



THE VOLUNTEER



The Official Newsletter of the
ALABAMA ASSOCIATION OF VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS

January - April, 2018

Annual Conference – Alabama Association of Volunteer Fire Departments

2018 AAVFD annual conference is being hosted by the Lauderdale County Association of Volunteer Fire Departments. Join us for the 41st conference on July 13-14, 2018 at the Shoals Marriott Hotel & Spa Conference Center, 800 Cox Creek Parkway, Florence, Alabama. All events will be held on the grounds of the Hotel.

The conference offers exhibits, expos, fire education programs, and networking opportunities with fellow emergency service leaders from across the state...experience it all. The conference features dozens of exhibitors displaying the latest public safety products and services for fire departments.

The conference will open Friday with registration, vendor exhibits and evening cookout at the River Heritage Park. Following the cookout, join us at Pavilion for musical entertainment provided by the Kerry Gilbert Band. Saturday morning opens with firefighter competition (River Heritage Park), vendor exhibits (Conference Center), business meetings (Conference Center), board elections (Conference Center) and the awards banquet (Conference Center).

Registration for the conference is open! This year we are hosting Wayne Ludewig, retired FDNY Special Operations Chief, as the keynote speaker at the Saturday night banquet.

Conference Chairmen:

Scott Childres

President

256-335-3234

Brian Ozier

Vice-President

256-810-0914

Steve McEachron

Treasurer

256-810-0914

FROM THE AAVFD PRESIDENT'S DESK

BY

Greetings Fellow Firefighters,

Mike Green

It is amazing how time passes but we are again approaching our Annual Conference. In this publication you will find a short biography on the candidates you have nominated to serve as the Officers of this association for the upcoming year. Please make every effort to have someone present at the annual business meeting to represent your department/county and let your voice be heard. Not only will you be involved in the election process but also be able to meet and network with old and new friends who share a common bond across this state. No matter what area you are from, we all have the same goals and are all dedicated to the citizens whom we serve. More so, we are all family so consider this our "family reunion"!

I am again honored and very humbled to have been asked to serve as president of the association. Volunteer firefighters are some of the most selfless and dedicated individuals in this nation and I am truly proud to be a part of such an elite group of men and women. I have enjoyed the last 5 years in this position and would not change anything about the last 38 years I have spent in the fire and emergency medical services field. I pledge my continued support to the volunteers of this state and will always make myself available to all our members. Thank you for your confidence in me and my dedication to you and your departments.

"Don't waste life in doubts and fears; spend yourself on the work before you, well assured that the right performance of this hour's duties will be the best preparation for the hours and ages that will follow it." Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-82)

As you already know the number of volunteer firefighters is declining rapidly. I regularly hear and see the effects this has on some of your departments and those across the nation. Recruitment and Retention of our volunteers must remain a priority for all of us; not just the Chiefs and Officers of a given department. Ideas are a dime a dozen; the people who put those ideas into action are priceless! We are the ones who must take action to enable our departments to survive. Our citizens and the communities in which we serve are depending on US to prepare for the future. I urge you to take every opportunity you have to bring a younger individual into your department and instill in them the PRIDE that comes with COMMITMENT! Hard work is easy to admire if you don't have to do it. Whereas our existence is concerned, we ALL must get our hands dirty!!!

May God Bless and keep you safe always!

Mike W. Green



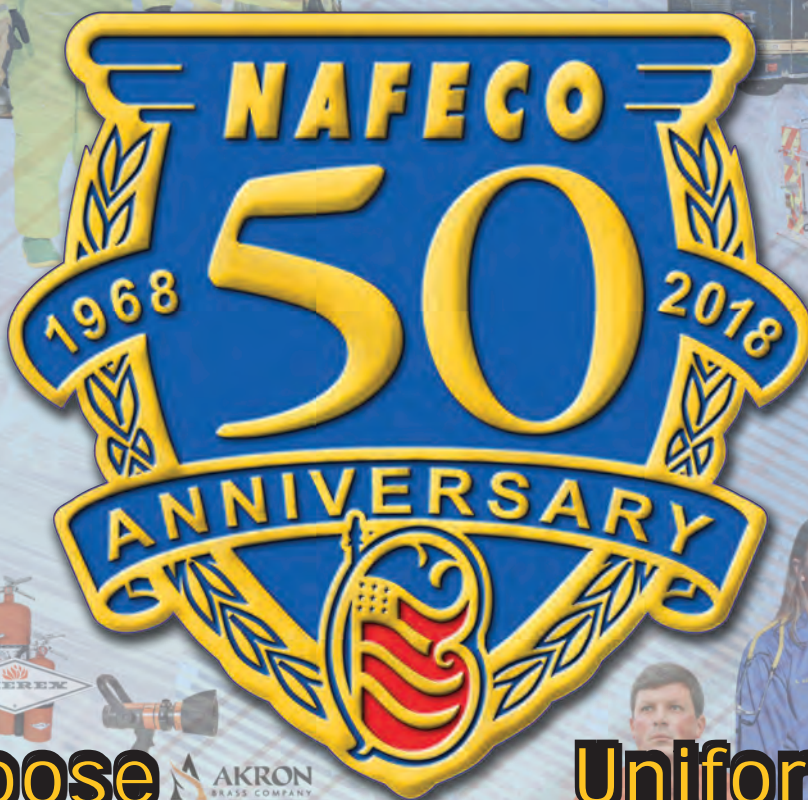


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The AAVFD Auxiliary was founded six years ago. It started at the annual conference by a group of people who wanted to assist and be involved in the AAVFD. Our goal is to support and provide services to the AAVFD, support programs on fire education, prevention & awareness and bring families of firefighters together. In addition, we assist fire departments throughout the state in establishing local fire auxiliaries.

The auxiliary will be in attendance at the annual AAVFD Firefighter Conference. We will have a vendor table set up during the expo times on Friday and Saturday. The booth will feature the 2018 AAVFD t-shirts. These Gilden shirts are soft, comfy and are made of a 50/50 blend. In addition to the t-shirts, other items available for purchase include: air fresheners in shapes of firefighter designs along with other designs, scented soap, firefighter jewelry and many other items will also be available for purchase. All proceeds go to the AAVFD Auxiliary.



In 2017, it was our honor to purchase two bricks which were added to the Alabama Firefighter Memorial honoring our fallen heroes. The bricks were placed in memory of Tracy Sanders and Clint Hardemon who died in the line of duty. The Alabama Firefighter Memorial is located on the campus of the Alabama Fire College.

It is our pleasure to sponsor the Sportsmanship Award which was added to the annual firefighter competition in 2017. This award was started by the auxiliary and is judged by individuals not connected to the auxiliary or competition teams. It is given to the team who exemplifies outstanding respect to opponents, coaches, encourages other teams during competition, persistence and fairness along with self-control during competition.

If you are looking for a way to give back to the AAVFD consider joining the auxiliary. It's not just for ladies, men are welcome too! Follow us on Facebook – AAVFD Auxiliary.

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2018 Alabama Firefighter Competition

The 2018 firefighter competition is now open for registration. This annual event features outstanding firefighters showcasing their skills against other firefighters from around the state.

Time to get practicing to make sure your team is ready and can compete in the annual Saturday morning firefighter competition! This year's event will include Air Pack Relay, Hose Lay and Water of the Roof. There is one new rule change on Air Pack Relay, you will be required to pull straps on the SCBA.



Don't miss this exciting challenge that is a conference favorite! Firefighter competition is like Firefighter Iron Man and is physically demanding – so crossing the finishing line is rewarding! It's earned the reputation of being "the toughest few minutes in sport." Wearing bunker gear, competitors race against each other and the clock. Are you tough enough? Give it a go and find out!

Competition Chair, Joey Boyd, is looking forward to facilitating an amazing event this year for Alabama firefighters from around the state to come together to perform, have fun and network in a spirit of brotherhood. If you have any questions, please contact Joey at (256) 497-8505.

2018 Firefighter of the Year & The Sherry Garner Memorial Award Nominations

The purpose of these awards is to recognize present members of a volunteer fire department who has served his/her department, community and state above and beyond normal expectations during his/her service as a volunteer firefighter in the year since the previous award.

Candidates should demonstrate commitment to their department and community and have contributed in a positive manner to the enrichment of their fire department and community they represent.

To be eligible for these nominations, a person should be a current member of a volunteer fire department in the state of Alabama. All nominations should include accomplishments, length of service, extra ordinary services in the line of duty such as saving a life, removing someone from a burning building, car, etc. and other related pertinent information.

Nominations must be received no later than June 1, 2018 in the AAVFD office (660 Adams Ave. Suite 345 Montgomery, AL 36104). The annual awards will be presented during the AAVFD Annual Conference Banquet on July 14, 2018 in Florence, Alabama. All nominations must be signed by the fire chief and one other officer of the department or two members of the Board of Directors if a chief is nominated.

If you have any questions regarding the Firefighter of the Year or the Sherry Garner Memorial Award, please contact the office at (334) 262-2833.

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AAVFD Officers and Board Member Elections

During the annual business meeting on Saturday, July 14, elections will be held to fill the officer and board member positions. The Nominating Committee made the following recommendations:

President:
Mike W. Green (I)

Vice-President Central:
Dan Hopkins (I)
David Rogers

Secretary:
Mary Sells (I)

Vice-President South:
Joey Moffett (I)

Vice-President North:
Derrick Gatlin (I)

Treasurer:
Joe Golden (I)

Nominations from the floor at the annual meeting are permitted by the AAVFD by-laws. All candidates, except those presented by the nominating committee, must be present at the annual business meeting. All six offices are elected by majority vote of the members in attendance and those members represented by proxy.

Each District (1 through 10) will elect two individuals to represent their district on the Board of Directors for the coming year. AAVFD by-laws require that those two individuals shall not be from the same member department and, in so far as possible, shall come from different geographical areas within the districts. Directors and Alternate Directors shall be elected by a committee consisting of one individual from each dues paid general member department from within the district (one vote per department present) at the general meeting.

Candidates' fire service biographies are provided on pages 8 and 9 in this issue.



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Alabama Association of Volunteer Fire Departments

41st Annual Conference July 13 - 14, 2018

Shoals Marriott Conference Center

800 Cox Creek Parkway South, Florence, Alabama



Sponsored by the Lauderdale County Association of Volunteer Fire Departments

PRE-REGISTRATION FORM

All pre-registrations should be post marked no later than June 15, 2018

Pre-Registration before June 15 th	\$35.00 per person
Late Registration after June 15 th	\$40.00 per person

Friday Evening - July 13, 2018

Registration - 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Conference Center
 Vendor Displays - Noon to 5:00 p.m. Conference Center
 Training/Meetings/Tours - 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 Conf. Center
 Board Meeting - 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Conf. Center
 Cook Out - 6:30 p.m. River Heritage Park
 Entertainment - 7:30 - 10:00 p.m. River Heritage Park

Saturday - July 14, 2018

Competition Registration - 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. River Heritage Park
 Captain's Meeting - 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. River Heritage Park
 Competitions - 9:00 a.m. to noon River Heritage Park
 Conference Registration - 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Conference Center
 Training/Meetings/Tours - 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 Conf. Center
 Vendor Displays - 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Conference Center
 Annual Business Meeting - 2:00 to 5:30 p.m. Conference Center
 Awards Banquet - 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. Conference Center
 Speaker Wayne Ludewig, Retired FDNY Special Ops Chief

Everyone attending Conference activities and competing on Saturday must register for the Conference
Alcoholic beverages will NOT be allowed at any Conference activity, meeting, competition, or in a raffle
Name badges must be shown to enter activities and compete in competitions
LCAVFD is not responsible for any loss, accident or injury incurred during event
Appropriate dress is required by the hotel. Please dress casual to formal at the Awards Banquet.

Hotel Information Please specify the AAVFD Group Rate when you call. All activities and events will be held at this location.

Shoals Marriott Hotel and Spa 1-800-593-6450 Rates: \$144.00 + tax [Reserve a room](#)

Alternate Hotels All Alternates are within in 2 miles of Conference Center

Holiday Inn Express Florence NE	256-246-2200	Group - VFD	Rate: \$104 + tax	Reserve a room
Hampton Inn Florence Downtown	256-767-8282	Group - FDC	Rate: \$92 + tax	Reserve a room
Hampton Inn Florence Midtown	256-764-8888	Group - AVF	Rate: \$93 + tax	Reserve a room
Residence Inn Marriott Florence	256-764-9966	Group / Association	Rate: \$114 + tax	Reserve a room

Please fill out the following form, detach and mail along with payment to the following address;

LCAVFD
 ATTN: AAVFD REGISTRATION
 Post Office Box 2145
 Florence, AL 35630

Send Questions to - aavfdconf2018@att.net
 Steve McEachron 256-810-0914
 Scott Childers 256-335-3234
 Brian Ozier 256-627-7209

Fire Department: _____ Number attending: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____ Please make checks payable to the LCAVFD

Please list the names and phone #'s of each individual attending conference. Use the back of this form if needed.

Dan Hopkins

Candidate for Central Vice-President



My name is Dan Hopkins and I am a candidate for central vice-president. My fire service career began over twenty years ago and I have been serving as the fire chief of Hollis Crossroads VFD for the past seventeen years. I have attended many firefighter courses over the years and stress the importance of training and being prepared to all involved in the fire service.

I am a resident of Cleburne County. I am married to Stacy Hopkins and we have four children and seven grandchildren.

In 2011, I was elected as central vice-president of the AAVFD. It has been my privilege and honor to serve in this capacity. It is my pleasure to also serve on the Board of the Cleburne Hospital. In the past, I served five years as district 4 director. I am well respected among firefighters throughout this state for my professionalism and ability to build strong relationships.

It is my continued commitment to serve all fire departments throughout the state. Our fire service is changing rapidly and we are facing challenges like never before. I am committed to continuing to serve and believe we need to create new models and a different way of thinking about the delivery of fire and emergency services. My numerous years in the fire service, leadership skills and ability to work with all people will continue to assist in moving the AAVFD ahead.

As Central Vice- President, I am committed to promoting firefighter training as well as sharing and preserving the finest traditions of the AAVFD. I am devoted to the fire service and serving firefighters and volunteer fire departments throughout the state. I am proud to be a volunteer firefighter and would like to ask for your support and vote in this upcoming election.

David Rogers

Candidate for Central Vice-President



As we approach the annual AAVFD Conference, I ask your support for the position of Vice-President for the Central Region. I am currently a member of Tallassee Fire Department in Elmore and Tallapoosa Counties and have volunteered here for 23 years. I currently serve as an Assistant Chief and Secretary/Treasurer of our local Fire Association. I am also the Vice Chairman of the Elmore County Fire Fighters Association and AAVFD District 10 Director.

My wife (Allison) and I have a daughter (Ansley) and son (Andrew). I work for a Montgomery governmental relations firm as an Office Manager.

As both a volunteer firefighter and a Government Relations Manager, I understand the problems and challenges facing the Alabama Fire Service. As the Central Vice-President, I can work with the Board and fire departments throughout the state to affect positive change and improve the fire service capabilities statewide. I ask for your vote as well as prayers for the entire fire service as we work to make the lives of Alabamians safer and improve the quality of our families' lives.

Mary Sells

Candidate for Secretary



I, Mary Sells, a twenty-eight year veteran of the fire service, am proud to be a volunteer firefighter and serve my community. I have dedicated my life to the volunteer fire service. I have had the privilege of serving as secretary for the AAVFD for the past seventeen years. I am a long-time member (eighteen years) of the AAVFD Honor Guard and serve in the South Unit. It has been my honor to be a part of the outstanding group of honor guard members. In addition to serving the AAVFD, I am the Assistant Chief of the McCullough VFD in Escambia County and have served in the capacity for the past twenty-eight years. I am standing on the frontline serving my community and the AAVFD with dedication, commitment and pride.

I have been nominated as a candidate for secretary. I am committed to continuing my service in this position and serving volunteer fire departments throughout the state. I am dedicated to doing my best to serve the AAVFD and the individual firefighters along with the VFD in our great state. Your support in the upcoming elections in July would greatly be appreciated.

Derrick Gatlin

Candidate for North
Vice-President



My name is Derrick Gatlin and it has been my honor to have served as your AAVFD Northern Vice President for the past eight years and presently serve as 1st Vice President. I appreciate all the support you've showed me over the last eight years. During our Annual Business Meeting, we will elect officers for the 2019 year. I'm asking for your continued support and would like to thank you in advance.

I also would like to take this opportunity to thank each of you for your dedication and commitment to the fire service and the citizens of Alabama. I look forward to seeing you at the annual AAVFD Conference.

Joe Golden

Candidate for
Treasurer



I would appreciate your support in my re-election to the office of AAVFD Treasurer. My wife and I have two daughters, Tara Goggins and Cari Golden. Tara is a Meteorologist with the National Weather Service at the Shelby County Airport office. Cari is a math teacher at West Point High School. My wife worked for the Cullman

County Board of Education at Parkside Elementary School and is retired.

I worked for Nicholson File in Cullman, Alabama for over 35 years in accounting. The last 13 years I held the Executive Staff Controller position. I was responsible for all accounting activities at the Nicholson File Plant. The company closed its US operations and moved to Mexico, Colombia and Brazil in late 2011. I am currently retired.

If elected this will be my sixth term as treasurer. I have previously held the positions of Alternate Director and Director for District 2. I served as the chief of the Baileyton Volunteer Fire Dept. for 17 years before stepping down. I am currently secretary of the department. I also serve as Co-Commander of the Cullman County Haz Mat Team, and President of the Cullman County Association of Volunteer Fire Departments. I hold several certifications through the Alabama Fire College.

I would appreciate your continued support for the office of Treasurer.

Joey Moffett

Candidate for South
Vice- President



My name is Joey Moffett and I served in the position of Vice President for the South Region for the past two years. It is my honor to have been elected to this position and I thank all of you who elected me as I am very much enjoying the experience. Since 1981, I have been a volunteer fire fighter as a member of Roberts Volunteer Fire Dept. in Brewton, AL, and, as such, have developed a deep seated passion for the fire fighting life as well as a sincere respect and compassion for the volunteers of this state and the families that support them. The needs and the sacrifices made by our volunteers prompts me to be ever seeking more ways to improve our support of Alabama's volunteer fire fighters.

Over the years, I have acquired certification as an American Heart Association instructor, Certified Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC) Instructor, Alabama Fire College Certified Volunteer Fire Fighter, Instructor I and Mobile Live Fire Trainer Operator.

Since 2006, it has been my privilege to serve as the District 7 Alternate Director and designee for the Alabama Association of Volunteer Fire Depts. It was my honor also to serve as President of the Escambia County Association of Volunteer Fire Fighters from 2000 to 2011. Currently, I am also serving as the AFC District 7 President.

Being a native of Brewton, AL, I graduated from W.S. Neal High School in 1979 and then from Jefferson Davis Community College with a Degree in Computer Science. As a Computer Systems Specialist, I am currently employed by Frit Car, Inc., a railcar repair facility in Brewton, AL. My wonderful wife, Angela Tolbert Moffett, of Jay, Florida, is also a volunteer fire fighter. Together we have one amazing daughter, Crystal Dawn Moffett, who is currently studying to be a life flight nurse.

Your support to continue serving as Vice President for the South Region would be appreciated for the upcoming election taking place in Florence this July. I am truly dedicated to doing my best to serve this association and the individual fire fighters out there. On a special note, I would like to say a huge THANK YOU to all you volunteers out there who give of your time and energy so freely. That is what makes our departments successful. Be safe!



ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION

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FROM THE DESK OF ...

Dear AAVFD Members:

Greetings from the Alabama Forestry Commission! It's been a year now since I was appointed to the position of State Forester. I have enjoyed getting to know many of you and attending your meetings across the state. It has also been exciting to learn about the partnership that exists between the AFC and Volunteer Fire Fighters in Alabama. Our combined interests and efforts serve the people of this state in many ways and I look forward to helping this partnership grow.

Alabama has an average of over 2,000 wildfires annually which burn approximately 21,000 acres. Without the aid of volunteers like all of you, our minimal staff of 175 fire fighters would be quickly overwhelmed. Your quick response and ability to contain wildfires until our crews arrive helps prevent the large fires we see in western states. We thank you for helping to prevent these potential disasters.

As you know, we've been facing difficult financial times for several years, but we maintain our commitment to the VFDs. We will continue to support the many programs we administer aimed at helping you do your job. Some of these are outlined below.

Federal Excess Property Through a cooperative agreement with the Department of Defense and the U.S. Forest Service, we obtain federal excess property for fire control. Modified tanker trucks, transport trucks, trailers and generators are examples of some of the property we can obtain for VFDs to use both in fighting wildfire and structural fires. VFDs can use this and other equipment to make their jobs safer and more efficient.

Radio Communications We provide and maintain UHF radio systems in 37 counties. Our four radio technicians keep these systems, with almost 500 VFD radios and 1,000 AFC radios, operating full time to ensure safe and effective communications. We also run a dispatch center to help facilitate communications across the state.

Certification, Coordination and Training The AFC is authorized by the Code of Alabama to certify and decertify VFDs. This year, at the request of the local associations, we decertified two departments which had ceased to function. This enables the remaining departments to ensure coverage for all rural Alabama. The Rural Community Fire Protection Steering Committee, also established by the Code, enables us to work together more efficiently to prevent and solve problems, including training and financial assistance.

Our annual check presentations will take place over the next six weeks. Myself and several members of our leadership staff will attend many of these meetings. Local legislators are expected to attend as well, offering us a great opportunity to highlight the work of VFDs and the AFC. I hope you will use this time with me or our leaders to let us know what's on your mind; that's why I've made this a priority for us.

As I stated earlier, I look forward to working with all of you in the coming years. Please know my door is always open. If you are in Montgomery, drop by to see me. Better yet, if you have something going on in your county that you would like me to attend, please give me a call (334-240-9304) and I will try to be there.

Thanks for all you do to help the citizens of Alabama.



RICK OATES
STATE FORESTER



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Brantley VFD Responds to Largest Fire in County History (Crenshaw County)

In the early hours of Palm Sunday, March 25, 2018, Brantley Volunteer Fire Department was dispatched to the Brantley Recycling Center in response to a call advising that the entire facility was engulfed in flames. The recycle plant bought plastic, metal and cardboard for recycle. There was approximately 800,000 pounds of plastic at the plant.

Multiple fire departments from Crenshaw County and surrounding counties including Rutledge VFD, Fullers Crossroads Roads VFD, Honoraville VFD,

Highland Home VFD, NECVFD, Glenwood VFD, Opp VFD, Elba VFD, Greenville FD and Ft. Rucker FD responded.



The incident continued until Tuesday, March 27, 2018.

The response to the incident involved over twenty different city, county, state and federal agencies.

This was the largest fire and emergency response in the history of Crenshaw County. There were no injuries or deaths among the public or first responders. This was truly a miracle considering the magnitude of this incident.



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Gary Lovell

Owens VFD Fire Chief

The News Courier

Gary Lovell, 59, of Limestone County, died Christmas morning at Athens-Limestone Hospital after a battle with lung cancer. He was diagnosed with cancer in September.

Lovell served for 24 years as a volunteer firefighter in the Owens community west of Athens. In December, he received an award for his years of service. Lovell joined Owens VFD in 1993 and had been chief since 2004. During his tenure, his department raised the money to buy four firetrucks, build a new fire station and twice purchase turnout gear and radios for its firefighters. The department also had a hand in getting a storm shelter built at Station 2 on Glaze Road.

In addition to the thousands of hours of service he donated to the fire service each year, Lovell was corrections officer at the Limestone County Jail for 14 years.

Friends Remember

Elkmont Fire Chief Michael Carter considered Lovell a colleague and a friend. "He was a good guy," Carter said. "There are not many guys like him. He would do anything for you, and he was an



all-around great person. All of the firefighters looked up to him."

Carter said Lovell was very instrumental in the Owens VFD

"being where they are now" in terms of members, equipment and trucks. He said Lovell and his wife had always been extremely great people.

One of Lovell's gestures stands out in Carter's mind. He gave a retired firetruck, bought when J.C. Toone was chief, to the Rogersville Fire Department so they could use it for cancer awareness. Rogersville firefighters painted the engine pink and named it Elna, in memory of J.C.'s wife. The pink truck appears at events in Limestone and other counties.



"Gary was always open and willing to help anybody in need," Carter said. "His grandkids also played baseball with some of my kids, so we were friends outside of the fire department."

Derrick Gatlin, president of the Limestone County Volunteer Fire Departments, lauded Lovell for his service to his department and to community. "I knew Gary a long time," he said. "He was in the fire service for over 24 years. He was a major asset not just to his department but to Limestone County as a whole." Gatlin recalled Gary and Teresa's service in the Limestone County honor guard and, when needed, the state honor guard.

He said Lovell also dedicated time for fire prevention activities. "Anything that needed to be done and anyone who needed help, he was willing," Gatlin said, also recalling the donation of the fire truck to Rogersville.

Limestone County Sheriff Mike Blakely said Lovell gave thousands of hours and did it gladly. "He was very involved in his community," the sheriff said. "He didn't just work as a corrections officer. He donated thousands of hours to the fire department."

The Lovells' daughter, Casey Burroughs, is a dispatcher for the Sheriff's Office, he said.



Bits and Pieces From Around the State

Holtville/Slapout VFD in Elmore County held their annual dinner on January 7, 2018. Michael Henline was named Firefighter of the Year. He is a second-generation firefighter.

On December 30, 2017, Wade Rogers was named Hazel Green VFD (Madison County) Firefighter of the Year.

Congratulations to Toney VFD in Madison County as they celebrated 50 years of fire service on January 1, 2018. The Department has an I.S.O. rating of Class 4!

Mrs. Severe S. Strode, Vice-President of the Lower Gainesville Road VFD (Greene County) was presented the keys to a F-250 Ford 4x4 truck by Mr. Bobby L. Stallings, Jr., Lead Operator and Mr.



Greene County Presentation
Pictured L-R John Nickson, Bobby Stallings, Severe Strode, Troy Gibbons & Johnni Strode-Morning.

Troy Gibbons of Colonial Pipeline Company in Pelham, Alabama on Tuesday, February 6, 2018. John Nickson, Fire Chief of LGR-VFD and member/

firefighter Johnni Strode-Morning were present for this presentation. Mrs. Strode said, "We are so grateful and thankful for receiving this truck which will enhance the function of LGR-VFD and its service area." The truck will be outfitted and equipped as a brush-truck.

Altoona VFD Fire Chief Tim Crow, Etowah County, was the recipient of the 2018 VFW Post 8600 Firefighter Award.



Fulton VFD in Clarke County held their annual Christmas dinner on December 9, 2017. Brandon Martin was bestowed the Firefighter of the Year; Brad Hare was named Most Improved Firefighter and Chief Danny Bedwell and his wife Sandy were presented the Behind the Scene Award.

A Master Coin Presentation was recently held. Master coins were awarded to Derrick Gatlin and Mike Norton.



Pictured from left to right: Danny Southard Region 1 Coordinator AFC; Derrick Gatlin president of Limestone County Association; Mike Norton Clements VFD and Matt Russell Executive Director AFC.

Laton Hill VFD in Washington County recently had (3) firefighters complete the VVF160 certification class through the Alabama Fire College. The department is very proud of these gentlemen for their countless hours of studying to better prepare themselves to serve the people in the community. Congratulations Jamie Lindsey, Michael Garrick and Cody Crager!



Ivallee VFD, Etowah County, recently took possession of a new 2018 pumper/tanker. The new fire apparatus was purchased with an AFG Grant.

Red Hill VFD in Elmore County held its annual Christmas Banquet on December 16, 2017. Assistant Chief Chad Moore and Lieutenant Charles Whatley were recognized for ten years of outstanding service to the Red Hill Community. Both individuals were presented plaques for their outstanding service. The Department also purchased a 1989 Pierce Pumper from Seaford FD in New York and the apparatus arrived on December 11th.

Lauderdale County Association of Volunteer Fire Departments 40th Annual Awards Banquet

The Lauderdale County Association of Volunteer Fire Departments held their 40th Annual Awards Banquet at the Shoals Marriott Conference Center at 6:00 pm on February 17. About 275 firefighters, their families and invited guests were in attendance. After Posting the Colors, President Childers introduced the guests. Mr. Danny Pettus, Chairman of the Lauderdale County Commission, gave the invocation. The entertainment for the evening was provided by Matt Fore, from Johnson City, TN. He is a "humorist, entertainer, speaker and slight of hand artist extraordinaire". Everyone thoroughly enjoyed his performance.

The awards program began with a special presentation by the Lauderdale County Commission, followed by a few words from Congressman Mo Brooks. Plaques and awards for 2017 were then presented by President Scott Childers, beginning with the 20 Year or More Service Awards, and Deb Miles from Central VFD and Sonny Balitmore from Center Star VFD were the only recipients this time. Next came the "Small Business Award", given to Haddock's Quick Stop, located in the Central Community. Bank Independent, with a home office in Sheffield, AL, received the "Business Supporter of the Year Award". The "William D. Posey Memorial Fair Parking Award", named in honor and memory of the late Dwayne Posey, was presented to Cleve Miles, from Central VFD. Next was the Alabama Forestry Commission's "Smokey Bear Award", which consists of two parts – a travelling bronze statue of Smokey Bear and an engraved plaque with a Smokey Bear belt buckle for 2017 attached. This was won by Underwood-Petersville VFD. The "Ladies Auxiliary Individual of the Year Award" for 2017 was Amanda Slaton from Anderson VFD. The "Individual Fire Prevention Award" came next, and it is also in two parts – a fireman's bust plaque which has the names of all the winners engraved and travels in the Childrens' Fire Safety House and an engraved plaque with a firefighter belt buckle. Melanie McDuff from Killen VFD won this award. The "Explorer of the Year Award"

went to Tristen Sebeliski, Waterloo VFD. Next up was the "Rookie Firefighter of the Year Award" for 2017, and this was awarded to Ryan Blessing from Killen VFD. The "EMS Star of Life Award", for the first time, was awarded to two individuals: Lonnie Hayes, Underwood-Petersville VFD and Leslie Whitten, Mid-Lauderdale VFD. The next award category was the "Fire Officer of the Year Award", which was presented to Josh Barnes from Killen VFD. The "Peoples' Choice Award", or "Fire Department of the Year" is a two part award also. It consists of a travelling shadowbox, created by Chief Robin Mitchell and an engraved Maltese cross wall clock. It was presented to Underwood-Petersville VFD. Next up was the "Fire Chief of the Year Award", and it was presented to Chief David Hale, Central VFD. A new award created last year is called the "President's Appreciation Award/the Flame". For this award the President of the Association gets to choose a deserving individual that he or she feels is worthy. Paula Phillips from Rogersville VFD was the recipient of this award.

The final firefighter category for the evening was the "Firefighter of the Year Award". The 2017 recipient was David Charles, from Center Star VFD, who was presented a plaque, an engraved desk clock and a certificate for a helmet. David's wife, Sue, also received an engraved plaque for her support of David. There was no recipient for the "Beth Childers Memorial Life Saving Award".

David Charles
receiving the
Firefighter of the Year
Award from Scott
Childers, President
LCAVFD



Ted Kavich, Chief, Waterloo VFD, conducted the Memorial Plaques Presentation and Ringing of the Bell Ceremony. After retiring the colors, the Board passed out door prizes. President Childers gave closing remarks and adjourned the banquet.

Executive Director's Letter to AFC Staff

Following are excerpts from a letter to the Alabama Fire College staff:

Vision:

We, the Alabama Fire College, will be the answer to the needs of the emergency response community.

Mission:

Our continuing commitment is to facilitate excellence in education, training, and support services for the emergency response community.

Vision and mission statements, while broad in scope by design, are interpreted differently by individuals within an organization. Personnel actions should satisfy and embody the intent of the mission statement and because individuals within the organizations are diverse, the interpretations and resulting actions will most likely also be diverse. If staff are allowed the latitude to recommend solutions to problems, they will inevitably take ownership in that organization. Every day in every job classification the Alabama Fire College staff has the opportunity to find some way to 'facilitate excellence' and 'be the answer to the needs of our customers,' both internally and externally. If every day we actively seek to fulfill our vision and mission, then every day would be an opportunity for improvement, to prove our worth, to show, not only by word, but by deed, that our actions exemplify who we say we are. We would develop a reputation of great customer service, caring, concern, understanding, and compassion. Knowing their reputation and what is required of them every day, wouldn't it be an honor and privilege if the Alabama Fire College was held in such high regard that we were used as an illustration by those we serve as the personification and embodiment of excellent customer service?

Our goal at the Alabama Fire College is to make every student's training experience the best possible. I believe our customers experience will be directly proportional to our level of professional engagement. So how do we make our customers experience a great one and how do we fulfill the vision of the Alabama Fire College?

- ◆ Actively seek improvement; know your job or be working hard to learn it
- ◆ Focus on me, us, them; be flexible and adaptable
- ◆ Be who we say we are; focus on doing the right things
- ◆ Be vulnerable and receptive to criticism, seek constructive feedback from supervisors and coworkers, work collaboratively to build esprit de corps
- ◆ Devote full attention to your duties, take ownership, do what you get paid to do, be fully engaged in your job
- ◆ Pursue opportunities for personal growth, be a mentor, seek mentors
- ◆ Be appreciative of the privilege to serve; don't just deliver, over deliver
- ◆ Create opportunities to enhance students experience

It is imperative that we empower our diverse staff in such a way that their actions embody the facilitation of excellence. We should encourage our personnel to resolve problems at the lowest levels of the organization; problems are often solved where the work is done. If we do this, the Alabama Fire College will be the answer to the needs of the emergency response community. I believe that if we take pride in our Fire College, being mindful that we should provide excellent education, training, and experience, promote higher education, and be good stewards of public resources, we will be successful and our students will have a great experience. But in order to do so requires an educated and trained workforce. We must personify who we say we are by being morally and ethically forthright. We must be honest and trustworthy while focusing on us so that we can serve them. We must act as any other prudent person, seek information so that we make the right decisions and also be flexible and adaptable when faced with situations that are not in a rule book so that we meet the needs of our customers.

Matt Russell

Randolph County Volunteer Firefighters Honored

The brave men and women of Randolph County were recognized at the Randolph County Association of Volunteer Fire Departments (RCAVFD) Annual Appreciation Banquet on March 3, 2018. The annual event brings together firefighters and those that support them, to include; officials from local and state government, Forestry Commission personnel, 9-1-1 dispatchers, law enforcement officers, emergency medical responders (ground and air), and most importantly, their families.

This year's event, hosted by Auslin's Chapel VFD, brought together approximately 250 men and women to share in honoring the county's best. Distinguished guests included Alabama State Senator Gerald Dial and his wife and Alabama State Representative Bob Fincher among many others. Featured speaker was former Chief Operating Officer of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Chief of the United States Fire Administration and Fire Chief of the City of Marietta, Ken Burris.

President Richard Pike presided over the event to honor those that selflessly sacrifice their time to serve their community. Two Lifesaver Awards were presented to Josh Gowens and Josh Herren (not pictured) from Newell VFD. Additionally, Lifetime Achievement Awards were presented to former Chief Billy Fred Lipham, Newell VFD, and former Chief Donnie Knight, Corinth VFD, for their decades of service to their respective departments, and Randolph County.



Former Chief Billy Fred Lipham (left) receives the Lifetime Achievement Award from President Richard Pike



Chief Josh Gowens (left) receives the Lifesaver Award from President Richard Pike



Former Chief Donnie Knight (right) receives the Lifetime Achievement Award from Chief Danny McCord

March 19, 2018

In Randolph County, when you dial 9-1-1 to report a fire, do you know who is going to show up? More than likely, it's someone you know--a friend, neighbor or someone who goes to your church. A 2015 national survey conducted by the National Volunteer Fire respondents believed that their local fire department now whether their department used volunteers. In fact, over 87% of all fire departments nationwide, and 89% of all fire departments in Randolph County, use volunteers or mostly volunteer.

DAILY DISPATCH

Daily News for America's Fire Service.

Council indicated that only 29 percent of respondents believed that their local fire department used volunteers, and 41 percent did not know whether their department used volunteers. In fact, according to the U.S. Fire Administration, over 87% of all fire departments nationwide, and 89% of all departments in Alabama, are all volunteer or mostly volunteer. In Randolph County, 100% of all fire departments are staffed by volunteers.

THE BELL TOLLED

♦ **Esther Lucille Jernigan** passed away on April 12, 2018 after a battle with cancer. Jernigan was one of the founding members of Owens VFD in Limestone County. She served over forty years with the department.

♦ **Donald Howze** passed away on March 25, 2018 as a result of a car accident. Howze was a member of Winn VFD in Clarke County for approximately six years. He also served on the Board of Directors.

♦ **Linda Stacey** passed away on March 10, 2018. Stacey served as secretary/treasurer for more than 20 years at Beat 1 VFD in Monroe County.

♦ **John C. Dixon** passed away on March 6, 2018. Dixon was a member of Dixonville VFD in Escambia County. He served the department since it was founded.

♦ **Gerald Matchett** passed away on February 7, 2018. He was president and founding member of Monroe County Fire & Rescue in Monroe County with over 45 years of service.

♦ **Mike Blankenship** passed away on January 28, 2018. Blankenship was a long time member of Echo VFD in Dale County.

♦ **Donald Marion Smith**, age 59, passed away January 24, 2018. Smith was a member of the Banks VFD in Pike County. He was also a Town Councilman in Banks and a retired veteran.

♦ **Nicky Farrish** passed away January 3, 2018. He was a retired Captain with Excel VFD in Monroe County, serving more than twenty-five years.

♦ **Captain James S. Fields**, age 67, passed away on January 27, 2018. Fields was a member of the Wicksburg VFD in Houston County for over twenty-two years. He served the Wicksburg Community as a firefighter and EMT. Fields served his department in many roles over the years including chief, assistant chief, board of directors, training officer and mostly recently as captain. He was also a mentor to junior firefighters. Fields served our country with over twenty years in the United States Army and eighteen years as an Army civilian employee. Jim fought a good fight! Fields was a true servant and will be missed!

♦ **Chief Gary Lovell**, age 59, passed away on December 25, 2017 after a three-month battle with lung cancer. Lovell served for fourteen years as the fire chief at Owens VFD in Limestone County. He served his community over 24 years as a member. Lovell was also a member of the Limestone County Firefighters Honor Guard. He was a correctional officer at Limestone County jail for 14 years.

♦ **Claudie "Billy" Stacey, Jr.** passed away on December 28, 2017. After serving twenty-seven years with Frisco City VFD, he relocated to Beat 1 in Monroe County when it opened and served more than twenty-five years, including Chief of the department.

♦ **Stevan Beckley** passed away on December 26, 2017. Beckley was a member of Battens VFD in Coffee County.

If any volunteer Fire Department (member or not) has a firefighter die in the line of duty or as a result of a line of duty injury (examples: at the scene, going to or from the scene), notify ONE of the following IMMEDIATELY, no matter what day it is or what time of the day or night: Mike W. Green (334) 309-5026, Derrick Gatlin (256) 998-0043, Dan Hopkins (256) 225-7230 or Honor Guard Commander Daniel Day (251) 267-2527. A copy of the booklet "Death In The Line Of Duty" may be obtained from the Montgomery office. 1-888-972-2833 or at www.aavfd.org.

About the Volunteer: *The Volunteer* is issued three times a year in January, May and September. Articles, information and advertisements for the newsletter must be submitted to the AAVFD office no later than the fifteenth of the month before publication. We reserve the right to edit for length, corrections and font.

Other AAVFD Info: All membership information, insurance information, changes of addresses and inquiries having to do with the AAVFD should be sent directly to the Montgomery Office.

AAVFD Officers:

President: Mike W. Green

1st VP: Derrick Gatlin

2nd VP: Dan Hopkins

3rd VP: Joey Moffett

Secretary: Mary Jane Sells

Treasurer: Joe Golden

Newsletter Editor: Debbie Green

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The Alabama Fire College believes training and dedication go hand in hand. We want to recognize you for your dedication to safety and your community as a volunteer firefighter. That's why we developed **INVEST** (InState Volunteer Emergency Services), an incentive program comprised of four levels of training. Upon completion of each level, a challenge coin, numbered and assigned to you, will be awarded.

Which level do you qualify for?

For more info, contact your Regional Coordinator
www.alabamafirecolleg.org/regional-map
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