



# CallBox



Newsletter of the Bellerose Fire Department

Volume 1, Issue 3

December 2008

## Chief's Chat

Hi, my name is John R. Cortapasso, your current fire chief, serving a two year term which began this past April. As the holiday season approaches many of us will have live Christmas trees festively lit in our homes. Eventually, these trees begin to dry out so it is always a good idea to have a fire extinguisher in an accessible place.

I am happy to report it has been quiet in the Village throughout the first six months of my term and for that matter throughout the County. Your volunteer Fire Department is a member of the First Battalion in Nassau County, which includes ten different departments from Bellerose to Mineola. There are nine battalions in all, in the County.

The Department has joined forces with other fire departments throughout the County in supporting Operation Wounded Warrior (OWW). This has been a year long effort to raise money and goods to deliver down to our service men and women who have been injured defending our great nation. In early December, a convoy of firefighters from Nassau County head south to Camp Lejeune, NC to visit the soldiers and bring them gifts for the holidays. This is the third year that the fire service in Nassau County has been supporting this great cause.

We currently have several new residents who have come down to join the Department and are currently training as probationary firefighters. We will be looking to attract two or three additional probationary firefighters early next year as we strive to maintain an adequately staffed department of active firefighters. This is a constant challenge for volunteer departments nationwide as we fight attrition in our ranks.

Please consider joining Bellerose Fire Dept after the New Year and assist us in protecting the lives and property of your family and those of our neighbors. It's our town and it's up to us to protect it.

Have a happy and healthy holiday!  
Stay safe.

Chief Cortapasso

## Fire Prevention Safety Tip

### HOLIDAY FIRE PREVENTION

Each year fires occurring during the holiday season injure 2,600 individuals and cause over \$930 million in damage. By following some of these tips, you can greatly reduce your chances of becoming a holiday fire casualty.

#### Selecting a Tree for the Holiday:

Needles on a fresh tree should be green and hard to pull back from the branches, and the needles should not break if the tree has been freshly cut. The trunk should be sticky to the touch. Old trees can be identified by bouncing the tree trunk on the ground. If many needles fall off, the tree has been cut too long, has probably dried out, and is a fire hazard.

#### Caring for Your Tree:

Do not place your tree close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heat vent. The heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flame or sparks. Do not put your live tree up too early or leave it up longer than two weeks. Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times. The best way to dispose of your tree is to take it to a recycling center or have it hauled away.

## BFD Spotlight

### Fastest Water on the Border

Dryer Efficiency - by Ex-Chief Wayne Weber

There is something that you can do that will keep your home safe from dryer fires and increase the life of your dryer to twice as long.

Most people use the new dryer sheets for fabric softening. The only problem with them is that dryer sheets cause a film over the mesh and it can overheat and burn out the heating unit. You can't SEE the film, but it's there. Take out the filter and try to pour water through it. You'll find that it often holds water like a bowl! This is what causes dryer units to catch fire and potentially burn your house down!

The best way to keep your dryer working for a very long time (& to keep your electric bill lower) is to take that filter out & wash it with hot soapy water & an old toothbrush (or other brush) at least every six months. It doesn't take long and it will make your dryer safe and efficient!

## Ask Sparky???

Dear Sparky - How can I best protect my home and family from fire during the holiday season?

Happy Holiday Harry

Dear Happy - Please see this issue's Fire Prevention Safety Tip for detailed instructions on what you can do.

Sparky

Do you have a fire safety or fire service related question you would like to have answered? Submit it to [callbox@bellerosefd.org](mailto:callbox@bellerosefd.org) and look for it to be answered in a future issue.

## Fire House Tours

If you would like to arrange a tour or demonstration of the Bellerose Fire Department for your group or organization please send an email to First Asst. Chief Charles Puglisi at [charles.puglisi@bellerosefd.org](mailto:charles.puglisi@bellerosefd.org). Please include group description and date you would like to visit along with contact information.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

VISIT BY SANTA

DECEMBER 24TH

WEEKLY DRILLS

BFD FIREHOUSE, SUPERIOR ROAD

Every Tuesday Night at 8PM

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**Holiday Lights:**

Maintain your holiday lights. Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets. Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory. Do not overload electrical outlets. Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe. Make sure to periodically check the wires – they should not be warm to the touch. Do not leave holiday lights on when you are not home.

**Use Care With Candles:**

Candles can be dangerous. If you use them, make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot be easily knocked down. Never leave candles unattended while burning. Never put lit candles on a tree. Do not go near a holiday tree with an open flame – candles, lighters or matches.

Finally, as in every season, have working smoke alarms installed on every level of your home, test them monthly and keep them clean and equipped with fresh batteries at all times. And remember to practice your home escape plan.

**Have a Safe and Happy Holiday Season!**

**Department Rating Improved**

*First Asst. Chief Charles Puglisi*

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) collects and evaluates information from communities in the United States on their structure fire suppression capabilities and, based on their comprehensive analysis, assigns each community a Public Protection Clarification (PPC™), an important factor used by insurance underwriters in setting the price of fire insurance. While home owners and businesses in the commercial district may see an increase or decrease in the cost of fire insurance as a result of the fire department’s ISO classification, the total cost of insurance is based on many factors.

The PPC™ rating system is a ten-point scale with lower numbers assigned to departments whose fire suppression capacity is matched to the fire protection needs of the area served. The final PPC™ rating is computed using a complex mathematical algorithm that includes a fire department’s fire alarm and communication systems, equipment, staffing, training, record keeping, the geographic distribution of fire companies, and the water supply system. The Bellerose Fire Department’s last review by the ISO was in 1995. At that time it was assigned a PPC™ a solid rating of 4.

In the first quarter of 2008 the Bellerose Fire Department was the subject of a comprehensive ISO review. An inspector from ISO visited the fire house, reviewed the department’s equipment, call volume and response times, member training records, inspection records, electronic reporting systems and pre-plans for buildings in the commercial district. The day-to-day vigilance of the Chiefs and Firematic Officers ensured that all the required documentation was in order and ready for the ISO inspection.

On June 30<sup>th</sup> the ISO sent the results of its inspection and records review to the Mayor and Chief of the Department. The final document, a 36 page report, provides a detailed analysis of the Bellerose Fire Department’s fire suppression capacity. The bottom line: effective October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 the PPC™ rating of the Bellerose Fire Department has been upgraded to class 3. Of the 47,663 fire department in the United States fewer than 4% have a rating of 3 and only 1.2% of all fire departments have a higher rating. Only 8.5% of the 2,515 fire departments in New York State have a rating of 3 and only 0.8% of New York State fire departments have a higher rating.

**Brain Teaser???**

A palindrome is a word or phrase that reads the same, if it's turned back-to-front. The names Bob, Eve, and Otto are all palindromes. So is the name of the pop group Abba. Try to identify palindromic words from the following clues. Good luck!

Example: Part of the body

Answer: Eye

1. Middy
2. A young dog
3. Flat
4. Word for addressing a lady
5. An Eskimo canoe
6. A system for detecting aircraft, ships, etc.

*Look for the Answer in our next issue*

*Last issue’s Brain Teaser solved*

Find out what the animals are! (for example, "To run away or escape" could be a "flea")

1. hair-control foam - Moose (Mousse)
2. very exposed - Bear (Bare)
3. tellin' falsities - Lion (Lyn')
4. a lamenting cry - Whale (Wail)
5. a dull person - Boar (Bore)
6. a precious or loved one - Deer (Dear)
7. first you get a parking ticket, then you get this - Toad (Towed)
8. these make up a chain - Lynx (Links)

**BFD Incidents and Training**

Incidents

Since the last issue of the CallBox, the Bellerose Fire Department has been part of only 2 bigger incidents. The first was a natural gas incident in Floral Park where we assisted in search and evacuation. The second was as first mutual aid engine for a house fire in Bellerose Terrace. During that incident, the BFD was responsible for assisting with primary search and overhaul. Although damage was extensive, it was limited by the quick response of Bellerose Terrace and Bellerose Fire Departments.

Training

Once again the BFD has completed our annual training at the Nassau County Fire Service Academy’s Burn Facility. As the colder months are upon us we will focus more on interior drills but will work outside when feasible. We also use this time to get in educational classes to increase our overall knowledge. (<http://www.bellerosefd.org>).

**Come Join Us!!**

Would you like to be part of a growing family? Would you like to contribute to your community? Would you be interested in testing the limits of your capabilities? Do you like a challenge? If so, come down any Tuesday night and see what we do at the BFD. You can do all this and more. Feel free to drop by the firehouse and see for yourself. If you can satisfy the minimum requirements, we will be happy to welcome you to our family.

Editor’s Note:

Callbox is a periodic publication whose purpose is to open a line of communication between village residents and the Fire Department dedicated to protecting you. It will also shed light on what exactly it is the BFD does and the people, fellow residents, who make it up. For comments email [callbox@bellerosefd.org](mailto:callbox@bellerosefd.org).

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