

# THE SECOND ALARM

BRINGING VALUABLE RESOURCES & NEWS  
ONE ALARM AT A TIME

FEBRUARY 2015

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 9



VALDOSTA FIRE  
DEPARTMENT

## A Department Without Limits

Editor:  
Sgt. S A Miller



### BIRTHDAYS:

**SGT JORDAN WASHINGTON** 02/03

**SGT LAMONT WILLIAMS** 02/05

**SGT MORGAN HENDLEY** 02/09

**LT CHAD ROE** 02/11

**BC JASON ROWAN** 02/11

**SGT DOUGLAS BENNETT** 02/14

**FF RYAN STRICKLAND** 02/14

**FF WILLIAM "JAY" CARTER** 02/16

**FF SHANNON FOWLER** 02/17

**FF CARLTON COUCH** 02/18

**FF ROGER CHASTAIN** 02/23

**FF LLOYD CUMMINGS** 02/24

### POINTS OF INTEREST

- 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

### CHIEF'S TOPIC OF THE MONTH

I spend a lot of time each month analyzing our department and thinking of a topic that I feel is relevant for the month. After reading the following inspirational quote by Iyanla Vanzant, I felt compelled to talk about responsibility and change this month.

Ms. Vanzant notes that "one of our greatest challenges in creating a joyful, peaceful and abundant life is taking responsibility for what you do and how you do it. As long as you can blame someone else, be angry with someone else, point the finger at someone else, you are not taking re-

sponsibility for your life"- Iyanla Vanzant.

As I come upon the completion of my first year as chief, I have come to realize that it is time to stop blaming each other for things that happened in the past. As a department, it's time that we take responsibility for our attitudes, our job performances, our professionalism and our careers. Ghandi reminds us to "be the change you want to see in this world." As we continue our quest to be a "department without limits" we must start by taking responsibility and be the



Freddie D. Broome, Fire Chief

change you want to see in your life and in our department. Thank you for your hard work and support.

### RUMOR MILL—HAPPENINGS AND GOINGS-ON?

**B-shift is trying to eliminate Holiday Leave time. False.** Fire Administration is working with HR to find a formula for incurring holiday leave time so all shifts are operating consistently in accordance with City policies. The department's overall goal is to have the holiday leave time hours available on each paycheck.

**Is it true that Captain Gallagher is moving to the airport?** The department is reviewing several options and considered assigning airport

personnel to work under Capt. Gallagher. At this time, the department is considering moving the VFD duties and responsibilities for the Airport Fire & Rescue Station from the Operation's Division to the Support Services Division. No final decision has been made.

**Chief Broome is holding off on promoting the Lieutenant position to allow someone to get the position by default. 100% False.** The department recently had a thorough Fire Marshal and Battalion

Chief Process; which required months of planning. I'm currently in the process of planning the promotional process for the Lieutenant and Sergeant ranks. The Department will follow SOG #104 (Promotional Procedures) to ensure an equitable process. All promotions will be earned. In accordance with the City of Valdosta Personnel Policies and Procedures (2008) there is no mention of a promotion by default or due to working in the capacity for 1 (one) year.

## ATTA BOY—DONE DID GOOD



Lt. Henry has received the Elk's Public Service Finalist of the Year Award. The Elks recognize area residents who have demonstrated extraordinary commitment in their particular field of employment or volunteerism.

Susan Boone, Admissions Director, and Pat Osterhout, Administrator, both of Parkwood Developmental Center on Lee Street, thank the Valdosta Fire Department for their participation in the Mayor's Motorcade. They state that their "clients are very near and dear to [their] hearts and [we] helped make their Christmas a little brighter."

A big thank you to the Valdosta Fire Department for the work we do with the WG Nunn CPIE program. We have made a huge impact on the students we have worked with, specifically, at least six students in Mrs. Koenig's class alone. Those six students have raised their reading scores by a combined 189 points tests that monitor their reading progress. This increase would not have been possible without our one-on-one work with the students.



Congratulations to the new Battalion Chiefs: BC Ron Skrine, BC Brian Boutwell, and BC Jason Rowan. All three Captains received their new titles and began work as Battalion Chiefs on Monday, January 19th, 2015. BC Skrine and BC Boutwell are the new administrative Battalion Chiefs while BC Rowan is the new operations Battalion Chief on C-Shift.

## WELCOME TO THE FAMILY



We would like to take a moment and welcome our newest member to the Valdosta Fire Department family, Capt. James Clinkscales, for those of you that have not met him yet. We'd like for you to welcome him aboard when you do meet him.

Capt. Clinkscales comes to us with a great wealth of knowledge and experience in

dealing with fire prevention and fire safety education. When Capt. Clinkscales was asked what part of fire prevention he found most enjoyable, he stated that he loved all aspects of the job, from dealing with business owners about questions and concerns with code issues to ensure the safety for all of their patrons, to education in schools, daycares, nursing homes, and local industries.

Fire investigations are also a part of the job that Capt. Clinkscales says he enjoys very much, and that it is not always about the win-lose ratio, but it's about providing help and the right services to the individuals that need it. Investigations, for Capt. Clinkscales, are like putting all the pieces to a puzzle together to get the overall picture, and when everything fits, it gives him a feeling of satisfaction and greater understanding.

Capt. Clinkscales has been in the prevention division for about 10 of his almost 26 years in the fire service. He says that he can

still remember being a firefighter who, on his off days and without any extra pay, brought a reserve fire department engine to a couple of local schools and began teaching the kids about fire safety. By the following school year, Capt. Clinkscales began teaching the kids about fire safety in all twelve elementary schools in the city and county without his department having a single Fire Safety Educator at the time. The fire safety education he performed also lead Capt. Clinkscales to become a mentor for troubled young boys from the elementary and middle schools. "Most departments are getting away from fire safety education," says Capt. Clinkscales, "but as I have seen in the past, education is an ongoing process. Education constantly changes, people continuously change, and fire safety is a never-ending process. We will always have a new and younger generation to teach."

One of Capt. Clinkscales goals for the Valdosta Fire Prevention Department is to create and develop new and exciting programs that will put the Valdosta Fire Department on the cutting edge of fire safety education. He would also like to see the Valdosta Fire Department become more of a main stay in the community, volunteering for more events, and assisting the citizens of Valdosta. "I would love the people of Valdosta to know that their Fire Department is here and willing to serve and be a big part of the community, today and for days to come," stated Capt. Clinkscales. One of Capt. Clinkscales' mottos that he learned early in life from a close family member is "when you become a part of a community, you need to work to make that place a better place, and make it a better place for the future."

## EVENTS—SPECIAL DWTS EDITION

Chief Broome has agreed to participate in the local "Dancing with the Stars" on April 11, 2015. The event is sponsored by the Music Scholarship Alliance of Valdosta State University (VSU). The purpose of this organization is to support the VSU Music Department. This organization shall provide financial and volunteer support for the

department and provide 100% funding for music scholarships. The organization is a non-profit organization, and no part of the net earnings will be used to the benefit of any individual.

Please visit the following website to learn more about the VSU Department of Theatre and Dance Scholarship Fund Raisers

<http://www.valdosta.edu/colleges/arts/communication-arts/theatre-and-dance/events/scholarship-fund-raisers.php>

You can make a donation at the following website: <http://www.gofundme.com/DancingwithStars> to support Chief Broome. I will keep the website updated with photos and videos leading up to the final event.

## EMPOWERING BUGLES—NOTES ON LEADERSHIP

### Are You a Manager or a Leader?

By Stacey Alcorn

Over the past 15 years of building my real estate business, I've come to learn there's a huge difference between managers and [leaders](#). Too often these words are used interchangeably. I've seen managers who are, in fact, leaders and so-called business leaders who are really nothing more than managers.

The nuances in meaning are slight, but the business results produced by the two are drastically different. If you search online for the definition of a [manager](#), Google defines it as "a person responsible for controlling or administering all or part of a company or similar organization."

A leader is simply someone who leads.

A manager controls. A leader leads.

It has been my experience that the companies that make a dent in the universe are the ones that are led not controlled by people.

Are you a manager or a leader? Here are four simple ways to find out:

#### 1. Being open to new ideas.

I will admit that there have been times in my career when I have actually caught myself saying, "That's the way it's always been done" to someone. When I do, I know I am trying to control not lead.

When employees or customers challenge the status quo of the way your organization does things, this is an opportune time to let them lead.

Your employees and customers have great ideas, ones that can make your company better. Instead of always saying or thinking, "We do it this way because that's the way we've always done it," challenge yourself to stop controlling the situation and let someone else have a stab at making the company better.

#### 2. Viewing the competition to learn from it.

"Our competitors are awful," a manager might say. If you're thinking or saying that the competitors are awful, you're a manager. Managers like to control things and one thing they can't control in business is the competition.

A leader, on the other hand sees that competition can make a company stronger. Leaders pay attention to what the

competition is doing right and what rivals are doing wrong, so that they can learn new and better ways to build their own business.

Leaders realize that the competition is not awful. It's just different. When explaining their company's value proposition, leaders can eloquently detail how the competition's value proposition differs from their own, without saying anything negative about the other company.

#### 3. Embracing the input of staff.

Managers don't ask others for their opinion because by doing so, control is lost. Leaders love using technology like the online-polling tool [Survey Monkey](#) so they can poll team members for ideas and advice about everything.

I learned this the hard way. I used to control and manage everything in my business from the planning of events to the training and marketing. When you start to see low attendance at your events and training or find that few are embracing your new ideas, it's time to start asking for help.

I survey members of my team about everything, including what training to offer, how the marketing should look and when and where to host events. By doing this, I get a consensus about what's important to them.

When people are engaged in the decision-making process, they are more likely to embrace whatever organizational endeavors the leader is working on. Even if you have some staffers who don't agree with the final decision, they appreciate having been asked their opinion, which means they're more likely to embrace the initiative even if they don't agree with it.

#### 4. Not needing the final word.

Managers like control and one of the ways they retain it is by analyzing most decision-making processes with an assumption that they are right most of the time.

Leaders approach things from a different viewpoint, one in which the assumption is that they don't have all the answers and the best way to find the best answers is through collaboration with others on the team.

Stacey Alcorn is CEO of Boston-based [Laer Realty Partners](#). She owns and operates several businesses in the Boston area including a consulting firm, a law firm and a fashion line. She is the author of *REACH! – Dream, Stretch, Achieve, Influence*.

## EVENTS—HAPPENINGS AND GOINGS-ON

02Feb—Ground Hog Day

06Feb—1700-2000hrs Art Walk, Downtown Valdosta

06Feb—1830-2130hrs First Friday, Downtown Valdosta

13Feb—0930hrs Promotion Ceremony, Valdosta City Hall Annex Multi-Purpose Room

14Feb—1000-1200hrs Recruit School Family Orientation and Welcoming program

19Feb—1000hrs Arbor Day Celebration, VSU University Center Theatre, Celebrate Valdosta's 29th consecutive Tree City, USA designation.

If your church, club, or organi-

zation has a special event that they want the Valdosta Fire Department members to know about, please send that information to the editor by the 18th of each month.