

THE SECOND ALARM

BRINGING VALUABLE RESOURCES & NEWS
ONE ALARM AT A TIME

FEBRUARY 2016

THE SECOND ALARM



VALDOSTA FIRE
DEPARTMENT

A Department Without Limits

Editor:
Sgt. S A Miller



BIRTHDAYS:

FF DARYL LEV- 02/03
ER

SGT JORDAN 02/03
WASHINGTON

SGT LAMONT 02/05
WILLIAMS

LT CHAD ROE 02/11

BC JASON RO- 02/11
WAN

SGT DOUGLAS 02/14
BENNETT

FF RYAN 02/14
STRICKLAND

FF WILLIAM 02/16
CARTER

FF CARLTON 02/18
COUCH

FF ROGER 02/23
CHASTAIN

FF LLOYD CUM- 02/24
MINGS

CHIEF'S TOPIC OF THE MONTH

Edmond Mbiaka once said, "At first, some friends who are actually 'unfriendly friends,' would laugh at your faith in succeeding with your dream, because they would judge you based on your past failures and mistakes. But later on, they would become very jealous when they start to notice that you are succeeding in an extraordinary way, and continuously proving them wrong." It is hard to believe that after all of the great things we have accomplished as a department we still have doubters. As the Chief of the department, I can't apologize for requiring and expecting more out of myself, my administration or our department. Remember, "It's not as important to accomplish every goal as it is to have goals in place to accomplish" (unknown). As a department we have set and accomplished several enormous goals. I have a special request for

everyone to join me in congratulating yourselves on an outstanding job over the past two years. Our success would not have been accomplished if it was not for the supporters and hard-working employees in our department. I can't thank you enough! I must admit, I am proud to work for the Valdosta Fire Department and I know that majority of our employees in the department are too. Therefore, it's ok to let the doubters know, this is only the beginning for our organization, so they can start planning to doubt some more. We will continue to make great strides and be recognized as one of the top Fire Department's in the nation. Please remember some are going to continue to be in their feelings as the doubters are going to doubt, the haters are going to hate,



Freddie D. Broome, Fire Chief

and the complainers are going to complain but in the words of an NFL Star, "I wish they had Band-Aids for feelings." Thanks again for your hard work, support and dedication to the Valdosta Fire Department, "A Department without Limits."

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Submissions to the newsletter should occur before the 20th of each month
- Feel free to submit photos with your submissions



The 20th of January brought two new editions to the Valdosta Fire Department Family. To the left is Maxwell Lee Manus, son of FF TJ and Rachel Manus (TJ pictured with Maxwell). To the right is Bryce Rayne Lyons, son of FF Aaron "Jake" Lyons and Angel Thornton. Welcome to the family guys, and welcome to the world.



ATTA BOY—DONE DID GOOD

Thanks to Tina Riggins, a participant in the Citizens' Fire Academy, for honoring the Valdosta Fire Department by planting a tree in one of our National Forests.

Congratulations to the city of Valdosta and the Valdosta Fire Department come from many folks for our recent announcement about receiving a new ISO ranking of 1: Marvin Riggins, Fire Chief of Macon/Bibb County (also thanks for help in their assessment); Carolyn S. Burgess, a City of Valdosta Budget Analyst; Chris Bowman, Fire Rescue Chief, CFO, City of Thomasville; Mike Terrell, Chief Remerton Police Dept.; Tim Riddle, CFE, General Manager of James H. Rainwater Conference Center; Mike Byrd, Deputy Chief and Fire Station Manager at the Georgia Fire Academy; Joey Fowler, Chief Tift County Fire Dept.

Heartfelt gratitude from the Reed Family for our support after the passing of FF Reed's father. "We are grateful to be a part of [the Valdosta Fire Department] family."

Parkwood Developmental Center Administrator, Pat Osterhout, and Admissions Director, Susan Boone, send their thanks to the Valdosta Fire Department for our participation in the Mayor's Motorcade. They said that we "helped to make [the Parkwood clients'] Christmas a little brighter" and that the Mayor's Motorcade is a "wonderful program".

Sarah Brooks, Lowndes County 4H Secretary and Teen Leader, states that we are "real MVPs!" for "giving up [our] Saturday to help [the 4H] in our main fundraiser!" She is sure that our presence increased attendance for the event.

A big thank you to FF Darren Williams for his work at the Valdosta Regional Training Center, extending the handicap ramp amongst other things.

Chief Shane E. Hill, Putnam County Fire-Rescue, commends Assistant Chief, Brian Boutwell, and Battalion Chiefs, Ronald Skrine and Johnny Henry, for presenting themselves "in the most authentically professional manner" and for demonstrating "genuine care and concern" in assisting their fellow firefighters

by spending extra time after class sharing knowledge and offering guidance. States Chief Hill, "It has been my experience that we often hear when our staff act in an unbecoming manner. I certainly didn't want to miss an opportunity to commend when commendation was justified. Just wanted to share this with you and congratulate you on having the right people in the right places."

Kudos to LT John Herpin and Sgt. Caron Wright for making great suggestions to show our appreciation to the Valdosta Police Department. LT Herpin suggested the blue magnetic strips and Sgt. Wright suggested the blue light bulbs.

Citizens' Fire Academy participant Tefe Stone has praise for the Valdosta Fire Department and two personnel in particular in a note to Chief Broome:

- "Good morning Chief, I just wanted to say that you have an awesome, kind team of Firefighters. I was blessed by two of them. Firefighters Mercer blessed me at the Christmas party with the free One Night get away gift that he won. I was so grateful for his kindness because I felt that he definitely deserved it more than I did. I also had the pleasure of running into firefighter Davasio Johnson on Saturday at Bojangles and he was on his motorcycle getting ready to do Toys for Tots and there was this little boy who was fascinated with his motorcycle and his mom was taking his picture next to the motorcycle and Firefighter Johnson stopped eating his breakfast to go outside and let the boy take a picture sitting on his motorcycle. The smile on that child's face was priceless. Sometimes it's the small things we do that is a blessing to others. Kudos to all the Firefighters and thanks for being our heroes!"

LT Justin Ply has two items that made him feel proud to be a member of the Valdosta Fire Department:

- Tonight Engine 4 responded to the movie theater parking lot for a vehicle leaking gas. Once the owner of

the vehicle showed up he was very distraught. When Lt. Primrose told him that the vehicle would have to be towed he got upset about the money. The tow truck showed up and told him it would be \$140 to tow the vehicle to Stockton. The man became very upset and stated he could not afford the tow bill. Lt. Primrose told the man that he would cover the tow bill for him as a gift. Once he told him that the man started crying and insisted that he not do that. After a lengthy discussion he agreed to the deal. While they were talking Sgt. Niehanke and VPD Officer Findlay also offered up money for the cause. The wrecker driver then dropped the tow bill to \$75.00 once he saw the guys helping the man out. The wrecker bill was taken care of due to kindness of others in a time of need. This is another proud moment at the VFD.

- An incident that occurred today made me very proud of three of our members. While picking up lunch today at Michael's deli. Sgt. Alderman, FF. Cothron and FF Dickson were approached by an elderly gentleman. While they were sitting at the table waiting on their take out order the gentleman put three crisp \$50.00 bills on the table, one for each of them. He then said "here you guys go something for each of you that you deserve". All three of our members politely refused the offer and thanked the gentleman for the kind gesture. He then picked up the money and went on about his business. This to me was a true test of their professionalism and they didn't give in. Fifty dollars was a mighty big offer for these men to turn down during the holiday season. I just wanted to let you know what happened and to say I am very proud of proud of them.

Congratulations to LT Carolyn McMillan and FF Chris "Ricky Bobby" Scott for being selected as Employee(s) of the Month for the City of Valdosta. While riding clinicals, LT McMillan and FF Scott assisted SGMC EMS with saving a citizens life utilizing their newly acquired skills from EMT class.

EMPOWERING BUGLES—NOTES ON LEADERSHIP

The Humble Leader Paradox

By Ken Downer

How does a humble leader lead without becoming a door mat?

I believe the Servant-Leader mindset is the best sustainable approach to leadership. But if you are not careful, it is easy to fall into the idea that to lead, you are supposed to be running around doing everything you can to make everybody happy.

But are you really going to be a better leader if you are always playing coffee boy or gopher girl when someone on your team has a whim? In this post, we'll look at this "Humble Leader Paradox" and give you a guide you can use to sort out the confusion.

The Humble Leader Paradox

There's no shortage of commentary on blogs and in book about how a good leader is a humble leader. In his ground-breaking book Good to Great, Jim Collins found that the leaders of the very few greatest companies were without exception very humble men.

They were remarkable in that they were unremarkable. One such man Collins described variously as mild-mannered, lacking in pretense, and awkwardly shy. But how does someone who is humble lead anything, much less a wildly successful multi-million dollar corporation?

The dictionary doesn't seem to help much. The Free Dictionary defines humility as "having a modest opinion of one's own importance or rank; meekness."

Yet it defines a leader as "a person who rules, guides, or inspires others; head."

How can you reconcile the two?

The Level 5 Leader

One clue comes from Collins' other finding about the leaders of the great companies: they were professionally willful. They zealously and intensively focused on making their organizations the best that they could be. They were willing to do almost anything to ensure the success of the organization.

They didn't care about getting personal credit when things went right. They weren't boastful. They shunned the spotlight. They were calm, understated people. Many of them lacked the personal charm or charisma you might expect of someone operating at their high levels.

If you didn't know better, you would say they were meek.

They were anything but. The difference is that they were humble about themselves, but passionate about the organization they led.

Any personal ambition they had they channeled into the long term vitality of the organization. Success to them was organizational success. It didn't matter whether or not they got credit so long as the organization improved, achieved its goals, realized its vision.

"They were remarkable in that they were unremarkable."

Humble, Yes; Meek – No

It boils down to the idea that the concept of meekness as a part of humility has to go.

You can be humble in the sense that the focus is on others, on the organization.

And you can be quiet, understated, even shun attention.

But when it comes to the interests of the organization, you cannot be meek. You have to be assertive.

"...as the leader you need to step up quickly and assert your influence for the good of the organization."

Stuart Taylor calls this characteristic "Assertive Humility" and defines it as "Courageous value-based behavior for the greater good."

What drives you to be assertive are your underlying values and the values and interests of the organization. You act to ensure long term organizational survival and the well-being of its members.

Putting it into Practice

OK, so values and organizational survival are good ideas, but what does that look like on the ground on a daily basis?

At the risk of leaving something out, the following lists may help you get an idea of when to be humble, and when you might need to be assertive.

Be humble when:

- You feel someone offended you (does it really matter?)
- Your ego took a hit
- You need to admit a mistake
- When the team succeeds (pass credit to those who deserve it!)
- When the team fails (accept the blame as the leader)
- When trying to build consensus
- When getting input and ideas from teammates
- When accepting well-intended constructive feedback (some call this criticism)

In some circumstances, as the leader you need to step up quickly and assert your influence for the good of the organization. Be assertive when:

- Safety is an issue
- Any teammate is being disrespected
- If someone violates team standards or agreed upon norms

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EMPOWERING BUGLES—CONTINUED

- People aren't doing their job
- People act in ways that pull the organization farther from its vision
- It's time to make a decision
- Making sure the actions of the team contribute directly to the vision.

Getting Assertive

If you have to assert yourself, there is no need to suddenly become Mr. Hyde or pull out the Drill Sergeant routine. You can be assertive with quiet authority. In fact it is usually better that way.

The keys here are to focus on the problem behavior, point out why it hurts the team and impacts the vision, and come to agreement on what they will do to change. Always keep the focus on the organization and the vision. More detail on this idea here.

“People act in ways that pull the organization farther from its vision”

“...you are not above self-improvement...”

The Takeaway

Humility in a leader is good. As John Maxwell says, it means you are confident and don't need to draw attention to yourself, you are willing to let your work speak for itself, you are not above self-improvement, and you value the contributions of others.

But there are times when assertiveness in a leader is required. To protect the interests of the organization in its pursuit of the vision, you need to be focused and ready to step forward and take action. To do less is to fail to lead.

So be humble, yes. But be assertively also.

Reprinted from: <http://www.rapidstartleadership.com/the-humble-leader-paradox/>

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY-MEET THE RECRUITS EDITION

Here are the newest recruits to the Valdosta Fire Department who started way back in the end of December 2015. Some of you had an opportunity to meet them already and I only interacted with them briefly. Thanks to FF Matt Davis, I had the recruits answer a few generic questions so that we might get to know them a bit better before meeting any of them face to face. Upon reviewing the answers they gave, I decided that it would be best to get to know them on an individual basis and I will let them tell their own stories when you finally get to meet them. So here they are, pictured below, to give you a heads up as to their names when you finally meet.



Austin Williams from Valdosta, GA.



David Heeter from Crawfordville, FL.



Nick Bishop from Thomasville, GA.



Connor Bennett from Monticello, FL.



David Jones from West Palm Beach, FL.



Steve Walker from Valdosta, GA.