

THE RESPONDER

— Dedicated to Our Community, Our Profession and Each Other —

SPRING 2014



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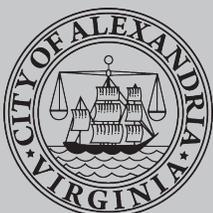


Alexandria Fire Department

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This newsletter is written
and compiled by the
Alexandria Fire Department's
Community Services Unit



Top Left: FF V. Murphy, FF L. Laios, FF M. Duckery, & LT H. Cook; Top Right: FF C. Okoli & FF M. Quante; Middle Left: FF M. Faber, FF M. Rowan, FF D. Hermatti, & LT M. Dunn; Middle Right: LT W. Sherman, FF A. Hematti, FF C. Brwon III, FF J. Wood, FF C. Herring, & LT H. Cook; Bottom Right: Medic W. Jordan, CPT. S. Good, Medic R. Lese, FF J. Taylor, & FF R. Givens; Bottom Right: FF T. Blunt, FF C. Okoli, & FF D. Kuny

Community Engagement

Alexandria Fire Department Partners with a Fire and EMS Explorer Program

By Grant Thomas & Jack Houston

Over the past six months several community adult volunteers have worked with the leadership of the Alexandria Fire Department to establish a youth fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) program. The program is sponsored through Learning for Life, which is affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America and is targeted at youth aged 15 to 20 with the goal of providing experiences to help young people develop career and life skills through community involvement.

On Tuesday April 1, 2014, the Alexandria Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Explorer Post 1774 held its first official meeting at the Alexandria Fire Department Professional Development Center. There are currently 10 members of the post which meets several times each month to allow the participants the opportunity to learn about the Alexandria Fire Department and participate in some of the Fire Department's activities. For example, in the upcoming weeks the Explorer Post youth participants will be getting trained in basic first aid. Upon completion of some of the basic CPR and EMS skills, later this summer the Explorer Post youth participants will begin learning about basic firefighting tactics and procedures.

The Alexandria Fire & EMS Explorer Post is currently at the maximum capacity for the number of youth participants the program can accept, but there is a waiting list for other youth who are interested in joining. For more information, visit www.afdfireexplorer.com, email alexandriafireexplorers@gmail.com, or call 571.969.2214



Explorer post members learning CPR from EMS Supervisor Michael Gerber.

Spring Fire Safety Visits

By Shawn Gore

In continuation of the department's community outreach and fire safety campaign, city firefighters and paramedics discussed fire safety and prevention to preschool, kindergarten, and first grade students in Alexandria's Elementary and Preschools throughout the months of March and April.

The Alexandria Fire Department wants to remind local residents that children under the age of five only account for 7% of the population, but make up 10% of the fire deaths in the United States. Fire safety visits remind us of all the serious fire hazards present in our communities, homes and workplaces and how to prevent them from starting.

The curriculum focused on the job duties of firefighters, smoke alarms, "Stop, drop and roll," "Stay low and go," 911 calls, "What's hot and what's not," and the common types of fires and how to prevent them from happening.



Explorer post members visiting station 204.



Firefighter Valdez doing community outreach.

2015 Fiscal Budget Proposal

By Cameron Hall

On Tuesday, February 24, City Manager Rashad Young presented his Fiscal Year 2015 General Fund Budget to the City Council. This budget has been organized around four "Focus Areas" that are anticipated to align with what Alexandria residents expect and have requested. These focus areas include 1. Accountable, Effective, and Well-Managed Government; 2. Healthy and Thriving Residents; 3. Livable, Green, and Prospering City; and 4. Safe, Secure, and Just Community. This is a new approach to the budget process, and is not based solely on historical spending; rather it seeks to align investments with the priorities outlined in the City's Strategic Plan and City Manager's Performance Plan. The City Manager has developed a framework called Results Alexandria, to determine long-term outcomes that support the Strategic Plan and align funding to reflect those priorities.

The Fire Department falls under Focus Area #4: Safe, Secure, and Just Community. The City Manager is proposing to open Station 210, currently under construction, on Eisenhower Avenue with the engine staffed by firefighters relocated from Station 204. This move is expected to balance City resources and provide a more consistent level of service throughout the city. Station 210 will also have a 24-hour medic unit and provide additional space for the Fire Department's Professional Development Center.

The updated Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Records Management system is also scheduled to be implemented in the next fiscal year with plans to devote personnel and resources to its operation and maintenance.

While funding for merit increases and career ladders is expected to move forward, some positions are proposed to be eliminated. It is important to note that any reduction in force have resulted from eliminating or reducing programs and are not related to individual, specific employees. The City plans to assist displaced employees in finding other positions with the city government, if possible.

The City Manager has proposed to eliminate ten (10) vacant firefighter positions that were scheduled to assist with staffing as Station 210 opens later this year.

Other projects throughout the city include continued work on the waterfront plan and marina improvements, design work for rebuilding Station 203 on Cameron Mills, and the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station. City leaders remain optimistic for the future, as Alexandria will welcome the National Science Foundation, scheduled to open in 2017. The continued development of Potomac Yard and the waterfront areas in Old Town will add economic investment that will help maintain and grow the City's tax base.

(On May 6, 2013, the Alexandria City Council approved a \$624.8 million General Fund operating budget for FY 2014. The approved budget can be found at <http://alexandriava.gov/Budget>.)

TRAINING/ PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

EMS Sim Lab: Better Than Ever

By Michael Zuidema

The Alexandria Fire Department, in order to ensure a consistent training process for its emergency first-responders, is piloting a full-time EMS Field Training Officer Coordinator position. The FTO Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that all FTOs have the equipment and resources needed to train new EMS Interns. Additionally, they are responsible for creating realistic training simulations using the department's state-of-the-art simulation manikin. EMS Supervisor John Rule has been assigned to this position and has initiated a number of improvements to the department's current EMS training capabilities.

One such improvement has been to upgrade the Simulation Lab (Sim Lab) with an audio/visual system. The department's Sim Lab allows personnel to train on the latest EMS techniques and protocols in a safe, controlled environment using a computerized manikin which takes the place of a live patient.

This new system, which consists of three cameras, a microphone system and DVR, will allow instructors to monitor and record a student's performance during training evolutions. This information makes it possible for instructors and students to evaluate student performance,

develop training plans, and improve simulation scenarios.

Supervisor Rule believes this new A/V system will "help reduce the amount of anxiety involved during testing, in that students will no longer have an instructor looking over their shoulder." It will be just the student and the Sim Patient in the room, providing a much more realistic environment.



Meet the Newest Members of the AFD: The Medics of the 28th Recruit Class

By Hilary Gates

The 28th AFD EMS recruit class, consisting of 14 medics, graduated on February 20, a week later than originally scheduled due to weather-related delays. In spite of the postponement, the ceremony was well-attended by family and friends of the graduates.

Speaking to the assembled audience, class valedictorian Hillary Lindsay reprised many of the recruits' fondest moments and memorable events.

"We pushed the recruits hard and their grades reflected that," said Supervisor Tracy Eichelberger. "The class average was 94.92% with 11.1 points separating highest and lowest grade."

The recruits have now been stationed at their respective firehouses for almost two months. Under the supervision of their Field Training Officers, they are moving through the first sessions of their medic internships. The focus for the initial period of training is on driving, scene management, drills at the Simulation Lab and familiarizing themselves with station life.



28th AFD EMS Recruit class doing team building.

Introducing AFD's newest medics:

Christopher Bente

Firehouse and shift: 207A

Hometown: Pasadena, Md.

Resides in: Nottingham, Md.

Q: What are you enjoying so far about the job?

A: Working with [Medic II] Fiona Apple.

Q: What are you most looking forward to about your future in the AFD?

A: At this point I'm only focused on finishing my internship and getting cut loose.

Q: What is something people don't know about you?

A: I speak German, but only a little. Just learning.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: Triathlon, video games, cooking, and hiking.

Brett Buehler

Firehouse and shift: 207B

Hometown: Laurel, Md.

Resides in: Laurel, Md.

Q: What are you enjoying so far about the job?

A: The protocols and new work environment.

Q: What are you most looking forward to about your future in the AFD?

A: The prospect of getting to do something I enjoy as a career.

Q: What is your favorite memory from recruit school?

A: All of the instructors.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: Music, running, and being out on the water.



28th AFD EMS Recruit class doing team building.



28th AFD EMS Recruit class doing team building.

Andrew Cornell

Firehouse and shift: 205A

Hometown: Fairfax, Va.

Resides in: Alexandria, Va.

Q: What are you enjoying so far about the job?

A: The job in general motivates and excites me, and the pair of preceptors I have makes it even better. They lead by example and offer insights on how to do the job better on just about every call. Even when the call is low priority it is still service; the service aspect of this is what I most enjoy.

Q: What is most challenging so far?

A: Just trying to put it all together. The individual components are improving, and hopefully that will lead to smoother overall performance and delivery.

Q: What are you most looking forward to about your future in the AFD?

A: Developing roots.

Xenya Gainor

Firehouse and shift: 208C

Hometown: Boise, Idaho

Resides in: Catonsville, Md.

Q: What are you enjoying so far about the job?

A: The variety of calls we run.

Q: What is something people don't know about you?

A: I competed in the Winter Olympics in ice skating for Ukraine. That actually never really happened, but I am Ukrainian.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: Hiking with my dog and playing sand-volleyball.

Sean Goza

Firehouse and shift: 205B

Hometown: NAS Patuxent River, Md.

Resides in: Falls Church, Va.

Q: What happened on your first call, shift or tour that made you excited for your new job?

A: The constant realization that I wasn't actually dreaming. There are a lot of people willing and happy to do whatever they can to help us all succeed.

Q: What is most challenging so far?

A: Remembering to hit the switch to exit the ER before walking by and standing expectantly at the door. I've gotten better, so now I only forget about 75 percent of the time.

Q: What is something people don't know about you?

A: I lived overseas for eight years, spending all my teen years in Norway and Japan.

Q: What is your favorite memory from recruit school?

A: Negotiating the maze in the dark was a little anxiety-inducing and a great experience. Psychologically, it was quite interesting.

Hillary Lindsay

Firehouse and shift: 206A

Hometown: Roxbury, Conn.

Resides in: Springfield, Va.

Q: What happened on your first call, shift or tour that made you excited for your new job?

A: I'm at 206 and I didn't run a call until 10pm. I was shocked and worried that I would be a white cloud and wouldn't run calls, ever. Clearly that changed.

Q: What is most challenging so far?

A: Answering this survey.

Q: What is something people don't know about you?

A: This is my second career. My education is actually in Computer Engineering and IT.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: Adventure racing, triathlons, hanging out with Colt, my 11-year-old Pit Bull.

Caitlin Neill

Firehouse and shift: 207C

Hometown: Springfield, Va.

Resides in: Burke, Va.

Q: What happened on your first call, shift or tour that made you excited for your new job?

A: The very first call on my first shift, [Medic] Tracy [Eichelberger] looked at me and says "You're leading this one." I was extremely nervous about how I would do, but very excited to know that I'm being thrown in the middle of everything.

Q: What is most challenging so far?

A: Getting used to not being in recruit school. I still feel like

someone is going to make me do push-ups if I mess up.

Q: What is something people don't know about you?

A: My record for eating chicken wings is 35.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: I like going to vineyards and wine festivals.

Bao-Vinh Nguyen

Firehouse and shift: 208A

Hometown: Annandale, Va.

Resides in: Annandale, Va.

Q: What happened on your first call, shift or tour that made you excited for your new job?

[On my] first shift, I ran a Segment Elevation Myocardial Infarction (STEMI) with [Former Medic Nate] Brenner and [Medic] Bobby Honaker.

Q: What is most challenging so far?

A: It's challenging trying to retain everything. Being fresh out of medic school, I have a lot to learn and remember including keeping an eye on the fuel level, stocking units, and station duties.

Q: What is something people don't know about you?

A: I was born in Alexandria. [I] couldn't wait until we got to the hospital so medics delivered me.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: Mountain biking, flag football, snowboarding, lacrosse, camping/backpacking.

Dylan Poole

Firehouse and shift: 206C

Hometown: Dayton, Md.

Resides in: Catonsville, Md.

Q: What interesting thing happened on your first call/shift/tour that surprised you/worried you/or made you excited for your new job?

A: My third call was an rapid sequence intubation (RSI), so that made me pretty excited for the job even though [Supervisor David] Fox stole the tube.

Q: What are you enjoying so far about the job?

A: I really enjoy everything. I like learning new things and becoming better at what I do and everyone seems very willing to teach.

Q: What is most challenging so far?

A: The steep learning curve. There is just a lot learn in a very short amount of time.

Q: What is your favorite memory from recruit school?

A: I enjoyed the Physical Training. It was a nice break from the classroom and all the quizzes. I also enjoyed doing the little bit of fire training that we got to do.

Jessica Robertson

Firehouse and shift: 202B

Hometown: Rockville, Md.

Resides in: Frederick, Md.

Q: What are you enjoying so far about the job?

A: I love the different kind of calls we run as well as just the overall station life. Everyone has been so nice and welcoming that it makes it fun to come to work every day.

Q: What is most challenging so far?

A: For me the most challenging part has been navigating the city. I am "directionally challenged" so I have to study my maps twice as hard.

Q: What is something people don't know about you?

A: I love to bake and cook. On my days off I am always on Pinterest looking for new ideas to make and bring in. I also love arts and crafts.

Q: What is your favorite memory from recruit school?

A: I loved running scenarios. Every day was different so it was always a surprise what we would be doing. Some surprises were better than others.

Barbara Sparklin

Firehouse and shift: 206B

Hometown: Pasadena, Md.

Resides in: Kingstowne, Va.

Q: What happened on your first call, shift or tour that made you excited for your new job?

A: We had a candidate for RSI. I was amazed at how smoothly the call flowed. The teamwork on this call was more than obvious. The call built my excitement to work with such great people who work cohesively even during times of stress.

Q: What is something people don't know about you?

A: I have an interest in pursuing a skydiving certification.

Q: What is your favorite memory from recruit school?

A: My favorite memory of recruit school would most definitely be the EDGE teamwork training day since this was the first day the other recruits and I had exposure to each others' strengths and weaknesses.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: Kayaking, hiking/camping, DIY projects, cooking/baking (perhaps 206 knows this by now?), swimming, and traveling.

Edgar Velazquez

Firehouse and shift: 207D

Hometown: West Palm Beach, Fl.

Resides in: Alexandria, Va.

Q: What happened on your first call, shift or tour that made you excited for your new job?

A: My first code was a good experience. I was responsible for managing the airway and was able to get a tube in. We were able to [regain a pulse] on the patient.

Q: What is most challenging so far?

A: Everything is a challenge but the biggest challenge is putting it all together.

Q: What is something people don't know about you?

A: I was part of a dance crew for Prince at the Superbowl.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: Basketball, football, baseball, and studying my protocols.

Laura Suggs

Firehouse and shift: 206D

Hometown: Enderlin, N.D.

Resides in: Springfield, Va. and Annapolis, Md.

Q: What are you enjoying so far about the job?

A: I really enjoy the diversity and demographics of the calls that we run.

Q: What is most challenging so far?

A: There are many moving parts and being able to do all of them at the same time and still give good patient care.

Q: What is your favorite memory from recruit school?

A: When we would take tests, [Supervisor] David Fox would roll his podium around the room banging into the tables so we could learn to concentrate in a chaotic environment.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: I love all sports, but [I'm] waiting for the weather to change to hit the links and pull my bikes out.

Adam Wynn

Firehouse and shift: 205D

Hometown: Woodbridge, Va.

Resides in: Fairfax, Va.

Q: What happened on your first call, shift or tour that made you excited for your new job? A: For my first tour, the longest we were in the station at one time was 88 minutes. Luckily, it slowed down a bit.

Q: What is your favorite memory from recruit school??

A: We convinced Robertson they built large, wooden sailing vessels at the "ship plant" next to the burn building. After completion, they went to the Torpedo Factory to be outfitted before going in service.



28th AFD EMS Recruit class doing SCBA training.



28th AFD EMS Recruit class doing SCBA training.



28th Alexandria Fire Department EMS Recruit Class and instructors.



28th AFD EMS Recruit class doing Hazmat training.



28th AFD EMS Recruit class doing SCBA training.

FIRE PREVENTION & LIFE SAFETY TIPS

Spring Fire Safety Tips

By Andrea Buchanan

Spring is here, it's time to put away the snow shovels and prepare for your favorite spring activities like barbecuing, entertaining, outdoor sporting events, yard work and everyone's favorite spring cleaning. While clearing out the unwanted items it is a good time to check your homes for unsafe conditions, and to ensure your families are safe from potential fire hazards. Here are a few fire safety tips to help you perform your annual spring cleaning, and to ensure that your family has a safe spring.

BBQ / Grilling Safety Tips

- All barbeque grills must only be used outdoors — using grills indoors or in enclosed spaces is not only a fire hazard, but it exposes occupants to toxic gasses and potential asphyxiation.
- Always position the grill well away from combustible objects — buildings, fences, deck railings and landscaping can easily and quickly ignite.
- Get your grill cleaned and serviced. Check all propane tanks and lines for leaks and damage.
- Never leave a lit grill unattended.
- Always use long handled grilling utensils and heat resistant oven mitts to avoid exposure burns from heat and flames.
- Periodically remove grease build-up in catch trays to prevent it from igniting.
- Keep a garden hose nearby, connected and ready for use in case of a fire.

Safety Tips in and around the home

- Remove leaves and trash from carports and garages: Combustible materials are dangerous if they are exposed to heated automobile components, especially under the vehicle.
- Properly store flammable liquids and home chemicals: Make sure that gasoline and home chemicals are well marked and out of the reach of children and pets. All flammables, i.e., gasoline should be stored in a cool dry place outside the house or work area in an approved container.
- Recycle: Get rid of old newspapers, magazines and

junk mail. These items tend to pile up and can greatly contribute to the severity and spread of fire.

- Check for and correct frayed or damaged extension cords and wiring on all appliances.
- Dryer Vents - If clothes are still damp at the end of a typical drying cycle or requires longer times than normal, this may be a sign that the lint screen or the exhaust duct is blocked. Pay particular attention to lint build-up in clothes dryer vents and in the exhaust ducts. Correct by cleaning the lint screen/filter before or after drying each load of clothes. Clean the dryer vent and exhaust duct periodically. Clean behind the dryer, where lint can build up. Keep the area around the dryer clean and free of clutter.
- Clean behind large furniture and appliances: Vacuum and clean behind furniture and appliances.
- Add smoke alarm maintenance to your spring cleaning list. They require only three minor scheduled tasks: One, replace the batteries once a year; two, keep them clean. Just as you dust your bookshelves, make sure that your smoke alarm is free from dust and debris, as it may interfere with proper functioning. Thirdly, test your smoke alarms monthly.
- Plan your escape: This is a good time to sit down with your family or co-workers and discuss what to do in the event of a fire and identify your meeting place outside the house/work area.
- Clean your oven: oven fires occur when oil/grease deposits are overheated and ignite.
- Clean the cooking surface of your stove: grease and food crumbs can quickly ignite.
- Keep combustible items i.e. oven mitts, towels, wooden utensils, paper towels, etc. off the top of the stove.
- Plug cooking appliances directly into wall outlets. Do not use extension cords or surge protectors with cooking appliances.
- Ensure a safety area for children and pets around the stove or areas where hot food are prepared or served, rule of thumb 3' clearance.
- Do no leave kitchen when you are frying, boiling or when cooking anything on cooking surface (stove top). Even if you leave the kitchen for a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- When baking, roasting or boiling check the oven regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking and use a timer to remind you to check the oven while cooking.

WINTER 2014 RUN STATISTICS

(December, January & February)

	UNIT	MEDICAL	FIRE SUPRESSION	TOTAL	2014 YTD	2013 YTD
Station 201	E201	122	230			
	Total			352	250	1319
Station 202	M202	427	95			
	U202	1	2			
	Total			525		
Station 203	E203	164	207		342	2091
	T203	24	268			
	Total			663		
Station 204	E204	165	218		465	2294
	M204	127	37			
	T204	39	376			
	Total			962		
Station 205	E205	201	342		677	3478
	M205	531	131			
	Total			1205		
Station 206	E206	268	318		800	4627
	M206	542	130			
	RS206	42	88			
	Total			1388		
Station 207	E207	240	291		951	5460
	M207	425	108			
	Total			1064		
Station 208	E208	406	361		726	4209
	M208	523	132			
	T208	88	354			
	Total			1864		
Station 209	E209	204	213		1262	7219
	H209	0	12			
	U209	2	1			
	Total			432		
Total					294	1493
				8455	5767	32190