

FIRE & EMS NEWS

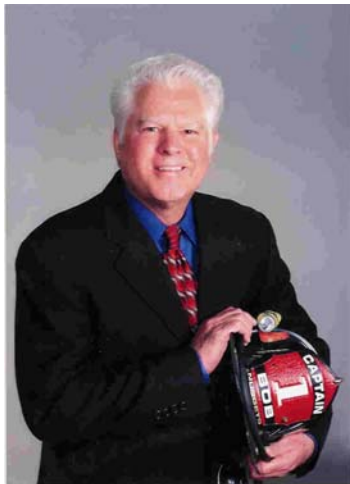
April 2004

Volume 2 – Issue 10

Welcome to the latest issue of the Fire & EMS News! My goal is to provide you with information about your Chabot College Fire Technology Program, the local Fire Departments, in addition to other information that might be beneficial to you in your pursuit of better preparing yourself for the career of your dreams! Some of the highlights of this issue include:

- Free Oral Board Seminar with Captain Bob on April 18, 2004!
- Summer and Fall 2004 Chabot College Fire Technology related schedule
- Firefighter testing in tough economic times

WHAT IS KEEPING YOU FROM GETTING YOUR FIREFIGHTER BADGE?



On Sunday April 18, from 1:00 pm until 3:00 pm, “Captain Bob” Smith will be providing a **FREE** Oral Interview seminar. This will occur at **Chabot College** in **room 916**. Captain Bob is a retired Captain from the Hayward Fire Department who has been on numerous interview panels and has helped countless candidates obtain their badges. He will provide you with tips on how to better prepare yourself for the oral interviews you will be taking or have already taken and not done as well as you possibly could have on. Remember that the oral interview is probably the **MOST** important phase of the firefighter hiring process since most fire departments score this portion 100% of your total score.

Register early – seats are filling up fast!

Why should you attend? To learn step by step, everything you need to know in the process, starting with the application, written, physical, oral interview, psych interview, background, polygraph, and medical to gain a badge. You will find the inside “Nuggets”, tips and resources you can’t get anywhere else to shorten the learning curve and the distance between you and that badge. This is information that has helped over 2100 candidates nail their badges!

For more information about Captain Bob, visit his website at <http://www.eatstress.com> He has numerous free tips and suggestions to score better on the oral interview. To register for this unique and excellent opportunity, email me at sprziborowski@chabotcollege.edu and let me know how many people plan to attend. Hurry, seats are limited!

Oral interviews are the toughest thing for most people (going for jobs in any line of work, not just the fire department). Why not take this free opportunity to learn at least one new thing? If you learn something that even just raises your score by 1%, it was worth your time to attend!

SUMMER 2004 FIRE TECHNOLOGY SCHEDULE

Presently, the following fire-technology related courses are scheduled to be offered this summer:

COURSE	DAY	TIMES
FT 95 (Work Experience) <i>**Must also be registered in FT 96</i>	TBA	TBA
FT 96 (Work Experience Seminar) <i>**Must also be registered in FT 95</i>	Thursdays (pm)	1800 – 2050 hours
Health 61 (EMS First Responder)	Mondays (am) & Wednesdays (am)	0900 – 1400 hours

Registration for the summer 2004 semester will begin as follows:

- Continuing Students - May 3rd
- Chabot Early Decision Students - May 10th
- Las Positas Early Decision Students - May 12th
- New and Former Students - May 17th

NOTE: The above information is to the best of my knowledge as of the time this went to print. For the most up-to-date information (including room numbers & registration numbers) regarding Summer 2004 scheduling, check the Chabot College web site at <http://www.chabotcollege.org>

FALL 2004 FIRE TECHNOLOGY SCHEDULE

Registration for the Fall 2004 semester will begin as follows:

- Continuing Students - May 3rd
- Chabot Early Decision Students - May 10th
- Las Positas Early Decision Students - May 12th
- New and Former Students - May 17th

Presently, the following fire-technology related courses are going to be offered this Fall:

COURSE	DAY	TIMES
FT 50 (Fire Protection Organization)	Monday (am)	0800 – 1200 hours
FT 50 (Fire Protection Organization)	Monday (pm)	1800 – 2200 hours
FT 51 (Fire Operations)	Tuesday (pm)	1800 – 2050 hours
FT 52 (Firefighter Safety/Public Education 1) <i>**State Fire Marshal certificate course</i>	Tuesday (am)	0900 – 1150 hours
FT 52 (Firefighter Safety/Public Education 1) <i>**State Fire Marshal certificate course</i>	Wednesday (pm)	1800 – 2050 hours
FT 53 (Fire Behavior & Combustion)	Wednesday (pm)	1600 – 1850 hours
FT 54 (Fire Prevention Technology)	Thursday (pm)	1900 – 2150 hours
FT 56 (Building Construction for Fire Protection)	Wednesday (pm)	1900 – 2150 hours
FT 90A (Firefighter 1 Academy) <i>**Must also be registered in FST 90B and 90C**</i>	Tue & Thurs (pm) Saturday (all day)	1700 – 2050 hours 0830 – 1650 hours
FT 90B (Firefighter 1 Academy) <i>**Must also be registered in FST 90A and 90C**</i>	Tue & Thurs (pm) Saturday (all day)	1700 – 2050 hours 0830 – 1650 hours
FT 90C (Firefighter 1 Academy) <i>**Must also be registered in FST 90A and 90B**</i>	Tue & Thurs (pm) Saturday (all day)	1800 – 2150 hours 0830 – 1650 hours
FT 91A (Wildland Interface Firefighting) Note: Class only meets on the following dates: November 30, December 2, 4, 7, 9, 11, and 12	Tue & Thurs (pm) Saturday (all day) Sunday (all day)	1800 – 2150 hours 0800 – 1650 hours
FT 91B (Haz Mat 1 st Responder-Operations) Note: Class only meets on the following dates: November 16, 18, 20 and 21	Tue & Thurs (pm) Saturday (all day) Sunday (all day)	1800 – 2150 hours 0800 – 1750 hours
FT 91C (I-200; Basic ICS) Note: Class only meets on the following dates: December 14, 16, 18 and 19	Tue & Thurs (pm) Saturday (all day) Sunday (all day)	1800 – 2150 hours 0800 – 1750 hours 0800 – 1750 hours
FT 95 (Work Experience) <i>**Must also be registered in FT 96**</i>	TBA	TBA
FT 96 (Work Experience Seminar) <i>**Must also be registered in FT 95**</i> Note: Class only meets on the following dates: August 24, 31, October 5, 26, November 30 and December 21	Monday (pm)	1800 – 2050 hours
Health 61 (First Responder)	Monday (mid)	1330 – 1820 hours
Health 61 (First Responder)	Tuesday (pm)	1800 – 2150 hours
Health 61 (First Responder)	Friday (am)	0900 – 1250 hours
Health 81 (EMT) <i>**Must also be registered in Health 83**</i>	Wednesday (all day)	0800 – 1650 hours
Health 83 (Extrication and Triage) <i>**Must also be registered in Health 81**</i>	Saturday (one day only – November 13)	0830 – 1620 hours
Health 9909 (EMT Refresher) Note: Class only meets on the following dates: December 7, 9, 11, 14, 16 and 18	Tue & Thurs (pm) Saturday (all day)	1800 – 2200 hours 0800 – 1700 hours
PE2FSC (Fire Science Conditioning)	Mon & Wed (mid)	1300 – 1415 hours

COURSE	DAY	TIMES
PE2FSCI (Fire Science Conditioning – Intermediate)	Tuesday (mid)	1200 – 1415 hours

NOTE: The above information is to the best of my knowledge as of the time this went to print. For the most up-to-date information (including room numbers & registration numbers) regarding Fall 2004 scheduling, check the Chabot College web site at <http://www.chabotcollege.org>

My suggestion to everyone is to register as soon as you are eligible to. Classes fill up very quickly, and I with more people wanting to become firefighters, I don't see our numbers of students decreasing, only increasing. I would have liked to offer more classes in the summer time and in the fall; however the state budget crisis does not appear to be going away anytime soon. I think we are very fortunate if we get to keep the above courses that I have scheduled. Also, if you are registered in the Chabot College system, you are eligible to take classes at Las Positas College in Livermore as well. Just because one class is full (or does not fit your schedule) at Chabot doesn't mean it isn't being offered at Las Positas. When you register for classes on the Chabot College website, you can see both schedules – Chabot and Las Positas.

FIRE DEPARTMENT HIRING DURING TOUGH ECONOMIC TIMES

Many of you might be getting discouraged with all of the talk of firefighter layoffs, fire departments that are not hiring, fire stations being closed down or “browned out,” as well as the overall condition of the state budget crisis that is trickling down to virtually every fire department. Yes, we are in tough times and know one knows for sure when things are going to start looking better. Should you be concerned? Of course you should. Should you be discouraged or give up your pursuit of becoming a firefighter? Of course not!

Realize that just because fire departments might be laying off firefighters or talking of potential layoffs or hiring freezes does not mean that they will not be hiring over the next few years. Firefighters will still be retiring, and while it is cheaper to pay overtime than to hire a new firefighter, there does come a point where it makes good fiscal sense to actually hire firefighters to replace those that have been retired out. As of the time I wrote this, the Oakland Fire Department had approximately 20 firefighters in the County-wide Regional Fire Academy, and there were also other newly hired firefighters in that same academy from the Piedmont Fire Department, Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department, and Newark Fire Departments (there may be others, but those were the only ones I heard about) . People ask me how can this be when Oakland had to close station 2 (including the fireboat), and brown out a couple of companies each day? Well, because of retirements, they will still need to hire, even just to get them to a level of being able to still brown out a couple of companies each day. Seems far fetched at first thought, but it actually makes sense when you think about it.

There are also many other Bay Area Fire Departments planning on hiring firefighters over the next few months. Just some numbers I have heard unofficially include: Santa Clara County Fire Department (up to 15), Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety (6), Alameda County Fire Department (12), Stockton (10 to 30 over the next year or two), and the list goes on. So when your friends or family members tell you that “nobody is hiring firefighters, why are you wasting your time testing,” don’t believe everything you hear! Provide them with this information and also do your own research to prove them wrong.

I had a student come up to me the other day and when I asked him how testing was going, he told me he wasn’t testing because he had heard that nobody was hiring because of the budget problems. If you keep that attitude, you will never get hired! How do you get better at testing? By taking every test you qualify for. How do you increase your odds at getting hired? By taking every test you qualify for. Don’t believe everything you hear. Just because the fire chief of a department tells you today that he wasn’t going to be hiring anybody this year, doesn’t mean that somebody might suddenly retire next week, somebody might suddenly quit to go to another department, or something else might suddenly occur, allowing him to now hire some people. Firefighter testing is very dynamic and you have to really have your head in the game at all times and not give up.

What does this mean for you, the future firefighter? It means a number of things:

- 1. Do not give up!** As tempting as it might be, you’ve put too much time and effort (I’m hoping) into this process to just give it all up and let someone else get your badge! I’ve never known a candidate to not get hired that kept on trying to become a firefighter. I’ve known candidates take 13 years to get hired as a firefighter. I’ve known many candidates never get hired as firefighters for one simple reason: they gave up!
- 2. Resist the urge to get bitter and take the situation personal.** As frustrating as this may seem, realize you are not alone and that this situation tends to happen every five to ten years anyway. Ride the wave, realize that nothing lasts forever, and do not get caught up in the bitterness that easily affects many candidates. If you’re frustrated and bitter that you’re not getting hired and that the whole situation stinks, it is going to inevitably come across during your oral interviews and interactions with firefighters, thus reducing your chances of getting hired. Who wants to hire or work with a sourpuss?
- 3. Use this as a “kick in the pants” to better prepare yourself.** Become more educated and better trained. Be able to honestly say you are going to be an “asset” to a department (as opposed to a liability like many folks turn out to be or have the potential to be). Obtain your two year degree, your four year degree, your paramedic license, your firefighter 1 academy certificate, your firefighter 1 certificate, become bilingual, build up your volunteer hours / community service hours, take those state fire marshal certified classes in hazardous materials, rescue systems, confined space rescue, etc. Make yourself more valuable than you were yesterday!

4. **People will still get hired as firefighters; however maybe not in large numbers and with the positions going to the MOST qualified candidates.** This means the best of the best are probably going to still get the jobs. When there are more jobs, there is the good chance that “marginal” candidates will get those jobs. Now, with few positions available, it does not make sense for a fire department to hire the most qualified candidates that can bring a large amount of education, experience, and training to the table.
5. **Keep taking every firefighter test you qualify for!** If departments are only hiring the best of the best, then you need to be at the top of EVERY hiring list! That means taking every test not just for practice so that you can improve your scores, but taking every test so that you are on multiple hiring lists. It is not uncommon for departments to only test once every three to five years when they are in a budget crisis or to sell their hiring lists to other fire departments who might not be able to afford testing on their own, but still are in the need of hiring qualified candidates.

CLOSING COMMENTS

I hope you have found this newsletter somewhat valuable. If you have learned one new thing, then I think I’ve done my job. I truly want to see everyone succeed, and I also really enjoy doing what I do. This program is your program. It can only get better with your assistance. There is an old saying, don’t just give me problems – give me solutions! I can’t read your minds, so please provide me with feedback. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or want me to clarify any rumors you might have heard. Thank you very much!

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Chabot College web site: www.chabotcollege.edu

***** PLEASE FEEL FREE TO PASS THIS ON TO YOUR FRIENDS OR CO-WORKERS*****

The Fine Print:

- If you would like to be added to our mailing list (no, I won't give your email address out to others), email me at sprziborowski@chabotcollege.edu and I will add you to the list. Benefits of being on the mailing list include being notified when the latest Fire & EMS news is published, and being notified of firefighter testing opportunities, volunteer opportunities, or training opportunities.
- If you know of someone who wants to receive this newsletter (as well as other updates) email me at sprziborowski@chabotcollege.edu and I will place them on the mailing list.
- If you want to take your name off of the mailing list, just send me an email at sprziborowski@chabotcollege.edu and in the subject heading, and type in "unsubscribe from mailing list" and I will remove your name.