



CHIEF THOUGHTS

March 2016

As you can see we are starting our Newsletter again. Many things have happen since our last newsletter, I will try to recap most of the significant events.

We were successful in securing a 6 million dollar bond which allowed us to consolidate all existing loans, construct a new Headquarters facility, purchase two new engines, and renovate Station 22. We did all this without increasing taxes to our citizens.

In 2015, we were inspected/rated by ISO and lowered our ISO rating to a class 3. In a fire district our size this is a great accomplishment, I'm not sure we will ever see a lower rating. The majority of credit for the lower rating is the result of the hard work you do every day. In the future we may be a stronger 3, but in order to lower to a class 2 we would need to build an additional 3 stations, 3 new engines, at least 1 additional ladder truck and increase our shift staffing by at least 10 firefighters per shift. The cost efficiency of this most likely would not be beneficial to our citizens. Again, great job by all for lowering our ISO rating.

We recently promoted 6 new Lieutenants and advanced the rank of our Fire Marshal Scott Baldwin and Training Officer Jamie Earle to Battalion Chief. Robert Anderson, John Bekemeyer, Brandon Beaton, Keith Kelley, Keith Kersey and Billy McKay were the 6 promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. There were many good candidates for the Lt position and showed all involved in the process that we have several senior firefighters ready for the officer ranks.

Battalion Chief Vaigneur served our State Firefighters' Association as the President for the 2014-2015 year. He served with

honor, integrity and accomplish many great things during his Presidency. To serve as President you must be elected by the members of the association. This is a six year commitment where you are elected as 4th Vice President and progress through the chairs, the final elected position is the immediate Past President. Chief Vaigneur will serve as immediate Past President until the annual conference in June. Battalion Chief Vaigneur you made us all proud and soon you will be a member of an elite group of Past Presidents.

In this newsletter, Chief Vaigneur interviews our Commission Chairman Gordon Bowers. This is the first interview and article about our current Commissioners. The next newsletter we will interview two of our Commissioners. This will allow you to learn about our Commissioners, their background and the reasons they serve.

We are restarting the Firefighter profile and this issue Lieutenant Robbie Morgan is interviewed.

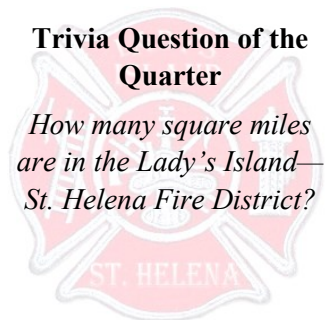
In this issue under the heading of Carter's Corner we have reprinted one of his Fire Wire articles that appeared on the SC State Firefighters' Association website.

New to this newsletter we have added a section from Joe Palmer the Executive Director of the SC State Firefighters' Association. We hope Chief Palmer will continue to provide articles about your Association and what's happening in the State's Fire Service.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter and if you have any suggestions please contact Battalion Chief Vaigneur.

Trivia Question of the Quarter

How many square miles are in the Lady's Island—St. Helena Fire District?



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TRAIN THE BRAIN

Battalion Chief Earle

Training for Mistakes

Part I

The Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon is a group of 24 Marines who exemplify Marine Corps professionalism, discipline, and skill by performing ceremonial drill across the nation. They conduct this complex drill routine in crisp dress uniforms while twirling and throwing around their ten and one-half pound M1 Garand rifles with fixed bayonets; and, they do it all without any verbal commands. These Marines spend thousands of hours honing their skills and watching them perform is an awe-inspiring example of commitment to perfection.

I have had the opportunity to watch the Silent Drill Platoon perform twice. The first time, about half way through the performance one of the Marines had his cover (hat, for those of you that don't speak Marine) knocked off by a spinning bayonet. The platoon instantly stopped at attention while the rifle inspector marched over to retrieve the fallen cover. The rifle inspector then marched behind the coverless Marine, ceremoniously inspected and twirled the cover then slammed it squarely on the Marine's head. This was done with such precision and showmanship that the crowd erupted in applause and everyone remarked that it must have been part of the show. The rifle inspector marched back to his position and the platoon resumed their performance where they left off without a single word spoken.

The second time I watched the Silent Drill Platoon perform, I anxiously awaited the dropped cover part of the show, but it never happened. Apparently, it was a mistake after all. Near the end of the perfectly



executed performance the platoon lined up for their coup de grace- the rifle inspection. The rifle inspection is an incredibly complex series of movements between the

rifle inspector and two Marines in formation. The rifle inspector ceremoniously inspects the Marines' rifles while twirling and throwing the heavy wood-stock rifles back and forth with the two other Marines. As the rifle inspector finished his inspection and threw the rifle back to one of the Marines in formation the unthinkable happened. The throw was slightly off and the Marine could not catch the rifle. The crowd gasped in despair as the rifle landed on the pavement. This was certainly not part of the show. No Marine, let alone one of the elite Marching 24, would ever intentionally abuse his weapon.

"The show was ruined; the platoon would march off the field in shame in front of a silent crowd and that poor Lance Corporal would be severely disciplined", I thought. Surely there was no way to recover from this egregious error; or was there? The way the Silent Drill Platoon handled this mistake made me prouder than ever to be a United States Marine.

Once the Marine realized that he couldn't catch the rifle, he immediately snapped back to attention, the stoic expression on his face unwavering. The rifle inspector marched over to retrieve the fallen rifle, pausing briefly to issue an icy stare of disapproval to the young Marine. He picked up the weapon, thoroughly and ceremoniously inspected it for damage, then twirled it several times and slapped it smartly back into the Marine's hands.

The rifle inspector then marched back to his position and again the platoon picked up right where they left off, eliciting applause from the audience. The

platoon went on to finish the rest of the show flawlessly. As the platoon marched off the parade deck to a standing ovation it occurred to me, these Marines train for mistakes.

These Marines spend countless hours of grueling repetition to prevent mistakes, yet they realize that they are human and mistakes will occasionally happen. As rare as these mistakes occur, it would be easy to just dismiss one bad performance and move on; yet, in typical Marine Corps spirit, these Marines refuse to accept failure as an option. They identify potential mistakes and practice just as diligently to recover from them as they do to prevent them.

So, the question is, how much effort have you put into preparing for mistakes? With the chaotic and dynamic nature of the emergency scene, mistakes will happen. Do you lose your composure, cursing and throwing down your helmet in disgust? Do you make excuses or blame someone else for things not going well? Or do you recover with the same grace and professionalism as the Marine who dropped his rifle? Training to prevent mistakes combined with training to recover from them can make the difference between leaving the scene feeling defeated and embarrassed, or leaving the crowd thinking it was just part of the show.

Note: In part two we will discuss how to identify mistakes that have been made in the past and things that could go wrong in the future.

How much effort have you put into preparing for mistakes?



This is an article Chief Carter Jones submitted to the South Carolina State Firefighter's Association's Fire Wire. Each newsletter we will include one of Carter's history articles. We have numerous historic fires and events in our own state that most of the fire service has no knowledge of. Enjoy.

four of the show's crew. Early in my career I worked as a Training Specialist with the Office of State Fire Marshal, and, although my primary responsibility was in the training arm of that agency, frequently I was assigned the duty of investigating the "origin, cause and circumstance" of large loss fires or those in which there were fatalities. Jesse C. Johnson served as the State Fire Marshal in those days and provided me the assignment to meet with railroad and local officials to gather the details of the fire.

The engineer, once alerted to the fire, was finally able to stop the train about 15 miles south of Kingstree. Firefighters from Lane and Kingstree were unable to gain access to the burning coach due to the remote location. The engineer had to back the train about three miles to a point where firefighters and rescue personnel could position their engines to finally extinguish the flames and retrieve the bodies. According to the late Kingstree Assistant Fire Chief, George Hinnant, the fire department received a call from a railroad dispatcher around 6:45 A.M. requesting that they respond to the fire.

Carter's Corner

In all likelihood, most of us have attended a circus performance in our lifetime and watched in wonderment the skill of the trapeze artists, the fearless lion tamers, the animated clowns, the elephants' compliance to the commands of their trainers. I am forever fascinated with the flawless orchestration of all of the acts and the coordination required to pull off each show. Few know that the life of circus entertainers and support personnel is filled with danger, hard work, long hours, and a commitment to the motto that "the show must go on." Also, few people know of the long list of misfortunes and tragedies that have plagued circuses since the beginning of the very first circus to appear in America.

Usually I write about stories that have taken place in the far distant past, but it came to me that there's a piece of history that occurred forty years ago last December that may be of interest to our readers. The story centers around The Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey Circus train fire that occurred around 5:30 A.M. on Tuesday, December 3, 1974, outside of Kingstree, S.C.

This incident is memorable for me because I had a role in the investigation of the fire which killed

My report to the Fire Marshal and to NFPA revealed that the fire gutted a "sleeper" coach located about midway of a 30 car train. The train was traveling south along Seaboard Coastline tracks at a speed nearing 60 mph. The circus had closed its final engagement for the season at New Haven, Connecticut, on December 1st. The train carried animals, performers, and equipment enroute to the circus winter quarters in Venice, Florida.

As the train passed through Kingstree, fire was detected by a number of the coach's occupants. Nine of the thirteen occupants escaped to safety by existing through the north end of the coach. However, three of the victims died in their rooms, and a fourth victim died when she jumped from the coach. The body of the female who jumped from the flames was found near the tracks approximately one mile south of Kingstree. It was noted by the Coroner, Guy T. McIntosh, that the woman who jumped from the train also sustained burns on her arms and hands. A number of witnesses said they saw the car "smoking" as it passed through several of the small communities about dawn. From all accounts the fire started near Lake City but went unnoticed until it was observed near Kingstree.

The fire broke out in an area near the front of the coach occupied by one of the circus employees. The coach was partitioned throughout into sleeping berths, or rooms. Each room contained a small bunk, lavatory, and space sufficient for a few personal belongings. It was noted that an electric hot plate was found among the remains near the origin of the fire.

Evidence reveals that the fire originated in the first room on the south end of the coach. As the fire intensified and spread, the windows began to break. A significant draft was created by the train's nearly 60 mph speed and was further made worse when the female victim left the door to the coach in the open position before she jumped to her death.

Based on the evidence observed, I concluded (1) the fire started as a result of human carelessness or electrical malfunction of an appliance within the room of origin; and (2) the fire spread with great rapidity due to a combination of substantial fire loading and drafts created by the trains speed.

It wasn't until a number of years later that it dawned on me that I was afforded the opportunity to be



Carter's Corner

involved in a significant historical event in the life of the circus community. Only after doing some research did I discover some of the many tragedies that have beset this entertainment industry over the years. Written history of the circus in America, and there were many of these groups, reveal the idea of entertaining people in the "ring" had its beginning in the late 1700s when John Bill Ricketts first formed a horse show in Philadelphia. Sadly, in 1799, the amphitheaters of the Ricketts Equestrian Circus playing in Philadelphia was destroyed by fire with no loss of life, but, as a result of the fire, Mr. Ricketts went bankrupt.

A list of other fires which have plagued this industry is shown below:

- (1868 in Bridgeport, Conn.)**-Barnum & London Circus winter quarters burned...all animals died
- (1900 in Bridgeport, Conn.)**-Barnum & Bailey winter quarters damaged by fire

- (1901 in Kansas City, Mo.)**-Ringling Brothers' Circus burned...no injuries or deaths
- (1910 in Schenectady, N.Y.)**-Barnum & Bailey Circus burned with over 15,000 people inside...everyone escaped unharmed
- (1912 in Sterling, IL.)**-Ringling Brothers' Circus burned to the ground...no injuries or deaths
- (1914 in Cleveland, OH.)**-43 railway cars of Ringling Brothers' Circus burned...no deaths of injuries
- (1916 in Huntsville, AL.)**-Ringling Brothers' Circus stock tent burned...40 horses died & 40 others had to be destroyed
- (1918 in Ivanhoe, IN.)**-Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus train wrecked...at least 85 circus workers died
- (1924 in Bridgeport, Conn.)**-another fire hit winter quarters of Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey Circus...no injuries or deaths
- (1923 in Gainsville, Ga.)**-Miller Brothers Wild West Show lost 2 sleeping cars...no injuries or deaths
- (1940 in Rochester, IN.)**-winter quarters of Cole Brothers' Circus burned...18 animals, in-

- cluding elephants, lions, zebras, etc. died
- (1942 in Cleveland, OH.)**-the menagerie tent of Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey Circus burned killing 45 animals including camels, lions, elephants, etc.
- (1944 in Hartford, Conn.)**-the most horrific disaster to hit Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey Circus destroyed the main tent and killed 163 people, mostly children

There have been other fires, wrecks, and windstorms that are too numerous to mention which have ravaged the circus world since those early beginnings. However, each event has only confirmed the allegiance of circus performers to the age old adage that "the show must go on."

Acknowledgements:
 The Circus Report.."America's Favorite Circus Weekly" (December 16, 1974)
 "Important Fires of Circus History" by A. Morton Smith (1944)
 The State (December 4, 1974)

Carter H. Jones

MARSHAL WORDS

As the 2016 New Year begins, our Fire District will see some changes and growth. McDonald's has closed temporarily to demolish and rebuild at its location. Their design plan is to be similar to the restaurant on Boundary Street. Another project that has been on hold for some time, is Grace AME on Holly Hall Road. The leaders of the church have regrouped and obtain assistance to get their new church construction back into motion. Some site modifications are being done to accommodate the

proposed traffic circle at Sam's Point and Holly Hall Road. SC DOT anticipates starting on the traffic circle during the summer.

No updates have been provided for the proposed Walmart and Harris Teeter. Both projects are City of Beaufort's. Sea Pointe Apartments has not received a "Certificate of Occupancy" at this time.

Development of residential subdivision have increased. Oyster Bluff Phase 1, on Sam's Point Road, has started. The land was cleared be-

fore the holidays and site work has begun. Phase 1 includes 52 lots and the next phase will be proposing a Parker's Gas Station at the corner of Sam's Point and Oyster Factor Roads. Sommerset Point (Portion of Marsh Hawk) has begun to develop 73 more lots.

In closing, the "Letters to Santa" program was a good success for the second year we have participated. I did not receive the volume of letters as last year, but overall it went well.



COMMISSIONER PROFILE

This is a very interesting story about a “Damn Yankee.” You know, the kind of Yankee that comes down and never leaves. The funny thing is that he has been in Beaufort longer than any other member of our fire department. His company, Mitchell Brothers, is also responsible for the bumper stickers that were on a lot of vehicles around Beaufort in the late 80s early 90s. A simple sticker, white in color with red print that read, “I don’t give a damn how you did it up North.”

Commission Chairman Gordie Bowers was born in 1935 in Enfield, NY. This is a small town near Ithaca, NY. As he explains it, it is a long way from the city. Commissioner Bowers was the oldest of five children. His mother was born in Pennsylvania and was educated in New York. His father was born and raised in Enfield where he was in automobiles. He was a mechanic and owned a Nash dealership. Gordie always thought that he would work for his dad.

Gordie attended a one-room schoolhouse from the first until the eighth grade. First graders sat on the front row and as you got older and moved up grades you worked your way to the larger desk. He only had one other boy in his grade and they remain friends to this day. I kidded him about how awkward the eighth grade social must have been. He bragged about the education that he received from this school. He feels that this was a very effective way to educate. No student traveled more than a mile for school. After eighth grade he attended high school in the big city of Ithaca. After graduation he and his Enfield classmate joined the US Marine Corp.

It was in 1954 that Gordie made his first trip to Beaufort. He left his small town by train and arrived in Grand Central Station. This was his first trip to the city. He said you can only image a small town boy seeing the city for the first time, “Country comes to town.” From there he was trained down to the big city of Yemassee, SC. Back then, when recruits arrived they had holding barracks. You stayed the night and were transported to Parris Island the next day. The Drill Instructors

GORDON BOWERS
COMMISSION CHAIRMAN

were giving a little more liberty to keep the recruits in line. This was a lesson that Gordie learned early. He said that he was the last one off of the train. Not taking his time, but not running anyone over either. Just before he could put a foot on the ground on the Yemassee soil he took a rap to the head by a DI. “Didn’t I tell you to run?” Once he came to his senses, he made a B-line to the middle of the pack and tried not to stick out for any reason again. He finished boot camp, was sent to Camp Legeune and then was reassigned back to Parris Island. He spent his entire Marine Corp time in Beaufort.

While in the Corp he met the love of his life, Mrs. Jan Bowers. He met her at a dance at the Teen Canteen. They met in February of 1956, and were married in August. They will celebrate their 60th anniversary this year. They have three children, five grandchildren, and four great grandchildren. There was a special kind of smile when he talked about his grand and great grandchildren. I was curious about insight in making a marriage last for 60 years. Some of the readers of this article

couldn’t make a marriage last for 60 days. He said that he and Jan are truly partners for life. She has always been his confidant and advisor. He said, to make any relationship work you must have good communications and he talked about the importance of sharing in each other’s passions.

Shortly after getting married Gordie was out of the Corp. Nash had gone out of business so he would not go home to work for his dad. However, he wanted to go back home. He loaded up Jan and they returned to Enfield where he became a plumber. That lasted one winter and he said he nearly froze to death. They were headed back to Beaufort. He worked as a plumber here and hooked up with Mitchell Brothers in 1962. He became a partner in 1978 and continues to be active with the company now. I have no doubt the intelligence of Commissioner Bowers, but I do not think he understands the definition of retirement.

Commissioner Bowers has been active in county government since the mid 70’s. He has served on and chaired many boards. He has served on the Appeals and Adjustment, Solid Waste Advisory, and Solid Waste and Recycling. He gave me some advise that if someone ask if you are retired, tell them no because they are getting ready to put you to work.

While working with Mitchell Brothers he did most of the government jobs. He was responsible for those jobs from start to finish. He did quite a bit of work with a Col. David Townsend. Over these jobs they developed a mutual respect for one another and a friendship. Twelve years ago, several things that were going on with our fire district made Gordie the



perfect selection for our commission. At the time we had one commissioner stepping down opening up a spot for a new commissioner. The other thing was the new construction project for Station 21. Col. Townsend was able to talk Gordie into serving with our department. He came into office with a vast knowledge of building and has grown while serving on the commission to learn about the job we do. As you all know, he now serves as the Chairman of the Commission.

I asked, "Why did you want to be a commissioner?" He said that he knew that he could help with the stations that were to be built. He has always been mechanically inclined and understands trucks, pumps, and

water supply and has always had an interest in that, but he never had dreams of being a firefighter. He stated that firefighters have the most misunderstood profession. "The public only knows the tip of the iceberg of what y'all do." As he has become more involved, he has enjoyed it more and more as he continues to learn.

"What are you most proud of as a Commissioner?" "I am most proud of the service that this department provides and I am proud to be connected to that."

Chairman Bowers will be 81 this year, so I had to know what keeps him so motivated. He first mentioned his family. He also loves being part of achievement. He likes to rebuild and restore things. He takes great pleasure

in things being completed and enjoys fixing things.

"What do you want the firefighters to know about you?" "I hope they know that I do it for them." He sees his position as working for us, the firefighters.

I really had a great time interviewing Commissioner Bowers for this article. He enjoys being part of this organization and he is extremely proud of the work you do on the streets. The level of service that you are providing to the citizens makes him proud to wear our patch. Your dedication to the job makes it easy for him to fight for the things we need.

GREAT LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

The S.C. State Firefighters' Association's Leadership Institute is offered to individuals to improve and develop fire service leadership at the state level through networking and education pertaining to the many facets of the fire service profession.

The Leadership Institute is a 12 month leadership development and educational process in an executive level environment emphasizing communications and group project based skills.

- Attendance to meetings of the institute is mandatory and participation in the projects is required. For successful completion of the Institute, the participants will be expected to take part in an assigned group project and an approved individual project.
- Participation is not based on the criteria of rank or pay status but instead on the individual's potential to impact future guidance for the Firefighters' Association and South Carolina Fire Service.
- Funding for the Leadership Institute is provided by the Firefighters' Association and by donations from private entities such as the Pierce Corporation. This funding is designed to minimize the financial impact to participants through housing and meal provision.
- From this program the participants are expected to receive a working knowledge of the numerous and varied aspects of the intricacies of the fire service within the State

of South Carolina outside of their previous background and experience through exposure to current events and a variety of department experiences from around the state.

- The program will not be a traditional classroom environment. The participants are expected to bring information as much as receive from the presentations. The Institute will facilitate thought, but the participant will gleam as they participate and offer thoughts, thus fostering the networking and communications portion of the programs. Problem solving will be best fostered in the Institute by group participation and effort. Institute meetings are held monthly at various locations around the state and there two weekend retreats.

Examples of Topics Covered:

- Paid, Volunteer and Combination Departments
- Special Purpose Districts
- Labor Relations
- General Fire Service History
- Firemen's Insurance and Inspection Fund (One Percent)
- Fire Service Legals and Liability
- State Response Assets

Statehouse Tour and Legislative Process Overview

If you are interested in this excellent program please get with Chief Kline of Battalion Chief Vaigneur.



FIREFIGHTER PROFILE

BC William Vaigneur

It is always a pleasure to do the firefighter profiles for the newsletter. The subject of this profile is one of my best friends, Lt Robbie Morgan. We have been close since 1990, but while preparing for this article, I still learned things about him that I never knew.

This is a story about a local boy, that attended local schools, and has spent his entire life serving the community where his family has lived in for generations.

Lt Morgan comes from a family of firefighters. His grandfather, William Morgan, was the fire chief of the Naval Hospital. When asking about his grandfather, he struggled telling me his real name. Everyone around town called him Chief Morgan. His father, Dan Morgan, was an Asst. Chief of our department when it was a volunteer organization. He has had countless uncles and cousins that have been a part of this department. He stated that some of his earliest memories were of turkey shoots at Station 22, fire brigades in Winn-Dixie parking lot, and softball games between departments. Although he grew up in the service, he never thought he would have a career in it. He always new that he would volunteer in some capacity, but until 1986 there were no paid firefighters.

He began volunteering at Lady's Island – St. Helena Fire District in 1991 as a high school senior. A little trivia fact, Lt Morgan and myself were voted into the fire department on the same night. Back then anyone wanting to be part of the organization had to have a unanimous vote to become a member. They would stand you up in front of the membership and you would tell them why you wanted to join. One vote no meant you were not in, the

ole black ball. Obviously, we were voted in and our service to the community commenced. I took roads that led me away from here, but this is not my story.

After graduating high school he began work with his Uncle's air conditioning business but continued to be an active volunteer. He tells stories of him and Chief Horton packing out in the old black gear doing search and rescue evolutions in his father's garage. He knew he loved the fire service, but was still not thinking of it as a career.

He can remember Chief Williams coming to him and asking if he had ever thought of becoming paid. Chief Williams told him that they were getting ready to hire three firefighters and that he should put in for it. He credits Chief Williams for pushing him to be a fire fighter. He took the test and became a career fire fighter in 1994. Lt Sanford Picklesimer was also hired on that day.

In these articles I am always curious about mentors. Who gets the credit for your success? He said that Chief Williams always pushed him to be better. Chief Williams was very good with tactics and aggressive. There has always been a competition between them to out do the other. He says that it was mostly a positive competition although sometimes the strong competitive natures of both of them led to more than a couple of disagreements. He also said that Asst. Chief John Garber had a huge influence on his career. He has always respected Captain Tom Cooper from Burton FD. He and Capt. Cooper have similar personalities and he always got a lot out of the training session and classes with him. He gives a lot of credit to Chief Taylor for helping him grow up. Chief Taylor was the only guy to pull him

aside and taught him the importance of the image that we project. He also said that he always disciplined him with the intent of making him better. Chief Kline has made a huge impact on him as well, bringing new ideas and new techniques to this fire department.

A man named Willie Riley made the biggest influence in his life. Willie is the father of one of our best friends, Keith. Willie has always been a part of Lt Morgan's life. He was a man of high moral values and lived his life the right way. Always doing the right thing because it was the right thing to do. Lt Morgan has always said that Willie could teach the fire service all about customer service. He was a man from the "Greatest Generation" and believed that if you have the means to help someone else, it was your duty to do so. He always said, "I need quality, not quantity." It has been a couple of years since Willie has passed away, but not a day goes by that he is not talked about. Lt Morgan still lives his life every day trying not to let Willie down.

"What was your best day on the job?" He recalls a fire that we had years ago on Meredith Lane. This was back when we were both firefighters. It was rare that the two of us rode a truck together. On this day we were down at Station 21. I remember the jokes during the day, if we get a fire we were going to have it out before anyone else arrives and "10-19" everyone else. As fate would have it, around 1 am the tones dropped. We did not have the fire out before anyone else arrived, but it was one of those fires that just go right. As the engineer, Lt Morgan deployed my line to the front door, another line around back, and then got a two

LT. ROBERT MORGAN



and a half to the rear as well. I wish that I could say that all went well, but we buried five dogs that night. However, we operated on this fire ground like a well-oiled machine. Lt Morgan said he is like Hannibal from the A-Team, "I love it when a plan comes together."

"What was your worst day on the job?"

I knew the answer to this question before I asked it. When Daniel, his son, was four or five years old he was riding a motorcycle in the field behind Lady's Island Middle School. He was wearing a helmet, but struck a limb that went through the face piece. Lt Morgan was working at HQ when Daniel's mom showed up and walked through the front door; covered in blood holding Daniel. She handed Daniel to him, but Lt Morgan knew he could not work on his own son so he handed him to Scott Maxey. FF Maxey loaded him in the Squad and rushed him to the ER. With

Lt Morgan looking on at his young son he heard the worst sound any parent could hear. He heard the solid tone from the heart monitor indicating a flat line. In seconds that seemed like an eternity they noticed that one of the leads came off. Daniel was flown to MUSC where he was treated, made a full recovery, and now serving the citizens of our district.

"How do you want to be remembered?"

Lt Morgan wants to be remembered for his quality of customer service. He wants to be talked about as a man who cared for the people we served. "In this business, the calls that we run have a way of equalizing us and everyone that we respond to deserves your respect." He also wants to be remembered as fair and hopes no one forgets the grand slam he hit in the shift vs shift softball game.

"What do people not know about you?"

"I don't think people around here know how much I really care. How much I care about the firefighters, their families, the department, and our citizens."

"Lt Morgan, you have had a long career and are coming to the finish line. What are you most proud of?"

He is most proud of seeing Daniel coming into the family business. He said that Daniel has inspired him to be better. "He has forced me back in classes and forced me to evaluate my performance." I can understand why this is what he is most proud of. At the end of the day, nothing we do is more important than being a father.

Lt Morgan, I thank you for allowing me to do this interview with you, thank you for serving our citizens for 25 years, and thank you for being my friend.

A MOST GRATEFUL THANK YOU

BC Eric Taylor

As most of you are aware, in November of 2015 I received some devastating news, I had tested positive for Prostate Cancer. It was one of the most surreal moments that I had ever experienced in my life. Emotionally I was at a loss, I was not even home for 30 minutes after receiving this news when a member of our Fire District, Lt. Billy McKay, showed up on my front porch and began the total outpouring of support that I was soon to experience by the personnel of this Fire District, as well as other fire personnel from all over the United States and Canada. The first few days after hearing this sort of news, in my opinion, are absolutely filled with confusion, concern and worry. Every single day during this time there were always members of

this Fire District extending helpful hands, offering any type of assistance or just stopping by for a while to check on me. Daily calls from Chief Kline just to see how I was doing, and always calling after any test or procedure was performed. As time continued there were good signs that the cancer had been contained, but there is never a 100% certainty until the actual day of surgery. As that time drew near, I spent a countless amount of time with the brothers and sisters of the Lady's Island - St. Helena Fire District, showing me a tremendous amount of compassion. I was totally caught by surprise on Christmas Eve by the members of Shift II at a Christmas Eve dinner where I was presented with an Axe

signed by a majority of the department as a token of their support. Each individual at this dinner was wearing a Prostate Cancer ribbon. I just want to simply say thank you so very much for being there to support me, it means more to me than words can even describe. There is not enough room in this entire newsletter to name everyone individually, but you know who you are, and please know that it is appreciated so very much. These are times when true brotherhood is demonstrated, and the Lady's Island - St. Helena Fire District could not have demonstrated it any better.

I sincerely thank you all,



YOUR ASSOCIATION

Meeting the Mission

Submitted by Joe Palmer, executive director executive director of the South Carolina Firefighters' Association

Most public service agencies, local or state, have similar value statements about what they believe and who they are. LISHFD and the SC State Firefighters' Association are no different. And in fact, I find numerous similarities that I am proud of and think proves that we stand together. Please allow me to steal your language from the internet in talking about those similarities.

Dedicated to Customer Service

The firefighters of South Carolina, the customers of your Association, have a wealth of resources at their finger tips. The Association strives daily to provide member benefits for our 17,543 members. Insurance, legal aid, individual and departmental support in tough times, scholarly support, merchandise discount programs, drug discount programs; the list goes on and on. Get details at: <http://scfirefighters.org/members/benefits/>, but let me mention one briefly.

Behavioral Health – We talk a lot about physical fitness, but what about mental fitness. If you haven't already discovered, what you do is a tough job. You see and do things that people should not be required to handle. The Association sponsors a FAST (Firefighters Assistance and Support) team for help, training, and counseling for those tough times that we all experience (myself included – not only am I an endorser but a user). Call Patti Johns or myself, we will come see you and talk about our program. Your being a member even provides free services for clinical help when needed.



Be tough, but be sensible and ask for help when needed.

Dedicated to Our Citizens

The Association must help make better firefighters to better serve our citizens in every way. We do that by sponsoring training, sharing new ideas, ensuring state statutes are met, participating in and coordinating mobilization responses, striving to get new and improved legislation, and fundamentally keep forward movement. Let me give you two success stories.

Public Fire Safety Education – Your Association realizes that we as firefighters can no longer tolerate the numerical atrocity of the level of fire deaths in this state. As the leaders of the SC Fire Service, we must take action. I will give you something hot off the press at the time of my typing this article. Your Association is working diligently to form a Section to coordinate and lead in the field of life safety education. We have many good people working around this state on education, but the Association must take a leadership role. We are up to the task and are bringing together the brightest minds in the field to start something big. Stay tuned for more.

SC Fire-Rescue – Making better firefighters means supporting and providing training. Your Association provides FREE one of the largest fire training conferences in the nation. We train over 2,400 people at your annual event and, as a member, must be a part of this special time. I understand one of your immediate concerns, Myrtle Beach is a long way to drive from LISH, but change is coming to make the program more efficient for all firefighters to attend. Come to the 2016 conference June 6-11, we have an outstanding line up. Prepare for June 11-16, 2018; SC Fire-Rescue is moving to Columbia! It's all about the mission. If you can't travel, watch some of the major events live on line.

Always a Brother

I will expand this and say – family. Sometimes we disagree; sometimes we argue – but I will always have your back! The tree may have some nuts (and I know some faces just came to mind) – but we are all in. The Association focus has been and must always be the strength of family. The reason after 111 years that we are one of the nations leaders in fire associations is the family premise and the realization that we are stronger as one. The Association has a little over 10,000 persons which participate in our supplemental retirement system trying to keep members whole after retirement. You own part of an insurance company. SCFIS (South Carolina Firefighters Insurance Service) is a full service agency that you, the members, own and can provide you with home, auto, life, medical, etc. etc. at very low rates. Check it out at: <http://insurance.scfirefighters.org/> The Association operate a LAST team (Local Assistance State Team) to provide your families and LISHFD with help in times of line of duty deaths. This team has responded nationally to major events as a resource to our extended family (something of which I am very proud).

Finally, your Firefighters' Association is like your local gym. You may be a member, but if you never darken the door; what are you getting out of it? I am biased, but I am amazed every day of the amount of things we have going on to ensure that we can meet our collective core values and mission. Please go to your web site and look around: www.scfirefighters.org Please come to your training events. Please sign up for emails and social media notifications. Please come to your meetings. Serving you; serving our citizens; serving our family – meeting the mission. I hope our paths cross soon. Stay safe.



**OFFICER OF THE YEAR
LT. BRIAN SMITH**



**FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR
SAMUEL NEGRON**