



# First Alarm Newsletter

## "Our Mission"

The Belmont Fire Department, a progressive organization through the efforts of dedicated personnel, will deliver the highest quality of service to our stakeholders and visitors.

Issue No. 160

March 2018

## 10 Line of Duty Deaths in 2018



### Happy Birthday

Raphael Rodriguez	03/02
Daquan Doyle	03/14
Robert "Bob" Neuer	03/25



### Happy Anniversary

Marjorie & Bob Wilson 03/04

### On the Cover...

#### Drawn by Fire

##### The Monster Inside

From the time we are children, we are told to be afraid of monsters. Monsters under the bed. Monsters in the closet. The monster in that dark and treacherous basement that our parents never wanted us to explore alone. As we grew older, our teenage monsters changed to be the bully in second-period literature or our ever-present self-doubting reflection in the mirror. Adults? Yeah, we have our monsters, too, but the faces have morphed into opposing politicians, rogue foreign leaders, pedophiles, and the new reality of school shooters who kill indiscriminately and without remorse. Monsters are everywhere.

-Paul Combs

March 19, 2018

Multi Company Training

March 10<sup>th</sup> Refresher Burn

### **BUCKLE UP!**

*We demand it, Policy dictates it, and Your Family deserves it!*

**"Everyone Goes Home"**

## Marking Vacant & Abandon Buildings

With the economic decline over the last several years and subsequent rise of homelessness, we are seeing an increase in the number of hazardous vacant, abandoned and dilapidated structures in and around our communities.

These structures are usually taken over by vagrants, vandals, gang members, drug users and even copper thieves. The boarded-up doors and windows are no match for squatters who easily remove the board-ups and occupy these abandoned buildings. The age and neglect of these structures are further damaged by weather. When occupied by squatters, these buildings are often loaded with combustible trash and clothing, and are targets for arsonists and thieves who steal aluminum siding, copper pipes, furnaces etc. Others use the building for shelter during freezing weather and often start small fires inside for heat. These buildings are becoming death traps for firefighters across the country.

According to an NFPA report on vacant building fires, more firefighters are injured in vacant buildings than any other property. There are many hazards that contribute to those statistics, including delayed discovery, holes in the floors, missing stairs, hoarding conditions and collapse risks, to name a few.

The International Fire Code (IFC) provides a guideline for marking vacant structures. Our department has a standard operating guideline (SOG #019) that provides the necessary information, (*See the SOG for review in this Newsletter*)

- A placard with an open square: Normal structural conditions at time of inspection.
- A placard with a single diagonal slash: There are interior hazards to the building and interior operations should only be considered with extreme caution.
- A placard with an "X" in the square: Significant structural deficiencies in the building. Firefighters should only engage in exterior firefighting operations UNLESS a known life hazard exists.

Other marking systems offer additional identification, such as "R/O" (roof open) or "F/O" (floor open).

In summary, we will continue to mark these dangerous buildings according to our SOG for everyone's safety!

Have A Great March!  
Stay Safe & Hydrated!  
Chief Anthony C. Segars

*"Our Family, Helping Your Family"*