



FIRE & EMS NEWS

February 2006

Volume 4 – Issue 8

Welcome to the latest issue of the Fire & EMS News! Some of the highlights of this issue include:

- Volunteer Firefighter Opportunity – Alameda County Fire Department
- Free Captain Bob Oral Board Seminar at Chabot College – March 1, 2006
- Semi-Annual Firehire Firefighter Examination!
- FREE Firefighter Preparation Seminars at Chabot College!
- Oral Board Preparation Tips – Part 2
- Paramedic School Entrance Examination Opportunities
- Firefighter employment opportunity – Phoenix and San Jose
- Firefighter Action Photo Websites
- Volunteers needed around the Bay Area – EMS classes
- Chabot Firefighter 1 Academy Baseball Caps – Only a few remain!

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY – Alameda County Fire Department



The [Alameda County Fire Department](#) is accepting applications for the position of Reserve Firefighter!

Last day for filing: Monday February 6, 2006

NOTE: Applications must be in the possession of the Human Resources Department by 4:30 p.m. on the Last Day for filing! Postmarks are NOT accepted.

Date of examination: Examination will be held by appointment with applicant.

The position: The [Alameda County Fire Department \(ACFD\)](#) is recruiting for the position of Reserve Firefighter. The Department serves the unincorporated areas of Alameda County, the City of San Leandro, the City of Dublin, and the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory. The area comprises approximately 500 square miles and serves a population of 234,500. The Fire Department has a budget in excess of \$50 million with a staff of 250 firefighting personnel and 18 fire stations.

This is the entry-level position in which incumbents receive training and experience in fire prevention and suppression techniques. Reserve Firefighters respond to fire alarms, emergency and non-emergency calls to prevent or extinguish fires and to protect life and property including rescue and salvage operations. Reserve Firefighters are also responsible for cleaning, maintaining and repairing fire department property and equipment.

PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES: Reserve Firefighters may advance by competitive examination for Reserve Fire Engineer and/or Reserve Fire Lieutenant.

Minimum Qualifications:

These are entrance requirements for admission to the examination, which is competitive. Possession of the entrance requirements does not assure an invitation to examination or a place on the eligible list. A candidate's performance in the examination will be judged in comparison with the performance of other candidates.

AGE: Must be at least 18 years of age by date of appointment; AND

LICENSE: Possession of a valid California State Motor Vehicle Operator's license by the date of appointment; AND

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Physical – Must be in excellent physical condition. Hearing must be normal in both ears. Visual acuity must be correctable to 20/30 with either eye. Residency – Must live within Alameda County or 25 miles travel distance to the Alameda County Station 15, 5352 Broder Road, Dublin, California, by date of appointment. Certification – Candidates who do not currently possess Firefighter I and Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) I are required to complete certification as a Firefighter I and EMT I in the State of California, within two years of appointment as a Level I Reserve Firefighter or one year as a Level II Reserve Firefighter. Level III Reserve Firefighters must possess current State of California Firefighter I and EMT I.

Knowledge and Abilities:

The examination may include but may not be limited to: KNOWLEDGE OF basic construction, fire chemistry, physics and automotive mechanics and common office practices including filing, indexing and cross-reference methods. ABILITY TO follow oral and written instructions; read, comprehend, and remember training materials; deal effectively with the public and co-workers under circumstances requiring presence of mind, sensitivity, interest, and understanding; adapt to changes in work assignments and duties; write clear, concise, and complete reports; perform physical tasks that require coordination, strength, dexterity, and stamina and communicate effectively and clearly orally.

Examination Components:

THIS IS A NEW ASSEMBLED EXAMINATION. The eligible list resulting from this examination will cancel any existing list and may last approximately one year, but can be extended. THE EXAMINATION WILL CONSIST OF the following steps: A review of candidates' applications to verify possession of minimum requirements. Those candidates who possess the minimum requirements for the class will move on to the next step in the examination process, which is an oral interview weighted as 100% of the candidates' final examination score. The oral interview may contain situational exercises. Candidates must attain a qualifying rating on each portion of this examination. WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO MAKE CHANGES TO ANNOUNCED EXAMINATION STEPS.

Candidates selected to continue on to the Reserve Academy will be required to take the physical ability test. Candidates must pass the physical requirements to proceed with the Academy.

To apply: Applications may be obtained at Alameda County Human Resource Services, 1405 Lakeside Drive, Oakland, CA 94612. The application is also available on their website at www.acgov.org

WHAT IS KEEPING YOU FROM GETTING YOUR FIREFIGHTER BADGE?

It's Your Turn in the Hot Seat!

Get a Badge. Beat the Odds!

Are you?

- A firefighter candidate that wants to shorten the learning curve between you and that badge?
- Finding out what skills you may be missing?
- Hitting a wall in your orals and you don't know what to do next?
- Figuring out that you just can't wing the oral board?
- Wanting to discover the inside secrets of interviews--ideas that have been tested, proven, and have worked for thousands of individuals who are now firefighters?

If you answered "YES" to any of these questions, then you will want to join a small group of people for an exclusive, "Oral Board Intensive Seminar" with Fire "Captain Bob"; speaker/author of the CD/DVD programs "Conquer Fire Department Oral Boards", "It's Your Turn in the Hot Seat" and the book "Fire Up Your Communication Skills" that have helped countless individuals to get the job and promotions of their dreams.

Here is just some of the powerful information others have said after a seminar:

- There were so many critical points that I was not aware of. Pat
- The interactive format getting information from many people was amazing. Jim
- The grilling of everybody was a great learning experience. Nathan
- I could have listened to this engaging format for hours. Steve

What are you missing that's keeping you from gaining a badge? Wouldn't you like to find out how ready you are? Want proof that this seminar will do the trick for you? "Captain Bob" has been coaching thousands of firefighter candidates for over 30-years. This is where you can find your uniqueness that could immediately be the tilting point for your badge! Ask yourself this question: If you could gain just one "Nugget" idea that can make a difference between where you are at now and a real shot at a badge, would you go? Then, don't miss out on this opportunity, the only risk is you might get a badge. Register early!

During previous seminars the candidates volunteered to sit in the "hot seat" not knowing in advance what the next oral board question would be. Everyone quickly learned what they thought was prepared and unique fell short of getting top scores, especially those candidates who volunteered to give it their best shot. You won't believe what these, I thought I was ready, candidates said! This also applied to many in the packed room who gave their .02 cents as the questions were opened up to the attendees. It proves that still many haven't learned how to take a firefighter interview, which will be the deciding factor in whether you will gain a badge, or not. You've spent time, money and put your life on hold to gain the necessary education and experience to become a firefighter. Your oral board will determine

the future. It's game day. You have around 20 minutes to stun the oral board into giving you the opportunity to ride big red. Are you ready to sit in the hot seat and see what you've got? Wouldn't you like to find out how ready you are?

Here are some of the comments from the "It's Your Turn in the Hot Seat" seminars:

- There were so many critical points that I was not aware of. Pat
- The interactive format getting information from many people was amazing. Jim
- The grilling of everybody was a great learning experience. Nathan
- I could have listened to this engaging format for hours. Steve
- The information from this seminar could be the tilting point that could turn things around in your oral boards.

You've spent time, money and put your life on hold to gain the necessary education and experience to become a firefighter. Your oral board will determine the future. It's game day. You have around 20 minutes to stun the oral board into giving you the opportunity to ride big red. Are you ready to sit in the hot seat and see what you've got?

At the Chabot College Seminar on Wednesday March 1, 2006, with Captain Bob, you can gain the time-tested strategies of oral boards you might be missing. In a no-nonsense, straight-from-the-hip -- in a total of 2+ hours! --you will gain more information and insights than most candidates learn in an entire lifetime.

Please send Captain Bob your questions on what you want to make sure that is covered at the seminar: Email Captain Bob at captbob@eatstress.com

Captain Bob will give a FREE presentation; *It's Your Turn in the Hot Seat - Get a Badge, Beat the odds!* at Chabot College in Hayward (CA).

DATE: Wednesday March 1, 2006
TIME: 6 pm to 8 pm
LOCATION: Room 1904 (in building 1900)



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: [CLICK HERE](#). 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!

Register early – seats will fill up fast!

BAY AREA FIREFIGHTER TESTING OPPORTUNITIES – FIREHIRE

FIREHIRE is going to be accepting applications for Firefighter, Firefighter / EMT and Firefighter / Paramedic positions February 1, 2006 through March 3, 2006.

For a list of departments that will be hiring off of this list, take a look at the list on the next page.

Benefits of taking this test include:

- You're only taking one test (as opposed to separate tests for each fire department)
- The hiring list will be in effect for one year
- There is a chance other fire departments will hire off of this list

To participate in the entry-level firefighter examination process, you must possess or meet the following minimum requirements:

- High school diploma or GED
- At least 18 years old
- California Drivers License – Class "C"
- Proof of citizenship or legal ability to work in the U.S.

You may be wondering, is any fire department going to be hiring? Of course! While the California budget crisis has impacted a number of their clients, and there are some agencies that do not have or do not anticipate any openings in the next year, there are going to be some departments that will be hiring.

Why then would a department participate if they were not planning on hiring? Well, number one, things can and do change. Just because a department does not have any openings as of this moment, does not mean that situation cannot change over night. Firefighters retire, firefighters get injured, firefighters quit (usually to go to other departments), many times without any advance notice to the department. Number two, many fire departments are required to keep a current, active hiring list because of their civil service rules or union contract. Even if they do not anticipate hiring, many departments still have to have a current list. Why is that so? Well, just like number one, things can and do change. Additionally, it allows them to get the most current "best-of-the-best" candidates out there. Even though fire departments are facing severe (or potentially severe) budget shortfalls, it does not mean they won't ever hire again. Departments will have to hire at some time in the future to fill vacancies from retirements, permanent injuries, etc. The question is when, and **the bottom line is that if you are not actively testing and on the current hiring list, you do not stand a chance at getting a badge!**

The financial situation in the State is very dynamic and it is just a matter of time when it gets better (when exactly is anyone's guess). If you decide not to test because of the budget problems, that is your choice. Many departments **ONLY** hire candidates from the [Firehire](#) testing process. So, if you don't take the test, you don't stand a chance.

Here are some recent personnel hired of the recent Firehire test:

- Rio Vista Fire Department hired 3 Firefighter/Paramedics.
- Half Moon Bay Fire District hired 2 Firefighter/Paramedics
- Sonoma Valley Fire & Rescue Authority hired 4 Firefighter/Paramedics
- Larkspur Fire Department hired 1 Firefighter/EMT
- Pacifica Fire (doing business as the North County Fire Authority) hired 2 Firefighter/Paramedics.
- San Rafael Fire Department hired 3 Firefighter/Paramedics
- Albany Fire Department hired 1 Firefighter/Paramedic
- South Lake Tahoe Fire Department hired 4 Firefighter/Paramedics
- There are currently interviews in progress for the Redwood City and San Mateo Fire Departments.

NOTE: Although it seems like most of the folks above getting hired were paramedics, it doesn't mean the tides won't turn to Firefighter/EMT hiring or that you can't take the test for practice and to start learning more about your strengths and weaknesses. Trust me, you do get better every time you take a test.

Some of the fire departments might have other requirements (view the Firehire web site at www.firehire.com for more specific information) such as:

- EMT
- Paramedic
- Firefighter – 1 Academy
- Firefighter – 1 Certificate

For application materials or more information, visit their website at www.firehire.com or if you do not have internet access, call them at 1-800-755-5891.

The examination process consists of the following:

- Completion of the application packet that is sent to you by FIREHIRE
- **Written examination** – 130 question test which you must pass with a score of at least 70%. There are 65 EMT questions from the AAOS Emergency Care and Transportation of the Sick and Injured, 8th Edition textbook, and 65 firefighter questions from the IFSTA Essentials of Firefighting, 4th Edition textbook. This portion of the exam is weighted 75% of your total score. **The Written examination is scheduled to be given on Wednesday April 19, 2006 in San Rafael, CA.**
- **Physical Ability Test** – this portion is pass / fail. It will be the Firehire Physical Ability Test (FPAT) tentatively scheduled May 6 through 8, 2006 in San Ramon, CA. If you have completed the Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT), they will also accept a current CPAT card. For more detailed information on the CPAT and where to find locations that offer it, [CLICK HERE.](#)

- **Emergency Medical Assessment Center** – this event consists of a patient involved in a trauma and/or medical setting. The treatment is commensurate with your level of training. There are critical care criteria points that must be addressed or it is an AUTOMATIC FAILURE. You are graded on the criteria established by the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians. This event is weighted 25% of your total score.

NOTE: This is something you should really prepare for – most fire departments fail up to 50% (some more) of the candidates in this station, whether you are an EMT or a paramedic. Study up and prepare!

The following fire departments are expected to be participating (based on the information I had available at the time I printed this document) in this recruitment and will be using the list that is established to hire for open positions:

<u>Fire Department</u>	<u>Positions available</u>
• Albany Fire Department –	Firefighter/Paramedic
• Central County Fire Department –	Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic
• El Cerrito Fire Department –	Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic
• Foster City Fire Department –	Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic
• Fremont Fire Department –	Firefighter
• Half Moon Bay Fire District –	Firefighter/Paramedic
• Kentfield Fire Protection District –	Firefighter/EMT
• Larkspur Fire Protection District –	Firefighter/EMT
• Menlo Park Fire District –	Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic
• Millbrae Fire Department –	Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic
• Mill Valley Fire Department –	Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic
• North County Fire Authority -	Firefighter/Paramedic
• Novato Fire Protection District –	Firefighter/Paramedic
• Oroville Fire Department –	Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic
• Petaluma Fire Department –	Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic
• Piedmont Fire Department –	Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic
• Redwood City Fire Department –	Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic
• Rio Vista Fire Department –	Firefighter/Paramedic
• Ross Valley Fire Authority –	Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic
• San Bruno Fire Department –	Firefighter/Paramedic
• San Mateo Fire Department –	Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic
• San Rafael Fire Department –	Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic
• San Ramon Fire Protection District –	Firefighter/Paramedic
• Sonoma Valley Fire & Rescue Authority -	Engineer/Paramedic
• South County Fire Authority –	Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic
• South Lake Tahoe Fire Department –	Firefighter/Paramedic
• Vallejo Fire Department –	Firefighter/Paramedic
• Woodside Fire District –	Firefighter/EMT & Firefighter/Paramedic

NOTE: They are also currently having discussions with the following fire departments and may (or may not) provide recruitment services – Dixon Fire Department, Lodi Fire Department, Elk Grove Fire Department.

I believe that the **Fremont Fire Department** is the only Fire Department **NOT** requiring EMT, Paramedic, Firefighter 1 Academy, or Firefighter 1 Certification. So you have no excuse to NOT take the exam, even if you are just starting out!

To join the **FREE** FIREHIRE mailing list and find out about their latest updates, go to www.firehire.com/mail_list.htm

MORE FREE FIREFIGHTER PREPARATION SEMINARS!

Become a better firefighter candidate!

*****You are invited to attend a FREE seminars to help learn how to better prepare yourself to become a firefighter!*****

DATES: **Wednesday March 29, 2006**
 Wednesday April 26, 2006
 Wednesday May 24, 2006

TOPICS: **March 29:**

Guest Speaker: Jennifer Reed from Northern California Training Institute; (AMR's EMS educational arm) to discuss their paramedic program and opportunities within the EMS field.

General Firefighter Preparation Seminar:

April 26 and May 24: (Both sessions will provide slightly different material; even if you go to one, you're bound to learn something new at the second one)

Oral Board Preparation – overview of the oral board process, tips on how to increase your oral board score, and also the chance to perform a mock oral interview!

FACILITATOR: Steve Prziborowski, Fire Technology Coordinator at Chabot College and a Captain with the Santa Clara County Fire Department.

ADDED BONUS!!

Bring a copy of your resume and I will critique it for you free of charge, before the seminar or during one of the breaks (time permitting).

TIME: 6 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. each night
LOCATION: Chabot College
25555 Hesperian Boulevard, Hayward, CA 94545
Room 1904 (in Building 1900)

**REGISTRATION /
MORE INFO:**

Just show up, no reservation needed. If you have any questions, feel free to email me at sprziborowski@chabotcollege.edu or call me at 408-205-9006.

Please visit the Chabot College Fire Technology website at www.chabotfire.com for more information on becoming a firefighter.

For directions to Chabot College, [CLICK HERE](#).

ORAL INTERVIEW TIPS – PART 2

NOTE: Part 1 appeared in the January 2006 issue of the Chabot College Fire & EMS News.

OUR FIRE DEPARTMENT:

- **At least know the name of the department.** One incorrectly called us by the wrong name eight separate times. One time is understandable; eight times shows me you either don't care, you didn't do your research, or you just didn't properly prepare. If you can't get the name right now, how are you going to be when you're representing us in the public eye? We have enough problems as it is having people confuse us with a City Fire Department that has the same name as our County Fire Department (the only difference is ours has "County" after the city name. For example, the Alameda Fire Department sometimes gets confused with the Alameda County Fire Department, even though they are two different departments that are not protected by the same fire department. They are a great department, but they are not our department – two separate departments.
- **Name dropping.** If you really feel compelled to name people in the department, at least ensure you are pronouncing them correctly. One candidate pronounced our fire chief's name wrong, and it is not that difficult of a name. My name, I understand; but even then, unless you can get it right, don't bother. Also on this subject, be careful of name-dropping. The names you think that might be stellar individuals might not be so stellar in the eye of the receiver. You might think that person helped you get the job, but in my eyes, I'm thinking otherwise because they incorrectly prepared you in some way.
- **Do better research.** Don't state facts that are incorrect (wrong number of stations, wrong number of apparatus – trucks, engines, etc.). One person said "you have a great budget." I don't know of any fire department that has a great budget. If it so great, why don't we have 4 person engine companies and more stations, newer apparatus, etc.? Don't get me wrong, we have an adequate budget, but nothing great. We don't transport patients; we provide ALS first responder services on our first out apparatus (engines, trucks, rescues and haz mat). Many candidates were answering questions like they were still a transport paramedic or that we were a transporting agency.

- **Be careful what you say.** Some examples “I know the streets really well.” Yeah right, I bet if I gave you a street and told me to tell the board where it was located, which direction it ran, where it stopped and started, you probably wouldn’t be able to. Don’t open yourself up to failure. Plus, do you really know them that well? I doubt it. I bet you know the major streets, but we can teach anyone major streets.
- **Use appropriate terminology.** Many departments call their Truck Companies “Ladder Companies,” their Ambulances “Rescues,” and so on. Not using proper terminology shows me you didn’t do your research.

GENERAL:

- **Listening skills.** Most folks have terrible listening skills.
- **Time.** We only have so much time to give you – use it wisely. We told candidates you have 30 minutes for your interview. That only gives us 5 minutes to grade candidates and then 30 minutes for the next. A few candidates felt it was their right to use up more than 30 minutes. I guess shame on us for not stopping them. We ended up running over, into our breaks, into our lunch hour, and into other candidate’s times.
- **What to bring into the building besides yourself.** Resumes should be the only thing you bring into the building with you. Don’t think you can leave your items on the chair outside the room either. One candidate brought in the daily paper (I assume he was reading it in the hallway while waiting his turn) and then put it on the interview table when he sat down. Just didn’t work for me. **We don’t want your certificates, references, letters of recommendations, or life stories contained within your binders.** We don’t have time to look at that stuff – you’re getting graded for what you say, not what is on paper. Plus, that stuff just takes up valuable table space.

NERVOUS HABITS:

- **One candidate kicked the floor continuously.**
- **One candidate fidgeted with his ring so much it distracted me from what he was saying.**
- **Numerous candidates swiveled back and forth in the chair.**
- **The dreaded words – uhm, uh, ah, you know, etc.** These are all filler or slang words. Why do people say uhm or uh? Because they are pausing, waiting to find something to say. One candidate had to have said uhm over 100 times. Instead of saying uhm or uh, pause and remain silent. Force yourself to be aware of your speech and you will improve. Yes, you are getting graded on oral communications and we want to have people that will represent us very well, every time you are giving station tours, public education demonstrations, talking to the media, or just talking to the general public in your everyday work. Here are my suggestions to improve your speech:
 - o **Be aware of what you are saying at all times, have your “edit feature” working.** Awareness is half the battle; doing something about it is the other half.

- **Listen to yourself answer questions in a tape recorder or through a video camera during mock orals.** Yes, that is you you're listening to.
- **Take some speech classes at a college.**
- **Take every opportunity to stand up in front of audiences and speak or teach classes.**
- **Join Toastmasters.**
- **Watch the news reporters deliver their news stories.** Most newscasters are excellent oral communicators; they have to be or they would be out of a job. Nobody wants to watch the news just to be put to sleep. Newscasters punch their words, accentuate and emphasize their words, modulate their speech as needed, and do not sound as monotone or boring as most candidates do during an oral interview.
- **Don't learn from athletes or musicians.** Athletes are not getting paid for their speaking ability; they are getting paid for their athletic ability. That said, just because a famous ball player is saying "you know" and "like" or other slang words consistently, it doesn't mean you have to follow their lead.

POLITICAL CORRECTNESS:

- **Agree with it or not, but you have to try to be politically correct,** if nothing else to show the board you have an edit feature and you can represent us well in the public eye.
- **I heard fireman a few times** (if you have a female grading you, this is the kiss of death).
- **Old people should probably be called "elderly."**
- **Be nice to everyone you come in contact with in life, but especially when you are in the testing process.** You never know who you will be talking to and if I was a fire chief making hiring decisions, I would be asking all of my staff, including secretaries, to provide their feedback as to how nice you were and how you treated them. When it is 3 a.m. and the fire chief is at home sleeping, he or she wants to know you'll be representing the department in the best light when nobody else is watching.

ATTIRE:

- **Take a look in the mirror.** I saw candidates that had a gap between their shirt top button and their tie. Tighten it up, and straighten that tie.
- **Shave the stuff under your chin, you're not here trying to score a date or look cool.** You're trying to get a job.
- **Dress shoes.** Please polish them before you show up to the interview.
- **Dry clean the suit.** I saw some candidates that looked like they had slept in their suit because of all of the wrinkles.

EDUCATION:

- **If you're going to start something – finish it.** This includes education. So many candidates have not finished their formal education. The ones that did get degrees really stuck out; getting the degree doesn't guarantee you the job, but it makes you stand out positively and prove to the board that you can finish something and you have a basic level of education to offer.

- **If you don't have any fire education on your resume, do what it takes to get some!** Go to your local junior college and start working towards that two year degree in fire technology and get into a firefighter academy as well. Take as many fire classes as you can to show your commitment to the fire service. There were many paramedics that had years of experience on a private ambulance, but did not have a clue about what the job of a firefighter entails or what the fire service does and stands for. Just because you work on an ambulance and respond to calls with the firefighters doesn't mean that you have a clue as to what we do or why we do what we do. Getting some college fire technology education will be one way to make you have a more well-rounded background. Just because you have a lot of paramedic or EMT experience on an ambulance, it doesn't mean that you're going to be sure thing for the department. We're not hiring licenses or experience. We're hiring people that we hope will turn out to be successful assets to the department and the community for many years.

OPENING STATEMENT:

- **Do have it written out and prepared in advance.** There is a great chance at every interview (no guarantee) that you will have the opportunity to provide an opening statement. Something to the effect of "tell us how you have prepared yourself," "tell the board how your education, experience and background have prepared you for a position with our department," etc. These questions, like the closing statement, are the freebies. There is no reason you shouldn't nail this one, assuming you have prepared and practiced in advance.
- **What I suggest is having it on your computer so you can modify it as needed.** Yes, it should be continuously changing as you add more information to it and you find things that need to be added, deleted, or altered.
- **Keep it under five minutes, preferably under four minutes.**
- **Contain the information found in your resume and application, as well as some personal characteristics.** Don't assume we'll give you credit for something on the resume or application; if you don't say it, you don't get credit for it. Talk about your training, education (formal), experience, community service, bilingual ability, personal characteristics and attributes.
- **Don't tell us your age or name in the opening statement.** For that matter, sorry to sound harsh, but I really don't care to hear about the names of each of your five children, three dogs and two cats. I'd love to find out their names if we hire you as I get to know you better, but for the purposes of the interview, I don't think it's appropriate. You can say you're married with kids, but then move on.

CLOSING STATEMENT:

- **Keep it from 30 seconds to 90 seconds, nothing more, and nothing less.** When we asked them do you have anything else to say, we heard everything from "thank you very much, I appreciate the chance to be here" to five minute dissertations. Anything over 90 seconds is going to bore us and possibly hurt your score, especially if it makes you go over your allotted time.

- **Show us your passion for wanting to be here with us, in our department.** Some candidates did not do this, and it sounded like they just wanted any fire job. At least make us feel like we are your number one choice, and hopefully in a sincere way.

ANSWERING QUESTIONS:

- **Don't ask us at the end of every answer you provide, "does that answer the question," or "is that specific enough?"** Our standard answer was "whatever you feel is appropriate."
- **Don't abruptly end your answers.** It makes us wonder if you have anything more to say. Have a nice closing to each question, even if it is only one sentence.
- **Don't immediately blurt out your answer.** It makes it seem like you heard the questions in advance. On that note, don't share the questions with your buddies; you're only hurting yourself.
- **Take a few seconds to process the question and formulate an answer.** However, don't take that too literally and spend up to two minutes (or so it seemed) trying to find an answer. There were a few candidates I almost wanted to do a pulse check on or shake and shout to ensure they were still alive.
- **Don't ramble on, get to your point, but be detailed.** Saying something without backing it up is not going to get you hired. For example, don't say "I am dependable." Back it up with a fact/example and maybe why it is important to be dependable. That will take your score from an average 70% score on that question to a score in the 80 to 90 percentile. 70% answers don't get you the job; 80% and 90% answers do.
- **Before you answer, don't tell the board "this is a tough question," or "this is not what I expected."** Do you think we would ask you easy questions? That just doesn't make you look to confident or prepared. You should expect any and all types of questions. If you have answers for virtually every type of question we can ask you, you'll be able to adapt to answer anything asked of you.

INFORMATION SPECIFIC TO THE POSITION YOU ARE APPLYING FOR:

- **If you are applying for a paramedic position, expect to have questions to test your knowledge, skills and abilities you are claiming to possess.**
 - o May be actual hands-on skills scenarios
 - o May be oral questions
- **While you are not expected to know our specific county EMS protocols to do well, it wouldn't hurt to know them.** Most county EMS agencies have websites with their protocols (policies and procedures) online to download. Knowing county protocols in advance is a "value-added" answer. On that note, it doesn't hurt to know your ACLS or PALS protocols as well. Then, when describing your treatment, it doesn't hurt you to say "in Santa Clara County, I know the protocol is _____," or "where I work in San Francisco, our protocol is _____."
- **Some fire departments actually have their paramedic candidates perform a hands-on skills examination.** A common one is to have you come into a room and run an adult or

pediatric full arrest, or demonstrate your knowledge of treating different patients or reading different cardiac rhythms. Other items you should expect to be tested on include seldom-used skills. Discussions I have had with fire departments that use such skills assessment centers within their paramedic testing process tell me that it is not uncommon to have 50% or more of the candidates fail this station, thus removing them from the hiring process.

- **We actually had a paramedic scenario that was more of a talking station where you talked your way through your patient treatment.** I figured it would be easier and was expecting more candidates to pass. Well, our results were not much different from other fire departments out there. You might be great at what you do in the field, but if you can't talk your way through the station, you're not going to succeed.
- **Some of the main reasons candidates did not do well in the paramedic scenario:**
 - o Too aggressive in their treatment
 - o Not aggressive enough in their treatment
 - o Not having a clue as to what to do
 - o Totally missing the primary chief complaint and deviating into other treatments that would not have benefited the patient as much as the treatments we were looking for.
 - o Incorrect dosages, incorrect routes of administration, incorrect concentrations or names of medications to be used
 - o Reading too much into the scenario
 - o Not checking for expiration dates
 - o Lack of confidence in their treatment plan (saying "I would consider" or "I think I would do this."). We want confident, not cocky, paramedics to represent us.
 - o Not being detailed enough; remember, if you didn't say it, you didn't do it!
 - o Not having a good detailed patient turnover report (most were pathetic at best).
 - o Not reviewing the equipment we put in front of you. If we take the time to put some equipment in front of you, if you're given the chance to review it, please touch and handle everything and ask any questions immediately if you are not familiar with something. Also, if there are medications check the expiration dates and ask questions if something is expired. There were expired and current medications and only a few people noticed the difference.

Just some random thoughts, hope they help in some form or fashion. Realize that these are just my opinions and that opinions can and do change from person to person. Learn something from every person you come in contact with, both from the good and the not so good. Good luck, there is an oral interview out there in your future if you don't give up!

PARAMEDIC SCHOOL ENTRANCE EXAMINATION INFORMATION –
Northern California Training Institute (Pittsburg)

Northern California Training Institute (NCTI) is holding pre-entrance examinations for their upcoming Paramedic classes in:

- **Livermore** - courses to be held on *Tuesdays and Fridays*
- **Roseville** - courses to be held on *Tuesdays and Fridays* OR *Mondays and Thursdays*

- **Santa Barbara** - courses to be held on *Mondays and Thursdays*
- **Emeryville** – courses to be held on *Wednesdays and Saturdays*
- **Milpitas** – courses to be held on *Tuesdays and Fridays*

Here is more information I downloaded from their website:

NCTI holds the HOBET entrance exam for all paramedic program placements. NO late arrivals are allowed at the exam. Please make arrangements to arrive early. All application information is accessible from the NCTI homepage at www.ncti-online.com – *Please return all materials prior to the test date!*

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course fulfills all of the training requirements set forth by the State of California for Mobile Intensive Care Paramedics. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be eligible to take the National Registry Exam which NCTI hosts throughout the year at our Roseville Campus. This certification can lead to employment in a wide range of fields, to include ambulance or fire paramedic, E.R. technician, special functions paramedic, sporting events, concerts, etc. NCTI is owned by American Medical Response, Inc. (AMR) and direct employment referrals are a benefit reserved for NCTI students.

TO QUALIFY FOR ADMISSION APPLICANTS MUST:

- Be at least 18 years of age
- Have a high school diploma or GED certificate
- Complete an approved Anatomy and Physiology course within the last 5 years
- Possess a current CPR card and a current EMT-1 or EMT II certification
- Applicants whose certification expires less than twelve (12) months prior to the enrollment date are also eligible

SCHEDULE OF TRAINING

PHASE I - (Didactic & Lab)

400 Hours (approx. 6 months)

Course days and times will be announced at a later date.

PHASE II - (Clinical Rotations)

160 Hours (approx. 2 months)

individually, as arranged for each student, at one of several acute care hospitals in the area.

Guaranteed placement by NCTI.

PHASE III - (Field Internships)

480-720 Hours (approx. 4 months)

Depending on experience and performance individually, as arranged for each student. ***Guaranteed placement by NCTI. (This is a key selling point when shopping around for paramedic schools!)***

DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS

General knowledge of first aid and the ability to handles stressful situations and/or prior experience as an EMT with an ambulance or fire service provider agency.

ADMISSION TESTING

\$50.00 entrance exam fee (non-refundable / non-transferable)

COURSE FINANCING

Tuition may be paid by check, money order, Visa, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover.

TESTING DATES & TIMES

For their **Paramedic Course** that will be held in Livermore, CA, the examination dates are as follows:

- Thursday May 18, 2006 – 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at their Livermore Satellite Location
- Thursday May 25, 2006 – 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm at their Livermore Satellite Location

For their **Paramedic Course** that will be held in Roseville, CA, the examination dates are as follows:

- Wednesday March 22, 2006 – 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at their Roseville Classroom
- Wednesday March 29, 2006 – 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm at their Roseville Classroom
- Wednesday May 3, 2006 – 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at their Roseville Classroom
- Wednesday May 10, 2006 – 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm at their Roseville Classroom

For their **Paramedic Course** that will be held in Emeryville, CA, the examination dates are as follows:

- Thursday March 23, 2006 – 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at their Livermore Satellite Location
- Thursday March 30, 2006 – 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm at their Livermore Satellite Location

For their **Paramedic Course** that will be held in Santa Barbara, CA, the examination dates are as follows:

- Wednesday April 5, 2006 – 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at the Santa Barbara EMS Agency
- Wednesday April 15, 2006 – 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm at the Santa Barbara EMS Agency

For their **Paramedic Course** that will be held in Milpitas, CA, the examination dates are as follows:

- Thursday February 16, 2006 – 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at their Livermore Satellite Location
- Thursday February 23, 2006 – 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm at their Livermore Satellite Location

FOR MORE INFORMATION - Visit their website at www.ncti-online.com – also, for links to those above tests and classes, [CLICK HERE](#).

This is not meant to be an endorsement or recommendation of their program. It is listed as a service and a resource for you to evaluate and determine on your own.

NOTE: For a list of other paramedic programs around the state, visit our website at www.chabotfire.com and go the LINKS page.

FIREFIGHTER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY – **San Jose Fire Department**

The [San Jose Fire Department](http://www.sjfd.org) will be accepting applications for Firefighter/EMT and Firefighter/Paramedic from February 6 through 8, 2006. Visit their website at www.sjfd.org for more information!

FIREFIGHTER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY –
Phoenix Fire Department

In February of 2006, the [Phoenix Fire Department](#) will open up their recruitment for the position of Firefighter. [CLICK HERE](#) for more details (realize the website might not yet be updated to include the February 2006 process, but it will provide you with information about the process).

BASEBALL CAPS – ONLY A FEW REMAIN, GET THEM WHILE
THEY LAST!

Chabot College – Firefighter 1 Academy

Baseball Caps!



Available in blue – only \$18.00 each

- **Enclosed back** – Sizes available include Small/Medium OR Medium/Large

Limited supplies available – act quickly!

Contact me at sprziborowski@chabotcollege.edu or 408-205-9006 if you are interested in purchasing one. Because of my limited availability at the college, I may or may not be able to drop it off to you in person at class on campus. If not, I will try to work something out. Worse comes to worse, for an extra \$4.00, I will ship it to you. Contact me and we can discuss how we will get it to you.

NOTE: I have no plans to produce any more of these, or any of the ones that say “Fire Technology” in the near future. If there is enough interest in the future, we may be able to get the bookstore to start stocking them.

GREAT FIRE DEPARTMENT WEBSITES – Fireground Action Photos

www.firepictures.com
www.firestormvideos.com
www.ktb.net/~billmeco
www.kenjicam.com
www.zimmermanmedia.com

www.fire-images.com
www.firegroundaction.com
www.chibiphotography.com
www.actionfirephoto.com
www.emergencyphoto.com

EMS VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AROUND THE BAY AREA:

The [San Francisco Paramedic Association](#) is looking for volunteers for the following upcoming EMS related classes:

Advanced Medical Life Support Classes - Volunteers Needed

Dates / Locations / Times:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monday February 6 from 1230 to 1700 hours - Tuesday February 7 from 1030 to 1630 hours <p>Both of the above classes will be held at the <u>San Francisco Paramedic Association Offices in San Francisco.</u></p>
You will receive:	Valuable experience watching paramedic level (or higher) students perform patient assessments. Learn from their plusses and minuses. You will also receive a free San Francisco Paramedic Association t-shirt and your choice of an SFPA rescue key chain or ALS field guide.
Your role:	As a volunteer, you will be designated to role-play a victim of a medical emergency scenario. Please wear loose, old, comfortable clothing, as you may be on the floor for some scenarios.
Contact person(s):	Call the San Francisco Paramedic Association for more information or to sign-up at (415) 543-1161 (tell them Steve at Chabot sent you) , register via email at director@sfparamedics.org or register and see more information on their website at www.sfparamedics.org/volunteer.htm

Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support Classes - Volunteers Needed

Dates / Locations / Times:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thursday February 16 from 0700 to 0930 hours - Friday February 17 from 1230 to 1730 hours - Tuesday March 14 from 0700 to 0930 hours - Wednesday March 15 from 1230 to 1730 hours - Thursday April 20 from 0700 to 0930 hours - Friday April 21 from 1230 to 1730 hours <p>NOTE: All of the above classes will be held at the Bay Model Visitor Center in Sausalito (2100 Bridgeway, Sausalito)</p>
You will receive:	Valuable experience watching paramedic level (or higher) students perform patient assessments. Learn from their plusses and minuses. You will also receive a free San Francisco Paramedic Association t-shirt and your choice of an SFPA rescue key chain or ALS field guide.
Your role:	As a volunteer, you will be moulaged and designated to role-play a victim of a trauma emergency scenario. Please wear loose, old, comfortable clothing, as you may be on the floor for some scenarios.
Contact person(s):	Call the San Francisco Paramedic Association for more information or to sign-up at (415) 543-1161 (tell them Steve at Chabot sent you) or email them at director@sfparamedics.org or visit their website section on volunteer opportunities at www.sfparamedics.org/volunteer.htm

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!

Steve Prziborowski, Fire Technology Coordinator - Chabot College

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Cellular: 408-205-9006
Fax: 510-782-9315
Email: sprziborowski@chabotcollege.edu

Chabot College Fire Technology & EMS web site: www.chabotfire.com
Chabot College website: 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.
- If you are subscribed to my email mailing list and you are not receiving anything (a problem some earthlink, aol, hotmail and yahoo users have at times), make sure you add my name – Steve Prziborowski and the email address I use to send this newsletter and other fire and EMS related news items out – sprziborowski@aol.com to your address book, safe list, white list, etc. Since I mass mail items to over 1000 people, some email providers may think these items are spam or junk mail, even though they are not. I typically send a couple of things out per week; if you have not received anything from me in over two weeks, email me to let me know so that I can attempt to troubleshoot the issue.
- Thank you very much for your assistance and cooperation!