

October 2008 Newsletter

Bringing Laughter Among Loss, The Tough Job of a Clown

Fire Prevention Week is the first full week of October. The weekend prior, members of the fire service, survivors of our fallen heroes and others joined together in Emmitsburg, Maryland, to honor those firefighters who lost their lives in the line of duty during the past year.

» [A 2008 Memorial Weekend Photo Essay](#)

» **Visit:** [Memorial Weekend Website](#)

I Am a Child of a Firefighter



A Poem
by
Baylee Cox



Firefighter Mental Health and Wellness

Stress, Job Stress, Job Burn Out, Acute Stress Disorder, Post Traumatic Stress: What is it? What can we do about it? What can be done to reduce its impact on our physical, as well as, emotional outlook? We need to begin the run and manage ourselves through active service careers and balance out the negative impact that stress has on us.

Cultural Change: Just Do It

I've heard it said many times that if we could accomplish Initiative #1 concerning cultural change, the remaining 15 wouldn't be necessary. After spending a lot of time with the Everyone Goes Home® program, I'm not so sure I believe that is completely true. As with any plan, there are benchmarks and/or steps along the way to reach the desired outcome.

Fireman's Fund Insurance Company Reaches \$20 Million Milestone in Donations to Fire Service

Fireman's Fund Insurance Company today announced that its corporate philanthropy initiative, the Heritage

ProgramSM at Fireman's Fund, has surpassed the \$20 million milestone since its inception in 2004. This is the company's nationwide commitment to provide needed equipment, training, and community education programs to fire departments and other fire service organizations.

[Carr Looks Forward to Challenges as Charleston Chief](#)

There are not many newly appointed fire chiefs who can say they've had an impact on their department before their first day on the job. But there aren't many fire chiefs like Thomas Carr.

[Everyone Goes Home® Speakers Bureau](#)

The *Everyone Goes Home*® Speakers Bureau is a support program to the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation in an effort to prevent line-of-duty deaths and injuries. The bureau provides nationally recognized speakers to address larger local audiences in the promotion of the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives and other safety issues.

[Paul Nelson Named New Wisconsin State Advocate](#)

I would like to wish everyone a warm and safe welcome. I am pleased to be part of the team that represents the State of Wisconsin as an advocate. Currently, I am the Chief of the North Fond du Lac Fire and EMS in Southcentral Wisconsin. We are a combination department with three career firefighters (myself and two paramedics/firefighters) and 50 paid on-call members. North Fond du Lac serves the community of approximately 5,000, plus we provide paramedic service for an additional 5,000+ in the surrounding townships.



INITIATIVE SPOTLIGHT

Spotlighting one of the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives each month

Initiative #14 - Public education must receive more resources and be championed as a critical fire and life safety program.

More on Initiative #14:

- » [Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Research Database](#)
- » [USFA Fire Prevention and Safety Campaigns](#)
- » [New York State Office of Fire Prevention & Control](#)

More Information: [16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives](#) | **Share a Resource:** editor@everyonegoeshome.com

Online TRAINING

NFPA Halloween Safety Facts

» **More:** [Fact Sheets](#)



FEATURED Events

Courage to Be Safe(SM)

Train-the-Trainer

Morris Co. Training Academy - Parsippany, NJ
November 21, 2008

Read More: » [About the Event](#)

Courage to Be Safe(SM)

Train-the-Trainer

Cape May Co. Fire Academy - Cape May, NJ
November 22, 2008

Read More: » [About the Event](#)

Safety Through Leadership - Modules 1 & 2

Camden Co. Training Center - Blackwood, NJ
December 11, 2008

Read More: » [About the Event](#)



FIREFIGHTER LIFE SAFETY RESOURCE KIT VOLUME 3

NEW RESOURCES TO MAKE EVERY DAY A TRAINING DAY

GET YOUR COPY TODAY! CLICK HERE ◀

Do you have an suggestion for the newsletter? Tell us about it! Please send your comments, articles, or news about what your department is doing to keep firefighters safe to editor@everyonegoeshome.com.

Bringing Laughter Among Loss, the Tough Job of a Clown

Chief Freddy "Higbee" Howell
Kings Bay Fire Department
Everyone Goes Home® Georgia State Advocate

Fire Prevention Week is the first full week of October. The weekend prior, members of the fire service, survivors of our fallen heroes and others joined together in Emmitsburg, Maryland, to honor those firefighters who lost their lives in the line of duty during the past year. They came from all over the United States to take part in this important weekend of events. They came as returning survivors, as escorts, as members of an honor guard, and as members of bagpipe and drum corps. Among the gathering of this distinguished group of people, there was one unlikely group that came to offer hope - professionally trained fire clowns. Yes, you read that right - clowns - and they came with a mission: to lift the spirits and bring a smile to the remaining loved ones, the most important of which are the children of fallen firefighters. The fire clowns occasionally brought smiles to volunteers and others involved in the event as well.

Friday, during registration when families were arriving, the clowns wandered around making balloon animals, painting faces, doing magic tricks or just plain "clowning around." That evening, before dinner, clowns were everywhere trying to make someone smile. After dinner, the clowns were introduced to the families and the children had the opportunity to play games with them. They play anything from Monopoly, Clue and Battleship to activity games like Simon Says or Red Light/Green Light.

Saturday while the adults were meeting with past survivors and learning how to deal with their loss, the clowns again entertained the children with more games. This time most of the games were outside and included bell ringing relays, a water balloon toss, a water gun challenge, and more. Then, afterward, the clowns provided the children with more one-on-one smiles by painting faces or making balloon animals.

So, who are these clowns and why do they do this?



Photo by Jen Underwood

They come from the areas of the fire service from all parts of the United States and they range in rank from firefighter to chief. They are typically career firefighters, and for some this has been their only profession. They are not goofy people who decided to become firefighters; they are heroes who decided there was another way they could help. They can identify with the lives of each and every person attending the Fallen Firefighter's Memorial because each one has had to train for emergencies, enter burning buildings, or scale a ladder to rescue a child. Each one is dangerously close to being one of the fallen they are here to honor.

In the experience of more than one firefighter, including Kings Bay Naval Base Fire Chief Freddy Howell, it was the day-in, day-out frustration of seeing disasters such as massive burns and fatalities that inspired these fire service professionals to become active in the art of prevention. They found out that by having fun they could educate others about the value of preventing fires and other emergency situations.

So what does it take? In addition to performing regular duties as a fire professional, these clowns spend tireless hours learning how to make people laugh. It begins with deciding what kind of clown he or she wants to become. It involves the type of make-up (which takes an hour to apply and even more than that to learn and perfect) to hair, to colors of the costume, shoes and accessories. They have to find what fits them best, develop their own costume, and get all that other funny gear they wear and carry. Clowns learn how to apply face paint, tie balloon sculptures, perform magic, and even juggle. They learn how to make people laugh by what they do or say in an ethical and professional manner. It's not as easy as it sounds, however the rewards are immense. Chief Howell states, "To know that you took away someone's pain for just a moment makes it all worth it."

The Georgia Firefighters Clown Society, started by Chief Howell about 20 years ago, is an extension of the Georgia Firefighters Burn Foundation. The Burn Foundation credits hundreds of saved lives as being directly related to the efforts of fire clowns and their message of prevention.

Borne out of the efforts of those that hosted the Memorial Weekend is a program called *Everyone Goes Home®*. Although we paid tribute to those that



Photo by Jen Underwood



Photo by Jen Underwood

are gone, we need to endeavor to keep our firefighters safe every day on the job. We are our brother's keeper, so let's take care of each other by making sure that we are doing what we can to make our profession safe!

I have been fortunate to attend the [National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend](#) for the past five years and have gained many friends and extended family as a result. It is a worthwhile sacrifice having to leave my family to tend to others' families. In the end, I am grateful that I have had the opportunity to spread such joy, because if it were my family attending, I would hope that my brothers would be doing the same.



Photo by Jen Underwood

About Freddy Howell:

Fire Chief Freddy Howell

Naval Sub Base Kings Bay, Kings Bay, Georgia

Years in the fire service: 24

Years as a fire clown: 20

Started as a firefighter in: Waycross, Georgia

Clown Name: "Higbee" (named after a part of fire truck apparatus)

Web Site: higbee2000.tripod.com

E-mail: higbeetheclown@hotmail.com

Married to Kathryn; Two children: Danielle (20) and James (8).

How to Get Involved:

If you are interested in being a professionally trained clown, several states such as Georgia and Florida, have fire academies that host classes each year. The Georgia Public Safety Training Center holds programs in March and September.



Photo by Jen Underwood



Photo by Jen Underwood



Photo by Jen Underwood



I Am a Child of a Firefighter

By Baylee E. Cox, 12, Daughter of Anthony P. Cox (2007)



My dad has an awesome job, one that he truly loves
I am so proud of him and everything that he does
He doesn't do it for the glory or for the money
It's a CAREER he loves to do no matter what they may pay

There's a price my family pays for a career he loves so DEEPLY
As daddy's gone on holidays and at bedtime too you see
He's not always at my ballgames or at my school plays
My "other family" watches me and cheers me on these days
I know my Daddy is with his "other family"
And he is sorry that he's away

Daddy tells me that he loves me and blows me kisses through the phone at night
So I can go to sleep knowing that WE ARE ALL SAFE tonight
Cause when I hear those sirens and see those flashing lights
I know that MY HERO and his crew have come to save someone tonight
Willing to pay the Ultimate Sacrifice, off the truck they come
Into the burning building as others turn and run

My dad paid the ultimate sacrifice and I miss Him HORRIBLY
But my "other family" will help me through this terrible tragedy
And they will remind me of the work that my Daddy has done
And what a TRUE HERO my father has now become!

I love you Daddy and I miss you more!

Firefighter Mental Health and Wellness

Shannon H. Pennington

firefighterveteran.com

26 Year Career Firefighter I.A.F.F.

Everyone Goes Home® Life Initiative 13: Firefighters and their families must have access to counseling and psychological support.

Stress, Job Stress, Job Burn Out, Acute Stress Disorder, Post Traumatic Stress: What is it? What can we do about it? What can be done to reduce its impact on our physical, as well as, emotional outlook? We need to begin the run and manage ourselves through active service careers and balance out the negative impact that stress has on us.

To full-time professional or volunteer firefighters the "s" word happens quite often on the front lines. (Thanks Forrest Gump...we needed that). The other word that begins with "s" is "STRESS". What does it mean to family and friends who support our efforts on the front lines of America? How can we help ourselves and how can we help others to understand the "drama and the trauma" of the psychological consequences involved with "the most dangerous of professions?"

Help is currently being developed, along with an active information highway, about the subject of stress in the American Fire Service. The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation has partnered with the North American Fire Fighter Veterans Network to get the stress message out.

The website firefighterveteran.com is designed to address the educational component of the *Everyone Goes Home®* Firefighter Life Safety Initiative #13 (Mental Health and Wellness). This site focuses on prevention before a stress exposure triggers traumatic wounding in you, the firefighter on the front lines.

It is true that firefighters can kick locomotives off the track, and jump over tall buildings when they roll out onto the street, but, the aftermath of serious traumatic exposure can cause emotional shock waves that can take the fight out of the firefighter. Any time you step into your bunker gear and strap on an air pack, you have the potential to be exposed to smoke, heat, and gasses formed from an "emotional backdraft." It can flashover in the memory of the event and take you out of the front lines and put you into a downward spiral away from the job.

Getting connected and staying connected to not just the physical, but to mental health and wellness, the other fitness needed for the "toughest job in the world, is vital. It will give you, the "front line firefighter" the staying power to keep fighting the good fight for all the right reasons. The information is online for you and your family.

Having a pre-plan when, not if, stress invades your bunker gear and penetrates your Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to the basement of your heart and soul, makes sound "firefighter common sense."

Firefighterveteran.com is a website designed to be a "go to" resource for firefighters, as well as, any family member who wants information on how to cope with the aftermath of stress. The website is available just like you, online 24/7/365.

On the front page you will find a message for all "First Responders" from a Canadian Lt. Governor who carries

the scars from childhood polio. His message is, "Not all wounds are visible". There is a video link to FDNY firefighter veteran Jimmy Brown who survived with emotional wounding on 9/11, along with his message about the "Real Men Real Depression" campaign from National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). The spring 2008 E-newsletter talks about the "suicide of a firefighter veteran" and what to look for. The winter E-newsletter talks about what stress is for us, written by a former firefighter in Germany writes about his experience as a volunteer and how he looks at stress in the fire service.

"F.I.R.S.T. S.T.E.P. H.O.P.E." is one of many tools on the website that can help you through the drama and trauma of sorting out the who, what, when, where, why and how of " your positive or negative reactions."

Education about firefighter stress will reduce the negative impact stress has on firefighters. It will require vigilance, patience and wisdom by listening to those who have lived the life and the lifestyle of the profession. We will begin to use all of the tools in the tool box, including regular updates as information becomes current.

In closing, I can see being out there on the speakers rounds, on a dedicated bus tour to talk with as many of you as possible. Firefighters need to open up the inch-and-a-half between our heads and our hearts and reduce the back pressure that negative stress causes us to experience. Dialogue and education, as well as, collaborative effort will change the outcomes. Let's all get on the bus and move forward on the information highway.

Think about it. **Everyone Goes Home®** When you get home remember to take your boots off before you walk in the door. If you carry the job with you through that door, de-con as soon as you can. Your family and friends are your refuge and re-hab zone. Keep yourself and those you care about safe.

Look for more information on Initiative 13 this December in the *Everyone Goes Home®* Newsletter!

Cultural Change: Just Do It

Billy Hayes

Courtesy of FireRescue1.com

I've heard it said many times that if we could accomplish Initiative #1 concerning cultural change, the remaining 15 wouldn't be necessary. After spending a lot of time with the Everyone Goes Home® program, I'm not so sure I believe that is completely true. As with any plan, there are benchmarks and/or steps along the way to reach the desired outcome. Perhaps I can suggest that a cultural change is the starting point, and there are 15 other initiatives that are the remaining necessary steps needed to reduce firefighter injuries and line of duty deaths (LODDs). So, how do we discuss this first initiative? Let us begin by trying to define what culture is in this instance.

For me, culture gives rise to values and those values in turn give rise to situational norms. Situational norms in turn give validation of the beliefs from which the norms originated. This closed circuit of values, norms and beliefs is the process of cultural development. Simply put, the way things get done over a period of time without distinction between right and wrong becomes the way things are done, period. Sayings such as "It's always been done this way," or "If it ain't broke, why fix it?" can be commonplace.

Monkeys in a cage

Have you ever heard of the "monkeys in a cage" description of culture? I picked it up a few years ago from a class I was attending and I have never forgotten it. I haven't found out who the author or creator was, so excuse me for borrowing the material.

A group of scientists put five monkeys in a cage. In the center of the cage was a stepladder. A banana was hung from the very top. The monkeys scurried up the ladder to retrieve the banana and then the scientists sprayed them with freezing cold water to prevent them from reaching it. Each time they tried to go up the ladder, they were again sprayed until none of the monkeys went up the ladder.

The scientists removed one monkey from the cage and replaced it with a new monkey. The new monkey saw the banana, saw the ladder and attempted to go up. The four original monkeys, afraid of being sprayed with water, assaulted the new guy to prevent him from going up the ladder. He had no idea why he was being attacked but he didn't go up the ladder again.

A second original monkey was removed from the cage and replaced with a new one. Same thing: the new monkey attempts to go up the ladder to retrieve the banana, and once again, this newest monkey is assaulted.

This process of bringing in new monkeys continues until there are no original ones in the cage that were sprayed with cold water. But no monkey in this now completely new group dares go up the ladder out of fear of being assaulted, not sprayed with cold water. Does this sound a little like fire department culture? Again, it's always been done this way!

Are there fire departments in our country today that operate in a similar manner? We may not be sure if the way we are doing things is right or wrong, but because it's always been done this way, we are afraid to change.

- Do we have fire crews pull booster lines on structure fires because we've put out a lot of fire and been accidentally successful? YES
- Do we have firefighters who don't wear seat belts because they have never been involved and/or injured in an apparatus collision? YES
- Do we have fire chiefs who do not pay critical attention to the needs of their firefighters and the conditions they operate under because they have never lost a firefighter on their watch? YES
- Do we have individuals in company officer positions who are not adequately trained to serve in the position but accept it as they are afraid to turn it down out of fear of not being promoted in the future? YES
- Do we have fireground commanders who do not always know where their fire crews are operating or have true accountability, but believe they do because personnel tags are in the front seat of the command vehicle? YES
- Do we have fire service members who do not exercise and get physicals because they have never had medical problems previously? YES

Each of these questions directly relate to Initiative #1 and more specifically culture. However, these aren't examples I just made up. These are the statements and stories I've experienced from various fire service members I've met.

Now keep in mind my columns are based on my beliefs and from my experiences as I've travelled and presented in various settings. In no way am I broadly painting every fire service organization as operating this way. In fact, there are many fire service organizations that have begun to make a culture change to prevent firefighter injuries and firefighter LODDs. I learned of a department (which I haven't pinpointed yet) in North Carolina that conducts exterior operations if full life safety and accountability exists; meaning family at the meeting place tells the arriving company officer, "We are all out and safe." If this happens, the tactics then transition to exterior. Now whether this is until fire is under control and conditions are conducive to enter, dependent on involvement, etc., I do not know. What I do know is the department is aware that its incoming resources are limited and firefighter safety over property conservation takes precedence. Some may not agree with this measure. Nevertheless, this is a bold move that other departments are beginning to implement. Just a few days ago I was on the campus of the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Md., with Dr. Burt Clark for the presentation of certificates to several departments in the Frederick County area of the state for achieving 100 percent signatures on the Brian Hunton National Seat Belt Pledge. As we stood in front of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial bearing all the names of our fallen brothers and sisters, I thought about the words I was going to say. It struck me that the philosophy that the fire service should adopt when it comes to firefighter safety can be found in Nike's slogan: Just Do It.

Maybe that's how we should approach Initiative #1. Just do it. Despite the culture, despite tradition, despite how hard it is, or despite whether it's not the popular thing to do or say, just do it. I'm not big on continuing to beat culture in the ground. Honestly, I think culture is too easy to blame for our problems. Culture is another word for laziness or for those who don't possess the leadership skills to make change. Be responsible, be accountable, be safe, and just do it.

Billy D. Hayes is the Advocate Program Manager for the Everyone Goes Home® campaign through the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation where he has served as a State and Region IV Advocate. He currently serves as the Director of Public Information and Community Affairs for the District of Columbia Fire and EMS Department. Previously, he was the Chief of Fire Services for the City of Riverdale, Ga., and is past-president of the Metro Atlanta Fire Chiefs Association. He is a graduate of Georgia Military College and the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program. Hayes frequently writes and speaks on the topics of firefighter safety and fire prevention. In this column series, he will be outlining the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives - and what they mean for you and your department. He can be contacted via email at Billy.Hayes@firerescue1.com.

Fireman's Fund Insurance Company Reaches \$20 Million Milestone in Donations to Fire Service

More than 1,000 Fire Departments Supported Since 2004

NOVATO, Calif. (Oct. 8, 2008) - Fireman's Fund Insurance Company today announced that its corporate philanthropy initiative, the Heritage ProgramSM at Fireman's Fund, has surpassed the \$20 million milestone since its inception in 2004. This is the company's nationwide commitment to provide needed equipment, training, and community education programs to fire departments and other fire service organizations.

During the past four years, more than 1,100 different fire departments have benefitted from the insurance company's grant money. Donations average \$20,000, but can range from \$5,000 to more than \$100,000. Grants are issued, in part, to fill the voids left by growing budget cuts.

"This is a program that has a direct impact in helping local fire departments, big and small, all across the country," said Mike LaRocco, president and chief executive officer. "The equipment purchased with our grant money not only makes communities safer, it has literally saved lives, and that's what we're most proud of."

The \$20 million mark was passed this week in Heath, Texas. The city's department of public safety received a \$10,000 grant for a new high-tech educational robot used to teach children how to protect themselves from fires and other dangers in their community.

Fireman's Fund employees and its network of independent agents work together to identify specific needs and direct grants to local fire departments. Grant money is frequently used to purchase auto extrication gear, thermal imaging cameras, defibrillators, fire safety houses for children, and a variety of other equipment.

Additionally, the company has supported national fire service programs by providing hundreds of thousands of dollars in matching funds for the International Association of Fire Chiefs-led "National Fire Fighter Near-Miss Reporting System," the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation's "Everyone Goes Home" campaign and the National Volunteer Fire Council's "Heart Healthy Initiative."

Because of the unique scope and impact of this initiative, the Heritage Program at Fireman's Fund was honored with two distinct awards in 2008 - the American Business Award for Best Corporate Social Responsibility Program in the nation and the International Business Award for Best Corporate Social Responsibility Program in North America.

Fireman's Fund's commitment to the fire service stems back to 1863, when the company was founded with a mission to donate a percentage of its profits to the fire service. This commitment was renewed in 2004 with the launch of the Heritage Program at Fireman's Fund.

About Fireman's Fund

Fireman's Fund Insurance Company is a premier property and casualty insurance company providing personal,

commercial and specialty insurance products nationwide. Fireman's Fund is a member of the Allianz Group (NYSE: AZ), one of the world's largest providers of insurance and other financial services. For more information, visit www.firemansfund.com.

Carr Looks Forward to Challenges as Charleston Chief

By Jamie Thompson, FireRescue1 Editor

Courtesy of FireRescue1.com

CHARLESTON, SC - There are not many newly appointed fire chiefs who can say they've had an impact on their department before their first day on the job. But there aren't many fire chiefs like Thomas Carr.

The Montgomery County, Md., fire chief was named Monday as the new chief of the Charleston Fire Department. His appointment has been hailed as a coup for the city, with Charleston Mayor Joseph Riley saying he has achieved his goal in bringing the "best person in America" to lead the department.

While Chief Carr's appointment can not be officially ratified until the city council meets next Tuesday, the 54-year old has already made inroads into bringing about the desperately needed change that was highlighted by last year's Sofa Super Store fire, which killed nine firefighters.

Advanced training

In the wake of the fire, Chief Carr invited commanders from the Charleston Fire Department to attend advanced training in Montgomery County. He showed not only that things should be better, but perhaps more importantly, that they could be better.

The benefit these sessions brought to Charleston are obvious but, they also gave Chief Carr a personal perspective on a department which, just a few months later, would be looking for a replacement for Chief Rusty Thomas, who retired in June.

"When the job came up, I looked at it with interest," Chief Carr said. "I thought 'I've made lot of progress with Montgomery County and we are doing well - now here's an opportunity to work with the firefighters of Charleston and maybe have an impact there.'"

Getting to know some of the Charleston members through the training sessions only affirmed his interest, Chief Carr said, describing those he worked with as "tremendous."

But it was the concerted effort and drive of Charleston to find a suitable chief to take the department forward that was most impressive, he said.

As one of seven final candidates for the job, Chief Carr completed two days' worth of interviews and meetings last Tuesday.

"It was a very grueling process, but it really showed the commitment that the community has to the fire service, more than any I've seen anywhere," Chief Carr said. "It was unbelievable."

'Country's finest'

In making the announcement Monday, Charleston Mayor Riley said Chief Carr's reputation in the fire service is "unsurpassed" and that he hopes the new chief will help the department to become the finest in the country.

It's fair to say huge changes will be needed for that to happen, but Chief Carr said he relishes the opportunity.

"I have worked hard in Montgomery County to effect change - I'm one of those people who thrive on that," he said.

"I think that's part of the interest I have in Charleston...and working with the folks here to figure out what path takes us to the best place."

Chief Carr's resume' is impressive. He holds a Master of Science degree from the University of Maryland University College and a Bachelor of Arts from National-Louis University. His work in the fields of emergency management, firefighter health and safety and incident command is well known across the country.

He puts significant weight on learning from mistakes and following the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives. When he hosted senior members of the Charleston department for the training sessions last year, Chief Carr said it made him reflect on the near misses within his organization.

"They've always been of significant concern to me," he said.

An example can be found two years ago, when Chief Carr noted a rise in collisions involving apparatus.

"We were having close to 200 collisions a year," he said. "So we had a real focus on that and were able to drop that down significantly, by about 20 percent in the first year after."

Change of focus

Having spent his entire 30-year fire service career in Montgomery County, including the past four as chief, the new post will certainly offer Chief Carr new challenges.

Montgomery County has about 2,100 career and volunteer firefighters, compared to the 246-person strong Charleston Fire Department, and has a much bigger call volume.

The lower call volume is not a bad thing, according to Chief Carr, who said it will allow him to focus on other areas.

"Not that I don't enjoy the working fires, but I am happier working day in and day out having people focus," he said. "I get excited making progress in that area. I am more focused now in my career on the people and making sure I am able to support the people."

To enable this, Chief Carr said he is committed to ensuring Charleston looks at the latest technology for firefighters, both from an equipment and procedural perspective.

"The fire service continues to evolve its approach to fires and we'll need to keep our finger on the pulse," he said. "I am committed to doing that and fighting for whatever we need."

One of the early tasks for Chief Carr in the new position will be working with the task force that was set up to look at the department and its response to last year's fire.

Headed by Gordon Routley, the team has already completed an initial review of the department and detailed analysis of the Sofa Super Store fire. But the final part of its three-phase mission - the development of a five to 10-year strategic plan - was put on hold following the resignation of Chief Thomas a day before the findings of the report were released.

Chief Carr's appointment will enable the team to move forward with its final duties.

"It's a great team and it's critical that we do strategic planning," Chief Carr said. "It's critical to create a roadmap."

The *Everyone Goes Home*® Speakers Bureau

The *Everyone Goes Home*® Speakers Bureau is a support program to the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation in an effort to prevent line-of-duty deaths and injuries. The bureau provides nationally recognized speakers to address larger local audiences in the promotion of the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives and other safety issues. Support for speakers from the foundation includes: identifying the right personality and topic for the right conference, coordination with the sponsoring agency, and logistic support for speaker travel. These programs are intended for large venues of at least 250 attendees. In addition, the Speakers Bureau supports the delivery of the *Courage to be Safe*(SM) Program's Train-the-Trainers. The *Courage to be Safe*(SM) Train-the-Trainer classes are provided to at least 25 qualified instructors at state events to pursue the goal of having a cadre of *Courage to be Safe*(SM) instructors in the 30 states with the highest (historic) rate of line-of-duty deaths. The Bureau identifies programs that meet the criteria then communicates the information to the program advocates who then promote the programs within their state. This program will continue to make programs available to fire departments that may not have the resources to hire national speakers or attend national conferences. Requests for speakers can be made through the [EveryoneGoesHome.com contact form](#).

Paul Nelson Named New Wisconsin State Advocate

I would like to wish everyone a warm and safe welcome. I am pleased to be part of the team that represents the State of Wisconsin as an advocate. Currently, I am the Chief of the North Fond du Lac Fire and EMS in Southcentral Wisconsin. We are a combination department with three career firefighters (myself and two paramedics/firefighters) and 50 paid on-call members. North Fond du Lac serves the community of approximately 5,000, plus we provide paramedic service for an additional 5,000+ in the surrounding townships.

Through my experience and education, I hope to be able to share what I have learned over the years with the *Everyone Goes Home®* program. I have a Bachelor of Science degree in Occupational Safety, Master of Science degree in Industrial Health, and an Emergency Management certificate. In addition, I was recently accepted into the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy. My career has afforded me to see a lot of diverse areas in emergency response. I started my professional career in industry, working as a safety director for a foundry and then working as an industrial hygiene intern for a major automobile manufacturer. After graduate school, I went to work at the Los Alamos National Laboratory as an industrial hygienist. While there, I joined the full-time hazmat response team and was the team leader for a number of years. In addition, I was one of the safety staff to provide safety oversight for several of the Department of Energy emergency response teams. These teams could deploy worldwide and through the interactions with other countries, I was able to meet our brothers and sisters in other parts of the world. We are truly blessed here at home with our safety equipment and with programs such as *Everyone Goes Home®*.

As with all of us, family is most important to me. And yes, this does include my fire service family. I have been married for 20 years to my beautiful and wonderful wife, Cherie. We have three children, Stephanie -17, Kylee - 15 and Logan -9. We do what we do to save and protect our loved ones and the loved ones of others. *Everyone Goes Home®* is such an important program to our business and I am proud to be a part of it.

