



# BOX 42 NEWSLETTER

"Serving the fire community since 1942"

May 2016 - (all images: click twice to enlarge)

## 45 Years Ago ...

# 1908 pumper returns to Detroit

By LAWRENCE PERRAULT  
News Staff Writer

A splintered, rusted hunk of history — a horse-drawn, steam-powered fire pumper — is making a comeback at the Detroit Fire Department's apparatus shop, 1400 Erskine. And though they can't do anything about its age, fire officials hope to fix up the relic for a featured spot in the museum at Fire Department headquarters downtown.

"When the steamer was first put into service in 1908, it took three horses to cart around its 9,400 pounds," said Fred Beer, the department's director of public instruction. "Then there was a separate wagon for hose and coal, drawn by two horses, that went along with the pumper."

TODAY'S MACK pumpers carry all the equipment on one truck — everything except the coal which has been displaced by diesel fuel.

And city fathers take note: The old steamer cost \$4,800. Today's pumpers cost a whopping \$29,000 apiece.

The old carriage has no fancy chrome plating, impressive pressure gauges or col-

ored lights and deafening sirens, but in its day it pumped 700 gallons of water a minute. Today's trucks pump 1,000 gallons a minute.

As far as officials can determine, the pumper started out at Engine Co. 13, which then was at Russell and East Ferry.

IN 1912 it was sent to Engine Co. 29 in the downriver area.

It put in nine years of faithful service there, before being replaced by a motorized vehicle in 1921.

From there the records are hazy. It reportedly went to an auction house in Detroit, where it was purchased by two fire buffs.

The pumper eventually ended in the hands of George E. Shaw, of Franklin, Pa., who donated it to the Fire Department, and offered to deliver it to Detroit.

Despite the rust, charred

hoses and splintered hitching post, Beer said the steamer is in "surprisingly good condition," and needs only some

sandblasting, paint and metal work to make it look like new. "We're hoping some local fire buff organization will

offer to make the repairs on the rig in time for Fire Prevention Week in October," Beer said.



Photo by Mike Rosenblum

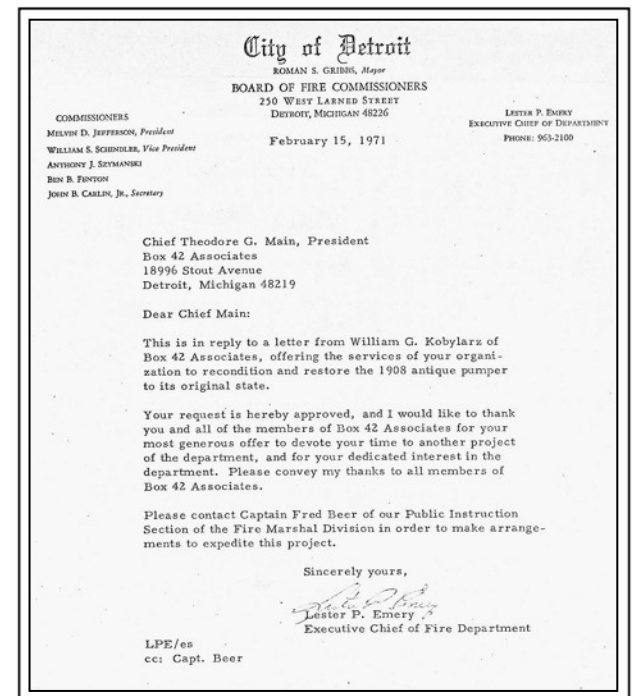
It was February 4, 1971 when this story appeared in the Detroit News. Box 42 quickly answered the call and received the letter of agreement,

## MEETING INFORMATION

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

The May 21st photo tour takes place in lieu of the May meeting. See inside for details.

shown below, a couple weeks later. Members were called upon for work sessions twice a week for over two years along with some donated specialty services, and the rig made its debut at a DFD field day at Tiger Stadium on July 29, 1973.



City of Detroit

ROMAN S. GRUBIS, Mayor  
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
250 WEST LARNED STREET  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48226

LESTER P. EMERY  
EXECUTIVE CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT  
PHONE: 963-2100

COMMISSIONERS  
MELVIN D. JEFFERSON, President  
WILLIAM S. SCHENKLE, Vice President  
ANTHONY J. SEYMANSKI  
BIN B. FINSTON  
JOHN B. CARLIN, Jr., Secretary

February 15, 1971

Chief Theodore G. Main, President  
Box 42 Associates  
18996 Stout Avenue  
Detroit, Michigan 48219

Dear Chief Main:

This is in reply to a letter from William G. Kobylarz of Box 42 Associates, offering the services of your organization to recondition and restore the 1908 antique pumper to its original state.

Your request is hereby approved, and I would like to thank you and all of the members of Box 42 Associates for your most generous offer to devote your time to another project of the department, and for your dedicated interest in the department. Please convey my thanks to all members of Box 42 Associates.

Please contact Captain Fred Beer of our Public Instruction Section of the Fire Marshal Division in order to make arrangements to expedite this project.

Sincerely yours,

Lester P. Emery  
Executive Chief of Fire Department

LPE/es  
cc: Capt. Beer

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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Please contact us at above address to be added to the mailing list - view online multimedia content at: **JAYMR.COM/B42**

## Feature

**FDNY: Brothers In Battle** was broadcast in 1992 as an episode of A&E's Investigative Reports. Created by FDNY member Brian Hickey and his brother, Ray, it provides an excellent look at the makeup of the 1990 New York City Fire Department and its history, now going back for over 150 years.

To see the program (44:00) [\[click here\]](#).

## Monroe Photo Tour

A photo tour of Monroe area fire stations has been set for May 21st at 10:00, taking the place of the monthly meeting. Arranged by Anthony Rzucidlo and Larry Cooper, the tour visits four locations to view as many as 17 pieces of apparatus, and includes a break for lunch. Anthony provided this printable write-up with directions to each stop: [\[Click here\]](#). He asks that those planning to attend contact him for a count by May 14th at 313-563-6065 or by email at [ajr107@peoplepc.com](mailto:ajr107@peoplepc.com). As always, guests are welcomed.

This is a summary of the locations for loading into a GPS:

1. Monroe Central, 75 Scott
2. Monroe Twp HQ, 15331 S. Dixie
3. Lunch - Mugsy's, 15425 S. Dixie
4. Monroe Twp, 4925 E. Dunbar
5. Monroe Twp #2, 14795 Laplaisance

## Steve Redick Video

Steve Redick shot this video last month of a pair of dwellings on Seminole, north of Gratiot. Steve retired in 2015 as a Chicago FD senior dispatcher, having spent 35 years with the department, and he has published several books on Chicago area fires.



Steve Redick  
(photo by John Tulipano)

Steve's latest book, *Chicago Fire Rigs at Work, Vol 3*, was published this year and can be seen with a full preview at this site:

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

For Steve's Detroit video [\[click here\]](#).

## Attention Old-Timers

Member Anthony Rzucidlo has begun a project to examine the history of Box 42, which will celebrate its 75th anniversary next spring.

He would like to hear about any specifics or recollections you may have about our past, particularly as to members' participation in devils' night activity, dinner dances, picnics, and work on the fireboat, museum, and steamer projects. In fact he would like to hear any stories or thoughts you may have, as well as any photos you have which tell the tale.

Please submit any material you have to his email at [ajr107@peoplepc.com](mailto:ajr107@peoplepc.com) or to his mailing address, 26840 Rouge River Drive, Dearborn Heights, MI 48127.

## 3/4 Of A Century (Almost)

Congratulations to Bill Rosenblum, who just turned 74. He was born the day after Box 42 was founded, and is now serving as club president for his sixth year since 1974. (Only George Valrance has served as many).

This is a throwback shot of him, holding a folder of Box 42 paperwork.

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

## Coming events

Saturday, May 14, 9:00

Fire truck pull to benefit Special Olympics Brighton - For details [\[click here\]](#).

Saturday, May 21, 10:00-2:00

Monroe photo tour in lieu of regular meeting  
For Details from Anthony [\[click here\]](#).

Saturday, June 11, 10:00

Box 42 monthly meeting CREST -  
The Oakland Community College center for scenario based public safety training

Saturday, July 30

GLIAFAA Frankenmuth flea market, parade, and muster -  
Heritage Park, 601 Weiss St., Frankenmuth  
For more information [\[click here\]](#).

Friday, August 19, 1:00 - 8:00

16th Annual Emergency Vehicle Show  
9 Mile, e/o Woodward, Ferndale [\[click here\]](#)

The Box 42 Newsletter welcomes all ideas for input and features and we 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

## Profile: Detroit Shields

WDIV reporter Lauren Podell gave some press last month to Detroit Shields, a business run by veteran DFD members Tom Suchora and Don Woods. Their business creates helmet shields and other artwork for use by fire communities across the country. Don Woods, in addition to working at DFD, is a PT trainer for the Schoolcraft Fire Academy. Tom Suchora, who joined DFD in June of 1995, received a commissioner citation in 2014 for his efforts at the Jason Manor Apartments fire in March of that year.

(To review the story of that fire, see our April 2014 issue: [click here](#))

To read the WDIV story about Detroit Shields [click here](#).

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## The Dave Fornell Story

Last month we welcomed DFD Deputy Commissioner Dave Fornell to membership in Box 42, and took a look at his numerous past accomplishments. This article from CivasMedia, and published at Troy Daily News, tells a little more of the story.

To read it [click here](#).

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## Recent Detroit Multiples

Here is a recap of the Detroit and Highland Park extras for January and February 2016, courtesy of John Kaled and Tony Isaac.

To view the listing [click here](#).

## Reader Comments

From Joe Provost (retired Dearborn FD)  
*Nice job on the newsletter story about Engine 12 & Ladder 9's quarters. Not sure if you guys remember my telling you the story of when that station exploded, but my parents were still living with my Grandparents at 2127 Merrick. My Dad hadn't been out of the army that long and they were still house hunting and he was working nights as a streetcar motorman out of the DSR Car Barns at Warren & Lawton and was sleeping when the blast happened. He told us the blast shook the house and broke out a few windows He and my grandfather ran down there but there wasn't much they could do.*

From Carol A. Rosenblum  
*I loved reading about the Sanders stores!*

From Dave Fornell (Dep. Comm., DFD)  
*Please consider this an invitation to Box 42 to let me know what the Detroit Fire Department can do to assist your organization. Please call me any time if you have any questions or requests.*

From Ted Main  
*Another beautiful job. It's nice to see what you look like 40 years ago. The fire on Oakman is just east of where we met the ROSENBLUMS near the old Michigan Bell building.*

From Greg Pearn (retired Dep. Chf, DFD)  
*Very interesting. New promotions et all. Green and Simms showed great promise way back when. Hard to believe Harp is still employed!*

From Shane Neckel  
*Thank you for using my photo!*

From Len Williams  
*As usual, this came as a pleasant surprise. I vividly recall picking up the "Free Press" the morning after the Engine 12 / Ladder 9 explosion and being shocked by it. I also vividly recall the identical Seagraves of Engine 31 & Engine 12 nose-to-nose at the fire hydrant at Scovel & The Blvd. at the 3-alarm fatal fire at the German orphan home at that corner.*

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## The Burke-Elwood Evacuator ... 1941

(Photo was taken at Maple, east of Biddle, Wyandotte)

**SAVE LIVES WITH THE B-E EVACUATOR**

**ABSOLUTELY SAFE!**

This device permits the position of body of person sliding down the EVACUATOR. High sides make it impossible for a person to fall out, and spread of descent is controllable. For additional safety, flames from lower floors cannot ignite the FIRE-PROOF fabric of the EVACUATOR.

The EVACUATOR can be held by two police officers or citizens, releasing firemen for other duties. It can be used with maximum efficiency in narrow streets and alleys. Easily carried up a ladder by any fireman, the EVACUATOR can be attached VERY QUICKLY, to any window and near roof parapet!

Two Models are offered—the B-E EVACUATOR for use with ground ladders—REMEMBER—the first duty of a fire department is to save lives—the B-E EVACUATOR will aid you in that duty!

- ★ It will pay in LIVES SAVED to investigate the B-E EVACUATOR.
- ★ Write for profusely illustrated literature describing this NEW METHOD of life-protection.

COMPACT and DURABLE—the frame work of the B-E EVACUATOR is made of Chrome-Molybdenum steel tubing—gas welded—Cadmium plated to prevent corrosion. The fabric is fire and waterproof for ABSOLUTE SAFETY!

**BURKE — ELWOOD EVACUATOR PATENTED**

**E & E MANUFACTURING CO.**  
2970 WEST GRAND BOULEVARD  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN

MADE BY MASTER CRAFTSMEN

# Photos

Detroit Fire Department

July 3, 1975 00:21 hrs.

4 Alarms +

Box 432

Grand River & Whitfield

Riviera Royal Motel and  
Riviera House Liquor

(all photos by Joe Mancinelli)



## Looking back ...

The Box 42 'Red Freaks' raise a toast at the wedding of Joe Provost and Sue Reardon, September 13, 1975. From left: Bill Reardon, Ralph Koehler, Bill Kobylarz, Joe Provost, Mike Rosenblum, Bill Rosenblum, Ted Main, and John Reardon. (Photo by Bill Eisner)

