

# Annual Report

2020



DANVILLE  
FIRE  
DEPARTMENT



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# Message from the Chief

Like everyone, 2020 presented the Danville Fire Department with some unique challenges. During a normal year, the work performed by the men and women of the DFD would be noteworthy. However, 2020 was anything but normal and the work performed by our members was nothing short of extraordinary!

As the COVID-19 pandemic tightened its grip on the country, our department took proactive measures to minimize our risk. In addition to the daily personnel monitoring that was required multiple times throughout the shift, we modified our response plans requiring the ambulance service to request our assistance on non-critical calls. Clean areas were established in the apparatus bays and the vehicles were disinfected multiple times throughout the shifts and following any suspect call. We purchased additional uniforms and everyone was required to launder their uniforms in the station and after every suspect call.

When businesses started closing their doors and sending employees home, we recognized an opportunity to further serve our community. We reached out to God's Storehouse and asked if we could be of assistance. Our timing was perfect, they had just received word from the Postal Service that they were cancelling their annual food drive, which is their single largest collection. Our firefighters stepped up and put collection boxes in front of each fire station creating drive thru opportunities to donate. We continued the food drive for 6 weeks and collected over 10,000 pounds of food.

Prior to the pandemic, we made plans to start a reading program in the elementary schools, "Danville Reads," where firefighters would go into the classrooms and read to the students, emphasizing the importance of reading with some fire safety mixed in. With classrooms going virtual and children learning from their homes, the firefighter "can do" spirit was not to be out done. We started recording firefighters reading story books in the station and then uploading these videos where the teachers could access them and share with their students at their leisure.

As the year wore on, it started to become apparent that our efforts to keep our firefighters physically healthy by modifying our response plans was taking a toll on their mental health. Staying in the station, not responding on minor emergencies, as well as not providing the highest level of service that our community deserves, was driving our firefighters stir crazy. As we started to better understand the COVID virus, we reverted back to our pre-pandemic response plans, responding to all medical calls again while enhancing our safety precautions.

As you will see by the numbers, our response volume, as well as our Emergency Communications Center's calls for service, decreased ever so slightly in 2020. Intuitively, we believe this decrease was a culmination of several factors; the general public was apprehensive to call 911 in the wake of the unknown, with much of economy shut down most of us were home bound or less active and as mentioned previously. We also modified our response plan early on limiting our emergency responses.

While our response volume was down, I assure you we were no less busy. The pandemic changed our daily activities and routines. We still completed required training; instead of large classes we had multiple small classes. Our disinfection policy kept us busy cleaning and I don't know of any time that our stations were cleaner.

The Danville Fire Department was not immune to the virus and more than a few of our members tested positive, however we were able to maintain our minimum staffing levels at all times. As we watched surrounding fire departments close stations and even entire shifts because of COVID positive members, we considered ourselves fortunate and give credit to the precautions that we exercised as well as the professionalism displayed by our firefighters and telecommunicators.

Amidst the pandemic, 2020 delivered a huge blow to the Danville Fire Department when we lost one of our own. On August 29th, Engineer Greg Thomas passed away at his home. Greg was a firefighter's firefighter and while I didn't have the opportunity to know him as well as most, I know he was a good man and the Danville Fire Department is a better place because he was here.

As we start the new year, we are cautiously optimistic that the worst is behind us. Our thoughts and prayers are with those in our community that have suffered loss this past year. We consider it an honor and privilege to serve this great community and pledge to continue to provide you with the best professional life saving services possible.

Yours in service,



Fire Chief David Coffey



# Our Mission & Vision



## Mission

Danville Fire Department strives to protect life, property, and environment through prevention, mitigation, response, recovery, education and communication in order to promote the entire community's health, safety, and well-being.

*Pictured above are the 2019 Engineer Promotions. Engineers are responsible for driving the apparatus as well as for maintaining and operating the fire pump and aerial ladder.*

## Vision

Our vision is to be recognized as an Internationally Accredited Fire Department and to be known for excellence in timely, courteous, effective service delivery to our community.

Our workforce is honest, reliable, and dedicated to the highest ethical standards. We work hard to maintain a good reputation and to inspire public trust and confidence. We respect one another and the diverse community we serve. Our team will remain safe, skilled, and successful with comprehensive training and development opportunities.

Our physical resources are managed responsibly and effectively. We explore new, more efficient technologies to improve the quality and scope of our programs and operational services. We strive for ongoing improvement and carefully plan our facility and equipment maintenance and replacement.

Our leadership and workforce will hold one another accountable for fulfilling our mission, living our organizational values, and reaching our goals. All employees will value a professional atmosphere where cooperation is expected and involvement in decision making is encouraged. We will build strong relationships and collaborate with local, regional, and state partners and support agencies.

Our community will know we care. We will proactively identify and analyze our community's evolving risks and needs to determine the best strategies for such dynamic demands. We will improve emergency preparedness and expand our response capabilities. We will keep each other and the public well-informed with complete, consistent, accurate, frequent, and clear communications.

Our vision is to honor our community's trust, to continuously improve as an organization, to perform with integrity, and to consistently meet or exceed the expectations of our members and the community we serve.

# Our Values



## Customer and Community Focus

We value timely and exceptional service to the public, to our team, and to the city organization. We serve all in a caring, courteous, respectful, compassionate, and reliable manner. We work hard every day to improve the community's health, safety, and well-being.



## Peak Performance

We value effective and efficient service at the individual and team level. We support each other in being capable, knowledgeable, skilled, responsible, and accountable. We foster success and improvement.



## Integrity and Transparency

We value the trust and confidence of the public and of our team. We are committed to serving with honesty, trustworthiness, honor, loyalty, and ethical behavior. We strive to keep each other and the public well informed with frequent and accurate communication.



## Diversity and Inclusiveness

We value respect for diversity of people and belief. We give equal treatment to all in our team, our city organization, and our community. We do not tolerate discrimination.



## Safety and Valor

We value life. We take every precaution to prevent harm while facing threat, danger, and discomfort with courage and bravery. We treat each other as family, and we view the community as an extension of our family.



*Engineer Brown participates in new cardiac monitor training.*

# Our History



Above: "Little Mary"

1884

Danville instituted the community's first paid (professional) fire department on January 1, 1884. Records indicate the first apparatus inventory consisted of one Button fire engine, two Ainsleys, one hose reel, and four horses. Prior to 1884, services were provided by two private fire companies.

1896

The annexation of Neapolis in 1896 prompted construction of a headquarters on Patton Street, where the Municipal Building stands today, as well as a second station just north of the Main Street Bridge which came to be known as the North Main Station.



1903

Of historical note, the "Wreck of Old 97" occurred on September 27, 1903. The southbound Southern Railway passenger train No. 97 derailed and plunged into a ravine below the Stillhouse Trestle, killing eleven persons according to some accounts.

1924

In 1924, a Seagrave ladder truck was added to the department's inventory, equipped with solid rubber tires, a tiller, and a 75-foot hand-operated ladder. This replaced the hook and ladder, the last piece of horse-drawn equipment in the city.

1926

1926 saw the Patton Street station relocated to a new building on Bridge Street. This served as the fire headquarters until the construction of the new station on Lynn Street in 2014. A third "West End" station, designed for horse-drawn apparatus, was also constructed in the early 1900s less than one block off Main Street.

At right: A major fire occurred in Danville on June 30, 1927, as the Main Street Iron Bridge burned. The wooden floor of the bridge caught fire when a tar wagon overturned. The steel girders buckled from the intense heat and finally collapsed, separating the north and south sides of Danville.



1950

A two-way radio communication system was installed in 1950, which allowed the Station One telephone switchboard to centrally receive fire calls and dispatch suppression services. The chiefs' vehicles had two-way radios installed, but radios were not required in the engines.

1951

A 1951 annexation required an additional station to serve the Schoolfield community around Dan River Mills. Station Four was initially located at the West Main Street and Augusta Avenue intersection and was rented from the textile company. The same annexation prompted construction of a northside station on Third Avenue.

1957

Station Five opened in 1957 and came to serve as the agency's training center with a five story training tower and drafting pit.



1971

In 1971, the station on North Main Street was relocated to its current home on Piney Forest Road to provide better response to the western portions of the city.

*At right: In 1971, a lightning strike hit Moffett Memorial Baptist Church on North Main Street which sparked a large fire that destroyed the sanctuary.*



1978

In the summer of 1978, Station Three was relocated to Industrial Avenue near the intersection of South Main Street.

1988

Danville's annexation of approximately 27 square miles of Pittsylvania County in January 1988 more than doubled the department's area of responsibility. As a result, Station Four was relocated to its current home on West Main Street, plans were made to add two stations, and six engine companies were added.

1990

August 1990 saw completion of Station Seven on Airport Drive, adjacent to the city's regional airport and within sight of US Highway 58. Around this time, OSHA's endorsement of the Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) Standard prompted the state of Virginia to establish, fund, and train 12 regional Hazardous Material Response Teams. This resulted in an agreement with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management and ultimately the creation of a Regional Level III Response Team, which became operational in December 1990.

1991

Station Six was opened in August 1991 on the corner of Westover Drive and Beech Avenue to service the north and west end of the city.

1997

Beginning in 1997, the department began training personnel to the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) level of certification. City Council authorized formation of a Fire Marshal's Office in 1998. This led to the creation of a Fire Prevention and Education Bureau and sworn officers with legal authority to investigate fires and enforce city fire code.

2000

In 2000, Danville Fire Department (DFD) teamed up with Pittsylvania County Firefighter's Association and applied for a grant from the Virginia Department of Fire Programs. The award served as the primary funding for a burn building, which is now the centerpiece of the area's Regional Training Center at 658 Stinson Drive.

2008

The Dan River Mills Long Mill catches fire. Over 100 personnel were on scene and the blaze took days to extinguish.  
*Long Mill Building Fire, pictured at right.*



2014

In 2014, The Danville Fire Department Headquarters and Emergency Communications center relocated to the new facilities on Lynn Street.





Simplex Products Division

BARECAT

BARECAT

DAN

MSA

R. GIBSON

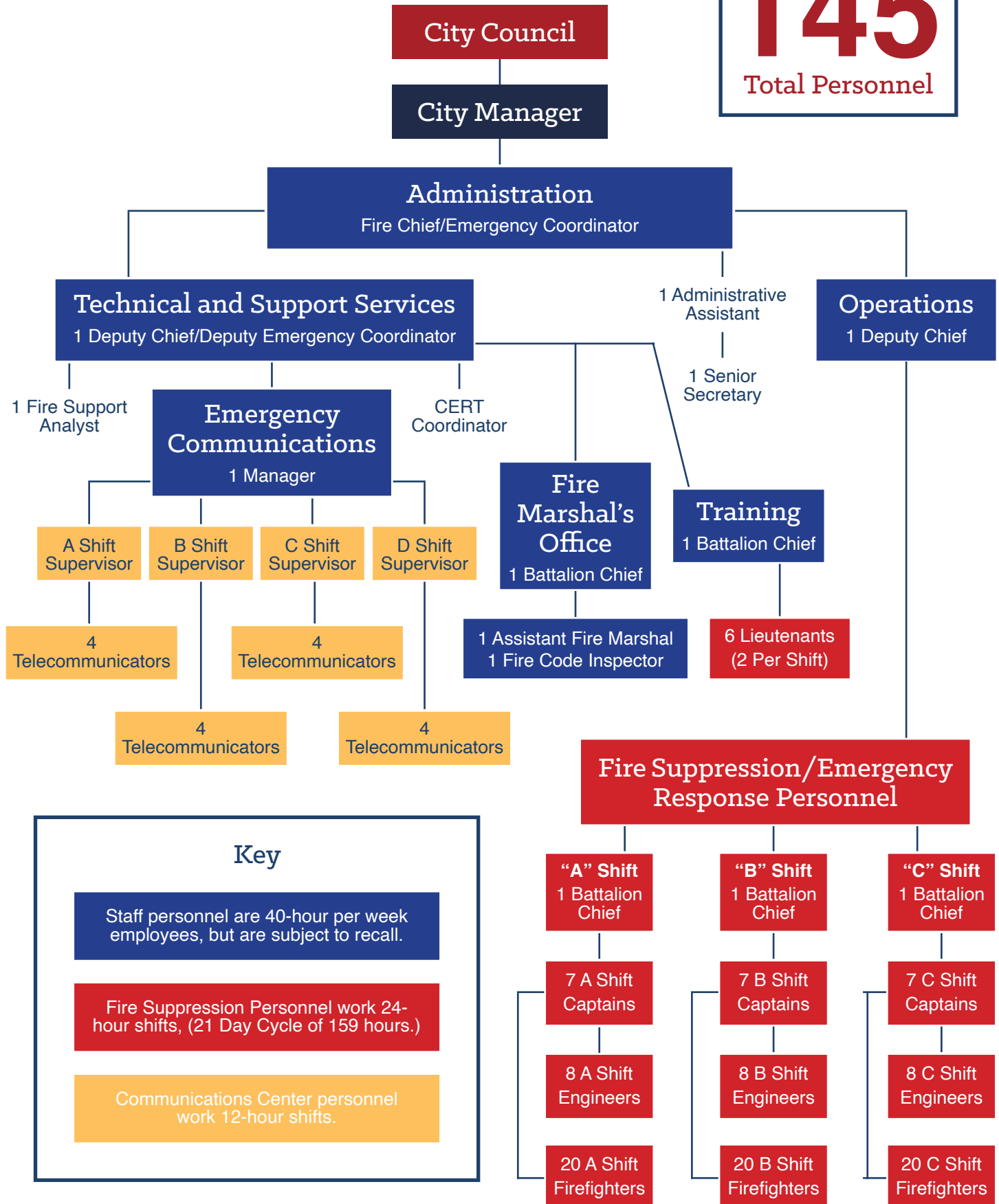
REAVES

WILMINGTONVILLE



# Organizational Chart

**145**  
Total Personnel



# Command Staff



**David Coffey**  
Fire Chief



**Michael Jefferson**  
Deputy Chief of Operations



**Tim Duffer**  
Deputy Chief of Technical  
and Support Services



**Shelby Irving**  
Fire Marshal



**Jon Yeaman**  
Battalion Chief of Training  
and Safety



**Brian Alderson**  
Battalion Chief A Shift



**Chris Key**  
Battalion Chief B Shift



**Dean Fowler**  
Battalion Chief C Shift



# Support Staff



**Richie Guill**  
Assistant Fire Marshal



**Kasey White**  
Emergency Communications  
Manager



**Jay Thornton**  
Fire Inspector



**Stephen Williamson**  
Fire Support Analyst



**Bob Yeaman**  
Chaplain



**April Neal**  
Administrative Assistant



**Erika Saunders**  
Senior Secretary



*Danville Fire Department received International Accreditation from the Commission of Public Safety Excellence in March 2020.*



# Promotions 2020



**Robert Walker**  
Captain



**Brian Cochran**  
Emergency Communications  
Supervisor



**Kasey White**  
Emergency Communications  
Manager



**Chris Beckner**  
Engineer



**Kevin Farris**  
Engineer



**Darren Cornell**  
Engineer



*Motor Vehicle Crash with Building  
Involved on Green Street*





# New Hires

## FIREFIGHTERS



Hillary Alderson



Kaleb Barker



Avery Cox



Zane Elder



Tyler McPherson



Rorer Payne



Joshua White



Connor Wood



▲  
▲  
▲

*We participated in a food drive for God's Storehouse in March of 2020.*



# New Hires

## EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER



Beverly Hayes



Emilia Kinsley



Latrice  
Garland-Stamps



Kirsten McBride



Tristan Smith



*Hawaiian Shirt Day for Telecommunicator Appreciation Week –  
April 2020*



# Retirements



**Captain Charles Finney**  
**23 Years of Service**



**Engineer Chris Bass**  
**33 Years of Service**





# In Memory of Greg Thomas

On August 29th, 2020 our department lost one of our own. This was the first active member death in 23 years in the DFD, and the first for a vast majority of our current members. Most everyone that chooses to enter the fire service do so because they are called to, whether they realize it or not in the beginning. We are a unique people, committed to serving our fellow citizens in times of crises. Whenever we lose one of our own it is felt throughout the fire service. We feel it more than most because those we work with are our family. Not family in the sense of blood relation, family in a sense that sometimes it is much deeper than that. There is not one member of the fire service that is replaceable, whether through retirement or death, and Engineer Greg Thomas was no exception. Greg was, in my opinion, one of a dying breed of firefighters, a firefighter that dwelled on the time honored traditions of the past and strived to guarantee those traditions are kept alive.

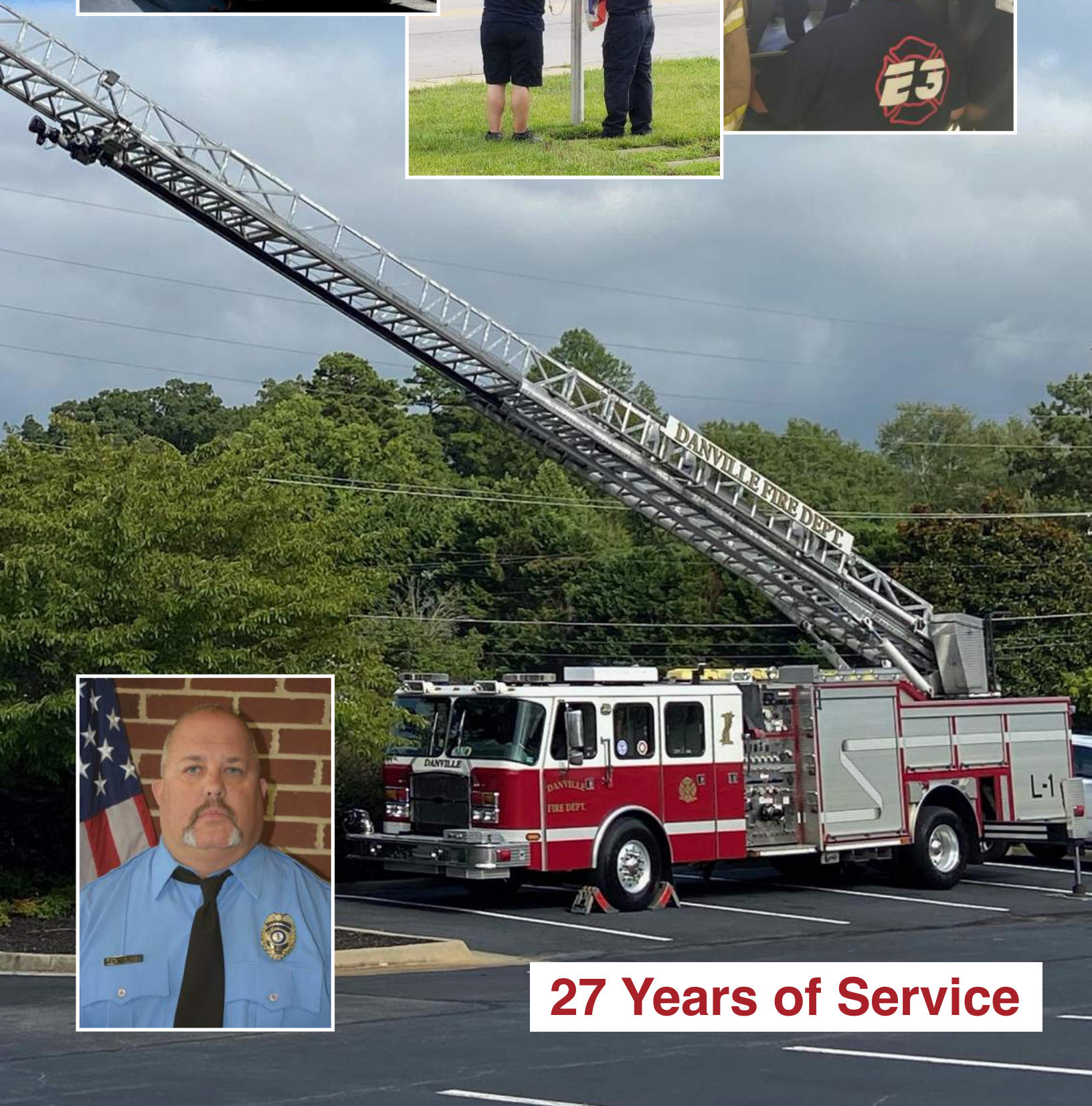
I am honored to have been Greg's Captain for the last couple of years of his career. He taught me how to be humble in my new position and kept me focused on what my ultimate purpose was. Engineer Thomas is truly missed. He is mentioned a few times a day around Station 3, whether talking about memories of calls ran or quoting one of his many sayings, most of which can't be quoted here. The guys at 3A were very fortunate to have spent the evening prior to his passing with Greg and other friends at a "stress debriefing exercise" at Buffalo Wild Wings. We carried on like we always do and spoke of Greg's upcoming retirement, not a retirement he wanted, but something he had to do. We all rest easy knowing he is still riding with us on every shift.

*- Captain T. L Barker - 3A*



**"Greg was a firefighter that dwelled on the time honored traditions of the past and strived to guarantee those traditions are kept alive."**





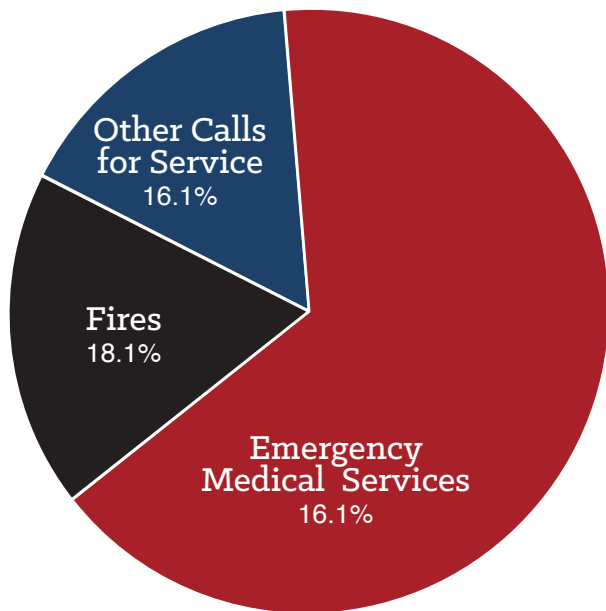
**27 Years of Service**



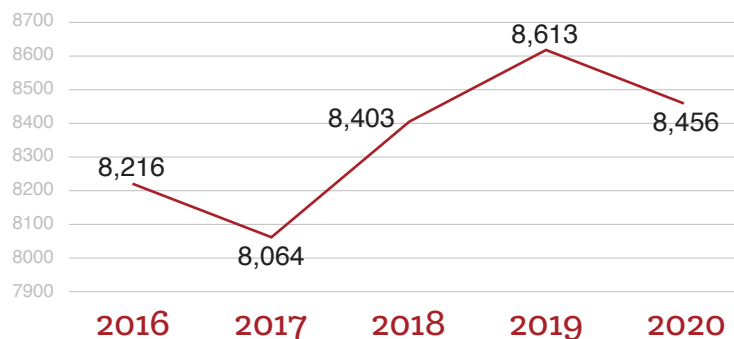
# 2020 Snapshot

**8,456** TOTAL CALLS  
IN 2020

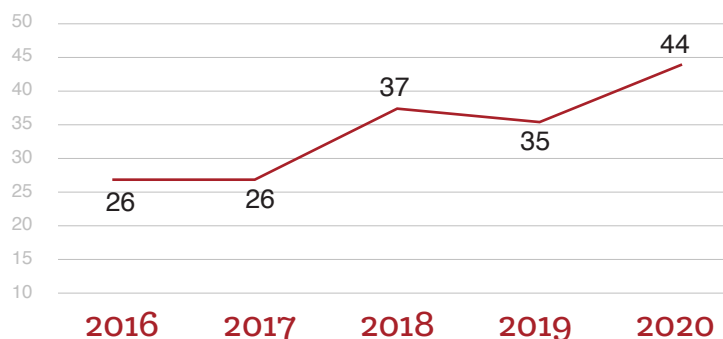
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL CALLS



CALLS THROUGH THE YEARS



WORKING FIRES



**23** CALLS PER DAY  
ON AVERAGE

**SECOND HIGHEST**  
CALL VOLUME NEXT TO 2019

FIRST UNIT ON THE SCENE

OF A STRUCTURE FIRE WITHIN

**6** MINUTES **16** SECONDS **90%** OF THE TIME

TOTAL PROPERTY VALUE SAVED =  
TOTAL PROPERTY VALUE — TOTAL PROPERTY AND CONTENT LOSS

TOTAL SAVED  
**\$11,404,800**

TOTAL VALUE  
**\$12,802,201**  
TOTAL LOSS  
**\$1,396,801**

STAFF & FACILITIES

**145** FULL TIME STAFF  
BETWEEN FIRE AND ECC

**7** STATIONS

**1** 9-1-1 CENTER



# Operations Division Summary

Deputy Chief Mike Jefferson

## Overview

This year has been very challenging dealing with the **COVID-19 Pandemic**. The DFD changed the way we responded to EMS calls, the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that we wear, PPE shortages, and the way we disinfect our equipment. On top of all this, the number of members out for potential exposures and positive tests also created a challenge to maintain our staffing levels. I am proud to say the men and women of the **DFD stepped up and overcame the challenges**. We never dropped below the minimum staffing levels. Firefighters frequently pulled back-to-back 24-hour shifts or splitting a shift between two or three firefighters. Some of these shifts were covered at the last minute due to an unscheduled illness or emergency. I would like to also thank our extended fire department family for allowing their spouse or parent to work extra duty to keep the department running.

An additional change in 2020 was our daily **uniforms**. The daily uniform has changed to a tactical navy blue shirt and pants. These uniforms are light weight and durable. Due to COVID 19 and constantly decontaminating our clothing, the DFD started washing and drying our uniforms within the stations to help prevent the spread of the virus.

During 2020, the DFD has started the process of becoming an **Accredited EMT and Advanced EMT training center**. We purchased all the necessary training equipment and will be submitting our application to the Virginia Office of EMS the first quarter of 2021. The DFD has 8 EMT instructors that were instrumental in conducting an EMT class during the academy which resulted in a 100% pass rate!



## Apparatus

The DFD received a 2020 Pierce Enforcer 1250-GPM pumper, which will be housed at the Piney Forest station number 2. A 2020 Pierce/Kenworth 2100 gallon water tender was also purchased. This apparatus, which will be housed at the West Main station number 4, is used to transport large amounts of water where the supply of water is limited.

Plans were made to order a new Pierce Enforcer 1250-GPM pumper to replace a 20-year old pumper. This apparatus will be housed at the West Main station number 4 on its arrival in August 2021.

During 2020, the department began retrofitting older fire apparatus with Chevron reflective striping and LED headlights.





## New Equipment

- 107 Sets of turnout gear arrived first quarter of 2021
- 10 new LifePak-15 cardiac monitors were procured to replace antiquated equipment
- Added additional turnout gear extractor and purchased a 2nd washer and dryer for station 1
- Replaced fire hose testing equipment

# Danville Fire Department Teams

## Technical Rescue Team

The Danville Fire Department Technical Rescue Team (TRT) has had an active year. The TRT responded to various calls including **several water rescues** at the beginning of the year due to flooding.

The Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP) conducted the 2nd annual Rescue Week in Danville. This program is not only for the DFD members but any fire and rescue personnel within the state of VA.

The following classes were offered:

- Rope Operations
- Trench Operations
- Trench Technician

The DFD TRT also hosted a **Surface Water Operation and Technician class** in June, and **14** TRT members completed the course.

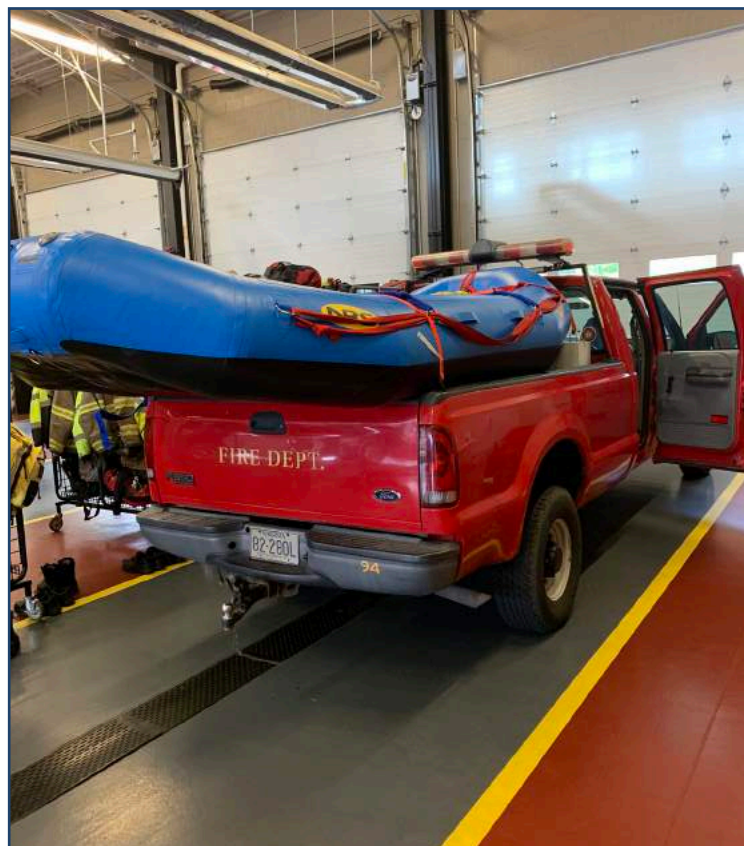
Seven of our TRT members are attending Train-the-Trainer programs which will allow them to instruct to the Operation level classes within the department. Train-the-Trainer courses in Rope Rescue Model I and Vehicle Rescue Operations have also been completed.

## SWIFT WATER PROGRAM

Twenty-two members from the technical rescue team have completed the Virginia Fire Programs Surface Water Technician level and 14 of these members have taken the next step and completed the Swift Water Technician. Twice during 2020, members of the swift water team were placed on standby from the Virginia Department of Emergency Management for possible deployment to assist with water and search and rescue operations due to hurricanes impacting the coast line.

## TRT EQUIPMENT

The department acquired **12-foot inflatable rescue boats** as well as trailers and motors to support the swift water program. After training is completed, 1 boat will be housed at Station 5 on Third Avenue and the other at Fire Headquarters on Lynn Street allowing for quick deployment on either side of the river.





# "A" Shift Year in Review

Battalion Chief Brian Alderson

## QUICK GLANCE

**2,857** CALLS DURING 2020 **20** WORKING FIRES

"A" Shift responded to 2,857 calls during 2020. This was the most for all three shifts. Engine 1A led all DFD apparatus with 699 responses. Out of the 44 working fires for the year, "A" Shift ran the most with 21. We also worked the most days during 2020.

The Technical Rescue Team and the Hazardous Materials Team responded to several calls early in the year within the city due to flooding. Each team also completed shift and team training days. Out of town training was extremely limited due to Covid-19. All personnel compensated by adding local and online training to maintain certifications and training hours.

Three firefighters were released from their one-year probation. Two captains were released to ride Battalion 1 when the battalion chief is off work. All personnel completed more than the required annual training hours.

In August we lost one of our own. Engineer Greg Thomas passed away unexpectedly while off-duty. Thomas was the engineer on Engine 3. He had been at Station #3 for several years. His family included his work crew in the family visitation line. This was a tremendous honor for them and showed his family's understanding of the "family" with all DFD personnel.

# "B" Shift Year in Review

Battalion Chief Chris Key

## QUICK GLANCE

**10** WORKING FIRES **1** BEAR VISITED STATION 1

2020. Well what can I say? It was the best of times; it was the worst of times. I think that is a song. It was a year of change: changes in the way we operate, from social distancing, to wearing masks, to attending Zoom meetings, to drive-by birthday parties, to new equipment like the Life-Pak 15 monitors, in personnel with retirements, promotions and resignations along with a new recruit class starting in November.

We also saw changes in apparatus with the

arrival of Tender 4 and Engine 2. It was a year of learning to adapt, but that's what we do: adapt, improvise and overcome

We had a mutual aid call for Pittsylvania County with a motor vehicle accident involving a car and a tractor trailer hauling flammable materials with the car on fire and occupant trapped inside which resulted in a fatality.

We had a bear visit Station 1 and take a dip in the creek on July 8 and Engine 7 rescued an owl hung up in fishing line at Dan Daniel Park on August 25. The owl was rehabilitated and released on January 2, 2021.

New firefighting gear was evaluated from 7 different companies. The vendors were then narrowed down to 3 and voted on by personnel. Morning Pride was awarded the contract with new coats and pants that are due in around the first week of February 2021. The new recruits gear has already arrived and is in service.

The most memorable and somber day for the year was losing a fellow brother of the Danville Fire Department, when Engineer Greg Thomas passed away on August 29, 2020. We went to high school together, played baseball together, coached our son's baseball team together. Thank you for everything you did. Brother, you will be missed but never forgotten.





# "C" Shift Year in Review

Battalion Chief Dean Fowler

## QUICK GLANCE

**14** WORKING FIRES

**9** CALLS FOR VEHICLES THAT HAD STRUCK STRUCTURES

C-shift responded to fourteen working fires in 2020, one of which was a double fatality fire on February 17th on Oakland Ave. In addition, we responded to 9 calls for vehicles that had struck structures and four heavy equipment fires. Water rescues were a common occurrence in 2020 with several stranded boaters and one high-angle rope rescue to retrieve a trapped kayaker. The Hazmat team responded to two hazardous material calls on shift, and many C-shift hazmat team members responded on the out of town deployment east of Gretna for a fuel truck rollover and spill.

## Accomplishments

In 2020, C-shift accomplished many tasks that were of great benefit to the department. C-shift is responsible for both station and EMS supplies. In 2020, we implemented the new domain ticket system and inventory process for supplies. This has allowed the supply distribution process to be much more streamlined and an account of all inventory is much more easily accessible. Firefighters Vernon and Harris took the lead on this project and have done an outstanding job. In addition, the "little mary" trailer was overhauled by C-shift personnel in order to allow the trailer to be used for a multitude of departmental tasks. Painting was also completed at Station 8, the new mayday bus, and the Emergency Management storage container. Many C-shift personnel completed their relief driver training in 2020 and have begun driving apparatus. Tyler Jarrett, Chris Scott, Hunter Milam, and Tanner Reed were released to drive fire department Engines, and Will Stephens was released to drive Ladder 1. Captain Gregory and Lieutenant Poteat received their Train the Trainers in Heavy Technical Rescue (HTR) courses Intro to Tech Rescue as well as Vehicle I. Many members also received their HTR certifications.









# Technical and Support Services

## Deputy Chief Tim Duffer

The year started off great. We completed the site visit for accreditation and the City of Danville selected a new fire chief, David Coffey. In March, we went to Florida to sit before the commission on accreditation. During this time, the fire department was able to express its goals for the next five years and to introduce Chief Coffey.

As we started to hear about COVID-19, we realized 2020 was going to be a challenging year, for not only the Danville Fire Department, but for the entire country. By the end of March, both the state and the country were under a state of emergency because of the pandemic. It was also the first time in US History all fifty states and territories were under a state of emergency at the same time. It is also the longest running disaster in history, still in effect at the end of 2020.



This was an event that tested emergency plans and has shown the strengths and weaknesses in them. Most plans did not account for an event lasting over a year and most did not expect such mass disruption in supplies. As in most cities, we had to think of ways to meet PPE needs for the providers. During this time, we looked at all options that were safe, along with coming up with ways to clean or re-use PPE for non-direct exposure. We had support from a local lab allowing us the use of a device which would clean face masks with peroxide. We also had fire fighters who built boxes housing UV lights to clean masks after each use. The year 2020 showed us when we could not get products, we still had the ability to come up with a solution meeting the needs of the department.

Most, if not all, Emergency Management programs were postponed or cancelled due to COVID. Both Chief Coffey and Chief Duffer are planning to attend Emergency Management classes during 2021. One goal is to become more focused on Community Risk Reduction. This will have several topics involving Emergency Management and the Fire Marshal's Office. We hope 2021 will allow us to be more involved with the community as we get the pandemic under control.

One goal set by Chief Coffey was to encourage the officers of the department to get credentialing in one of the 5 areas offered by the Centers for Public Safety Excellence. During the 2020 calendar year, we had three members complete

or submit their applications. Captain Satterfield was credentialed as a Fire Officer, Battalion Chief Yeaman was credentialed as a Chief Fire Officer, and Deputy Chief Duffer completed his application and is awaiting his interview for Chief Fire Officer. This designation is good for three years and requires continued improvement and goals during that time. Working towards this designation will help in the areas of professional growth, career development, and showing you have lifelong learning goal. It also sets the individual apart as a person who is prepared to test their department and themselves.

2020 was a challenging year, but as a team we were able to overcome the challenges and be better for the years to come.





# Community Risk Reduction

Fire Marshal Shelby Irving



The Fire Marshal's Office was deeply impacted by the COVID Pandemic. The Governor's State of Emergency halted the normal routine of Fire Code Compliance Inspections. Inspections were completed on new construction and on any complaints received. Fire Investigations continued with safety precautions added.

During the Pandemic, the Fire Marshal's Office had time to change a few programs that are administered by the office. The "Get Alarmed Danville" Program, which installs smoke alarms in any household that requests them, was revamped.

Changes were made in the way a request was handled. Originally the request would have been placed in a computer program and sent to the Station for the Engine Company to install the alarm. The engine company on any given day would see the request and as time allowed go install the alarm. Once the alarm was installed, a paper form was filled out and sent by interoffice mail to the Fire Marshal's Office to be entered into a database. The program was changed to make the process more efficient and to offer better customer service. When the request is received now, the Engine Company is dispatched as a non-emergency call to the location and install the alarm. The NIFIRS system was used to integrate the information needed for records of the alarm installation. This has eliminated the use of paper forms and the delay of the information being placed in multiple systems. These changes highlight a few of the changes to the program. Positive results have been seen from the changes from the customer and Engine Companies.

The Fire Marshal's Office was able to get the Fire Inspector position temporarily moved to an Assistant Fire Marshal's position. This will be permanent in the 2021 budget. Jay Thornton was sent to complete 1033, which is the fire investigation certification. He successfully completed the training and is shadowing on all fire investigations.

The Danville Fire Department identified the trend in holiday related fires and in turn, developed the "Keep the Wreath Red campaign". A large wreath was placed at Station 1 Headquarters with red bulbs and lights were changed to white once a fire occurred during the holiday months.

The year was a challenge for the entire department, and changes affected the daily operations of the Fire Marshal's Office. In spite of these times, the Fire Marshal's Office made changes to better the service to our community.





# Training & Safety

## Battalion Chief Jon Yeaman

The Training Division started the year off running with a division meeting during the first week of January. During this meeting, a plan of attack was laid out for the first six months of 2020. From this meeting, the department-wide training schedule was put into action by the end of January with the first class titled “**Truck Work**.” This class was a fire ground based curriculum covering various tactics, such as **innovative ways** to carry ladders and vent / enter / isolate / search techniques. “Truck Work” lasted through the end of February which led into **organization-wide agility testing** of all members. The shift Battalion Chiefs organized this testing, and with the help of the Battalion Chief of Training, they were able to successfully test every member of the organization. The agility times were some of the **best in the history of the agility testing**. This proves the physical fitness level of the organization is definitely improving.

The Training division met with Task Force Tips to conduct flow testing on our current nozzles. They were tasked by the Fire Chief to look into how many **gallons per minute** (gpm) were flowing through the nozzle of our attack lines for structural firefighting. The Fire Chief wanted to ensure our organization was following the recommendations of NFPA by flowing 150 gallons per minute while conducting interior firefighting. This task was spearheaded by Lieutenants Goad and Collins. The Training Division as a whole began researching via the internet as well as meeting with representatives from Task Force Tips to conduct flow testing on our current nozzles. After several days of testing, the results showed that the department was meeting the NFPA recommendation.

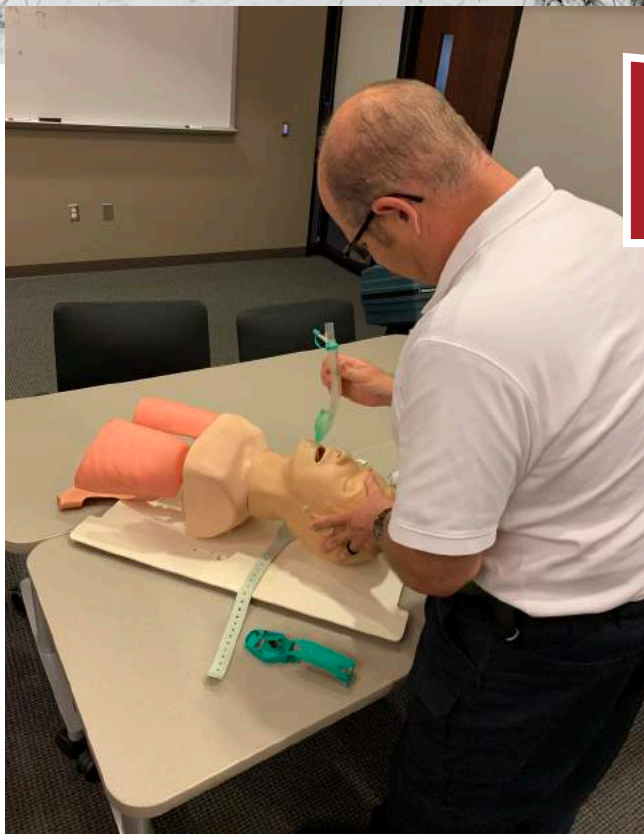
I-Gel training was completed the second week of June and the next organization wide training was started. Due to the labor intensive objectives in the course, the class was conducted at night to provide a cooler environment for personnel to train. This class was simply titled “**Night Training**” and was taught in a vacant building in station four’s first due territory. This class covered two very important topics: **high-rise firefighting** and **large area search**. As stated, this class was very labor intensive but was well received by the members of the organization. During the “Night Training” class, Safety Stand Down week was also observed by the department. A presentation was developed by Lt. Reaves on “safety of responders during incidents located on roadways.”

Before the “Night Training” class could be concluded, the **Covid-19 pandemic hit** and our organization changed the way we had to do business on a daily basis. As a result of social distancing efforts, we were unable to finish the “Night Training” class because this training required two companies to be together. The silver lining to this allowed us to allocate



Working Fire on Jefferson Street





*Deputy Chief Duffer participates in new airway training*

more time to our **CPR recertification training** since only one company could participate at a time. To prepare for this CPR recertification training, five of the six Lieutenants attended and completed an American Heart Association CPR instructor course during the month of March. This training certified everyone in the Training Division as CPR instructors. Throughout the month of July and into August department wide CPR recertification courses were held and all members of the organization as well as dispatchers were recertified.

Although the COVID 19 pandemic was in full swing, the Virginia Department of Fire Programs decided to continue with the second annual "**Rescue Week**" September 7th – 12th. During this week, the Danville Fire Department hosted three technical rescue classes taught by Virginia Department of Fire Programs instructors: Rope

Rescue Level I, Trench Rescue Level I, and Trench Rescue Level II. In addition to the individuals from all over the state coming to Danville for training this week, **12 members** of the Danville Fire Department Technical Rescue Team attended these three classes. Once again this annual "Rescue Week" was a success and the organization is planning to continue the tradition in 2021.

In an effort to continue to improve upon the technical rescue capabilities of the Danville Fire Department, the department signed an agreement with the Virginia Department of Fire Programs to allow **nine members** of our organization to become





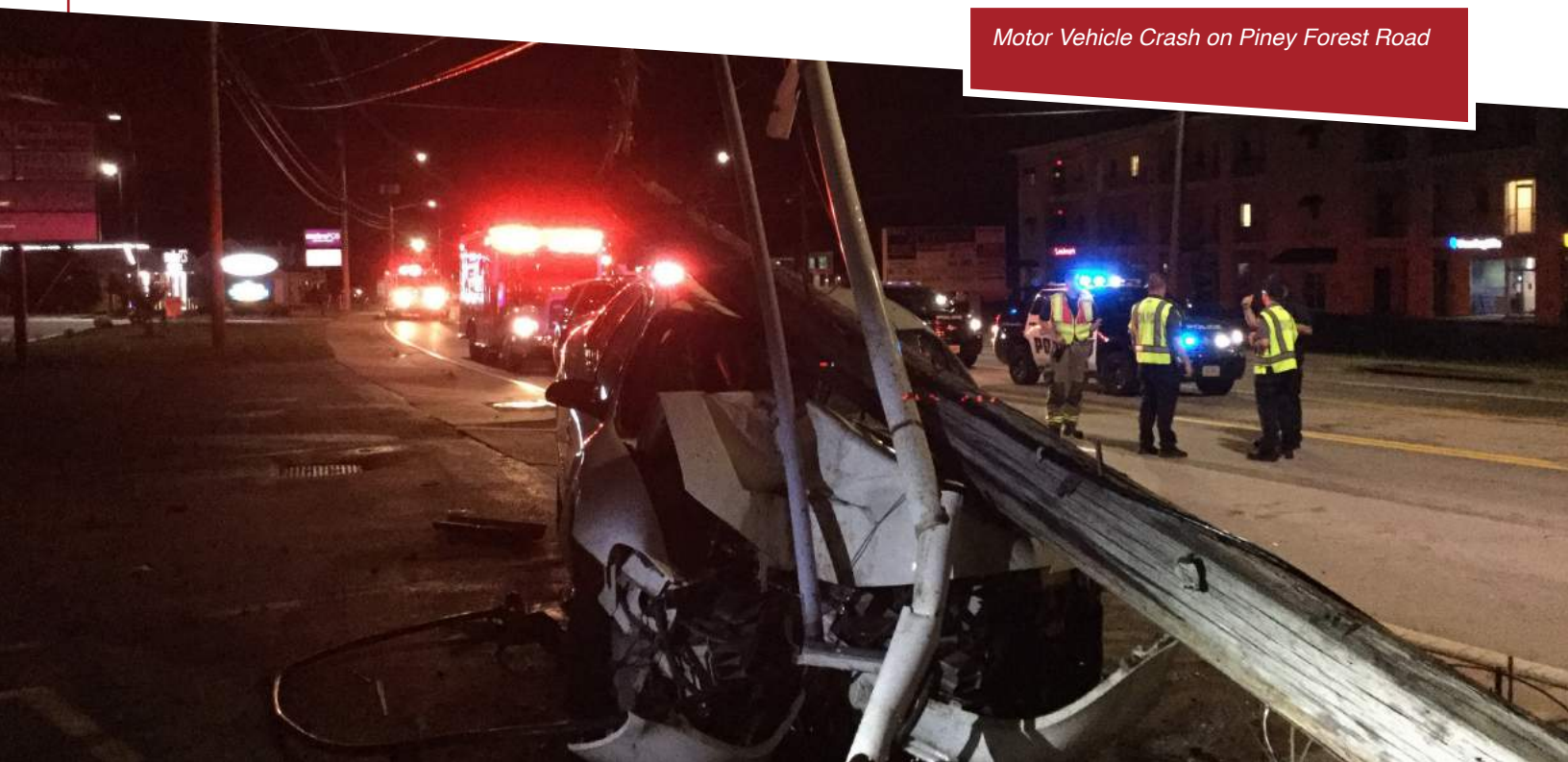
**in-house instructors** in various technical rescue disciplines including: Introduction to Technical Rescue Module I & II, Surface Water Rescue, Rope Rescue, Trench Rescue, Vehicle Rescue, and Confined Space Rescue. As of the end of 2020 these members have already completed the Introduction to Technical Rescue Modules I & II and Vehicle Rescue Train-The-Trainer programs. In an effort to improve relationships and increase communication and collaboration between organizations, the Danville Fire Department signed Memos of Understanding (MOUs) with the Pittsylvania County Public Safety Department and the Danville Life Saving Crew stating they agree to help fund these technical rescue train-the-trainer courses in return for providing them with a certain amount of slots for upcoming classes. Special thanks to Lt. Poteat, Lt. Goad, Lt. Haymore, Captain Harless, Captain Gregory, Captain Barker, Captain Sergeant, Captain Satterfield, and Chief Yeaman for being willing to participate in this joint agreement between the Danville Fire Department and the Virginia Department of Fire Programs.

Starting on November 2nd, **eight new recruits** started their careers with the Danville Fire Department. These recruits started the academy in Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) class lasting the first five weeks before moving into the firefighting portion of the academy. This academy is slated to end the third week of March 2021. During the EMT portion of the recruit academy, Lt. Poteat was assigned to the same weekly schedule as the recruits so he could teach the entire portion of the EMT program. Based on the reviews from the recruits, this proved to be very advantageous for their learning of the material. The proof was in the pudding so to speak because at the time of this division summary being written, all six recruits needing to test their EMT had successfully passed their National Registry EMT examination. Thanks to Lt. Poteat for the work he did during EMT class.

Throughout the year, the training division continued to work to improve our training facilities as well as expand upon the services the department provides. The Danville Fire Department received a grant from the Virginia Department of Fire programs in the amount of **\$43,380** for repairs on our training center located on Stinson drive. At the time of this division summary, the Training Division was waiting for the final inspection to be completed by the Virginia Department of Fire Programs Division Six Chief. The remodeling of our training facility located on Gypsum Road continued in 2020 with numerous renovations and upgrades. In addition to our brick and mortar training facilities, the training division acquired a bus that has been renovated to include a mobile SCBA training maze. Special thanks to Station 5-B shift for spearheading this bus project.

The Training Division plans to keep **moving forward** in the year 2021 with the development of new training courses as well as continuing with building upon our training facilities and mobile equipment.

*Motor Vehicle Crash on Piney Forest Road*







Members of Station 4 A Shift complete CPR recertification .





# Emergency Communications

Kasey White

## QUICK GLANCE

**44,582** PROCESSED 911 CALLS  
DURING 2020

**85,501** COMMUNICATIONS  
EVENTS REPORTS

**48,009**

INBOUND ADMINISTRATIVE CALLS

**35,764**

OUTBOUND ADMINISTRATIVE CALLS

During 2020, the Emergency Communications Center processed 44,582 911 calls, 48,009 inbound administrative calls, and 35,764 outbound administrative calls. There were 85,501 Communications Events Reports created for calls for service.

The year started with Michael Gobble as the 911 Manager. In March, he announced that he had accepted a position as a Regional 911 Coordinator with the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA). Emergency Communications Shift Supervisor Kasey White was promoted to the 911 Manager position on July 1. Telecommunicator Brian Cochran was then promoted to Shift Supervisor to fill the open position.

The ECC implemented part-time positions in March to help minimize full-time employee fatigue from overtime. By the end of the year, there were **three part-time employees** who were a great help on nights and weekends.

Due to COVID-19, the ECC was unable to use the \$3,000 grant from VITA for in-person training as planned. Instead, some telecommunicators found online training that they wished to take, and the entire center participated in a **four-week online training program** hosted by Fairfax County, Virginia. The training was titled “**The Resilient 911 Professional**” and was open to agencies across the country. It discussed topics such as stress, burnout, and physical and mental health.

The ECC has received another \$3,000 grant to be used for training through July 2021 from VITA (now VDEM – Virginia Department of Emergency Management).

The Danville-Pittsylvania County Critical Incident Stress Management Team assisted with **three debriefings** for



At left: Michael Gobble poses with the crew from Station 7 on B-Shift.

Above: ECC D-Shift poses for a picture in the Emergency communications Center





outside agencies in 2020. The ECC has three members on the team – Kasey White, Brian Cochran, and Heather Eakin.

ECC dispatchers participated in the Ballou Park Community Light Show and several Community Engagement Walks.

**Four dispatchers** attended **Entry Level Basic Dispatch School** in July at the Piedmont Regional Criminal Justice Training Academy in Martinsville. Supervisor Darlene Foster instructed at the school.

Supervisor Daryle Harris attended **General Instructor School** in September, which gives him the needed training to be able to teach at future Basic Dispatch Schools.

Supervisor Brian Cochran and Telecommunicator Heather Eakin completed the online class “**Fundamentals of Tactical Dispatch**” through APCO (Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials). Heather also completed “Crisis Negotiations” through APCO.

The ECC hosted **Emergency Medical Dispatch, Emergency Fire Dispatch, and Emergency Police Dispatch classes** at the Danville Fire Department in June and December. These are required certifications through the International Association of Emergency Dispatch (IAED) that the telecommunicators must obtain before they can process 911 calls. Instructors came in from as far away as Maryland.

The ECC has been working with VDEM and Mobile Communications America to **upgrade the 911 phone system** to be Next Generation 911 compliant. The phone system should be installed in the first half of 2021. VDEM is reimbursing most of the \$250,000 price. This new phone system will make transferring 911 calls to other agencies faster and will allow for video and picture messaging to 911 as well as better Text-to-911 features.

As COVID allows, the ECC hopes to **provide more training and outreach opportunities** for the Telecommunicators in 2021.



**SPECIAL THANKS  
FOR THE CONSTANT  
SUPPORT FROM:**

Mayor Alonzo Jones  
Vice Mayor Gary Miller  
Councilman James Buckner  
Councilman Larry Campbell  
Councilman Sam Kushner  
Councilman Barry Mayo  
Councilman Sherman Saunders  
Councilman Lee Vogler  
Councilman Madison Whittle  
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@DanvilleVaFire

