MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF

It is my pleasure to present to you the Meridian Fire Department annual report for 2016, which recaps one of the busiest years in the history of the Department. The information contained in this report is a reflection of the combined efforts of the outstanding men and women who proudly serve Meridian Fire and the community at large. It is through their work and dedication that the Department had a successful and productive year; simply put, they are the best of the best.

We are proud of the services we provide and want to share with you how well we performed last year by providing some vital statistics and major accomplishments within the City of Meridian and the Meridian Rural Fire Protection District, that helped us achieve our mission. Most of all, we want to thank our Mayor and City Council, Fire District Commissioners, and you, the citizens of Meridian, for your unwavering support of all the members of the Meridian Fire Department.

As the City that CARES, Meridian constantly strives to maintain its high levels of service and to ensure the best quality of life for all of its citizens. The Fire Department is a key component in the City’s efforts to provide a safe community for its residents, visitors, and businesses. Our members accept and embrace their roles, and we continue to prepare for not only the day-to-day challenges, but the ones on the horizon that we may be faced with in the future.

It is my distinct honor and privilege to lead a progressive, customer-driven fire department that constantly works hard to meet the fire and rescue needs of its community. I encourage you to contact us if you have any questions or if you have suggestions to improve our services to you. I also invite you to visit the Fire Department website (www.meridiancity.org/fire) to find more information about your Meridian Fire Department and how we help contribute to this vibrant, progressive, and safe community for all who call Meridian home.

Fire Chief Mark Niemeyer
The Meridian Fire Department’s annual operating budget is a detailed public plan of the expected revenues and intended expenditures of the Department. The process is dynamic and constantly changing to match public interest, needs and expectations. The development and ultimate adoption of the budget requires considerable effort by the entire Fire Department’s management team, the City’s Finance Department, the Mayor, our City Council and the Rural Fire District Commissioners. We utilize long-range financial planning tools to help guide the budget process such as our Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), and our Department Strategic Plan. The budget fiscal year runs from October 1st to the following September 30th.

Meridian Fire operated on a $10.9 million dollar budget for fiscal year 2016. The Department currently employees 76 employees, staffs 5 fire stations, and responds to over 6,000 calls for service per year. Capital purchases for 2016 included the replacement of two staff vehicles, two fire engines, and fire hose nozzles. The purchase of two engines in the same year allowed for substantial savings along with avoiding a cost increase that was expected the following year.

Meridian Fire remains committed in seeking cost savings for the operation of the department while maintaining or increasing our service levels for the citizens of Meridian.

The Meridian Fire Department’s Planning Division responsibilities include the management of the community risk reduction plan, communications plan, standards of cover plan, fire department emergency preparedness plan and evaluation of response service levels. The Division Chief of Planning also manages information technologies, records management systems (RMS) and geographic information systems (GIS) with strategic partners.

The year 2016 brought two major changes to information systems used by Meridian Fire Department. Both the dispatch information systems and records management systems (RMS) received upgrades. In March, the Emergency Communications Bureau of the Ada County Sheriff, which is the main dispatch center for Meridian Fire Department, upgraded their computer aided dispatch (CAD) system from Northrop Grumman CAD to TriTech Software Systems. This upgrade has allowed for improved communications between the emergency dispatch center and emergency responders. In September, the RMS system was upgraded from Firehouse Software to ESO and has created a more efficient platform for completing and storing incident reports.

The Planning Division began developing outcome benchmarks and performance measures in 2016. These benchmarks and measures will be used in the future to assist in the evaluation of response service levels and to ensure that the most efficient methods of emergency response are being utilized by the Meridian Fire Department.
Promotions, Pinnings, Ceremonies

Promoted L to R: Garrett Hirsch, Engineer; Kristian Forbey, Captain; Glenn Wilson, Captain; Dan Cole, Engineer

Newly promoted Captain Kristian Forbey being pinned by Deputy Chief David Jones

Engine Dedication E-32 October 2016

New Hire, Firefighter Rustin Hood with Kipp Mills & baby Piper, Chief Niemeyer & Mayor Tammy

New Hire, Division Chief Charlie Butterfield with Amy Busek, Chief Niemeyer & Mayor Tammy
FROM OUR CUSTOMERS

“Firefighters were excellent, one of the best groups! Helped my wife out when I was out of town and a water leak ran all night. Thank you!”

“I have nothing but praise for Meridian's wonderful Fire Department. Special thanks to all responders, for the 3 firemen who replaced batteries in smoke alarms, and for Pam in Safety who helped install car seats for my grandchildren. Great people!”

“All the firemen were great and extremely efficient - very helpful to calm me down! Thank you!”

“My wife and I were extremely happy with the response time and quality of service provided by the firemen that responded to our need. Thank you very much!”

“Thank you for your help. God bless you.”

“The Meridian Fire Department has assisted in both emergencies and non-emergencies and have done an exceptional job. Many thanks!”

“Thank you for being so great!”

“They saved my life, along with Ada County Paramedics!”

“Thank you! I was really scared until you arrived.”

“These guys came at 4 AM at my request. My smoke detector was going off for no reason and I live alone and didn’t know what to do. They were very polite and explained it was just a freaky thing! A big thank you!”

“Great group of guys who know their stuff. I feel much safer knowing the quality of firefighters we have in Meridian.”

“We were very impressed with the help we received from the Fire Department. They worked diligently to put out our fire and protect surrounding structures. Thank you so much for your expertise and hard work! We were very confident in their abilities.”

“As a student currently pursuing a career in the medical field, the Meridian fire that responded to our call showed me how compassion, empathy and professionalism in the field can make an enormous difference for a patient who is confused and afraid due to their emergency situation; I truly appreciated experiencing that first hand! I unfortunately was not in a complete sound mind to have gotten names or remember faces, but I do remember the kind voices who did everything in their power to care for me and make me comfortable...my hats off to you, I thank you all.”
In 2016, the Operations Division of the Meridian Fire Department continued responding to an increasing volume in calls for service. Although our overall call volume was down slightly from the 16% surge in 2015, we are still experiencing an overall rising trend in 911 emergency calls. We responded to 6,275 total incidents in 2016, which represents an 11% increase in total call volume from 2014. This increase is comparable to the 8% average annual increase in call volume that we have been experiencing over the last 15 years. We attribute some of the decrease in call volume to the new Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system that Ada County implemented this past spring. This system is able to more accurately prioritize incoming 911 calls and send only the most appropriate apparatus for that incident. For example, a non-acute medical call that would have previously received both a Meridian Fire engine and an Ada County ambulance, may now only receive one or the other based on the specific needs of the patient. The changes brought about with the implementation of this new system aligns well with our philosophy of The right resource with the right personnel responding to the right call at the right time. Our administrative staff and emergency responders are working hard to ensure that the appropriate type and number of resources are being sent to each call. This resolves the emergency without committing units unnecessarily saving taxpayer dollars and ensuring resource availability.

The Operations Division staffs four fire engines and one ladder truck daily to respond to emergent and non-emergent calls for service. Fire Stations #4 and #5 house our brush firefighting units and Fire Station #2 houses our water tender. These units are “cross staffed” meaning that if those resources are needed, the crews assigned to that station leave their fire engine and respond in those specialty units. Fire Station #1 uses a similar model to staff the Department’s ladder truck and a fire engine responding in the smaller, more efficient fire engine to calls that do not require the ladder truck.

To effectively respond to emergencies in our community 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, our firefighters work 48 hours on duty followed by 96 hours off duty. During these 48 hours, our crews are required to be dressed in their protective gear, safely seat belted on the fire apparatus, and on the way to emergency calls within 90 seconds of receiving the call day or night. To accomplish this they must live, sleep, cook, eat, and perform all of the tasks they are required to accomplish each day within close proximity of the fire apparatus.

In addition to the time that our firefighters spend responding to emergency calls, they spend countless hours enhancing the safety of our community by training for emergencies, conducting fire safety
OPERATIONS, continued

classes and friendly firefighter visits at schools, performing car seat installations, installing smoke detectors, replacing smoke detector batteries and a variety of other activities.

Here are some of the Operations Division’s major accomplishments from 2016:

- We received and placed into service two new fire engines. Engines 32 and 35 are 2016 Pierce Enforcer pumpers that carry 750 gallons of water and are capable of pumping 1500 gallons per minute. The new engines were also designed with roll over protection, front and side curtain airbags, and various other features to keep our firefighters safe. Engine 32 is located at Fire Station #2 on Ten Mile Road and Engine 35 is located at Fire Station #5 on Linder Road.

- We worked in collaboration with the Ada County Sheriff’s Department communications division and all of the other fire, EMS, and law enforcement agencies in Ada County to research, develop protocols, and implement a new Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system. This system will dramatically improve the speed and accuracy of processing 911 calls. Once the dispatchers enter the information provided by the 911 caller, the system uses geo-location to find the closest appropriate resource and then directs them to the incident.

- A new incident report system was also implemented this year. The new software provided by ESO Solutions allows us to capture more accurately the information from our responses and extract that information in a more useful format to guide us in long term planning and budgeting. Another advantage to this system is that it was a collaborative purchase by all of the fire and EMS agencies in Ada County. This allows us to share information with our cooperators and with the hospitals.

The Operations Division also includes the Department’s Training Unit. It is a priority of our department to ensure that our firefighters are properly trained and equipped to deal with the dangerous, unpredictable, and often unforgiving situations that they encounter on a regular basis. The Training Unit is overseen by the Division Chief of Training and utilizes two 40 hour Training Captains and six Field Training Officers (3 fire and 3 EMS) on each 48 hour shift to develop, coordinate, and deliver training to our crews.
Here are some of the Training Units notable accomplishments for 2016:

- In 2016, our department added two full time Captain positions to the training unit. Engineer Glenn Wilson and Engineer Kristian Forbey were promoted to the rank of Captain and have been assigned to the positions of Shift Training Captain and Programs Training Captain. Their duties will include managing the day-to-day shift training needs of the department and specific training programs such as the recruit training academy, engineer development, and officer development programs. Captains Wilson and Forbey will also serve in the capacity of incident safety officers, responding to major incidents and working directly with the Battalion Chief to ensure that any critical safety concerns are identified and addressed.

- In December, the department saw six new firefighters graduate from the Treasure Valley Joint Fire Academy. This 14 week academy is designed to provide newly hired recruits with the basic skills and knowledge needed to be firefighters. Topics included basic firefighting skills such as an introduction to personal protective equipment, basic operation of fire hoses, using ladders and hand tools in firefighting operations, basic rescue techniques, responding to hazardous materials incidents, vehicle rescue, and many other foundational skills. We would like to congratulate the following firefighters on their successful completion of the recruit academy and welcome them to the Meridian Fire Department family.

  Firefighter/Paramedic Sean Stear
  Firefighter/EMT Tim Walstad
  Firefighter/AEMT Matthew Myers

  Firefighter/EMT Garrett Bjerke
  Firefighter/EMT Josh Wheeler
  Firefighter/EMT Trevor Sund
MFD Training

- New driver/operator training: 29 hours
- Officer training: 280 hours
- Training drills: 493 hours
- Hazardous materials: 193 hours
- EMS: 1203 hours
- Driver/operator training: 1241 hours

MFD - Total Training Hours for 2016 = 17,615
Year End Completion Report
TOTAL INCIDENTS

City 5,170
Rural 351
Aid Given 754
Total 6,275

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<td>Responses</td>
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<td>Number of Incidents</td>
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DEPARTMENT STATS, CONTINUED

Apparatus Response Per Station Comparison 2016

Incidents by Property Type

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<td>Storage</td>
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Incidents Per Year Comparison
The Fire Prevention Division’s main focus is to prevent fires from occurring, minimizing the impact of fires and determining the cause and origin whenever possible. Much of the work we do is dependent on our connection with the public, residents and business owners alike. The Prevention staff also conducts fire and life safety development review of potential new projects. Meridian Fire’s Prevention Division consists of the Fire Marshal, two fire inspectors and two public educators.

It is very important for the Prevention Division to be actively involved in the pre-application process level. It allows for us to be very pro-active in identifying access issues, water flow needs for firefighting and potential life safety issues in the design of facilities. It provides for a greater level of safety for the public and the firefighters. In previous years, we usually experience a lull in activity from November to March for pre-application meetings on new developments and commercial construction. That was not the case in 2016.

In 2016, Inspector, Captain Joe Bongiorno was able to earn some very important certification levels. Captain Bongiorno is now an International Association of Arson Investigators Certified Fire Investigator (I.A.A.I CFI) and a Certified Evidence Technician. He also tested for certification as an International Code Council (ICC) Inspector I and II.

The combined experience of our Fire Prevention Division was put to good use in 2016. Of all the fires that occurred in our District, 27 of these were considered “suspicious” in nature or had a high dollar loss amount. These fires were investigated and, where it was possible, a determination was made as to the cause.

The division has completed the second full year of using Mobile Eyes as our records management software. The functionality of this program is still working very well for us. We are able to more accurately track our activities and scheduled inspections based on time intervals and assign re-inspections. As a division, we were able to clear over 96% of the violations we identified. I believe this program has made our division more productive and efficient. Finding data and past inspections is so much easier with this program and the office staff is able to easily utilize this program to assist the public with inquiries.

The end of 2016 marked our 18 month point with utilizing The Compliance Engine, (TCE). This is a third party company that helps us monitor and track occupancies that have fire alarms, fire sprinkler or cooking hoods with extinguishing systems. All of these systems are required by code to be tested and maintained on an annual or semi-annual basis. TCE sends out notices for when the systems are due for inspection, sends reminder notices for re-
FIRE PREVENTION, CONTINUED

pairs, and tracks when repairs are completed. Typically, after one year of using TCE, you would see about a 27 to 30% compliance rate; at year 3 you can expect approximately 80%. Our goal has been to be at 90% compliance at the end of year 3 and we are already at 74% compliance at the end of our first full year. I believe this high number is based on good business practices already in place, that our division already had a good relationship with the business community and lastly, the majority of the companies are regional or nationwide companies that were already working with TCE in other areas.

We continue to work closely with other departments in our local area to be consistent with the application of the fire code between our jurisdictions. We anticipate that during 2017, we will be adopting the 2015 International Fire Code. Our collective efforts have been and will continue to be towards common language and application of the new and future code editions.

We are finding that as technology changes and we gain the tools needed to access programs, codes, and data in the field, we become much more efficient and are able to provide a higher level of service to our community. This next year should be a great year for prevention!!

In addition to prevention activities, our Prevention Division is also filling the needed role of providing logistics for the department. We maintain the fire department’s apparatus which includes 7 Engines, 1 Ladder Truck, 1 Water Tender, 2 Brush Units, 1 Training Engine and 17 staff and support vehicles and trailers. In addition, the Division also maintains our facilities, 5 fire stations, a 5 story training tower and a fire safety center facility.

This past year, the department was able to purchase two 2016 Pierce Engines. These units went into service in late October at Stations 2 and 5. The replaced engine at Station 5 was sold to Middleton Fire District and the engine from Station 2 is now a reserve engine. The reserve engine that was replaced will be used for training.
The Meridian Fire Department’s core mission is to respond to and mitigate incidents. It is also the department’s mission to reduce the number and severity of those incidents by proper code development and enforcement, and ongoing public education. It is through this continuous and comprehensive program of education that the department maintains a culture of safety in the community. All of our stations conduct tours for school groups, families, and other citizens on request. Many people come into the stations to get their blood pressure checked, their car seat checked, or to get safety related information. Every day you will find the members of the Meridian Fire Department out in the community installing smoke alarms, teaching safety classes, assisting the community and educating the public about fire safety. Public education is vital to the success of the fire department mission. From infant car seat safety to school programs to our senior safety programs, the department is serious about doing all it can do to help the Meridian community to be a safer place to live, work, and raise a family.

National Fire Prevention Week/Month
A week established years ago by the National Fire Protection Association to focus all education efforts on the current fire safety issues facing the country. Meridian found out long ago that it takes more than a week to get our life saving messages out to the community, so we plan maximum educational activities throughout the month of October. The educational area of focus for 2016 was once again smoke alarms with the theme being “Don’t Wait - Check the Date Replace Smoke Alarms Every 10 Years”. During the month, we presented educational skits via assembly style to elementary school students in the first through fifth grade and our crews delivered Friendly Firefighter visits to students in preschool through first grade. We visited many day-care and preschool programs and opened our doors to many visitors from home school groups to scouting groups. We also made presentations to businesses and senior groups.

Elementary school children participated in a poster contest showcasing the national theme and the winners of the poster contest were treated to an awards ceremony at city hall with the chief officers and firefighters. One lucky class at Discovery Elementary received a pizza party with the firemen just for participating in the contest. This was a great way for students to help us get the fire prevention message home to their families.

Public Safety Day
On October 8 we hosted nearly 700 visitors at fire station one and taught them about smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, home escape plans, getting low under smoke, stop-drop-and-roll, hands-only CPR, emergency planning, along with lots more. Demonstrations included vehicle extrication, a live fire, and ladder truck operations.
Sparky the Fire Dog came out to help with the festivities where we served up good old fashioned hot-dogs, face-painting, and interactive educational games.

Happy 72nd Birthday Smokey Bear!
We celebrated Smokey’s birthday with an invitation to the community to join us at Kleiner Park for a fun day of activities! We had over 300 people in attendance and they enjoyed cookies and ice-cream with the Birthday Bear, Engine 33 crew, and local wildland firefighters. It was a fun day filled with educational information booths, the fire safety educational house, and of course lots of educational giveaways.

Public Safety Academy
In the spring, we taught 25 citizens about the inner workings of both the Meridian Fire Department and Police Department. Community members invested in ten-weeks of classes coupled with four exciting hands-on super Saturdays! The group learned a lot about both departments and were also equipped with many tools to keep their families safe and informed. The graduates from the academy are great community advocates who generally after graduation invest in the community through volunteer work with one of the agencies.

“An honor to have participated in this class!”
Frank Marcos- 2016 participant

“I am impressed by the level of cooperation and commitment of all who put on this academy class” 2016 participant

Project S.A.F.E. Smoke Alarms For Everyone
2016 continued to be an effective year in getting our smoke alarm message out. Our Project SAFE Program had 246 calls for service; we replaced batteries, installed alarms in homes that were not covered with smoke alarms, changed out expired alarms and helped determine and correct smoke alarm problems. As a result of this year’s national educational theme to change your smoke alarms every ten years, we spent a good portion of our efforts in assisting residents in updating and changing those alarms out. Smoke alarm education will continue to be one of our top priorities in the upcoming year.

“A smoke alarm is critical for the early detection of a fire in your home and could mean the difference between life and death. Fires can occur in a variety of ways and in any room of your home. But no matter where or how, having a smoke alarm is the first key step towards your family’s safety.” Consumer Product Safety Commission

Project S.A.F.E. is a program that will be with Meridian for years to come as we do everything to educate our community to the danger of fire and to go one step further in equipping their homes with these life saving devices. Smoke Alarms Save Lives!

Fire Prevention Day –The Village At Meridian
We spent a day with our fire prevention characterization partners to put on educational clown and puppet shows at The Village. The skits focused on fire safety in the
home and how to care for those important smoke alarms. Throughout the day families visited information booths and the children received a fire engine tour and a visit with our firefighters.

Child Passenger Safety

The Meridian Fire Department continued to be a leader in the community in their commitment to child passenger seat safety. We added eight more car seat technicians to the department and sponsored two child passenger technician classes certifying new technicians throughout Idaho. Meridian Fire currently has 22 certified technicians and together they performed 306 car seat inspections/installations in 2016 through scheduled monthly check-up events, drive-ups, or appointments. Parents and other caregivers can become easily confused by the recommendations of the seat instructions or the vehicle owner’s manual when trying to install a child passenger seat. Further, different vehicles all have various models and types of seats, and configurations. The use of LATCH versus using the vehicle seat belts to secure the seat, and where the child seat can be installed in the vehicle, can become a nightmare for caregivers who only want the best for their children. Motor vehicle crashes remain the number one cause of injury and death for our nation’s children and MFD certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians are on the front lines preventing such tragedies.

EVERY 33 SECONDS
A CHILD IS
INVOLVED IN A CAR CRASH

Safe Kids Worldwide
The Meridian Firefighter Local 4627 Benevolent Fund would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your support this past year! In 2016, we were able to provide over $4,000 in burn-out checks to victims of fires. We also gave out a few thousand dollars in store gift cards for personal items to burnout victims. This past year we supported many local charities and events that have had a direct impact on the residents of Meridian. These included Muscular Dystrophy Association, Coats for Kids, Camp River Run, the Meridian Optimists, the Idaho Fallen Firefighters Association and many others. In addition, we have helped our Public Education Specialists, Pam Orr and Charmaine Schuler with their public education programs. We were also able to purchase $2,000 worth of carbon monoxide detectors for Meridian homes which needed them.

This next year will be the third year of the Brandon Erickson Memorial Scholarship Fund. We want to remember Brandon and all that he did for the fire and EMS fields. This scholarship fund will help those that are pursuing degrees in fire and/or EMS fields at local colleges. Two $500 scholarships will be given in June of 2017.

I would like to thank everyone for coming out again this year and supporting the Cable One Movie Night. The inflatable educational house we bought for the Department is a big hit; there was a line almost the entire night. A big thanks also to the others that volunteered at the tables handing out literature and operating the 911 simulator. We appreciate all of our volunteers and the many hours spent helping us out!

The Salmon BBQ held on the first Friday of August, was again a huge success. The Salmon BBQ is our only money raising event for the year other than local gifts and donations. In 2016, for the first time ever, the event location was moved from its original location, the Meridian Dairy Barn to Kleiner Park. Everyone who attended said they enjoyed the grass and covered areas for the kids to play in. The fish was fantastic (as always) and everyone had a great time. The BBQ could not have happened without all the support from Meridian Fire Local 4627 union members and the various volunteers who gave their time. Much gratitude goes out to our numerous sponsors who donated raffle prizes for the event; we couldn’t do it without you! Everyone is looking forward to 2017 at Kleiner park and we hope to see you there!

This year we also finished the restoration of our 1943 GMC Parade Fire Truck which was purchased by the Meridian Fire Department back in 1947 and used for several years. This last year it made two appearances in car shows in the valley and many people were excited to see it! I had many people stop and tell stories of the old rigs and how they drove them in the war, etc. It was a great time. Look for this piece of history in the City of Meridian parades in coming years!

Thank you again to all of you that support the Meridian Firefighter Local 4627 Benevolent Fund.

Joseph Bongiorno - Treasurer
WORKING WITH AND FOR OUR COMMUNITY
OUR FURRY & FEATHERED RESIDENTS

SOMETIMES WE RESCUE ANIMALS, SOMETIMES THEY RESCUE US

Jaxon the Pug alerted his family to a fire in their home

MFD assisting in the training for Comfort Dogs
THE MFD MISSION

To protect and enhance our community through professionalism and compassion.

MFD VISION STATEMENT

A premier organization recognized for providing a safe community through professionalism, innovative actions, and community involvement.

MFD GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Compassion – We will provide friendly and compassionate service to each other and the public we serve.

Professionalism – We will dedicate ourselves to be an educated workforce striving to meet the community’s and our employees’ changing needs.

Honesty – We will conduct ourselves in an honest manner and be transparent in our interactions.

Ownership – Ownership of our department will be expressed through tradition, loyalty, and dedication.

Trust – We will earn and maintain trust through integrity, our actions, and holding to commitments.