



**Town of Falmouth**  
**Fire-EMS Department**  
8 Bucknam Road  
Falmouth, ME 04105  
Business 207-781-2610  
Fax 207-699-5268

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**NEWS RELEASE – 2014-05**

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**Contact: Chief Howard Rice, Jr. at (207) 781-2610**

Falmouth Fire-EMS held their annual Awards Recognition Dinner at the Falmouth Country Club on Saturday night April 5<sup>th</sup>. A large group of 110 members and guests were present to recognize members of the department for their service in 2013.

Introduced to the membership in attendance were Falmouth Fire-EMS Life Members Ted Vail, Bill Lunt, David Halligan, Allen Coffey, Jim Matthews, George Tarbox, Linda Roberts, Andrea Roberts, and Mike Coffey. Also recognized were Falmouth Town Council Chair Teresa Pierce and Deputy Chief David Jackson representing the Portland Fire Department.

Chief Howard Rice, Jr. gave the opening remarks including listing off some of the accomplishments from 2013. The total call responses for calendar year 2013 were announced at 1,627 incidents, which is a 5% increase over the 2012 total of 1,549 incidents. In 2013 there were 1,072 calls for medical assistance, up 10% from the previous year. Chief Rice pointed out that in the room there was 924 years of service to Falmouth Fire-EMS and asked those members in attendance who have served the longest to stand and be recognized. Chief Rice then announced a commitment to the members and guests in attendance that the department will be a better department and learn from tragic events such as those most recently in Boston to be even more organized, better-trained, and safer than before.

Chief Rice then called upon Town Council Chair Teresa Pierce to speak to the department. Council Chair Pierce thanked members and their families for their dedication and commitment to the town. Council Chair Pierce also thanked Chief Rice for his leadership to the department and pointed out some of the positive examples of customer service

improvement to the community over the past few years such as the SMCC student live-in program and the high school EMT class.

Recognition awards were then presented to the members who responded to the most emergency calls in 2013 led by Firefighter/EMT Robert Franklin who responded on 393 emergencies last year. The rest of the top ten responders included Garrett Weldon, Nate Fitzgerald, Stan Bishop, Laurie Page, Dylan Hallett, Erik Pietrowicz, Jon Denham, Julie Suiter, and Zack Tooker. Also recognized were the five members who increased their response from 2012 to 2013 by the most calls. Garrett Weldon increased his responses by 61 calls and filling out the top five were David Cuttler, Jeff McCorkle, Max Pacetti, and Jon Squier.

Each year Falmouth Fire-EMS recognizes members on reaching a milestone of years of service with the department. The following groups were announced:

5 Years of Service – Matt Goldstein, Jon Denham, Kyle MacDonald, Cassandra Buhelt, and Levi Cyr

10 Years of Service – Ron Dearth, Sarah Beliveau, Brian Saucier, and Jason Barschdorf

15 Years of Service – Laurie Page

30 Years of Service – Steve Shaw

Deputy Chief Jay Hallett then presented an engraved clock and plaque on behalf of the department to Captain Mike Coffey who retired this past year after serving as a member for 34 years. Captain Coffey was thanked with a standing ovation from those in attendance.

Captain Mike Carroll presented a new award created this year to recognize the Live-in Student of the Year. Falmouth Fire-EMS has four fulltime college students who provide service to the fire-ems department in exchange for living quarters at the Winn Road fire station. This year's inaugural winner was Firefighter Nate Fitzgerald, who was singled out for always being there to help cover shifts, respond to calls, and for always displaying a positive attitude.

Lt. Denise Mayberry presented the Recruit of the Year award to Firefighter/EMT Anthony Regis. Lt. Mayberry spoke about how often Anthony is at Central Station in between his very busy schedule as a Resident at Maine Medical Center. In addition to volunteering at the station during the week, Anthony also took the time needed to complete Firefighter Level I and II Certification over this past year and has started covering overnight EMS shifts.

The Firefighter of the Year Award was presented to Firefighter Barney Schneider. In presenting the award Lieutenant Erik Knudsen spoke about how Barney came to the department in 2001 to fulfil a lifelong dream of being a firefighter. Now, 13 years later Barney is a well-respected, extremely dedicated and staple of Falmouth Fire-EMS. Known for his firehouse dinners, Barney is often the only member on calls during daytime hours from his station.

Lieutenant Laurie Page presented the EMS Provider of the Year award to Paramedic Sarah Beliveau. Lt. Page thanked Sarah for her dedication and willingness to help out responding to calls in her neighborhood even when she is not on duty. Just this past week Sarah was standing in line at the grocery store when a person fell ill and required assistance while the ambulance was being called. For this and many other examples, Sarah was recognized.

Deputy Chief Tom Martelle presented the Officer of the Year Award to Lieutenant Jason Macmaster. Deputy Chief Martelle spoke about how Lt. Macmaster is always willing to pitch in and help. Whether it is on a call, at the station, or even in his garage, he is routinely the first person to show up when assistance is needed. He was thanked for his leadership and dedication to the department. Whether it was a time when a live-in student needed assistance with his car, the Maine Safe Kids van needed repairs, or the department needed to store fire apparatus while the fire station parking lot was being paved, Jason steps up to help out.

The last award of the program was a Chief's Award. Each year the department recognizes those outside the department for their contributions to Falmouth Fire-EMS. This year Deputy Chief Jay Hallett presented the award to Falmouth Dispatch. In presenting the award Deputy Chief Hallett thanked the dispatchers for their assistance at calls and noted that we cannot even begin to do our job until they have done theirs.

Chief Rice closed the awards ceremony by thanking all members, their guests and families, the Town of Falmouth, mutual aid partners, and the Administrative Group at Falmouth Fire-EMS for the help in working together to make the department run smoothly. Chief Rice thanked the Falmouth Country Club for their assistance in putting on the annual dinner event and thanked the Cumberland and Windham Fire Departments for providing station coverage so that all Falmouth Fire-EMS members could attend the dinner.

End of release.

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