



Chief's Corner

Giving Back to the Community

Welcome everyone, to the November edition of the Chief's Corner. I hope you are doing well and enjoying the fall. I know the weather for the last several weeks has been great and I hope you were able to get outside and enjoy it with family and friends.

For this month's corner, I want to take a little time to discuss the Fire Department's role in supporting the community and how we "give back." It is an important part of the department's history and something we will continue to do to strengthen our ties to the community. We have been fortunate to receive great support from City Council and the citizens of Lynchburg, so it is only right that we should support our community whenever possible. Here are just a few of the causes the Fire Department has supported over the last several years.

Fill the Boot: This is a joint venture between the department and Local 1146. Over the last three years, the efforts of the firefighters collecting funds for MDA during the "Fill the Boot" campaign have really exceeded expectations. When City Council passed the panhandling ordinance, everyone was concerned about the impact this would have on collecting donations. Members would no longer be allowed to collect "in the roadway" and visibility would decrease, thus reducing the amount collected. The Local was successful in getting permission from businesses to allow firefighters to collect on their property. This effort, along with a positive, can do attitude, actually allowed us to increase our collections. During the 2013 campaign, we collected \$30,141. In 2014, we collected a record amount of \$46,500, and in 2015 we again collected over \$32,000. This means that over the last three years our department has donated over \$108,000 to the Muscular Dystrophy Association. In addition, in cooperation with the Police Department, we also raised approximately \$9,500 for MDA from the annual Guns and Hoses softball games.

Breast Cancer Awareness: Another big project the department has been involved in over the last several years is the annual "Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign," or as it's known to some, the Pink T-shirt Campaign. In 2010, the department participated with area merchants in raising money for the cancer patient support fund. In all, over \$29,000 was raised and a check was presented to the Alan Pearson Patient Support Fund. In 2011, the Fire Department started the "Live, Fight, Dream" (LFD) campaign and sold t-shirts to support the Centra Foundation's MAAM fund (Mammograms Annually A Must). The success of this campaign has been unbelievable. Although the sale of the shirts does not occur until October, to coincide with Breast cancer Awareness Month, we start receiving inquiries about "this year's shirts" in June and July. Each year the shirts picture something that is iconic to Lynchburg or the Fire Department. In 2011, we raised approximately \$8,000 and the next year (2012) we increased to \$12,910. In 2013 and 2014

we collected \$13,000 and \$12,500, respectively. This year it looks like we will be around the same figure (\$13,000). In total, the Fire Department has raised almost \$60,000 during the Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign and donated it to the MAAM fund. When you think about it, that's quite a feat!

Relay For Life: The Fire Department has also been very supportive of other community projects, including the Lynchburg "Relay for Life." We have helped Relay for Life for over a decade and continue to raise money for this worthy cause. Over the last several years we have had a great presence at the relay and our team members have numbered over 30 each year. We have donated thousands of dollars to Relay and helped with the logistics of the event. We plan to continue with this support and help the Relay be as successful as possible.

Other Community Projects: We also contribute to a number of other great projects that don't garner the same "headlines" as the bigger events, but are no less important. The Fire Department installs hundreds of child safety seats each year for no charge. When a member of the public stops by a fire station for assistance we will check their child's seat for proper installation or provide a seat if needed. The citizens are very aware of this service and depend on the Fire Department to help keep their "little ones" safe. Speaking of safety, the department is also teaching public CPR at events around the city and the response has been very positive. I think we will be doing more of this in the future to help make our cardiac care even better than it is now.

The department has also started to assist, giving of both time and money, with the Senior Santa Project. The Fire Foundation has provided financial assistance and members of the department assisted with the delivery of gifts to our elderly citizens. It's very rewarding to see the look on the faces of these seniors when you deliver their gift and spend some time interacting with them. This is something I want to see our department continue to be involved with.

As you can see, the Fire Department is very involved with the community we serve and it is important that we continue to do so. It improves people's lives and strengthens our community as a whole. Its also just the right thing to do!

That's a wrap for this month's Chief's Corner. I hope everyone has a great holiday season. Stay safe and keep up the great work. However, never forget the most important rule: "Everyone goes home safe at the end of the shift!"

Chief

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November Anniversaries

Congratulations to the following members who celebrate anniversaries with the department in November:

31 Years

Jack Williams

28 Years

Chuck Taylor

24 Years

Fletcher Wimbush

18 Years

Rob Turner

Certifications

Introduction to Unified Command for All-Hazards Incidents

Joey Kilgore

CPS Car Seat Technician

Brandon Bergeron
Corey Douglas
Frank Fowler
Peter Keller
Chris Mabes
Aaron Reeves

Dana Bischoff
Charles Evans
Ashley Howard
Lonnie Kincaid
Joshua Mata
Joseph Watts

Structural Collapse Technician

Zach Foster

Burke Konen

Farewell

Best wishes to Jimmy Mitchell whose last day was October 27th. He has accepted a position with Centra. We wish him well in his new endeavor and thank him for his service to the department and citizens.

Reminders

City Holiday Observance

City offices will be closed November 26-27 in observance of Thanksgiving.

2015 Christmas Ornaments

LFD Christmas Ornaments are still available. They are \$10 each (\$1 extra to customize). For every ornament sold, New Life Laser Engraving will donate \$1 to the LFD Museum. The ornament depicts an old LFD logo.



To purchase, contact Tammy Sage (ext. 6341). Ornaments are available in the Chief's Office at the time of purchase.

2016 Pocket Shift Calendars

Calendars have been distributed to all fire stations for employees. If you need additional cards, contact Tammy Sage at ext. 6341 (while supplies last).

Promotions

Congratulations to the following department members who were recently promoted:



Greg Wormser
Deputy Chief of Operations

Deputy Chiefs

Battalion Chiefs Greg Wormser and Jason Campbell were promoted to the rank of Deputy Chief on October 21, 2015. Chief Wormser will serve as the Deputy Chief of Operations, while Chief Campbell will serve as the Deputy Chief of Administration.

The department members below were promoted effective November 4, 2015.

Members are invited to attend a promotional ceremony in City Council Chambers on December 2nd at 3:00 p.m.



Jason Campbell
Deputy Chief of Administration

Battalion Chiefs



Battalion Chief Sean Regan
Battalion 1 — C Shift



Battalion Chief Mike Reeves
Battalion 2 — C Shift



Battalion Chief Jonathan Wright
Training Division

Captains



Captain Matt Smith
Station 3 — B Shift



Captain Lewis Thomas
Station 5 — A Shift



Captain Todd Davis
Station 6 — C Shift

Master Firefighters



Master Firefighter Will Copes
Station 4 — A Shift



Master Firefighter Allen Marston
Station 7 — C Shift



Lynchburg Establishes Wildland Team

By: Captain Bob Mays

In July 2015, the Lynchburg Fire Department (LFD) established a Wildland Team. The mission of the Wildland Team is to utilize wildland firefighting techniques and tactics to control and/or extinguish large brush fires and urban interface. The Lynchburg Fire Department Wildland Firefighting Team consists of 25 LFD firefighters who are specially trained in Wildland Fire Fighting and Urban Interface. This team will respond to Wildland fires in our city and provide pertinent information to department members regarding how to best assist and utilize the team. In addition, the team will also provide public education on Urban Interface to citizens of Lynchburg. Utilizing funds from the Virginia Fire Programs Fund (VFPF) - Aid to Localities (ATL), the department acquired the necessary tools, gear and equipment to respond in these remote areas when needed. On October 27th, members of the Wildland Team participated in "Field Day" to obtain federal certification (pictured below).



Wildland Team Members

Bob Mays, Coordinator/Shift Leader
 John Ripley, Safety
 Kent Ferguson, Logistics
 Jonathan Wright, Logistics
 Jody Mayberry, Shift Leader
 Sean Regan, Shift Leader
 Colt Freeman, Records
 Mike Thomas
 Will Copes
 Eric Mendel
 Andrew Jenks
 Scott Hargis
 Burke Konen
 Scott Hudson
 Tim Greenway
 Steve Ripley
 Todd Styles
 Joey Kilgore
 Adam Wagner
 Jeremy Pillow
 Josh Phillips
 Roger Rozell
 Jeff DeGoede
 Sean McCleese
 Kenny Bunch

Shifting Focus From Employee Engagement to Workplace Excellence

By: Deputy Chief Jason Campbell

I'm a bit of a pack rat when it comes to leadership and management related articles, social media posts, and books. I have bookshelves full of my favorite books and a folder in my desk (and one on my computer) titled, "Good Reads." However, one of my most favorite is a report by the Peter Barron Stark Companies titled, "Beyond Engagement: 8 Proven Strategies to Workplace Excellence." The report indicates that organizations need to move beyond trying to engage employees in order to make a better organization. And the shift needs to be one creating and building workplace excellence. When an organization achieves workplace excellence, its employees are engaged and happy, which leads to even greater benefits. To assist, the report by Stark provides eight strategies used by the very best organizations to create and sustain a culture of workplace excellence.

Over the next four months, I'm committed to sharing these strategies with you as an opportunity to understand how we can work together to move our organization forward. Honestly, I believe as we achieve workplace excellence it will result in improved employee engagement and a happier and more productive workforce.

Strategy 1: A Compelling Positive Vision and Clear Goals

Our vision is "to be a leading public safety agency in the Commonwealth, providing superior services that promote life safety and minimizes property damage." I call this "The Big Picture." I believe that collectively we need to paint the picture of what the next few years look like – and what services are we required to provide; what services do the citizens want us to provide; what resources do we need to provide those services to the best of our ability. Once the picture is painted, we have to continuously go back to it and ensure we are headed in the same direction to achieve the results. Why is this so important? Because employees crave clarity! An employee interviewed for the Stark report stated that she enjoys reading mysteries, just not working in one. For our organization, the big picture comes in the form of our organization's strategic plan – a working strategic plan. Sometime between the end of the year and into the beginning of 2016, we will embark on a revision of our Department's strategic plan. We won't necessarily start with a clean canvas as we paint the next big picture, but drawing on our experiences, our internal input, and input from additional stakeholders will assist us in drafting our next strategic plan.

Strategy 2: Communicating the Right Information at the Right Time

It's hard to believe that a top complaint in many organizations is that there is not enough communication. With the volume of email that we all receive, newsletters, meetings, minutes, social media, etc., it's hard to fathom how there is a lack of communication. In the "Best of the Best" organizations that Stark described, information needs to be timely, direct, honest, and easily understood. I believe that we can make a concerted effort to eliminate some of the lag time from our organization's communication. The faster we get the information to the front lines, the better equipped employees are to make the right decision and provide extraordinary services. It's also important to understand that some of the information is not always information that all members are privy to. The most difficult of these is personnel-related matters. Unfortunately, when the communication is not flowing or can't be shared, speculation often ensues.

So, expect to hear more about our organization's positive vision and the availability of clear goals as part of a working strategic plan. And you should also expect to see an increase in communication, at the right time. Next month, I'll share information about Strategy 3: Hiring the Right Employees and Managers and Strategy 4: Accountability Counts.



Health Exchange

By: Firefighter Kenny Bunch



This month I want to introduce you to Yoga. One of the best things we can do for our bodies as we age is to take care of our joints and work on our flexibility. Weight lifting and cardio training can help build strength and endurance, but one of the best ways to increase strength and flexibility is through Yoga.

If you just concentrate on resistance training, you will build strength at the expense of flexibility. The benefits of Yoga are many and varied. In addition to increasing your flexibility, Yoga increases blood and oxygen flow to your joints, as well as increasing the suppleness of tendons and other connective tissue. Other benefits include better posture, a stronger core, and improved balance.

According to Dr. Timothy McCall, Yoga can also lower blood pressure, increase lung capacity, boost your immune system, lower stress, and help you sleep better. One of the things that is stressed in Yoga is breathing, being aware of each breath. Filling the lungs and then expelling as much air as possible will help to increase the efficiency of your breathing. Focusing on your breath also helps to center your mind, which can increase your awareness of other body systems. One of the great lessons of Yoga is that everything in the body is connected, rather than addressing each individual body system. Yoga treats your body as one system and many of the restorative benefits are overlapping. Increasing blood flow to organs, regulating adrenal glands, boosting heart rate, flushing toxins from your blood, are all added benefits of regular Yoga practice. These all work together to help lower blood pressure, regulate blood sugar, support your immune system, and reduce stress, which can result in better sleep, and a happier, more confident outlook on life.

There are many opportunities in our community to take Yoga classes; they are easier to find, more affordable, and more accepting to all comers than you may think. My first experience with Yoga was more than 15 years ago, through the downtown YMCA. At that time, Yoga was an additional expense over your monthly membership, and was mostly made up of soccer moms who didn't seem excited to share the space with males. Now, the YMCA offers several classes for different levels, at times which can suit most anyone. Plus, they no longer cost extra. There is also a class on Jefferson Street called Hot Yoga. I have not tried that class, but I can see a benefit of practicing in a warm environment; and, I've heard it is quite a workout. I would like to add, that a lot of the classes I attend have a comparable number of men and women of all ages and abilities, and they have all been very welcoming and comfortable.

As the benefits of Yoga become more widely known and accepted, so has the availability of classes. These are just a few of the classes I am aware of, I am certain that there are many more, probably within just a short drive of your home. If anyone would like more information about Yoga, or help finding a class, feel free to let me know.

Source: Yoga Journal, Aug 2007

*Happy
Thanksgiving*



60 Second Safety

By: Battalion Chief Ricky Bomar

Beware of Fallen Leaves

While many are traveling to the Blue Ridge Parkway to view the colorful foliage from seasonal changes, hidden hazards can result from fallen leaves. Personnel must remain observant for wet leaves that can cause both slip/trip and driving hazards. Fallen leaves can also hide injury-prone areas such as holes, ditches, and waterways. In some cases the area hydrant may be covered by leaves awaiting City removal.



Practice What We Preach!

By: Jennifer Mayberry

Public Education month is by far our busiest time of the year. The citizens and children really appreciate seeing the fire stations, gear, fire trucks, and getting a lesson in fire safety. We all have the words to those safety videos memorized! I have received numerous compliments on the job LFD has done this past month or so. Keep up the good work!!!

But lately, we have all started feeling that nip in the air and the leaves are changing colors. Autumn is upon us! Do we practice what we preach? I sure hope so! As the cold air approaches and we turn on our heaters, remember to keep a clear distance of three feet away from heating sources. Be sure to check all plugs to make sure prongs aren't bent and wires aren't frayed. Clean chimneys and heating ducts so nothing inside catches fire. Check gas lines for leaks before igniting the pilot light.

As Thanksgiving and Christmas approach and we begin decorating and cooking, remember to NEVER leave cooking unattended, lights on, or candles burning. Live Christmas trees should have a fresh cut at the bottom of the trunk and plenty of water. Check your wires to make sure they are working properly and aren't frayed.

I have enjoyed working with each of you over the years and want to continue to do so. Stay safe in the field and at home; so, let's practice what we preach!

Robert E. White Scholarship

The Virginia Fire Chiefs Foundation awards an annual scholarship for continuing education. The scholarship was established in 2002 in memory of Robert E White, a citizen of the Commonwealth of Virginia who donated his money towards the betterment of the Fire Service throughout the state.

The scholarship assists individuals desiring to further their academic education through a variety of opportunities such as college classes, National Fire Academy classes, VFCA events, and other Fire and EMS classes or conferences. Individual scholarship awards range from \$250 to \$1,000 and can be utilized for any direct expenses such as registration, tuition, books, meals, lodging, or transportation.

Applications for the Virginia Fire Chiefs Foundation Robert E. White Memorial Scholarship are currently being accepted. The deadline to apply is December 1, 2015. For more information, visit www.vfca.us.