

A Department Without Limits

VALDOSTA FIRE DEPARTMENT

Editor:
Freddie D. Broome

Happy Birthday

CHIEF'S TOPIC OF THE MONTH

Bennett	Benjamin	3-Aug
Henry	Johnny	4-Aug
Brown	Aaron	4-Aug
Howard	Justin	4-Aug
Donaldson	Bradley	12-Aug
Haynes	Marcus	16-Aug
Stevick	Chris	16-Aug
Miller	Shelley	18-Aug
Kasun	Genna	20-Aug
Gilliard	Jarvese	21-Aug
Audain	Louis	25-Aug
Garren	Scott	25-Aug
Carder	Daniel	26-Aug
Schulte	Mark	26-Aug
Rodriguez	Luis	28-Aug
Taylor	Stephanie	31-Aug

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

When did it first happen?

That's the question; I often ask when someone comes to me complaining about his or her job. Most people that know me, often admire my optimism. I remember as a firefighter, I had a reputation for being optimistic and passionate for my job. One day, my Battalion Chief heard me make a negative comment. He pulled me to the side and asked me, "When did it first happen?" I had no idea of what he was asking; then he explained, when were you first exposed to the "dark side?"

After pondering on his question, it started to make sense. I always found the good in every situation until I found myself spending time with co-workers that were the opposite. If it wasn't for my Battalion Chief, I would have fallen deeper into that abyss. Victoria Addino once said, "Always think extra hard before crossing over to a bad side, if you were weak enough to cross over, you might not be strong enough to cross back!" I was fortunate enough to cross back; however,

there were several of my co-worker that were not. Some left the department, and others are still working in the department living a life of misery both personally and professionally. I mention this only to remind you that negativity is an addiction. It is worst than most drugs. Metaphorically speaking, it gives you a natural high, it makes you feel good; however, at the same time, it is adversely affecting your body both mentally and physically. If you do not believe me, look at someone that is a "card-carrying member" of the negativity club. They are graciously aging; never happy nor smiling, and often lose focus of normality because of their self-assertion not to see positivity. When you feel yourself being negative, ask yourself, "When did it first happen?" If you hear a co-working being negative, ask them, "When did it first happen? I wouldn't be where I am today if Chief Brooks never asked me, "When did



Freddie D. Broome, Fire Chief

it first happen?" Take back your power of happiness from that individual or individuals who allow you to fall into the abyss of negativity. Chances are that individual or individuals are probably smiling and happy. Remember "All that we are is the result of what we have thought. The mind is everything. What we think we become." -- Buddha

Thank you for your support and dedication to the Valdosta Fire Department

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY—CONGRATULATIONS



Miss Sealeah Noreal Williams was born May 21, 2018. Miss Sealeah is the daughter of Fire-fighter Seabron Williams.



Miss Josie Rayne Mitchell was born on July 9, 2018. Miss Josie is the daughter of Fire Recruit Frank Mitchell.



Congratulations to the Penland's. Fire-fighter Michael Penland and his wife Holly were married on June 16, 2018.

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY—RECRUIT EDITION



Hometown: Cleveland Ohio

FD interest: Helping people in need/ community service. **Why VFD:** Valdosta is an awesome city made for families. Tight knit group where the community knows everyone. The city seems to care about their employees. **Hobbies:** arts and crafts **Donte' Robinson**



Hometown: Altus Oklahoma, **Why VFD:** I've always been fascinated with the fire service since my husband joined the profession. Valdosta is a great place to work and live, I have lived here majority of my life. **Hobbies:** I enjoy exercising and running. **Melissa Roe**

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY—RECRUIT EDITION

Please welcome our newest recruits. In order from left to right, the recruits answered three questions: **1)**What do you consider your home town? **2)**What sparked your interest in the fire service? **3)**Why the Valdosta Fire Department?

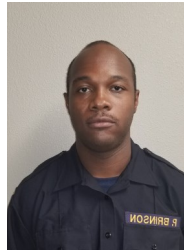


Hometown: I consider Waynesboro or Augusta, GA to be my hometown as that is where I was raised until I joined the Marine Corps. **Why the Fire Service:** The brotherhood that firefighters share is what drew me to the fire service. After the Marine Corps, no other job had that and it was something that I needed. **Why VFD:** I was informed that Valdosta Fire Department hired new comers off the street and trained them, along with the ISO 1 rating that the department holds was another big selling point for me. **Hobbies:** Spending time with my family, watching football with my wife and working out. **Lawrence Goddard**



Hometown: Fort Lauderdale, FL. **Why the Fire Service:** Fire science, Helping people and the brotherhood of a Fire Department **Why VFD:** Why not? It is a great Department and is constantly growing. **Hobbies:** Crafting, cooking and baking .

Stephanie Taylor



Hometown: Madison FL. **Why the Fire Service:** Observation of many good firefighters around the community. **Why VFD:** Valdosta is my 2nd home and this is the place I want to start helping and giving back as much as possible. **Hobbies:** My hobbies are playing sports, hiking while listening to music, and working with my hands.

Patrick Brinson



Hometown: .Thomasville Ga. **Why the Fire Service:** I wanted a career where I would have the opportunity to impact the lives' of others, and I love the team/family concept of the fire service. **Why VFD:** I wanted to become a part of VFD because of the training, community involvement, and the positive interactions I have had with employees in the past. **Hobbies:** Spending time with my family, fishing, hunting, cooking/grilling, and going to the gym. outdoors, water. **Frank Mitchell**



Hometown: Lubbock, Texas **Why the Fire Service:** I wanted a career that I can be proud of. **Why VFD:** I applied the moment I moved into Valdosta, and during the waiting process I had the opportunity to met some current Firefighters and they talked so positive about there job and how much they love being with the department. **Hobbies:** working out, playing any sport, anything involving sports cars, and collecting comics.

Matthew Estenson



Hometown: Valdosta, GA. **Why the fire service:** Growing up around the fire service had a huge impact on me wanting to be in the fire service. I love helping the community and being able to give back to the community. **Why VFD:** I'm from Valdosta, the Valdosta Fire Department has always been my first choice for a Department, the VFD is very family oriented and just a great Department to work for. I love how involved we are with the community. **Hobbies:** are hunting, fishing, learning new things (continuing my education). **Gabe Luke**



Hometown: I consider my hometown Valdosta, Ga. This is where I was born and raised. **Why the Fire Service:** Being in the fire services is one of the three things I've always wanted to do. **Why VFD:** Valdosta is home. I wanted to help and give back to my community. **Hobbies:** playing videos games, flag football, watching movies, and coaching wrestling.

Jarvese Gilliard



Hometown: I grew up in a military lifestyle, so I don't claim a hometown because I moved around so often. The longest I've lived somewhere is here in Valdosta. **Why the Fire Service:** I always looked up to firefighters and police growing up. Though, firefighting seemed more exciting to me. I have met a lot of people that have told me stories of how firefighters impacted their lives. I would love to be an inspiration and be apart of those stories one day. **Why VFD:** I have live in Valdosta for about 9years and I know this city pretty well. There are a lot of good people here that I want to help, and this is my way of achieving that. **Hobbies:** I enjoy the outdoors, from fishing and hunting to hiking and camping. I also love to workout and spend as much time with my son as I am able.

Faith Bordelon

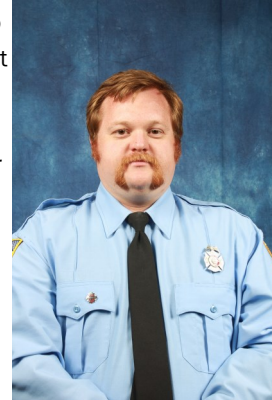
Happy Anniversary



Congratulations to Firefighter Davasio Johnson for **5-years of service**. Thank you for your service and commitment to the Valdosta Fire Department.



Congratulations to Lieutenant Lamont Williams for **10-years of service**. Thank you for your service and commitment to the Valdosta Fire Department.



Congratulations to Sergeant Matt Courson for **15-years of service**. Thank you for your service and commitment to the Valdosta Fire Department.



Employee of the Month Nomination



On Friday May 18, 2018 at 3:22 pm Valdosta Fire Department units were dispatched to a structure fire at 410 S. Fry St. Upon arrival units confirmed that there was a working fire on the second floor of a two story apartment unit. The unit was comprised of six separate apartments throughout the two floors. During this incident there were two animal rescues made by Valdosta Fire Department Personnel.

While crews were working the scene Lieutenant Eddie Coppage noticed a terrified cat hanging from the second floor window. He then put a ladder up in order to reach the cat and rescued it from the smoke filled window. The cat was uninjured and was able to return to its human family. Coppage put his own self aside in order to save the cat. He is allergic to cats and after the cat was given to the family the effects of his allergies showed up. He was able to keep them at bay and continue working.

Lieutenant Anthony Solberg and the crew from Engine 3 were searching the second floor for residents during the fire. Solberg then found a small family dog hiding behind a door of the room that they were searching. He then brought the dog out of the building to safety. The dog was uninjured and was reunited with his human family.

Due to the actions of these two personnel no human or animal lives were lost during this incident. The animals were all uninjured and returned to their owners for a joyful reunion on the scene. It is actions like this that deserve

The Valdosta Fire Department responded to a cardiac event on April 5th, 2018. Engine three arrived on scene and found a South Georgia Medical Center EMS crew providing patient care in the back of an ambulance. Firefighter Vincent Houston was assigned the task of providing chest compressions to an unresponsive patient with no pulse.

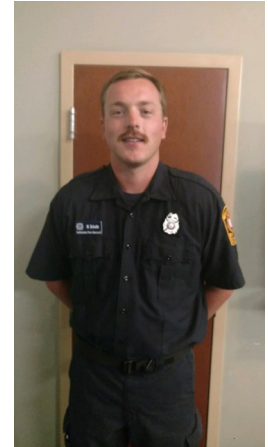
Firefighter Houston assisted the medical crew until the ambulance arrived at the hospital until patient care was passed to SGMC emergency room staff. A pulse was established en route to the hospital and the patient was breathing without assistance.



Employee of the Month Nomination



The morning of May 11, 2018, around 0730hrs, Lieutenant Miller and Firefighter Schulte were sitting in the bay talking. A young lady passed by in front of the bay as if she were searching for something. Instead, she walked back around the front of Engine 2 and asked if we could help her because she "fell in a hole." VFD personnel quickly figured out that the "hole" was the ditch located on the west side of the station. Firefighter Schulte asked her if she wanted a towel to help dry herself off and she said yes. Firefighter Schulte came back out with a towel and handed it to her. Firefighter AD Williams and Firefighter Schulte also grabbed some newspapers and dried out her shoes while she was attempting to dry her pants and socks. VFD personnel offered to call her parents or make arrangements to get her home to change, but she insisted that she would be fine and needed to go to school. While putting her shoes back on, Firefighter Schulte found out her name was Jada, and she was in the 5th grade. Before leaving, Jada hugged each firefighter and tried to return the towel to Firefighter Schulte. However, he insisted that she keep it in case she needed it. After Ms. Jada left Lieutenant Miller asked Firefighter Schulte if that towel was just an extra one left in the laundry room, "he stated that it was his towel (and that it was clean)." Firefighter Schulte then inquired if the convenience store next door sold clothing items and if he could purchase some for her to wear to school.

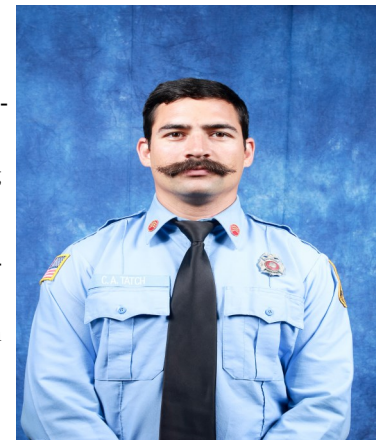


On May 4, 2018, The Valdosta Fire Department was dispatched to a Structure Fire at 4027 Chadwick Drive. Fire crews arrived on scene to find a small single family dwelling with smoke discharging from the roof line and flames visible through the windows. Battalion Chief Jason Rowan directed Lieutenant Tyler Shoemake and his crew to perform a search of the residence to locate any occupants trapped inside. Other fire crews worked to extinguish the fire and save property. Shortly after entering the structure fire crews were made aware of a possible dog occupant of this home. Lt. Shoemake and Lt. Caron Wright quickly searched the home and confirmed all the human residents were out of the structure. Lt. Shoemake advised by radio that he was exiting the home with a large dog. The dog was assessed by fire crews and showed no ill effects from the fire. The pet owner was reunited with his dog. Fire crews treated this pet as if it were a human patient and provided this resident with excellent customer service.

Lieutenant Charles Tatch oversees engine crew number three for A-Shift and is responsible for fire suppression, pre-incident planning buildings in maintenance territory, and ensuring that his crew performs proper training needed to protect the citizens of Valdosta.

The Valdosta Fire Department places extreme emphasis on minimum staffing for each shift to operate efficiently, lowering the risk of our members and the community for the purpose of mitigating emergencies. Many times in order to ensure that adequate staffing is available the Valdosta Fire Department implements a voluntary hire back program for members to take on extra shifts. Maintaining minimum staffing proves sometimes difficult due to members having family obligations and burnout of our personnel having to work 48 hours or more.

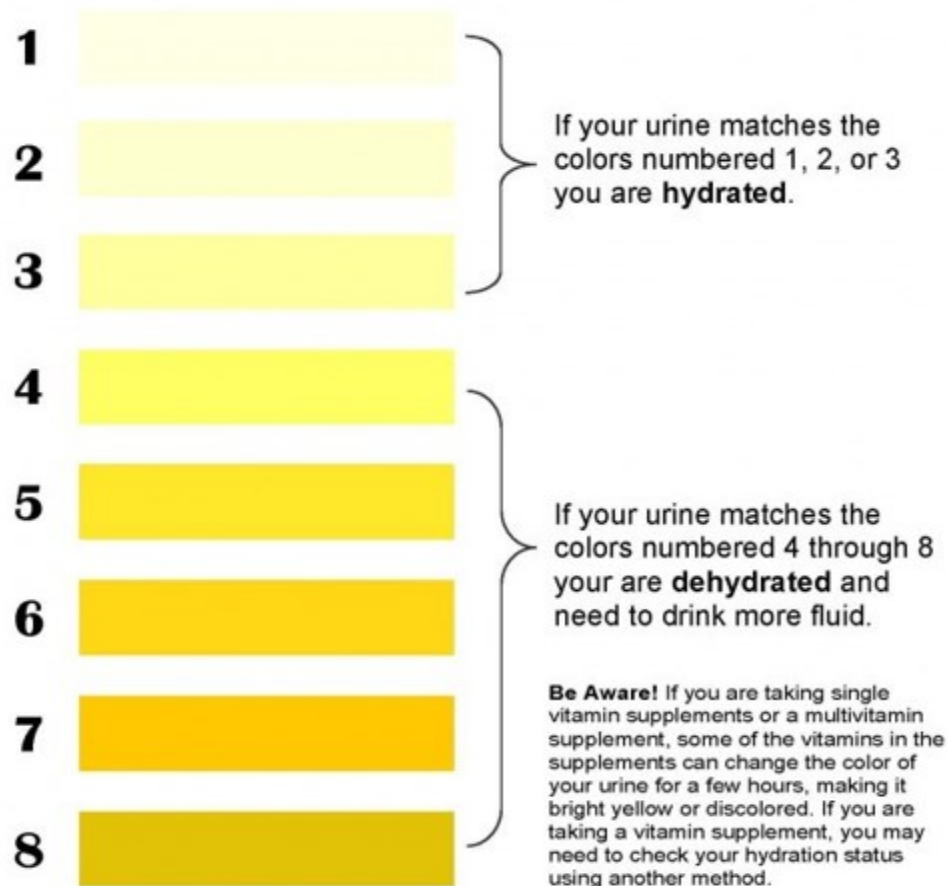
Lieutenant Charles Tatch has gone above and beyond to take on extra shifts at any position from Firefighter, Driver, or Lieutenant for the sole purpose of helping to maintain the adequate staffing to protect the citizens of Valdosta having even worked four consecutive shifts which included his shift and hire back. In addition to working consecutive shifts, Lieutenant Tatch is also an active member of the Georgia Search and Rescue Team, the Honor Guard Team, the fitness and wellness committee, and has along with other members voluntarily implemented and executed a physical training program for the new recruits to improve the mental and physical capabilities to successfully perform firefighting duties with team work being the main emphasis.





Am I Hydrated? Urine Color Chart

This urine color chart is a simple tool you can to assess if you are drinking enough fluids throughout the day to stay hydrated.



Your Nose Knows!

While some foods, like asparagus, can cause your urine to smell different, a strong smelling odor can also be a sign of dehydration.