



HOT TOPICS

CHIEF'S CORNER



The definition of collaboration is working together to create something. That is exactly what we are doing by collaborating with Read Elementary School. Our partnership has the opportunity to create many things. One result will be the coolest playground ever! Who doesn't love the idea of having a fire department themed playground at one of our local schools? But it is so much more than that.

As the department seeks opportunities to develop talent pipelines in our long-term recruitment strategies, introducing and reinforcing the idea that a career in the fire service is attainable to our local elementary aged children is a winning proposition. This partnership will create opportunities to do increased fire prevention education, build adult-child relationships based on trust, and to support childhood literacy through leaders being readers to classes. These are just a few of the potential benefits that we hope to realize with this innovative pilot program.

Another true benefit to the department is the reminder of the impact that we can have. Being able to see the unbelievable joy that the students had on their last day of school because we were there, with a big ladder truck, spraying water on the playground and letting them run through it. We got to be part of creating special memories that they will not soon forget. We got to remember what for many of us is a foundation for why we joined the fire service. The love of the big red trucks. Memories of firefighters coming to our schools and us thinking that someday we wanted to grow up and be firefighters too. It wasn't just the school kids who were wearing big smiles that day. Days like this are no small part in what makes the fire service such a great career. I am lucky to be a part of it. Have a safe and fun start to summer!

--Chief Mike Stanley

OPEN OR CLOSED?

by MJ VanGompel
Management Analyst

I'm a science kind of person. Show me the facts. As a parent of 2 and grandparent of 3 children under the age of 4, I am concerned about fire safety. So when the Fire Science Research institute (FSRI) asked a number of individuals to participate in a discussion and demonstration about fire safety I was very interested to learn what they had to say.

Luckily I didn't have to read a 30 page scientific journal with three pages of footnotes. It took me just a few minutes to watch this short video. FSRI used research data and footage, combined with custom 3D modeling for this scenario. I immediately texted my kids with the link to this video and asked them to watch.

Key Takeaways

- You have 3 minutes or less to get out of your house, so have an escape plan and practice it;
- Smoke from a home fire is thick, black and toxic; you may not be able to see;
- Smoke inhalation is the leading cause of death in home fires;
- Make sure you have working smoking detectors in all levels of your home; and
- Close the door before you go to sleep.

READ PARK ELEMENTARY PROJECT UPDATE

by Jennifer Skolaski, PhD

Our overall goal for the playground project is to reach \$475,000 by August 1st. With the generosity of individual donors, businesses, and community partners we have been able to raise over \$412,000. We're so close to making this project happen by this fall 2023, but need a few more partners to step up.

Our last pieces that specifically need funding include:

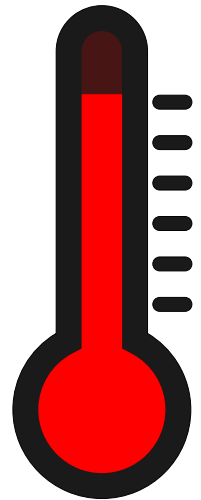
- Walking path throughout the property for students to help regulate their bodies, staff to have the ability for self-care, and an accessible way for students to get from the playground, to musical instruments, to the stage, to the outdoor classroom, and to the book walk = \$37,350
- Outdoor classroom for teachers to have alternative teaching spaces, students to learn in nature, a space for mentors to meet with students, and a space for the community to enjoy = \$15,000
- Outdoor stage for children and families to perform and play = \$5,000
- Outdoor play shelter for kids to use their imagination and be safe = \$3,000
- Landscaping to improve the property aesthetics = \$2,650

Our original \$450,000 goal was raised by \$25,000 to cover the cost of a new ornamental fence, which will be placed in front of the school and replace a chain link fence that many of our students connect to incarceration. The Oshkosh Area School District is paying for a chain link fence, but due to the generosity of an individual donor who paid the difference in cost between a chain link fence and an ornamental fence, we are upgrading to a better and more welcoming fence that will reflect the history of the property.

We are so grateful for all the community support we have gotten!



Please consider making a donation, if you have not already done so. You can contribute to this campaign by making a tax deductible donation to the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation (230 Ohio Street, Ste. 100, Oshkosh, WI, 54902), in the memo line please write "Read Elementary Playground Fund," or online at https://www.oshkoshareacf.org/?post_type=fund&p=3242



87% of Goal



The students/teachers and parents at Read Elementary raised money to support the playground project. The Oshkosh Fire Department with Equipment Operator Ben Schoenborn at the nozzle surprised them with a big spray of the playground. The kids were ecstatic.

CELLCOM MARATHON 2023

by MJ VanGompel, Management Analyst, MSc



When a firefighter goes on scene of a fire they may be wearing anywhere from 45 to 80 pounds of "turnout" gear. (Source: *Firefighter Insider*) This gear is the firefighters protection between them and the fire. They wear turnout pants and jacket, hood, helmet, boots, gloves, SCBA (self-contained breathing apparatus) in addition to carrying a radio and other tools that they need to fight the fire. Let's not forget the hose. If a firefighter weighs between 130 to 200 pounds, this means they may be carrying between 33% to 50% of their body weight. That's a lot of extra weight to be carrying.

How do firefighters keep in excellent physical condition you wonder? Our firefighters are encouraged to work out every day at least 30 minutes and they have the muscles to prove it.

Others have taken their cardiac fitness to a whole new level. Just ask EMS Coordinator, Eric Shea and Firefighter/ Paramedic Alex Johll. For the past months, both men have been preparing for the 2023 Cellcom Marathon in Green Bay which was held May 21. The race started at 7:00 a.m. and finished with a final lap at Lambeau Field.

Eric finished at 5:09:24, two minutes faster than his time for the Chicago marathon. "I always hated running when I was growing up, but in the last 6 years I have really come to enjoy it. It is such a great outlet to clear my mind and to get in a good work out. This was my second full marathon and to share this race with Alex was pretty special. It's really fun to be ambulance partners and to have a common interest in running! Maybe someday I'll be faster than him...."

Alex completed the 26.2 miles in 3:51:55. "I started running 3 years ago as a way to improve my overall health and fitness. I quickly realized that running, like any form of exercise, is an excellent way to become the best firefighter and person I can be. Getting to run my first marathon with Eric made it all the more special. I'm lucky to get to work with him and all the other excellent firefighters we have", said Alex.



Congratulations to both Eric and Alex on completing the marathon. You are heroes!



WHAT'S NEW

On May 16 the Oshkosh Fire Department was recognized by the Winnebago County Wisconsin Sheriff's office for their multiple ice rescues during a severe snow squall on Lake Winnebago. Attending the award ceremony were (from left to right) Assistant Chief Greg Stelter, Equipment Operator Chris Heder, Captain Scott Krause, and Firefighter Josh Antes.

Great job guys!



CAR FIRE BLANKET

Thank you Capital Credit Union for their generous grant of \$3,230 to purchase a car fire blanket.

In 2020, there were 6,310 electric vehicles registered in the State of Wisconsin. That increased to 9,330 in 2021. It is expected that this number will continue to rise dramatically. While electric vehicles have many benefits, they also create additional risks.

Fires in electric vehicles powered by high-voltage lithium-ion batteries pose the risk of electric shock to emergency responders from exposure to the high-voltage components of a damaged lithium-ion battery. A further risk is that damaged cells in the battery can experience uncontrolled increases in temperature and pressure (thermal runaway), which can lead to hazards such as battery reignition/fire. The risks of electric shock and battery reignition/fire arise from the "stranded" energy that remains in a damaged battery.

A car fire blanket provides the quickest and most effective way for firefighters to extinguish a car fire by removing oxygen supply. Toxic gases and smoke are stifled immediately in fossil fuel cars. The same immediate result is achieved in electric cars, whose batteries have not been affected by the fire.

This project will not only protect the firefighters of Oshkosh, it can also be a resource to our surrounding communities. Through our existing mutual-aid agreements, the blanket could be taken to neighboring fire departments to help them extinguish electric vehicle fires safely as well. The impact of the project would be very far reaching and dramatically improve firefighter safety in the area.



CONGRATULATIONS CAPTAIN CRAIG DOWNS



Congratulations on your 30 years of service.
You will be missed.

When Captain Craig Downs retired from the Oshkosh Fire Department (OFD) on June 1, Station 16 was packed with members new and retired. Known for his love of cribbing, "Stimpy" got his nickname from a popular cartoon series during his time in paramedic school. Former EMS Chief Jim Austad, who started employment at the same time, played his counterpart. "Ren".

Around the fire station Captain Downs put a ton of work into vehicle extrication training and equipment on all of the fire engines, as well as decorative pieces at the firehouses such as the hose flags and ladder/pike pole displays. He played a huge role in the Honor Wall project and designed and built the specialty fire podium to honor retired chief Mark Boettcher.

Craig started with OFD in August of 1992. By 2002 he had been promoted to Equipment Operator, Lieutenant in 2010 and Captain in 2016. A career to be remembered.



FALL PREVENTION UPDATE

The Oshkosh Fire Department received a grant from the Ladies Benevolent Society to purchase a stair climber for the Oshkosh Senior Center and the Falls Prevention Program.

The Oshkosh Senior Center and the Oshkosh Fire Department are committed to helping older adults "Find Balance."

Build your strength now to prevent future falls! It's never too late to start.



MAY MONTHLY METRICS

by MJ VanGompel, Management Analyst



Up or down from last month

Emergency Medical Services



756 ↓

Motor Vehicle Accidents



26 ↑

Structure Fires



18 ↑

Falls



131 ↓

Inspections



194 ↓

Overdoses



12 ↑

LET'S CONNECT

