We Passed!
-See “Pro Board Re-accreditation Visit” on page 3-

L to R- Gary Oden, Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs; Rachel Nix, Arkansas Fire Academy Director; Tom Peal, Pro Board; Fred Piechota Jr., Pro Board; Dr. Steve Franks, SAU Tech Chancellor
Hello Fellow Firefighters,

There are so many wonderful things going on with the AFA. One of our accrediting bodies, Pro Board, has visited and passed us on our reaccrediting.

At the last joint convention in Fayetteville, the AFA began a new award process that we will be doing every year. One is the “Charles P. Butler Award” and the other is “Outstanding Adjunct Instructor Award”.

We have received several donations from fire departments for which the AFA is very grateful and won’t be able to thank the donors enough. You’ll see most of what I’m referring to in this Firewatch.

One of the questions I get most often is “why can’t I get a class in my area or department”. To get a class from the AFA in your department or area is very easy. Fill out a course request form and send or fax to the AFA. We would like 10 students or more. This helps with the cost of sending an instructor to your area. Many times you have a qualified instructor that can teach the course in-house and can receive that training and an AFA certificate. Even if you have a qualified instructor you may still choose to use an AFA instructor. We will do our best to provide that service.

The other question I get is “why do I have to fill out an application”. The application provides several key pieces of information, such as: a signature from the chief or training officer verifying you are a member of that fire department. This also lets us know you are covered by workman’s comp. It will aid us in updating your training records as well.

I hope this will help with some of the questions I have been presented with lately.

Another great thing that has happened, due in part to the Arkansas Fire Service, is the passing of the Higher Education Bond Issue. This has enabled the AFA to start the process of restoring the 2-story burn building as well as updating or building propane fueled props. This was not only a wonderful thing for the AFA but it was also great for the other 2-year and 4-year colleges. They also benefited from this bond issue.

As always, we appreciate your support and willingness to help.

Continue training and stay safe,

Rachel Nix
Director, Arkansas Fire Academy

New Faculty and staff at Arkansas Fire Academy
New additions to the faculty and staff in the last year.

Camden Office: Rich Wakefield, EMS Coordinator

Off Site: No new Faculty or Staff
Proboard Re-accreditation Visit

The Arkansas Fire Academy’s recent on-site accreditation review by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications Committee on Accreditation (PRO Board) was successful. SAU Tech Chancellor, Dr. Steve Franks, received notification on October 25, 2006 that the Arkansas Fire Academy was approved for re-accreditation in the following standards and levels:

NFPA 1001, Fire Fighter I, 2002 Edition
NFPA 1001, Fire Fighter II, 2002 Edition
NFPA 1021, Fire Officer I, 2003 Edition
NEPA 1021, Fire Officer II, 2003 Edition
NFPA 1002, Driver/Operator Pumper, 2003 Edition
NFPA 1041, Fire Service Instructor I, 2002 Edition
NFPA 472, Hazardous Materials Awareness
NFPA 472, Hazardous Materials Operational

The Arkansas Fire Academy serves an estimated 15,000 to 19,000 fire service personnel, mostly volunteer, serving in approximately 1000 fire departments, of which 50 are career, 50 combination and the remaining volunteer. Rachel Nix, the Arkansas Fire Academy Director provided leadership for the recent Pro Board visit. The AFA is a division of SAU Tech.
Paperwork, Paperwork, Paperwork!

Many of the issues concerning paperwork that have plagued the Fire Academy for many years are disappearing as policies and procedures are being set in place and the local training officers are adhering to these policies. As these policies are met, the quality of our records improves and the fire departments and firefighters of the State of Arkansas are better served. Our goal is to serve the State of Arkansas and meet the training needs of firefighters and fire departments. We cannot meet these goals without the help of the local training officers and departments.

However, we are still having departments and training officers that are not practicing good procedures for enrolling and reporting of classes taught. Applications must be received at the office in Camden no later than two weeks before the class. Often these are faxed to the office. At times the fax machine may malfunction and the fax is missed. It would be good for the person who is faxing the application to call and verify that the fax has been received.

Classes are to be requested and approved prior to teaching. Course request forms can be downloaded from the AFA website (www.sautech.edu/academics/Arkansas Fire Academy/AFA forms or by contacting Kilatha Steelman (870-574-1521). Once the date has been set for a class it can not be changed unless the change is cleared with either James Rubow, Assistant Director or Kilatha Steelman. This will give all students who have made application to attend the class an opportunity to be notified of the change.

Prerequisites are being check for ALL applications. If the applicant does not meet the requirements, the application will be rejected and the applicant will be notified either by phone or mail. Credit will not be received for the class if the applicant does not meet this requirement—even if they take the class! The classes are developed to teach in a sequence that builds on other classes; therefore, these prerequisites must be met. The Firefighter Track Module Program is developed for the firefighter to have the option of testing for Firefighter I and II and receive IFSAC certification upon completion of the first 17 modules. If the student has not completed all the necessary training, this testing can not be done.

Class rosters are to be sent in to the Camden office no later than two weeks after the completion of the class. The information will be entered when it is received. This will ensure the proper information is in the database when we check prerequisites for future classes and enable our staff to issue certificates in a timely matter.

Two-story Burn Building Restoration

The two-story burn building on the AFA Camden campus will soon be under restoration. The pictures above show the C-side of the building as well as a close-up of some of the water damage under the windows. We will keep you updated on the progress of the restoration.
ARKANSAS FIRE ACADEMY
BOOKSTORE

The Arkansas Fire Academy Bookstore is located within the SAU Tech Bookstore. The AFA Bookstore provides textbooks and study materials for firefighters and emergency care personnel throughout Arkansas.

Georgia Womack is the contact person within the SAU-Tech Bookstore for the Arkansas Fire Academy Bookstore. Bookstore hours of operation are: Monday-Thursday from 8:00-5:00 and Friday from 8:00-11:30.

Orders may be made by mail or phone. Fire Departments and Cities may charge the materials but individuals are on a cash only basis.

The following materials are available:

IFSTA Manuals and Products
Fire Protection Publications
Emergency Care and First Responder Manuals
Fire Attack and Silent War Manuals
American Heart Association CPR Materials
Essentials 4th Edition
Pumping Apparatus Driver/Operator
Fire and Emergency Services Instructor
Fire Department Company Officer
Souvenir Items.

SAU Tech Bookstore
Phone: 870-574-4595
Fax: 870-574-4489

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Maintenance of Personal Protective Equipment

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” Every firefighter assumes that retirement will be in the future and plans for a healthy experience. Often simple everyday habits affect the future health of the firefighter—example: care of equipment. Dirty turnout gear is a firefighter’s worse enemy. By not cleaning and removing the by-products of combustion from the turnout gear problems can be created. By not cleaning turnout gear after continuous firefighting, the increasingly heavy soiling makes the gear a conductor of electricity and exposure to the right situation makes the gear ignitable due to those contaminants on the gear.

Simple turnout gear cleaning can begin with hosing off the gear after a fire. If your department has an extractor, the gear can be washed after a structure fire or a medical call that caused an exposure to bio contaminants. Turnout gear cleaning should be based on a schedule or the volume of calls.

Always follow manufacturer’s recommended instruction for cleaning turnout gear. Never use any type of bleach on turnouts because bleach can destroy the protection that is woven into the outer shell’s fabric. Clean turnouts and proper care of the personal protective equipment will pay dividends when most needed.

The most important piece of equipment used by the firefighter is the personal protective equipment ensemble. Rescue is the first responsibility for the fire service and properly cleaned and maintained personal protective equipment is essential for the protection of the firefighter and for the effectiveness of the rescue effort.

Health and safety should be a daily focus for the firefighter. His life and the life of those that are served depends on it!
James Utsey, instructor and coordinator of the Firefighter Standards course at the Arkansas Fire Academy, is the SAU Tech Outstanding Faculty Member for 2006. He was recognized with an award at the 18th annual fall conference of the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges held in Hot Springs October 15-17 2006.

Kevin McMaster is the recipient of Outstanding Adjunct Award for his contributions to the Arkansas fire service presented at the 2006 Convention at Fayetteville in June. He is pictured above with Director Rachel Nix and Assistant Director James Rubow.

Charles Butler, retired Assistant Director of the Fire Academy, received two awards at the 2006 Convention in Fayetteville. He is the first recipient of the Charles Butler Award for his positive contribution to the Fire Academy. He also received the 2006 Willhite Award Honoring individual excellence in fire prevention.

How do I ----- ?????????

Contact the Arkansas Fire Academy?
Phone: 870-574-1521, Fax: 870-574-0817
Mailing Address: P O Box 3499 Camden AR 71711

Schedule a class that I need in my department?
Contact Kilatha Steelman and fill out a course request form.

Do incident reporting for my department?
Contact Terry Harcrow.

Schedule a First Responder Class?
Contact Rich Wakefield

Get a record of my training at the Arkansas Fire Academy? Send in a request for a transcript. You need to include your name, social security number, where the transcript is to be sent, and your signature.

Register for a class? Contact Shannon Fleming

Confirm that an application or other paperwork has been received after it is faxed?
Contact Patricia Box

James Utsey
Outstanding Faculty Member

James Utsey, instructor and coordinator of the Firefighter Standards course at the Arkansas Fire Academy, is the SAU Tech Outstanding Faculty Member for 2006. He was recognized with an award at the 18th annual fall conference of the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges held in Hot Springs October 15-17 2006.
January 9, 2007, by unanimous decision, the board of directors at Lake Hamilton Fire Department agreed to follow Chief Loren Shanek’s recommendation, to donate their Engine 3 to the Arkansas Fire Training Academy. Engine 3 is a 1977 Chevrolet / FMC pumper with a 1000 GPM pump and a 750 gallon water tank. This engine had served Lake Hamilton since it was purchased new in 1977 and was housed at station one where it served as the primary pumper for that part of their district. The Lake Hamilton Firefighters as well as the board of directors are pleased that this truck will be used to train firefighters from across the state. Lake Hamilton recently replaced this engine with a new Ferrara pumper that will proudly be designated Engine 3. Lake Hamilton serves a population of over 10,000 on the outskirts of Hot Springs and protects an area of over 160 square miles. They are proud of their ISO rating of 5. Within the district they have 5 fire stations and one fire boat station on Lake Hamilton. Equipment in their inventory includes 4 pumpers, 1 pumper / tanker, 3 brush trucks, 2 tankers, a 100-ft aerial truck, a rescue truck, the chief’s command car and 2 fire / rescue boats. They have 33 volunteer firefighters, 24 of which are first responders. Also included on the roster are 3 fire cadets and an auxiliary unit. 2008 marks the 50th year anniversary for Lake Hamilton Fire Department.
ATTN: All Fire Departments

AFA wants to ensure that our Firewatch newsletter reaches all fire departments within the state. In order to maintain an accurate mailing list, we need your assistance. Please check the mailing label on this newsletter and advise us if your department has any changes with regard to the mailing address and the fire chief’s name. Please contact Sarah Hixson at Arkansas Fire Academy at (870) 574-1521 or e-mail at shixson@sautech.edu with any corrections.