





The Official Newsletter of the ALABAMA ASSOCIATION OF VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS September - December, 2019

Thomasville VFD Renames Fire Station No. 3



Thomasville VFD Station No. 3 (Clarke County) has been renamed to honor Roy L. Mott, Jr. A dedication ceremony was held in conjunction with the department's annual Christmas banquet on December 7, 2019.

The banquet also included special presentations to the Roy L. Mott, Jr. Family. Presentations were made to the Mott Family from the Alabama Fire College, Sunbelt Fire and Sheldon Day, Mayor of Thomasville.

Mott served as the Fire Chief of Thomasville VFD for seventeen years from 1978-1993. He was also instrumental in assisting in the formation of Fulton VFD in Clarke County along with several other fire departments. Mott was one of the Founding Fathers of the AAVFD. Mott served on the Board of Directors of the AAVFD, as a Director of District 8, Vice-President and President of the Association in his years of service to the AAVFD.



As part of the banquet and ceremony, Thomasville VFD Fire Station 3 will forever bear the name of Roy L. Mott in honor of his service to the community.

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.

FROM THE AAVED PRESIDENT'S DESK

Greetings Fellow Firefighters,

It seems like just yesterday that I sat down and wished you all a prosperous and safe New Year but here we are again! I hope that everyone had a Merry Christmas and that you were able to spend quality time with your family and friends. The holidays are not only a time to celebrate but also to reflect on the past year and look ahead and plan for the future. I pray that each and every one of you, your families and your departments will remain safe and excel in 2020!

I usually try to write about a single topic in my article but have a couple of things that I feel are important to make you aware of so please forgive my "rambling" this time! For starters I would like to clear up some confusion concerning the new Firefighter Cancer Disability Law which took effect on January 1, 2020. The program was originally championed by the Alabama Fire Chiefs Association and endorsed by the Alabama League of Municipalities. The law states that municipalities **MUST** provide this coverage for their **PAID** firefighters in their perspective cities and towns. However, the law **DOES NOT MANDATE** Volunteer Fire Departments or Associations to pay for this coverage for volunteers! The Alabama Fire Chiefs Association President (at that time), Chief Gene Necklaus, contacted me early in the discussions concerning this bill with the idea of adding the volunteers. You were added to the bill to give volunteer firefighters an opportunity to purchase, either yourselves or through your department/association where funding allows, an affordable cancer policy. Again, it is available to you if you wish to take advantage of the coverage but is NOT mandated by law whereas volunteers are concerned. For further information regarding coverage and cost please contact the Alabama First Responders Benefit Program at 1 (800) 23-CANCER (1-800-232-2623) or email them at cancerinsurance@alfrbp.com.

Secondly, I would like to give you a "heads up" on a joint effort with the Alabama Forestry Commission, the State Fire Marshal and the RCFP steering committee. After discussion with all involved it has become evident that the time has come to educate the members of the volunteer fire service on the "do's and don'ts" within your respective departments. Before any of you Chiefs blow a fuse, let me assure you that this is not about anyone or any entity trying to control your departments. It is merely an effort to assist you in knowing the correct way of



handling business and giving you references on where to find the laws pertaining to volunteer fire departments in this State. As of this writing the method of delivery of this information had not been finalized but look for more information in the near future. I would like to thank Mr. Rick Oates, State Forester, for facilitating these efforts with the help of Mr. Greg Wood and all others involved.

In closing I want to again thank each and every volunteer for your dedication and service to the citizens of this State. Without you so many Alabamians would be unprotected whereas Fire and EMS is concerned.

May God Bless and keep you safe on every call,

Mike W. Green





Lauderdale County Association of Volunteer Fire Departments 41st Annual Awards Banquet

The Lauderdale County Association of Volunteer Fire Departments held its 41st Annual Awards Banguet at the Shoals Marriott Conference Center on February 9, 2019. Approximately 250 firefighters, their families and guests were in attendance. After posting the colors, President Scott Childers introduced the guests and members of the LCAVFD Board. Danny Pettus, Chairman of the Lauderdale County Commission, gave the invocation. Entertainment for the evening was provided by Travis Wammack and the Snakeman Band. Travis and his band received an appreciation plague.

The awards program began with a special presentation by the Lauderdale County Commission. Firefighter plaques and awards for 2018 were presented by President Scott Childers, beginning with the twenty year or more Service Awards. Cleve Miles from Central VFD was the only recipient.

Next on the agenda was the "Small **Business Supporter Award.**" This award was presented to Collision Center, Tommy Trousdale, owner, located in Mid-Lauderdale VFD's District. Sam Newton Insurance Agency, located in Lexington, AL received the "Business Supporter of the Year Award." The "William D. Posey Memorial Fair Parking Award," was presented to Cleve Miles from Central VFD. This award was named in honor and memory of the late Dwayne Posey. The Alabama Forestry Commission's "Smokey Bear Award," which consists of two parts – a traveling bronze statue of Smokey Bear and an engraved plague with a Smokey Bear belt buckle for 2018 attached was won by Central VFD.



(L-R) Sonny Baltimore, Firefighter of the Year, and President Scott Childers

The "Ladies Auxiliary Individual of the Year Award" was presented to Amanda Gilbreath from Rogersville VFD. The "Individual Fire Prevention Award" is also in two parts – a fireman's bust plaque which contains the names of all the winners engraved and travels in the Children's Fire Safety House and an engraved plaque with a firefighter belt buckle. This

award was bestowed to Bradley Maxwell, Underwood-Petersville VFD.

Macey Richardson, Underwood-Petersville VFD, was presented the Explorer of the Year Award. Rookie Firefighter of the Year was presented to Hannah Abernathy, Underwood-Petersville VFD. The EMS Star of Life Award was bestowed to Adam Hold, Central VFD.

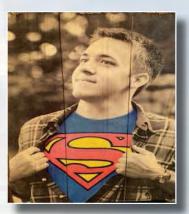
Fire Officer of the Year was given to Kyle Taylor, Mid-Lauderdale VFD. The People's Choice Award also known as the Fire Department of the Year was bestowed to Greenhill VFD. Barry Mitchell, Greenhill VFD was presented the Fire Chief of the Year Award. The President's Appreciation Award was given to Sam Newton, Lexington VFD. Lauderdale County Association Firefighter of the Year was bestowed to Sonny Baltimore, Center Star VFD.

There was no recipient for the Beth Childers Memorial Life Saving Award for 2018.

Alabama Firefighter Memorial Service

The sixteenth annual Alabama Firefighter Memorial Service was held on Saturday, October 5, 2019 on the campus of the Alabama Fire College in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. The memorial pays tribute and remembers those who gave their last full measure.

> The 2019 roll of honor contained one name this year: Caleb Benjamin Atnip of Huntsville Fire-Rescue.



Caleb Atnip



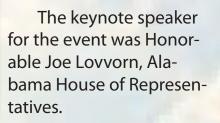
During the ceremony, his family was presented with a United States flag, photo and other fire memorabilia. His name was engraved on the memorial.







Honorable Joe Lovvorn





Several members of the AAVFD Honor Guard assisted with the memorial service. In addition, several AAVFD officers, board members and auxiliary were in attendance.









To AAVFD Members,

As I pen this letter, it is hard to believe we are in the final days of 2019, but here we are. The end of every year brings with it two things: an opportunity to reflect on the past year, and a chance to look forward to the new one with an eye toward establishing high expectations for the year to come. As with every year, 2019 brought with it some things that we would like to dwell on, and other things we wish we didn't have to think about. Unfortunately, the topic of this letter falls in the latter category; I feel it is worthy of our attention if we are to continue to improve the volunteer fire service in Alabama.

During the 2018 and 2019 AAVFD Annual Conferences, Alabama Fire Marshal Pilgreen sounded the alarm concerning financial mismanagement of volunteer fire departments. As we in the fire service understand, sounding the alarm doesn't mean much if no one responds. Because of this, and the long-standing relationship between the AFC and the volunteer fire service, I have been contemplating what the AFC can do to assist in the response to this alarm. This led me to assemble a meeting between members of the AFC staff, the State Fire Marshal's office, President Green of the AAVFD, and Chairman Ledbetter of the RCFP Steering Committee. Currently, we are in the early stages of planning our combined response, but this is an excellent time for us to look back to 2019 to make sure that this alarm does not go unanswered while we look ahead to 2020 as a time for action.

The thinking at this time is to focus our response to this alarm by providing educational opportunities to VFD members that enhance their knowledge of how VFDs are intended to be organized and operated according to the laws of the State of Alabama. The goal we hope to achieve by doing this is that the more members understand proper organization and management of VFDs, the more difficult it will be for anyone person to lead the group astray. I believe this will be a big step toward providing more stability within VFD organizations, and that will result in achieving our common goal of providing the best possible fire protection to the citizens of Alabama.

This is where you as AAVFD members come in: the group I mentioned above can develop all the plans and opportunities in the world, but without your help encouraging VFD members to take advantage of the opportunities, the alarm will go unanswered. We are still working on the details of the information to be presented and the specific delivery method to be used, but it's not too early for you as VFD members to be preparing to respond to this alarm when the opportunity arises.

So, stay tuned for more details concerning our joint response to the alarm that was sounded in 2019 and be more determined than ever to make sure that when we reach the end of 2020 we can look back and realize that among our successes for 2020 is a successful response to this alarm!



ALABAMA FIRE COLLEGE AND PERSONNEL STANDARDS COMMISSION



From the Desk of Matt Russell . Executive Director

The Alabama Fire College and Personnel Standards and Education Commission is commissioned as the certifying body for firefighters in Alabama. I often say the Alabama Fire College isn't going to make a firefighter in nine weeks and we aren't going to make a fire officer or rescue technician or a fire investigator in 40 hours. These things take time. Whether for recruits or for seasoned veterans, our goal is to impart foundational knowledge based on the National Fire Protection Association standards so that when firefighters return to their jurisdictions they can function safely and efficiently within the scope of their training. Every jurisdiction operates a little differently, and we trust that you will mold your personnel into the emergency responders you want them to be based on your operational guidelines and jurisdictional needs. We all have a stake in teaching those in our profession the technical aspects of firefighting. Equally important though is the need to not only instill, but to institutionalize, the high ethical standards the public demands from emergency responders.

I am currently reading a book entitled Leadership (2019) by Peter Northouse. As the title indicates the book has numerous chapters related to various types and styles of leadership. The Path-Goal Theory discusses the relationship of the leader with followers and how the leader defines goals, clarifies the path, removes obstacles for the follower, and provides support so that the follower can accomplish his/her mission. The Leader-Member Exchange Theory emphasizes the reciprocal relationship between the leader and followers and how followers are members of either in-groups or out-groups. The group to which an individual is a part is determined by how well they get along with the leader, how intimately the individual involves

themself in expanding his/her personal roles and responsibilities, and if the followers are willing to go beyond their typical job descriptions for the benefit of the organization. Transformational leadership is concerned with emotions, values, ethics, standards, and goals. It emphasizes the intrinsic value of the work itself (i.e. in our case firefighting) as well as follower development. Servant Leadership emphasizes the obligation of the leader to be attentive to the needs of the follower, empathize with them, nurture them, put followers first, empower them, and help them develop to their fullest potential. At the core of these theories is the thought that while leadership may take different forms there is an inextricable relationship where leaders and followers are interdependent. In other words, one does not exist without the other.

One of the concepts in Leadership that most resonated with me was that of virtue theory. A virtue is not just a character trait, but rather a tendency which exposes one's true positive disposition. Many emergency responders have been characterized as virtuous. The fire service is rife with stories of our brothers and sisters who have upheld the traditions of our profession by sacrificing of themselves to save others. It is incumbent that we pass along to the younger generations the virtuous tales of our peers who have illustrated by deed the sacrifice, honor, and bravery that have elevated ours as one of the most honored professions. Conversely, there are those who have exhibited behavior that demeans the ideals of the fire service. These lapses in character often occur when people put their own agenda and selfish interests above those of the organization and our profession. When this occurs, it tarnishes our image and damages the public trust.

BRINDLEE MOUNTAIN FIRE APPARATUS



2009 Ferrara Inferno Rescue Pumper Hale 1500 GPM Pump 500 Gallon Tank Cummins Diesel



2011 Ford F-650 Quick Attack CET 210 GPM Pump 500 Gallon Tank CAFS System



2004 Bluegrass Freightliner Pumper Waterous 1250 GPM Pump 1000 Gallon Tank Low Miles



2005 E-One International Pumper Hale 1250 GPM Pump 1000 Gallon Tank International Diesel



2012 Anchor-Richey Ford Brush Truck Waterous 275 GPM Pump Pump and Roll 4x4

256.469.2626



2013 Pierce Ford Light Rescue Gas V-10 Engine Seating for 5



2007 Deep South Freightliner Tanker Hale 1250 GPM Pump 2500 Gallon Tank Low Miles



2011 Pierce International Pumper Waterous 1250 GPM Pump 1000 Gallon Tank Navistar Diesel



2006 Pierce Dash Rescue Pumper Waterous 1500 GPM Pump 1000 Gallon Tank Detroit Diesel



2012 Pierce Velocity Rescue Pumper Waterous 1500 GPM Pump 1000 Gallon Tank Low Miles



2012 HME Ferrara Rescue Pumper Hale 1250 GPM Pump 750 Gallon Tank Low Miles



2003 American LaFrance Heavy Rescue Cascade System Generator Detroit Diesel



2000 Fort Garry Interntional Pumper Waterous 1250 GPM Pump 1100 Gallon Tank Low Miles



2002 Pierce Dash 55' Sky Boom Waterous 1500 GPM Pump 750 Gallon Tank Detroit Diesel



2000 Pierce Saber Custom Pumper Hale 1250 GPM Pump 500 Gallon Tank Low Miles



2005 Ferrara Igniter Rescue Pumper Waterous 1500 GPM Pump 500 Gallon Tank Detroit Diesel



2002 Amercian LaFrance 75' Quint Hale 1500 GPM Pump 500 Gallon Tank Detroit Diesel



2008 Ferrara 65' Snozzle Waterous 1500 GPM Pump 1000 Gallon Tank Cummins Diesel Low Miles



2005 Rosenbauer Spartan Pumper Waterous 1500 GPM Pump 500 Gallon Tank Cummins Diesel



2010 KME 4x4 Rescue Pumper Hale 1500 GPM Pump 1000 Gallon Tank Low Miles

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Life Saving Award Presented to Three Departments in Bullock County



On September 12, 2019, members of the **Bullock County Rescue**, **Union Springs VFD** and **Fitzpatrick VFD** were recognized during a special awards ceremony held at the Bullock County Court House. The members of these three departments were recognized for their excellent work on an accident that occurred in the county. During the recognition ceremony, members of these departments were presented The Life Saving Award for their teamwork and actions.

On June 26, 2019, at approximately 4 am, Bullock County Rescue, Union Springs VFD and Fitzpatrick VFD responded to an overturned semi on Highway 110 near County Road 7. Upon arrival, the semi had stuck several trees ripping the cab of the truck apart. The driver was ejected and thrown under the truck as it turned over onto its side. The driver was pinned under the truck behind the engine with only his head



visible. Through the quick actions of the three departments working together, the driver was extricated within twenty minute. The driver was airlifted to a trauma center and is recovering from his injuries.

Owens VFD Dedicates New Truck in Memory of Gary Lovell

The Owens VFD (Limestone County) is proud to announce a new edition to their department's fleet, Brush 15. This new apparatus arrived at the Owens VFD on Saturday, September 7, 2019. It is a custom built 2019 Dodge Ram 5500 Heavy-Duty.



Fire Chief Andy Pylant unveiled a plaque on Brush 15 dedicating the truck to the memory of Chief Gary Lovell.



The ceremony was attended by several of Lovell's family members including his wife,

Teresa. What an honor to have this new apparatus placed into service in tribute to our fallen Chief Lovell.



2020 ATHENS AFC WEEKEND MARCH 11TH TO 15TH 2020

CLASS LINE UP

Instructor	Class	Hours	Dates	
Carl Byrd	S130-S190	40	March 11 th -15 th	5 day
Jason Jones	Instructor II	40	March 11 th -15 th	5 day
Bryan McQueen	NVFC Cancer Awareness	16	March 14 th -15 th	2 day
Gene Nicklaus	New Chief III	16	March 14 th -15 th	2 day
Tim McMullins	Aircraft Crash Response	8	March 14 th & 15 th	1 day
Glover/Rose	Active Shooter Hostile Event	8	March 14 th & 15 th	1 day
Matthews	Natural Gas Emergencies	8	March 14 th	1 day
Chad Menard	Unbreakable Engine Co. Ops	16	March 14th-15th	2 day
John James	NFA Incident Safety Officer	16	March 14th-15th	2 day
M. D. Smith	NIMS 100,200,700,800	8	March 14 th	1 day

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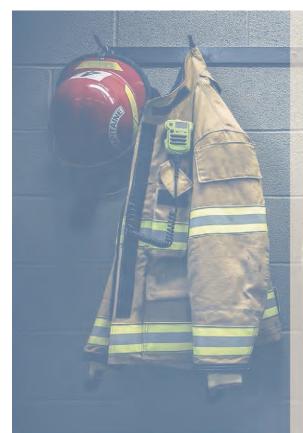
1984 Pierce Dash 1250 gpm & mid 750 tank under 26,000 miles. Current pump test certification new tires, aluminum wheels, mint Alabama truck loaded with equipment.



New Waterax 450psi pump



Skid Unit –200 gallon, poly skid & mid high pressure pump.



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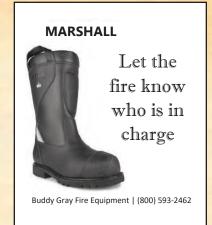
How can we help you #ServeSharpenSucceed?

Continued from page 8 - From the Desk of Matt Russell, Alabama Fire College

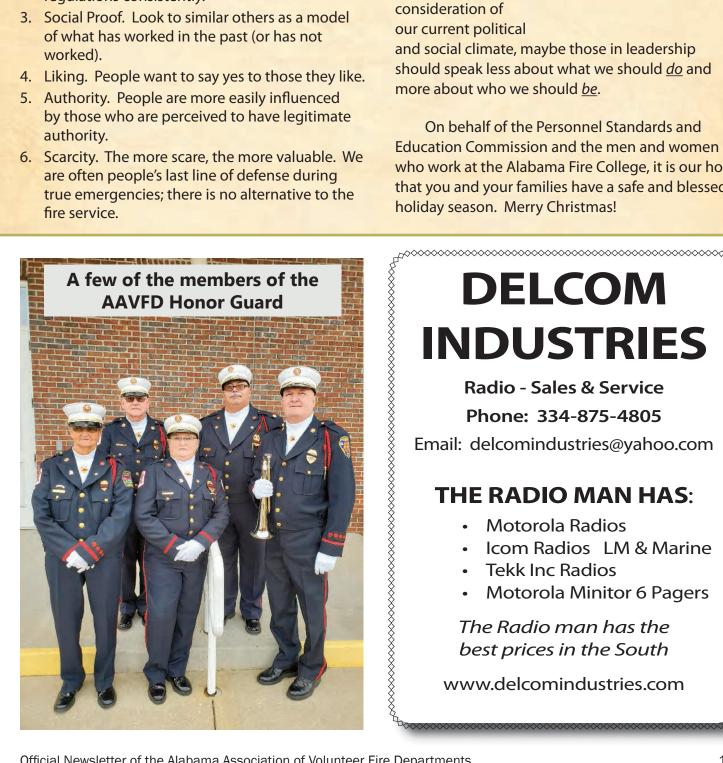
We all have a stake in teaching the technical aspects of our professionas well as an obligation to model the behaviors we want other firefighters to emulate. Author of The Six Laws of Influence, Robert Cialdini, cites six principles used to influence people:

- 1. Reciprocity. People will reciprocate the behavior extended to them.
- 2. Commitment and Consistency. Apply rules and regulations consistently.
- 3. Social Proof. Look to similar others as a model of what has worked in the past (or has not worked).
- 4. Liking. People want to say yes to those they like.
- 5. Authority. People are more easily influenced by those who are perceived to have legitimate authority.
- 6. Scarcity. The more scare, the more valuable. We are often people's last line of defense during true emergencies; there is no alternative to the fire service.

With the right mix of leadership, virtue, time, and influence, fire service leaders have the opportunity to significantly impact others, both inside and outside of our profession. In consideration of our current political



who work at the Alabama Fire College, it is our hope that you and your families have a safe and blessed



Mrs Catherine C. Burnett Secretary



Mr. Reid Vaughan Chairman Mr. Dale Wyatt Vice-Chairman Mr. Richard Pugh Mr. Chris Mullins Mr. Billy Doss

Alabama Firefighters' Annuity and Benefit Fund P.O. Box 71210 Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35407 www.alabamafirefightersabf.org 1-855-531-3718

Alabama Firefighters,

I know of very few volunteer fire stations in the country that are not struggling to find the members needed to fill the roster these days. Indeed, it seems that the average age of firefighters continues to climb while the numbers answering the call continues to drop. I am sure that many of us remember a time where there was a waiting list due to the cost of insurance and how large the active roster could be.

While trying to understand this issue in Alabama and at the national level it has become apparent that we must do more to recruit and retain the next generation of volunteers with incentives that are beneficial to them. In recent years the Alabama Fire Service has lobbied for many programs that I think place Alabama Volunteers in a much better position that volunteers in most states.

In 2010 the Alabama Legislature created the Alabama Firefighter's Annuity and Benefit Fund and its Board of Commissioners. This Commission was created to provide a tangible retirement benefit to all firefighters, especially volunteers, that serve the great State of Alabama. This Commission is comprised of five members and must always have three volunteer firefighters serving on it.

The Board of Commissioners has wisely invested the money that has been vested in its care and has realized at least and 8% return over its history. At present any firefighter in the state of Alabama can accrue time at \$20.00 per month and receive an annuity of \$90.00 per month upon completing 25 years of service and turning 62 years of age. We are expecting a new actuarial statement in early 2020 which will raise the monthly payout to at least \$100.00 per month. This benefit started at \$60.00 per month and has steadily increased over time. The forecast is good for continued growth at each three year study.

Please consider making this option available to your volunteers as a benefit for their service. Please go to <u>www.alabamafirefightersabf.org</u> for more information.

Sincerely,

A. Vaufun

Bits and Pieces From Around the State

Montgomery VFD in Tuscaloosa County bestowed Firefighter of the Year to **Myree Galloway** onOctober 12, 2019. She is one of the founding members and served as treasure for thirty years.



On October 12, 2019, the **Carroll's Creek VFD** In Tuscaloosa County named **Jeremy Sullivan** as the Firefighter of the Year.

Samantha VFD in Tuscaloosa County named **Austin Phillips** Firefighter of the Year on October 12, 2019.



Eric Rolph - Crossville VFD

On December 3, 2019, **Crossville VFD** in DeKalb County named **Eric Rolph** the 2019 Firefighter of the Year for his outstanding and dedicated services.

Green Pond VFD in Bibb County named Lieutenant Cody Franklin and Lieutenant Nathan Kirkpatrick as Firefighters of the year on December 5, 2019.

Alabama Port VFD

(Mobile County) took delivery of a new Kenworth 2000 gal. tanker/pumper with a 1250 gpm pump from Deep South Fire located in Seminary, Mississippi. The department is located in a rural area and



Pictured L – R Commissioner Jerry Carl & Alabama Port Fire Chief Pat Burns

with fire plugs few and far between it necessitates the need to haul water to the fire scene. The department was founded in 1966 with the acquisition of a 1945



open cab Mack pumper from the City of Mobile and has progressed over the years.

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Bits and Pieces From Around the State

Waugh-Mt. Meigs VFD in Montgomery County held their annual firefighter appreciation dinner and banquet on December 14, 2019. Firefighter of the Year was bestowed to Todd Clark, Andy Nguyen was awarded the President's award and Brady Medley was presented the Officer of the Year award.



L- R Brady Medley & Alma Bowen, Board President



Andy Nguyen



L-R Alma Bowen, Board President & Todd Clark

Magnolia **Springs VFD** (Baldwin County) held the 2019 **Christmas Party** on December 7, 2019. Firefighter of the Year was presented to Yael Girard.

Thomasville **VFD** (Clarke County) held their annual Christmas Banquet on December 7. 2019. Frederick Culpepper was named Firefighter of the Year.



Frederick Culpepper Thomasville VFD

Fulton VFD held their annual banquet December 6, 2019. The

department named Bradley Martin Firefighter of the Year.

Loxley VFD in Baldwin County held their annual Firefighter Banquet on November 12, 2019. Cliff (CJ)

Amerson, Jr. was

named Firefighter of the Year. Amerson is described as a

dedicatedvolunteer

countless hours of

volunteer service.

In addition to his

a large impact on

the department.

volunteer service, he is

credited with making

membership, training

and leadership within

who provided

Bradley Martin



Eclectic VFD in Elmore County held their annual Christmas party and awards banquet on December 17, 2019. Officer of the Year was presented to **Jimmy** Whitehead; Firefighter of the Year - Lee Stephens



L –*R* Jimmy Whitehead, Lee Stephens & Alan Nummy

and Firefighter/EMT of the Year - Alan Nummy.

Bits and Pieces From Around the State

Redland VFD (Elmore County) held their Firefighter Banquet on December 6, 2019 to celebrate the holiday season and another successful year serving the community. **Christopher Swaney** was named Firefighter of the Year. Swaney served twenty-eight years in the army including several deployments. He is recognizable checking and painting local fire hydrants. He is truly a great asset to the Redland VFD.



The 2019 Dan Ayers Award recipient for



L-R Clarence Quarles & Jerry Jackson, Etowah County Association President

Etowah County Association Volunteer Fire Departments was **Clarence Quarles, Gallant VFD**. Quarles has been a member of the fire service for many years and has served his

community in many ways. Congratulations to a well deserving and dedicated firefighter.

On December 10, 2019 **Barnwell VFD** in Baldwin County named **Tom Jackson** Firefighter of the Year. The 2019 Alvin Goolsby EMS Award, recipient for Etowah County Association Volunteer Fire Departments was **Magnum Waldrep**, **Ivalee VFD**. Magnum has been a member of the fire service for many years and has served his community well. Congratulations to a well deserving and dedicated EMS and firefighter.



L-R Magnum Waldrep, Jerry Jackson, President Etowah County Association & Paul Evans Etowah County Association VP

Hammondville VFD (DeKalb County) Fire Chief **Craig Hall** was honored on October 1, 2019 at the Hammondville City Council meeting. Chief Hall received special honors and a plaque from the mayor and town council. He was presented this honorable recognition for his heroic acts on March 17, 2019. Chief Hall arrived on the scene of an accident in which he was deemed to have performed life saving measures that saved the life of a female citizen. He was able to remove her from a wrecked burning vehicle with entrapment without further injury or burns.



From the Desk of State Fire Marshal Scott F. Pilgreen ...

Second, when using **fireplaces or wood heaters these should be inspected annually to ensure that the flues



and chimneys are free of obstructions and clear of creosote buildup with no cracks or spaces present, which could allow embers to escape and cause a fire.

**Note: Improper venting can lead to a buildup of carbon monoxide which can have deadly consequences.

Third, be mindful when using items that have open flames such as candles, smoking materials, i.e. cigarettes, cigars, etc. and outdoor burning. Do not leave candles unattended or place them close to combustible materials. When smoking please discard these items in a safe manner and never smoke while using oxygen, and when conducting any type of outdoor burning do not use gasoline or other highly flammable products, be alert to weather conditions such as wind and never leave these fires unattended.

In closing I want to encourage everyone to develop and practice an escape plan from your home primarily but extend this to wherever you might be. A plan that is well practiced and has become second nature to everyone in the family is critical. Should an emergency occur and we find ourselves unprepared the time to develop and practice a plan has passed.

I strongly believe that if we as individuals develop safe habits and behaviors and encourage those in our circles of influence to do the same then collectively all of us can reduce the occurrence of fires as well as the injuries and deaths that are too often associated with them.

> State Fire Marshal Scott F. Pilgreen

I hope that everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving and I wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

As of the date of this article we're six (6) days from the official start of winter which occurs December 21st. During the fall season to date I believe it's been typical for the south as there have been moments of cold to include wintry mix and snowy weather to mild spring like temperatures.

The reason I mention this is that unfortunately in 2019 Alabama is experiencing an increase in the number of fire related deaths. During the previous two years there was a slight decline, in 2017 there were 79 and 2018 the number was 75. The unofficial total this year places us at or above the total we had in 2017 and we're not at the end of the year yet...

Though I am mentioning these figures as we move into winter let me be clear even with the increase when colder weather is present no one should believe that the cold is the main reason for Alabama's fire fatality problem.

There are many factors which contribute to our state's terrible numbers, weather is just one of those. I firmly believe that poor habits and behaviors is primary culprit and all of us need to take stock of our habits and behaviors where we live, work and play as it relates to fire prevention.

Below is information taken from my article to the AAVFD Newsletter from last fall. This information remains relevant to this day, I hope it serves as a reminder to all of us...

First, if you or someone you know are using space heaters as primary or auxiliary heating source make sure these appliances are used properly. Keep them safe distances from any combustible material such as drapes, bed clothing, furniture, etc. When using a kerosene or **LP/Natural gas fueled unit make sure that it has proper ventilation and that the proper fuel is used. If the appliance requires venting to the outside make sure that the vent is clear of obstructions.

THE BELL TOLLED

Chief **William "Bill" Drake**, age 78, passed away December 11, 2019. Drake served as chief of the Redland VFD in Elmore County for nearly three decades and was its chief for more than twenty years. He had many accomplishments during his tenure. Some of his accomplishments included training young firefighters and improving the ISO rating. He was dedicated to continuous improvements. Drake was also a twenty year veteran of the U.S. Navy.

Paul Smith, age 58, passed away on December 9, 2019 after a sudden illness. Smith was an eight year member of the Wadley VFD in Randolph County. He was a great asset to the maintenance area of the fire department. Smith will be missed by all who knew him and also by the members of the community.

Anthony Wilson passed away unexpectedly on November 21, 2019. Anthony was a captain with the Central Fire/EMS in Madison County. Wilson has been with the Central VFD for twenty-one years. He was a proven leader, a voice of reason and a selfless firefighter and EMT who was dedicated to serving the community.

Bobby Dale Horton passed away on November 8, 2019 from natural causes. He was a member of Marion Junction VFD in Dallas County and served the department thirty years including performing maintenance of the department's apparatus to ensure response time in a timely manner.

Michael Fredrick Tyler, age 67, passed away unexpectedly on October 20, 2019. Tyler was the active Fire Chief of the Appleton VFD in Escambia County for more than twenty years and presiding President of the Escambia County Association of Volunteer Fire Departments for ten years. He loved working daily at the fire station, as well as working to refurbish old vehicles. He was a long-time resident of Escambia County and of the Baptist faith. Tyler was retired from the US Air Force after twenty years of service as a Technical Sergeant, Radar Specialist and Instructor.

Michael Wayne "Peanut" Johnston, age 45, passed away as a result of a tragic accident on October 18, 2019. He was responding to a grass fire in the department's tanker when he lost control of the vehicle and was ejected. Johnston was an active firefighter with Equality VFD in Coosa County. He worked as a diesel mechanic and loved to cook and have family reunions. He was always willing and happy to help people. **Byrd Stewart** passed away on October 8, 2019 from natural causes. Forty years ago, he was a founding member of the Morrison Crossroads VFD in Randolph County and served as chief for many years.

H. (Curly) Duke passed away September 26, 2019. Duke was a founding member of the Walter VFD in Cullman County. Duke was a great leader in the fire department and the community.

Jack Norton, age 90, passed awaySeptember 24, 2019. Norton was a lifetime member of Centre VFD in Cherokee County. He served the department for thirty seven years. Norton was a dedicated firefighter and provided a great service to the city and county.

Gregg Stokes, age 69, passed away September 14, 2019. Stokes was an active member of the Leroy VFD in Washington County and the National Association of EMT's. A bible scholar and devout Christian, he was a member of 3 Circle Church in Thomasville. His interests included trains and golf.

Christian Kole Richards, age 28, passed away unexpectedly as a result of a tragic accident on September 6, 2019. A truck struck him on the side of I-59. Richards was a member of Crossville VFD in Dekalb County. He was the department's Firefighter of the Year in 2016. Richards was a Class Act, loved his Town, family and was a dedicated firefighter. He was known as part of the Fab five, a small group who are known to make every call. He will be greatly missed not only in the fire department but the community as well.

William Randall Ussery passed away on September 3, 2019 from natural causes. He served for approximately 30 years as a member of the Rock Stand VFD in Randolph County.

Danny Ray Vasser, age 63, passed away September 3, 2019 as a result of a vehicle accident. Vasser was a member of Reece City VFD in Etowah County for many years where he served as a firefighter/EMT. Vasser also served as an EMT at Goodyear Tire & Rubber where he was employed. He loved serving his community and will be missed by all who knew him. Vasser was a great asset to his department.

Wayne Downs passed away September 2, 2019. With forty-five years of service, he was a senior member of Peterman VFD and a Monroe County Fire & Rescue Squad in Monroe County.

Gary W. Hale passed away on August 27, 2019. He was a member of the Austin's Chapel VFD in Randolph County and served for approximately six years.

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:**

<u>President</u>: Mike W. Green <u>1st VP</u>: Derrick Gatlin <u>2nd VP</u>: Dan Hopkins <u>3rd VP</u>: Joey Moffett <u>Secretary</u>: Mary Jane Sells <u>Treasurer</u>: Joe Golden

Newsletter Editor: Debbie Green

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