



Firefighter of the Year: Byron Miller

Byron Miller joined the department in 1985 and has been assigned to work at all stations in Lawrence during his career. His present assignment is at Station 1 where he serves as an engineer. He has been a certified Emergency Medical Technician since 1991.

Byron has consistently exhibited a desire to learn and in doing so has attended well over 20 specialized training classes, including water and ice rescue classes as well as technical rope rescue classes. His strong background has allowed him to serve as an instructor in these areas when needed. Byron also served with the Douglas County Underwater Search and Recovery Team for 17½ years with time as a co-team leader and was certified to work on various specialized equipment for the team.

Byron’s skills in utilizing various computer software programs also have been helpful to the department. He has worked to create several databases for tracking items such as breathing apparatus maintenance, equipment inventory and response map updates. One of his current responsibilities is managing the department’s Geographic Information System (GIS). With GIS, highly accurate electronic and paper maps are created to assist our members in responding to emergencies in Lawrence and Douglas County.

Additionally, Byron is one of three firefighters who are designated to perform advanced level repair and testing on self contained breathing apparatus. Breathing apparatus are utilized by all department members in hazardous environments and are one of the firefighters’ most important pieces of safety equipment. Byron takes this responsibility very seriously and has worked diligently to make sure repairs are done correctly. His computer skills also were used to developed a parts tracking system to ensure that repairs can be made promptly and a repair history on each breathing apparatus is recorded.

Byron’s skills, dedication and ongoing accomplishments make it clear why he was chosen to be the Firefighter of the Year.



2004 Recruit Academy

The sixteenth Lawrence-Douglas County Fire and Medical Recruit Academy began on September 27, 2004 with 12 new recruits eager to begin their career as firefighters with the department. Captains Stan Ray and Pat Talkington were the lead instructors for the program. The class involved instruction in all aspects of fire suppression and prevention, hazardous materials, emergency medical patient care, and departmental administrative and operational procedures. After 11 weeks of extensive training, this was the first recruit class to graduate with both Kansas State certification as Emergency Medical Technicians–Immediate and national



certification at the Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations Level. Congratulations to Captains Ray and Talkington for a job well done and to the recruits for all their hard work in preparing themselves to be contributing members of the department.

Mobile Data: Quick Access to Emergency Incident Information

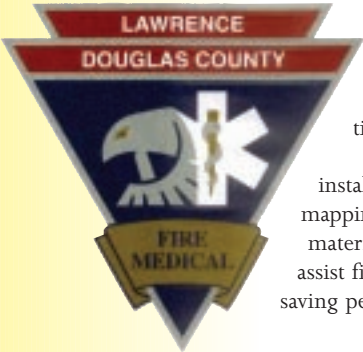
In September 2004, LDCFM went live with mobile data computers (MDCs) in all front line apparatus. These computers and the supporting infrastructure was a result of nearly two years of planning and acquisition.

The infrastructure for this system was possible through a \$384,000 federal grant secured by the Douglas County Sheriff’s Department. The county contributed an additional \$124,000 from 911 fees. The City of Lawrence committed additional funds to install specialized mobile computers in fire apparatus and medic units. These specialized mobile computers utilize touch screen technology as well as screens designed to be seen in bright sunlight.

These MDCs send information utilizing radio modems linked to the county’s computer aided dispatch system and 800 MHz radio system. They give firefighters quick access to emergency incident information. Rather than tying up the dispatcher, users can access the information in written form that they can check without having to recall all the details from memory. Additionally, information about routing, hazards and access is readily available to help firefighters respond and handle emergencies.

The computers also have maps utilizing city and county Geographical Information System (GIS) data. These maps allow firefighters to find buildings and fire hydrants quickly. Aerial maps assist firefighters in finding houses not clearly visible from the street. In addition, the MDC system utilizes global positioning satellites, specialized software and maps allowing dispatchers to visually monitor the location of all fire and medical units from the communications center.

Future funding will be necessary to install additional computers and to enhance mapping capabilities, pre-fire plans, hazardous materials information and other components to assist firefighters and medics in protecting and saving people’s lives and property.



Emergency Medical Dispatch

On November 18, 2004, the Douglas County Emergency Communications Center initiated an Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) program with oversight by Lawrence-Douglas County Fire and Medical and Scott A. Robinson, M.D., the department’s medical advisor.

Communication officers working in the Douglas County Emergency Communications Center now are using EMD for all medically related calls. EMD classifies medical calls to determine correct emergency resource responses and to provide lifesaving emergency medical instructions to callers prior to the arrival of emergency resources. Communication officers ask a series of questions that direct the communication officer to provide responses and instructions. Division Chief Jim Murray acts as the medical liaison to the ECC and coordinates our department’s participation in the program.

Approximately 30 emergency communications officers and LDCFM personnel attended up to eight days of training in the implementation of this important life-saving program, funded by your 911 utilization fee on telephones and cell phones.

Chief Officers Attend Emergency Management Institute



Five chief officers from LDCFM joined with other leaders from area law enforcement, the hospital, school district, the University of Kansas, City and County government, and numerous other public and private agencies to learn and prepare for potential disasters in our community. In December 2004, more than 70 officials

from Lawrence and Douglas County participated in a week-long Integrated Emergency Management Course at the National Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg, Md. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) sponsors the course and selects just 10 communities from around the country each year to receive this training. The goal is to ensure that the top decision-makers in local governments can work together to pull the community through a disaster. The simulated, real-time exercise included a severe winter snowstorm, a major flu outbreak and several other complicating factors. The benefits of participating in this exercise included making connections and becoming familiar with all the other agencies and people who must work together to help manage any large-scale emergency.

Fire Investigations Bureau

Lawrence-Douglas County Fire and Medical is charged by Kansas statute to investigate the origin and cause of fires within the city limits of Lawrence. In order to accomplish this directive, six personnel from the operations division are appointed as fire investigators. Five of the current investigators have completed the certification requirements set forth by the Kansas fire marshal’s office to become certified as Fire Investigator II. Our sixth investigator was appointed in 2004 and is beginning this certification training with a goal of becoming certified in 2005.

As Fire Investigator II-certified fire investigators, our personnel have the powers of arrest, search and seizure, and the authority to carry defensive weapons and operate as a law enforcement officer while investigating fires.

In 1999, the department achieved “criminal justice agency” status as defined by the National Crime Information Center and therefore is authorized to share criminal information with other law enforcement agencies for and during investigations.

This team of investigators works within the prevention division and under the direction of the division chief of prevention.

Water and Ice Rescue Team



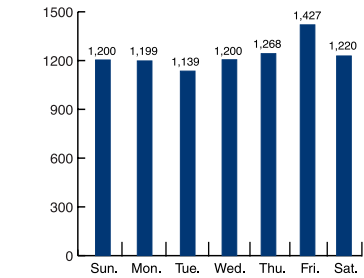
The Water and Ice Rescue special team experienced many changes in 2004. Funding was received through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Assistance to Firefighter Grant for fire operations and firefighter safety. The approved grant amount was \$78,876 of which the federal

share is 70 percent or \$55,214. Congressman Dennis Moore announced the award stating, “It’s critical that our first responders have the equipment and training they need to save lives and property if threatened. I am pleased that FEMA is providing our firefighters with this funding through the fire grant program.”

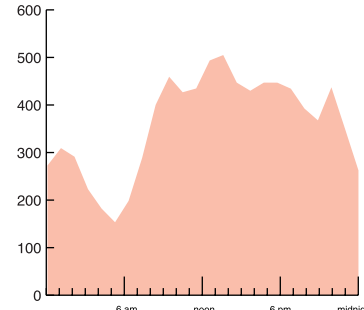
The funds were utilized to purchase three water rescue boats. Two of the boats are housed on a trailer at Station 3 where they can be deployed throughout Lawrence and Douglas County for water rescue. The third boat is docked in a slip at the Clinton Marina to be dispatched to rescue situations at Clinton Reservoir. The cooperation of the marina staff allows this boat to be deployed to any emergency at the lake.

Also acquired was special water rescue equipment including ice rescue suits, line deployment launchers, ropes and miscellaneous hardware. Key department members assigned to Station 3 have received specialized training in swift water rescue and boat operations. Ongoing training with firefighters assigned to Station 3 ensures that all members are prepared to meet our goal of quickly delivering a well-equipped, well-trained crew to the site of any water or ice rescue incident in our community.

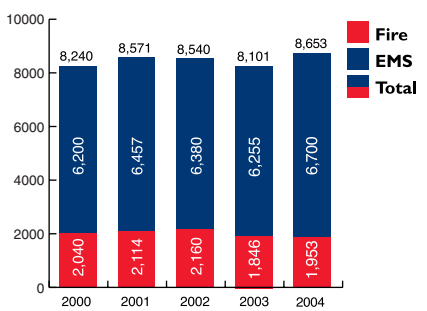
Incidents by Day of the Week



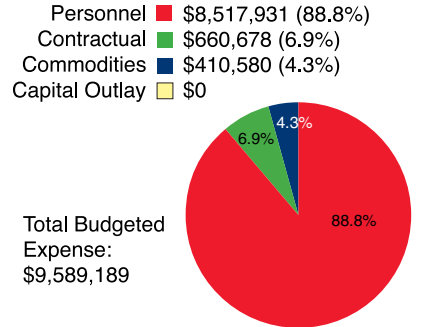
Incidents by Hour of the Day



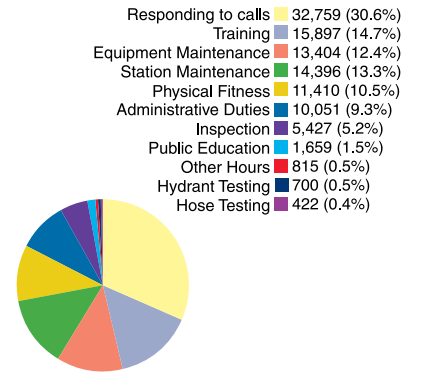
Incidents in Past Five Years



Budgeted Expense Report



Allocation of Work Hours



2004: A Year of Milestones

While the City of Lawrence proudly celebrated the 150-year anniversary of its founding in 1854, the Lawrence-Douglas County Fire and Medical Department also reached two important milestones in its history of providing public safety. The end of 2004 marked the completion of 90 years as a municipal, fully paid fire service in the City of Lawrence as well as 30 years of publicly operated ambulance service in Douglas County. Lawrence-Douglas

County Fire and Medical is an organization that emerged in 1997 as a result of combining the Lawrence Fire Department and the Douglas County Ambulance Service. The members of these two exceptional organizations are now the heart of one outstanding team. The current members of the department salute all those who came before us and laid the groundwork, paving the way for the modern, professional services we provide to the citizens of Lawrence and Douglas County today.



From our archives (1975), left to right: Station 1, Station 2 and Station 3.

Five Members Retire in 2004



The department honored five members who retired during the past year. Retiring members were recognized at individual receptions held in their honor at Station 1. Chief McSwain presented each one with a plaque as well as a brass-headed fire axe as gifts from the department. All those who attended enjoyed sharing in slide show presentations reflecting these distinguished careers:

Lieutenant Marshall Biggerstaff	June 18, 1984–March 20, 2004
Firefighter Robert Kent	May 25, 1984–June 14, 2004
Firefighter James Wilson	June 27, 1993–August 6, 2004
Firefighter James Mullen	August 1, 1983–March 5, 2004
Lieutenant Robin Donahey	July 2, 1979–October 1, 2004

The department sincerely thanks all five members for their service to the community and wishes each of them a long and happy retirement.

Shaun Coffey Promoted to Division Chief

On October 31, 2004, Lawrence-Douglas County Fire and Medical selected Shaun Coffey as the new division chief assigned to the training division. This is the first chief officer promotion to occur in the department in nearly 12 years.



Coffey started with the department in 1985 and quickly made an impression upon his supervisors as a dedicated and hard-working firefighter. He served for many years as a night consultant and sought out advanced training in the areas of high angle rescue and hazardous materials. He applied himself to advancing his education and completed his Associate of Science degree at Johnson County Community College in 1992. Later that same year, he was appointed as acting officer. In 1994, he was promoted to lieutenant, and rose to the rank of captain within two years.

Coffey served for five years as station officer at 1-X before being reassigned in January 2002 to the training division as one of two captains specifically dedicated to meet the training needs of the department.

Throughout his career, Chief Coffey has served in a variety of roles as an instructor, both within the department and as adjunct faculty with University of Kansas Fire Training Institute (KUFTI). His initial areas of expertise included high angle rescue and incident command, but later he developed a keen interest in the area of the fire service's emergency response to terrorism and WMD (weapons of mass destruction). He initiated and obtained training in this field through the National Emergency Training Center, the Kansas Department of Emergency Management and KUFTI.

Chief Coffey is highly respected among his peers and is a valuable asset to this department.



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