



Colorado State Fire Chiefs' Association

Post Office Box 3945
Englewood, Colorado 80155
Phone: (720) 874-8116
Fax: (720) 862-2181

www.colofirechiefs.org

CSFCA President's Report – 2008 in Review

Dave Parmley, CSFCA President
Fire Chief, Lake Dillon Fire Rescue

Looking Back, Looking Ahead . . .

It is the time of year again when we come together as an Association for our annual meeting and conference. While the Leadership Challenge provides us the opportunity to learn together and network with our peers on common issues; the annual meeting affords us the opportunity to reflect on the events of the past year and examine the opportunities that lay ahead.

In looking back on this past year, I can sum it up in four words, "It has been challenging." Yet, I am impressed with how well the local fire services met the challenges confronting it. I am also very pleased with how much we, as an Association, were able to accomplish in 2008.

2008 was a year marred with tragedy, with the loss of four firefighting personnel in the line-of-duty. The deaths of Captain Shane Stewart of Ault-Pierce, Chief Terry DeVore and Firefighter John Schwartz, Jr. of Olney Springs, and Air Tanker Pilot Gert Marais serve as a vivid reminder of the hazards of our chosen profession. It is our duty to take the lessons learned from their deaths and put into place the policies, procedures and training necessary to prevent similar occurrences.

Many of our departments also lost active or retired members during the past year due to accidents, illness, or other tragic events. Undoubtedly, there are some that did not come to my attention, but those that I know of that we laid to rest in 2008 include:

- Fire Chief Jim Payne, Wheat Ridge Fire Department
- Fire Chief Robert "Red" Russell, Vilas Fire Department
- Fire Chief (ret) Marvin Rosencrans, Prowers County Rural FD
- Past Fire Chief and District Board Director James Machuga, South Adams County Fire District
- Lieutenant and past Fire Chief Greg Martin, Glen Haven Area VFD
- Firefighter and past Fire Chief Jim Foster, Glacier View VFD
- Division Chief Marc Mullenix, Fairmount Fire Protection District
- Fire Engineer Billy Pine, Pueblo Fire Department
- Firefighter Todd Sielaff, Simla Volunteer Fire Department
- Firefighter Tyler Spell, Springfield Volunteer Fire Department
- Firefighter (ret) and District Board Director Robert Wenserritt, Florissant FPD
- Firefighter (ret) Michael Korrell, Cheyenne Wells Fire Department
- Firefighter (ret) Thomas Kalter, Northeast Teller County FPD
- Firefighter (ret) Jimmie "Buffy" Van Buskirk, La Junta VFD

Some of these folks were local or regional icons, but others quietly served their communities without much notice. Regardless, the loss of each of them, as well as those that died but are not listed, has left a hole in their family, their department, and their community.

"Serving the Chief Fire Officers of Colorado Since 1968"

Please keep the families and friends of those we have lost this past year in your thoughts and prayers.

2008 Legislative Session

The 2008 Legislative Session was an extraordinarily busy one. The Executive Director and Legislative Liaison monitored or actively worked a total of 33 bills of interest to the Colorado fire service. The CSFCA legislative successes in 2008 included:

SB08-11, Funding for Uncompensated Motor Vehicle Trauma Care
SB08-26, Reduced Ignition Propensity Cigarettes
SB08-071, Extend the Forest Restoration Pilot Program
SB08-116, Job Protection for Volunteer Firefighters
HB08-1027, Building and Fire Safety Requirements for Educational Institutions
HB08-1110, Income Tax Deduction for Wildfire Mitigation Measures
HB08-1334, Group Health Insurance for Volunteer Emergency Service Providers
SJR08-025, Interim Committee on Wildfire Issues in Wildland-Urban Interface Areas

A summary of these bills and all other bills of interest to the fire service can be downloaded from:
<http://www.colofirechiefs.org/08Legisature/LegislativeStatus060508.pdf>.

The CSFCA also successfully lobbied support for additional funding and personnel for the Division of Fire Safety.

Interim Committee on WUI Fire Issues

One of the most significant issues in Colorado is the health of our forests and the "powder keg" that we sit upon in terms of the Wildland Urban Interface Fire problem. The legislative Interim Committee was established to leverage existing studies and analyses relating to wildfire in wildland-urban interface areas in order to develop a series of legislative recommendations to present to the General Assembly in 2009.

The CSFCA was actively involved in the Interim Committee process through the summer and made a series of recommendations for consideration (the recommendations may be found at: http://www.colofirechiefs.org/docs/CSFCA_WUI_Issues_v3.pdf). Several of the CSFCA recommendations formed the basis for proposed legislation to be introduced in the 2009 session. The proposed legislation may be found at: <http://www.colofirechiefs.org/news13.htm>.

Other Notable Accomplishments

Throughout the past year, several committees, workgroups and individual representatives of the CSFCA were hard at work to ensure the needs of the Colorado fire service were being addressed. Some of the more notable accomplishments during 2008 include:

- Participated in redrafting the Colorado State Emergency Resource Mobilization Plan and exercised the plan as part of the IAFC Intrastate Mutual Aid System (IMAS).
- Worked with Colorado Department of Public Health to revise the requirements for Assisted Living Facilities concerning training standards and lift assists.
- Conducted a study of the standardized equipment rate issue and worked with the Colorado State Forest Service to reach a satisfactory solution to this issue.
- Provided staffing for the State EOC for the Weld/Larimer Tornados and the Democratic National Convention.
- Successfully hosted the IAFC's Fire Rescue International conference.
- Worked with Gov. Ritter's Office to revise the Flag Policy for the line-of-duty death of a firefighter or law enforcement officer.
- Implemented the Volunteer Chief Officer's Section of the CSFCA.

Other Activities

Other activities performed on behalf of the members of the Colorado State Fire Chiefs' Association included:

- Participated in the Colorado Homeland Security Summit.
- Attended the Congressional Fire Services Institute Workshops and Dinner and met with Colorado's Congressional Delegation to discuss issues of concern to the fire service.
- Coordinated the Colorado Rockies Firefighter Appreciation Day to support the Colorado Fallen Firefighters Foundation.
- Advocated for the ICC code change requirement for residential sprinkler systems.
- Attended various county and regional fire chiefs meetings to discuss the needs and concerns of local fire chiefs and to provide updates on matters of interest.
- Provided assistance to one county and one region in the establishment of a local chiefs association.
- Participated in IAFC Strategic Planning and Leadership Forum "Thriving in Tough Times" in Washington, D.C.
- Participated in Governor's Office First Responder Authentication Credentialing (FRAC) program
- Conducted a Needs Assessment for the Crowley County Fire Service and help facilitate the transfer of excess apparatus and equipment to address these needs.
- Sponsored two deliveries of the VCOS "Beyond Helmets and Hoses" Leadership Workshop
- Sponsored IAFC/CFAI Mentoring Train-the-Trainer Workshop and Implemented Mentoring Program
- Sponsored Managing Emergency Incidents on the Roadway, Train-the-Trainer

The CSFCA was also represented on the State's All-Hazards Advisory Committee; Colorado Municipal League's Policy Committee; Special District Association's Legislative Committee; the Firefighter Training and Certification Board; the Hazardous Materials Responder Certification Board, the State Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Advisory Council, the Emergency Fire Fund Committee, the Sheriffs, Police Chiefs and Fire Chiefs Joint Public Safety Forum, the Board of Directors of the Missouri Valley Division of the IAFC and others.

While it is evident that the CSFCA works hard to meet the needs of its members, it is the members that make us strong. Looking back, it is abundantly clear that few of these accomplishments would have been possible had it not been for the significant number of CSFCA members that roll up their sleeves to get the job done.

Also, looking back . . . I would have never guessed that I would be thrust in the position of CSFCA President. I was pretty happy serving as your Vice-President and filling in for Chief Forsman when the rare occasion occurred that he was unable to make a meeting or other event. But, with Chief Forsman's departure for Champaign, Illinois, the responsibility fell to me. From this, I gained a whole new perspective of what all really goes on behind the scenes to keep the Association going on a day-to-day basis and how much we expect from our President and Executive Director.

Looking Forward

We recently completed our Board of Directors fall planning meeting where we took stock of where we were with respect to our Strategic Plan and discussed some long and short term goals and several new legislative initiatives.

One of the most significant issues we need to tackle in 2009 is to revisit the Strategic Plan and examine what programs and services are realistic, given the Association's limited resources. Individually and collectively, the Board of Directors is concerned that the level of effort that was put forth by the Association in 2008 is not sustainable over the long term. Most certainly, our members will be included in this examination in order to determine what programs, services and benefits are important to them.

In addition to preparing for the upcoming legislative session, some of our goals for 2008 include:

- Establish of a viable wildland fire section to serve as the Association's focal point on wildland fire issues.
- Establish a formal cooperative relationship with the Colorado Professional Fire Fighters Association and the Colorado State Fire Fighters Association.
- In partnership with the Fire Marshals Association of Colorado, establish a working group to develop a strategy for the implementation of the 2009 Edition of the International Residential Code, and more specifically to work with stakeholders on the residential fire sprinkler requirements.
- Examine the dues structure and alternative funding sources necessary to sustain the CSFCA as a viable organization.

Lastly, after much careful deliberation from both a personal and department standpoint, I have decided to not seek election as President of the CSFCA for the upcoming two year term. This was not an easy decision to come to as I believe the CSFCA is having a significant impact across the state for the fire service and has a tremendous amount of momentum going into 2009 as an effective, respected voice for fire chiefs of every size and type of department.

I firmly believe the progress the Association has made is clearly evident to our members and is due in great part to the leadership and commitment of our Board and Executive Director. I also do not overlook the fact that the active leadership and contribution Chief Forsman provided during his tenure was outstanding.

You can be assured I will continue to be actively involved with the CSFCA and fulfill the obligations to the Board as immediate past president. I am confident the Nominating Committee will present a highly respected, motivated and qualified fire chief as a nominee for president.

I greatly appreciate your support and understanding with the decision I have made and I look forward to continuing to assist, where I can, with the great work being done by the CSFCA.

In closing, I give my warmest thank you to our Board of Directors, committees, staff and the many others who strive to make a difference on behalf of Colorado's fire service. And, I applaud the commitment that all chief fire officers make in serving their respective communities on a daily basis.

Respectfully submitted,



Dave Parmley, CSFCA President
Fire Chief, Lake Dillon Fire Rescue