



# THE BUGLE



Winter 2023

SAVING HISTORY, SAVING LIVES!

Volume 30, Number 1

## SANTA SPREADS HOLIDAY CHEER

BY JOAN OLIVER

On Sunday, December 10th Santa journeyed to the Museum to visit with families, spread holiday cheer and grant Christmas wishes. This was the fourth year he has blessed us with a visit, and we were fortunate to have Mrs. Claus in attendance as well. He shared some exciting news with us that day, he would be making it a permanent stop every year.

When the doors opened at 10am, families began to pour in with their children anxious and excited to be able to talk to Santa and tell him what they wanted most for Christmas. Mrs. Claus did a preliminary check to see where they stood on their naughty or nice list. Then children could have their visit, and afterwards the families could pose with Santa & Mrs. Claus and have their picture taken.

Each child received a candy cane and goodie bag. There were refreshments for everyone, and the children could have fun playing in the Kid's Corner. We had a great turnout and the kids left happy but tired after a wonderful afternoon with Santa.



Photo Joan Oliver

Special Holiday Pic with the Family

## PRESIDENT'S LOG

BY JIM BELL

By the time this issue of *The Bugle* is distributed the museum will have had our annual membership meeting and many of you will have heard me announce that I will not be seeking the presidency for 2024. After seven years as President I feel it is time to step aside and let someone else lead this organization. I will continue on the Board of Directors and Executive Committee. I am grateful for all of the support I have received from the Executive Committee, Board members and the many wonderful volunteers that truly keep this museum running.

As I look back over the last seven years I feel the Museum has made great strides in moving forward. First and foremost is the fact that we opened to the public in 2017 and have our doors open four days a week, year round. Last year alone we had almost 2100 visitors. Our visitors are a diverse mix of firefighters, citizens, school groups, seniors groups, Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts.

The Museum has been successful in maintaining a solid financial foundation. Our annual luau fundraiser has proven to be popular, fun and sustaining. We have received significant grants from the Mandel Foundation, the Richard G. Small Foundation and Cuyahoga Arts and Culture. Members of the Board of Directors have been generous in their support as have the members of Cleveland Division of Fire. And I certainly do not want to discount the donations that come to us from our members during our Capital Campaigns or free-will contributions. Every amount, large or small, is used carefully and responsibly for the betterment of our organization.

Our building proves to be a constant challenge. On the bright side the event space in the former dormitory has been largely renovated. However, the emergency tuck pointing and masonry repair on the building exterior diverted money that had been earmarked for completion of the area. With the success of the 2023 Capital Campaign I am confident we can finish the event space in the near future. (See Log, Page 2)

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This newsletter is dedicated to informing the members and friends of the Western Reserve Fire Museum and Education Center of its activities and events.

Published by The Western Reserve Fire Museum and Education Center, 310 Carnegie Ave., Cleveland, Ohio 44115-2816

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www.wrfmc.com

## MEMBERS SUPPORT CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

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Thank you Museum members!! You have again responded to the Capital Campaign in “Five Alarm” fashion by contributing more than \$32,000.00 to the year end drive. This amount significantly exceeds last year’s successful campaign. It also comes on the heels of a special capital appeal to our Board members this spring to help the Museum offset some of the \$44,000.00 tuck pointing emergency expense caused by leaks to the second floor. We want to thank all those who contributed in any amount at year end. Each donation was important to the total and we are grateful to all our supporters. In the interest of space we are just listing below those who made significant year end gifts.

**Richard Bamberger**  
**Daniel Bambic**  
**Francis Beam**  
**Jim Bell**  
**Paul Bobak**  
**Billy Braun**  
**Johnny Brewington**  
**Bob Derritt**

**Keith Devine**  
**Christopher Fink**  
**Shawn Flanigan**  
**Linda Florian**  
**Bob Gahr**  
**Thomas Gallagher**  
**Scott Giesler**  
**Larry Gordon**

**Daniel Hayden**  
**Hook N Ladder Jerky**  
**Raymond Kotecki**  
**Thomas Kulick**  
**Williiam Laditka**  
**Patrick Malloy**  
**Jack, Joseph & Morton Mandel Fdn**  
**Robert Marquard**

**Pat McCon**  
**Michael Milano**  
**Frank Novak**  
**Rodger Ramsthaler**  
**The Sherwin-Williams Fdn**  
**Brian Wilker**  
**The Zangerle Family**

## LOG

(Continued from Page 1)

I am pleased to report we have seen an increase in our volunteer staff over the past few years. We have added six docents and one archivist to our ranks, all of whom have a background in the fire service. We recently added two new members to the Board of Directors. We also have been fortunate enough to contract with a professional janitorial service.

In 2018 the Museum hosted the summer convention of the Fire Museum Network. A successful 3-day event was held that included educational seminars and visits to local fire related restaurants, memorabilia collectors, and departments. Again, this raised the profile of the greater Cleveland area and our stature as a professional fire museum.

In closing, I would like to say thank-you to two people who greatly assisted me during my tenure. Joan Oliver is our Office Administrator, but she is that and so much more. Joan has taken on many additional responsibilities beyond her job description. She truly is the glue that holds our organization together. I could always count on her to give me information, keep meticulous records, prepare reports and documents and listen to me vent when I needed a sympathetic ear. The Museum is very lucky to have such a talented, dedicated person.

John Zangerle was my right-hand man. I counted on John’s wisdom and counsel as we navigated the waters of museum operation. I always knew that John would give me straight answers and keep the museum out of legal trouble and pointed in the right direction. I will be forever grateful for his guidance.

Please continue to support the Museum and come down and visit and see what a great place we have.

Sincerely,  
Jim

## HELP THE MUSEUM REDUCE EXPENSES

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BY JOHN ZANGERLE

I am sure you must have noticed that postage costs rose again at the beginning of this year and these costs have been rising significantly in the past several years. In addition to postage costs, the cost of paper, ink, and printing have all been rising with inflation. Our dues, on the other hand, have remained constant for many years and it forces us to look at ways to control our expenses and generate more income. We are slightly raising our admission price this year for the first time since we opened!

On the expense side, we are looking at all options, but one that many organizations are implementing is sending newsletters electronically to as many people as possible. The other alternative is to add a surcharge for those who wish to continue getting hard

copies. Fortunately we are not at that point yet, but you can help if you agree to have your Bugle only delivered to your email. Many members already receive the electronic copy and some also receive the Bugle in both formats. As someone who traditionally loves hard copy documents (can you say newspapers?) I understand the reluctance of some to give up the hard copy, but many of our members, particularly younger members, receive most of their literature electronically. If you are willing to receive your Bugle only electronically, please take a second to email Joan Oliver at [oliverj@wrfmc.com](mailto:oliverj@wrfmc.com) or scan the QR code to the right. This can help the Museum combat expenses.



## SMALL MUSEUM DAY AT CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

BY JIM BELL

The Fire Museum has once again been invited to participate in the Northeast Ohio Inter-Museum Council's Small Museum Day at the Cleveland Museum of Art. This gives us an opportunity to set up an information table and spread the word of the exciting events and exhibits here at the Museum. A multitude of other museums and historical societies are in attendance in the Ames Family Atrium, and this provides us with a network of organizations with which to explore opportunities to network and collaborate. This year, Small Museum Day will be held Saturday April 13 from 10:00am to 2:00pm. We are always looking for volunteers to staff our table or come join us and find out what other fine institutions are here in northeast Ohio.



Photo: Joan Oliver

Visitors Learn About Museum

## SHOULD WE BE WORRIED ABOUT ELECTRIC VEHICLES FIRES?

BY JOAN OLIVER

It may seem as though electric vehicle fires are a common occurrence but that may be due to the fact that EVs are relatively new to the market which makes them difficult to compare statistically to gasoline vehicle related fires. EV sales are on the rise and have increased from 2% of the market in 2020 to 7.6% of the vehicle market in 2023. In 2022 there were 25 reported EV fires for every 100,000 EVs sold compared to 1530 ICE fires per 100,000 gasoline powered vehicles sold.

The most commonly reported electrical vehicle battery fires tend to be one of two types. In some cases the batteries caught on fire after the vehicle was involved in a collision or after the car batteries were damaged in some way. Auto manufacturers constantly continue to work on ways to improve battery protection. Other fires have occurred during charging and have resulted in safety recalls.

The challenge to firefighters occurs when the lithium-ion battery in an EV ignites. They have a tendency to fail very quickly and give off a tremendous amount of heat and fire, making them a possible explosion hazard. The other problem is when the fire moves beyond one cell and spreads to the rest of the battery setting off a chain reaction called "thermal runaway". When they go into thermal runaway the battery will generate it's own heat which can get to be over 1,000 degrees. The challenge for the firefighters is getting to those batteries. If they are not cooled down quick enough, and for a long enough period of time, they will continue to generate heat and catch back on fire. Fires from Lithium-ion batteries burn hotter and last much longer, therefore it can take tens of thousands of gallons of water to extinguish them.

Firefighters and first responders must follow different response guidelines than for gasoline fires, and need proper training to extinguish the blaze. Unfortunately, fire departments aren't always equipped with the trucks and gear to deal with this type of situation.

Undoubtedly, with the use of electric vehicles comes with the challenge of effectively and efficiently solving the problem of



extinguishing a fire in the high voltage battery and stop thermal runaway.

Firefighting foams won't solve the problem because getting the foam to the failed cells is difficult due to the fact that the thermal runaway is happening inside a watertight, fire-resistant box. Plus the purpose of the foam is to starve the fire's oxygen supply, but a lithium-ion battery cell does not need oxygen to burn. A fire blanket won't work for the same reason the battery does not need oxygen to burn.

A pancake nozzle is designed to slide under the vehicle and spray cool water at the bottom of the battery box. However, the water needs to flow inside the box to directly cool the cells making it ineffective.

A piercing nozzle is designed to puncture the battery box in an effort to deliver large quantities of water inside the box to cool cells. This method is dangerous due to the electrocution hazard. There is also the possibility of causing more battery cells to fail by crushing cells or shorting out electrical components.

Unfortunately, there is no simple solution to this problem. The best solution is to wait for the battery to burn itself out. It should only take an hour or so. The alternative would be to continually dump water on it for 6 to 8 hours. I am sure with time and the continuing advances in technology a solution will eventually arise.

# DAVID GOODYEAR ALWAYS THINKING OF MUSEUM

BY JOAN OLIVER

Retired Cleveland Firefighter David Goodyear stopped by the Museum last month and dropped off eight sirens and several light bars with the hope that the Museum could sell them and use the money for operations or to help finish the 2nd floor renovation. David started out on Squad 1 located at 28's House and has many fond memories of the time in this building while on Cleveland Fire. When he visits he always has interesting stories to tell so it's always fun to have him stop by and reminisce. He has made several donations periodically over the years. Thank you David for thinking of us!



Photo Joan Oliver

David Goodyear Reminisces About CFD

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: KEN RYBKA

BY JIM BELL

In this issue of *The Bugle*, we would like to shine our spotlight on one of our members who has been with our organization for decades. Many of you know Ken Rybka. Kenny has been involved with the Fire Buffs and the Museum since the young age of fourteen. Born and raised in Garfield Hts., Ken started with the Fire Buffs back in 1977 where he could be found buffing fires and shooting pictures with his camera. This interest led to him being hired by Bedford Fire Department in 1985. From there Kenny progressed up the career ladder, eventually becoming Fire Chief in 2000. Ken retired from BFD in 2006. During his time in the fire service Kenny also worked as a Communications Specialist at Metro Life Flight as well as enjoying twenty years as a bagpiper with the Cleveland Firefighters Memorial Pipes and Drums.

now restoring a 1948 Model HT Ahrens-Fox pumper, formerly used by the New Orleans Fire Department.

Kenny is very involved with the Fire Museum. He is a Life member, serves on the Board of Directors, volunteers as a docent, merit badge instructor, caisson driver, Exhibit Committee member and has helped with renovation and maintenance projects around the building. He also serves as the President of the Western Reserve Fire Buffs and is working to revitalize that group.



Photo Bedford FD

Chief Kenny Rybka at Your Service

When not working on his many projects, Kenny lives in Richfield with his wife Donna and maintains his alpaca ranch.



Photo Liz Jackson

Kenny Playing Pyro-Pipes in Colorado Springs

Many of you know that Kenny is an avid fire apparatus collector. His first piece of apparatus was a 1956 Mack from Garfield Ht., that he co-owned with two firefighter buddies. He then purchased and restored a 1936 Mack from Corry, Pennsylvania. Ken returned the '36 Mack back to Corry and replaced it with a 1966 Ford Galaxie fire chief car replica. Kenny moved on from the chief's car and is



Photo Joan Oliver

Kenny Bringing in 1936 Mack for Exhibit

# IT'S NOT IF...IT'S WHEN

## THE WORSTED MILLS FIRE OF JULY 4, 1993

BY PAUL NELSON

It was the last “really big fire” in recent history for Cleveland. “Big” in terms of structures involved and area covered. It has been 30 years since Cleveland has seen a fire like the one that occurred on July 4, 1993 in the Broadway and E. 65th Street area.

The old Worsted Mills Company complex at 5846-6126 Broadway was destroyed on that day. A total of 17 interconnected buildings of 5, 6 and 10 stories, built between 1902 and 1920, were involved. Only the 10 story structure was of fire proof construction, the others were of wide open space, wooden interior mill-type construction.

After the mill closed in 1958, the complex had several owners and multiple occupants. By 1991 it was vacant but still filled with left over combustibles, chemicals and hazardous materials. In 1992 a series of arson fires occurred but were extinguished by box alarm companies.

CFD conducted a number of inspections and multiple violations were issued against the last owner. A pre-plan was established for a potential fire.



Ladder 10 playing away on the fire

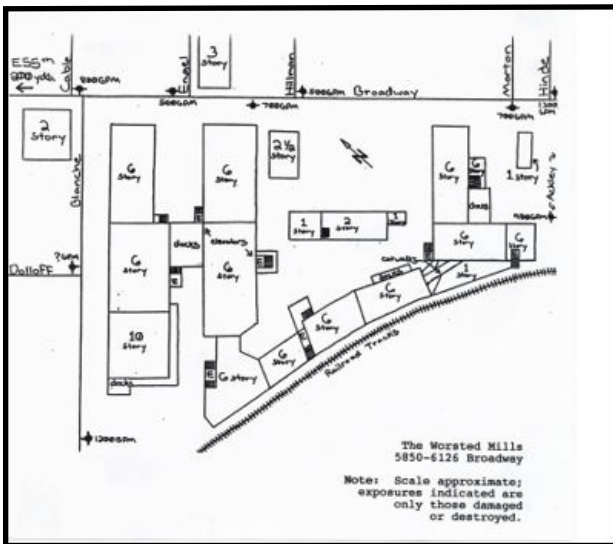
- 6107-6121 Broadway at Morton Ave. 21 apartment building
- Opposite Hillman Ave. pizza shop and vacant bar
- Broadway and Blanche Ave. Tyndall Cash Checking Co.
- Broadway and Engle Ave. Stevens Furniture and doctor's office.

As the fire intensified a 4-4-4 alarm was transmitted. Chief Walter Zimmerer then used eight special alarms to summon additional specific apparatus. Total response was 16 engines, 8 ladders and a number of specialized units. Only the second time in CFD history a call back of off duty members occurred (the other was the East Ohio Gas fire in 1944; another would take place later during the Blackout of 2003). Three spare apparatus were placed in service with X-5 at Station 23, X-7 at Station 7 and X-9 at Station 9. Those companies made a number of responses during the day with X-9 being sent to the fire. In addition, there were six other working fires in the City during the Broadway incident.



One of the walls collapsing

The fire was not brought under control until 9:21pm with some companies remaining on the scene for two days doing overhaul and cleanup. No loss was given for the mill but adjacent properties suffered \$1 million in loss. The City spent over \$2 million in demolition and cleanup.



Map of site

The Alarm Office received a call for smoke in the area of 5800 Broadway at 3:13am on July 4th. Box 3131 was transmitted with Engine 13 and Ladder 13 first due (interesting group of numbers). The 13's found smoke coming from two buildings at the rear of the complex. Before they could stretch a line, flames appeared on several floors of the building. The lack of adequate water supply, mill-type construction and combustible contents would be instrumental in the total destruction of the complex. Only the 10 story building would remain intact. Hazardous materials added still another challenge.

The fire spread rapidly. The huge volume of fire and collapsing walls allowed the fire to communicate to nearby properties causing heavy damage:



Engine X-9 working on Broadway

# HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT - LORAIN COUNTY

BY JOHN ZANGERLE



Photo John Zangerle

Lorain's Old Station No. 1

The second article in this series moves us to the west to explore Lorain County fire stations. Starting with the county's largest city, Lorain, the tenth largest city in Ohio, the Lorain Fire Department has some very interesting former stations. Lorain's old Number 1 station has a very unusual "cottage" design. This was designed to blend in with its neighborhood which was residential at the time of construction in 1912. It was designed by Lorain architect, Hamilton Ford, who also designed many other Lorain buildings including the Duane Building downtown and the National Tube Steel company office. Located at 605 West 4th Street, today the building houses the Lorain City Treasurer's office and is on the National Register of Historic Buildings. It was built to house Lorain's first motorized fire apparatus, a Seagrave tractor drawn aerial and Seagrave hose and chemical. In 1919, the city installed a Gamewell system with the Gamewell office in Station 1. A very popular vintage postcard shows the apparatus on the apron. The station served as Lorain FD headquarters until a new central station was built on Broadway in the 1970s.



Photo John Zangerle

Lorain Former Station No. 3

One of Lorain's largest and busiest stations, former Station 3, is located at 1800 East 31st and Pearl Ave. This company was originally formed in 1896 as the Tom L Johnson fire company, named for the president of the nearby National Tube steel and wire mill. Tom L. Johnson was Cleveland's mayor from 1901 until 1909 and also owned some of Cleveland's streetcar lines. This two story, two bay yellow brick building housed a ladder and engine company and was first due at the city's largest employer, the National Tube mills. The station closed in 1971 when new Station 3 at 3030 Grove Ave. was built. After it was closed the apparatus bay doors were bricked in with matching yellow brick and it became a bar and later a social club. It is now privately owned with a for sale sign in an upper window.



Photo John Zangerle

Former Lorain Fire Station No. 4

Lorain Fire Station #4 is equally interesting. Located at 401 Idaho Ave, it was built in 1919 in the center of a residential neighborhood. It is also a cottage style station which looks very much like a neighborhood home. The station housed Engine 4 and at one time a squad. This small station protected the east side of Lorain until 2019 when it was replaced by a new station at 2410 Garfield at Missouri. The closed station was purchased by a retired Strongsville firefighter who converted it into "Firehouse 401" AirBNB which opened in 2022.



Photo John Zangerle

Old Lorain Station No. 8

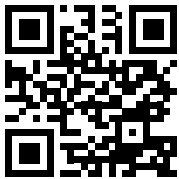
Another surviving Lorain station is #8 at West 18th and Hamilton. This single bay west side station was built circa 1908 and has the distinctive bell tower that was a feature of the early Lorain stations. It was the last horse drawn station in Lorain and did not convert to motorized until 1929! After housing Engine 8 it became Rescue 8. The house was closed when Rescue 8 was relocated to Engine 7's quarters, but the station house is still owned by the city and houses the electrical utilities department. Station 7 that housed E7 and R8 was a converted township garage that is still standing on the northeast corner of Leavitt and Meister Roads. Station 7 moved several times and is now in new quarters on the far west side of Lorain close to the Vermilion border on Kolbe Rd and W Erie (Rte 6).

I didn't expect to find so many Lorain stations hiding in plain sight and in a future issue will highlight Elyria and other Lorain county stations. I want to thank members, Dave Hribal and Brian Wilker for helping provide information for this article.

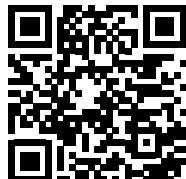
# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- **Saturday, March 2, 2024** – Cleveland, OH. Annual Firematic Flea Market, held at Cleveland Fire Training Academy, 3101 Lakeside Ave, Cleveland, OH. 8am – 1pm. Admission \$5.00 with children 12 and under free. For more information and route to FTA while under construction visit the Museum website at [www.wrfmc.com](http://www.wrfmc.com).
- **Saturday, April 20 – Sunday, April 21, 2024** – Allentown, PA. 2024 Spring Melt Fire Memorabilia Auction and Market. Location – Agri-Plex at Allentown Fairgrounds, 302 N. 17th Street, Allentown, PA 18104. Nations premier and largest fire memorabilia auction and marketplace, over 250 vendors. For more information visit Spring Melt 2024 ([unionhistoricalfiresociety.com](http://unionhistoricalfiresociety.com)).
- **Saturday, May 10 – Sunday May 11, 2024** – Goodells, MI. 2024 GLIAFAA 46th Annual Great Lakes SPAAMFAA Chapter Fire Swap Meet. Location – Goodells County Park, 8201 Lapeer Road, Goodells, MI 48027. For more information contact Ken Sieloff [54redchevy@gmail.com](mailto:54redchevy@gmail.com) or call 586-601-4240.
- **Sunday, May 26, 2024** – Cleveland, OH. 2024 Firefighters Memorial Ride starting at the Cleveland Firefighters Memorial next to the Browns Stadium. Staging from 8:30am – 10:30am. Ceremony 10:30am. Processional Ride 11:00. Registration begins March 1st. For the most up-to-date info go to [www.firefightersmemorialride.com](http://www.firefightersmemorialride.com) or check Museum website at [www.wrfmc.com](http://www.wrfmc.com).
- **Tuesday, June 4 - Saturday, June 8, 2024** – York, PA. The Old Fire Farts of York County, PA is Hosting the SPAAMFAA Summer Convention & Muster. Host hotel is Four Points by Sheraton York 1650 Toronita Street, York, PA. Phone 717.846.4940. For more info go to [www.spaamfaa.org](http://www.spaamfaa.org).
- **Saturday, June 15, 2024** – Cleveland, OH. Dalmatian Celebration. 10am – 2pm on the plaza in front of the Museum. Honoring the Official Firehouse Dog. Featuring Dalmatians from the Western Reserve Dalmatian Club. Hotdogs, Popcorn & Beverages. Games for the children. All Dalmatians welcome! Anyone who brings a Dalmatian will receive (1) free admission to the Museum. Tours available. Standard admission rates apply. For more information visit Museum website at [www.wrfmc.com](http://www.wrfmc.com).
- **Saturday, July 13, 2024** – Cleveland, Ohio. Fire Apparatus Day at the Museum. 10am – 2pm. Join us for a celebration of all fire apparatus. A mix of fire trucks by various manufacturers restored and original on display in front of the Museum. Hotdogs, Popcorn & Beverages. Museum tours available. Standard admission rates apply. See website at [www.wrfmc.com](http://www.wrfmc.com) or call 216.664.6312 for more information.
- **Friday & Saturday, July 26-27, 2024** – Frankenmuth, MI. Great Lakes Frankenmuth Muster, 27th Anniversary. Friday night - dinner. Saturday - parade and muster. Heritage Park. Headquarters hotel – Bavarian Inn. For more info contact Bill Rausch 248-625-8924 or [www.gliafaa.org](http://www.gliafaa.org).

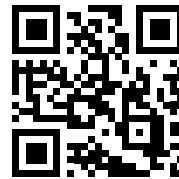
You can use the QR codes listed below to access the websites referenced in the Calendar of Events



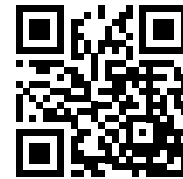
[www.wrfmc.com](http://www.wrfmc.com)



[unionhistoricalfiresociety.com](http://unionhistoricalfiresociety.com)



[www.spaamfaa.org](http://www.spaamfaa.org)



[www.gliafaa.org](http://www.gliafaa.org)

**Q: How many Pierce aerial ladders have CFD had?**

**A: The recent delivery from Pierce is the first.**

## CFD TRIVIA

BY PAUL NELSON

Although CFD has had 24 other rigs from Pierce, the 2023 acquisition of a 107ft heavy-duty rear-mount Ascendant Aerial Ladder is the first aerial ladder from Pierce. It has a 2000gpm Darley pump, a first of that capacity in the Department for a ladder. The Department has a Pierce telescoping platform from Pierce but no aerials. In recent years Rosenbauer and Smeal have been the choice for aerial ladders. The new Pierce quint has been placed in service as Ladder 30.



New Ladder 30 unmarked at Pierce factory

An interesting bit of trivia on aerial ladders offered by Pierce. In the beginning they did not build their own ladders. They bought ladder assemblies from LTI and Smeal and assembled them on Pierce custom chassis and cabs. They have continued to develop their own ladder technology to the current offering of the Ascendant model. One of the choices in that line offers a unique to the industry single rear axle 107ft model. Its shorter wheelbase length has become very popular to departments across the country. Locally Shaker Heights has purchased one.



**Western Reserve Fire Museum  
at Cleveland, Inc.**

310 Carnegie Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44115-2816

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**Dates to Remember  
Firematic Flea Market, March 2  
Firefighters Memorial Ride, May 26**

**Don't Throw  
That Away**

The Fire Museum is looking for fire related photos, articles, artifacts from Cleveland and all of the Lands of the Western Reserve as we preserve area fire history.



**Museum Annual Flea Market**

The 39h Annual Fire Museum Flea Market will be held on Saturday, March 2, 2024 at the Cleveland Fire Training Academy located at 3101 Lakeside Ave E, Cleveland, OH 44114 just off the Inner Belt. Doors open at 8:00 am with a \$5.00 donation at entry. Road construction in that area see website for best way to get there. Hope to see you there.

**The Bugle** is a publication of the Western Reserve Fire Museum and Education Center. The entire contents © by Western Reserve Fire Museum at Cleveland, Inc.

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