

TFACA NEWSLETTER

A Note From Al Thomas, Chief of Staff

On behalf of the State Fire Marshal's Office and the Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance, I would like to take a moment to introduce myself. My name is Al Thomas, and I joined the Fire Prevention Division as Chief of Staff on June 15. Some of you may know me from my 37 years of service with the Nashville Fire Department ("NFD") and most recently as Deputy Director and Fire Marshal for Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County. After retirement, I was fortunate enough to be offered an opportunity to work with some of the best people in Tennessee to improve firefighter training and decrease injuries and fatalities due to fire; however it was not an easy decision since I always expected to be a Nashville firefighter until the day I reached social security retirement age. I didn't expect to stay 50+ years like Nashville Fire District Chief Bobby Connelly who began his career when I was still in elementary school and retired still fighting fires every shift. But when I was told I would be involved with the Tennessee State Fire Service and Codes Enforcement Academy, it was a no-brainer.

I have known some of the staff at TFACA for many years. In fact, I was an adjunct instructor for Volunteer State Community College in the Fire Science program when a young Jeff Elliott attended my Building Construction class back in the 1990s. Getting the chance to work with him and the rest of the staff and instructors to build on the successes for the good of the fire service across all of Tennessee is a dream opportunity. As an instructor with NFD back in 1992-95, I saw how rewarding it is to teach someone our craft. The Fire Service has come a long way from just learning how to tie knots, stretch hose, throw salvage covers and ladder buildings. In my rookie firefighter class, I learned about teamwork with my fellow students - and that concept is critical to working together to save lives. *We need to teach all firefighters, public safety educators, codes inspectors and fire investigators to work as a team to reduce the number of injuries and lives lost due to fire in every community.* Each of those areas is vitally important. Collectively, we could all do a better job.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reported Tennessee's 2006-2010 fire death rate to be 17.7 deaths per million which means for every 1 million people in Tennessee, 17.7 deaths occur annually. This ranking put Tennessee as the nation's **6th highest in fire deaths**. That rate has changed as results show that the state's fire death rate has decreased to 13.7 deaths per million, equaling a 25.6 percent reduction for 2011-2014 compared to 2006-2010. This is the single largest reduction of the state's fire mortality rate in Tennessee's recorded history. I believe this reduction is a result of the efforts of fire departments working with the State Fire Marshal's Get Alarmed program. As of this date, at least 106 lives have been saved due to smoke alarms installed through this effort. *I know we can do more.*

I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible and want to make Tennessee a safer place to work and live. As a team, we can do this together.

A Note From Roger Hawks, Executive Director

TFACA has record year delivering training!

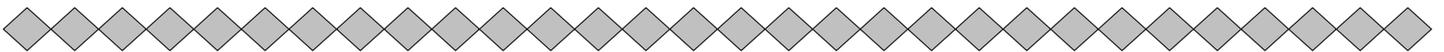
Thanks everyone for making the year ending June 30, 2015 a record year for TFACA. We set records for students trained, classes conducted, student contact hours and number of departments in the Elite Club (more than 1,000 student contact hours in a given fiscal year). From all the staff at TFACA **THANK YOU!**

On line training arrives at TFACA

TFACA is excited about the addition of on-line training to the Acadis system. The on-line system will have classes which anyone with a training record in Acadis can complete and have it recorded into your training history. Additionally, some classes will have class material or prerequisites "assigned" to the student to complete prior to attending the class. We will be starting off with a small selection, but will be regularly adding new course material. The on-line courses will be Code, Fire and/or Firefighting Commission related subjects. If you have not set up your Acadis portal account now is a great time to do so. That can be done by going to the Acadis portal home page <https://acadis-portal.tn.gov/AcadisViewer/Login.aspx>. Then complete the two sections described. If you do not know your PSID number, please check with your training officer.

Assistance to Firefighters Grant ("AFG") award

Hats off to Director Jeff Elliott and the Fire Program for being awarded an AFG grant this year. The AFG grant will be used to purchase a mobile training tower which was requested by Jeff Elliott and Cheryle Hunt from our staff. The tower will be 3.5 stories and have multiple scenario capabilities including bailouts, hose line, confined space, drafting and many more. Delivery is expected late spring or summer 2016. More details will be provided as this project moves forward.



TN Fallen Firefighter Memorial Service

Firefighters, family members and friends from all over gathered at the Academy on September 12 for the annual Day of Honor and Remembrance ceremony to honor those firefighters who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect their neighbors. Two names were added to the memorial this year: Jerry Campbell—TN Division of Forestry and Gus Losleben—Hardin County FD.



A Note From Jeff Elliott, Fire Program Director

TFACA is pleased to announce the addition of Eric Sacharczyk to our team within the Fire Service Program. Eric and his family relocated to Middle TN after accepting an Instructor II position here on campus August 10, 2015.

Eric and his family of five relocated to Rutherford County from Memphis, where he worked for Memphis Fire Department. Eric's wife, Heather, was hired by the Rutherford County School system as an Academic Interventionist with Roy Waldron Elementary School. The Sacharczyk's oldest daughter is enrolled at MTSU studying Pre Physical Therapy and Athletic Training. Their two youngest children are in middle and elementary school and are very involved in their school's athletics.

Eric set himself apart from the other applicants with his education, certifications and experience associated in the emergency service training field. His work history established lead roles in training with the Memphis Fire Department and the Virginia Department of Fire Programs. Listed below are some of the major items leading the interview panel to our decision:

- ◆ Well Established Networking Ability in TN Already in Place as a Member of FEMA Urban Search and Rescue, Task Force 1
- ◆ Established Training Background with both Volunteer and Career Departments
- ◆ Offers Additional Insight to TFACA's Recruit Program
 - ◇ Lead Instructor of Firefighter I and II, Virginia Department of Fire Programs
 - ◇ Lead Instructor with Haz Mat Awareness and Operations
- ◆ Technical Rescue
 - ◇ Assigned as a Special Operations Instructor with Memphis Fire Department
 - Rope Operations
 - Rope Technician
 - Confined Space
 - Portions of Structural Collapse
- ◆ Forwarded Thinking Concerning TFACA's Future with Blended Training
 - ◇ Online Self Learning and Testing Coupled with Hands on Training and Testing

Mr. Sacharczyk has already proven to be a valuable resource to our team at TFACA. He hit the ground running working with the fall 2015 recruit class. He brings 15 years of service and experience from large departments and the Virginia State Fire Academy. The life experiences he brings from that exposure partnered with the professional development he achieved with certifications and college degrees makes him a top candidate to help carry out the mission of TN Fire and Codes Academy.



Recruit Firefighter Class 2015-02

Recruit class 2015-02 started on 8/31/15 and after the first few weeks of training, recruits have already begun building the foundation needed for a long healthy career. The recruits have been extremely busy throughout their days, from physical training starting at 6am to completing homework assignments using the online learning management system through JB Learning in the evenings. Recruits are also tested on a weekly basis to ensure their retained knowledge throughout the grueling schedule.

The class is made up from 9 departments across the state, ranging from Martin, TN to Lenoir City, TN. Other departments include Humboldt FD, Lebanon FD, Gallatin FD, Putnam County FD, Southeast Community VFD, and Number One VFD. The class also contains 2 open enrollees. The students in the class also form three shifts, and are led by appointed classmates. This permits the students to be officers and allows opportunity and empowerment for students so they can get used to the day to day operations of the fire station.

The class has their work cut out for them in the upcoming weeks, the last week of September consists of HMA and HMO class and certification testing while the month of October involves vehicle extrication, survival, and live burns just to name a few. The class will conclude and graduate on November 6, 2015, finishing the 400 hour program.



Annual Firehouse Barbecue



On October 5, 2015, the Shelbyville-Bedford County Chamber of Commerce held their annual Firehouse BBQ at TFACA. The money raised helps local fire departments purchase smoke alarms for the community. The event featured great food, live entertainment and door prizes.

2015 Pigeon Forge Codes Conference

Here we go again! We are busy preparing for our 2015 Pigeon Forge Conference, and while December is months away, it will be here before you know it. Many of you remember the great time we all had together last year at the Music Road Inn and Convention Center, and we plan to do it all again.

As in the past, we'll be conducting classes of different lengths, and offering training of interest to both codes and fire inspection personnel. This way we can address the subject needs of more students, and better maintain variety and interest. With so many participants expected to attend, everyone should find training that meets their needs. We will also be introducing some new instructors, and they are very eager to meet you. Here are the classes we are developing for this year's conference:

"2015 IPMC Property Maintenance Inspections"

"Inspecting Building Construction in Crawlspaces"

"Inspecting Building Systems in Crawlspaces"

"Penetration Requirements for Rated Assemblies"

"Haz Mat Awareness for Inspectors"

"Performing a Proper Fire Inspection"

"Testing Hydrants for Fire Flow"

Now who could resist that lineup? Of course we hope you will come for both days, but if you can only make it one day, or just for one class, we'll be glad to see you. Having a crowd of familiar faces is the best part of the conference, so help us continue that tradition by registering right away. We almost ran out of room last year due to a near record turnout, so be sure to register early to reserve your spot.

This year the conference will be held December 10 and 11, right in the middle of the Christmas season in Pigeon Forge. Call TFACA for more information or if you're ready to register. But whatever you do, don't miss it!

**Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress;
working together is success.**

Henry Ford



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