



Bells and Whistles

Algonquin Lake in the Hills Fire Rescue Newsletter

December 2008

Merry Christmas!

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Chief's Corner

By Chief Guetschow

I would like to wish all of you and your families a very happy, healthy and safe holiday season. I also want to thank all of you for the work you have done this past year, please know that your work and your efforts do not go unnoticed.

Happy Holidays!

Kid's Christmas Party

Who: ALFPD Kids
What: Christmas Party
When: Sunday, December 7, 2008
2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Where: St.1 Training Room
Why: Because it's fun!!

Instead of buying gifts for our kids, we would like to suggest the idea that was presented last year: bring in a new unwrapped toy to donate to Toys for Tots.

Please RSVP to Marjean or Michele by 12/5/08 so we have an idea of how many to plan for. Thank you!

Bells and Whistles
Algonquin Lake in the Hills Fire
Department

Station 1
1020 W. Algonquin Rd
Lake in the Hills, IL 60156
(847) 658-8233
fax (847)854-2609

Station 2
2440 Harnish Dr
Algonquin, IL 60102
(847) 658-8224

Station 3
1691 Cumberland Pkwy
Algonquin, IL 60102
(847) 658-0930

Candle Safety

From NFPA

This is certainly the time of the year when households burn candles.

Facts and Figures*

- Candle fires reached a 19-year high of 12,540 in 1998, resulting in 157 deaths, 1,106 civilian injuries and \$176.1 million in property damage.
- Unattended, abandoned or inadequately controlled candles are the leading cause of home candle fires (37%), followed by leaving candles too close to combustibles (19%), according to annual averages from 1994-98. Nine percent were started by children playing with candles.
- December is the peak month for candle fires, with nearly twice the average number of incidents.
Almost half (44%) of home candle fires start in the bedroom.

Safety Tips:

Extinguish all candles when leaving the room or going to sleep.

Keep candles away from items that can catch fire (e.g. clothing, books, paper, curtains, Christmas trees, flammable decorations).

- Use candle holders that are sturdy, won't tip over easily, are made from a material that can't burn and are large enough to collect dripping wax.
- Don't place lit candles in windows, where blinds and curtains can close over them.
- Place candle holders on a sturdy, uncluttered surface and do not use candles in places where they could be knocked over by children or pets.
- Keep candles and all open flames away from flammable liquids.
- Keep candle wicks trimmed to one-quarter inch and extinguish taper and pillar candles when they get to within two inches of the holder or decorative material. Votives and containers should be extinguished before the last half-inch of wax starts to melt.
- Avoid candles with combustible items embedded in them.
- **Candles & children:**
- Keep candles up high out of reach of children.
- Never leave a child unattended in a room with a candle. A child should not sleep in a room with a lit candle.
- Don't allow children or teens to have candles in their bedrooms.
- Store candles, matches and lighters up high and out children's sight and reach, preferably in a locked cabinet.

During Power Outages:

- Try to avoid carrying a lit candle. Don't use a lit candle when searching for items in a confined space.
- Never use a candle for a light when checking pilot lights or fueling equipment such as a kerosene heater or lantern. The flame may ignite the fumes.

Personnel Status

Work Comp

Kim Matz

EMPLOYEE TOTAL 80

Officials 6

Full time 51
 Firefighter/paramedics -30
 Firefighter/EMT - 12
 Firefighter - 3
 Salary - 4
 Civilian - 2

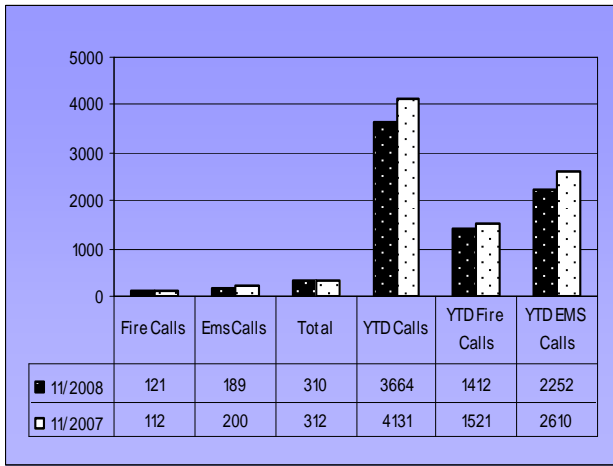
Part time 23
 Firefighter/Paramedic - 6
 Firefighter/EMT - 11
 Firefighter - 0
 Paramedic - 3
 Civilian - 3

Statistics

NOVEMBER 1-30 2008

	Fire calls	121
	Ems calls	189
0130	Station One	64
0150		1
0151		98
0141		133
0146		2
0154		2
0181		35
0191		1
	Station Two	
0152		110
0142		104
0162		2
	Station Three	
153		43
143		61

Grand Total 310



The greatest asset. Faith
 The most worthless emotion. Self-pity
 The most beautiful attire. SMILE!
 The most prized possession Integrity
 The most powerful channel of communication.
 Prayer
 The most contagious spirit. Enthusiasm

My Appointment with Santa

By Sharon Lopez
 as told to Cynthia Culp Allen

As I pulled away from the hospital parking lot, I wasn't expecting something special to happen. The day seemed like all others. Every day I made a one-hour trip to the hospital for my three-year-old child to get his daily radiation treatment. Every day when we left the hospital, we passed the Santa in front of the flower shop on The Esplanade. And every day my son, Cameron, asked to see him.

Today was no exception.

As I pulled onto the street, the shops and businesses that I'd driven past daily for almost six weeks melted into a monotonous blur. I had memorized this road and barely had to concentrate on maneuvering my car. My mind was free to brood over my worries.

So much to do with only two days left until Christmas. I checked off my mental list: mail Aunt Ellen's package...shop for the boys...wrap Mom and Dad's presents...

Cameron shouted from his car seat behind me, bringing my mind back to the present. "Mommy, I wanna see Santa!"

I glanced to the side of the road, and there sat the same Santa we'd driven past for weeks now, waving and smiling the same bearded smile.

"Cameron, I have to do some shopping. There's probably a Santa out there for you to see," I told him.

"I don't want that Santa Claus - I wanna see this Santa!" Cameron protested loudly.

"Okay, okay, I'll try to get over."

I tried to weave into the right lane to go around the block, but I couldn't get over. I tried for several blocks and still didn't manage it.

What is this? I thought. *The traffic is never this bad at this time of the day.* Finally, I gave up.

"Cameron, I couldn't get over," I said. "We'll

Birthdays

December 3rd Keith Mohr
 December 5th Bill Todd
 December 31st Warren Olsen
 Andrew Pieri

Anniversaries

Bob Haughey 15 years FT
 Kym Griffiths 14 years PT
 Keith Svendsen 13 years FT
 John Greene 10 years FT
 Steve Ciaccio 1 year as LT

Reflections

The most destructive habit Worry
 The greatest Joy Giving
 The greatest loss. Loss of self-respect
 The most satisfying work. Helping others
 The ugliest personality trait. Selfishness
 The most endangered species . . . Dedicated leaders
 Our greatest natural resource Our youth
 The greatest "shot in the arm". . . . Encouragement
 The greatest problem to overcome. Fear
 The most effective sleeping pill. . . . Peace of mind
 The most crippling failure disease. Excuses
 The most powerful force in life. Love
 The most dangerous pariah. A gossip
 The world's most incredible computer. . . The brain
 The worst thing to be without. Hope
 The deadliest weapon. The tongue
 The two most power-filled words. "I Can"

have to see the Santa at the mall."

My son wailed all the way to the mall. I glanced at him in the rearview mirror.

Poor little guy, I thought. He's as pale as a ghost, and looks a sight with his hair almost gone.

I wondered about the results of our doctor's last effort to radiate away a second cancerous brain tumor in Cameron's small head. They didn't want to attempt another operation on someone so young - he was only eighteen months when he'd had the first surgery. Oh, how we had rejoiced when they said they'd "got it all." We'd hoped, held our breath, prayed and hoped some more for two long years. Then just six weeks before Christmas 1986, we'd been told the tumor had grown again.

Although my hopes dwindled, I knew we had to keep fighting it. When the doctors suggested radiation treatment, we agreed, even though I knew it would mean a two-hour daily drive to a larger city for six weeks up to Christmas Day. The drive, stress and worry were draining me, even as the radiation drained the life from Cameron's once-pink cheeks.

I entered the mall with a heavy heart. The sounds, sights and smells of Christmas were everywhere: Lights and colors flashing, the jingle of the Salvation Army bell, carols playing softly in the background, package-laden people rushing here and there, some tense, some laughing. A candy shop cooled chocolate fudge on its counter...

Christmas everywhere but in my heart, I thought, as we stopped at the back of the line to see Santa.

The long line moved slowly. Children whined and mothers grew impatient. I clutched Cameron's cool, small hand and gazed at him wistfully, wishing away the whiteness of his skin. He was stretching his neck for a better view and had an expectant gleam in his eyes. We were almost up to Santa!

Finally, it was our turn. Cameron scrambled up into the ornate, red sleigh and looked up into Santa's face with anticipation. I stood off to the side and watched.

"Well, what do we have here?" Santa asked, noticing Cameron's balding head. "Are you going to have an operation, son?"

"No, he's having radiation for a brain tumor," I answered from where I stood.

"What's his name?"

"Cameron!" my son piped up.

"Come over here, Mom," Santa called. I stepped nearer to hear him. "You know that after the doctors have done all they can with their technology, that the ultimate healing is up to the Lord."

"Oh, absolutely!" I agreed.

"Would you sit up here with me, Mom?" I climbed up into the sleigh.

"Do you mind if I pray for this little guy?" I shook my head. Santa continued, "I had a serious problem in my brain at one time and the Lord healed me. I believe He will heal Cameron, too."

Santa pulled Cameron and me close, and I felt as if God had reached down and wrapped me up in a warm hug. I needed it so badly right at that moment.

Santa prayed, "Father, I ask you to touch this little fella from the top of his head to the bottom of his feet. Make him feel good for Christmas. Your word promises us, 'for nothing is impossible with God.' We thank you for healing this little child's body. Amen."

When I opened my eyes, about thirty people had gathered around the sleigh, some bewildered, others with knowing looks. I thanked Santa. With Cameron beaming, he and I left the mall.

On the ride home, I realized how easily I could have missed that special moment. But God had something much better planned.

He had steered me to a Santa whose fur-clad arms were used by God to touch me with his concern, and whose lips had offered a prayer of hope when I was too weak to pray. God had led my small son and me to a saintly Santa - the Santa he would use to put Christmas back into our hearts!

Merry Christmas!