



New Jersey Division of Fire Safety

FIRE FOCUS



Excellence in Public Safety

In December 1773, Benjamin Franklin wrote an essay entitled, "Brave Men at Fires." He might as well have written it a few short weeks ago. In his essay he said: *"Neither cold, nor darkness will deter good people from hastening to the dreadful place to quench the flame. They do it not for the sake of reward or fame; but they have a reward in themselves, and they love one another."*

On July 13 and 14, we gathered to honor two brave men who found a reward in firefighting, and who loved what they did. Two men who, in turn, richly rewarded their community. On July 5 they hastened to a dreadful place to save others. For them, there was no other way.

For over 100 years of service to our nation, the U.S Army's Spartan Brigade has been tested in the crucible of ground combat. To this day they fight America's adversaries with overwhelming combat power. When the Nation calls, "whom shall we send?", a Spartan will respond, "Send Me!".

When the same question rang that night from the fiery ship, Augusto "Augie" Acabou and Wayne "Bear" Brooks Jr. also answered: "Send me!".

They were firefighters to the core, heroes already to their friends and loved ones. For both, being a firefighter was more than a job, it was in their blood. As they entered the burning ship that night, they were following their dream to serve and to save lives. Like firefighters everywhere, they embodied the best of humanity; of commitment and community; of teamwork and trust. Values instilled to the core of our character; values reflected in the service we provide as firefighters.

To the Acabou and Brooks families, we can only imagine how hard it is, how much you yearn to reach out and touch the living memories you can see so clearly in your mind's eye; the smiles, the warmth, the Sunday dinners, the last movie you watched together... we hope you can remember the good and happy times, and that they bring some smiles through your tears.

To the Newark firefighting family, your tragedy is ours. The fire service grieves with you, and we support you through this difficult time as we honor Augie and Bear when we pledge that they will always be in our hearts, and their example will never die.

Richard J. Mikutsky
New Jersey State Fire Marshal



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Bayonne's Nicholas Oresko School Captures 2023 NJ FIRE Bowl Title

On May 24, the 16th Annual New Jersey FIRE Bowl program culminated at Kean University's STEM Building with two teams answering questions on stage for the state championship. In a close-fought competition, the team from Bayonne's Nicholas Oresko School edged out the newcomers from Burnet Middle School of Union Township.

The 2023 edition of the FIRE Bowl proved to be the most competitive ever, with over 30 teams of 7th- and 8th-graders battling throughout the spring to see which school knows the most about all things fire-related.



The program, which began as a partnership between the NJ Division of Fire Safety and Dr. Frank Field to promote the "Fire Is" educational videos, continues to grow each year. The goal is to instill life-long fire safety practices through spirited competition. In addition to studying fire prevention, students study fire science, firefighting operations, the history of fire/firefighting, as well as fire in current events.

Since 2006, over 2,000 middle school students have participated in the New Jersey FIRE Bowl, several of whom have gone on to pursue careers in the fire service.

New Jersey's Top Two FIRE Bowl Teams - Burnet Middle School and Nicholas Oresko School - Compete live on stage at Kean University.



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NJ Division of Fire Safety Hosts 19th Annual Homeland Security Conference

On June 6, State Fire Marshal Richard Mikutsky and NJ Division of Fire Safety staff hosted the 19th Annual Homeland Security and Fire Safety Conference. A sell-out crowd of 250 attendees came to Kean University's STEM Building to hear Keynote Speaker Chief Ron Kanterman, Executive Inspector, FDNY-Bureau of Fire Prevention, discuss this year's theme of "Back to Basics." Chief Kanterman focused on the importance of leadership in today's fire service and the challenges we face.



Chief Ron Kanterman delivers his Keynote Address to a capacity crowd at the 19th Annual NJDFS Homeland Security Conference at Kean University in Union.

Lieutenant Paul Rogers, Retired-FDNY, Energy Safety Response Group, also made a presentation where he discussed new advancements in lithium battery technology and the dangers it poses to both the public and first responders. Lastly, Deputy Chief Thomas Dunne, New York City Fire Department, presented on how to be successful despite the difficulties of fireground operations.

Next year, the NJ Division of Fire Safety will celebrate the 20th year of the Homeland Security Conference. Stay tuned for more information in Spring 2024.



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NJDFS Selects State Winners of 2022-2023 Fire Safety Poster Contest

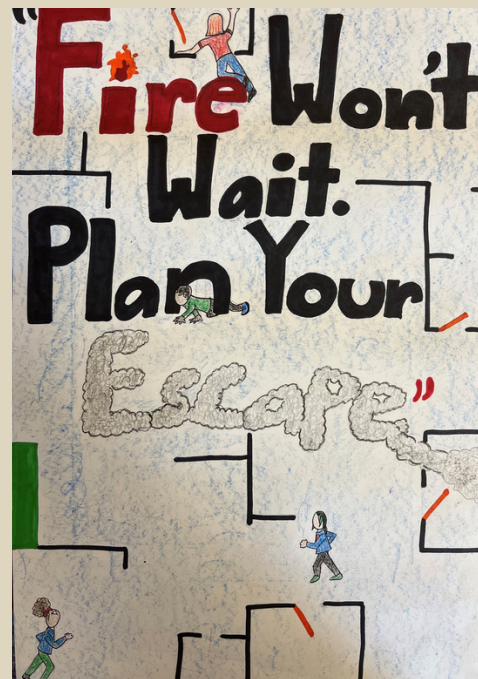


Throughout the 2022-2023 school year, artistic students from around New Jersey created original artwork to promote fire safety messages in their schools. Using the past year's Fire Prevention Week theme - "Fire Won't Wait. Plan Your Escape" - young artists from kindergarten to 12th grade submitted thousands of entries into the New Jersey Fire Safety Poster Contest.

The contest is a collaborative effort between the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety and the New Jersey Fire Prevention & Protection Association. The winners shown below will be featured in the 2024 New Jersey Fire Safety Calendars:



Division 1 Winner
Juliana Holland
Mill Lake School
Monroe Township, NJ



Division 2 Winner
Polina Sobolev
Frank R. Conwell - P.S. #3
Jersey City, NJ



Division 3 Winner
Audrey Tracy
Central Middle School
Stirling, NJ



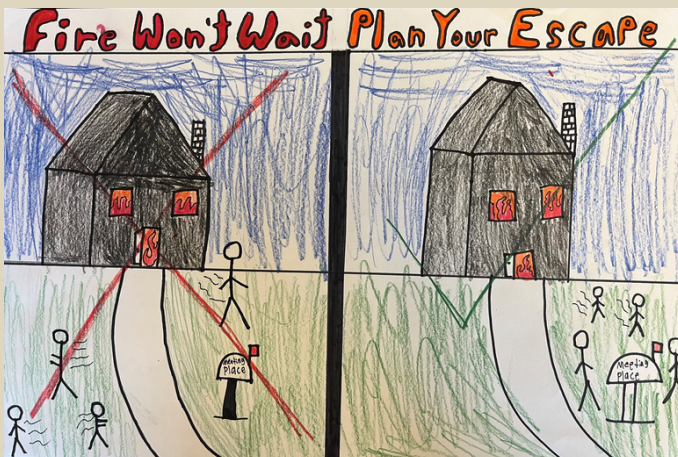
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Division 4 Winner
Celine Park
Bergen County Academies
Hackensack, NJ



Division 5 Winner
Mason Feltes
Cumberland County Tech. Education Center
Vineland, NJ



Division 7 Winner
M. Laughlin
Brick Township High School
Brick, NJ



Division 6 Winner
Jeff Cabigas
Horace Mann Community School
Bayonne, NJ



Excellence in Public Safety

Dr. Frank Field, Champion of Fire Safety in New Jersey, Dies at 100

On July 1, the State of New Jersey lost one of its most prolific and esteemed fire safety advocates with the passing of Dr. Frank Field at the age of 100.

In addition to his illustrious career as a nationally-renowned meteorologist, Dr. Field leaves a legacy of teaching people how to be safer and healthier. He believed in taking a scientific approach towards public education, which he did by promoting a serious, realistic fire safety program for children and popularizing the Heimlich Maneuver nationwide.

As a long-time resident of Montclair, Dr. Field built partnerships with the fire service community throughout New Jersey to further the mission of fire safety education. In 2005, Dr. Field worked alongside State Fire Marshal Lawrence Petrillo and Bayonne School District Superintendent Patricia McGeehan to establish the New Jersey FIRE Bowl program. At the time, this program for middle schoolers was geared towards promoting an upcoming fire safety education campaign: "Fire Is..."

The "Fire Is..." video series debuted in 2006 as a five-module DVD. It highlighted the very dangerous and very real elements of experiencing a fire in one's home. The "Fire Is..." program is still taught today throughout New Jersey's schools and by fire prevention professionals everywhere. The videos are currently available at: www.njfiresafety.com

On behalf of New Jersey's fire service and the countless lives he saved through education, we say thank you, Dr. Frank Field.



The "Fire Is..." initiative was conceived by Dr. Frank Field, with more than 50 years' experience as science editor, meteorologist and reporter for the local NBC, CBS and Fox networks in New York City. He became passionate about fire prevention in 1987 when he read the alarming statistics regarding civilian fire death and injury rates in the United States.



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SUMMER FIRE SAFETY

As the seasons change here in New Jersey, so do the hazards that could potentially cause fires. Here are some tips that your fire department, or fire prevention bureau, can promote in your towns this summer season:

Fireworks

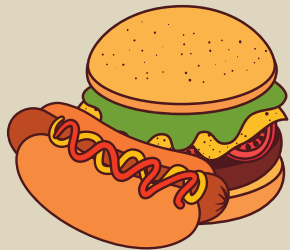
***To enjoy fireworks this summer, the best way is to see a public show put on by professionals.**

*Be aware of how dangerous even simple fireworks are at home. Sparklers can reach 1,200 degrees F and cause 3rd degree burns.

***NEVER allow young children to handle fireworks.**



Grilling



***Before you barbecue, make sure all elements of your gas grill are working properly and not leaking gas.**

*Keep your grill well away (at least 10 feet) from your home or anything that can burn.

***NEVER leave the grill unattended. Closely monitor what's cooking.**

Campfires / Fire Pits

***Build campfires at least 25 feet away from tents, shrubs, and anything that can burn.**

*Use fire pits **OUTDOORS ONLY**. Put them on a flat, level surface.

***Fires for recreation should never be lit on balconies, underneath eaves or overhangs, and away from railings or siding.**



As with all seasons, focus on having and practicing fire escape plans and stress the importance of having working smoke alarms in the home.

If we're all fire smart, Jersey is *shore* to have an amazing summer!



SAVING LIVES IS STRESSFUL!

We've Been Where You Are . . .
Now We're Here For **You**



We get it. The work is stressful and life can get overwhelming. Talk confidentially to a trained peer support specialist who has had similar experiences as a firefighter, dispatcher, or EMS professional. **NJ Fire & EMS Lifeline** is a 24/7 confidential peer support service for New Jersey Firefighters, Dispatchers and Emergency Medical Services Personnel and their families. We offer the following services:

- ✓ **PEER SUPPORT:** telephonic peer counseling, support and clinical assessment
- ✓ **CRITICAL INCIDENT CRISIS MANAGEMENT:** peer-based critical incident stress management (CISM) services available throughout New Jersey
- ✓ **TRAINING:** Resilience and wellness prevention training available to all fire, dispatch and EMS agencies upon request
- ✓ **PROVIDER NETWORK & RESOURCES:** access to providers who are familiar with the unique culture of fire, dispatch and EMS professions

Talk to us and find out more about our **free** and **confidential** services.

888.653.3367 | NJFIREEMS.com |





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You're invited! **FireStat**

Every 1st & 3rd Wednesday 9:15a

If interested in attending please contact
Capt. Ben Berkman: Bennet.Berkman@dca.nj.gov

The purpose of FireStat is to create a single, reliable one-stop fire information sharing platform

Log in to hear:

- *Discussions regarding current topics, trends & patterns
- *Presentations on current/pressing topics
- *Earn FREE CEUs



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NJ_FIRESAFETY





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