



## Chief's Corner

### Keeping Your Head in the Game

Welcome to the July edition of the Chief's Corner. I hope you're having a great summer and getting outside to enjoy activities with your family and friends. For this month's corner, I want to discuss a topic that is very important to firefighter health and safety: the mental toll that this type of work takes on you. Staying healthy means more than just being physically fit and in good shape. It also means learning to control stress and stay mentally healthy. This aspect of health and safety is often overlooked and I want to stress how important it really is.

Over the years there have been a number of "programs" to help first responders who are having trouble dealing with traumatic events. Some of these were more successful than others, and in this area we have generally used CISD (critical incident stress debriefing) or CISM (critical incident stress management). These consisted of a group of peer debriefers led by a mental health professional who would meet with the responders involved and "debrief" the incident. While this approach had some success, there were also some individuals who did not feel that it helped at all. It also did not "deal" with cumulative stress. Over time, the CISD approach fell out of favor and not much took its place. Responders who were having problems with stress were referred to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), or some other form of counseling, or they just tried to deal with it themselves.

Now there is a new tool available to first responders and their families called Stress First Aid. This program was developed in part by Dr. Richard Westphal, PhD. and RN at the University of Virginia School of Nursing. Dr. Westphal states: Stress First Aid (SFA) is a combination of knowledge and skills designed to save a life, prevent further harm, and promote recovery for those who have stress injuries. This program focuses on the fact that any injury should receive first aid, whether it be physical or psychological. With all forms of first aid there are three actions that should occur. 1) Recognize when an injury is present, 2) Assess and provide first aid; and 3) Get the person additional help as needed. Below are the Stress First Aid Actions. SFA actions are needed when there are observable changes in function, statements of distress, or known stress exposure.

1. Understand that stress occurs on a continuum. Be aware of the four sources of stress injuries present in the current situation.
2. Assess, do not assume that the person has a stress injury. Identify behaviors that indicate a stress injury.
3. Address essential needs. Safety and calming first. Then identify additional sources of support.

The program is based on the realization that stress is caused by one or more of the following reasons:

(\*The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation has adopted this program. For more information, visit [www.firehero.org/resources/department-resources/training](http://www.firehero.org/resources/department-resources/training))

- Life Threat or Trauma - Due to an experience of death provoking terror, horror, or helplessness.
- Loss - Due to the loss of people, things or parts of oneself.
- Inner Conflict - Due to behaviors or the witnessing of behaviors that violate deeply held beliefs or moral values.
- Fatigue - Accumulation of stress from all sources over time without sufficient rest and recovery.

Not everyone who is stressed will need help, some people just need support and time to recover. "Stress impacts people across stress zones that range from effective stress management (green), through reacting (yellow), injured (orange) and ill (red)." Everyone reacts to stress in some way and most people do not need first aid for daily stressors. Stress injuries can occur with exposure to potentially injurious events of trauma, loss, inner conflict, or fatigue. Distress or loss of function occurs when stress events create more demands on coping resources than are available. The following chart summarizes the stress zones and the associated behaviors for each color.

READY (Green)	REACTING (Yellow)	INJURED (Orange)	ILL (Red)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good to go</li> <li>• Well trained</li> <li>• Prepared</li> <li>• Fit and focused</li> <li>• Cohesive units &amp; ready families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distress or impairment</li> <li>• Mild and transient</li> <li>• Anxious, irritable, or sad</li> <li>• Behavior change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More severe or persistent distress or impairment</li> <li>• Leaves lasting memories, reactions, and expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress injuries that don't heal without help</li> <li>• Symptoms and impairment persist over many weeks or get worse over time</li> </ul>
Unit Leader Responsibility	Individual, Peer, Family Responsibility		Caregiver Responsibility

So, if you're suffering from stress, or know someone who is, don't hesitate to get help and address the essential needs as soon as possible. Apply the following steps:

1. **Cover:** promote a sense of safety.
2. **Calm:** reduced heart rate and over-vigilance.
3. **Connectedness:** sense of community, unit cohesion.
4. **Competence:** necessary skills and resources to meet the stress demands.
5. **Confidence:** hope in the future, belief in mission, sense of meaning and purpose.

By addressing these essential needs right away and getting the secondary aid needed, you will go a long way towards helping yourself or someone else successfully recover from a stress injury. I hope everyone will think about how they are coping with stress and will take the proper steps for help if you are feeling stressed, or know someone else who is having problems. That is what we expect from our Fire Department family. If you fail to acknowledge that you are not dealing well with stress and don't get some help, it can lead to all sorts of problems and could even end your career early.

Until next time, be safe and keep up the great work, and never forget the most important rule: "Everyone goes home safe at the end of the shift!"

Chief

## Certifications

### Fire Officer II

Candace Brown  
Earl Copes  
Adam Morton  
Kenny Turner  
Danny Williams

### Paramedic

Travis Calloway  
Tyler Harrison

### Law Enforcement for Fire Marshals

John Norman

### Paramedic

Dana Stillman

### Surface Water 1

Roger Rozell

### ICS 300 & 400

Earl Copes

## Congratulations

- Best wishes to Michelle Drake who retired effective July 1, 2016, with 13 years, 2 months of service.
- Congratulations to Tucker & Megan Driskill on the birth of their son, Parker Chase. He was born June 28, 2016, and weighed 6 lbs., 10 oz.
- Congratulations to Chris Mabes and Frankie Fowler who transitioned from part-time to full-time on June 1, 2016.
- Congratulations to Robert Tucker, Chris Coleman, and Robert Barkley, who transitioned from SAFER (grant-funded) positions to general fund positions effective July 13, 2016.

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## Welcome Aboard

### New Recruits

On June 29, 2016, Lynchburg Fire Department Recruit Academy 15 began. This will be an accelerated academy as the new members have already acquired much of the core curriculum and certifications. The eight week academy will feature intensive training, testing, and practical evolutions to prepare each new member for their career with the department. The new members, listed below, are scheduled to complete the academy and graduate August 23, 2016. Special thanks to the many members serving as instructors and assisting the Training Division in presenting Recruit Academy 15.



Dylan Alvis  
EMT-B



Brennen Lawson  
EMT-B



Jared Martin  
EMT-B



Thomas Rothwell  
EMT-P



Chaz Smith  
EMT-B



Brian Summers  
EMT-B



Jennifer Foreman

### EMS Billing Liaison

Jennifer Foreman has accepted the position of EMS Billing Liaison and assumed her new role on June 29, 2016. Jennifer has been with the City of Lynchburg for 13½ years. She worked as a Teller in Billings and Collections for two years, and the past 11½ years she has worked at Parks and Recreation as an Administrative Services Associate II.

Jennifer is married and has two loving youngsters. She enjoys spending time with her family and is active in her church. She graduated from William Campbell High School and received an Associate Degree in Merchandising from Bauder College in Atlanta.

She also has an Associate Degree in Administrative Support Technology and a Certificate in Accounting from CVCC.

Be sure to stop by Administration and welcome Jennifer. She is excited about joining the Fire Department and looks forward to meeting everyone.

## Chief Celebrates 40 Years!

Congratulations to Fire Chief Brad Ferguson who celebrated his 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the City of Lynchburg. Chief Ferguson began his career with the Lynchburg Fire Department on June 25, 1976.

City Manager Bonnie Svrcek presented Chief Ferguson (pictured right) with his service award, along with a few of Chief's "favorite" things (Snapple and Dr. Pepper!!)

Congratulations Chief!



## Norman Graduates Fire Marshal Law Enforcement Academy

By: Captain John Norman

I recently attended the Virginia Fire Marshal Academy - Law Enforcement Academy. It was a fun and enlightening experience. It is a culmination of several classes (1031 Inspector - 160 hours; CORE - 24 hours; and 1033 Investigator - 160 hours) that ends with a very long ten week class (400 hours) concentrating solely on law enforcement.

The first two weeks deal primarily with Virginia Criminal and Traffic Code, along with a significant look into law enforcement history and United States Supreme Court cases that have shaped the enforcement of federal and state laws. We were fortunate to have had several experienced instructors. Our third week included Defensive Tactics (DT) where we were shown, demonstrated on, and performed compliant and non-compliant take-downs on each other using grabs, pressure points, arm bars, strikes, and sometimes just simple avoidance by stepping out of the way. My youngest son, Jacob, made a great, UNWILLING, practice partner the following weekend! Virginia State Police (VSP) First Sergeant Mark Campbell, head of the Drug Enforcement Section - BCI Fairfax, VA, spent the week teaching, instructing, and abusing us. His habitual repeating of "the more you sweat in here, the less you bleed out there," became a class motto.



Captain John Norman

We moved into the more fun aspect of the class the following two weeks, firearms! I say it was fun, but in reality it was miserable most days. Ten days were spent on the range; it rained ten days straight, but class moved forward. The basics of gun safety began on the Friday preceding the two weeks of rain with handgun, shotgun and assault weapon nomenclature. The initial days were spent learning basic hand gun target acquisition, site picture and site alignment. Gradual progression of shooting techniques took the class through static (standing still) courses, dynamic (moving) courses, combat courses, clearing room scenarios, clearing building scenarios, clearing multiple floors scenarios, and active shooter scenarios. We had some of the best instructors from around the state at our disposal which included members of the FBI, ATF, Secret Service, the Virginia State Crime Lab, VSP, Henry County, Hanover County, Chesterfield County, Henrico County, and Colonial Heights.

The last few weeks were split between practical and classroom time. These days involved learning about, watching and then performing felony stops on active roadways and in homes/buildings with compliant and non-compliant subjects. The last week of class was spent doing "shift" work (08:00-14:00hrs or 14:00-20:00hrs) which was a scenario that had a total of 12 subjects (instructors from across the state) playing roles, starting multiple fires, and committing multiple felonies and misdemeanors. Application of all the tools the class had been taught over the last 744 hours of training had to be employed at one time or another in order for the scenario to come to a successful conclusion and apprehend all guilty parties.

Overall, the training was a great experience; however, just like other skills we acquire in the department for specialized teams, if the skills learned are not used regularly, they will be lost. Continued training for all of us in the department is paramount. All of our skills are perishable commodities. Just like other training conducted throughout the department, the FMO has to continually train to be ready when the need arises.



## Guns & Hoses Tickets Available Soon!

By: Battalion Chief Greg Wormser

Tickets will soon be available for the annual Guns 'N Hoses Charity Softball game that will be held at City Stadium on August 14<sup>th</sup>. Tickets are \$10 and include a FREE t-shirt. The Guns & Hoses game will take place at 2:00 p.m., followed by the Lynchburg Hillcats game at 4:00 p.m. Your ticket includes admission to both games.

Proceeds will benefit the Special Olympics (on behalf of the Police Department) and the Muscular Dystrophy Association (on behalf of the Fire Department). Remember, \$7.50 of every \$10 donation goes to these local charities; however, only tickets purchased PRIOR to game day will go towards the fundraising efforts. So, be sure to purchase your tickets IN ADVANCE! Contact Greg Wormser (455-6345), Tammy Sage (455-6341) or Ann Jenkins (455-6357) to purchase tickets.

## Getting Out In Your First Due

By: Firefighter Andrew White

Recently, the Lynchburg Fire Department has experienced turnover with many of its senior members retiring. This has resulted in an infusion of younger employees. The department has over 70 members who have less than 10 years of service. We have lost a vast amount of knowledge, including crucial information that may not have been passed down. This increases the need for new members to learn and spread knowledge to help prepare for the task at hand.

While the vast majority of calls for service are of medical nature, we must also remember that knowledge of your response territory is important. A good opportunity presents itself at the completion of any call. An example would be to locate the hydrant nearest to the call and plan how it would be utilized during a structure fire. Other important aspects include scene size-up, practicing on-scene reports, and estimating hose lay and water supply distances. Lastly, it's always a good idea to locate fire department connections (FDC), practice making the connection, and discuss whether they supply sprinklers, standpipes, or both.

In conclusion, if we take advantage of every day opportunities to continuously learn, we too will be able to pass crucial information to other employees. Stay safe, and keep training.

## NFPA 1582

### Just For The Health of It!

By: Deputy Chief Jason Campbell

It is a significant fact that annually nearly half of all firefighter fatalities occur as a result of medical emergencies in firefighters themselves. The severe physical nature of firefighting, and the harsh environmental conditions under which firefighters must perform their duties, dramatically increases our susceptibility to stress and overexertion. Many of these deaths could potentially be avoided through early detection of underlying medical conditions by participation in an annual routine medical examination, which includes non-invasive medical testing.

NFPA 1582, Standard on Comprehensive Occupational Medical Program for Fire Departments, is the industry standard crafted to reduce the RISK of fire service occupational morbidity and mortality while improving the safety and efficiency of firefighters and addresses medical issues of both firefighter candidates and incumbents. NFPA 1582 provides the responsibilities for fire departments to measure themselves against. Fortunately, the Lynchburg Fire Department adheres to most of the components of the standard.

It is important to understand that the 1582 standard contains essential job tasks for which the medical standards are required in order to perform. It is recognized that some fire fighting functions and tasks can vary from location to location due to differences in department size, functional and organizational differences, geography, level of urbanization, equipment utilized, and other factors. So, the standard is not necessarily a "one-size-fits-all" standard. Essentially, the essential job functions performed by the various ranks of our department must be defined in order to establish the medical requirements for applicants and incumbents.

Health and Safety Officer Nathan Chapman and I have begun a review of our current physical components to ensure compatibility with the department's essential job functions. We have opened discussions with Human Resources staff regarding making adjustments to match some of the changing demands of our jobs and also to provide for early detection of diseases often associated with our profession.

Even as the department takes these important steps, personal responsibility for your health and wellness cannot be over emphasized. Be sure to schedule an annual physical with your primary care physician and share information from your fire department physical with your PCP. This can go a long way to ensuring a long, healthy career.

## 60 Second Safety

### Seat Belt Use

By: Nathan Chapman, Health & Safety Officer

More than 12 million adult drivers and passengers are injured each year in motor vehicle crashes. Statistics show that proper seat belt use is the most effective way to stay safe and it saves lives for those involved in a MVCs. Yet millions of Americans fail to wear it each and every time they travel.



Buckling up is a safety measure we must not forget even when we are rushing to help those in need. It's our best defense if we are involved in a crash so make this an everyday practice and buckle up prior to moving any vehicle. Stay safe and buckle up!

## LFD Members Receive BREMS Awards

Providers from across the BREMS region attended the BREMS annual awards ceremony on June 22, 2016. The ceremony recognized individuals and agencies for their outstanding efforts during the past year.

Congratulations to Lynchburg Fire Department members Maurice Bruce and Josh Phillips, who received awards for Outstanding Prehospital Educator and Outstanding Prehospital Provider. Below are excerpts from their award nominations.

### Outstanding Prehospital Educator- Maurice Bruce

This award is given to a provider who exemplifies outstanding teaching and leadership qualities while participating as an educator in an EMS program.



Maurice Bruce

For almost 20 years, Maurice (Moe) Bruce has been educating EMTs and ALS providers in the BREMS region. He consistently has one of the highest passing student ratios in the region. Moe serves as an adjunct Instructor with Central Virginia Community College where he teaches EMT courses. He also is an instructor within the Fire Department for BLS & ALS providers. He teaches many hours of continuing education throughout the region while precepting paramedic students completing their field competencies. In addition, this past year, Moe led an EMT course completed by members of the community who had no EMS experience. His enthusiasm, dedication, and leadership as a provider and mentor make Maurice stand out as an exceptional educator.

### Outstanding Prehospital Provider- Joshua Phillips

This award is given to an individual who exemplifies outstanding dedication and service to their community through involvement with EMS.



Josh Phillips

Josh began with the Lynchburg Fire Department in September 2010. Since then, Josh's development shows his desire and dedication to furthering his knowledge and skill set for providing pre-hospital care. He has advanced his critical thinking skills and has the ability to relate, communicate, empathize, and calm the patients and customers he interacts with daily. He is very involved with the CVCC Paramedic Program and their EMT classes. His passion for EMS shows in his ability to teach and work with the students. In his off-duty hours, he volunteers with the Brookville-Timberlake Volunteer Fire Department. During their company trainings he incorporates EMS skills and drills to further the volunteers' ability to adequately provide Basic Life Support to patients. Josh exemplifies outstanding dedication and service to his community, students, coworkers, and his patients.

