

THE SECOND ALARM

BRINGING VALUABLE RESOURCES & NEWS
ONE ALARM AT A TIME

JULY 2016

THE SECOND ALARM



VALDOSTA FIRE
DEPARTMENT



Editor:
Sgt. S A Miller

A Department Without Limits

BIRTHDAYS:

LT CAROLYN MCMILLAN 07/08

FF DAVID JONES 07/11

FF DAVID HEETER 07/13

SGT WADE BRIGGS 07/14

SGT CHARLES TATCH 07/26

LT JUSTIN PLY 07/28

FF TANGELA ROWE 07/29

AC BRIAN BOUTWELL 07/30

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

CHIEF'S TOPIC OF THE MONTH

I recently read a metaphorical story on Facebook by an unknown author. The story reads:

An elephant and a dog became pregnant at the same time. Three months down the line the dog gave birth to six puppies and six months later gave birth to six more puppies.

On the eighteenth month the dog approached the elephant and asked the following question, "Are you sure that you are pregnant? We became pregnant on the same date and I have given birth two times to a dozen puppies and they are now growing into big dogs."

The elephant replied, "There is something I want you to understand. What I am carrying is not a puppy but an elephant. I only give

birth once every two years. When my baby hits the ground, the earth feels it. When my baby crosses the road, human beings stop and watch in admiration because what I carry draws attention. So what I'm carrying is mighty and great!"

The moral to the story is, Don't lose faith when you see others received answers to their prayers. Don't be envious of others testimony. If you haven't received your own blessing, don't despair. Say to yourself, "My time is coming, and when it hits the surface of the earth, people shall yield in admirations." Stay encouraged by knowing that when things are meant to hap-



Freddie D. Broome, Fire Chief

pen it will happen and remember that some things require patience and the self-discipline to maintain faith.

Thank you for your support and commitment to the Valdosta Fire Department.

CAREHERE-JULY IS SKIN CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Did you know sunscreen alone is not enough to prevent skin cancer? Per the Skin Cancer Foundation (skincancer.org), you should also:

- Seek the shade, especially between 10 AM and 4 PM.
- Do not burn.
- Avoid tanning and UV tanning beds.

• Cover up with clothing, including a broad-brimmed hat and UV-blocking sunglasses.

• Use a broad spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen with an SPF 15 or higher every day. For extended outdoor activity, use a water-resistant, broad spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen with an SPF 30 or higher.

-Continued Page 4-

ATTA BOY—DONE DID GOOD



Southside Rec Center wanted to give a special thanks to BC Jason Rowan, Lt. Caron Wright, Sgt. Ryan Strickland, and FF Joshua McBride for helping rejuvenate their swimming pool.

Chief Broome sends a special thanks to the personnel who assisted in making the Valdosta Fire Department's hiring process a success on Saturday, June 11th: A-Shift personnel, Sgt. Ricky Alderman, Capt. James Clinkscales, FF Matt Davis, BC Johnny Henry, FF Vincent Houston, Lt. Bennie Kennedy, Lt. Keith Niehanke, Lt. Barry Richardson, FF Tangela Rowe, BC Ronald Skrine, Capt. Carl Smith, Lt. Jeffrey Thibodeau, Sgt. Scott Watson, Ursula Antley-Williams, Lt. Derick Willis, FF Lloyd Cummings, and FF David Jones.

Chief Broome commends Lt. Chad Roe, Lt. Caron Wright, and FF David Heeter for their quick response to ensuring that the Valdosta Fire Department is properly staffing our stations on June 12th.

Lisa McAleer, Project Manager for VALOR GIS, sends her "heartfelt thanks to the men and women of Station 1 for giving me a send-off to remember! My trip to the top of the city in the aerial platform and my ride in

the Special Operations vehicle are experiences I'll remember forever. I'm honored to have served such a talented, dedicated, and gracious group of people. Thank you all so very much for sharing your time and department with me the morning of April 22nd and for the last several years."

The faculty and staff of Scintilla Charter Academy sends their thanks for bringing a fire truck to their first field day. "The kids loved meeting the firefighters and seeing the truck up close. It was a great addition to our day and we cannot thank you enough!"

Rhonda Wheeler, County Director for the Lowndes County Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS), sends her thanks to the Valdosta Fire Department for sending personnel and a fire truck to attend the Lowndes County Foster Parent Appreciation Day at the Gathering on May 7, 2016. She says that the fire truck was one of the best activities the children that day and that our personnel were professional and interacted well with all of the children in attendance. She especially wanted to thank the firefighters who attended, Lt. Troy Thomas, Sgt. Jordan Washington, and FF Ken Taylor.

Beverly Blake says, "THANKS for your

support of the 24th Annual Juneteenth Celebration!!! The kids – and some parents – enjoyed the Fire Engine AND the Fire House!"

Samantha Thereasa to the Valdosta Fire Department (via Facebook): I want to thank the Valdosta Fire Department for helping my parents yesterday. They broke down on an exit ramp in town, blocking a lane. A fireman pushed their car (with a trailer) to safety, and another one helped my mom cross the street with two dogs. They are amazed by the hospitality Valdosta has shown them. We can't thank you enough.

It's hot out there. Remember to hydrate before, during, and after your shift. Watch out for and take care of each other.

EMPOWERING BUGLES—NOTES ON LEADERSHIP

Younger and Wiser

By Sally Helgesen

Finding a mentor can be a fraught affair, both for would-be mentors and aspiring mentees. If you're prime mentor material, someone who holds a senior position and commands respect, chances are you're inundated with requests. And if you were to accept half the mentor requests you receive, you would barely be able get your work done. As one senior female executive I know lamented, "Every time I step out of my office, I'm practically ambushed with requests." In Lean In, Facebook chief operating officer Sheryl Sandberg reported being similarly crushed.

The imbalance between supply and demand gives rise to another set of problems. Since the most prestigious mentors are probably oversubscribed, you may feel foolish pestering people with your entreaties. Being rejected can make you feel as if you've signed up for a bad dating service, with the added indignity of having to encounter the person who rejected you on a regular basis. And yet every time you turn around, someone's thrusting research (pdf) in your face showing that people who succeed are those who have managed to engage the right mentors. So the quest to find the perfect mentor remains at the top of your inexhaustible to-do list, causing perpetual low-grade worry.

Organizations often try to address the mentor gap by instituting formal programs. While these can be helpful, effective mentoring thrives on chemistry, which is hard to mandate and does not necessarily respond to assignment. It can work but it can also feel generic, awkward, and dutiful.

There has to be another way.

Paul Smurl may have found one. After working as an attorney and management consultant, Smurl held a range of positions managing online products, strategies, and subscriptions for the New York Times for nearly 12 years. He ascended to the role of acting head of digital in 2014. In 2015, Smurl surprised colleagues by leaving to take a position as president and COO of Some Spider, an Internet publisher founded by e-commerce star Vinit Bharara. Some Spider owns the popular parenting site Scary Mommy and has restarted the topical satirical site Cafe.

After making this gutsy move, Smurl knew that breakthrough success would require new skills, fresh insights, and an expanded way of viewing the world. The Some Spider demographic skews fairly young, which meant that Smurl, nearing fifty and married with children, needed to sharpen his understanding of the next generation's media habits.

"It goes beyond technical proficiency," he says. "I can use and consume Snapchat and Yik Yak but I don't naturally live there." The challenge he faces when it comes to new messaging technologies isn't technical — it's strategic. Everyone in the media business has

to be able to grasp the implications of how communications is evolving.

So, like anyone looking to up his or her game, Smurl needed a mentor. He ended up turning to Kareem Rahma, a former colleague from the Times who had worked in audience development.

"Prestige shouldn't be the marker that determines a mentor's potential value..."

Kareem is now CEO of Nameless.tv, a social media startup that offers original video content along with chat functionality. A 2008 graduate of the University of Minnesota, he is also decades younger than Smurl.

The relationship started when Smurl asked Rahma out to dinner, not to "pick his brain" — a request that makes most of us shudder — but rather to exchange ideas. Their conversation proved rich and helpful to Smurl and they began meeting regularly. "I didn't so much need

advice as I needed context," Smurl says. "Kareem helped me get it." He's explicit about considering Kareem to be a mentor.

"For example, the other night we got together and he was telling me how his users have begun exchanging content with messaging tools, like Facebook Messenger, instead of broadcast tools that post to your whole network like Facebook," he says. After they talked at length about the implications of this shift from broad to narrowcasting, Smurl decided to start testing messaging applications at Some Spider.

Prestige shouldn't be the marker that determines a mentor's potential value. Rather, people should simply consider "what can help."

Based on his experience, Smurl advocates engaging younger mentors. Prestige shouldn't be the marker that determines a mentor's potential value, he says; rather, people should consider "what can help." Of course, having a mix of mentors is ideal. In addition to offering lessons in management and in life, older mentors tend to have long-standing relationships that can be helpful. But given the extraordinary four-generation range of people in organizations today, from 20-something millennials to 70-year-old matures, and the fact that digital natives possess a bred-in-the-bones feel for how technology is driving change, there can be real value in thinking outside the age-frame box.

How can you make December–May mentorship relationships work? Smurl has three suggestions for those intrigued by this route.

1. Be self-aware. "Start by taking an honest audit of your strengths and weaknesses and decide what you need to work on," Smurl says. "I knew I needed to understand emerging media from the perspective of an engaged and passionate user, so I looked for someone who really was."

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EMPOWERING BUGLES—CONTINUED

2. Don't take a transactional approach. "Being a good mentee is basically Human Relations 101," Smurl says. "You need to be interested in the other person." In his experience, most mentoring relationships fail because the mentee sees the mentor as a means to an end -- it's all about advancing his or her own career. Such an approach does little to foster the easy give and take that fruitful engagement requires.

"You need to be interested in the other person."

3. Recognize that mentoring should be a two-way street. "Even as you're getting help, consider what you can do to help the other person," Smurl says. "For example, I have relationships I've cultivated over many years that can be useful to Kareem."

Though mentoring connotes sharing your wisdom or insights with someone else, if you never perceive a benefit to yourself, you will eventually lose motivation. In Smurl's view, formal mentoring

often founders because the incentive is all one-way. The desire simply to be magnanimous can make mentoring gratifying, but it's likely to pall when things get really busy. At its best, mentoring is mutually beneficial, no matter what the mentor and mentee's respective ages.

"...mentoring should be a two-way street."

Sally Helgesen is an author, speaker, and leadership development consultant, whose most recent book is *The Female Vision: Women's Real Power at Work* (with Julie Johnson; Berrett-Koehler, 2010).

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RUMOR MILL

The department is looking at doing an accelerated program for new hires that have experience? **True:** Due to the unforeseeable vacancies, the department is considering creating an accelerated program for potential applicants that have FF II certification, active with another department within the last year and current on their required training hours. The accelerated program is a one-time consideration used to address our current staff concerns.

Lt. Neihankie and members off the Wellness Committee are trying to "get rid of the older employees." **False:** The department is working on implement-



ing a revised wellness assessment to improve the department's overall life safety and health initiatives. All certified Firefighters including Chief Broome will participate in an annual wellness assessment.

Is it true we have a family member of a VFD employee participating in the current hiring process? **True:** After reviewing the current Employee's Handbook of Policies and Procedures and having multiple conversations with Human Resources, the decision was made to allow the family member to continue in the process. The only restrictions are that the family members cannot work on the same shift and or under direction supervision of the employee.

CAREHERE—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

- Apply 1 ounce (2 tablespoons) of sunscreen to your entire body 30 minutes before going outside. Reapply every two hours or immediately after swimming or excessive sweating.

- Keep newborns out of the sun. Sunscreens should be used on babies over the age of six months of age.

- Examine your skin head-to-toe every month.

- See your physician every year for a professional skin exam

Have something for the newsletter? Feel free to submit articles or photos to Sgt. Miller at:

smiller@valdostacity.com