive new pumpers equipped with larger pumps and greater water capacity. He was able to prove that having a pump of 840 or 1050 IGPM was the proper way to equip fire departments even if there was not a municipal water supply. Pump capacity can be the difference between winning and losing the battle with a fire. He was also part of the committee that instituted 911 into the Whitehorse area and standardized phone numbers for the rest of the communities. Numerous Fire Departments were formed during Jack's time as Fire Marshal and the equipment provided is as modern as possible. At the same time as he was forming Fire Departments, Jack was also working on Mutual Aid Agreements and working on providing common radio frequencies so that Fire Departments could communicate on a scene together, and starting the process to have a tanker in each fire hall. Much of this work paid off during the fire in Burwash Landing when many fire departments responded to a wildfire that overran the community.

Jack continued to work on these improvements and others such as involvement of the VFDs in the initial at-

tack of some wildfires, embracing FireSmart as a prevention tool, working towards a new radio system to allow all emergency responders to communicate easily, and setting higher standards for initial training, inspections, and fire investigations.

Jack took training very seriously and there are few of us around in the Fire Service today that have not heard his talk about how dangerous car fires can be. I don't think that I will ever forget his look and his forcefulness when he stated "It's only a car fire!" to a class of new recruits, or his humour in describing fire hydraulics so that we were all able to understand how water moves and why friction is important.

It would take a book to write down all the things that Jack has done for the Fire Service in Canada and in particular the Yukon. Ask him sometime about the "door prize" he won in Faro in 1993, how he tested for flammable liquids after a fire in the little building next to the Yukon Cinema, or how he assisted in major fire investigations such as the hangers in Whitehorse or the Super A fire in Watson Lake. If dry technical issue such as these are not to your liking, ask him about the "rain dance" at a fire in Nova Scotia, or sitting on a bomb at an airport bar.

Even in retirement, Jack has not given up on his contributions to the Service. The AYFC will be sponsoring the 2008 Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs convention in Whitehorse and Jack is our unpaid but very important Convention Chairman. Expect to have him speaking to you and getting your assistance in making this conference a success. Jack is also a Founding Member of the AYFC, and as such we expect him to continue to attend our meetings and provide us with a little entertainment and a lot knowledge.

It has been a privilege to work with Jack, and I hope that we as Firefighters, Fire Chiefs, and as the AYFC we can live up to what he has taught us

and honour him by continuing to grow and become more professional in all our activities.

Enjoy your retirement (when you are not still working for us) Jack, get in some golf, travel, and when you need to, and stop in for a coffee and a chat at any fire hall in the Territory. You should be as proud of the legacy you leave us with as we are in having known and worked with you.

Clive Sparks  
Fire Chief  
Whitehorse Fire Department

# AYFC 2005 Banquet Photos



# Marsh Lake Fire Rescue

For MLFR the summer was quiet. Our overall call volume was about the same compared to 2004 - 45 calls to-date. We had four marine rescue calls this summer, compared to only one over the last five years. Just two Motor Vehicle Accidents; several medical calls; and luckily no real fire calls this summer.

Even though it was a calm and uneventful fire season, our emergency preparation and our wild fire planning went a long way this summer. On May 7, we held a wildfire workshop and almost 40 people showed up to discuss and learn the basic principles of a wild fire; what influences an event like that and what we all can do to make our homes a little safer.

We also introduced a new computer mapping program to our community. We conducted house surveys and wild fire assessments and so far we have visited over 50 households in Marsh Lake; had the chance to talk to the residents, and were able to add those places to our map. The opinions of those who asked us to visit their homes were most valuable.

In the first week of surveys we were visited by a CBC TV team, who accompanied us on a survey. They were very interested in the whole project and put Marsh Lake on national TV for a few minutes. If anyone is interested in seeing the maps and the program don't hesitate to give me a call.

At the Fire Chiefs Conference in August, we had the opportunity to introduce the whole project to the Fire Chiefs of the Yukon. We received a very good response and were asked from three different communities to show the whole plan in order for other fire departments to get their own emergency preparedness done. Overall, the conference proved most interesting. The training officer from the downtown Vancouver Fire department, Archie

Roberts, introduced the new danger of drug laboratories from the fire department's view.

On October 29th we held a workshop for our annual Marsh Lake mock disaster. This year's motto was "Accidents on the Highway" – a situation that can possibly affect any one of us. As most people in Marsh Lake commute to town every day, there is good possibility that somebody from our community might come upon an accident scene and be confronted with a complex scene which can be very scary and traumatic, and the purpose of our workshop was to show people how to deal with a situation like that, how to react to it, and the responses that are being set in motion with their call.

It was a busy time training for our members this fall. We participated in the Ibox Valley live fire exercise and EMO's CBRN (chemical, biological, nuclear and radiological) incident orientation course.

Wishing all of you the best for the coming season.

Juergen Willms  
Fire Chief  
Marsh Lake Fire Rescue



May 7th Wilfire Planning Workshop



At the Fire Chief's Conference in Whitehorse, Chief Juergen Willms introduces the basics of the Emergency Planning concepts put together by Marsh Lake Fire Rescue.



Donna Larsen our Marsh Lake Dispatcher explains the part played by Dispatch during a disaster, while Mike Larsen controls the audio-visual equipment.



Ed Schifffkorn from Marsh Lake Fire Rescue receives a certificate for 35 years service as a firefighter and a congratulatory handshake from Commissioner Jack Cable.

# Marsh Lake Fire Rescue

## Practice Exercise completed in 15 minutes

During the summer, MLFR did some practice obtaining water from Marsh Lake for fire fighting.

The tanker was positioned as near as possible to the water source.



Hoselines were connected and run down to the pump. We used a length of 4" suction, 4 lengths of 4" supply line, the manifold, and 1 length of 2 1/2" to reach the tanker from the lake.



A floating dock-strainer was placed in the water and connected to the Tohatsu pump.



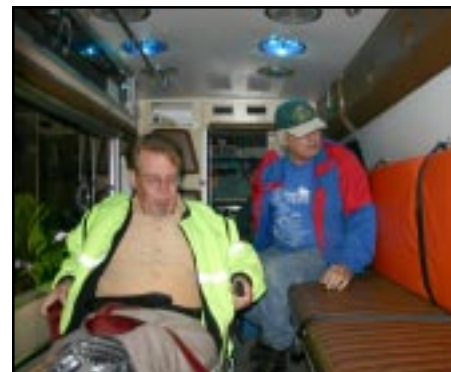
All the equipment was up and running and the tanker was filled to capacity within 15 minutes of arrival at the site.

In another medical training session in September, Graham Gifford from MLFR talked about about safe ambulance driving.

Ambulance drivers always want to get patients to a hospital as rapidly as possible, and this of course requires considerable driving skills, and it also requires consideration of patient safety and the safety of the ambulance crew themselves.

Patients are strapped safely in a stretcher but medical attendants need to be free to move around to administer proper care, and driving on dirt roads or uneven surfaces, cornering too fast, braking too hard, and so on, can make this difficult and dangerous work.

In the photo below, our firehall medical officer Irv Harper straps himself onto a stretcher to find out for himself what it's like to be an ambulance patient, while Blair Corley takes on the role of the medical attendant, and Graham Gifford drives the ambulance



In one of our many medical scenarios, the Editor-in-Chief of Hoselines is rushed out to our ambulance.

# Ibex Valley Fire Department

## IBEX BURNS

On October 1, 2005 Ibex Valley VFD conducted a live burn exercise at the old dog sled track north of the Alaska Highway. Firefighters from Ibex Valley, Mendenhall, Marsh Lake, Mount Lorne, Carcross and Whitehorse went through their paces under the watchful eye of training officer Darrell Johnson. A safety briefing was held at the Ibex fire hall before proceeding to the site.

A water shuttle was established and lines laid for attacks on 3 structures. The first to go was a 2-story observation tower. A number of interior attacks were conducted before the structure was allowed to burn completely. Next in line was a small shed which had been loaded with some old furniture and scrap wood. Again a number of interior attacks were conducted until the structure became unsafe for any further attacks and was allowed to burn out. Both sites were monitored and the surrounding areas hosed down to prevent any spread to the bush around the sites.

After a BBQ lunch, a short debrief was conducted and the equipment moved a short distance to the final structure. It was decided that the attending Chiefs appeared to be too clean so they were tasked with conducting the first interior attack. The third or fourth would have been better as they came out still looking a little on the clean side. From there, more attacks took place until the crew from Mount Lorne got to experience that rare phenomenon of a flashover up close and personal. Although a little shaken up, no injuries occurred but the Fire Marshal's office was asked to replace some turn out gear. It certainly showed the value of the protective equipment. This site was once more hosed down to prevent any spread and allowed to burn out. The gear was then packed up and everyone returned home a little wiser, a little tired, and hopefully enjoyed a valuable experience.

Many thanks to all who attended and to Darrell for a job well done on setting up and conducting the training.  
Bob Atkinson, Deputy Fire Chief  
Ibex Valley Fire Department

2-story Observation Tower



The final structure fire



Burned turn-out gear from the flashover



The small shed fire



Some of the Mendenhall crew



Mount Lorne crew



# Whitehorse Fire Department

## FIRE INVESTIGATOR'S COURSE LEVELS I & II

In early May the Fire Marshal's Office hosted these two courses, which were held in Whitehorse. Ken Swan, with the Fire Marshal's Office in Manitoba and who is seconded to the Arson Division of the City of Winnipeg, provided the training. Ken did an excellent job at both levels. The courses were extremely intense, especially for those folks who took both – back to back. Half of the Level II participants already had obtained their Level I several years before, and while they were not inundated with two weeks of classroom they did have to refresh their knowledge.

Participants came from the Fire Service, RCMP and the private sector. The course and the take home materials were excellent and will be well used when the need arises.



**Instructor Ken Swan**



**Course participants**

# Whitehorse Fire Department

## Live Fire Training

Weekend Live Fire Training took place at the Whitehorse #2 Station.

Mount Lorne, Ibex Valley, and Mendenhall, showed up on Saturday morning for training. Kevin Taylor and Warren Zakus ran the training with the aid of three Whitehorse volunteer members.

The training started with the exterior training Car, Dumpster, barque, propane tank and flammable liquid.

Despite being cold and windy all the volunteers had a good time and learned some useful tips.

On Sunday everyone who came had big smiles on their faces because Warren Zakus demonstrated interior fire attack. For those people who weren't there, if you want to know why, you'll have to ask me.

Everyone went through lots of fire, and by the end of the day there were lots of worn out people.

Darrell Johnson  
Training Officer  
Ibex Valley Fire Department,  
and Volunteer Fire Fighter  
City of Whitehorse



# Mendenhall Volunteer Fire Department

In June of 2003, the Government of Yukon provided the community of Mendenhall with a 1969 pumper truck. This truck was quickly put into action responding to a series of three wildland fires.

During the fall and winter of 2004, the Government of Yukon constructed a new fire hall for the community. The hall was officially opened on July 18, 2005.

In addition to the 1969 pumper, Mendenhall was provided with a 1994 Hub pumper and an initial attack 4x4 vehicle.

Since 2003, twelve volunteers have taken the Level 1 Firefighter course, first aid, Wildland Fire Orientation and communications training and continue to participate in various training opportunities.

The community of Mendenhall is very grateful and appreciative of the Government's investment in and support of our volunteer fire department.

Rod Liske  
Fire Chief  
MFD

## Open House & Inauguration



# Golden Horn Fire Department

## Greetings from Golden Horn Fire Department

The past few months Golden Horn Fire Department has been working closely with the Golden Horn Elementary School's principal and staff on behalf of Golden Horn Fire Department (GHFD), Marsh Lake Fire Rescue (MLFR), and Mount Lorne Fire Department (MLFD). Last year the school gave us a space (approximately 3' by 6' – bulletin board size) to put up Fire and Safety Information for the students and their parents/guardians.

This year a GHFD member gave a presentation and discussed Fire Prevention & Safety Month with all the staff of Golden Horn Elementary. The presentation involved a video call “HOME FIRE DRILLS: What Every Parent Should Know”. The Yukon Fire Marshal's Office has a copy of this. We highly recommend you contact them to get a copy for your department. GHFD also plans to attend the Golden Horn Student Led Conferences in order to hand out safety information to the students' parents/guardians.

GHFD has come up with a monthly “theme” safety calendar entitled “**Yukon Fire Department & Fire Rescue Safety Calendar**” – Association of Yukon Fire Chiefs. We selected this name in hopes that every Fire Rescue & Fire Department, throughout the Yukon, as well as for the Association of Fire Chiefs, and the Yukon Fire Marshals Office will adopt and use it. These monthly “themes”, which can be covered through the schools, bulletin boards, community organizations, open houses and fund raising events, are useful ways to focus and educate our members and the public. The new calendar will help to reinforce our current efforts. We feel that a monthly theme safety calendar would work best compared to daily and/or weekly calendars and/or events. These are just four reasons why:

- A) It is very difficult to find daily/weekly information and then distribute the information.
- B) It is too much information for the public to take in and understand.
- C) It is very, very costly.
- D) It is very, very time consuming.

Reasons C & D are just two reasons we do not have, especially in our volunteer fire department systems in the Yukon..

The monthly themes come from the following agencies: Fire Prevention Canada, Safe Kids Canada, Canada Safety Council, Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada, Canadian Burn Survivors Association, International Association of Fire Fighters, Boat Smart Canada, Public Health Safety of Canada, Underwriters' Laboratories of Canada, National Fire Protection Association, SafeCanada – Public Safety Resources, Canada Red Cross, Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety, Canadian Society of Safety Engineering, Human Sources & Skills Development Canada, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

If this Safety Calendar is accepted, or if your department would like to try and set up a bulletin board for your department, school, or community centre, please feel free to contact Fire Chief Kevin Taylor. He and the rest of us at Golden Horn Fire Department will gladly help your department with all the information we have.

Mike (MJ) Marcuson  
Captain  
Golden Horn Fire Department



The poster board at Golden Horn School displaying information about CPR awareness, winter darkness “See & Be Seen” with examples of reflective tape which can be worn by children.

# Golden Horn Fire Department

## YUKON FIRE DEPARTMENT & FIRE RESCUE SAFETY CALENDAR

Association of Yukon Fire Chiefs

### **JANUARY** Happy New Year!

What is Wind-chill?

What is Sensory-Deprivation Syndrome Month (Cabin Fever) – Healthy Living

### **FEBRUARY** Healthy Heart & Burn Awareness - Cook Safely Month

About The Heart

Burn Awareness & Kitchen Fire Safety

### **MARCH** Health & Nutrition Month

Exercise & Eating Healthy

### **APRIL** Electrical Safety Month

Indoor & Outdoor Use

### **MAY** Water Safety Month

Thin Ice

Boat Safety & Personal Floatation Devices

### **JUNE** Bike Safety Month

Bicycles – Motor Cycles – Four Wheelers – etc

### **JULY** Camping / Campfire & Forest Fire Safety

Camping & Campfire Safety Tips

Wildland Fire Safety – Smokey Bear & Friends

### **AUGUST** School Is Cool! – Welcome Back To School

School Safety - Walking – Bus Riding – Bike Riding

Driver Safety - School Zones

### **SEPTEMBER** Chimney & Wood Stove Cleaning Month

It's a great time to get your chimney professionally cleaned

### **OCTOBER** Fire Safety & Prevention Month

Theme Changes Yearly

### **NOVEMBER** CPR Awareness & See and Be Seen Month

CPR Awareness etc

Road Safety (Students & Schools / Pedestrians & Drivers)

### **DECEMBER**

Holiday Safety Month

## **DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME**

**“Change your clocks. Check your Smoke Detectors and your Carbon Monoxide Detectors”**

## “Gator 30” by Kevin Taylor

### Ride along with Gator 30

Hello all

Just wanted to share my experience with you of my 5 day ride-along in Winnipeg with the Office of the Fire Commissioner's Arson Strike Force and the Winnipeg Fire and Paramedic Services fire investigation unit, “Gator 30”.

Since I had to travel to the emergency services college in Brandon, I managed to request a ride along for a few days to get a taste of what it is like in the so called “Arson Capital of North America”. This is the name Winnipeg was given back in the late 1990's when arson was a big problem there, it has since quieted down substantially but the problem still exists.

I arrived in Winnipeg on Oct.26th and was met at the airport by the lead investigator, Ken Swan. The first night was relatively quiet and I was taken on a tour of the city, and given an idea on the call volume of the WFPS on a typical Wednesday. From the time I arrived at the airport, to the time I checked in at the hotel (about 2 hours), the WFPS had well over 25 calls ranging from first responder calls, to automatic alarms and dumpster fires. Dumpster fires are a common thing there and most of our Arson calls were people lighting these dumpsters. Sometimes, the dumpsters just burned out of the way of any other combustibles but on occasion, the dumpsters were next to a garage or shed which the fire would extend to. One particular case a dumpster, our first call, the garbage set on fire extended to an apartment window and into the apartment.

Through the next four days, I visited 4 separate halls, and got a chance to see how busy each hall was. The first hall was station #1, in the heart of Winnipeg. This hall staffs around 20 firefighters and paramedics, they run 14 hour shifts for nights and 10 hour shifts during the day. The apparatus in that hall consisted of 1 engine, a heavy res-

cue, 100ft Arial, a squad (kind of a mini pumper used for small fires and first responder calls), an SUV the district chief uses for fire command, and a cube ambulance. We arrived there in the early afternoon and I was introduced to the day shift, soon after they were out on calls. From then on it was call after call.

I was exposed to the grim reality of the drug users the first night as we went on a call to a crack house which had “mysteriously” ignited. The fire had started under the first floor stairwell and unfortunately, we could not find the ignition source or material first ignited. After every structure, the building is boarded up for protection of both the structure to elements and to keep the public out for safety purposes. Believe it or not there is a contractor who makes his living by boarding up these structures, I saw him so much I was able to call him by his first name!

When the WFPS get a call to a structure fire they do not play around. The houses in some areas are so close together, the eaves are only inches apart. It can be very easy for fire to spread from building to building so when a possible structure fire call is received, the dispatcher sends to the fire 2 engines, a heavy rescue, a ladder, a squad or ambulance, and a district chief to take command. During a working fire the dispatcher will send a rapid intervention crew from another district for firefighter rescue. Pretty overwhelming in the eyes of a rural Yukon fire chief who is lucky to see one pumper and a tanker on any given fire! I spent the next three days and nights racing from fire to fire, assisting the investigation teams and honing my skills at fire cause determination.

The last day being the busiest beginning at 7AM with a working fire at a house and chasing some small kids who were in a neighbourhood lighting small garbage fires and graduating to the garages down the small alleyways.

During a small break from calls, I was able to get a tour of the dispatch centre and given a lesson on how the calls are handled and dumped. These people in the dispatch centre really have their hands full and are very good at what they do. They have 3 computer screens and each screen has a different function. One screen has 6 different icons or boxes on it which references different radio banks or frequencies. The dispatcher just has to click on the icon to activate that frequency, and talk to whoever is at the other end with a radio. The other two screens are for the calls, one initiates the call, the other screen brings up the closest station(s), and what type of apparatus will be needed for that call. This system they have now will be changed and a more up to date system will be installed in the near future to include GPS technology.

It was an experience I won't soon forget; I met a lot of great people, and rode along with some of the best fire investigators in the country.

I now also owe a fishing trip to many and will be looking for help to return the favour! The trip was well worth the time and money.

Kevin Taylor  
Fire Inspector  
Fire Marshall's Office

See photos of Kevin's trip on page 20

## “Gator 30” by Kevin Taylor



A typical working fire showing the amount of equipment sent. This one could have been disastrous as the occupants were asleep at the time and had no working smoke detector. A passer-by flagged down two Winnipeg Police Officers who alerted the fire department and woke the occupants up. The fire flashed when the attack team opened the room, sending the captain to hospital; with minor burns. The cause was a baseboard heater which had its extension cord pinched under a bed frame leg.



A clock on the wall shows the exact time the room flashed over, the time was actually 8:10, the occupants just hadn't changed their clock back one hour for fall time change.



The mountain of debris that needs sifting to find the cause

“Gator 30”



The cause of this fire, the baseboard heater's electrical chord is pinched by the bed frame, causing resistance heating.

See article on page 19

# Hootalinqua Volunteer Fire Department

Well, for a change the Hootalinqua Fire Department has been quiet. That is a good thing because at this time we do not have a water tanker. There was a report of a vehicle fire and both the pumper and the tanker were dispatched. The bad news is that the tanker did not make it to the scene.

While enroute to the call the fan blade and shaft that holds it broke off and went through the radiator. The operator did not hear any noise and only when he smelled an abnormal smell did he pull over and discover the problem. By this time the engine had been extremely overheated.

It was towed to a garage and we learned that parts are not available for that vehicle any more. The salvage yards would have to be combed for parts. At this time it was decided by the Fire Marshal's Office not to spend any more money on this unit. It was towed to the YTG compound and all equipment was removed from it.

We are still waiting for a replacement tanker. There is a rumour of three used tankers being put together. Yes Al, once again we are dependent on your department for back up water.

We did receive a new Tohatsu four inch water pump. It was taken down to the Takhini River on a practice session and it performed very well. It is very easy to start (electric start) and prime and claims to pump 500 gallons per minute. When we get a tanker to fill up we can test this out.

Winter is upon us and the wood stoves will be cranked up. Lets pass the word to all in regards to proper use and regular chimney cleaning.

Dan Nickason  
Fire Chief  
Hootalinqua Fire Department



Editor-in-Chief's note:  
Why does Hootalinqua have to be dependent on Al's department when they have this magnificent piece of high tech equipment ?



# Wildland Fire Management

## Computer Fire Growth Model Aids in Community Planning

from David Milne, Prevention Coordinator, Planning Section

The computer screen shows a collage of brilliant colours as it strikes the eye. Hey, it looks like a map of the south end of the city of Whitehorse. Then a moving graphic circle comes alive, growing larger and ever more irregular as the clock spins in the corner of the screen. It appears to be consuming more and more land. What is this? ...A new computer game?

No, it is one of the latest fire management planning tools – a wild land fire growth model. The computer model, *Prometheus* has been under development for the past several years by a national project team driven by the province of Alberta. Yukon has contributed funds to its development. It is being tested by Yukon Wildland Fire Management (YWFM) staff as a planning tool, both for operational and community focused initiatives.

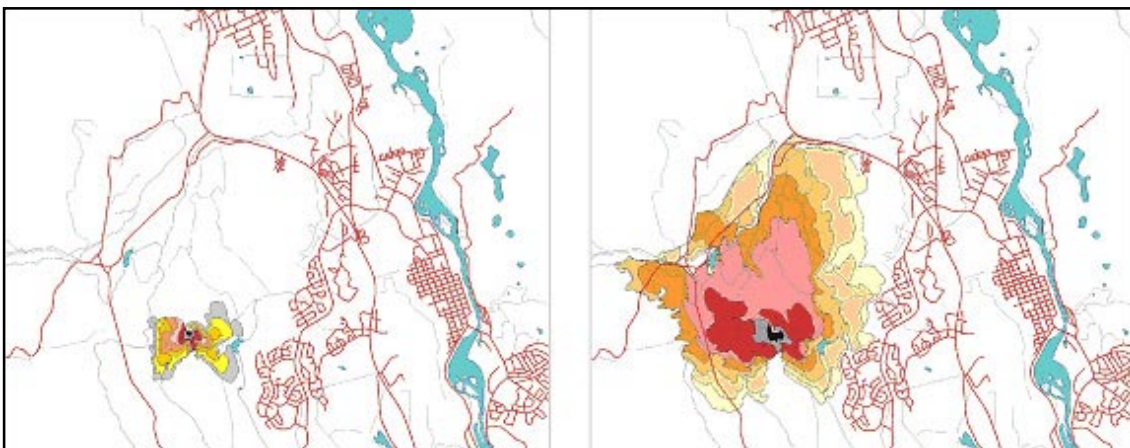
Key components that describe the fire landscape, such as forest cover type, lakes and rivers, elevation, slope, and aspect are fed into the model as background layers, displayed as maps. A “weather stream” is added that includes a detailed hourly record of such parameters as temperature, wind and precipitation. These could be a set of fictitious numbers that were created to model a fire under certain conditions or actual weather data from Environment Canada. A location for an ignition is identified on the computer map, as is a scenario timeframe and the program is instructed to proceed in hourly increments, “growing” a fire under the environmental conditions that are the background layers identified above.

The sophistication of such a model is mind boggling. In addition to a detailed map of where the fire has is predicted to spread over the course of the day, the program produces a spreadsheet with a set of fire behaviour statistics for each hour of modelling time. There is a tremendous amount of complicated mathematics buried behind the colourful maps and slick interface that tells the fire growth polygon to speed up on a steep slope, to burn more intensely in a dense spruce stand and to switch directions when the wind changes. As the fire grows larger, the computer has to work harder to make all of the calculations. Recent advances in computer speed and power have helped to make the program more efficient.

The fire scenarios that are currently being created by YWFM staff are testing the feasibility of the program for Fire Smart planning on a landscape scale for the greater Whitehorse area. Where can we “treat” stands of trees between subdivisions that will be most effective for reducing the fire risk? How effective are our proposed treatments? One of the strengths of the program may be as a public education tool in the near future. If a fire can be realistically simulated using actual weather from the previous summer in front of a public gathering for an area close to home, it may spur residents to “treat” forest fuels on their property or to become better advocates of the Fire Smart philosophy.

For more information go to: <http://www.firegrowthmodel.com> .

Examples of *Prometheus* fire growth modelling using actual hourly weather data for June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2004 (left) and June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2004 (right) for the Whitehorse area. The same ignition point was used in both scenarios. The weather streams differed rather dramatically – June 17<sup>th</sup> was a Moderate fire danger rating day; June 18<sup>th</sup> was in the High to Extreme range. The model calculated a fire size at 2200 hours after nine hours of burning at 150 hectares for June 17<sup>th</sup> and 1400 hectares for June 18<sup>th</sup>.



# Wildland Fire Management - Klondike Zone

## 2005 Reclamation Of 2004 Fire Cat Guards

In 2004 the summer months started out with beautiful skies and warm temperatures. As the summer went on these conditions did not change and the Yukon was progressing into one of its driest and hottest summers on record. The high pressure system giving the good weather was not moving off to allow the relief of rain. This caused extreme fire conditions to build in all parts of the Yukon. On June 10 fire was reported in the Goldfields near Dawson City and from this point on fire became a regular part of the landscape during the summer of 2004. Fires in the Dawson area began to threaten the Goldfield inhabitants as well as the City of Dawson. Fire management personnel - taxed to the limits of their resources and efforts to divert the closest fires - saw the use of fire to fight fire, the use of cat guards to fight the fires from, and as safety zones. The cat guards are mini fire breaks where dozers push off the ground cover to expose the mineral soil in an attempt to prevent the fire from burning across it and as safety zones for crews fighting the fires.

During the 2004 fire season there were three major fire locations where the guards were placed; these were the French Gulch, Dempster Highway, and Flat Creek. These fires posed the greatest threat to life, property and resources in the Goldfields and to the inhabitants of Dawson City and the surrounding suburbs.

The reclaiming of these cat guards began on October 26<sup>th</sup> 2005 with four excavators and four dozers. They were teamed in pairs of a dozer and an excavator to begin the reclamation work. Two teams were placed on the French Gulch guards while Flat Creek and the Dempster had one team each.

Work went well on all areas except for the Dempster area where the excavator experienced major mechanical problems while the team was dealing with some soft ground. This condition, mainly prevalent on this one site, was unexpected and it was felt that the operations on this site would have to wait for more frost to get in the ground to allow safe and environmentally friendly movement over the ground or for summer conditions with less surface water.

The priority areas were the guards which had environmental concerns of soil erosion and permafrost exposure. Once these were completed then the other sections would be reclaimed. French Gulch had most of the steep slope areas while Flat Creek also had two areas with this type of concern on it. While these were priority sections, the Dempster guards have a different type of environment as a lot of these went through wet areas. These are areas not normally affected by wildfires, but in the extreme conditions of 2004 these areas were also burning and thus had to have guards established.

The time of the year when we got under way posed some special operating concerns requiring specific procedures for the heavy equipment. Ice lugs had to be put on all equipment, light engine oil installed and operating procedures for the steep slopes had to be adjusted. The cold temperatures and snow, while not preventing the work, did pose different operating procedures to be followed. With the cold winter conditions, work goes slower and equipment tends to have more problems than usual. Consequently work was suspended on November 9<sup>th</sup> but with the most sensitive sites completed and plans to finish the reclamation in the spring of 2006.

Dan Baikie  
Zone Protection Manager  
Klondike District

D6 dozer leveling and compacting material on Flat Creek Fire

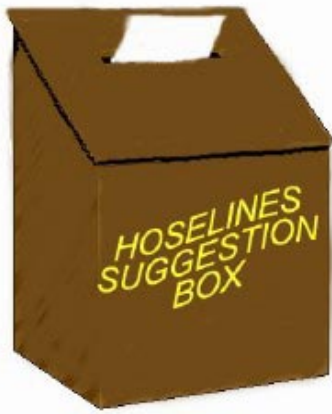


Excavator with hydraulic thumb pulling out material on Flat Creek Fire



Reclaimed guard on French Gulch Fire





If you have suggestions about what you would like to see in Hoselines, please send them to:

Rob Alexander,  
Box 2165 Marsh Lake, YT, Y0B 1Y2  
phone: 660-4005  
e-mail: [robalex@northwestel.net](mailto:robalex@northwestel.net)

or send to:  
Al Alcock,  
PO Box 20612 Y1A 7A2  
phone: 633-3758 Fax 633-4843  
e-mail: [alalcock@northwestel.net](mailto:alalcock@northwestel.net)

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Association of Yukon Fire Chiefs.

If you wish to reproduce any of the content of this newsletter for training use or other purposes, please contact our Editor-in-Chief Rob Alexander at the address shown on the left.

## New hose technique for highrise buildings



## NO PARKING IN THIS COLUMN



If you would like copies of photos appearing in Hoselines please contact the Editor-in-Chief.

**FIRE LINE - DO NOT CROSS**