



FIRE DEPARTMENT CONNECTION

For and About the Employees of the Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department

Rescue's on a Roll

Four Additional Full-Time Rescues in Service in January, More Planned



Rescues 4, 10, 14 and 29 will become full-time units in January. They follow Rescue 63's introduction last October. Also planned are Rescue 16 at JIA and then Rescue 73 near Cecil Field Commerce Center when Fire Station 73 opens later this year. JFRD now has 47 full-time rescue units.

Chief Miles Bowers Served JFRD More than Half of His 91 Years

Tucked away in a cabinet in his office, Tom Francis has several small boxes containing employee service pins. There's just one box of pins labeled "50."

Francis, JFRD's public information officer, still recalls the day when he



Chief Bowers

plucked one of the 50-year service pins and presented it to Director/Fire Chief Miles Bowers.

"I doubt I will ever need one of those again," Francis said, referring to Bowers' exceptionally long tenure.

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Chief's Corner

New year, new newsletter.

Our decision to retire ON SCENE was rooted in strengthening your role and presence in our department's newsletter. What better way to start building upon your direct involvement than by seeking your ideas for the new publication's name?

Nearly 50 members offered suggestions, and I appreciate your efforts. Given the scope of our profession, it's not easy to summarize our duties, objectives and culture in a few words. We received a variety of options and considered how each name fit the newsletter's focus which is much more upon you than the administration.

Ladder 28's Lt. Jairo Herrera submitted "Fire Department Connection." We chose that name because it is representative of the newsletter's mission to share information from the field, to recognize your successes and your ideas. Notice how I said "from" the field? We are interested in your story ideas and photos. Please see box below for information about submissions.

Fire Department Connection's format will be shorter articles and some recurring features, one of which is Station Spotlight. This is a great feature that recognizes passion for the job and work environment. Please see page 3 for the first installment. Another distinction is unit call volumes will now appear in a separate report which Lt. Mark Rowley publishes in his duties as JFRD's data and privacy officer.

You likely have heard that we lost a JFRD legend this month. Chief Miles Bowers, who served the department for 57 years, passed away Jan. 9. He served as Director/Fire Chief from 1984-88 and as interim Chief in 2003. Let's keep Chief Bowers and his family in our thoughts.

Kurt Wilson
Chief of Department

Story Ideas & Photos

Please e-mail jbracey@coj.net

Legendary Leadership

By Operations Chief Keith Powers

If your first captain was Lloyd Ray, then you probably experienced his mentoring style which provided a priceless learning opportunity for rookies and engineers assigned to Engine 17 on C-shift.

Each shift, Capt. Ray would rotate the assigned roles of our engine

crew, so every third trick, the firefighter

would ride up for the day, and Capt. Ray would ride backwards. By extracting his rookies from their comfort zone, Capt. Ray accelerated their learning pace. He also built confidence in his firefighters and engineers through practical application.

More than anything, those rookies, who included yours truly, experienced a sense

of belonging and empowerment early in their careers. That's because their officer had demonstrated faith in their abilities to learn and to perform under the pressure of incident command.

Speaking of pressure, I was once the rookie riding up in the officer's seat when we got knocked out to a warehouse fire

off the 5200 block of Beaver Street shortly after midnight.

The structure,

which nearly filled one city block, was full of tires. As we got closer, I could see flames piercing through the building's skylight. Taking after Capt. Ray's communication style with his crew, I knocked on the window between the front seat cab and the firefighters' seats to alert him that this would be a working fire. Capt. Ray then asked what he should do upon ar-

Capt. Lloyd Ray, Engine 17

rival. I asked him to catch the hydrant. Once the engine was parked, I headed for the hydrant, but to my surprise, Capt. Ray was already on the task. No doubt about it, he put me in command. That's when I really understood his leadership style and his trust in a rookie's ability to apply his or her knowledge base and training.

Because Capt. Ray's mentoring had prepared me for moments like this, I was able to calmly and effectively communicate with our battalion chief to advise him that our attack would be defensive because there was too much fire inside and that the operational period would likely be a prolonged event. We were there past dawn.

From my perspective, Capt. Ray never saw a rookie as a burden. He believed the new firefighter was worth the investment, worth his trust, and that one day the reward would far outweigh the effort.

RECRUIT CLASSES 3-17, 4-17, AND 5-17

317 September 28, 2017

Firefighter/EMT Logan T. Balazic
Firefighter/EMT Jacob L. Blackstone
Firefighter/EMT Carlisa K. Breland
Firefighter/Paramedic Eric D. Courtney
Firefighter/EMT Lori M. Duncan
Firefighter/Paramedic Ashley S. Evans
Firefighter/EMT Zackery K. Gardner
Firefighter/EMT Robert D. Giddens
Firefighter/Paramedic Armando R. Gonzalez
Firefighter/EMT Jonathan A. Grigorescu
Firefighter/Paramedic Robert V. Haddock, Jr.
Firefighter/Paramedic Destin A. Hersey
Firefighter/EMT Patrick A. Hogan
Firefighter/Paramedic Phillip A. Holden
Firefighter/EMT Kyle E. Laffrey
Firefighter/Paramedic William J. Lee
Firefighter/EMT Arianna M. Lopez
Firefighter/EMT Zachary T. Matzen
Firefighter/EMT Brandon O. Oloryunda
Firefighter/Paramedic Gregory A. Potter, Jr.
Firefighter/Paramedic Shekinah A. Rudolph
Firefighter/EMT Abubakar C. Saddique
Firefighter/EMT Jonathan W. Taunton

417 November 16, 2017

Firefighter/EMT Isaiah E. Anderson
Firefighter/Paramedic Peter F. Baptiste
Firefighter/EMT Cevonte J. Edwards
Firefighter/Paramedic Christopher S. Foote
Firefighter/EMT Marckenley Garcon
Firefighter/Paramedic Jeffery A. Halker
Firefighter/EMT Joseph E. Harrison
Firefighter/EMT Benjamin D. Hodge
Firefighter/EMT Jarvis D. M. Jefferson
Firefighter/EMT Trevor K. Kirkland
Firefighter/EMT Andrew C. Lang
Firefighter/EMT Menos W. Leroy, Jr.
Firefighter/EMT Zachary M. Obermiller
Firefighter/Paramedic Christopher T. Pannell
Firefighter/Paramedic John W. Poole
Firefighter/Paramedic Adam S. Roland
Firefighter/EMT Amber R. Smith-Wilcox
Firefighter/EMT Colin J. Sperry
Firefighter/EMT Kayla L. Stephens

**Congratulations
to all Graduates.**

517 December 14, 2017

Firefighter/Paramedic Brandon M. Bradley
Firefighter/EMT Jordan A. Brown
Firefighter/EMT Ian M. Charlton
Firefighter/EMT Jesse A. Echeandia
Firefighter/Paramedic Vincent J. Fenton-Bruno
Firefighter/Paramedic Christopher A. Fox
Firefighter/Paramedic Antonio I. Gonzale
Firefighter/EMT Matthew D. Hammock
Firefighter/EMT Daniel L. Harris
Firefighter/EMT Harrison R. Helton
Firefighter/Paramedic Robert B. Hewett
Firefighter/EMT Davell L. Jackson
Firefighter/EMT Phaylicia E. Jenkins
Firefighter/Paramedic Eric P. Johnson, II
Firefighter/EMT Christian M. Lockey
Firefighter/Paramedic Garrett D. Locy
Firefighter/Paramedic Austin G. Macdonald
Firefighter/EMT Robert S. Montgomery
Firefighter/EMT Cody A. Nix
Firefighter/EMT Nicholas K. Roller
Firefighter/EMT Shannon L. Rowley
Firefighter/EMT Brittany M. Silcox
Firefighter/EMT Ronald K. Smith
Firefighter/EMT Nicholas W. Tawney
Firefighter/Paramedic Brandon W. Tripp

NEW AND TRUE

+ THANK YOU

From a recent standby:

Engine 51 firefighters Hatcher, Vandever and Jennings provided the 62 in attendance with a greater understanding of our community's emergency services. They explained the workings of the fire truck, the various tools, and encouraged the children to participate by asking such questions as "How much does a gallon of water weigh?" Many thanks for your assistance.

*Frances Wickes
Mandarin Branch Library*

Station 73's groundbreaking is planned for early 2018 at Cecil Field and will pave the path for another rescue unit and improved fire protection for southwest Jacksonville. When 73 opens, Engine 56 will relocate there and Rescue 73 will go in service. Station 73's location will be about 2 miles north of Station 56, placing it within the ISO-defined "5-road mile" limit of more structures...

In late January, JFRD will welcome a very large class of recruits. A SAFER grant will fund the majority of Class 1-18, which is expected to have about 90 members...

Usually, it's field personnel traveling to TAC Support and Logistics for help or supplies. But in early January, a civilian brought his brother to the Ellis Road facility for lifesaving help. Apparently, the driver noticed all the JFRD vehicles surrounding the building and pulled into the facility. In a matter of moments, TAC's Eng. Jason Jimenez, Lt. Jimmy Magill and Rescue 10's Firefighter Ray Howard, who was visiting TAC off duty, were caring for the unconscious man. Logistics' Eng. John Usry also assisted as did Fleet Management's J.R. Vergel. Meanwhile, David Tucker, TAC's vehicle coordinator, called for a rescue unit. Before Rescue 26 arrived, the team of TAC and Logistics personnel were able to bring the man to consciousness and improve his chances of survival.



Until early December, the light panels on the wall in **Station 28's** day room were the only reason to look that way. Then came the stockings – 46 red and white stockings. A time-lapse video reveals how the stockings, one per assigned firefighter, got there. The video, which is on social media, also shows Engineer

Suzie Smith and Firefighter Lorelei Vollmer



personalizing each stocking. Smith, who created the video, also captured as many members of 28 and Station 72 as possible putting up thousands of outdoor lights on the station and attaching custom-made wreaths to the apparatus. Beyond creating a holiday mood for the crew, the decorations also captured the attention of motorists and onlookers who slowed down as they passed the station on Hogan Road.

"The crew engaged the community," said Operations Division Chief Keith Powers.

Making that connection was one factor in recognizing the members of 28 and 72 as JFRD's first "Station Spotlight." The new recognition also considers unique group efforts by station members, upkeep of facility and apparatus, leadership, and teamwork.

"Any station can qualify," said Powers.

"This isn't about going on a bunch of runs or a particular call."

Powers added that "Station Spotlight" will be a recurring feature in Fire Department Connection and its selection criteria match the new publication's focus on the field. JFRD personnel are welcome to recommend stations for spotlight consideration with a brief explanation.

JFRD, JSO Collaborate for Police Athletic League's Holiday Event for Homeless Families



In late December, JFRD members guided their share of 175 homeless children during a Police Athletic League-sponsored shopping event at Wal-Mart on 103rd Street. Clockwise from top left: Engine 26's Eng. Ryan Hern, Ladder 31's Firefighter Justin Bessent, Engine 31's Lt. Aaron Bebernitz and Engine 26's Firefighter Eric Johnson. Ladder 10 and Engine 23 also participated.



Controlling Your Paycheck

Payment Report in Resource Management is a Good Troubleshooting Tool

Imagine your paycheck being accurate every time you receive it: your overtime, out of position pay, transfers, and all other details properly accounted.

JFRD's payroll specialists are here to help you, and they are hands-on with many of the time and attendance complexities each pay period. But they rely heavily upon what is entered into Resource Management or communicated directly to them from Chiefs in the field. Sometimes, that is not enough or not soon enough. That's where you can help.

"Before you sign off after each shift, please ensure your hours entered are

accurate. You should also review your payment report in Resource Management every Friday," said Wesley Archer, an administrative specialist in JFRD's payroll. "If something doesn't look right, call your chief." You should also closely look at every paycheck.

The what-you-see-is-what-you-get nature of the online payment report makes it a great troubleshooting tool to avoid potential paycheck issues. Also, you don't have to be at the fire station to access your payment report. It's available by remote access to the city's network. Payroll also runs smoother when all daily and weekly time and attendance reports are signed in a timely manner.

Archer works with Pearl Johnson, also an administrative specialist, and Michael Grossman, payroll supervisor. JFRD's payroll team processes approximately 1,350 paychecks 26 times annually. The variables they encounter and reconcile are numerous: leave balance, conversions from a 56-hour work week to a 40-hour week, out of class pay, military leave, bereavement leave, K-9 compensation, leave rollback and sell-back, FLSA, emergency comp time en-

tries or overtime generated during EOC activations, just to name a few.

"We partner with Employee Services and the

City's Central Payroll to navigate the many moving pieces involved in payroll," said Grossman, "and we either answer your questions or we can point you in the right direction to get the answers you need."

Currently, the team is preparing for the JFRD Holiday Sellback/Transfer process, ensuring that your holiday leave is accurately balanced and either sold or transferred to the Annual Leave Bank.



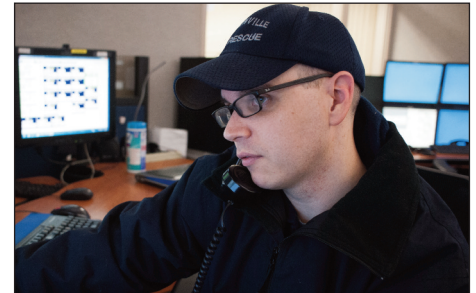
JFRD's payroll staff : (L-R) Wesley Archer, Pearl Johnson and Michael Grossman. They work at Headquarters.

If you have questions about payroll, please e-mail:

JFRDPayroll@coj.net

Fire Comm Feature

FRCO Jon Boles



Describe your job ...

It's an opportunity to make a difference by providing pertinent, life-saving instruction that enables the chance of survival for citizens in emergency situations, while also assessing the nature of the scene to determine safety measures for first responders. It is the chance to make a positive impact on someone's worst day.

Most memorable call ...

What are truly rare are moments where you experience your contribution ending in a positive outcome, and those you always savor. Most notable on my end was providing CPR instruction and reassurance to a caller that was effective enough for arriving units to bring a patient back from cardiac arrest.

On helping others ...

It's a job you do without any sense of self. You serve others with no desire for recognition or praise, only a dedication to help those who need help. Whether I am referring someone to another department outside my field or providing life-saving instruction, I know I am always at work to serve the needs of whoever is on the other end of the line.

Outside interests ...

Off time is spent continually improving my skills with photography; I also work fervently on composing a narrative, which I hope will end up being a manuscript worthy of editing into a first novel.

Remembering Chief Miles Bowers: June 13, 1926 - January 9, 2018



Retired Chief Miles Bowers is surrounded by fellow retirees Bob Garmon (left) and Ronnie Morrell (right). The men were participating in a JFRD officers' training session at the Fire Museum in 2012. They discussed department history, leadership philosophies and answered questions from new officers.

Continued from page 1.

Miles Bowers reported to work for 57 years – more than half of his 91 years on Earth. The World War II veteran came to our department when Jacksonville experienced extraordinary, multiple alarm structure fires – and often. He worked in Station 3 after it was converted to JFRD's vehicle shop but before it became the Fire Museum. Fire engines were chain driven back then.

Bowers achieved every civil service rank and was appointed as Director/Fire Chief twice, first in the mid-1980s and briefly in 2003 on an interim basis during a mayoral transition. He also remained connected to JFRD after his retirement in January 2004. He participated in officer training courses, attended numerous

events such as the annual retirees' luncheon at Local 122, the Sea of Blue Fallen Firefighter Memorial March, and the Men from Ten station reunion. If you invited him to a JFRD graduation or dinner at your station, he'd show. On occasion he might bring a supply of vintage JFRD patches to hand out after dinner. Bowers could recall details about calls from decades ago, and he retained his independence, driving himself to events and station visits.

No doubt, Bowers was committed to the fire service, but he also was immersed in his spirituality. For 56 years, Bowers deeply involved himself in North Jacksonville Baptist Church, as a member and a deacon who was considered an encouraging influence on young men.

"He was a constant source of inspiration. I was eternally blessed to watch him all my life," said Chris Coram, associate pastor for administration at North Jacksonville Baptist, during Bowers' funeral on Jan. 13.

Hundreds of active duty members and retirees attended the service at the church on North Main Street. They also heard from Senior Pastor Herb Reavis who shared how Bowers beat cancer twice, how he regularly consoled others in need, and how Bowers realized "you have to pass on your character and faith" to new generations. Reavis also put Bowers' passing in perspective: "He's home. He's healed. He's happy."