

## Individual Media Award 2005

*Nat Whittemore* is a career photographer for Boston's *WBZ-TV Channel 4*. Although this nomination is submitted for consideration of Nat's coverage during the Northeast Forest Fire Protection Commission's 2004 Forest Fire Awareness Week, Nat's commitment towards furthering the public's education to the threat from wildfire covers an over forty year timeframe.

His knowledge of the Wildland Fire Urban Interface (WUI) and Wildfire in general has been an added weapon to the Massachusetts' Bureau of Forest Fire Control's Prevention and Suppression Arsenal. Photographer Whittemore has been through the S-130 / S-190 course. Nat's coverage and presence at key fires and WUI prescription burns has been an integral factor in acceptance by the public and various Fire Departments of our efforts towards educating them to the benefits of hazard mitigation practices. Just a few years ago, during what the US Forest Service dubbed the "Historic Year of Wildfire", Mr. Whittemore and WBZ-TV Channel 4 accompanied the *Massachusetts Out of State Fire Crew* to a western fire and sent home terrific coverage of wildfire and our crew.

Nat's professionalism and dedication at fire incidents is highly recognized by his peers and non-media personnel in kind. The Bureau of Fire Control needs only to contact Nat by means of fax, email or phone call of a planned prescription burn or promotional event, and he takes it from there. His work experience and history with his editor and project managers usually assures the Bureau of some great coverage. He and the journalist he is teamed with are welcome and familiar persons at fire incidents. We are confident that the story will be aired with the purpose and intent of our mission.

One can access his name on the internet and find video footage he has shot at various wildfires during his very active career. Of particular interest is the "The Great Forest Fire of 1957" in which a 35 mile perimeter of wildfire consumed 18,000 acres and 50 structures. Situated in a high risk WUI area near the Myles Standish State Forest, more than 2,500 firefighters from 64 communities fought the blaze, which covered a 12 mile path from point of origin.

Most recently and the reason for this submission of award consideration is: Nat Whittemore's coverage of a planned NFFPC Forest Fire Awareness Week project by the State. His suggestions and set-up did much to promote our message. Nat worked with Bureau personnel to educate the high populace viewing audience of Wildfire and WUI concerns. The footage, a short documentary type exposé was aired several times during the NFFPC Forest Fire Awareness Week/Month at key news times.

~ Beginning with a WBZ-TV Channel 4 anchorman announcing that the threat to wildfire was particularly high during the month of April, Mr. Whittemore's photo coverage went on to show a helicopter pilot and footage taken from the aircraft of a then burning wildfire at the State Forest. The segment segued to a home in the town of Plymouth, which is categorized as a high risk WUI community. In this segment, the state district patrolman "walked" the homeowner through Fire Landscaping Tips and How To Better Safeguard Home and Yard from the Threat of Wildfire steps. Prevention measures to the house and landscape taken by the homeowner were pointed out. The footage panned back and forth between the homeowner's site and the state fire district office where more tips and instruction were given to the viewing audience of measures they could take to better safeguard their homes. The footage ended with a wrap-up from the TV anchor and more overhead shots of the fire that burned that day. ~