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THE MAGAZINE FOR INTERNATIONAL® TRUCK OWNERS AND OPERATORS

TRAIL

SUMMER 2012

Rescue Ready

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HOT COMMODITIES

FIRE DEPARTMENTS LIKE THE ONE IN ALTO, N.M. ARE CALLING ON LONESTAR® AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL® TRUCKS TO ANSWER THEIR EMERGENCY NEEDS.

BY **KENT BLACK** PHOTOS BY **BRIDGET BARRETT**

ON THE JOB
Members of the Bonito Fire Department in Alto, N.M. have praised their made-to-order LoneStar,

EVEN IN EARLY SPRING, THE BRUSH AND TIMBER SURROUNDING SPENCER THEATER IN ALTO, N.M. IS AS DRY AS KINDLING. **NESTLED IN THE STATE'S SOUTHEASTERN MOUNTAINS OF LINCOLN COUNTY, ALTO SITS AT AN IMPOSING ALTITUDE OF 7,600 FEET, WHERE BRUSH FIRES ARE EVEN MORE LIKELY.** ONCE THE STOMPING GROUNDS OF OUTLAW ICONS LIKE BILLY THE KID, THIS SMALL TOWN IS NOW HOME TO SLIGHTLY MORE THAN 20,000 PEOPLE SPREAD OVER 5,000 SQUARE MILES OF HIGH, DRY, COMBUSTIBLE WILD LANDS.

It's one of the last places in the lower 48 states in which you'd want to fight a fire.

I am standing a few yards away from Chief Carl Bartley of Alto's Bonito Fire Department. His assistant chief, Robby Hall, and several volunteer firefighters from the station are demonstrating the extraordinary capabilities of their "Ash Kicker," a massive firefighting vehicle adapted by Rosenbauer USA—one of the largest manufacturers of fire equipment on Earth. It sits atop an International® LoneStar® chassis. The firefighting function of a tanker is to deliver its 3,000-gallon load of water as close as possible to the engines alongside the blaze. Usually this means dropping a portable tank on the scene of the fire and filling it with the water from the truck. Then, while the attack engines suck up the water and spray it on the blaze, the truck runs to the nearest hydrant, fills up again, returns to the fire and drops another load.

It takes a special vehicle to haul 25,000 pounds of fluid at this altitude. It has to tread over tough terrain like an SUV and then tear up and down the highway like a sports car. Rosenbauer chose its chassis wisely. The LoneStar frame is normally associated with 18-wheel, Class 8 semis. This particular firefighting LoneStar boasts an Eaton Fuller 18-speed AutoShift transmission and two rear axles. With its signature front end, aerodynamic styling, bright-red body and chrome fittings, it could win prizes on looks alone. Still, in firefighting every second counts. And while it's pretty, the LoneStar is just as fierce when it comes to function.

Decked out in full fire gear, Chief Bartley directs the truck to back up to a desired spot while firefighters pull a hose from the side of the truck. The chief hails from a ranching family in Mora, up in the northern section of the state, and looks and acts the part. He is a tall, lean man of few words with a bushy white mustache. And though he looks every inch a rugged firefighter, this is a volunteer department. By day he is the respected founder and CEO of City Bank of New Mexico.

Bartley beams when he talks about how the LoneStar recently shined during a building fire on Highway 48. "We brought this truck in for water to supply the attack engines on the scene," he recounts. "This one truck was able to give us all we needed and more to control that fire."

When the chief is happy with the truck's position, Assistant Chief Hall hits a button and water chutes emerge from both the side and the back. Another button releases a torrent of water that can empty the tanker in minutes. Hall explains that the great advantage of such a high-tech tanker is that a single operator can do the job of several people, freeing up others on the team for additional responsibilities at a fire. "The great thing about this truck is you can operate everything without leaving the cab," he says. "Inside are controls that allow me to dump right, left or rear. I also have cameras all around so I can see everything on all three sides when I dump my full [load]. It has audio too, so you can hear as well as see."

STEPPING UP
Bonito firefighters unload gear from their LoneStar Ash Kicker (above); volunteers from Alto help pump water into the truck in a fire drill (opposite page).

After the firefighting exercise, the crew rides back to the station. The ease with which Hall operates the LoneStar is amazing. As he turns hard onto Highway 48, I am amazed that the nearly 25,000 pounds of water we're hauling in the rear doesn't send us spiraling down the side of the mountain. The assistant chief straightens the truck out effortlessly, and soon we are serenely cruising down the highway. He repeatedly informs me that driving the LoneStar is like cruising the highway in a luxury SUV. He proves to be right—but the truck sure looks a lot more impressive.

INTERNATIONAL TO THE RESCUE

Back at the Bonito station, a half-dozen other freshly minted International fire engines and tenders are waiting for us in the parking lot like an honor guard. They are there to support Marshall Davis, a third-generation dealer in his family-owned Artesia Fire Equipment business, which specializes in emergency vehicles and supplies throughout the state. Granted the exclusive privilege to sell Rosenbauer-built trucks in New Mexico, he says the demand for International trucks is powerful. More than 25% of all Rosenbauer builds are on an International chassis. Today the affable Davis has gathered six of his favorite Rosenbauer/International collaborations from all over the satisfied state. There are two Class-A pump engines from the Arabella and Nogal fire districts built on DuraStar® chassis, plus two wicked-looking 4x4 Timberwolf models served up on WorkStar® chassis (a third sits in

BUILDING A FIRE TRUCK IS AN INTRICATE PROCESS UNDERTAKEN WITH THE CHIEF, THE LOCAL DEALER AND THE TRUCK EQUIPMENT BUILDER. **"WE'LL SPEC IT OUT TO DO EXACTLY WHAT WE WANT."**

the Bonito Fire Station's truck bay). They are joined by another 4x4, mounted on a WorkStar® chassis, from Hondo Fire District. And then there's Davis's personal pet—a new bright red tanker on a WorkStar 7500 frame.

Judging by the good-natured ribbing Davis takes from this all-star team of firefighters, it is obvious that he is regarded as Santa Claus for supplying his customers with some of the finest equipment in the country. To them, he's more than a salesman—he's a lifesaver.

According to Joe Kenmore, the emergency coordinator for Lincoln County, the key to fighting fires in the area "is to get the water where you need it, and right at the moment you need it." In the 10 years Bartley has served with the Bonito Fire District, he has repeatedly seen evidence of this grim reality from fighting the flash fires that flourish in this environment. That is why he dedicated himself to finding the perfect vehicle for protecting his community.

Bartley got turned on to the LoneStar by his emergency services manager, who first caught a glimpse of the revolutionary vehicle on Rosenbauer's Website. It was the first LoneStar that Rosenbauer had ever been put up for sale. (There have been three built to date, and all are in active service.) "We reserved it and bought it as soon as it came off the demo line," Bartley says.

DELIVERING THE RIGHT SOLUTION

Rosenbauer has a reputation for letting its engineers and designers use their imagination, instinct and experience on a new chassis, incorporating the latest fire-fighting technologies into a prototype, which is then taken to truck shows throughout the country. According to the company's national sales manager, Donley Frederickson: "We decided to do that with LoneStar because it was a very pretty truck. We had more pictures taken of that truck at shows than of any other truck we had ever built."

INTERNATIONAL ALL-STARS

Members of four departments throughout New Mexico stand by their International firefighting trucks (opposite page); a Bonito fire-fighter and the Ash Kicker (below).

Here at the Bonito department, building a truck is an intricate process undertaken with guidance from the fire chief and his deputy, the local dealer and the truck equipment builder. "We have an executive board for the fire department who will sit down with them and design the [fire] engine, whether it's a tanker engine or a brush truck," Bartley says. "We'll spec it out to do exactly what we want. From there, we take it to Marshall at Artesia Fire."

From that point, Davis works with the folks at Rosenbauer to make the dream a reality. "The truck is designed to be specific to their needs," Davis says, explaining the collaborative process. "The chassis is the foundation. It is usually the first thing we talk about, followed by the horsepower, the size of the engine, and whether it needs a front- or a rear-wheel axle. Then we build a truck on the computer before we send it to the factory. They'll price it, engineer it and send back a fully specced drawing."

The engineers at Rosenbauer work up a computer-aided design, or CAD, incorporate all of the department's wants and needs, and then complete a specification sheet. The result, says Bartley, "is quite a document, usually 2½ inches thick, describing everything from the front to the back and anything in between."

Bonito's LoneStar went into service in January 2010 and, according to Bartley, has been a lifesaver ever since. Bartley still raves about how it passed its first test with flying colors. A few weeks after settling into its new home, it handled a burning aircraft at the Sierra Blanca Regional Airport in the neighboring town of Ruidoso. And just last April, it helped save that same town—the largest in the county—from a raging fire that ravaged 10,000 acres in its wake.

"It was a lot of truck when it first arrived," Bartley says. "It's one of the most important that we have. It's done everything we've asked it to do." T

See these International firefighters in action on the *Trail* app for iPad®.

THE FIRE BRIGADE

Rosenbauer has worked with International® to deliver topflight fire trucks since the 1940s. In addition to the new LoneStar®, here are three of their classic collaborations.

THE ALUMINUM TANKER
Mounted on a WorkStar® chassis and equipped with a MaxxForce® 10, this baby features a 3,000-gallon aluminum tank that is guaranteed for life.

THE PUMPER
Equipped with a sturdy WorkStar® 7400 chassis, this vehicle can carry up to six firefighters and features a 1,000-gallon tank.

THE TIMBERWOLF
Another WorkStar, with a MaxxForce® 9 engine and an Allison EVS 300 transmission, is used for urban structure fires.