



# Albany County Sheriff's Office Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

March 2023

## Critical Incident/Emergency Management Unit

This is the monthly newsletter for the Albany County Sheriff's Office Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit. **If you have events that you would like posted in this newsletter please email them to the Fire Coordinator's office.**



### Selkirk Fund Raiser for Firefighters with Cancer

#### ***In this issue***

Line of Duty crash results in criminal charges  
Firefighter Safety  
Recruitment  
Events  
Training

Office of Emergency  
Management

P.O. Box A  
58 Verda Ave.  
Clarksville, NY  
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025  
Fax: (518) 720-8031



# Albany County Sheriff's Office Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

March 2023

## Something to think about...

Fire Rescue 1 By Lexipol

# Mo. firefighter pleads guilty to 3 counts of manslaughter, is sentenced to probation

**Dominic Biscari has been on unpaid leave from the Kansas City Fire Department, which is seeking termination**

Feb 21, 2023

By Katie Moore, Glenn E. Rice  
The Kansas City Star

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — A Kansas City firefighter who pleaded guilty to three counts of involuntary manslaughter reached a plea agreement with prosecutors, allowing him to be sentenced to three years of probation.

[Dominic Biscari, 22, was charged Tuesday](#) in a 2021 crash that claimed the lives of [three Kansas Citizens](#).



Kansas City Firefighter Dominic Biscari was driving a truck on Dec. 15, 2021 when it struck a Honda CRV. The force of the crash propelled the vehicles, causing them to hit a pedestrian before slamming into a building. (Photo/Emily Curiel/Kansas City Star/Tribune News Service)

According to the Jackson County Prosecutor's Office, Biscari was placed on probation for three years. He is prohibited from carrying a firearm and must complete 40 hours of community service.

Judge Janette Rodecap approved the plea agreement during a court hearing Tuesday.

Office of Emergency  
Management

P.O. Box A  
58 Verda Ave.  
Clarksville, NY  
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025  
Fax: (518) 720-8031



# Albany County Sheriff's Office

## Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

March 2023

Biscari did not make a statement, but confirmed to Rodecap that there was enough evidence for him to be convicted at a trial. He waived his right to a preliminary hearing.

The fire department said he had been placed on unpaid leave and that they were seeking termination.

Biscari was driving a Kansas City Fire Department truck on Dec. 15, 2021 when it struck a Honda CRV at the intersection of Westport Road and Broadway Boulevard. The force of the crash propelled the vehicles northwest, causing them to hit a pedestrian before slamming into a building.

According to [charging documents](#), Biscari was traveling at 51 mph in a 35 mph zone, against a red light, at the time of the crash

Jennifer San Nicolas and Michael Elwood, who were in the Honda, and Tami Knight, the pedestrian, were killed. San Nicolas and Elwood worked at the restaurant Ragazza and Knight was a Kansas City Public Schools employee.

“Though this plea will not restore their lives or heal their grief, it demonstrates a level of accountability for the actions of the firefighter who carried a public duty,” Prosecutor Jean Peters Baker said. “We also hope this motivates further review of the best and the safest practices for operating public vehicles. Our community requires more care.”

A three-page statement, sent by Biscari’s attorney Kevin Regan, said Biscari had “expressed his regret, sorry, sympathy, and concern to the victims’ families privately.”

The statement said he “made a mistake in judgment,” but also said defended Biscari by saying he had no prior criminal history or traffic violations, was not under the influence or texting at the time of the crash and cooperated with the police investigation.

“Other drivers in the area heard the fire truck sirens and pulled over to stop safely,” the statement added.

It continued by placing blame on the city.

Biscari’s attorneys said the city has the technology to install receivers at traffic light intersections that prompt the lights to change so emergency vehicles can get a green light. They also said the city has known for years that the Westport intersection is dangerous and that the department failed to provide adequate training on driving a pumper truck.

Additionally, Biscari’s attorneys said he was not made aware of a [prior complaint about his driving](#). In September 2021, a medic told supervisors that she feared for her life after being in an ambulance with Biscari while he sped.

“Dominic was never made aware of that report, or given a chance to give his side of the story,” the statement said. “Moreover, prior to the accident, neither the City nor Fire Department conducted an investigation or undertook corrective or remedial actions.”

Several lawsuits were filed in the aftermath of the crash and last month, [Kansas City agreed to pay](#) more than \$1.3 million to the family members of the victims.

©2023 The Kansas City Star

Office of Emergency  
Management  
P.O. Box A  
58 Verda Ave.  
Clarksville, NY  
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025  
Fax: (518) 720-8031



# Albany County Sheriff's Office Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

March 2023

## Fire Rescue 1 By Lexipol

By Billy Goldfeder

# ‘Put your pants back on’: Proper PPE use is critical to survival

## Other firefighters died so you could live – so wear your damn gear already!

We've all seen pictures of firefighters undressed. Undressed as in not wearing their stuff – or not wearing it as designed. No eye protection, no gloves (or using extrication gloves at fires), wearing rubber pull-up boots, SCBA straps hanging down, stuff like that.

These members are pretending that they are operating in the so-called “good old days,” just like the fuzzy video they watched last night. Youthful firefighters who can barely grow facial hair pretending to be OGs.

Instead of us arguing about that, let me introduce you to some of the folks who caused our job to change, including a hero who impacted the way I operate – a man whose *horrific* line-of-duty death changed his entire fire department.



"Put your pants back on. Put the damn seatbelt on. Have no exposed skin or clothing. Size it up. Flow water. Wear your mask. Search for victims," writes Goldfeder. (Photo/Getty)

Then after reading about him, do what you want. If you function in a weak-leadership company or department, you can probably wear your bottomless PJs to a fire and no one would care. If you are in a strong-leadership department or company, you know what is accepted and what isn't.

Office of Emergency  
Management

P.O. Box A  
58 Verda Ave.  
Clarksville, NY  
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025  
Fax: (518) 720-8031



# Albany County Sheriff's Office

## Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

March 2023

### DO YOU KNOW JOE?

Joe Tynan was a firefighter in Brookline, Massachusetts, working overtime in 1982. Responding on a run, Joe was standing on the right-hand side of the apparatus as it rolled out of the bay door. As the truck turned left, the centrifugal force made Joe fall onto the apron of the station, and he sustained a severe head injury.

The crewmembers in the station ran to Joe, but he didn't respond. For the next 20 years, Joe functioned at the level of a 3-year-old and was blind. He died in 2002. His death – and an attorney – forced change. Because of Joe, there's a good chance you won't fall off the side of an apparatus.

### HOW ABOUT SANDY?

On Sept. 28, 1982, Prince George's County (Maryland) Firefighter Sandy Lee mounted a ladder truck to head to a call. As they turned out on a run, Sandy's three-quarter-inch boot fell (this was before bunker pants) from the jump seat onto the concrete ramp in front of the firehouse. In a split second, in reaching for the boot, Sandy fell from the apparatus. Her screams went unheard as she was struck by the rear wheels of the truck. She was dragged more than 30 feet across the front ramp and sustained severe damage to her body – and she was conscious the entire time.

Because of Sandy and her life-altering critical injuries, including losing a leg, odds are you won't have to experience falling out of an apparatus, getting run over by your own rig and feeling your own organs shatter within you.

### MEET CHRISTOPHER, JAMES AND JOHN

On March 28, 1994, three FDNY firefighters became trapped in a stairwell as they searched for residents reportedly trapped in a SoHo apartment building. Firefighter James Young, 31, was burned and died at the scene.

Firefighter Christopher J. Seidenburg, 25, and Capt. John J. Drennan, 49, a 26-year veteran, were rescued by other firefighters and transported to a burn unit with third- and fourth-degree burns. Seidenburg died the next day. Captain Drennan lived for 40 horrific days.

The men had worn long coats and rubber pull-up boots, as that was the gear at that time in NYC.

A little more about this fatal fire: Unknown to the first-arriving companies, the fire had been burning in the apartment for over an hour, creating a ventilation-limited fire. Modern upgrades to the building had occurred since it was built in the late-1800s. Well before the fire, the fire apartments had several updates, including energy-efficient windows, extra thermal insulation, and new doors. It was tight.

The fire began on the first floor and as it grew, the fire blew out a door on the first floor and moved along the ceiling to the stairway and up to the second floor. The three firefighters were caught in that hallway when the fire flashed over.

Captain Drennan lived through 10 skin graft operations, repeated infections, liver and kidney failures, and other problems that he almost outlasted. Despite the many lengthy operations to



# Albany County Sheriff's Office

## Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

March 2023

apply grafts of skin from Captain Drennan's chest, abdomen and scalp to the burned areas of his body (his back and both sides from head to toe and his upper extremities), the grafts were unable to establish much healthy new tissue. He gave his life.

Left behind was his wife, Vina Drennan. You may know her name. Until retirement, she was a powerful force related to firefighter and civilian fire safety. She served for many years on the board of directors of the [National Fallen Firefighters Foundation](#).

The fire was caused by an occupant of the first-floor apartment, leaving a plastic trash bag on top of the gas-fired kitchen range. The bag was ignited by heat from the pilot light. From then on, Vina's mission was fire prevention education and firefighter survivability.

### **THEIR SACRIFICES LEAD TO OUR SURVIVABILITY**

Vina was awarded \$2 million by the city. Why? She sued, arguing that the FDNY failed to provide her husband with adequate protective gear – equipment that NYC firefighters began using soon after this fire. Some departments had switched to bunker gear in the early 70s. Some had not. For example, the Chicago Fire Department switched in 2006.

Use of the protective bunker gear has led to an approximately 70% reduction in firefighter burn injuries. It took three firefighters burning to death to cause action and find funding make the switch in NYC. That was their sacrifice. That's why we are issued bunker gear in 2023.

No joke.

Families of the three firefighters also sued the building's landlord and a company that had illegally stored furniture in a hallway, impeding the firefighters' movements. The landlord and the flooring company agreed to pay a total of \$4 million to the firefighters' families.

Think of this fire the next time someone you know decides to not wear their PPE. Understand that the horrible deaths of these firefighters forced a significant change. That's often how we change in our business – something really bad happens so we change. Sometimes something really bad has to happen *a bunch of times* for us to change. In this case, three of your brothers burned to death and *that* is what finally forced change.

### **WHAT'S NEXT?**

Look, you as a chief will run your fireground the way you want to. Tough command. Weak command. No command. You own it. And of course, some firefighters will try to get away with whatever they can. And the more they get away with stuff, the more likely they will keep doing it. *"Hell, I didn't get shocked the first time I stuck my finger in a socket."* It's a very human reaction. [Normalization of deviance](#) at work.

Put your pants back on. Put the damn seatbelt on. Have no exposed skin or clothing. Size it up. Flow water. Wear your mask. Search for victims.

There are thousands of firefighters who have died, and individually or collectively we've all learned a lot from what their sacrifice. Take their lessons and apply them (personally or as an officer who requires it) so those who are gone can rest in peace knowing their suffering led to them taking care of us. Amen.

Office of Emergency  
Management  
P.O. Box A  
58 Verda Ave.  
Clarksville, NY  
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025  
Fax: (518) 720-8031



# Albany County Sheriff's Office Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

March 2023



Office of Emergency  
Management  
P.O. Box A  
58 Verda Ave.  
Clarksville, NY  
12041

Retention and Recruitment Car at Selkirk Department Fund Raiser for Selkirk Firefighters with Cancer February 18th

Ph: (518) 720-8025  
Fax: (518) 720-8031



# Albany County Sheriff's Office

## Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

March 2023

## Breaking Bad Habits: Recruitment and Retention of Volunteer Firefighters

We all have habits in our daily lives that we repeat with little to no thought in the process. Most of our bad habits are not even caught until someone calls attention to what we are doing, or we find out they have caused a problem for ourselves or our organizations. The volunteer fire service is no different. Our organizations have bad habits that we need to address before they cause harm.

Here are the top five habits to break in order to effectively recruit and retain volunteer firefighters:

### Habit 1: Believing People Will Come

The days of thinking that volunteers will continually come to the fire station to help are long gone. We are no different than any other civic organization. Most civic organizations have experienced declines greater than 63% over the past two decades. We must change our tactics and actively recruit members to join our departments. As an organization we need to be visible, approachable, inviting and open-minded.

**Challenge: In the next two months, hold a recruitment event in an environment away from the fire station.**

### Habit 2: Relying on People to Stay

We always thought that once we get them through training, we have volunteers for life. We now are realizing this is not the case. Some organizations are losing members at 115% the rate in which they can recruit them annually. This is something that cannot be sustained and will quickly lead to the demise of the organization.

One of the main reasons why members quit is because they do not feel appreciated. We all know time and energy are precious commodities and if we can't show our volunteers that we appreciate them and their time, they will find an organization that does. One of the best ways to combat this feeling is involving the entire family in the fire department. This requires effort and planning, but the rewards are huge in return.

**Challenge: Plan a family movie night at the station with special activities for all ages or demographics.**

### Habit 3: Diversity Without a Plan for Inclusion

Diversity can only thrive in a welcoming, inclusive environment. Fire departments often make well-intentioned efforts to recruit more diverse members without a plan for making them feel accepted and valued once they join. Diversity is something you have, and inclusion is something you are. This can only develop with a change in attitude and department climate. Living by our mission and values,

Office of Emergency  
Management  
P.O. Box A  
58 Verda Ave.  
Clarksville, NY  
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025  
Fax: (518) 720-8031





# Albany County Sheriff's Office

## Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

March 2023

reaching out to different cultural groups in the community, and practicing inclusion and transparency as new members join are necessary for a successful department.

**Challenge: Attend or volunteer at a community cultural event.**

Habit 4: One-Size-Fits-All Recruitment Strategy

We tend to recruit in a one-dimensional fashion. No successful organization can recruit this way and survive for very long. Instead, we need to adapt our recruitment strategies to better suit individuals in our community and recruit those who believe in our mission and values. We also need to recognize people's unique talents and skills they could bring to the department.

Combining these individuals into a collective unit allows us to grow together. The tribal concept of networking and learning from each other provides a positive climate and allows for diverse skill sets that reflect the communities we serve.

**Challenge: Perform a talent survey and find ways to utilize each member's unique skills.**

Habit 5: Blame It on the Millennials

We often blame the millennial generation for changes we don't like. Many have tagged this generation as uncaring, unconnected and lazy. But in fact, the complete opposite is true. Millennials are one of the most passionate and driven generations since the baby boomers. The issues they care about vary wildly but millennials are engaged, active and have a culture of sharing knowledge like no other generation before. To recruit millennials, they need a shared purpose and the flexibility to volunteer on their time as many of them give their time and talents to multiple causes. Utilizing communication tools such as social media platforms is the best way to connect with this generation, as your information is available when they want to receive it.

**Challenge: Develop a recruitment video and link to your social media accounts inviting your community to ask questions and find out more about volunteering.**

A wise man once told me that to be successful in any endeavor we must have the ability to adapt, the knowledge to improvise and the drive to overcome. To break bad habits in recruiting and retaining our volunteer firefighters, we must diversify our methods and strengthen our individual bonds to be sustainable. We have many bad habits to break but starting with these five is a step in the right direction in recruiting the citizens we rely on to protect the communities that rely on us.

*Colby Cagle*

*Council for Future Volunteer Firefighters*

*IFSTA/FPP Curriculum Manager, OK*

Office of Emergency  
Management  
P.O. Box A  
58 Verda Ave.  
Clarksville, NY  
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025  
Fax: (518) 720-8031



Albany County Sheriff's Office  
Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

March 2023

 **NEW YORK STATE** | **Homeland Security and Emergency Services** | **Fire Prevention and Control**

# HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SEMINAR

**APRIL 21-23, 2023**  
The New York State  
Academy of Fire Science  
Montour Falls, NY 14865

Please direct inquiries to: [HazmatSeminar@dhses.ny.gov](mailto:HazmatSeminar@dhses.ny.gov)

Office of Emergency  
Management

P.O. Box A  
58 Verda Ave.  
Clarksville, NY  
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025  
Fax: (518) 720-8031



# Albany County Sheriff's Office Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

March 2023

## NYS AFC 2023 SEMINAR SERIES

NYS AFC's annual Seminar Series provides educational opportunities for fire service personnel of all ranks at sites across New York state. Three-hour seminars are conducted by some of the nation's leading fire service instructors at the local level on a variety of timely topics.

[Online Registration](#)

[https://www.nysfirechiefs.com/files/Events\\_Training/2023%20NYS AFC%20Seminar%20Series.pdf](https://www.nysfirechiefs.com/files/Events_Training/2023%20NYS AFC%20Seminar%20Series.pdf)

### **NYS AFC 2023 Seminar Series "Truck Skills Beyond the Textbooks" With Lieutenant Mike Ciampo, Fire Department City of New York (FDNY)**

#### **Three-Hour Seminar**

Early in our firefighting orientation, we're taught basic skills and tactics from textbooks. In addition, we'll drill and be tested on many of these skills at fire academy buildings to attain our firefighting certifications. It's a good process, but our learning shouldn't stop there because we haven't been exposed to many of the situations we'll encounter at fires and emergencies. Plus, the buildings in the academy aren't conducive to allowing us to operate with tools to open the walls and ceilings, pull suspended ceilings, remove baseboard and window trim, or even cut open tongue and groove sheathed roofs. This interactive lecture strives to go beyond textbook learning and bring alive street skills, tips, and tactics of truck work in: portable ladders, overhaul, forcible entry, roof ventilation, tool use, and more.

#### **Registration Fee:**

**\$35 per person** – NYS AFC Individual and Department Members

**\$50 per person** – Non-Members

*Pre-registration is encouraged. On-site registration will be accepted if space permits.*

#### **2023 Dates and Locations:**

Registration area opens 30 minutes prior to starting time. Three-hour program.

#### **March 6 – 7:00 p.m. – Schenectady County**

Schenectady County Community College • Stockade Building • Room 101 • 75 Washington Avenue • Schenectady, NY 12305

#### **March 30 – 7:00 p.m. – Schoharie County**

Cobleskill Fire Department • 610 East Main Street • Cobleskill, NY 12043

#### **April 3 – 7:00 p.m. – Rensselaer County**

Pittstown Rescue Squad • 60 Parker School Road • Johnsonville, NY 12094

#### **October 23 – 7:00 p.m. – Albany County**

Village of Ravena Fire Department • 116 Main Street • Ravena, NY 12143

#### **October 24 – 7:00 p.m. – Saratoga County**

Clifton Park Fire Department • 38 Old Route 146 • Clifton Park, NY 12065

Office of Emergency  
Management  
P.O. Box A  
58 Verda Ave.  
Clarksville, NY  
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025  
Fax: (518) 720-8031



# Albany County Sheriff's Office Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

March 2023

## Albany County Training

ALBANY COUNTY FIRE TRAINING SCHEDULE #3 2023 is posted on our website and attached at end of newsletter.

<https://www.albanycounty.com/home/showpublisheddocument/27651>

There is now a link on our website with instructions on how to get an LMS sign on ID . We recommend that all new members should register as soon as they join so they have access to training opportunities.



Office of Emergency  
Management

P.O. Box A  
58 Verda Ave.  
Clarksville, NY  
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025  
Fax: (518) 720-8031

# ALBANY COUNTY FIRE TRAINING SCHEDULE #3 2023

**Pre-Registration Required: Students may register by clicking on the Learning Management System link on the NYS OPFC Home Page ([NYS Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Services - OPFC](#) )**


Registration opens 45 days before the first class

COURSE	LOCATION	DATE	INSTRUCTOR	PREREQUISITES
--------	----------	------	------------	---------------

**Please Note that a training authorization letter is now required for all courses offered by the New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control**

<p><b>Firefighter I Certification</b></p> <p>(BEFO/SCBA Interior Firefighter Operations)</p> <p><b>IN PROGRESS</b></p> <p>IFSTA Essentials of Firefighting 7th Edition Curriculum</p>	<p>Colonie MTB</p>	<p><b>January 4<sup>th</sup>: Orientation: 6:30 pm</b> Chief Officer <b>Must Attend with Student</b></p> <p><i>BEFO (W/Hazardous Materials Operations)</i> January 4, 25, 30, February 1, 6, 8, 13, 15, 27, March 1, 6, 8, 13, 15, 20, 21, 27, 29, April 3, 5, 17, 19, 24, 26, May 1</p> <p><i>SCBA/IFO: May 3, 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24, 31, June 5, 7, 12, 14, 21, 26, 27, 28</i></p> <p>1830-2130</p> <p>Instructor - Collins</p>	<p><b>At Orientation:</b> Training Authorization Letter</p> <p><b>Start of SCBA/IFO:</b> Medical Clearance to wear SCBA,</p>	
<p>SCBA Interior Firefighting Operations</p> <p><b>IN PROGRESS</b></p>	<p>Westmere</p>	<p>March 1, 8, 13, 15, 25, 27, April 1, 12, 19, 24, 26, My 1, 8, 15</p> <p>Weeknights 1830-2130</p> <p>Saturdays 0900-1500</p>	<p>Molesky</p>	<p>BEFO w/ Hazardous Materials First Responder Operations</p>

SCBA Confidence	Elsmere	March 22, 29, April 12, 19	Clawson	Firefighter I or Equivalent & SCBA Qualified
Fire Officer 1 Module Series: Fireground Strategy and Tactics for First Arriving Companies	Colonie MTB	March 21, 23, 28, 30, April 4  1830-2130	DeGroff	Firefighter I or Equivalent
Modern Fire Behavior ( <b>New Course Offering by OFPC</b> )  <b>NEW TO SCHEDULE</b>	Selkirk Station #1	April 4 & 5  1900-2200	Shaw	Firefighter I or Equivalent
Confined Space Awareness & Safety	Elsmere	April 8 0900-1500	Heinbach	None
Fire Officer 1 Module Series: Firefighter Health & Safety	Rensselaerville	April 17, 18, 25, 27 1830-2130	DeGroff	Firefighter I or Equivalent
NFA: Incident Safety Officer	Colonie MTB	April 24, May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 1830-2130	Clawson	None
Basic Passenger Vehicle Rescue (Note: Replaces Vehicle Rescue Operations Level)	Selkirk #1	May 3, 4, 6 Weeknights 1830- 2130 Saturday 0800-1700	DeGroff	None

Apparatus Operator Aerial Device	Stanford Heights	May 31, June 5, 7, 12, 19, 24 Weeknights 1830- 2130 Saturday 0800-1700	Molesky	Basic Exterior Firefighting Operations or Equivalent
Refresher Training (Rescue Technician Basic) <b>NEW TO SCHEDULE</b>	Berne	June 7, 8, 10  Weeknights 1830- 2130 Saturday 0800-1400	DeGross	Rescue Technician Basic
Firefighter II <b>Boot Camp</b> <b>Revised Date for Orientation (June 13)</b>	Guilderland Tower	June 13, July 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, August 7, 8, 9, 10, 12 Weeknights 1830 Saturday 0800	DeGross	Firefighter I or Equivalent
Apparatus Operator- Pump	Westerlo	September 7, 12, 14, 19, 23, 26 Weeknight 1830 Saturday 0800-1400	DeGross	Scene Support Operations/Basic Exterior Firefighter Operations or Equivalent
Rescue Technician Basic  <b>NEW TO SCHEDULE</b>	Berne	October 11, 16, 18, 23, 25, 28 Weeknights 1830- 2130 Saturday 0800-1700	DeGross	None
<b>Unless changed by instructor or noted above: All evening classes will be held from 19:00-22:00 hours. All Saturday and Sunday classes will be held from 09:00-12:00 hours and 13:00-16:00 hours</b>			 <b>Fire Coordinator Gerald Paris</b> 