



# BOX 42 NEWSLETTER

"Serving the fire community since 1942"

June 2015 - (all images: click twice to enlarge)

## MEETING INFORMATION

Normally meetings are held on Saturday late in the month at various fire stations.

The June meeting will be at 1000 hrs on Saturday, June 20

at Detroit Metro Airport FD - Station 200

Building #509 - West Service Drive -  
West of Rogell Dr., south of Goddard

[Entering Rogell from the north, turn west at Service Dr \(traffic signal\), then turn north on W Service Rd. - click for map](#)

## Explosion In Rochester

23 years ago -- a look back

During the late afternoon of May 20, 1992, a building at 440 Main Street, in the heart of downtown Rochester, exploded. A gas line, disturbed during a street beautification project, was found to be the cause. A project engineer, James Nelson, was killed, and many others were injured.

This audio clip combines the early radio and telephone traffic of Rochester police and fire. At times like this dispatchers earn their money.

To hear the clip (6:45) [\[click here\]](#).

The building, which housed stores with apartments above, was largely destroyed, although the southern portion was restored and the remainder rebuilt to resemble the original 1901 building. A Sanders store is now located in the south portion of the building, and @Home Furniture has replaced Macauley's in the next building to the south.

This video shows the extent of the damage. It was taken by Sgt. Dale Marsh of the Rochester Police Department.

To see the video (10:00) [\[click here\]](#).



**Below:** The building was restored to its original appearance, complete with 1901 nameplate.



**CONTACT US** You can contact Box 42 by US mail or email. Submissions are always welcome and highly encouraged.

email: [box42@box42.net](mailto:box42@box42.net) US mail: **Box 42 Associates, Inc., P.O. Box 1810, Royal Oak, MI 48068-1810**

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## Southeast Oakland Country Photo Tour

May 9th found members touring a number of southeast Oakland County stations and meeting members of those departments. Stops were made at Ferndale, Madison Heights, Royal Oak, and Huntington Woods with ample opportunities for rig photography. We thank our hosts, Captain Doug May and Sgt. Bob Farrar of Ferndale, Acting Sgt. Tim Kennedy of Madison Heights, FF Darren Duffany of Royal Oak, and Lt. Mark Bell of Huntington Woods for their hospitality., and members Anthony Rzucidlo and Larry Cooper, for making the arrangements.



**Above:** Capt. Doug May

**Above:** Sgt. Bob Farrar

**Below:** Act. Sgt. Tim Kennedy

**Below:** Lt. Mark Bell

FF Darren Duffany



## Reader Comments

In a recent letter about the activities of Fire Associates of Santa Clara Valley at a Tier 3 vegetation fire, Len Williams wrote: *A Tier = the same thing as a box alarm, except that no ladder trucks are on it, and 2 of the rigs on the complement are grass fire rigs instead of structure pumpers.* FASCV maintains three canteen rigs and supports fire departments throughout the Santa Clara area. Here is a link to their newsletter:

<http://fascv.blogspot.com>

Len also referred to [this entry](#) when he wrote these comments: *I just read the N/L, including the extra alarms, and #3 caught my eye. The probably was the former rectory for the big church on the s/w corner of Grand River & W. Grand Blvd. That church used to be St. Matthias Episcopal Church, built in 1926, and at one time in the 1950's was the largest Episcopal parish in Detroit. However, as we all know, Detroit's population declined precipitously in the 1960's, and the parish was dissolved in 1978. Since then, the building has been occupied by a variety of Baptist type congregations, and the rectory had been vacant for years. I assume that the large house next to it was the rectory because I once saw a man in clerical garb either entering or leaving it.*

Perhaps a reader can inform us as to which of these buildings burned. The larger building on the right is listed in tax records as 2008 W Grand Blvd, and the smaller house appears to be linked to the church property, which is listed as 6855 Vinewood.

To see the properties [\[click here\]](#).

Jim Leininger sent these comments, referring to last month's [Then and Now](#) column (**to review it [\[click here\]](#)**):

*There were places along the river where the fireboat could hook into the HP system and pump river water. There was also a pumping station near where the RenCen is now that supplied river water to the system.*

*Even back then if they used the HP system on a building fire nothing could be salvaged because of contamination. The old Detroit River was an open sewer with a lot of pollution in it. I'm surprised Walt McCall didn't recall this. Only us 80 year old guys remember these things. RE: The hose wagon. This rig also carried 2 portable monitors behind the cab. Saw them used once at a factory fire on the west side. They stretched across a field to the back of the building and only used one 3" line to it - it did a good job. Most of the time it went on extra alarms but sat on the street and seldom used.*

The Box 42 Newsletter welcomes all ideas for input and features and would be happy to hear from any interested persons who have job stories, historical information, newspaper clippings, photos, or other material that you would like to share with the Box 42 community. Please send all news and information to the address on the front page.

**Editors: Bill and Mike Rosenblum**

## Another Tanker Crash

For the second time within three months a local freeway was damaged and closed for days due to a tanker crash and fire. The latest occurred on Sunday morning, May 24th, on I-75 near Gratiot. And, once again, Marathon Petroleum was called upon for assistance with foam.



photo by Michael Valkin

The Free Press reported that the owner of the truck in the latest incident, Nour Light Petroleum Transport, had been cited for numerous violations since 2013, including brakes out of adjustment, driver qualifications, placard and lighting violations. Here is a video report from WDIV:

**To view the news clip [\[click here\]](#).**

Another serious tanker crash occurred in March on I-94 in Dearborn. Our April issue carried some photos and multi-media clips from that incident.

**To review that story [\[click here\]](#).**

## Arson Up In Detroit

As part of a year-long study of fire department activity in Detroit, Motor City Muckraker reported a jump in Detroit Arson cases recently.

To read their story [\[click here\]](#).

## Oil Train Derails In North Dakota

The small town of Heimdal, North Dakota was evacuated on May 6th when a train hauling crude oil derailed and burst into flame. Derailments of trains have been raising safety concerns of rail shipments from the Bakken oil formation.

Similar fire-involved crashes occurred on February 16, 2015 near Charleston, WV and December 30, 2013 at Casselton, ND. A major fire killed over 40 persons at Lac-Megantic, Quebec after a runaway oil train crashed on July 6, 2013. A story and several photos were included in our issue of September 2013 -

[\[click here\]](#).



## Faces In Box 42 History



Walt McCall and Alan Craig - 4/18/1975



Ed Sullivan - 5/10/1975

Red Nose Day - nothing new for Box 42. Ted Main (left) and Bill Kobylarz on 9/26/1975

