Vaughn, Barbara

From: Piringer, Peter [Peter.Piringer@montgomerycountymd.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, September 05, 2007 4:20 PM
To: Vaughn, Barbara
Subject: fire-rescue trade magazine interview proposal

Barbara - as per our conversation I am proposing that a select few CFD personnel be made available to share their experience regarding the SSS fire. This tragic event has had a tremendous impact on the CFD, their families and the community. Obviously, with several on-going investigations I don't think we are in a position to talk about specific tactics, operations or why this or that was done, etc, but I do believe we have a nice opportunity to share with the fire/rescue community, via popular F/R trade publications, some human interest stories. In my visits to fire stations over the past several weeks, I have been made aware of a couple of very dramatic and heroic actions performed by several firefighters during the fire. Some involved re-entry under adverse conditions, assisting fellow firefighters, working hard to 'put a knock' on the fire, going above and beyond the call of duty. It is an opportunity for them to share their perspective on what it was like. To date, most of the printed or published stories have been somewhat one-sided, often with "experts' weighing in (again somewhat biased). By telling their story, in their words can even the playing field and may even change the way people percive the events that occurred. Humanize it.

In addition, it could provide a platform for Chief Thomas to share information about what is being done, demonstrate that the leadership of the City and CFD are moving forward, taking positive steps.....What is the status of the Fire Review and Assessment task force? Lets get some info out. The way we want to.

Fire Rescue trade magazines, i.e. Fire Chief, Firehouse, Fire-Rescue and Fire Engineering magazines all are interested and each have different audiences being interested in different aspects of the CFD experience.

I believe we have a very short window of opportunity to engage these professional publications and share our perspective, we have suffered a tragedy, we are taking positive action to enhance our ability to respond to the needs of the community and we are sharing lessons learned. If we wait too much longer , information realated to investigative reports may take some focus away from the human interest and drama that took place.

All interviews can be performed with strict parameters and monitored by or in the company of a PIO or two. I know all the editors understand the sensitivity of the event, but at the same time are eager to share the CFD experience with the nation's fire service community.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Thanks, PIO Pete