



ALFRED STATION FIRE COMPANY

Alfred Station Fire Company Acquires Jaws Of Life

November 20, 2004

With the rise in motor vehicle accidents in our coverage area the Alfred Station Fire Company has added to its arsenal of tools the "Jaws of Life" which will be carried on our rescue truck. We would like to thank the Andover Fire Department for selling us their; power unit, 32-inch spreader tool and cutter tool when they upgraded their equipment through a Federal Grant awarded to them. The spreader tool comes with interchangeable tips and chain and shackle equipment.

Developed over 30 years ago for the racing industry the "Jaws of Life" scissor like spreaders, when activated, opens and forces crushed metal away from trapped victims. Because the tool reduced the time to extricate a victim from a car crash, literally snatching them from the "jaws of death", the tool earned the nickname the *Jaws of Life*. Today, Jaws of Life is used by Firefighters and EMS personnel all over the country.

Alfred Station Fire Company had been considering the purchase of a new set of "Jaws of Life" tools when the set from Andover became available at a great savings to the company. With many thanks - the purchase of these well maintained and annually inspected tools was made possible through a generous gift made to the Alfred Station Fire Company.

By acquiring the Jaws of Life – Alfred Station Fire Company will be able to reduce the time and steps involved in the extrication process when trying to save a life without having to wait for the equipment to arrive from a mutual aid company. Former Chief Donn Lang who was instrumental in brokering the deal stated, "The Jaws of Life is a great investment that will pay for itself the first time it saves a human life."



On November 20th, shortly after acquiring the Jaws of Life Alfred Station Fire Company held a joint training evolution with Alfred's A.E. Crandall Hook & Ladder Company to practice using the equipment in a simulated motor vehicle extrication.

Pictured at left, members of both fire companies are briefed on the goals of the training exercise before moving outside where mock victims were staged in a motor vehicle.

Outside, firefighters worked with EMTs to gain access to the victims for initial medical assessment, victim immobilization and then an actual extrication from the motor vehicle. Pictured below, Alfred Station firefighters Ben Link and Donn Lang use the Jaws of Life spreaders to pry open the driver's door of the motor vehicle so EMTs could immobilize and remove the victim.

The exercise was realistic and well organized providing invaluable training for both fire companies. To paraphrase an unidentified firefighter, "Nothing beats hands-on training for keeping it real. And the fact that we can actually pry into the car to get to them (the mock victims) is awesome."

We also wish to extend a special thanks to Harry Lain of Lain's Automotive for the generous donation of the motor vehicle used in this exercise.

