



City of Rochelle  
Fire Department  
2018  
Annual Report

Submitted by  
David W. Sawlsville,  
Fire Chief  
February 2019



## JANUARY 2018

### *Fire in an Apartment Building in Rochelle*

In the early morning of January 16<sup>th</sup>, Rochelle Firefighters were dispatched for a reported structure fire at 614 Lincoln Highway. The fire was noticed a short time before 6:30am on the first floor of the 2-story multi-family residence. When crews arrived on scene all residents had evacuated the various apartments. Engine crews stretched a hose line into the fire room and quickly extinguished the fire in the bedroom of the apartment. The fire was contained to the room of origin, with smoke damage dispersed throughout the apartment. Damage was estimated to be \$2000 for property and \$2000 for contents. A family of four was temporarily displaced, while occupants of the other four apartments were able to return to their residences. The cause was determined to be improper use of smoking implements.



### *Sunnymeade Apartment Fire*

Fire crews were called to 1266 Sunnymeade Drive on January 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:12pm for an apartment fire. The fire was quickly located in the kitchen of a garden apartment. The residents were home at the time and were able to escape safely. The fire was contained to the kitchen and heavy heat and smoke damage was present throughout the apartment. One family was displaced as a result of the fire. The damage was estimated to be around \$20,000 to the apartment. The cause of the fire was accidental in nature, relating to the use of the stove.

## FEBRUARY 2018

### *Annual Ice Rescue Practice at Spring Lake*

During a bitter cold night, many department members went down to the marina at Spring Lake for the annual ice rescue drill. The new Rapid Deployment Craft (RDC), acquired via the Federal Excess Property Program, was used to help the firefighters' access and rescue simulated victims safely. The scenario was a victim stranded in a hole in the ice and who was unable to self-rescue. (A hole had to be cut with a saw due to the extremely cold



night and rapidly freezing ice) In a typical thin-ice scenario, the rescue crews use the RDC to disperse weight to access the victim safely. The rescue crews donned insulated, buoyant surface

water rescue (Mustang) suits that keep them dry and warm. Once the proper safety measures were taken, rescuers made their way to the victim and rescued them from the freezing water.

## MARCH 2018

### SCBA Consumption Practice



The Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus or SCBA is one of the most important components of a firefighter's ensemble. It allows firefighters to work in dangerous environments with high heat, poisonous gases and harmful products of combustion while breathing clean air from their SCBA tanks. It is important that each firefighter understands at what rate they consume air, how various physical tasks affects how quickly they consume it, how to slow consumption, and how to preserve precious air in the event they are trapped or lost. The SCBA Consumption Practice is an opportunity

for firefighters to practice these skills and learn how their bodies react to these strategies.



### *Woman Calls Son, Neighbor Heroes for Helping Save Home During Fire*

A homeowner is crediting her son and a neighbor for their quick thinking and efforts in helping keep a fire from totally destroying her house on Sunday night. The Rochelle Fire Department, along with Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District responded to a house fire in rural Rochelle Sunday night. Crews were called at approximately 9:15 p.m. to 18100 Ritchie Road for a report of a structure fire. When crews arrived on scene, flames were running up the outside of the two-story structure. The residents, Rich and Laura MacPartland and their son, were home at the time but were not injured. The fire appears to have been electrical in nature,

possibly originating from the well's wiring. Crews were on scene for over 90 minutes. Damage was estimated at between \$3,000 and \$5,000.

## APRIL 2018

### *Short Court Apartment Fire*

Fire gutted an apartment early this morning in Rochelle at 2:45am at 1258 Short Court. The structure was a 2-story building with brick veneer and a flat roof. Heavy smoke was coming out the back of the 6-flat apartment building when crews arrived on the scene. The downstairs apartment was



gutted from the fire with most of the damage occurring in the kitchen, which was fully engulfed upon arrival. There was also smoke damage throughout the building. The Red Cross was called to the scene to provide resources and temporary housing for displaced residents. The fire started around the stove and cost damage was estimated to be around \$20,000. The Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District was called to



the scene to help battle the flames and assist the Rochelle Fire Department.

### 98th Annual Firemen's Ball

The Rochelle Fire Department Social Organization continued a long tradition by holding its 98th Annual Fireman's Ball on April 14<sup>th</sup> at the CSC Skydive Center Flight Deck Bar and Grill. The D.J. began the evening at 7 pm, and at 9pm the band Pablo and the Rhythmix took the stage. A silent auction and a 50/50 raffle were also held throughout the event. The winner was Cass Headon of MedCare who won \$832. MedCare graciously donated \$200 back to the Social organization! Way to go MedCare!



Although the Fireman's Ball is mostly "annual", it was not held for two years during wartime, but it can be traced back to the 1800's. It is believed to be one of the longest running events in the community. Funds raised by the ball support the service efforts of Rochelle Firefighters including the annual Kishwaukee College scholarship worth \$2,500, sponsoring the Fireman Little League team, and the Firefighters' Hall.

### Fire Damages Garage on 12<sup>th</sup> Street



No one suffered any injuries Saturday night following a detached garage fire in Rochelle. The fire was discovered around 8:10 P.M. on April 28<sup>th</sup> at 853 North 12<sup>th</sup> Street. The garage was fully engulfed when fire crews arrived on scene. Damage was also done to a shed next to the structure along with the siding on the owner's home. In addition, the neighbor's residence incurred slight damage due to radiant heat. The cause of the fire appeared to be electrical in nature due to the wiring coming into the garage. Damage is estimated to be at around \$40,000. The Rochelle Fire Department was assisted at the scene by firefighters from the Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District.

### May 2018

#### Rochelle Fire Department Respond to Lake Rescue

On May 22<sup>nd</sup> at approximately 2:45pm, the Rochelle Fire Department received word of a man who fell off his 12-foot sail boat on the east side of Lake Sule. When emergency personnel arrived on the scene, they found a man in the water attempting to repair his disabled sailboat. The fire department used the department boat to bring the man to shore for medical evaluation and then tow the disabled craft to the dock. The Dixon man refused medical treatment following the incident.



### *Fire Damages Lincoln Highway Home*



No one suffered any injuries at a 2-story house fire in Rochelle on May 24th. Flames were reported at 1022 Lincoln Highway shortly after 10pm. Smoke was coming from the attic area of the home when crews arrived on the scene. The fire started in the second-floor ceiling which then spread to the attic area. Firefighters were able to contain the flames in the attic area. The cause of the flames appeared to be electrical in nature. The residents said there was some problems with the air conditioners earlier in the day. The Red Cross was contacted to find a place for them to live until clean-up and renovation work is completed inside the residence. Cost damage to the home was estimated at \$10,000. Fire crews were on the scene for approximately 2 hours.

### *Mutual Aid Response*

On May 26th at 6:43pm the Rochelle Fire Department and the Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District received a MABAS request for assistance from the Oregon Fire Protection District for a smoldering fire inside a 98 ft. grain silo containing 90,000 bushels of wheat. At Oregon FPD's request, Rochelle responded with an engine and Ogle-Lee FPD responded with a tender. Ogle-Lee's tender supplied Rochelle's engine which in turn fed water to Mount Morris's tower. The incident took just over three hours to mitigate and crews were able to salvage most of the wheat.



## **JUNE 2018**

### *No Injuries in Grain Bin Fire*

Emergency personnel responded to 3503 Mulford Road shortly after 5:30 a.m. on Monday June 25<sup>th</sup> for a grain bin fire and were on the scene for approximately three hours. Firefighters had to cut an access hole in the side of the bin and while using water to extinguish any active smoldering a grain vacuum was used to remove the remaining corn.

## *Rochelle Hosts KEC Fire Science Program*

The Rochelle Fire Department hosted high school students from the Kishwaukee Education Consortium (KEC) Fire Science Program for three weeks in June. Students were instructed in a wide range of topics including Haz-Mat Operations, wildland firefighting, and vehicle extrication. The KEC Fire Science is a multi-year vocational studies program that readies high school students for careers in the fire service. The program travels intermittently to fire departments in partnered cities, so students can gain perspective on needs specific to local communities.



## **JULY 2018**

### *Lt. Miller Retirement*

Lieutenant Dan Miller retired from the Rochelle Fire Department in July following 33 years of service to the Rochelle Fire Department. Lt. Miller was hired at the Fire Department as a POC in 1985. He was appointed to a fulltime Firefighter position with the RFD in 1996 and was promoted to Lieutenant in 2011. Lt. Miller started his fire service career as a volunteer and then a lieutenant in his hometown of Leaf River before moving to Rochelle. Members of his family, including his father, were firefighters and inspired him as a young man to migrate to the fire service. In a party in his honor, Lt. Miller was presented with a helmet plaque for his service. Miller remains active as a P.O.C on the Rochelle Fire Department.



### *Annual Fire Works Display*

Rochelle Firefighters continued the tradition of conducting the Fourth of July fireworks display. The show was about 25 minutes in length and witnessed by a large crowd under with temperatures in the 70s. Thanks to a generous donation by the Flagg-Rochelle Park District, this was the largest show in Rochelle history. The annual fireworks display requires many hours of work. Planning the show, preparing equipment, and training in safety and nearly 100-man hours of work on July 4<sup>th</sup> alone.



### *Jeremy Good Promoted to Lieutenant*

Firefighter/Paramedic Jeremy Good was sworn in as a Lieutenant at the July 9 City Council meeting. Lt. Good was hired as a career Firefighter/EMT in 2006 after serving 4 years as a P.O.C Firefighter with the Rochelle Fire Department. Lt. Good holds an Associates Degree in Emergency Medical Service and is a Certified Fire Officer II. He also holds specialized certifications in Rope Operations, Trench Technician, and Public Safety Diver, and has additional training in RIT,

Advanced SCBA Techniques (Smoke Divers), and fireground leadership operations (Company Officer). Lt. Good started his career as a Firefighter with the Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District and is a graduate of Rochelle Township High School.



#### *Fire damages Car Dealership in Hillcrest*

July 25, 2018. Fire damaged a car dealership in the early morning in Hillcrest. The fire was noticed a short time after 2AM at Auto Hub, 211 Powers Road. The burglary alarm went off as an Ogle County Sheriff's Deputy was in the area and saw black smoke inside the building. The flames were contained in a back-workshop area where a car was damaged along with some shop equipment.

Firefighters used thermal imaging cameras to locate the area the fire started. The cause of the fire remains under investigation. Cost damage is estimated to be over \$70,000 due to the damage to cars inside and smoke throughout the building. One fireman was taken by ambulance to Rochelle Community Hospital for precautionary reasons when he became ill at the scene.



#### *Curt Helgren*

At the City Council Meeting held on Monday July 23<sup>rd</sup> Curt Helgren was sworn in as a full-time Firefighter. Prior to being hired fulltime, Firefighter Helgren worked for 8 years as a paid-on-call Firefighter. Helgren is a Licensed Paramedic and a Certified Basic Ops Firefighter. Prior to taking the full-time spot, Curt worked several years for the Flagg-Rochelle Park District. FF Helgren will be assigned to Black Shift which is supervised by Lt. Zach Prewett.

#### *School Active Shooter Drill held on July 21<sup>st</sup> at Kings School*

The Ogle County Sheriff's Department along with the Rochelle Fire Department, and the Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District conducted an active school shooter drill at Kings School. The purpose of the drill was to test inter-operability and unified command capability in an active shooter scenario. Also participating in the drill was the Ogle County Emergency Management Agency and MABAS Division 18.



#### *Dive Practice at Hickory Grove*



The Rochelle Fire Department has 9 members that are fully certified to perform dive rescues or recoveries. Annually each dive team member completes multiple refresher drills in full dive gear. It is important for each diver to remain proficient with all the equipment and emergency procedures. This training prepares them for various scenarios if the need arises for a dive rescue.



## *Local Firefighters Traveled to Oregon to Train National Guard*

As large wildfires burned throughout parts of the western U.S., fighting those fires requires special training. To help with that effort, four Rochelle area professionals stepped in. Fire Chief Dave Sawlsville, Area Chief Steve Builta, City Councilman Tom McDermott, and Ogle County Emergency Manager Tom Richter traveled to Salem, Oregon, where they were responsible for training 200 Oregon National Guardsman on wildland firefighting practices. The four instructors from Rochelle were among eight certified instructors from the state of Illinois who traveled to Oregon as part of a larger group of about 25 instructors from across the country who trained with the National Guard for five days.



## **August 2018**

### *Fire Damages Warehouse in Rochelle*

August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Fire damaged a warehouse in Rochelle. The fire took place at the former Del Monte building on 15th Street around 10:30 in the morning. A scrap metal company was using a torch to remove some iron pipes and set the inside of the roof on fire. Extinguishing the fire was difficult and time consuming due to the extremely poor condition of the roof. Cost damage is estimated to be around \$6,000 from the roof and smoke inside the warehouse.



### *No One Injured Following House Fire in Rochelle*

No one suffered any injuries following a house fire at 101 Southview Dr. in Rochelle. The fire was noticed a short

time after 3pm. Both front windows to the home were broken out from the heat. The fire was contained to one room in the house. The home owner was not home when the fire started. The cause of the fire is electrical in nature from an outlet in the bedroom. Cost damage to the home from the smoke and water was around \$10,000.



### *Lincoln Highway Heritage Festival*

Firefighters were busy during the LHHF, selling over 2000 pork chop sandwiches for the social organization. The American flag was flown from atop Ladder 1 over the Hub City Cruiser's annual downtown car show,

“Gertie” was also proudly on display at the car show. The Rochelle Fire Department would like to thank local resident Wayne Page for his dedication, hard work, and long hours keeping Gertie in great running condition. Gertie is a 1924 American LaFrance Type 38 Triple Combination engine housed in the Rochelle Fire Department Museum. Gertie is a local landmark and still makes regular appearances in local parades and events.

### *Firefighters Train at Donated Structure*

Area firefighters had a great opportunity to practice their firefighting skills on three downtown Rochelle properties late Thursday [August 23, 2018]. About 30 Firefighters from the Rochelle Fire Department along with the Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District conducted practical training sessions in the 400 block of North Sixth Street. The three properties are slated for demolition sometime next month to make way for the Rickhouse for Kennay Farms Distilling.



## **SEPTEMBER 2018**



### *Tyler Christopherson sworn in*

Tyler Christopherson was sworn in as a full-time Firefighter on September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at the regular City Council meeting. Tyler was a paid-on-call firefighter with the Rochelle Fire Department for 3 years before getting hired full time. Firefighter Christopherson is a licensed Paramedic and a Certified Basic Operations Firefighter. At the swearing in Christopherson was pinned by his father Retired Rochelle Police Officer Dave Christopherson.

### *Fire Causes Damage at Ethanol Plant*

Fire Departments from Rochelle, Steward, and Flagg Center responded to a smoldering corn conveyor belt in the afternoon of September 12<sup>th</sup> at the ethanol plant on the south side of Rochelle. The incident took place at around 2:45 at the CHS Ethanol Plant at 1900 Steward Road. Crews were on scene for about an hour and damages were confined to the conveyor belt.



### *No Injuries Following Duplex Fire*

No one was injured following a kitchen grease fire at a 1-story duplex located at 315 Irene Avenue a short time before 12:30 in the afternoon of September 19, 2018. There was damage to a kitchen cabinet along with some walls in the kitchen from the heat. There was smoke damage throughout the residence. Damage is expected to be around \$2,000.

## OCTOBER 2018

### *Rescue Boat Deployed for Windsurfer in Distress*

The Rochelle Fire Department was called for a water rescue at Lake Sule shortly after 3:30pm Tuesday, October 9, 2018, for a 69-year-old windsurfer that had been having difficulty returning to the pier due to strong winds. He had been attempting to make his way back to the pier for over 20 minutes before his wife called 911. The man suffered minor scrapes when exiting the lake but refused medical transport by ambulance.



### *Fire Prevention Month*

October is always a busy month at the fire station. With students returning to school comes annual school fire and safety inspections. Firefighters conducted walkthrough inspections of each school in Rochelle and the Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District which included Creston, Steward, Kings, and the Focus House. Firefighters ensure proper use of extension cords, electrical outlets, storage of chemicals, and general fire safety. Annual inspections are completed in coordination with the Lee-Ogle Regional Office of Education.



Each year, we set aside time to focus on fire prevention and education in our community. This year, the NFPA national theme was "Every Second Counts: Plan Two Ways Out" and focuses on planning and practicing two escape routes from the home in the event of a fire. Firefighters engage with students in the classroom and at the fire station, providing students the opportunity to meet local firefighters and learn about the latest in fire safety and services our fire department offers. This year, Rochelle Firefighters interacted with over 400 students ranging from Pre-K to High School.

The months of October and November were busy training months with several joint practices for both Rochelle Fire and Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District Firefighters to get the opportunity to train on advanced skills including ropes, big water application, foam application, auto extrication, and rescuing a downed Firefighter. On Thursday October 4th members of the Rochelle Fire Department completed annual rope rescue training. Members completed various tasks that included basic knot skills, rope systems, and the completion of raising and lowering evolutions with haul systems. Rope systems are comprised of ropes and pulleys that create mechanical advantage to allow rescuers to lift heavier loads. In this particular training evolution, members practiced with our ladder truck and rigged an attached haul system to simulate raising a rescuer to a higher elevation and then lowering the rescuer.



### *Rochelle Fire and CHS Conduct Joint Training Exercise*

On Wednesday October 24th, Firefighters from the Rochelle Fire Department and the Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District completed a joint training at CHS Ethanol located at 1900 Steward Rd. The members of both departments completed a tour of the facility directed by Kai Canter who is the Environmental, Health, and Safety Coordinator for CHS. The tour focused on portions of the plant where Firefighters may have to operate, and we discussed various plans of action. The second portion of the training focused on providing fire suppression in the event of a fire that was related to ethanol. Members practice with different types of nozzles that allowed us to flow foam. We also were able to practice with onsite water supply systems in combination with our fire department equipment.

## **NOVEMBER 2018**

### *Fire Departments Train on Vehicle Extrication*

On Thursday November 1<sup>st</sup>, members of the Rochelle Fire Department and the Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District completed extrication training at AC Towing. AirOne Equipment Inc. assisted with the training by providing demo equipment to practice with. The demo tools were new battery-operated extrication tools. Members of both departments completed different tasks that are all part of vehicle extrication. Members practiced various stabilization techniques to keep cars stable while extrication operations are being performed. Members then practiced different techniques for removing doors, roofs, and displacing dashboards. At the end of the evolutions, members completed a scenario where two victims were trapped in a pickup truck that required extrication. This scenario allowed the members to practice incident command roles as well as company operations.



### *Grain Bin Rescue Awareness Class Hosted in Rochelle*

On Saturday November 17th members of the Rochelle Fire Department and the Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District completed a Basic Grain Bin Rescue Awareness course. This course is provided by the Illinois Fire Service Institute through the Cornerstone Grant Program and was offered free of charge to our Firefighters. The class focuses on initial operations for first in companies to a victim trapped in a grain bin. The classroom portion covered various types of hazards and strategies that Firefighters must be aware of during these incidents. The hands-on portion allowed members to practice cutting a grain bin. A grain bin training prop was provided by IFSI. Firefighters practiced using gas powered rotary saws and electric Sawzalls to cut the metal bins.

### *Rochelle Firefighters Conduct Rapid Intervention Training*

On Thursday November 28th, members of the Rochelle Fire Department and the Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District completed Rapid Intervention Team Training (RIT). A RIT team is a crew of specially trained and equipped firefighters that are tasked with



rescuing a firefighter that becomes injured or trapped during a structure fire. These teams must train on different types of removal techniques. We train on how to get unconscious firefighters up and down stairs, out windows, and through floors that they may have fallen through. On this night, we focused on management of a Firefighter's air supply and how to package a Firefighter for removal from a building. Two scenarios were completed in removing downed Firefighters in low light and low visibility environments. We were able to use a practice smoke machine to create an environment that allows for realistic visibility conditions.

**DECEMBER 2018**

*New Hires POC's*

The Rochelle Fire Department would like to welcome Dustin Kanas and Zech VanVickle. Dustin and Zech both have obtained certification as Basic Operation Firefighters and both are newly licensed Paramedics.

*Heavy Smoke Showing in Hillcrest on December 31<sup>st</sup>*



A furnace malfunction caused a home to fill with smoke in Hillcrest at 3pm on December 31<sup>st</sup>. Firefighters responded to the heavy smoke showing call and tracked the problem to a furnace fan that was not functioning causing the furnace to overheat. Firefighters shut down the furnace, removed overheated materials, and removed the smoke from the home.

**Emergency Responses for 2018**

<u>Ambulance Responses</u>	
January	170
February	141
March	154
April	140
May	138
June	153
July	155
August	144
September	174
October	150
November	166
December	128
<b>Total</b>	<b>1813</b>

<u>Fire/Rescue Responses</u>	
January	23
February	13
March	13
April	27
May	27
June	21
July	17
August	18
September	17
October	18
November	28
December	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>237</b>

**Total Incidents: 2,050**

The loss of property and contents to structure fires in 2018 totaled an estimated \$248,600. The total estimated pre-incident value of property and contents was \$3,815,250. Property and contents saved totaled 93.4% of pre-incident property and contents value. Total ambulance calls from 2017 to 2018 increased by 249. The average number of ambulance calls is now 5 per day. Fire/Rescue responses saw a decrease of 35 calls from 272 in 2017 to 237 in 2018

**Training, Fire Prevention, and Public Education**

Firefighters train all the time. In addition to daily training, we offer three monthly training events and four large-scale, multi-company trainings per year. In addition, all paramedics must attend annual renewals of CPR, Advanced Cardiac Life Support, Pediatric Advanced Life Support, and Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support courses.

To keep track of their training each Firefighter is issued a Task Book and either through the scheduled trainings or as their schedule allows, each Firefighter completes a Task Book every year.

Rochelle firefighters compiled 2,178-hours training in 2018. Training time in 2018 covered a wide range of topics including EMS certifications, fire & rescue training, firefighter safety, HAZ-MAT, water rescue, and dive rescue training. Multiple firefighters also attended fire officer classes improving their knowledge and skills to become future leaders.

<b>Training Totals by Topic</b>	
Fire Training	1260
EMS Training	580
HazMat	88
Technical Rescue	93
Water/Dive Rescue	157

<b>Fire Prevention and Public Education</b>	
Business Registration Inspections	20
Alarm Tests/Follow Ups	5
Public Education	2
Fire station tour/fire safety	350 students

# Rochelle Fire Department Roster



*Chief David Sawlsville*



*Lt./Paramedic J. Underwood*



*Lt./Paramedic J. Good*



*Lt./Paramedic Z. Prewett*



*FF/Paramedic B. Edwards*



*FF/Paramedic J. Willis*



*FF/Paramedic J. Lewis*



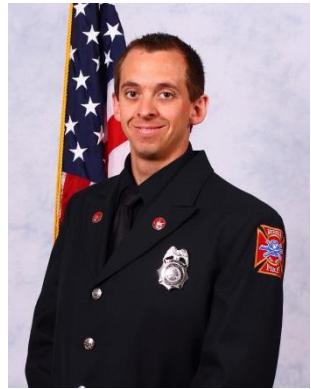
***FF/Paramedic B. Johnson***



***FF/Paramedic K. Dougherty***



***FF/Paramedic Tyler Carls***



***FF/Paramedic R. Baylor***



***FF/Paramedic T. Christopherson***



***FF/Paramedic Curt Helgren***



***FF T. Leahey***



***FF/EMT C. Ward***



***FF/EMT J. Valdivieso***



***FF/EMT R. Brown***



***FF B. Bakker***



***FF/Paramedic D. Fisher***



**FF/EMT J. Miller**



**FF/Paramedic A. Gillis**



**FF/EMT L. Erickson**



**FF/Paramedic Brandan Sanders**



**FF/Paramedic L. Harmon**



**FF/Paramedic N. Rhoads**



**FF/EMT Austin Gillis**



**FF/EMT B. Smith**



**FF/EMT P. Hardcastle**



**FF L. Noggle**



**FF/EMT M. McGill**



**FF/Paramedic D. Miller**



**FF. M. Perusquia**

**Not Pictured:**

**FF/Paramedic D. Kanas,  
FF/Paramedic Z. VanVickle,  
FF J. Brandt,  
FF/EMT A. Byrd,  
EMT H. Hopkins,  
FF/EMT M. Wittenauer**