



**VALDOSTA FIRE
DEPARTMENT**

A Department Without Limits

BIRTHDAYS:

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| SGT ALLEN CARTER | 05/06 |
| SGT DARREN WILLIAMS | 05/07 |
| CAPT MATT DAVIS | 05/13 |
| FF BRANDON TEBEDO | 05/17 |
| LT TERRY CLARK | 05/22 |
| FF JAMIE SAPP | 05/26 |
| SGT KEN TAY- LOR | 5/29 |
| LT MICHAEL WALDEN | 5/29 |
| CORP NICK BISHOP | 01/27 |

CHIEF'S TOPIC OF THE MONTH

An incident occurred in Georgia that stresses the importance of reporting on the job injuries, no matter how minor they may be. A recently promoted Captain injured his Achilles on shift and went to see the doctor the next day. The doctor referred him to a surgeon and the Captain still did not report the injury for fear of disciplinary action. A few weeks after his surgery, his family was preparing to take him on a short beach trip. While packing the vehicle, the family returned to find him unresponsive. He was transported to the Emergency Room where resuscitation attempts failed.

Had this injury been reported the day it occurred, there

would be no question this would qualify for Line of Duty Death (LODD) benefits for his family and the surgery would have been paid through workman's compensation claims. Both of these will probably still be claimed successfully but the department and family are having to utilize multiple resources to get there. Please ensure that all employee injuries are reported appropriately. While a situation such as this is a rare occurrence, it does happen. Minor injuries that feel better in hours to days can have lasting effects that manifest into worse problems years later. Without proper documenta-



Freddie D. Broome, Fire Chief

tion you may struggle to argue your position should you need seek treatment when the time comes.

—Robert Mercer, Lieutenant
Valdosta Fire Department

**HAPPY FIFTH ANNIVERSARY
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE**



Public Safety
Educator Tangelo
Rowe



Sergeant Jay
Carter



Sergeant Jake
Lyons



Sergeant Rodger
Chastain

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH NOMINATIONS

Mrs. Collins was involved in a vehicle accident where she was hit by another vehicle. Thankfully she did not receive any major injuries; however, she did receive some minor bumps and bruises. After going to the hospital, she was written out of work for the entire week. Mrs. Collins, called Chief Broome to notify him of her accident and her doctor's orders. However, her only concern was, "It was payroll Monday and it was the firefighters big pay cycle!" She went against her doctors' orders and reported to work to make sure that the payroll was entered in the system correctly and no one was underpaid or overpaid. After spending sometime in the office finalizing payroll, she went home to take some pain medicine and finished up payroll from her house. Payroll was completed that day and Mrs. Collins stayed home the remainder of the week. Her commitment to deliver exemplary customer service to the members of the Valdosta Fire Department is a true testament of her willingness to put her job before her personal needs.



Sgt. Ken Taylor and his wife were returning from Orlando, Florida when a motor vehicle crash (MVC) occurred in front of them. Without hesitation, Sgt. Taylor reacted. Utilizing his 20+ years of firefighting and emergency medical training, he quickly assessed the scene of the MVC that resulted in one vehicle being overturned with entrapment, and began to render aid. He entered the overturned vehicle and found the driver pinned and a 3 year old in a car seat. Realizing that he could not help the driver, he immediately checked the child for injuries and removed him from the vehicle. After handing the child to other bystanders, Sgt. Taylor returned to the driver and remained with her until the local first responders arrived and assumed patient care.

Sgt. Ken Taylor exemplifies duty, service, courage, and obligation to his craft and his fellow man. During his career with the Valdosta Fire Department, Sgt. Taylor has mentored and coached countless firefighters in both their personal and professional lives. He is humble and steadfast that his faith in God has allowed him to be where he is today. Sergeant Ken Taylor, a true asset to our department and city.



VALDOSTA ELK'S LODGE PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER OF THE YEAR
CONGRATUATIONS LIEUTENANT JUSTIN PLY

EMPOWERING BUGLES—NOTES ON LEADERSHIP

SMOKE AND TEARS

By Eddie Coppage

Disclaimer- Those of you that know me best, know that I am not one to share too many personal feelings. I am going to say what I need to say only once. You may not agree with what I have to say. Right now, I really don't care if you do or not. I may never share the full details of the event that led to this, so please don't ask me to.

I am in no way special or am I alone in the way I am feeling right now. What I have chosen to be, my career, is full of tragedy and loss. Most every time my crew and I get on the truck we are going out to help someone mitigate an emergency, their emergency...not ours. Our goal is to quickly and efficiently get the emergency under control and get ready for the next. It is what all of us in the fire service signed on for.

We don't do what we do for money or recognition. If you really stop and look at what we do, you could say it's a bit selfish, because our acts of selflessness give us what we need. They fill us with a pride that can only come from risking everything we have to help someone else. That is why we are here doing what we do, knowing every time we roll out in the truck that it might be our last call.

Sure, we train and train, then train some more, so if a situation comes up that may cause harm to us, we react and know what to do in order to make sure we go home to our families the next morning.

No matter how good the training or how well you think you will handle a situation, there is always that one. The one call that leaves you staring at yourself in the mirror, with the tears making tracks in the smut on your cheeks as they run down your face, asking "What the hell am I doing?" or "Do I really have what it takes, can I do this?"

The fire service is not special in this regard.

You may be a firefighter, a paramedic, police officer, soldier or even a bus driver; it doesn't matter what you do for a living, at some point you will face a situation that makes you question yourself! Are you going to change careers? Are you going to let it keep you from doing what you are meant to do? What are you going to do now? It's the answer that matters.

My moment came early on a Saturday morning. I lost a big piece of myself on that call. Like I said earlier, the details of what and how are mine, they will not be shared...at least not yet. I spent a great deal of that day to myself. Doing my best to avoid the, "how are you doing?" questions. I was forced to really look deep inside to find myself that day. I had to make a decision on how to use the events from that morning. I could let them make me give up what I have spent seven years building; and it came close to doing just that. I could try to ignore what I had done and bury it as deep as possible,

hoping it wouldn't haunt me. I could try telling myself that it wasn't my emergency. I went and did my job to the best of my ability and the outcome is what it is. Or, I could embrace the experience and use it to make myself better.

My decision has been made. Getting to the point of an end product may take a while, but so far the tracks are being laid.

For my Brothers and Sisters...we all took a big hit that Saturday morning. If you were on the call or not the effects of that call will stay with each one of us for the rest of our careers, probably even long after we move on to the next stage of life. The sights, sounds, and emotions of that morning will be triggered many times before we learn how to cope with them. I am not the best at giving advice and I know that but I've got to say this for myself as well. I know each of us are different and we each have our own way of dealing with the bad calls...remember...it's all part of what we do.

Don't walk away from your calling, give yourself some time if needed but don't just walk away...the people that matter, the ones that were there with you will understand. Please, I am begging each of you not to try and bury this...it will eat away at you like a poison and make your every day life miserable. If you need to talk to someone, do so. We have the resources provided for us. Use this guys, use it to drive you to work harder. Let it push you to be the best firefighter you can be. The memories of that morning will come back at some of the worst times. They can also be brought back when needed. When we get run down, doing the mundane aspects of our job and need a kick in the tail to get us going again, use them. Pre-plans, hydrants, smoke detectors, public education; all of these things can make us drag our feet sometimes. They are also important in helping prevent another day like that Saturday. Use the bad to find the good and use the good to control the bad.

To everybody else...life is short and tomorrow is not promised. Don't waste what time you may or may not have being petty. If there is something you want to do, do it now. If there is someone you once cared about but lost touch with, for whatever reason, reconnect. Say you are sorry before it is too late. Open yourself up and be accepting of an apology. Time is a gift and we never know when it will stop giving. Don't live with regrets. Don't withhold love and don't block love out. You can only "what if" and "if only" for so long before it's too late to act.

—Eddie D. Coppage, Lieutenant
Valdosta Fire Department

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR AMERICAN RED CROSS HOMETOWN HEROS NOMINEES AND GOLD STAR WINNERS



Fire Rescue:

Presented to a professional or volunteer firefighter or emergency dispatch operator whose lifesaving action went above and beyond the call of duty or displays exemplary community service.



Animal Rescue:

Presented to an animal that saved the life of a human, an ordinary citizen who used life-saving skills to save the life of an animal(s), or to a professional involved in the care of animals.



Emergency Response:

Presented to an individual who demonstrates an act of heroism or extraordinary courage in the face of an emergency or displays exemplary community service.



Animal Rescue:

Presented to an animal that saved the life of a human, an ordinary citizen who used life-saving skills to save the life of an animal(s), or to a professional involved in the care of animals.



Adult Good Samaritan:

Presented to a citizen above the age of 18, for an extraordinary act of heroism or courage or displays exemplary community service.



Animal Rescue:

Presented to an animal that saved the life of a human, an ordinary citizen who used life-saving skills to save the life of an animal(s), or to a professional involved in the care of animals.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR UNDER 40 YOUNG PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR NOMINEES

Ms. Rowe is definitely deserving of being recommended for the Young Professional of the Year award. Last year, she was responsible for creating the Valdosta Fire Department Citizen's Fire Academy Alumni Association. The association was created for past members of the Citizen Fire Academy classes, affording them opportunities to continue to be actively engaged in community programs while supporting the Valdosta Fire Department. The association volunteered their services last year during Hurricane Irma to check-in and create a friendly comfortable environment for the citizens that were utilizing Mathis Auditorium as an evacuation shelter. In December, the association was responsible for collecting items for the Mayor's Christmas Motorcade and shopping with kids during the Give a Kid a Bike program. The creation of the association has elevated the level of support and services the Valdosta Fire Department can provide to the community.

As the Public and Life Safety Educator, it is essential to monitor, create and evaluate community programs. Recently, Ms. Rowe modified our smoke detector program. Traditionally, when the department receives a request for a smoke detector, the firefighters usually deliver the detectors, help with installation and leave. After observing the program, Ms. Rowe decided to take over the program to enhance customer service and educational opportunities. Last year, not only did she start delivering and installing smoke detectors, but she also spent time with the citizen's to educate them on life and fire safety hazards. She also created a database to show where each smoke detector had been installed. This is critical in the event that one of the smoke detectors she installed results in saving the life of a citizen. While installing smoke detectors, Ms. Rowe also started a new program for senior citizens that is being implemented throughout the community. She created an Emergency Needs Checklist that is shared with senior citizens while she is installing their smoke detectors. She also takes time to stop by their residence to say hello and offer any assistance.



Outside of finding ways for the Valdosta Fire Department to enhance the level of service provided to the community, Ms. Rowe also works with the Valdosta Police Department DEFY program as a mentor and counsel. Ms. Rowe is willing to serve the Valdosta community with her time and expertise. Her love and dedication to the Valdosta community should be awarded by naming Ms. Rowe as the Young Professional of the Year.

Our department had out grown our training facility and was using the Lowndes County Emergency Operation Center to hold large training classes. In 2016, the Fire Department acquired two mobile trailers that were assigned to the Valdosta Fire Department Regional Training Center. The buildings were in terrible condition and needed some major renovations. However, after receiving the estimated cost to repair the buildings it was an expense that the department could not afford. The project was stalled until 2017 when Mr. Williams conducted a cost analysis for the repairs. He wasted no time making a proposal to completely renovate the facility at no charge. The department would only pay for the materials and he would do all the work on the days he was working. When Mr. Williams started working on the building he had one or two Fire Department employees assisting. However, as the project continued and everyone started to see the overall vision, everyone started requesting to help. Mr. Williams worked as a building contractor on his days off. As he worked on the building renovations, other employees who worked on their days off as electricians, cable installers, and sheet rock repairmen quickly joined the project in their areas of expertise. Thanks to the vision of Mr. Williams' and his commitment to make a difference in our training facility, we now have more offices, classrooms, a full kitchen, and more restrooms with showers. The training facility is also completely handicap accessible. The department has scheduled state and regional classes at the Training Facility to ensure that the members of the Valdosta Fire Department receive the required training that is essential in protecting and serving the community.



Mr. Williams also serves as the Vice-President of the Valdosta/South GA Pink Heals Association. The Pink Heals Association is a Fire Department cancer awareness/prevention program. Last year, he was responsible for coordinating the 2nd Annual Firefighter Ball which is a fundraiser for the Pink Heals Association. The 2nd Annual Firefighter Ball was a success and the Pink Heals Association is one step closer to having a pink fire truck that will be used to support local events and fundraising efforts for cancer patients/survivors and overall cancer awareness.

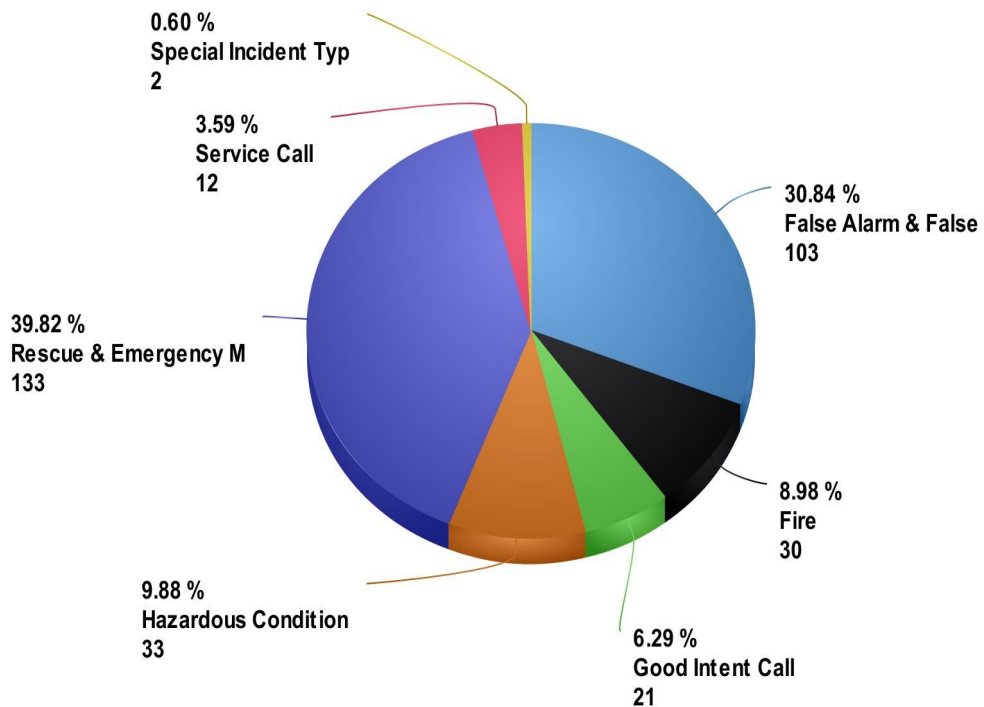
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911 • WHAT'S YOUR? EMERGENCY?

Incidents by Type

03/2018 - 03/2018

- False Alarm & False Call
- Fire
- Good Intent Call
- Hazardous Condition (No Fire)
- Rescue & Emergency Medical Service Incident
- Service Call
- Special Incident Type



Total of Incident Type: 334

THE SECOND ALARM

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Structure Fire Incidents Response Time City of Valdosta Fire Department

(Dates: 3/1/2018 - 3/31/2018; Incident Types: 110-119; Apps Types: Supp)

* Suppression Apparatus Only

| Line | Date | Time | Incident # | Unit Group | Num of Units | 1st Unit Response Time (Goal < 00:05:30) | Last Unit Response Time (Goal < 00:09:30) |
|------|------------|----------|------------|--------------------------|--------------|--|---|
| 1 | 03/09/2018 | 11:27:04 | 180300108 | Truck or aerial | 1 | 00:03:15 | 00:11:27 |
| | | | | Light and air unit | 1 | | |
| | | | | Chief officer car | 2 | | |
| | | | | Engine | 4 | | |
| 2 | 03/15/2018 | 20:45:08 | 180300171 | Chief officer car | 1 | 00:05:14 | 00:09:15 |
| | | | | Light and air unit | 1 | | |
| | | | | Truck or aerial | 1 | | |
| | | | | Engine | 3 | | |
| | | | | Mobile command post | 1 | | |
| 3 | 03/18/2018 | 19:40:27 | 180300198 | Light and air unit | 1 | 00:04:51 | 00:07:23 |
| | | | | Mobile command post | 1 | | |
| | | | | Engine | 3 | | |
| | | | | Truck or aerial | 1 | | |
| 4 | 03/19/2018 | 16:57:15 | 180300208 | Chief officer car | 1 | 00:04:14 | 00:07:44 |
| | | | | Truck or aerial | 1 | | |
| | | | | Engine | 3 | | |
| | | | | Light and air unit | 1 | | |
| 5 | 03/23/2018 | 16:21:17 | 180300261 | Engine | 1 | 00:04:20 | 00:04:20 |
| 6 | 03/24/2018 | 13:48:13 | 180300266 | Engine | 3 | 00:04:10 | 00:09:50 |
| | | | | Truck or aerial | 1 | | |
| | | | | Chief officer car | 1 | | |
| | | | | Light and air unit | 1 | | |
| 7 | 03/28/2018 | 10:11:06 | 180300307 | Mobile command post | 1 | 00:03:56 | 00:36:27 |
| | | | | Light and air unit | 1 | | |
| | | | | Chief officer car | 2 | | |
| | | | | Truck or aerial | 1 | | |
| | | | | Support apparatus, other | 2 | | |
| | | | | Engine | 3 | | |

Achieve Goal

100%

50%