

# ON SCENE



FOR AND ABOUT THE EMPLOYEES OF THE JACKSONVILLE FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENT

February 2010



## Back in Service

Following his heart attack, Rescue 54's Paul Mrgich Has New Perspective



## DEAR FELLOW EMPLOYEE

Even though it's February, please allow me to share my third New Year's resolution.

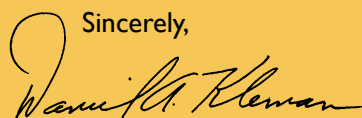
I committed to it following last month's meetings with the District Chiefs. We covered a variety of topics – overtime, the budget, Tri-Data and more – and those discussions provided me

with valuable perspective about the field. That's something I simply cannot get in my office. And when our department is facing so many challenges, it's critical for me to understand your concerns and also for me to share what is factual, to share what the administration is striving to accomplish and to share how certain decisions are made.

The District Chiefs also gave me some good advice last month: if I want more of that field perspective, talk to people in the field. So I'm going on record in the form of a New Year's resolution to reach out to the field through more fire station visits.

Every good relationship is built with good communication, and that's my vision for these visits. I promise to let stations know when I'm coming, and my expectations are simple: to have open and honest communication. There are so many issues we can discuss, and it's a benefit to me to hear your reactions to decisions within JFRD, your ideas for improving the department, and your thoughts on what we should do collectively.

If I am true to New Year's Resolution Number 3, we will get to know one another much better in the upcoming months. And I believe we will advance along our journey of making JFRD one of the best fire and rescue departments in America. Hope to see you soon.

Sincerely,  


Dan Kleman  
Director

**On the cover:** A heart attack in late November didn't keep Rescue 54's Capt. Paul Mrgich away for very long. Paramedic student Carrie Wallace accompanied Mrgich on his second trick back since returning in early January. Story begins on page 4.



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Fire Prevention's Lt. Dennis Higgs explains fire extinguisher operations to a group of CSX employees during a recent occupational fire safety presentation.



# Guns 'n' Hoses Training Begins

## Draws More JFRD Competitors



The fighters lining up for this year's 12th annual Guns 'n' Hoses include a dozen JFRD members, who are training several times per week.

IAFF claimed its sixth title last year, but it did so with just three JFRD fighters. Lead trainer Ike Davis believes IAFF's winning pattern attracted more of our own for this year's fight night, which is scheduled for April 17 at Jacksonville Veteran's Memorial Arena.

Firefighters Austin Gambill (Engine 22) and Jack Mounce (Engine 27) are first-timers to Guns 'n' Hoses competition.



Engine 36's Firefighter Lamar Roberts trains under the experienced eye of Brush Truck 31's Eng. Ron Langdon who has fought in several Guns 'n' Hoses matches.

### Fight Night is April 17

### Jacksonville Veteran's Memorial Arena



Rescue 13's Capt. Brad Sirmans, Tanker 44's Eng. Tom Shuman and Engine 22's Eng. Ike Davis enjoy a brief break from training.





## Back on the Street

Rescue 54's Capt. Paul Mrgich suffered a heart attack Nov. 28. He returned to work last month.

# Family, Friends Carry Mrgich Through His Very Worst Hour

When the elephant sits on your chest, you got problems.

Rescue 54's Capt. **Paul Mrgich** had just finished working overtime at Rescue 28. He felt fine. But not long after he got home, he was experiencing crushing pain, shortness of breath, dizziness, and profuse sweating. Mrgich was having a heart attack.

"The pain was so severe, it was like an elephant sitting on my chest," said Mrgich. "I figured it was the end."

With 19 years on the job, Mrgich has

responded to his fair share of chest pain calls. Nowadays, the familiar practice of asking cardiac patients to rate their pain on a scale of 1 to 10 has new meaning.

"I've had them tell me '20,' and now I know what a '20' is," the 49-year-old said. "I know how they feel."

On that late November night last year, around 11 p.m., Mrgich wanted a single shot so he wouldn't bother his neigh-

bors or his children's slumber. So he dialed Fire Communications directly. Supervisor **Meg Barr**, who's known Mrgich for 20 years, got the call on her administrative line.

"I thought it was a complaint. No way did I think this was an emergency," said Barr, who dispatched Rescue 52 to Mrgich's home and remained on the line with him until the unit arrived.

"He's standing there on the curb like nothing's wrong, like he was waiting for the bus," said Rescue 52's Lt. **Mike Binder**, another longtime friend. "I asked him 'What's going on?' and he tells me he's having chest pains."

Meanwhile, Mrgich asked his wife to remain home with their three daughters.

Just a few hours earlier, while on duty, Mrgich had transported a patient to Memorial Hospital. Now he was the patient. Though it's a 20-25 minute ride from his home, Mrgich said he chose Memorial for many reasons. His sister is a nurse there, his brother-in-law, Chris Henderson, is an ER doctor there and he knows a lot of the staff from his days on Rescue 20.

Binder said there's a heightened sensitivity to a situation involving a friend, but Mrgich was glad to see Binder, whom he's known for a dozen years and has even trained.

"Mike did exactly what I knew he would do for me," Mrgich said.

That involved the 12-lead ECG reading which revealed Mrgich's myocardial infarction. Binder called it in to the charge nurse and transmitted the ECG reading to Memorial.

"Paul is a very good paramedic, and I'm

glad to have him back. I believe he may be the first JFRD member to benefit

**I had 60 people visit me in the hospital everyday. Please include a thank you from me to all of them in this story.**

**– Capt. Paul Mrgich**



JFRD's rescue units have a cell phone that is dedicated to transmitting 12-lead ECG strips to hospitals and health care professionals' PDAs. Doctors can now see exactly what JFRD's rescue personnel see.

from the new 12-lead transmission," said Rescue Division Chief **Charles Moreland** who implemented the system last fall.

It gives each rescue unit the capacity to transmit 12-leads using wireless technology. Essentially, the hospital sees what a paramedic sees in the back of the rescue unit.

"This reduces the time between the onset of cardiac-related symptoms and the hospitals' ability to confirm a STEMI diagnosis. JFRD is now playing a more active role in helping hospitals make the best clinical decisions to provide definitive care, such as the cath lab, in a shorter time frame. That is and will continue to save more lives."

As of January, the Rescue Division has transmitted approximately 650 of the 12-lead ECGs, Moreland said.

Mrgich said the advance notice not only allowed Memorial's staff to mobilize the cath lab sooner, it also was a factor in

minimizing damage to his heart. The entire team, including his brother-in-law, administered nitro glycerin, a blood thinner and morphine, but his blockage wouldn't budge. Fortunately, he had collateral circulation which, enhanced by the medication, kept his heart alive.

Mrgich returned to work in early January. He has made several lifestyle changes. No more red meat, caffeine nor eggs in his life. The crew at 54-C helped him celebrate his 49th birthday with an angel cake topped with fat-free Cool Whip. He's also added cardiovascular exercise to his routine. Mrgich says he appreciates his job more, and he's especially happy to be here for his wife Angie and daughters Alena (8), Kayden (7) and Miranda (5). Mrgich also is thankful for all the attention from JFRD that he got during his worst hour and the weeks following.

"I had 60 people visit me in the hospital everyday," Mrgich said. "Sometimes, they'd come in groups of 10 or 12. Please include a thank you from me to all of them in this story."



**Mrgich's lifestyle changes include a healthier diet and regular exercise.**

## Getting to Know ...

### Capt. Jim Rogers

#### Assignment:

Health and Safety Officer (A-shift)

#### The beginning:

Firefighter in Newberry (near Gainesville, Fla.)

in 1988. The town had one fire station and "We averaged about one run a day."

**The beginning Part II:** Joined JFRD in 1995. Captained Rescue 7 for the last 5 years until becoming an HSO.

**The real beginning:** Born in Kingston, N.Y. (two hours north of Manhattan). Returns about once a year to visit family. "You don't realize how pretty it is until you leave it."

**About the job:** If you get hurt on A-shift, he's coming your way. If necessary, he'll connect you to doctors, rehab and light duty. "I like the idea of looking out for each other."

**Being an officer:** "I try to lead by example. If you set a good standard, people will live up to that standard."

**Family:** married with two daughters, ages 8 and 11.

**Latest endeavor:** Pursuing his bachelor's in public administration at Flagler College in St. Augustine. He already holds associate's degrees in nursing, fire science and EMS.

**Advice:** "Get as much education as you can and make yourself marketable. Never stop going to school."





# PERSONNEL FITNESS

## Suppress Your STRESS

Your 24-hour shift can be chock full of stress, but so can off-duty time, when you take care of life's responsibilities. Whether you're responding to an emergency or worried about paying the bills, your brain senses the onset of a threatening situation and triggers the flight-or-fight response.

You recognize this as nervous tension or just plain anxiety. Your heart pounds, you feel like you could jump out of your skin, but you aren't always able to respond or "fly." All that extra nervous energy (in the form of fat and glucose) designed to provide emergency energy is now being mobilized for action, but it goes unused, only to be re-deposited as fat. Researchers theorize that this unused fuel is generally deposited in the abdominal area as fat because of its proximity to the liver, where it can be quickly converted.

When you are faced with bouts of chronic stress, cortisol levels can remain constantly high, keeping you in a state of perpetual hunger. Elevated cortisol – the "stress hormone" – can promote weight gain due to excess insulin. Insulin resistance, which affects 25 percent of all Americans, is also a major risk factor for Type II Diabetes and heart disease.

This stress response is hardwired into the fabric of our lives. Ask a fellow first responder if he or she gets stressed out on a regular basis, and you'll most likely hear an emphatic "Yes!" But if we can't eliminate stress, how can we combat the negative effects of the flight-or-fight response on our bodies? The key is learning how to manage stress levels.

One of the most practical and effective ways to combat the negative effects of stress is with proper exercise.

First, exercise burns calories and uses stored body fat as fuel. Second, working out increases the amount of lean muscle mass your body must provide with fuel on a 24-hour-a-day basis. More muscle means less fat.

Researchers from Yale University have now clearly demonstrated a third mechanism by which exercise reduces stores of body fat, especially around the belly. They've proven that moderate to vigorous exercise, such as lifting weights, can offset all the negative effects of cortisol and insulin.

With as little as 10 minutes of strenuous exercise, the brain begins to produce beta-endorphins that calm you down and decrease levels of the stress hormone. Many feel that strenuous exercise actually mimics a typical caveman-like physical reaction to a threat, and is the modern-day version of an appropriate reaction to the flight or fight response.

A note of caution: Don't overdo it, especially at first. Too much exercise can actually cause additional stress and associated symptoms. Start slow and gradually build up your tolerance. Balance your exercise program with weight training and cardiovascular activities. Be sure to get plenty of rest. Inadequate sleep increases cortisol levels and reduces leptin, a hormone that signals fullness. Avoid dieting. High protein, low-carb diets do not provide enough energy during stressful situations.

Common sense dictates that you eat right, get plenty of sleep, and exercise, but now we have another weapon in the battle of the bulge: stress management. Be sure to not ignore the signs of being overstressed, which include being overweight.

### Early Warning Signs of Stress

- Sudden weight loss or weight gain
- Tired but can't sleep, excessive fatigue
- Speech difficulties, impatience
- Headaches, repeated colds or flu
- Nail biting, teeth grinding
- Low or high blood sugar
- Low or high blood pressure
- High cholesterol or triglycerides
- Ulcers and gastric disturbances
- Chest pains, muscle aches
- Lower back, shoulder, neck pain
- Forgetfulness, withdraw from social life

**Mud Run is March 20**  
[www.mudrunjax.com](http://www.mudrunjax.com)

# Engine 28, Rescue 1 and Ladder 30 *Busiest in 2009*

## ENGINES

E28	4446
E30	4095
E31	4055
E19	3836
E22	3682
E51	3536
E18	3521
E1	3513
E10	3488
E21	3431
E152	3403
E32	3294
E36	3222
E9	3126
E44	3123
E20	3087
E24	3045
E25	3004
E34	2903
E4	2903
E17	2902
E150	2802
E27	2799
E42	2694
E13	2692
E7	2685
E2	2573
E5	2276
E135	2236
E58	2114
E12	2110
E154	2070
E59	1998
E37	1982
E55	1889
E14	1779
E29	1594
E57	1479
E33	1465
E41	1433
E26	1284

E11	1263
E23	1198
E16	1024
E49	1021
E53	808
HAZ7	805
E143	738
HAZ21	708
AIR5	554
E48	544
E56	529
E46	526
HR4	387
E40	237
E45	194

## RESCUE UNITS

R1	4154
R30	4096
R22	4064
R4	4027
R2	3937
R31	3862
R20	3833
R36	3809
R7	3774
R19	3709
R34	3657
R5	3638
R17	3624
R24	3593
R28	3574
R15	3548
R32	3461
R13	3428
R21	3395
R51	3166
R25	3066
R52	3038
R35	3001
R50	2895
R54	2677

R27	2634
R58	2510
R42	2493
R55	2391
R23	2324
R71	2306
R57	2253
R59	2067
R49	1492

## LADDERS

L30	1864
L28	1779
L44	1654
L10	1651
TL21	1575
L18	1466
L1	1407
L32	1338
L31	1294
L34	1245
L4	1174
TL9	1101

## TANKERS

T28	1129
T52	812
T31	709
T42	638
T44	541
T29	436
T34	377
T57	342
T33	275
T49	237
T43	188
T40	57
T45	48

## BRUSH TRUCKS

BR42	916
BR31	875
BR32	846

BR50	802
BR35	753
BR43	667
BR53	516
BR16	42

## FIELD CHIEFS

F3	1720
R104	1161
F6	944
F7	914
R105	880
F4	872
R103	865
F9	733
F5	714
F2	684
F1	657
F8	606

## MARINE UNITS

M3	184
M1	111

## PLANS REVIEW

Inspections	4609
Plans Reviewed	3656

## SAFETY/INVESTIGATION

SF1	983
SF2	944
P7	96
P10	72
P4	53

## ANNUAL TOTALS

EMS	91,374
FIRE	19,090
NON EMR	3,065

**TOTAL: .....113,529**

## Another Push for Seat Belt Pledges

One year after JFRD launched its Seat Belt Pledge, participation is hovering at 25 percent. Soon, District Chiefs will remind field staff about the opportunity to sign the pledge. A link to the form is provided below. The chart to the right shows overall participation per district and per shift.

<b>Fire 1</b>	<b>23%</b>
A	24%
B	19%
C	26%
<b>Fire 2</b>	<b>47%</b>
A	39%
B	36%
C	65%
<b>Fire 3</b>	<b>37%</b>
A	41%
B	36%
C	33%

<b>Fire 4</b>	<b>12%</b>
A	12%
B	18%
C	6%
<b>Fire 5</b>	<b>30%</b>
A	26%
B	28%
C	37%
<b>Fire 6</b>	<b>23%</b>
A	28%
B	21%
C	19%

<b>Fire 7</b>	<b>17%</b>
A	15%
B	14%
C	21%
<b>Fire 8</b>	<b>13%</b>
A	1%
B	23%
C	7%
<b>Fire 9</b>	<b>18%</b>
A	18%
B	18%
C	19%

<b>Rescue 103</b>	<b>20%</b>
A	21%
B	15%
C	22%
<b>Rescue 104</b>	<b>9%</b>
A	4%
B	15%
C	8%
<b>Rescue 105</b>	<b>26%</b>
A	5%
B	60%
C	14%

Follow this link to the  
Seat Belt Pledge Form

<http://inside.coj.net/ps/JFRD/tr/Misc%20Pages/JFRD%20Seat%20Belt%20Pledge.aspx>

# Here's Some Professional Growth & Development

*Nine JFRD Members Earn Bachelor's Degrees*



Flagler College Public Administration bachelor's degree graduates in December include (above L-R) Lt. Scott Kornegay (E-152), Lt. Jill McElwee (TA), Lt. John Davis (R-30) and Capt. Roderick Moore (E-23).

FSCJ graduates earning their bachelor's in Fire Science Management include Capt. Paul Ginther (E-25), Eng. Charles R Johnson (T-40) and Eng. Pam Ramsdell (R-21). Lt. Gail Loput (E-16) earned her bachelor's in Fire Science from CSU and Lt. Eric Mitchell (R-19) earned his bachelor's in Political Science from UNF.

E-mail [onscene@coj.net](mailto:onscene@coj.net) if you've earned your bachelor's or master's.



Ginther



Mitchell



Loput



Johnson



Ramsdell

## Call Volumes January 2010

### ENGINES (Top 20)

E28	.....	337
E51	.....	336
E31	.....	334
E30	.....	333
E19	.....	329
E22	.....	313
E10	.....	305
E152	.....	305
E21	.....	293
E9	.....	291
E1	.....	286
E32	.....	286
E25	.....	272
E36	.....	270
E18	.....	261
E17	.....	259
E24	.....	251
E27	.....	246
E20	.....	243
E150	.....	240

### RESCUES (Top 20)

R22	.....	326
R31	.....	326

R5	.....	322
R2	.....	314
R7	.....	313
R36	.....	308
R1	.....	307
R15	.....	306
R4	.....	305
R30	.....	300
R19	.....	299
R20	.....	299
R17	.....	290
R21	.....	290
R28	.....	284
R32	.....	281
R34	.....	276
R24	.....	274
R51	.....	262
R25	.....	258

### LADDERS (Top 10)

L28	.....	226
L30	.....	158
L31	.....	152
L18	.....	150
L32	.....	136

L10	.....	135
TL21	.....	124
L1	.....	119
L44	.....	110
L34	.....	106

### TANKERS (Top 5)

T28	.....	93
T52	.....	71
T42	.....	54
T31	.....	52
T44	.....	44

### BRUSH TRUCKS (Top 5)

BR50	.....	99
BR32	.....	80
BR42	.....	74
BR35	.....	67
BR31	.....	60

### MARINE UNITS

M3	.....	7
M3	.....	3

### PLANS REVIEW

Inspections	.....	258
Plans Reviewed	.....	219

### SAFETY/INVESTIGATION

SF1	.....	107
SF2	.....	88
P7	.....	16
P10, P5	.....	10

### FIELD CHIEFS

F3	.....	152
F7	.....	128
F6	.....	89
F4	.....	87
F9	.....	78
R105	.....	77
F1	.....	73
R104	.....	71
F2	.....	62
F5	.....	62
F8	.....	62
R103	.....	61

### MONTHLY TOTALS

EMS	.....	7,317
FIRE	.....	1,798
NON EMR	.....	302
<b>Total:</b>	.....	<b>9,417</b>

## JFRD Raises \$15,213 for United Way

JFRD's pledges to United Way of Northeast Florida totaled \$15,213. Last year, the department raised approximately \$28,500.

The number of donors also dropped from last year's 220 to 72 this year.

Though the citywide campaign wraps up this month, you may still return your pledge form to John Bracey at JFRD Headquarters by Feb. 28.