



Tanner Garza — THE BATTALION

The Brayton Fire Field prepares first responders for disaster situations, with simulated fires and other incident recovery scenarios. The 2015 spring training hosted about 500 students, many from other states or countries.

**FIRE SCHOOL CONTINUED**

Mike Wisby, associate division director for the Emergency Services Training Institute, which operates Brayton, said the school was established in 1930 with 196 students from 76 Texas cities and towns. Today the school sees 45,000 students per year from across the globe. There are also satellite stations throughout the world, bumping the total number of people trained by TEEX to 80,000 annually. Wisby said TEEX, which includes the fire school along with specialized first response, has taught first responders who helped civilians in events like the Bastrop fires, Boston Marathon bombing and the London subway bombings. While not the largest in the world by size, Wisby said the university-based fire field is the largest in amount of equipment. The rigs, called props, focus on both municipal, including home and commercial businesses and industrial fires. Safety and teamwork are highly stressed. Wisby said multiple instructors watch from the sidelines during a simulation, ready to step in if something looks off about the simulation.

The students learn to communicate either through hand signals or verbal cues. "They're having to learn how to work as a team," Wisby said. "They have to learn how to move. We call it, 'Teaching you how to dance.'" Scheffer said safety is highly stressed in his classes. "The number one priority in all incidents — whether it's hazmat, fire, wreck — is life safety and it starts with your safety first and we want to make sure you do your job as safely as possible," Scheffer said. To run the fire school, Wisby said facilitators pump more than a million gallons of water per day. However, the water is drained into storage tanks to be recycled and reused. Most of the fuel used is E3, and the fire school uses about a million gallons per year of the flammable liquid fuel. "That fuel is blended for us by ConocoPhillips in Borger, Texas, up in the Panhandle," Wisby said. "They will tank truck that to us, we use it in the tanks and that's what we use out here. You get a really good fire, just like gasoline or diesel burning, but you don't get

the smoke. It's a low-smoke fuel developed just for us." Scheffer said TEEX has both industrial or municipal props. "The industrial props are extremely realistic," Scheffer said. "Those are probably the most realistic industrial burning props there are in the world. As far as the municipal side of it, when you're dealing with more structural fire fighting, the facilities again are out of this world. They're built with integrity to last a long time and they allow us to do many different scenarios." With these props, Wisby said the facility is constantly updating and creating new simulations for training. At the moment, they are installing a new prop — a four-car train derailment. "These rail cars have been sitting up in Bryan on the siding," Wisby said. "They've been donated to us by Burlington Northern. We've now started moving them out here. We're going to stack these up in a big train derailment and then we're going to set it on fire." Chief Robert Moore, director of the ESR1, said the week is going well so far, even with

the weather deviations that are common during the spring. Moore said this may be beneficial for the students, as it prepares them for scenarios in any weather. "Firefighting doesn't stop due to weather," Moore said. "It gives you some good training because you do some things a bit different depending on the weather." While incidents do not happen regularly, Wisby said some people have lost an eyebrow if they weren't in the correct position. Another concern is heat stress, and there are signs posted throughout the facility reminding students to drink water and stay hydrated. The training school has a broader focus than simply fire fighting, Moore said. It is an all-hazard facility, including training in EM tech, hazardous materials, rescue operations and management. Wisby said students can also be trained in rescue operations, other types of natural disaster incidents, as well as the management side of handling an incident. The practice of working an incident in simulation creates a muscle memory for the real world. "If you're a responder, you want this to be second nature," Wisby said.

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**Newsday Crossword** SIMPLE, FOUR STARTERS by Melanie Miller Edited by Stanley Newman www.stannewman.com

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ACROSS  
1 Minor quarrel  
5 Be nostalgic for  
9 Hollywood headlines  
14 Rich mineral find  
15 Genesis shipbuilder  
16 Forbidden  
17 Realtor's event  
19 "The show is starting!"  
20 Oklahoma city  
21 Himalayan guide  
23 Swimwear brand  
25 Novelist Grafton  
26 Joint near the waist  
29 Plus even more  
33 Mini-compact two-seater  
37 Benefactor amount  
38 Slightest amount  
39 Film critic Roger  
42 Salad alternative  
43 Drama excerpt  
45 Customs officers' workplaces  
47 Keep a talk private, perhaps  
50 Babble on  
51 Poetic nightfall  
52 Puts off  
57 Warship fleet  
60 Primrose piece  
61 Bayou cuisine  
64 Business-school research  
66 Audi alternative  
67 Bit of kindling  
68 Object of worship  
69 Permissible  
70 Minor obstacle  
71 Declare untrue  
DOWN  
1 Spaces on a schedule  
2 Appear suddenly  
3 British superstar singer  
4 Antsy  
5 Telephone trio  
6 Debt slips  
7 Kimono belt  
8 "Gimme a break!"  
9 Cash allowance  
10 Brit's bye-bye  
11 Belly muscles  
12 Aussie hopper  
13 Family member  
18 Tore into  
22 Feel sorry about  
24 Long ago  
26 Pay tribute to  
27 Poker declaration  
28 Offenders, to cops  
30 Tiny portion  
31 Sneaker-sole pattern  
32 Mediocore  
33 Actress Spacek  
34 Coffee flavoring  
35 Devoured  
36 Talk wildly  
40 Grande  
41 Stepped on  
42 Everlasting  
46 Readies, for short  
48 Drapery edge  
49 Makes unto law  
53 Foul-smelling  
54 Chopin piece  
55 Hazardous gas  
56 In a conniving way  
57 Subtle glow  
58 Dracula's curfew  
59 Much of the Old World  
61 Baseball great Ripken  
62 Unreturned serve  
63 Moonshine holder  
65 Custard ingredient

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