



THE SECOND ALARM

A Department Without Limits

JANUARY 2020
THE SECOND ALARM

CHIEF'S TOPIC OF THE MONTH



Not Another EMS Call

I first want to thank you for the job you did in 2019. Are there areas that we can improve? Absolutely, but I hope I never finish a year and reflect on the year with the feeling that I have no room for improvement.

Valdosta Fire Department had a busy year answering 3,837 emergency calls. VFD consistently answers approximately 4,000 per calendar year but this is the first year in several that a storm did not pass through the city. Out of the 3,837 incident calls, 87 were structure fires and another 38 were cooking fires that were contained bringing the total potential building fires to 125. VFD answered 879 calls related to emergency medical incidents.

Emergency medical incidents continue to increase and I have colleagues across the state that give similar lectures on maintaining enthusiasm for answering calls at 02:00 A.M the same way you do at 02:00 P.M and they are absolutely correct when they state the obvious about the duty to serve and there are many people that would love the opportunity to be in your place. All of the points made are accurate but I feel that Valdosta's enthusiasm is encouraged through the reality of impact made rather than duty alone. I want to share a story that is not about me but the impact made by just doing what we consider "the job".

On December 31st of 2019, I was scrolling through emails to ensure I hadn't missed anything pertinent before closing down the office for the last day of the year. I received an email from a lady that resides in Florida. In her email, she simply wanted to send a thank you for something that happened almost 16 years ago. She was at Smith Northview with pregnancy complications and was needing a transport to another hospital specializing in high-risk pregnancies. She recalled that my partner and I entered her room around midnight on New Year's Eve and she overheard our conversation about being called in. The email was really nice and explained her premature delivery but after two weeks in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), her daughter was fine and is a healthy 15 year old that will be turning 16 very soon.

Please don't misunderstand the message here. The message is not about me doing a great thing, it is about how thankful I am that I did not react in a "normal" way. I understand it is easy to get caught up complaining about loss of sleep and busy shifts. However, imagine the adverse impression my partner and I would have made on this patient if we were complaining about being called in on

New Year's Eve or how we think she should be held until morning or that an on duty squad should go instead of us. Again, I wanted to illustrate how easy it could've been to make a negative impression and how kindness can make such a huge impact that people remember for years.

You will not always get the privilege of being told about the positive impact you make on people's lives. There's no way to calculate how many lives you touch each tour but remember, you are always making a difference even when you think it's "just the job". Thank you for taking care of our families.

"What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make."- Jane Goodall



Brian Boutwell



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Open Letters to the Fire Dept.

SOUTH STREET AND COMMUNITY AREA ASSOCIATION

307 SOUTH STREET
VALDOSTA, GA 31601

PHONE 229.244.8877
FAX 229.244.8877

EVELYN TOOLEY SMITH — President

South Street Community Area Reunion
October 19-20, 2019

To the Valdosta Fire Department:

We at South Street Community Area would like to thank you so very much for your contribution of providing the fire truck to our event. It meant so much to us and our kids. The kids did seem excited while the firemen were explaining things about the fire truck and what the fire fighters do. The South Street Community Area Community was a success in part to your contribution.

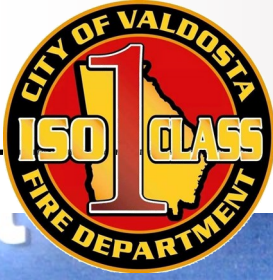
Again, thank you so much for all that you do for our community and our property. You all do a wonderful job, keep up the good work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Evelyn T. Smith".

Evelyn T. Smith, President
South Street Association

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to come read with our students. Reading is such an important skill for our students to gain a love for. National Young Readers Week would not of been a success



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Valdosta Fire Department members and the Citizens Fire Academy Alumni provided 10 Families (26 children) with gifts this year through the Shop with a Firefighter Program.



The Mayor's Motorcade was a huge success this year! Donations were more plentiful providing Mayor Gayle and VFD personnel with many gifts to deliver to the residents at Parkwood.



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Valdosta Fire Personnel along with SGMC medics were able to rescue and resuscitate a kitten after fire personnel removed it from a house fire.



Valdosta Fire Department's partnership with the Humane Society continues. There were a few puppies featured this month.

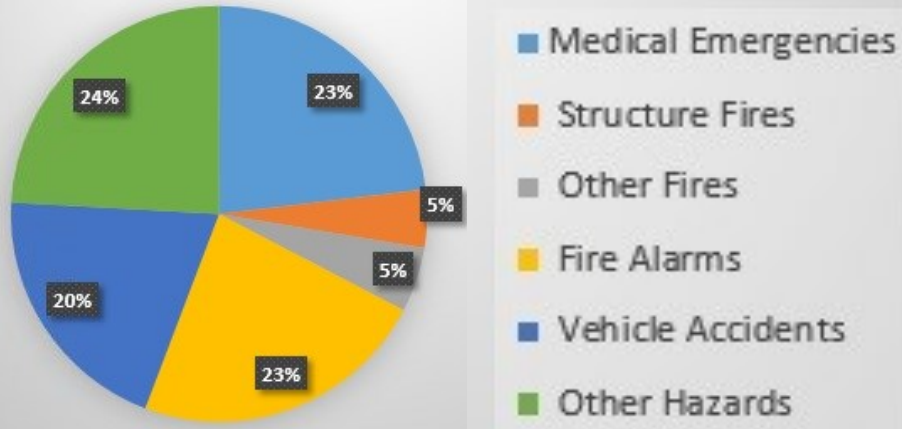


Valdosta Fire Department and Valdosta Police Department partnered up in providing Christmas to a family that lost their presents in an apartment fire.



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339 Incidents in December



Birthday Bulletin

Darriet Gordon	01/04
Matt Courson	01/08
Nichols Kester	01/17
Adam Casto	01/22
Ricky Alderman	01/25
Caron Wright	01/26
Ursula Antley	01/29
Charles Phillips	01/30

Happy Birthday!



Welcome to the family!

Ryan and Lisa Strickland welcomed their newest edition on December 4th, 2019. Lane Michael Strickland arrived at 08:08 weighing 10.5 pounds. Welcome to the VFD Family Lane!

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Submission 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.



CFAA MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

VOL. 2, Issue 1 January 2020

CFAA Reminders / Upcoming Events:

- ◆ CFAA General Meeting
Tuesday, January 21 @ Fire Station 1
(6:00 p.m.)
Please plan to attend this meeting so we may discuss upcoming events and activities for the CFAA.

Events must be presented at general meetings and approved to be added to the calendar or by special request through the Chief and the VFD.

Our Mission

"Our mission is to contribute to the functions of the Valdosta Fire Department while supporting service projects and fostering positive relationships among the community."

Need the 411?

If you are not receiving updates and emails or if your contact information has change, make sure to send an email to: cfaavaldosta@gmail.com

Include your name, your contact information and CFA Class #.

You can also sign up for Remind 101 and receive text reminders by:

Texting this message
@vfdc
To this number:
81010

Also, if you have not connected on Facebook, visit here: <https://www.facebook.com/VFDCFA/>

Happy New Year!



If you missed the last CFAA newsletter, check the Group Facebook Page or send an email to: cfaavaldosta@gmail.com



The Citizens Fire Academy Alumni (CFAA) are citizens whom have completed the Citizens Fire Academy (CFA) through the Valdosta Fire Department. If you are interested in signing up for the next CFA course, please email Tangela Rowe with the Valdosta Fire Department at: TROWE@VALDOSTACITY.COM

If you have completed a CFA course and would like to receive more information on the alumni, email: CFAAVALDOSTA@GMAIL.COM

CFAA MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



Christmas Parade

