



On the Line



Our Core Values: Pride, Respect, Duty, Unity, Integrity and Compassion.

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Upcoming Events

May 15-21

EMS Week

There are activities planned for every day this week—please plan on helping with this year's activities! **See A/C Light's article for the details.**

June 17th

2nd Annual Greater Des Moines National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Memorial Golf Tournament—The Legacy Gold Club. Norwalk.

Be sure to check the pub-ed calendars for upcoming events!

Types of Fire Calls

The 52 fire calls we had in April fall into the following categories:

Fire / Explosion:	13
Hazardous Condition:	4
Overpress., overhear:	1
Good Intent Calls:	7
False Calls:	21
Service Calls:	6



Prevention is superior to suppression!

UFD statistics for April

Calls for service: 187 YTD: 798

Average response Time – All incidents: **6 minutes and 50 seconds**

Average response Time – **Emergency** incidents: **6 minutes and 44 seconds**

Emergency Medical Service calls: 135

Average Response Time EMS: 6 minutes and 18 seconds

Emergency: 6 minutes and 7 seconds

Non-Emergency: 6 minutes and 27 seconds

Fire related calls: 52

Average Response Time Fire: 7 minutes and 53 seconds

Average turnout per fire incident: 7 people

We **received mutual aid four times**— three times for fire calls and once for an EMS call.

We did not provide mutual aid in April.

Birthdays:

Mike Gentosi	May 5
Thomas Montgomery	May 15
Drew Stiles	May 26





I recall a time when I overheard a person dealing with a billing problem on the phone. This person was calling a vendor with a bill that she obviously felt was in error. Now I don't know if the bill was right or wrong, but what I do know is that the person on the "receiving" end of that call couldn't have felt much compassion or much of a desire to help the caller! The caller was being mean and nasty, pretty much yelling at the person to whom she had called to "help" her straighten it all out. This was wrong, that was wrong, "it is your fault my bill is past due" etc. I don't think she ever cussed or outright called the person any names, but she sure did everything she could to let the person know she was not at all happy with her or the company she represented.

As I observed how she was handling her billing issue, I couldn't help but think of a story told by Zig Ziglar regarding a similar situation. He was in an airport catching a flight when he was informed that the flight had been cancelled. He was going home following a particularly long business trip and he was tired and anxious to get home. His response to the ticket agent's announcement that the flight was cancelled: "outstanding!" The Ticket Agent looked at him like he was crazy! Eventually, she had to ask why he was so up beat about having his flight cancelled. Zig told her that he thought that there were only a couple of reasons that an airline would cancel a flight; poor weather conditions or a problem with the plane. He went on to say that if the weather was so bad that the airline felt it was necessary to cancel a flight, inconvenience passengers, crews and cause the airline a logistical nightmare, that it must not be safe to fly and that was okay by him – he didn't want to be on a flight with weather threatening the safety of the flight! And if it was a maintenance problem, again, the airline was making more work for themselves and if they were doing that in the name of safety, how could anyone be upset about that! He didn't want to be on a plane that has problems!

What a great attitude! I know I've been traveling when I witnessed flights being canceled and I remember many passengers taking a totally different approach! I witnessed that very situation in 2009 while in New York City. Several thunderstorms had cancelled flights for more than eight hours and the crowd was not at all nice! They were being rude and ugly to the Ticket Agent, even each other and any one else who would listen. The way Zig explained his situation, he had two choices; be mad about the flight being cancelled or having a good attitude and looking for the positive side of things! Either way, ***the flight was still cancelled.*** Some of those "stranded" passengers could have learned a thing from him. They were being rude and ugly...and they were still forced to wait for another flight...either way, they were going to have to wait so they could have just been nice and made the wait a little more enjoyable for everyone.

That brings me back to the person calling about an apparent error in her bill. Chances are the person she was

speaking to wasn't the cause of the problem. Chances are she was just someone doing her job to the best of her ability. Making her feel that the mistake was her fault probably didn't do much to make her want to help resolve the issue in a positive manner. Perhaps she had been empowered to reduce the bill, fix the problem or some how offer the caller a "special discount" for a future purchase, but even if she did, I doubt that she felt a desire to be nice to someone who was being so rude to her.

The person who had called complaining didn't know what was going on in the life of the person she was talking to. Perhaps she was having a bad day too. Perhaps she had just had a fight with her significant other, one of her teenage children, had a spouse stranded in an airport somewhere or some other issue in her life. The caller's attitude didn't do anything to solicit a sense of cooperativeness and in fact may have made a bad day worse.

My point is this; the person calling with the problem had the same choices Zig Ziglar had when his flight was cancelled; she could be nice and try to resolve the issue or she could be mad and be a "jerk" to the person she needed to have help her. Either way, one thing is certain; she had an "errant" bill problem. So, if either way she was going to have the billing issue, why not be nice and try to work with people to resolve the issue?

Even if you cannot resolve an issue, why not be nice? The old expression, "You can catch a lot more flies with sugar than you can with vinegar" rings true. I know people are much more apt to go the extra mile and work with people to resolve an issue when there is a spirit of understanding, cooperation and mutual respect. How can you not want to help a person who is truly being "nice" in a difficult situation? I think we all want to work extra hard for people when they are being nice... especially in a difficult situation. That's a lesson that holds true in the fire department – be nice, to our customers, to each other - be nice to everyone, all of the time. It will make the experience better for them and by making it better for our customers in a difficult situation, it will be better for all of us!



"The best index to a person's character is (a) how he treats people who can't do him any good, and (b) how he treats people who can't fight back." Author unknown

What do you Want in a Leader – Assistant Chief Mike Cardwell

In the next few weeks, Urbandale Fire will be conducting a promotional process for the position of Lieutenant. The person selected, in addition to having a key role in on-shift operations, will immediately become part of the leadership team of this organization. And given all the changes we are currently working through, they will have the opportunity to step into a leadership position within the organization.

So what makes a good leader? What do people expect from their leaders? Interestingly enough, the skills that front-line personnel look for in a company officer are the same attributes the command staff is looking for. Here's a few thoughts from some of today's most recognized leaders...

Rudolph Giuliani has been referred to as the "Mayor of America." Most notably, this title was earned because of his performance in relation to a singular event, the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center in New York City. As the mayor of NYC, his decisions were hard-handed and often placed him at odds with the labor unions. But even his detractors acknowledged he was consistent in his message and in the end – was supportive of their efforts during a crisis.

In a presentation here in Des Moines, Mayor Giuliani spoke on the importance of displaying conviction in your beliefs and values. A good leader is willing to defend what they believe is right, and what's right isn't always popular. In the end, people will be attracted to a leader who communicates a clear vision, and then is willing to fight for it.

As a leader in our organization, the lesson to be learned is the idea of concept of personal courage. An effective leader lets those around them – superiors and subordinates – know what their beliefs and values are. They model these values each day in their words and actions.

Leading by example.

Leading by example is another key leadership principle promoted by another recognized leader, former General Colin Powell. Unlike Mayor Giuliani, General Powell was recognized for his leadership abilities long before his crisis moment – the first Iraqi war in 1991. The traits he developed during his military career were clearly on display as he deftly led a coalition of forces to what is considered one of the most overwhelming military victories of all time.

Again here in Des Moines, General Powell spoke of the importance of followship as a key to leadership. To be recognized as a leader, one must first have followers. Followers have to see value not only in their leader, but also in themselves and their own values.

The relationship between leader and follower has to be born from trust. People have to trust that their leader has their best interest at heart. "Even if they don't agree with you," General Powell promotes, "they will follow, if they trust

you." Leaders have to keep their values on display, so their followers can see them, understand them, and adapt them as their own. Again, through words and actions, a leader draws people to them by promoting their core values.

In the fire service, leading by example is critical for leadership success. Scoring well on a promotional exam is an important part of the process. Earning and wearing gold bars or bugles are important symbols of tradition and position. But both only go so far. Firefighters are drawn to people whom they have seen perform, who they feel have their best interest (literally their lives and safety) at heart.

While some may not see the connection between leading and performing within the daily routine of station life, there is a vital link. What you emphasize during the day – your priorities – shows firefighters your values. The way you perform ordinary duties – your attention to detail, your thoroughness – says a lot about your leadership style. Leading by example is probably the most important way you reflect the values of the organization and your personal values.



One final thing about leadership – you don't have to hold a rank in order to be recognized as a leader. John Maxwell, in his book The 360° Leader, points out that a successful organization has leaders at all levels, in all positions. The same things that Mayor Giuliani and General Powell speak of as keys to effective leadership can be displayed by anyone. How you do your job is an example of your personal values. Fellow employees and organizational leaders will recognize your importance to the organization.

Have you ever noticed how some personnel, again regardless of rank, always seem to be involved in key projects? How their input is sought out as key organizational decisions are being made? These people are the organizations leaders. Their values reflect organizational values. They are respected because of their ability to lead – mostly through personal actions – and not because of rank or talk. Lead by example, and others will follow.



EMS...what does it really stand for? By AC Light

For those of you that know me pretty well, you know that I am not one to tell “war stories” about the department. Thinking about the upcoming events for EMS Week, however, had me looking back to the past of where we’ve been and how much things have improved as far as the service we provide and the patient care we deliver.

When I first started back in late 1987, if you went to EMT school, you were considered a “doctor” around the fire station. The “old” guys thought you were less of a man for being interested in providing better care. We had numerous “first responders” that were “firefighters”, but it was mainly the young members that went to EMT, EMT-I or paramedic school. We did have a couple paramedics on our department but were not a paramedic service, neither was Clive, Windsor Heights, or Johnston at that time. Some of the paramedics from those services worked as part of “County Paramedic Assist” or “CPA” for short. Yes, even old Captain Malloy did some shifts with them from time to time. There were two CPA vehicles, one on the east side and one for the west side. This truck would tier in for paramedic level care whenever we asked for it. From there we had an old police car that we used as a paramedic car. Other services also came up with their own paramedic solutions and County Paramedic Assist went by the wayside. It was however, another stepping stone to where we are today. Now our own ambulances provide the paramedic level care.

Sorry for getting off my topic a little but my main point was this...back then, there were several members including officers that said “EMS, Every Minute Sucks”. Even though I never thought that way personally, I will never forget that phrase or the mentality it represented and neither should any of us. It represents the dying breed of “old school” firefighters who cared about one thing and mostly did one thing—fight fires. That’s all fine and well if there are enough fires to keep them busy, but there isn’t. New codes, sprinkler systems and better public education have all contributed to the decrease of “working fires”. Many fire departments that do “fire only” are scrambling to try and justify their existence. Thankfully, we are not one of them because we also provide EMS. The public still needs us and calls us more than ever before. We are the “experts” to mitigate their crisis whether it is fire, EMS, rescue, HAZMAT or any other problem they need help with. You are the guys and gals that provide the solution to their problem and you are much appreciated. You have the ability to turn a crisis into a miracle.

National EMS Week is coming May 15th through the 21st. We have several events scheduled throughout the week as follows to show you off to the public:

Monday, May 16th 1400 hours-Illahee Hills

Fall prevention/fire safety/safety features of facility

Tuesday, May 17th 1500 hours-The Reserve at Walnut Creek

Fall prevention/fire safety/safety features of facility

Wednesday, May 18th 1100 hours-Deerfield

Fall prevention/fire safety/safety features of facility

Wednesday, May 18th 1700-2000 hours-Incredible Pizza

Displays/balloons/handouts/first-aid kit drive/temporary tattoos/etc.

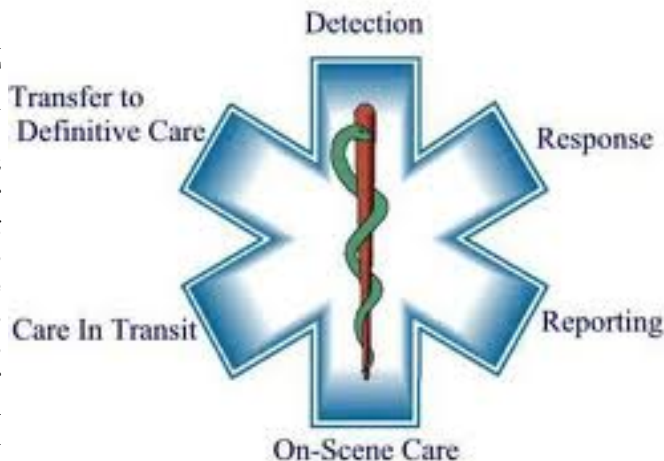
Thursday, May 19th 1230 hours-Senior Center

Fall prevention/fire safety/BP checks

Saturday, May 21st 1100-1400 hours-Incredible Pizza

Displays/balloons/handouts/first-aid kit drive/temporary tattoos/etc

I want to thank all of you in advance for helping with these events. In times like these, when budgets are tight and public opinion of public employees has decreased, it is events like these that help us gain and maintain public support. We have come a long way over the years. I think we are WAY better than the average department and it is you who make us that way. HAPPY EMS WEEK and THANK YOU FOR THE SERVICE YOU PROVIDE!



Hey You!! – Lt. Michael Gentosi

Radio traffic is one of the most vital parts to a smooth operation. I notice that just as much over here as I do at home. We have the same situations here of radio operations. We have those that operate with finesse on the radio and those that can't quite seem to get it. I truly believe radio traffic directly correlates to professionalism.

We'll start with call receipt to dispatch. I truly believe WestCom is a great agency to work with. It does happen, though, that a dispatcher will get quite excited upon call receipt and will directly affect their tone on the radio with us. It is nothing against them. I could never imagine what it would be like to talk to distraught people over the phone and feel helpless for their situation. But, that is where we come in.

I wrote a couple months ago about Lt. Bissell's "Garbage Man Syndrome." We should never get worked up or excited about something. It only worsens radio traffic and decreases the ability to make sound decisions. Nobody should

ever be able to "know" what is going on at the incident by your tone of voice. That should come from information presented over the radio. Nonetheless, we give West Com the



receipt of the page. This is where proper etiquette begins. Always, always hit the push to talk (PTT) and wait for approximately 1-2 seconds before transmitting. You can easily cut off what you are saying if you speak too soon.

Radio should be initiated by the "hey you, it's me" order. That being said, traffic should be "West Com (or whatever unit you are calling), L425 (or whatever call sign is yours). This is actually spelled out in our SOGs. It should **never** be the other way around: "it's me, hey you." After you have successfully transmitted the "hey you, it's me," ensure all the words are fully out of your mouth before releasing the PTT. This will ensure you won't cut your message off as well.

The remaining of radio traffic should be clear, concise, and to the point. The other day we were out, and I heard my platoon sergeant jump someone's case for radio traffic. It is a person who likes to talk on the radio and doesn't always speak well. After the transmission was complete, my platoon sergeant simply said, "Thanks for the information, but I didn't need your life story." I laughed because I immediately thought of the fire department and it gave me the idea for this article. This can be a common problem when talking on the radio. At the mission brief the next day, he

told everyone they needed to start writing down what they were going to say before they said something. This isn't very practical, but it was the point of what he said that was important.

Know what you are going to say on the radio before you initiate PTT. Try your hardest to cut out all the "crap" that isn't needed. If you stop and think before saying something, it will come out smoother which will help with the receipt of the message as well. As I stated above, always remain calm on the radio. We see some crazy stuff sometimes, I know. This should in no way reflect our radio transmissions though. We are there to bring calm to the storm. That also translates to our radio transmissions and ensuring West Com that, "We got this!"



There is a lot more to radio traffic, but these are just a couple items I recognize that can be problems for us. Please refer to our SOGs if you want specifics on radio transmissions. It is spelled out how it should be. Just remember, radio traffic directly reflects our level of professionalism. People are listening.

Safety Tip

The weather is finally starting to get nice and the motorcycles and bicycles are out once again. We are not accustomed to looking for these smaller vehicles – so be sure to look carefully for "bike" traffic when you are in our apparatus.



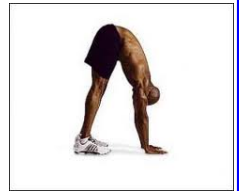
The Core of... The Core – Cody Thorne

Well, the title says it all, CORE!! We all know that in the Fire Service the most common and most expensive injury are back injuries. I'm not one to throw numbers at you but take my word for it; back injuries in the Fire Service are too high! We need to do a better job of reducing these injuries and it's done through core training.

What I offer you now is a simple way to get your back into shape. Unfortunately, the only true way to save your back is through core training and not many people enjoy doing such things. So here are 4 simple exercises you can do anywhere that will not only improve the strength of your core, but burn a little belly fat, strengthen your abs and hips, but also increase flexibility in the back, abs, and hips... Ready? Set. GO!!!

Pike Walk

Stand with your legs straight and your hands flat on the floor. (You'll probably need to begin with your hands a couple of feet in front of you.) Keeping your legs straight, walk your hands forward as far as possible. Concentrate on keeping your stomach tight, with your navel pulled in toward your pelvis. Then take tiny steps to walk your feet forward to your hands, ending in the starting position. Repeat the movement for a set of five repetitions.



Pike Walk

Straight-Arm Side Bridge

Lie on your left hip with the outer side of your left leg flat on the floor and your upper body propped up on your left arm. (The arm should be straight, palm on the floor.) Pushing against the floor with your left arm, raise your hips and legs off the floor and simultaneously lift your right arm straight up in the air so your body forms a T. Hold for a second, then lower your hips and right arm. Do six repetitions per side.



Straight-Arm Side Bridge

Glute Bridge with Abduction

Lie on your back with your knees bent, feet flat on the floor. Raise your hips so your lower back is off the floor. Then, holding this bridge position, straighten your right leg and move it out to the side as far as possible. (Don't let your hips drop.) Slowly bring the leg back in, lower your foot to its starting position, and slowly lower your hips to the floor. Repeat with your left leg. Do six repetitions to each side.



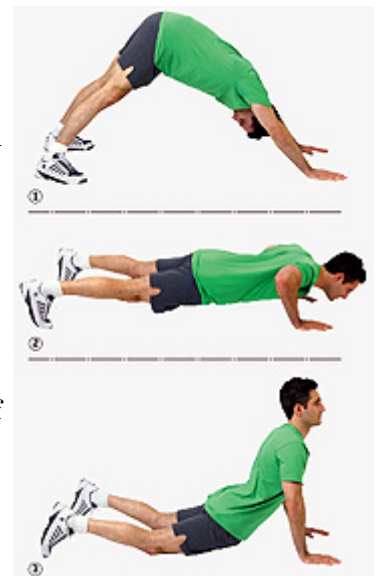
Glute Bridge with Abduction

Hindu Pushup

Start with your feet shoulder-width apart and your butt high in the air. Look back at your heels. Bend your arms at the elbows, moving your head toward the ground while keeping your legs straight. Then lower your hips (but don't allow them to touch the floor) as you push up with your arms. Finish with your head up and your back arched. Then push yourself back up to the starting position. Do eight to 10 repetitions.

These exercises are meant to be done as a circuit, so go through all four in rapid succession, take a 1-2 minute break and repeat the whole thing 3 times, 3 days a week at most, with at least 1 day of rest in between workouts. If all goes well you should feel some improvements in a couple weeks. Remember, if you really want to shave off some fat you need to control your diet... but I will get to that some other time! ***If you have any questions regarding these or any exercises, shoot me an e-mail or give me a call anytime!***

Stay fit, stay healthy



Hindu Pushup

WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND THE DEPARTMENT...



- We are awaiting the delivery of the furniture for Station 41. With this furniture, the renovation project will be complete. We anticipate that the furniture will be delivered in late April or early May.
- We continue to work on the computer lab for Station 41. The computers and software are in and will be configured in the coming weeks. We have ordered the desk for these computers and they should be in sometime in May. We hope to have everything up and running by the end of May although we are still working on some of the components such as the speaker/headphone system. Included in this project is two computers for Station 42 that will provide study opportunities at Station 42 as well. While these computers will be primarily for the purpose of training, they will also fill the role of additional computers at Station 41 and will have the same software (FireHouse, email, etc.) as the other computers.
- FireHouse has been added to all of our MDCs. This is FireHouse “web” and I’ve been using it for months in my car. It works well and has the same speed as the connection on any of our “in-station” computers. I encourage you to use it as needed. To use it:
 - ⇒ Click on the FireHouse Web icon located on the desktop on the MDC. (or use this address: <http://asencd2k3013/fhweb/index.html>. This will only work from a city computer on our system...**you cannot access this from a home computer or any other computer that is not on the city system**)
 - ⇒ At the FireHouse Web page, click on the “ActiveX-Default Printers” tab. *This and the next step are the slowest part of the system.* The first time you log on it takes a while to upload all of the information to the computer. This will be repeated each time you log on to a new computer-so if you log-on to 413’s MDC for the first time, it will be slow. When you log-on to 423’s MDC for the first time, it will be slow again.
 - ⇒ At the prompt, enter your city user name and password.
 - ⇒ At the FireHouse log-on screen, log-on using your FireHouse user name and password. The first time you log on it takes a while to upload all of the information to the computer. This will be repeated each time you log on to a new computer-so if you log-on to 413’s MDC for the first time, it will be slow. When you log-on to 423’s MDC for the first time, it will be slow again.
 - ⇒ Use FireHouse as normal. Once you are “in”, FireHouse will function just as it does in the station—same speed and functionality.
- We are moving forward with testing for the open Lieutenant position. Testing and the assessment center will be conducted May 11, 12, and 13th. Our goal is to fill the position as soon as possible, hopefully by the end of the following week.
- We will be conducting a review on incident scenarios on Friday May 6th. We will be going over the mistakes I have seen made in assessment centers during incident scenarios and reviewing techniques on how to cover all of the things that need to be covered in scenarios. It will be “hands on” and those in attendance will go through scenarios working through incidents. This should be a great class for all department members as the more one practices, the more prepared one is to perform when needed.



- The color **red** symbolizes the life and continuing growth of our Fire Department.
- The **gold** trim symbolizes that firefighters, like gold, will withstand trial by fire and still remain.
- The **black** background represents the foundation built by our past members as we will never forget all they have given in the line of duty.

• **“Mission Driven, Customer Focused”** These words speak a lot about our Fire Department. Our ultimate goal is to provide quality customer service by adhering to our core values and mission statement. We want our members to ask themselves two simple questions whenever they are faced with a challenge: Are your actions consistent with our core values and mission statement? Are they in the best interest of our customer?

Congratulations!

- To **Brad and Katie Crookshank**. Their daughter Payton Rae was born 4/17/2011 at 7:50 in the evening, 8 lbs 1oz 19.5in. And yes, Brad did manage to get to the hospital to see the birth. And sounds like he is still alive even though he missed all the phone calls from Katie!
 
- To Derek Manser—for obtaining his Bachelor of Science: Fire Science. Achieving the BS degree is an awesome accomplishment!!
 

ON THE LINE

Other programs/training/projects completed by UFD in April:

Training Report: **842 hours** of training were completed in April.

Fire Training: 516 hours

EMS Training: 326 hours

Prevention & Inspection Activities:

- Completed 28 Inspections
- Completed 16 re-inspections
- Completed 6 Preliminary Walk-thru/meetings
- Completed 5 preplans
- Conducted 19 plan reviews
- Conducted 3 Car Seat checks



			# of Children	# of Adults	
4/6/2011	4140 114th	Safety Fair	0	30	
4/12/2011	7305 Aurora	BP checks	0	15	
4/12/2011	4707 105th Ct.	Detector Batteries	0	2	
4/14/2011	St.42	CPR Class	0	3	
4/18/2011	3615 151st	Detector Batteries	0	2	
4/18/2011	15128 Clearview Ln.	Detector Batteries	0	2	
4/18/2011	3504 151st	Detector Batteries	0	2	
4/23/2011	St.41	Station tour	2	5	
4/25/2011	4707 105th Ct.	Replace Detectors	0	2	
4/27/2011	St.42	SafetyTalk/Station Tour	30	2	
4/27/2011	13007 Douglas Pkwy	Safety talk	0	18	Total
			32	83	115



**Last Safety Incident:
As of May 1st**



1 day without a safety incident

215 days without a lost time injury

Last incident:

- Apparatus Operator was hit in the head by a nozzle as a line was being pulled for a car fire on 4/20/11.



Member Profile...

Member Profile: Brad Crookshank

Length of time with UFD: Since September 2010

Level: FT FF/PS

What got you interested in the Urbandale Fire Dept? I had done ride time here as a paramedic student

Previous EMS/Fire experience: I work for Windsor Heights since 2006 .

Family life: Married to Katie for 3 years in July. Payton joined the family on 4/17/11. We also have 1 dog and 1 cat.

Activities or hobbies I enjoy: Aquariums, baseball

Most memorable moment with UFD: When Chief Holt called to make the job offer .

Most memorable moment outside of UFD: When I found out my wife was pregnant. (This might have changed as Brad was asked this question before Payton was born).

Favorite TV programs: Wheel of Fortune and Cops

Favorite movies: anything funny

Last book that I read: Paramedic Practice Today

Personal goals: To become an officer sometime in the future

Words of advice for someone new getting into EMS or Fire: Keep trying and keep applying.

What I enjoy about the Urbandale Fire Dept: Everything so far



"YOU'VE BEEN CAUGHT DOING AN OUTSTANDING JOB" LETTERS...

We continue to recognize your efforts. Whenever we receive a thank you letter, card or a phone call, we pass that along to the people involved in the form of a "You've Been Caught Doing An Outstanding Job" letter. As of May 1st, we have sent 24 letters to our personnel. The following people received "You've Been Caught" letters since our last newsletter:

(413=J. Boyle and C. Jensen - 424= Palizzolo & Roe) The Chief received an email from Lt. Wilson who said that we received a call from Deb Pickering. We transported a family member Pauline Stevens from 8525 Urbandale Ave on March 1st. She called to say Thank You and that she appreciated the fine service we provided.

We received two thank "yous" in April...it is unusual when thank yous don't address a specific call and such is the case with BOTH of these notes. The first is from Mrs. Clark Lemon (7323 Maple). We transported her husband, Clark on more than 10 occasions and she was sending a thank you and a donation. Mr. Clark passed away on March 29th and she said that he would want us to have a "token of appreciation" (\$25 donation). *You may recall that Mr. & Mrs. Lemon sent us a donation last year as well.*

The second "thank you" is a little more upbeat. It is from a Windsor Heights resident who works just behind our station. The writer wanted to write to tell us how much they appreciate what we do and thank you for our service.

As both of these are "generic" and covers the entire department - the "You've Been Caught" goes out to everyone!! You've obviously made an impression in people's life for them to go to the effort to let you know how much they appreciate what you do - Great job everyone!

Thanks to all of you for providing outstanding service!!