

About the Speakers

Alexandra H. Furr

Ms. Furr spent thirteen years as a Department of the Army civilian with the Army Continuing Education System, U.S. Army, Europe (USAREUR), holding the positions of Guidance Counselor, Education Services Officer, Senior Community Education Services Officer, and Education Specialist on the HQ USAREUR staff. Her primary responsibility was the development and delivery of training and education programs for adults, both military and civilian. Ms Furr coordinated employee training and career program services for 350 civilian education services professionals stationed in nine separate countries in the European command while assigned to Mannheim, Heidelberg, Schwaebish Hall, and Heilbronn, Germany for a two-year period. Alex came to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in 1990 as Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Development at the National Fire Academy, and accepted her current position as Chief of the National Fire Data Center (NFDC) in February 1995. The NFDC is responsible for the management of the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS), the world's largest annual national collection of fire incident data. NFDC programs include the U.S. Fire Administration's (USFA) Publications Center and the USFA web site. As of the summer of 1998, Alex assumed the lead role of coordination of USFA's Y2K activities with the Nation's fire service community. She has a M.Ed. in Guidance and Counseling from Sul Ross State University, TX and has completed additional studies with Boston University, Central Texas College, and the University of Maryland.

Nora H. Jason

Ms. Jason received her MLS from the State University of New York at Albany, and began her career as a cataloger with Sacramento State College. Shortly thereafter Nora spent three years working for the US Department of the Army's Special Services Libraries system in Germany. In 1971 Ms. Jason joined a team to develop a fire safety database for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)--this project stimulated the beginning of the Fire Research Information Services (FRIS) and the fire research collection of what is now the National Institute of Standards and Technology. During her tenure as Manager of FRIS, Nora and her staff have brought us many notable innovations: national and international document exchange programs; the FIREDOC online bibliographic database; and the first CD-ROM in the world to contain fire documents. Ms. Jason was instrumental in the founding of inFIRE, which she formerly chaired. Nora has authored numerous fire research publications and is active on many research projects and committees.

Dr. Charles Jennings

Charles R. Jennings, Ph.D., AIFireE is Assistant Professor of Public Administration and Fire Science in the Department of Public Management at John Jay College of Criminal Justice of the City University of New York (USA). He has a Ph.D. in City and Regional Planning and Masters degrees in Fire Protection Management and City and Regional Planning. Over the past ten years, Jennings also has consulted on fire service policy and management issues across the United States. This consulting has included working on national fire safety public education campaigns and major fire investigations on behalf of the U.S. Fire Administration. In addition, Jennings spent seventeen years as a line firefighter in departments in New York State and Maryland. From 1993-1996 he was on the Board of Fire Commissioners of the City of Ithaca, New York. His current research interests include socioeconomic, building stock, and demographic determinants of demand for fire services, and fire service policy formation in the United States. Jennings has authored articles appearing in *Fire Technology*, *Journal of Applied Fire Science*, *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, *Regional Science Review*, and *Colloqui* (the Cornell Journal of Planning and Urban Issues).

Ann Swing Kelly

Ann Kelly currently holds the position of Director of the Management Information Center for the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC). The IAFC is a professional association representing 12,000 local fire chiefs and chief fire officers from around the world. As the Director of the Management Information Center, she is the principal liaison to the emergency management community regarding their information needs. Ms Kelly is responsible for the association's information management systems and manages the association's web site and publications. Prior to joining the IAFC, Ann spent six years in information management with the United States Fire Administration. Assignments ranged from library management to establishing an Emergency Medical Services Resource Center, managing a technical support services program, in addition to managing the Arson Resource Center. She then spent two years with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as a Management Analyst in the area of Directives Management ensuring that all FEMA directives complied with applicable laws, federal regulations and policies. Ann has participated in numerous fire and emergency service programs, written several articles and is a regular speaker for the IAFC in the area of communications and networking. Ann currently is digitizing her library and placing all holdings on the world wide web. She has served on the inFIRE Advisory Committee for a total of nine years, four in the capacity of Chair. Ann is a member of the Special Libraries Association and is active with Association Information Services, an informal group of information professionals in the Washington, D.C. area.

Peter J. Laun

Mr. Laun is the Law Enforcement, Victim-Witness Coordinator for the 32 counties comprising the Northern District of New York. He is stationed at the US Attorney's Office in his native Syracuse. During his twenty-year career with the New York State Police, Peter had many special assignments including Internal Affairs investigations, the 1980 Olympic security detail and teaching at the State Police Academy. Following his retirement from the State Police he worked for Onondaga County, building a highly successful multi-agency program which reduced highway fatalities by 38.5% over a 5-year period. In 1989 Mr. Laun took his present position with the Department of Justice. In 1994 Attorney General Janet Reno presented Peter with the "Director's Award" for outstanding performance in law enforcement. Mr. Laun is an active member of the Northeast Regional Law Enforcement & Corrections Technology's advisory board. He is in demand as a dynamic speaker on the subject of change management, and enjoys moderating brainstorming and problem-solving groups.

James J. Murtagh

"Jim" Murtagh began his career with the Fire Department of New York City (FDNY) 32 years ago. Through his assignments in the arson-plagued South Bronx in the 1970s and departmental assignments as Chief of Uniformed Personnel and later as Chief of Training at the FDNY Fire Academy, Jim has been the model of a progressive fire officer. He is now a Division Commander in Brooklyn, and scored #1 on the current promotion list for FDNY Chief of Department. DC Murtagh also is an adjunct professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, and an adjunct professor at Western State Oregon College. For many years Jim has taught high rise fire operations as an adjunct instructor here at Fire Academy. He has a Master of Public Administration. Jim has published several books, e.g., *How to Prepare for Firefighter Examinations*, and numerous fire service articles in national trade journals.

Edward M. Olmstead, Jr.

Edward Olmstead is a consultant in fire-rescue services and emergency management and is President of Olmstead Fire Protection Consulting, Inc. He holds an Associate Degree in Fire Protection Technology and is a graduate of the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy. He is the past chief of the City of Ithaca, NY Fire Department and currently serves on the Board of Directors of the New York State Association of Fire Chiefs. Ed has served as an adjunct faculty instructor for the New York State Academy of Fire Science since 1976 and has previously served on the adjunct faculty of Tompkins-Cortland Community College. He currently is serving as a consultant to the New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control for the revision of the Fire Service Instructor I and II courses. He is a member of the Educational Advisory Board for the Fire Department Instructors Conference and serves as the Audio-Visual Coordinator for the annual conference. Ed has served as the Deputy Coordinator for Training in Tompkins County, NY since 1979.

Lian Ruan

Ms. Ruan is the Librarian of the Illinois Fire Service Institute, which is part of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Lian serves on the inFIRE Committee and has been very active in trying to improve IFSI's library through grant projects and a new fee-based service. She received her MA from UCLA in African History in 1988 and her MLS from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1990. Her experience in libraries includes a stint as both the Newspaper Project Cataloger and the OCLC Manuscript Cataloger for the Illinois State Historical Library. Ms. Ruan's introduction to the fire service came while working as a research intern for the Champaign Fire Department Library.

Susan F. Walker

Susan F. Walker has been the Librarian for IFSTA/FPP (International Fire Service Training Association/Fire Protection Publications) at Oklahoma State University (OSU) since 1996. Past experience includes: Special Collections Librarian at OSU, Manuscripts Division at the Lilly Library at Indiana University, Prints and Photographs at the Chicago Historical Society and the Kansas Collection at the University of Kansas. She received an undergraduate degree in History at the University of Kansas and a MLS from Indiana University.

Dr. John M. Watts, Jr.

"Jack" Watts is a graduate fire protection engineer from the University of Maryland. He subsequently received M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from the Department of Industrial Engineering and Operations Research at the University of Massachusetts. His experience includes several years in the fire insurance industry and positions as fire fighter, fire researcher, and fire investigator. He was an Assistant Professor of Fire Protection Engineering at the University of Maryland from which he spent a sabbatical year teaching and conducting research in the Department of Fire Safety Engineering, University of Edinburgh, Scotland. Dr. Watts is presently director of the Fire Safety Institute, a not-for-profit information, research, and educational corporation in Middlebury, Vermont, that focuses on innovative approaches to fire safety science and engineering. He also serves as editor of *Fire Technology*, one of National Fire Protection Association's journals. He has been married to a librarian for 33 years.