

Good Morning Dave:

I just wanted to write you a quick note to personally thank you for bringing your team to Gray Maine. The work that you, Mike Clarke, Steve Lyons and Doug Diem did was extraordinary. It was not just that you showed how to perform some tactical maneuvers or that you encouraged people to evaluate and plan for emergency situations it was much more. The passion that your team brought to the job was unique and powerful. I learned many new lessons from each individual you brought and I thought that I'd share them with you here.

From Mike Clarke, I learned about filling the tool box and not forgetting to look at the environment and what it has to offer. As he was showing us methods to utilize in escaping a basement (made even more relevant by the lessons learned by his father) he continued to ask "What else could be done?" The lesson was not to give up, as long as you can think you can survive and help others survive too. The greatest trick to basement ESCAPE is not what was shown in the class but rather the seed that was planted that there is always a way we just have to keep looking for it. Never give up on yourself or your fellow fireman.

From Steve Lyons I learned, through his example, about the true passion felt for this job, the commitment of self sacrifice to the fire service and the realization and re-affirmation that this is truly the greatest job on the Earth. Additionally his very simple statement about how these tactics/tasks are great but that we must not lose sight of our purpose. After all, a firefighter who is packaged up real nice but who dies in the building is not an acceptable outcome.

From You I learned about the tenacity and energy it takes to do this job well. The idea that continued training and learning are essential to maintain a high level of performance. The idea that we owe this type of commitment not only to the citizens that we swear to protect and serve but to each other as well (if not most of all)

And last and perhaps most meaningful to me were my encounters with Doug Diem. His desire to help, his ability to communicate, his personal humility despite his credentials, his positive attitude in the face of adversity, and his commitment to training, learning and making sure that everybody knows what he knows was truly a watershed moment in my career.

His dedication and passion for fireman and the fire service were evident in everything he did. With Doug I found that it was not only what he taught it was how he did it that was most dramatic and meaningful to me.

I feel truly fortunate that I was able to spend the weekend with you and your team. The passion, concern and caring that you as a team, and as individuals, showed for the job and each other was truly inspirational. I have never before in my life felt as if I had made such a deep connection in such a short period of time. My hope is that I will meet and work with you all again many times into the future. This experience has been one of the truly pivotal moments in my firefighting career.

I just wanted to make sure that you knew how much impact your efforts have had. Please share my thanks and appreciation with the other members of your group. It is important to me that you all know what deep impact that you have had on all of us in Gray.

May God Keep you and your families safe.
Sincerely

Rob Lindstedt