



# Pilot Does Double Duty as Community Firefighter

By John Perkinson, Staff Writer

You can't accuse Capt. Maury Gottlieb (Atlantic Southeast) of sitting on the sidelines. In addition to his flying responsibilities, the CRJ700 pilot actively serves as his Master Executive Council's Professional Standards Committee chairman and Strategic Preparedness vice chairman. He's also the interim captain rep for Local Executive Council 116. And when he isn't flying or serving his union, he pursues another passion—working as a volunteer firefighter for his community.

"In college, I lived right across the street from a fire department," said Gottlieb, who has been flying for Atlantic Southeast for 12 years. "I had always been interested in firefighting and figured if I ever had the occasion to, I'd volunteer."

Five years ago when Gottlieb moved just outside Nashville, Tenn., he became a member of the Nolensville Volunteer Fire Department—Station 16. In addition to some local training, he attended a two-week program at the Tennessee Fire Service and Code Enforcement Academy in Bell Buckle, Tenn. The Academy offers classroom instruction and hands-on training using facilities like a six-story burn tower, complete with computer controls for firefighting scenarios. Gottlieb learned about fire prevention, firefighting techniques, building codes, hazardous materials control, and emergency medical procedures, including first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

And like his job as an airline pilot, Gottlieb put on the uniform and, since then, has "loved every minute of it."

But firefighting is not a carefree pastime; it's a dangerous occupation and responsibility. According to reports, every 23 seconds somewhere in this country, firefighters are responding to a call. Three-quarters of them are volunteers.

"Every year, fires and other emergencies take thousands of lives and destroy

property worth billions of dollars," reports the Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Although they put out fires, firefighters more frequently respond to other emergencies. They are often the first emergency personnel at the scene of a traffic accident or medical emergency and may be called upon to treat injuries or perform other vital functions."

Gottlieb notes that Station 16 receives 30 to 40 calls a month and that most require medical assistance. Nolensville firefighters provide basic treatment until ambulance crews arrive on the scene. Gottlieb's group typically responds to car accidents and brush and structure fires but may also be called on to help with other kinds of emergencies. In performing their duties, firefighters may come in contact with poisonous, flammable, or explosive chemicals or radioactive materials, all of which could have immediate or long-term effects on their health. For these reasons, they must wear protective gear that can be hot and heavy.



**Five years ago Capt. Maury Gottlieb (Atlantic Southeast) became a volunteer member of the Nolensville Volunteer Fire Department outside Nashville, Tenn.**

"Paggers notify us of an event, then we 'hightail' it down to the station, get the truck that's required, and run the call," Gottlieb said. "I've been on primary attack crew for a fire and have acted as engineer, running the pump handle on the truck. It all comes down to how many volunteers show up and what kind of experience and training they have."

Regarding the challenges of dealing with particularly stressful events like gruesome auto accidents, Gottlieb commented, "You focus on doing your job. You concentrate on what you need to do to get him or her safely out of the car so that the medics can do their job."

During his flying tenure, Gottlieb has flown for a number of airlines, including Aer Lingus, American Eagle, Corporate Express, and Kitty Hawk Air cargo, and he readily acknowledges the value of getting involved. Volunteering for his union has enabled him to meet more of his fellow pilots and better understand how things work. Not content to just volunteer as a local firefighter, Gottlieb also actively serves as treasurer of his fire department's Board of Directors.

Gottlieb is one of many ALPA members who serve as volunteer firefighters in their spare time. Smaller cities, towns, and communities like Nolensville rely on these individuals to respond quickly to emergencies, and the demand for more volunteer firefighters nationwide continues to grow. Although Gottlieb receives no monetary compensation for his efforts, he notes that the opportunity to serve his community is an extremely rewarding experience. 🌟

*Editor's note: On Sept. 11, 2011, Capt. Gottlieb, along with firefighters all over the country, climbed 110 floors with all of their gear. Gottlieb "had the honor to climb for Lt. John Fischer, Ladder 20. We climb because they can't. Together, we made it to the top, my brother. We will never forget." Gottlieb dedicates this article to Lt. John Fischer, Ladder 20, FDNY.*