

PRESSRELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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“Battle On Lake Michigan” Firefighter Combat Challenge Coming to Michigan City This Summer

Michigan City, IN (July 11, 2005) – Support firefighters from across the United States and Canada this coming weekend when the Firefighter Combat Challenge is held in Michigan City, Indiana, on July 16 and 17. Firefighters, organized by departmental teams and representing the best of the bravest, will battle head to head against themselves and the clock for high honors at the Challenge.

The Challenge is an intense, spirited competition and seeks to encourage firefighter fitness and demonstrate the profession's rigors to the citizens who support local fire departments. The Challenge has won high accolades for its fidelity to the job and for providing the public with a greater appreciation of the physical demands of firefighting. Unlike sports that exist solely for entertainment value, the Challenge is about performing one of the most dangerous and demanding jobs safer and better.

Michigan City Mayor Chuck Oberlie said, “Firefighting is a physically demanding job. The men and women who serve in fire companies across the country face daily challenges that most of us cannot even imagine. The Firefighter Combat Challenge allows the public to witness the rigors of the profession without the danger and tragedy of an actual fire. Michigan City is honored to host this unique event, and we invite everyone to join us in cheering the competitors on to victory.”

Wearing “full bunker gear” and a Scott breathing apparatus (SCBA), pairs of firefighters simulate the physical demands of real life firefighting by competing on a linked series of five tasks. Dominating the landscape in Washington Park on the shores of beautiful Lake Michigan will be a five-story hydraulic tower, the centerpiece of all the activity. Competitors will climb to the top of the tower carrying a 42-pound high-rise pack and then hoist a 42 pound hose roll to the top. Next they descend to the ground floor where they simulate chopping by swinging a 9 pound shot mallet on the end of a 160 pound steel beam. The professional firefighters then zigzag 140 feet through simulation hydrants to the fourth station where they advance an attack hose a distance of 75 feet. Finally, the competitors drag a life-sized 175 pound “victim” a distance of 100 feet to the finish line.

Each member of a three-to-five-person team performs the standard evolutions against the clock, with the top three individual times added together to yield a team total. Other categories include male, female, over 40, over 50 and the Streamlight Relays. Qualifiers will advance to the World Championships.

The Firefighter Combat Challenge is free to the public for viewing. Parking will be available in Lot 2, in the Senior Center Parking Lot and in Fedder's Alley; parking fees apply.

Survivor, the rock band which wrote "Eye of the Tiger" in response to a direct request from Sylvester 'Rocky' Stallone, headlines the street dance which is planned as a benefit for the Hoosier Burn Camp. Survivor posted a dozen Top 20 Hits before they disbanded in 1989; they reformed again in 1997 and continue to retain their popularity, playing regular concerts. The band will arrive in Michigan City after playing concerts in Holland and Mexico.

The Hoosier Burn Camp is open to young people ages 8-18 years who have experienced a burn injury or have been treated in the state of Indiana requiring hospitalization. Camp activities include canoeing, paddle boating, fishing, swimming, archery, crafts, hay rides, horseback riding, and a variety of activities not found at a typical camp. The special programs available at camp help the children build self-esteem and realize their highest potential while learning to deal with the obvious burn scars and the deep psychological trauma they often suffer. Hoosier Burn Camp hosts an average of 40-60 children each summer, but each of the last two years the camp has hosted 80 children. The average cost per child is \$1000 per week to attend the camp. Children attend the camp free of charge; the camp is funded by donations.

The Battle on Lake Michigan schedule of events is:

Saturday, July 16

8:00 A.M. Corporate Challenge Begins
9:00 A.M. Kid's Crawl Drag & Squirt Opens
10:30 A.M. Opening Ceremonies with bagpipes, National Anthem, flyover and speakers
11:00 A.M. Firefighter Combat Challenge Begins
7:00 P.M. Street Dance featuring Survivor ("Eye of the Tiger"); 4th Street between Pine Street and Washington Street. Refreshments available. Tickets required for entry.

Sunday, July 17

11:00 A.M. Firefighter Combat Challenge Begins
11:00 A.M. Kid's Crawl Drag & Squirt Opens

For additional information about The Battle On Lake Michigan, contact Kyle Kazmierczak at 219/898-6622 or via email at cityfire184@yahoo.com.

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