

THE SECOND ALARM

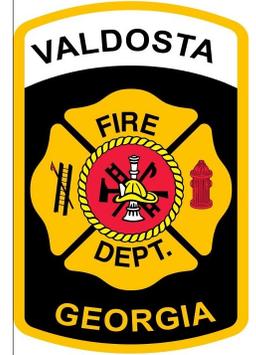
BRINGING VALUABLE RESOURCES & NEWS
ONE ALARM AT A TIME

JUNE 2014

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1



VALDOSTA FIRE
DEPARTMENT



A Department Without Limits

BIRTHDAYS:

CAPT RONALD SKRINE 6/03

FF BLAKE DAUGHERTY 6/08

SGT BLAKE WHITEHEAD 6/14

SGT JOE BRUHL 6/19

ALISA COLLINS 6/26

LT JEFFREY TALLEY 6/28

LT BARRY RICHARDSON 6/30

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Submissions to the newsletter should occur before the 20th of each month
- Feel free to submit photos with your submissions
- Interested in helping with the newsletter—contact Sgt. Shelley Miller, Editor

CHIEF'S TOPIC OF THE MONTH

I spent several days determining what to talk about this month. After participating in the “Talk of the Department” discussion sessions, I realized that “change” would be a relevant topic.

Over the last three months our department has experienced a number of changes. The Fire Service is a prideful organization that is known for traditions rather than change; however, statistics support that the average individual is not amenable to changes because they fear the unknown. It is my responsibility as the Fire Chief to effectively communicate with all employees

to eliminate the fear and hone the understanding.

“Change means movement. Movement means friction. Only in the frictionless vacuum of a nonexistent abstract world can movement or change occur without that abrasive friction of conflict”-- Unknown.

We all can agree there is no perfect world; therefore, there will be times when I have to make favorable and unfavorable decision that will create “that abrasive friction of conflict.” However, as we continue to build our foundation of trust and grow as a department, there is no doubt that change will be accepted as the



Freddie D. Broome, Fire Chief

“new norm of our tradition.” Thank you for all the support and dedication.

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY

We would like to use this section of the newsletter to welcome new members of the Valdosta Fire Department family. Births, engagements, and marriages are all welcome. Family is important and we would just like to reiterate that the Valdosta Fire Department is a family and we like to acknowledge

and take care of our own.

We'd like to welcome our new Chief, Freddie D. Broome, to the Valdosta Fire Department Family along with his son Brandon J. Trapp and daughter, Tia M. Broome.

FF Scott Garren with his wife, Lindsey Nicole Garren, and son,

Jason Scott Garren, welcomed Connor Andrew Garren into the family on April 14. Welcome, Connor, into the Valdosta Fire Department Family as well.

FF Ryan Strickland became engaged to Lisa Marie Ingram of Virginia on March 1st. Congratulations, FF Strickland, on your pending nuptials.

ATTA BOY—DONE DID GOOD

Congratulations to Sgt Doug Bennett for being selected Valdosta's Employee of the Month for May for spear-heading the work on the bathroom at Station 1 saving the city almost \$5000.

Pediatric Therapy Associates, Inc. staff thank the VFD for sharing your time and apparatus with their families. They hope you will come again during their next event.

Birmingham Fire and Rescue Service Department thanks VFD members, Lt Bennie Kennedy and Sgt Marcus Haynes for their participation in their promotional process. Birmingham Fire Chief, Ivor Brooks, says they conducted themselves with professionalism and class.

Henry Hicks of the Valdosta Water Department states that the VFD should be recognized for their outstanding

work in preventing damage to at least three other homes during the water main break on Eager Rd. Way to go B-Shift.

Kyla Ward of Behavioral Health Services commends Lt Dwight Primrose, Lt John Herpin, Sgt Eddie Coppage, FF Joe Brown, FF Theotis Johnson, FF Matthew Courson, and FF Heath Couch for participation in their mentoring program.



City of Valdosta Employee of the Month for May 2014, Sgt Doug Bennett.

EVENTS—HAPPENINGS AND GOINGS-ON

In this section, we hope to highlight the events happening in and around Valdosta. This includes events and activities sponsored by the City of Valdosta as well as any events sponsored by the organizations to which our personnel belong. For example, if you're a member of an organization that is sponsoring a BBQ plate fund raiser

then we would like to hear about it and include it in this section of the newsletter.

These events are separate, of course, from Birthdays which have their own section.

Please inform the newsletter staff as soon as possible as to any upcoming events you wish included in the newsletter. Due to the nature of the

publication, events submitted too late may not be included in the appropriate issue of the newsletter.

06June—First Friday, downtown Valdosta

16-21June—2014 GA Police and Fire Games: <http://gapoliceandfiregames.com/>

“Please inform the newsletter staff as soon as possible as to any upcoming events...”

RUMOR MILL—HAPPENINGS AND GOINGS-ON?

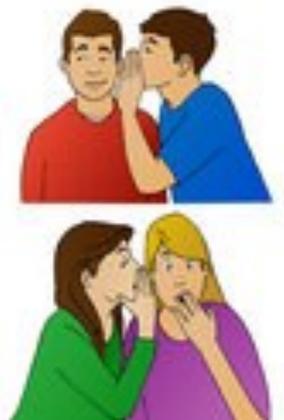
Rumor—You have to have an appointment to see Chief Broome. *False*—Chief Broome has an open door policy, and if his door is open, feel free to stop by and talk. However, if you need a large block of time, then do yourself and Chief Broome the courtesy of scheduling an appointment. This way you should have

enough time without being interrupted.

Rumor—The Accreditation Manager (AM) position will be Lieutenant level and can be used as a launch-pad to Battalion Chief. *Sorta-True*—If the person hired as the AM has the rank of Sgt or Lt before becoming AM, then a move to BC is possible if they have

the published qualifications for the position. However, a civilian or firefighter hired as AM will not be able to make the jump from AM to BC as they would not have the firefighting or supervisory experience necessary for the position.

Heard a rumor? Please send it in and see if it's for true.



EMPOWERING BUGLES—NOTES ON LEADERSHIP

Five Things Great Managers Do Every Day

When you hear the term inspirational leader, you may get images of someone who's achieved considerable success, or is a brilliant strategist able to amass a personal fortune. Or perhaps you consider someone who gives rousing motivational speeches worthy of a [TED](#) talk – an iconoclast who changes the national dialogue. While at first blush we may think of inspiring leaders as those that perform grandiose actions, more than five years of research into what really inspires others has led me to believe the opposite.

What truly inspires people is actually in reach of your average manager in any organization: a personal, authentic, one-on-one connection.

A [study](#) by Dale Carnegie Training revealed that nearly three-quarters of employees are not fully engaged at work. Of those who are, the number one factor that contributes to employee engagement is their relationship with their immediate supervisor. This mirrors what Gallup research has shown for decades – personal relationships matter the most. (In the Carnegie study, belief in senior management and pride in the company also topped the list, which is driven by similar concepts of connection and communication.)

“...nearly three-quarters of employees are not fully engaged at work.”

If you want to be a great manager who inspires others to greatness, you don't have to don a new outsized personality or break a mold. You simply have to choose to communicate, connect, and bring your full presence to those you lead.

Here are five strategies that continually come up in my research for how to be a leader others want to follow:

Be straightforward.

Trust is the gatekeeper to connection. A great manager doesn't sugarcoat bad news, evade the facts, or attempt to spin. She respects her employees enough to give them the truth, even if it's not the most palatable thing to hear on a Monday morning. Great managers inspire their team by being authentic, direct, and honest.

Not only does being honest foster trust, it also encourages an open culture that's good for business. According to a [2010 study by the Corporate Executive Board \(CEB\)](#), “firms whose culture encourages open communication outperform peers by more than 270% in terms of long-term (10 year) total shareholder return.”

A straightforward style also leads to efficiency, as it decreases rumor and misinterpretation which thwart productivity.

Exhibit leadership maturity.

“You can't just pay lip service to management decisions...”

When you get to a leadership level, you lose your ability to gripe – especially to those at lower levels. You become a representative of the company. The company's policies need to be aligned with your own personal values.

You can't just pay lip service to management decisions but must actually believe the value in what you're proposing. This means being reflective and aligning yourself behind the corporate direction, and finding a way to credibly and honestly represent it.

The opposite – so often on exhibit in companies – is a cancer. If a manager constantly complains about corporate policies, they lose followership and their employees lose hope.

EMPOWERING BUGLES—CONTINUED

Put the right people in the right jobs.

Writing about the thesis of his bestselling book, *Good to Great*, author Jim Collins [argues](#) that leaders of successful companies differentiate themselves by starting “not with where but with who. They start by getting the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus, and the right people in the right seats.”

Gallup research shows that people are happiest and most engaged when they apply their strengths to their job. Instead of changing people to fit the job, great managers try to put the right people in the jobs in which they can perform well.

Hold regular, meaningful one-to-ones.

Most managers know the importance of scheduling regular one-on-ones with direct reports – some companies even require it. Yet, these are often poorly organized, frequently rescheduled, and largely ineffective.

“Employees want a leader who stands up for them, clears a path, and makes it easier to do their jobs.”

Great managers prioritize their meetings with directs and honor the importance of that time. As Susan Scott says, “the conversation is the relationship.” Schedule one-to-ones with your direct reports weekly or biweekly and keep to your established schedule. Have a format to optimize each meeting as I discuss [here](#).

If you use these meetings well, the upfront time investment will more than pay off with increased efficiencies.

Actively manage conflict.

Successful managers don’t avoid the issues—they face them, head on.

The reality is that sometimes employees don’t work out, projects fail, turf wars launch, and tough decisions have to be made. When you’re able to successfully manage during these trying situations, you serve as a role model for your team, thereby inspiring accountability and decision making in your employees.

If you’re a manager who hates conflict, figure out how to manage it. Conflict is a constant when people are involved, and it’s simply impossible to avoid it without damaging your leadership capability. Employees want a leader who stands up for them, clears a path, and makes it easier to do their jobs. Avoiding conflict is no longer an option.

Hedges, K. (2014, May 1). *Forbes*. Retrieved May 12, 2014, from Five Things Great Managers Do Every Day: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/work-in-progress/2014/05/01/five-things-great-managers-do-every-day/>

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the inaugural edition of The Second Alarm, Valdosta Fire Department’s newsletter, with many thanks to Lt Johnny Henry for the name. The purpose of this newsletter is to disseminate information, inform you of what’s happening around the

department, and keep you “in the know”.

As many of you know, I can be quite verbose (I talk a lot), but I shall do what I can to keep my words short, sweet, and to the point. To that end, I wish you to know that it will be your

contributions that will make this newsletter a success as I hope to keep my contributions to a minimum.

Feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns about the newsletter and I shall endeavor to answer you

as quickly as possible.

Otherwise, this publication belongs to you and will be dependent upon your input to keep it going. I thank you for your time.

—Sgt Shelley A Miller, Editor