



**Chief's Corner**

**Hola Amigos!**

Welcome everyone to the May edition of the Chief's Corner. I hope you are doing well and enjoying the spring weather. I know the pollen has been intense over the last several weeks, but I think it is about over and I can wash my "yellow" cars soon. If you have allergies this is not a pleasant time for you. However, a couple of good rains will wash most of it away and bring some much needed relief.

For this month's corner, I want to discuss a recent trip that I took to Spain and some of the "cultural lessons" to be learned from visiting other countries.

The country of Spain is on the Iberian Peninsula in Western Europe, along with Portugal and Gibraltar. It's a land that has everything from mountains to seashore with rolling hills in between. To understand the culture of Spain, you need to understand some of its history and how it has influenced the people. Spain was first conquered by the Romans in the second century BC. Before the Romans, there were the Celts and the Greeks. Roman rule lasted for over 400 years until the Visigoths invaded and conquered Spain. The Goths ruled from the 5<sup>th</sup> century until the 8<sup>th</sup> century. In the year 711, Spain was invaded by the Muslims and they soon conquered the entire peninsula. The Muslims ruled Spain for almost 800 years and their influence on the culture and arts can still be seen today. Christians eventually reconquered the land, but it was not until the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century that they (the Muslims) were finally expelled. Medieval Spain was the scene of almost constant warfare between Muslims and Christians.

In 1492, Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand solidified their rule and completed the reconquista of Spain. Together they were known as the "Catholic Monarchs," a title given to them by the Pope. In that same year, Isabella and Ferdinand authorized the expedition of Christopher Columbus, who was looking for a trade route to the West Indies, but found America instead. As colonization of the "New World" began, the riches poured into Spain and the country entered its Golden Age. Imperial Spain ruled one of the largest empires the world has ever seen. Its influence in North and South America still exists today and we see it in the southern and southwestern parts of the United States.

Now that the history lesson is over, let's look at some of the interesting things about Spain. Every afternoon from 2:00 p.m. until around 5:00 p.m., the "entire country" shuts down and everyone relaxes. Some call it a siesta and some just call it a break. Either way, it is nice to be able to take some time and recharge before you have to deal with the rest of the work day. When everything reopens at 5:00 p.m., they stay open until late in the evening. Most restaurants do not open for dinner until 8:00 or 8:30 p.m.. People dining at home tend to eat late as

well and they make dinner time a family affair. Families enjoy spending this time together and discussing the day's events. (I think this is something we should do more of with our own families.) Dinner also lasts for a while; they don't just eat and run, but tend to savor the meal.

Speaking of meals and food, you can see the Spanish influence on our culture in some of the food we eat, especially in the southwest. We love the Spanish or Mexican dishes with lots of beans and rice and plenty of spices. Sometimes, the hotter the better. In Spain, the food was not as "hot" as some of the Mexican dishes, but it didn't lack for flavor. There was also a lot of fish on the menu and almost every meal is served with wine and Sangria. (This tends to be the case in most of Europe, well the wine part anyway. You have to ask for anything else to drink.)

One last thing that I found interesting about Spain is they are the number one olive oil producing country in the world. While we associate olive oil more with Italy and Greece, Spain produces more than either of these countries. A lot of the olive oil produced in Spain is exported to Italy where it is blended, bottled, and sold as Italian. Spain has over 300 million olive trees, and I think I saw most of them while I was there. While riding through the country side there would be olive trees on both sides of the road for as far as you could see. I just kept thinking, who picks all of these olives?

Well, that does it for this edition of the Chief's Corner. I hope everyone enjoyed "the trip" and learned just a little bit about another culture. The best thing about traveling is being able to enjoy different people and the way they live and work. Whether you travel around the world or just around the state, there is always something new to experience and learn. It seems most people just want to live and be free to enjoy life. They want to be with friends and family and just be happy. When you think about it, that's a pretty good way to be.

Until next month, take care of yourself and live life to the fullest. Keep up the great work and enjoy what you do. It's your efforts that make this a great place to work as we continue to provide excellent service to the citizens. Take care and be safe but, never forget the most important rule: "Everyone goes home safe at the end of the shift!"

Chief

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## Hiring/Promotional Processes

### Firefighter/EMT

The Firefighter/EMT Recruit hiring process is underway. 266 individuals from across the country submitted applications. After initial application and DMV screenings, eligible candidates were invited to participate in the entrance exam during the latter part of April. The department is now conducting background investigations and interviews of the top scoring candidates who are eligible to move forward through the process. As candidates continue in the process, they will also undergo health physicals and psychological examinations prior to being interviewed by senior leadership. It is anticipated that employment offers will be extended to the most qualified candidates this summer. A recruit academy is currently being planned to begin in the fall.

### Master Firefighter/Captain Promotional Processes

Twenty-nine firefighters are participating in the current Master Firefighter promotional process, along with five Master Firefighters who are participating in the Captain promotional process. Candidates have completed phases 1 and 2 (written exam and reports of professional development). During the month of May, candidates will participate in written exercises, a computer-simulation incident management exercise, and an interview. The list of successful candidates is expected to be certified in June. Good luck to all candidates.

## Certifications

### NFA – Strategies and Tactics for Initial Company Operations (STICO)

Mary Shumate

### Rope Rescue II – Attendance

Roger Rozell

### NFA - Health & Safety Officer;

### NFA - Incident Safety Officer

Nathan Chapman

## Congratulations

Congratulations to Lee Davis who has resigned from the department with 5 1/2 years service. We would like to thank Lee for his service to the department and citizens and wish him the best of luck!

## Kuhn Assumes New Role

By: Ellen Davidson-Martin

On March 23, 2016, Michelle Kuhn was promoted to Financial Technician IV. She officially assumed primary responsibility for the department's financial services functions such as payroll, accounts payable, and credit card processing. Eventually, Michelle will also manage the department's entitlement funds (Fire Programs Aid to Localities and Four-for-Life).



Michelle Kuhn

The job description for the EMS Billing & Collections Liaison position (vacated by Michelle) is being updated with plans to begin recruitment as soon as possible. Michelle will train the new person on the ambulance billing responsibilities and, eventually, train him/her as backup for financial services functions.

When the City implemented the new financial system (Logos.net) in February 2015, Michelle began processing payroll with Peggy Coleman and continued in this role until Peggy retired effective January 1, 2016. Michelle was then the sole payroll processor and she has performed this function superbly. In addition, she quickly learned requisition, invoice, and credit card processing all while still performing the ambulance billing responsibilities.

I want to sincerely thank Michelle for her hard work and dedication these last few months. The next time you are at Fire Administration, stop by and congratulate Michelle! By the way, be on the lookout for her next time sheet email—many folks have commented on how much they have enjoyed and look forward to her humorous communications!



## Infant Safe Haven

By: Deputy Chief Jason Campbell

In response to recent headlines of abandoned infants across the state, the Lynchburg Fire Department and the Department of Social Services – Child Protective Services are collaborating to clarify the fire department's role for serving as Infant Safe Havens.

Virginia law allows parents to relinquish custody of an infant up to 14 days of age to the Department of Social Services, essentially with no questions asked. The law indicates that the infants may be taken to local fire stations or hospitals providing 24-hour services. The infants may also be turned over directly to Child Protective Services.

While this is certainly a sensitive public matter, we will be working to ensure the appropriate policies and procedures are established, training of all members takes place, and appropriate signage is displayed at our fire stations. Further, a carefully crafted public message will be distributed to provide an appropriate awareness of the Safe Haven locations and the laws surrounding the matter. Centra's Women and Children's Services will also be partnering with the fire department and child protective services to provide information to parents of newborns of the applicable laws and to assist in providing counseling and support services to individuals giving consideration to relinquishing custody of their newborn. For more information, contact Deputy Chief Jason Campbell.

## Relay For Life Update

By: Firefighter Natalie Darling

Our Lynchburg Fire Department team has been busy with fundraising efforts for the upcoming Lynchburg Relay For Life event, which will be held on Friday, May 20, 2016, from 7:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. at City Stadium.



Our first t-shirt order has been processed and we will continue taking orders through May 10<sup>th</sup>. We expect to have a small supply of shirts for sale at the event, available on a first-come basis...and they usually sell out quickly!

The winning ticket for our Yeti Cooler raffle was sold by Wayne Casto. The winner selected the cash option. Drawing #2 will be held shortly, and by popular demand, we will offer tickets for a third drawing.

Our "Fill The Bucket" collections will take place on May 5-6 at Wal-mart and Target areas. This was a great fundraiser last year, and we are excited about the opportunity to do this again. If you would like to join us, please contact me at 941-1899 for details. I hope that everyone will have an opportunity to participate in some way to help make this our best year yet.

## When Machines Fail

By: Rob Turner, Acting Captain of EMS

We have all been guilty of it. Relying on devices to tell us how or what our patients are doing. But when we fail to realize that those devices are fallible in their interpretation of what they detect, we lose sight of the true status of our patients and their respective conditions. For example:

EKG's display heart rates as numerical values that are determined by measuring the time between each individual, and (more importantly), consecutive "R-Wave." This measurement is taken moment by moment, in real time. When the signal is strong and the heart rhythm is consistent and regular, then this will result in a reliable and accurate visual numeric representation of the patient's actual heart rate. The problem we run into is losing situational awareness. For EKG's, the numbers that we see, and too often take for granted as accurate without question, rely on a perfectly regular heart rhythm. If the heart rhythm is not perfectly regular, then the numbers we see are inaccurate and irrelevant to the actual heart rate!

I cringe whenever I hear a provider give a Med-Com report stating that, "the patient has a heart rate of between 80 and 200." I know instantly that the provider is simply reading numbers from an electronic screen and that they have no clue as to the patient's actual heart rate; and, therefore has no insight as to the amount of work actually being performed by the patient's heart (cardiac output).

Cardiac output directly relates to end organ tissue perfusion and refers to the amount of blood actually pumped by the heart ( $\text{Stroke Volume} \times \text{Heart Rate} = \text{Cardiac Output}$ ). When an EKG measures two consecutive electrical impulses that come closer together, the device will interpret the decreased time between the individual "R-Waves" to be an increase in the actual heart rate. Conversely, if an EKG device measures two consecutive electrical impulses that come further apart, the device will interpret the increased time between the individual "R-Waves" to be a decrease in the actual heart rate. Additionally, EKG's only measure electrical impulses of the heart, NOT an actual "heartbeat" or "pulse." These electrical impulses are simply a signal that the work of pumping blood should be performed, not an indication or guarantee that such work is or even will be performed.

Nothing could be further from the truth. This inaccurate heart rate representation is totally misleading and relying on these false indicators can be potentially deadly. To determine an accurate heart RATE in patients with ANYTHING other than a perfectly regular heart rhythm/pulse we MUST physically palpate a pulse for a FULL minute. ALWAYS!!! This is the ONLY way to ensure that we fully appreciate the TRUE work being done by the heart. And only by truly and accurately appreciating the real work of the heart can we detect and ultimately intervene when there IS a problem.



## Performance Evaluations and Career Development Planning

By: Deputy Chief Jason Campbell

This year, the department will begin an initiative to improve our annual performance evaluation efforts to include additional coaching and counseling by supervisors and aligning members with career development. These efforts are ultimately designed to result in continuous excellent services to the citizens by providing direction for knowledge, skills, abilities and performance improvements. The annual evaluation components will include an opportunity for a self-assessment by each member, feedback from the member's supervisor, and assessment and planning for the member's education and training in the coming years. The educational opportunities are mapped out in a new career development path document.

Performance evaluations will also incorporate electronic signatures and electronic submission this year. Evaluations are due for completion by June 1<sup>st</sup>.

The new career development plan is a working document that is designed to match the organizational needs with professional standards. The plan will assist the organization through succession planning and training, by providing consistent management decisions regarding planning, budgeting, and approving training requests, and places professional development directly in the hands of members. The career development plan is based upon the IAFC's Officers Development Handbook; the Virginia Fire Service Occupational Development Consortium recommendations; and the Fire and EMS Higher Education Curriculum (FESHE). Final revisions to the career development plan are currently being made.

### RELATIONSHIPS

#### Organizational Success

Provide the highest quality service to the citizens and visitors

#### Succession Planning

Preparing the Department and Members for the Future

#### Performance Evaluations

Align with career objective  
Coaching support from supervisors  
Improve/expand KSAs  
Prepare for promotional opportunities

## 2016 Retirees' Social

The department's Annual Retirees' Social will be held Friday, June 3, 2016 from 10:00 a.m. to noon at Fire Administration in the Training Room. The following retirees will be recognized at the Social:

Retiree:	Date of Retirement
Miles Tranks	November 1, 2015
Gitau Muhoro	November 1, 2015
Maurice Braxton	January 1, 2016
Peggy Coleman	January 1, 2016
Charlie Cox	March 1, 2016

Les Davidson will also be recognized for his 20 years of service as the department Chaplain.

Retired Firefighter Rod Smith will have newly restored memorabilia on display. Make plans to stop by and reminisce with the department's retirees!

## ARSON

By: Fire Marshal Thomas Goode  
May 1-7, 2016

Arson happens everywhere, including Lynchburg, Virginia. It is the job of Lynchburg Fire Department shift investigators and fire marshals to identify and preserve fire scenes for evidence to be collected and submitted to one of the four forensic labs in the Commonwealth. Once submitted, the evidence is identified, preserved, secured, and documented in the event it is needed for a forensic expert to testify in court.

Arson charges are, and can be, very difficult. However, a fire investigator should be able to rule out certain causes or characteristics of certain types of fires, which can be accidental (not intentionally set), natural (lightning, acts of nature etc...) and/or undetermined (cannot be proven certain) which are all different than incendiary (a fire that is ignited whether it's unintentional or intentional).

NFPA 921 states that Arson has been identified by six (6) characteristics for motives. The motives are in accordance to The National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crimes (NCAVC) which is identified by a mischievous or malicious intent. Short and abbreviated descriptions of the six are:

1. Vandalism is considered malicious fire setting that damage property by fire. Oftentimes they are set at educational facilities and abandoned structures, but also include trash cans and grass or weeds.
2. Excitement is when enjoyment of the actual fire setting or the surrounding fire suppression efforts are being conducted and that person may simply need attention.
3. Revenge is retaliation for some real or perceived injustice (personal, societal, institutional, and group retaliation).
4. Crime Concealment is secondary to an original crime. Often times can be seen after murders and burglary concealment and destruction of records or documents.
5. Profit involves monetary or merchandise gains whether it's direct or indirect, i.e., insurance fraud, eliminating or intimidating businesses competition, extortion, removing unwanted structures, and or from escaping financial burden.
6. Extremism is committed to further a social, political, or religious cause by terrorism and/or riot/civil disturbance.

Unfortunately, the Lynchburg Fire Department (shift investigators and fire marshal personnel) have dealt with the first five of these six motives for arson. Pending the severity of the charge, it takes a lot of personnel hours and court room preparation for both the Lynchburg General District and the Lynchburg Circuit Court.

Keep in mind the actions of an arsonist are also described as three types. 1) A serial arsonist who sets fires three or more times with a cool-off period. 2) A spree arsonist mainly sets fires at separate locations; and, 3) a mass arsonist sets fires at the same location during a limited period of time. Fortunately, the Lynchburg Fire Department has only had one serial arsonist in the 21 years I've been in the department and a couple of spree arsonists who all were apprehended and charged in a court of law.

## 60 Second Safety

By: Firefighter Colby Felton

Spring is known as the season of new beginnings. Flowers are blooming, animals waking up out of hibernation and the chore of lawn maintenance.



Lawnmowers and weed-eaters are powerful tools and improper use of them can result in serious injuries such as amputations, disfigurement, sight loss, and other serious injuries. Lawn mower injuries to both adults and children can be prevented. One should follow these tips:

1. Prepare the lawn before mowing by removing debris, sticks, rocks, or any other potential flying objects.
2. Fill the gas tank outdoors when the engine is cool. Never fill the tank in a garage or shed, because of the danger of gasoline fumes. Turn off mower and let the motor cool before filling the fuel tank.
3. Gasoline is a carcinogen (cancer causing agent) and a mutagen (can cause cells to mutate). When working with gasoline, work in a ventilated area, wear gloves and wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water when you are finished (even if you wore gloves).
4. Power mowers are especially dangerous on slopes, be sure to use the rollover bar and good judgement. Push behind mowers across (not down) slopes; drive riding mowers up and down slopes.
5. Always wear protective eyewear. Earplugs and other forms of hearing protection are a good idea, but don't listen to portable music player to drown out the mower noise.
6. Tennis shoes are not suitable footwear for mowing. Wear heavy boots, ideally those with steel/composite toe so that your feet have protection.
7. Never hold a child while on a riding mower. If the child falls off but the driver remains on the mower, the automatic shut-off will not be activated.
8. Keep children in the house or in another supervised area of the yard while mowing.
9. A child should be 12 years of age to push a mower and at least 16 years of age to operate a riding mower.
10. Wear sunscreen with SPF of at least 15. It is recommended for people not to mow during the hottest point of the day (between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.).
11. Mowing can be hot and hard work, so stay hydrated with lots of water, ice tea, or lemonade.

As a reminder, while on duty at the Fire Department we are to wear long pants, boots, eye, and hearing protection while cutting grass and weed eating.

Enjoy this spring weather and always be safe.

## City Observes Memorial Day Holiday

All City offices will be closed on Monday, May 30, 2016 in observance of Memorial Day.

