

THE SECOND ALARM

BRINGING VALUABLE RESOURCES & NEWS
ONE ALARM AT A TIME

OCTOBER 2015

THE SECOND ALARM



VALDOSTA FIRE
DEPARTMENT



A Department Without Limits

Editor:
Sgt. S A Miller

BIRTHDAYS:

LT RONALD ROE 10/01

FF TYSHON REED 10/02

LT NATHAN HUFFMASTER 10/09

LT RONALD SHOEMAKE 10/14

FF AARON LYONS 10/20

FF JOSHUA MCBRIDE 10/22

CHIEF'S TOPIC OF THE MONTH

This is a repost from our June 2014 newsletter; however, the topic is still relevant and needs to be shared again. There is no better time than now, to express the dire need of unity for our department, profession and community.

I was reading one of my daily motivational readings, when I read the following quote, "At a time when unity is so desperately needed it is significantly lacking. Misunderstandings about basic philosophical differences place people on opposite poles. Unity does not mean we will all believe in or do the same thing. It means we will agree to do something without battling over how and why."—Iyanla Vanzant.

I decided to discuss "unity" as this month's topic. I will not echo

the quote above but it reveals the challenges our department is facing. With the exception of operating on the fire scene, we are lacking unity as a department. This is not about individuals, this is about the profession we love, the community we serve and the Valdosta Fire Department. With one finger you can drag a piece of paper across the floor, with four fingers you can drag and/or push the paper further; however, with your hand you can pick the paper up and carry it anywhere. Each of our fingers and thumb represents each of our five divisions; however, we (our hand) can't operate effectively or in unison without our palm. Our palm represents the Valdosta Fire Department, at the end of the day it is our unison that defines who we are, what we do and how we do it. We are the leaders that



Freddie D. Broome, Fire Chief

will lead the department into the future; however, it is our unison that will strengthen and guide us to be "A Department without Limits." Thanks for all the support and dedication.

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Submissions to the newsletter should occur before the 20th of each month
- Feel free to submit photos with your submissions
- Have a strong opinion about a topic of concern to our fire department? Feel free to submit a piece for review and possible publication in the newsletter

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY



On September 19, 2015, Lisa Ingram wed FF Ryan Strickland and thus became an official member of the Valdosta Fire Department Family. Congratulations and welcome to the family.

SOFTBALL

Now is your chance to participate in some extra-curricular activities. The Toys for Tots tournament will be held on December 12th. Contact Sgt. Blake Whitehead or FF Jay Carter for information on how you can participate. Last year, our guys did pretty well. Join up and help them to win the whole thing this year. Good Luck!

ATTA BOY—DONE DID GOOD

The Muscular Dystrophy Association sends a big thanks to the Valdosta Fire Department for helping to raise over \$8k for local families living with muscle diseases. The money will be used to send 10 kids to MDA Summer Camp as well as other programs. The MDA sends a "big thank you to MDA Fill the Boot Coordinator Derek Willis and Chief Freddie Broome for all of their support!"

A special thanks to Cheryl Gallagher, Candice Broome, Bill Staples, and Bobby Flowers (CFA Class 1) for helping count money for our MDA Boot Drive.



Kudos to everyone who participated in the First Annual 9/11 memorial climb, including Lt. Bennie Kennedy's daughters, Tiffany and Whitney.

Todd Wilson and 175 high school students from Lowndes, Valdosta, and Valwood would like to thank Engine 4/A-Shift personnel for their participation in this year's Young Life's Annual CakeBall Tourney.

Peter D. Smith, Administrator at Open Bible Christian School, sends his thanks for participating in the Pre-School's "What I Want to Be Day." He says that we "did an excellent job of talking to [the students] and keeping their attention." He also appreciates not only our "willingness to come to the school, but especially [our] service to the city."



Ben Clary of Trademark Metals, located at 2000 W. Savannah Ave., donated \$250 to the Georgia Firefighter Burn Foundation on behalf of the Valdosta Fire Department. Thank you, Trademark Metals for your commitment to us your donation to the GFBF.

A big slap on the back to Sgt. Wade Briggs for passing his national registry test and practicals back in August, and thus becoming certified as Paramedic #13388. Congratulations on your accomplishment, Sgt. Briggs.



Congratulations to former Battalion Chief, now Assistant Chief Brian Boutwell. His promotion fills a position left vacant for over a decade here at the Valdosta Fire Department.



A hearty thank you to Police Chief Brian Childress for helping out the crew at Station 1 on truck day by personally washing Chief Broome's car. It just so happens that Chief Childress was fulfilling his part of the wager for losing the Guns and Hoses Blood Donation competition.

RUMOR MILL—HAPPENINGS AND GOINGS-ON?

Lt. Thibodeau is moving to the Fire Prevention Division. True, Lt. Thibodeau will be transferring to the Fire Prevention Division. The transfer creates one more Lieutenant and Sergeant position in the Operations Division.

Chief Broome had a choice to pick 3 Lieutenants for Tower 2 or 1 Assistant Chief position and he elected to choose the Assistant Chief to promote his "right-hand man" Chief Boutwell. False! The department did request to reclassify several positions for the Lieutenants and Assistant Chief

positions. However, the 3 Lieutenant positions never made the cut past the budget hearings to be considered as an option.

Submit your rumors via the anonymous suggestion box. Or submit them to Sgt. Miller at: smiller@valdostacity.com



EMPOWERING BUGLES—NOTES ON LEADERSHIP

Treat Promises to Yourself as Seriously as Promises to Others

By Michael E. Kibler

Successful leaders keep their promises. They take their responsibilities to others seriously, and, when necessary, they put aside their own needs for the good of the organization. As Simon Sinek put it in his bestselling book, *Leaders Eat Last*: “Leaders are the ones willing to give up something of their own for us—their time, their energy, their money, maybe even the food off their plate... Unless someone is willing to make personal sacrifices for the good of others to earn their place in the hierarchy, they aren’t really ‘alpha material.’”

In my firm’s work with and analysis of more than 1,000 senior executives around the world, we’ve found that this description is only half right. Of course leaders sacrifice aspects of their personal lives at times; that’s the price of admission in today’s competitive work environment. But those who subjugate their own personal needs for healthful diet and exercise, sleep and recreation, personal connections, professional development, cultural enrichment, and community engagement over five, ten or 20 years eventually succumb to a phenomenon we refer to as *brownout*—the graduated loss of energy, focus, and passion, which ultimately diminishes their success.

In contrast to burnout, where someone is obviously unable to function successfully, brownout is often imperceptible to outsiders—yet our observations indicate that it affects a much larger percentage of the executive population. Let me give you an example. During my first private conversation with “Steve,” the CEO of a top mid-sized law firm, he surprised me with a confession: “Mike,” he said, “I have to share something with you that I really can’t tell anyone else. I’m 39 years old and I’m running a successful firm. My client work is stimulating and challenging. I make close to a million dollars a year, and I have a wonderful wife and a five-year-old son. But I haven’t slept more than four hours a night in over three weeks. It’s been ten days since I last saw my son awake. I’m completely overwhelmed by work. We’re meeting in this conference room because my office is piled floor to ceiling with files. There is really important stuff that I know I’m not dealing with because of how fast new things come in. Sometimes it gets so bad that I find myself actually hoping I’ll have a heart attack. At least it would be an honorable way out.”

Steve was an extreme example, of course. But his story illustrates the profound stress facing leaders who focus too heavily on their responsibilities to others. After a time, the selfless behavior that made them successful in their early careers ends up impairing their long-term productivity, effectiveness, and well-being. They can find themselves becoming the highly promoted senior executives that no young professionals want to emulate. In our work, we’ve found that today’s superstar leaders supplement their commitment to focusing on others with another, equally important skill: keeping promises to themselves. What are some examples of promises you might make?

- To take care of yourself physically: exercise regularly, eat right, get enough sleep, and visit the doctor.

- To pursue activities that will help to differentiate your skill set from others.
- To spend time with your family and close friends.
- To manage your personal finances with care and attention, and with long-term objectives in mind.
- To spend time reflecting on what is most important to you in life and live and work according to your deepest values.
- To participate in a community outside work that truly matters to you.

The idea is to commit to activities that will make you feel better, increase your energy, stimulate your mind, and enrich your spirit. This isn’t self-indulgence. When you make and keep promises to self, you become a better, more fully realized version of yourself, which benefits not only you but everyone around you and your organization. You also become a true role model for those following you up the ranks.

Nice idea, you may say, but what about all my responsibilities, my crazy boss, my needy team and customers? Clients will, of course, have to adjust when they realize you are no longer available to take phone calls at every hour of the day or night. Colleagues will need to reset their expectations when they learn that you’re no longer willing to take on more projects or serve on yet another committee. But we hear from executives who have tried this tactic that key stakeholders quickly come to respect and honor their new way of living and working, since it so clearly improves their performance.

Inertia, procrastination, the power of habit, and the fear of others’ judgments can also make it difficult to make and keep promises to yourself. Clinical workaholics might find it impossible without professional psychological support. But we advise people to start by making one small but exceptionally meaningful promise to themselves—and to stick to it with 100% integrity. For example, if you decide that more time with family is most important to you, you might commit to eating dinner together at home three times a week for the next two weeks. And, if you successfully keep that promise, it should give you the confidence to try another: you might commit to walk for a half-hour every weekday, or to sharpen your presentation skills by tackling a public speaking course.

Everyone knows the customer service principle “underpromise and overdeliver.” Treat promises to yourself in the same way. Be realistic about what you can achieve and develop a plan for carrying it out.

Michael E Kibler is the founder and CEO of [Corporate Balance Concepts, Inc.](#) and the creator of the Pinnacle Program – a holistic executive coaching and development program designed for sustainable high performance.

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