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CITY OF MEQUON  
FIRE DEPT.

## MEQUON FIRE DEPARTMENT

### SERVING WITH PRIDE



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Standing: Firefighter/EMT Clint King, Firefighter/EMT Rick Lemke

Kneeling: Firefighter/Paramedic Josh Lipp, Paramedic Heather Krueger, Firefighter/EMT Scott Krueger

Cover photo by Martin Staples, Staples Photography

# MEQUON FIRE DEPT.

## COMMUNITY FEATURE



Front Row (left to right): Firefighter Steve Klocko, Firefighter Marco Zach, EMT Carol Barthel, Firefighter/EMT Mackenzie Haese, Firefighter/EMT Brian James, Paramedic Heather Krueger, EMT Elizabeth Bart, Firefighter/EMT Clint King, EMT Bailey Leeson, Firefighter/EMT Scott Krueger, Firefighter/EMT Drew Schuster, EMT Melissa Bradley, Intern Ernesto Campos, EMT Dean Knauss, Intern Deonte Pettis

Back Row: Lieutenant Nicholas Boehlke, Firefighter Brian Kendzor, Lieutenant Scott Blanchard, Lieutenant Armando Suarez Del Real, Deputy Chief David Depies, Deputy Chief Kurt Zellmann, Firefighter/Paramedic Amy Boll, Firefighter/EMT Jacob Evaska, Firefighter/EMT Rick Lemke, Lieutenant Jeremiah Bradley, Firefighter/EMT Brandon Bogan, Firefighter/EMT Quantavious Tucker

# Mequon Fire Department

## SERVING WITH PRIDE

By Marcia Schwager

Photos by Martin Staples, Staples Photography

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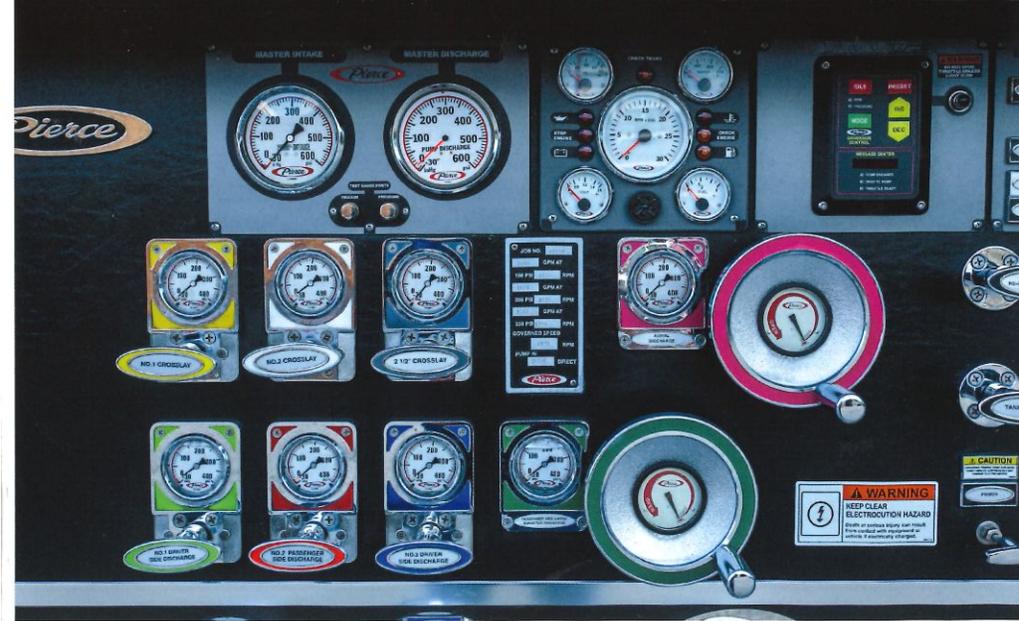
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**Y**ou see fire shooting out of your Mequon neighbor's windows! What do you do? You grab your cell phone and call 911.

Your co-worker clutches his chest and collapses in your Mequon office! What do you do? You grab the phone on your desk and call 911.

What happens next?

The lifespan of a Mequon emergency phone call is well planned and purposely short. If you are calling from a cell phone, the call is answered by Ozaukee County Dispatch, who upon determining the emergency is located in Mequon, forwards the call to the Mequon Dispatch. If you are calling from a landline in Mequon, the call goes immediately to the Mequon Dispatch. The agent then determines the nature of the emergency and decides if the emergency requires the police, emergency medical services (EMS), and/or the fire department. Police are normally dispatched to all medical and fire department emergencies often being the first to arrive.

Medical and fire department emergencies are serviced out of two locations: Station 1 located at the intersection of Mequon Rd. and Buntrock Ave. (11300 N. Buntrock Ave.), and Station 2 located on Port Washington Rd. Two locations exist due to the geographic size of Mequon (approx. 48 sq. mi.) and the fact that Mequon is divided by railroad tracks. The equipment at Station 1 includes two ambulances, two fire engines, one ladder truck, one tender (water tanker truck), one grass fire truck, one special operations truck, two rescue boats and one utility pickup. On the east side of town, Station 2 houses one ambulance, one fire engine, one ladder truck and one tender. Besides having a little more equipment at Station 1, the main difference is there is a paramedic on duty at Station 2 while Station 1 has no personnel at the station and relies on on-call Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs).

Serving approximately 24,000 residents and responding to over 2,000 emergency calls a year, the Mequon Fire Department (MFD) doubled its full-time staff in 2019 from one to two: Chief David Bialk and Deputy Chief Kurt Zellmann. Slated with handling the administrative aspects of the department, fire inspections and training, they also are responsible for operational command at large incidents. The balance of the department is made up of 55 paid on-call members with two exceptions. "We use 14 of our paid on-call members as part-timers to staff one paramedic position at Station 2 around the clock," states Chief Bialk. "Second, we have several MATC students as interns that work 24 hours on duty and 48 hours off duty just like a full-time firefighter to gain experience; interns are always in the firehouse unless they are at school." The department is actively recruiting new members as many members only work part-time and have other full- or part-time careers.

For EMS calls, the department maintains a schedule of on-call personnel. Two EMTs are scheduled on the department's first responder vehicles. The first responders have

*continued on page 6*

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Intern Deonte Pettis

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vehicles at their home or workplace and respond directly to the scene of an emergency medical call. "We also schedule people to cover two ambulances," explains Firefighter/EMT Rick Lemke. "One ambulance on the west side and one ambulance on the east side with the paramedic. The EMTs on the west side respond to their station from home or work. In total, there are always six people on-call for emergency medical calls. Filling this on-call schedule can be difficult especially on summer weekends."

For fire calls, the department does not have a schedule. Rather, when there is a call, every available firefighter responds to the closest station to staff the needed fire apparatus. Obviously, cross-training on the various equipment is a must. "We have weekly training on Monday nights and Tuesday mornings," states Lemke. "All members are required to attend at least 75% of these weekly trainings." The State of Wisconsin dictates the training requirements for firefighters and EMS personnel.

But what about those 911 calls?

For a medical emergency, why are so many people sent to help? "Both first responders immediately go in route to the scene. With so much territory to cover, that is the quickest way to get patient care started," explains Lemke. "With Station 2's on-duty paramedic, this ambulance is usually on its way first. The EMTs scheduled at Station 1 go to the

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station to staff the ambulance and also respond. Once units are on scene, a determination is made as to the level of care the patient needs. If a patient needs a high level of care, the paramedic ambulance will transport them to the hospital. If a more basic level of care is needed, the non-paramedic ambulance will do the transport.”

For a fire call, dispatch notifies all of the department members via pagers. According to Lemke, “All available personnel respond to the closest station. The first four personnel at each station will respond to the scene on a fire truck. The following personnel will continue to respond with ambulances, fire trucks, and tenders if there are no fire hydrants in the area.”

There are agreements with surrounding communities, or Mutual Aid Partners, to provide support for fire emergencies. “We work with the surrounding departments through MABAS (Mutual Aid Box Alarm System),” states Lemke who describes this as a preplanned systemic system to request help for the surrounding communities.

The department also has two specialized teams, the dive/rescue team and the technical rescue team, made up of individuals willing to attend one extra practice each month. The entire department is trained for surface water rescues, but for underwater operations, the team has eight SCUBA certified divers and three shore support personnel trained for calls in Lake Michigan, the Milwaukee River and the various lakes and ponds in the city. The technical rescue team trains for ropes rescue, trench collapse, structural collapse and confined space rescues but focuses on rope rescues along the Lake Michigan bluff.

In addition to responding to fire and emergency incidents throughout the year, the department also provides various services to the community including fire inspections, sprinkler installation plan inspections, fire alarm system inspections, burn permits, public education, and CPR training.

And now the burning question: How does the MFD handle coverage during a parade? According to Chief Bialk, “We keep the first responders and one ambulance crew available when we are participating in a parade. If there would be a second ambulance call or a fire call, most likely you would see the department exiting the parade route at the first opportunity.”

Follow the MFD at Facebook.com/mequonfire. Learn more about various MFD personnel and what it takes to become a firefighter and/or EMT in the following article.



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# Want to Be a Firefighter or EMT? By Marcia Schwager Photos by Martin Staples, Staples Photography



Paramedic Heather Krueger, Firefighter/EMT Mackenzie Haese, Firefighter/EMT Rick Lemke, EMT Melissa Bradley, Lieutenant Jeremiah Bradley, Firefighter Marco Zach, Firefighter/EMT Brandon Bogan



MFD Intern Ernesto Campos

## THE MEQUON FIRE DEPARTMENT WANTS YOU!

So, you think you have what it takes to be a member of the Mequon Fire Department (MFD)? Meet a few members to help you decide. All live in Mequon and, while members of the MFD, also have other careers.

**Brandon Bogan (3 years):** A Firefighter, EMT and Motor Pump Operator, Bogan's primary career is as a personal trainer/health coach, consultant and nutritionist. "I chose the fire service because I want to be able to mitigate and handle stressful situations. How can I be of service? What can I do? These are questions I ask myself every time I walk through the firehouse doors." The biggest challenge Bogan faces is to not second guess himself. Most memorable experience? Saving the resident of a burning house just this past August.

**Jeremiah Bradley (10 years):** Bradley serves as a Lieutenant Firefighter and Advanced EMT. His "other career" is with We Energies as a steam fitter mechanic and CPR instructor. Why did

he choose to be a firefighter? "It's the greatest job in the world. The physical and mental demands keep me on my feet. I have served alongside some of the most fascinating individuals. Never a dull moment." In Bradley's 10 years, he recognizes and takes pride in how far the department has come.

**Melissa Bradley (7 years):** Serving as an Advanced EMT, Bradley also has a career as a real estate agent with LaGalbo Realty here in Mequon. Previously a member of a neighboring department, she met her husband Jeremiah Bradley. They chose to live in Mequon and to serve together in the MFD. "My dad passed away from cancer when I was 15 and in a way being an EMT is a tribute to him. I couldn't exactly save him, but I can help someone else."

**MacKenzie Haese (3 1/2 years):** A Firefighter and Advanced EMT, Haese is a Master of Nursing student at Marquette University graduating in December. Needing to obtain healthcare hours for admission into graduate school, Haese chose to become an EMT.



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Realizing she truly loved the work, she also became a firefighter. "Some of the best moments come from public events. Kids love sitting in the truck and getting to honk the horn. It's a great opportunity to teach them EDITH (exit drills in the home)."

Heather Krueger (3 years): Krueger serves as a paramedic. "I am also an adjunct instructor with the Health and Human Performance department at CUW for 15 plus years as well as an Assistant Track and Field Coach at Homestead High School for over 10 years." Krueger is also a paramedic with Lifestar Ambulance and a mother of four children all who attend Mequon schools. Her biggest challenge? Preparing for the unexpected.

Rick Lemke (3 1/2 years): A Firefighter and EMT, Lemke is also an adjunct professor at Mt. Mary University teaching economics and business. "A memorable moment for me was a patient having an allergic reaction to a bee sting, which can be fatal. We had just had training on improving our speed of administering Epinephrine and were therefore able to administer the medication within 30 seconds of arriving on the scene. The call is memorable because the positive outcome was directly related to our training."

Marco Zach (25 years): A Firefighter since 1994, Zach is also a site manager for Oerlikon Friction Systems in Mequon. "Regardless of age, race or gender... you become a firefighter because you are courageous and enjoy hard work." Zach's most memorable moment came 15 years ago when he arrived to a fully involved house fire. "The owner was standing outside when I exited with a handful of pictures from the fireplace mantle. She held out her hands with tears in her eyes and said, 'thank you.' To this day, the look on her face is what gets me out of bed for a 2am fire call."

Do you have what it takes to be a firefighter or an EMT?

- Are you at least 18 years of age?
- Do you have a High School Diploma or Equivalent?
- Do you hold a valid Wisconsin Motor Vehicle Operator's License?
- Do you reside or work within seven minutes travel distance to the firehouse(s)?

If the answers are YES, according to the city of Mequon's online posting, you may satisfy the requirements to apply to become a firefighter and/or EMT with the MFD. You must also complete and pass a written and oral exam, physical agility test, and a medical examination.

But what then? Per the city's posting, "Paid-on-call firefighters and/or EMTs receive expert training on a regular basis from the department's training bureau and its staff of certificated training instructors. All members are trained to the National Fire Protection Association Standards. In addition to departmental training, members are encouraged to attend seminars and additional training provided by other agencies and organizations."

Milwaukee Area Technical College offers courses for those interested in becoming either an Emergency Medical Technician or a firefighter. The EMT Technical Diploma is available at both the Mequon and Oak Creek campuses (visit [www.matc.edu/tas/diplomas/emergency-medical-technician.cfm](http://www.matc.edu/tas/diplomas/emergency-medical-technician.cfm)), while the Fire Protection Technician Associate Degree is available only at the Oak Creek Campus (visit [www.matc.edu/tas/degrees/fire-protection-technician.cfm](http://www.matc.edu/tas/degrees/fire-protection-technician.cfm)).

If you are interested in joining the MFD and making a difference in your community, visit [www.ci.mequon.wi.us/fireamb](http://www.ci.mequon.wi.us/fireamb) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/MequonFire](http://www.facebook.com/MequonFire) to learn more.

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