



Virginia State Firefighter's Association
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The Virginia FIREFIGHTER

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Newsletter

Charlie Singleton Honored By The Virginia Fire Services Board

Last year, the Virginia Fire Services Board created a special award, different from the Governor's Fire Service Award, and is a lifetime achievement award. The nomination Ken Brown made to the Fire Board was reviewed and voted on and unanimously approved for presentation at this conference.

The recipient has been around for "a little while," joined the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department in 1952, and while in that department, he won the Leon L. Freeman Award that stood for dedication, devotion, and support of the fire service and his department.

He moved on in 1980 to the Ebony Volunteer Fire Department, and the way he knew this gentleman was for his legislative initiatives and tireless time that he spends at the General Assembly.

Mr. Brown stated there are very few people he looks up to in the fire service, but this individual is one of them and everyone owes him a debt that cannot be repaid and most do not realize the work he has done. This just

reflects the legislative issues but there are many other things he has accomplished in his career, not that it is near the end, but on the legislative issues, you can walk behind him on the streets in Richmond and Washington, DC, which he has done, and politicians from all over call him by name, shake his hand, and have a conversation with him. This is unheard of. There is untold assistance he has provided with representing the fire service and volunteers in particular; who knows the different legislation that has been improved, blocked, or enhanced due to his efforts. Therefore, it is only fitting for him to receive this lifetime achievement award; he presented the award to Charlie Singleton.

Mr. Singleton thanked the Fire Services Board for the award and stated he has en-



Charlie Singleton, left, District 3 executive committeeman and legislative co-chairman, was recently recognized by the Virginia Fire Services Board. Presenting the award is Ken Brown, VSFSA representative on the Virginia Fire Services Board.

joyed doing everything he has done for the Association and fire service. He hoped he had improved the fire service through the fire programs fund, and recalled as they go to the Legislative Summits, the first thing he says is that he plans to protect the Fire Programs Fund.

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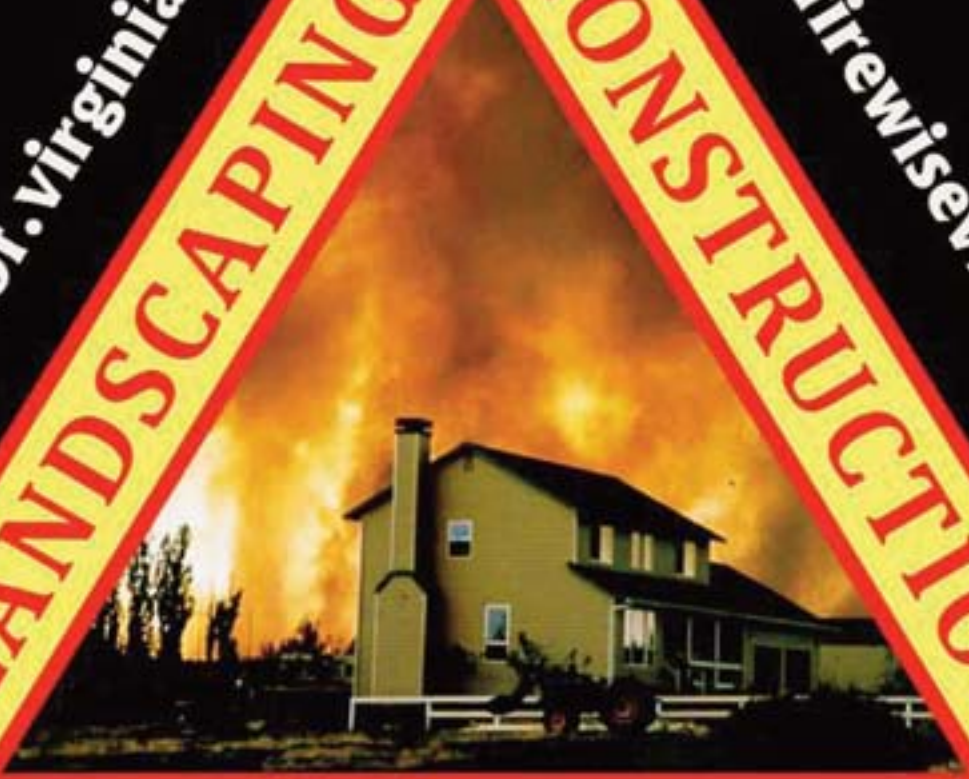
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Are YOU Prepared?

President's Message

BY GARY ALLRED
VFSA President

First and foremost, I personally would like to thank each and every one of you who supported me. This is a great honor.

I'd like to thank our president for the past two years, Ronnie Black, for his outstanding leadership and his continued support to the organization.

I would like to thank Dickie Adkins, who is stepping down after 12 years of devoted service as Secretary, and welcome David Akers as his successor, as well as Sandy Byer, David's assistant as well as chairperson of our website committee.

As in the past, Larry and Carol Gwaltney, along with the Conference Committee, made our

125th Anniversary Conference & Expo a memorable experience.

I continue to get many compliments of our memorial service. Many thanks to Pastor Tom Williams, Dickie Adkins, the ladies auxiliary and all who worked so diligently to make the service a huge success. Special thanks to the Rev. Bill Lewis for his inspirational singing during the service and a big thank you to the Hampton Firefighter's Association for their hospitality and wonderful food we have become so accustomed to!

As you can see, we have changed our format from a magazine style to a newsletter that is also available to you on our website.

The cost savings are considerable; it will be distributed quarterly and will pro-

vide you with more up-to-date information in a much more timely manner.

Please send us articles for the newsletter so we may spread the word across the commonwealth of Virginia about the incredible job our members' departments and auxiliaries do each and every day.

A list of our working committees and their chairmen appear in this edition of the newsletter. Please give us consideration to be serving on a committee. We are only as good as our members make us.

Contact a committee chairman and help us serve you!

I again want to thank you for this opportunity and look forward to working with you in the coming year.

56th Annual Convention

**Southside Virginia Volunteer
Firefighter's Association
56th Annual Convention**

BY FRANKIE TANNER

On Sept 17, 2011, Fire Departments throughout Southside Virginia converged on the Town of Blackstone.

There were no calls for mutual aid, no fires nor any emergency.

They had simply gathered to attend the 56th Annual Southside Virginia Volunteer Firefighter's Convention held at The Blackstone Army Air Field on Fort Pickett. The Convention was hosted by Immediate Past President of the Association, Tony Bradford, and the Blackstone Volunteer Fire Department.

The morning session, with over 200 in attendance, began with the Call to Order by President Butch Hamlet, of the Drakes Branch Fire Department.

The Honorable Billy Coleman, Mayor of Blackstone, welcomed everyone to the area. Association Chaplin, Cameron Bailey, conducted a Memorial Service for the members that had perished during the year.

Virginia Delegate, Tommy Wright of the 61st District was the Guest Speaker and gave valuable information concerning the Line of Duty Death Benefit.



Once the meeting adjourned, the departments showed their apparatus in a parade through downtown Blackstone. After a brief break for lunch, the afternoon started with 13 member departments, putting their best firefighters, on the competition field.

They competed for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place trophies in the One Man Hose; 2 Man RIT; Forcible Entry; 4 Man Ladder, 4 Man Hose; 6 Man Hose and Bucket Brigade

Contests.

Apparatus Judging was conducted for Best Pumpers; Tankers; Pumper-Tankers; Mini-Pumpers and Brush Trucks.

The day ended with a dinner and awards presentation for the event winners.

The Overall winner of the Gee-Tanner-Gee Memorial Trophy, sponsored by Victoria Fire & Rescue, was South Hill Volunteer Fire Department.

Community Fire Safety Guide

A Simplified Approach To Fire Safety Education

BY MARK NUGENT
Gene Reams

Having spent over 60 plus years in the fire, service we know that sooner or later we all are called upon to discuss or teach fire safety. It doesn't matter if it's a one-on-one conversation, a program for a civic or church group, or a more formal teaching session; we need to provide useful fire safety information when asked.

Usually this request is for a program that is intended to fit a very small amount of allocated time. Typical civic group and organizational meetings have about 20 to 30 minutes on their meeting agenda blocked out for a guest speaker and they usually don't like to go too far beyond that. Consequently, we try to organize a fire safety talk based on that agenda time slot and meet the intent of the request.

We know from experience, we will probably spend two to four hours researching and developing a simple lesson plan for the program, just to deliver a 30-minute session. That is, unless we find someone else in the department to pawn this program on, then it's their problem.

Ever had that happen to you? What if there was a simpler way to accomplish this request without a huge time commitment from anyone within the organization?

What if there was a means to access a selection of fire safety topics that are already prepared and ready to instruct? How about if the topics were available to download and print so you can provide the participants with a copy of the fire safety information, as well as, provide you with an instructor guide to parallel the participant guideline?

Wouldn't that make this process so much more pleasant and easier to deal with? As many of you already know, this is exactly what the Virginia State Fire and EMS Association (VSFEMSA) did when they had the "Community Fire Safety Guide" created to meet those need.

This project materialized as the leadership of the association, through their strategic planning process, performed a simple risk assessment and collectively determined that one of the areas that kept coming up was the need for a simple, yet consistent, fire safety education training program that anyone could use. We know we can

find information on all fire safety topics, but typically those topic searches don't produce a canned program ready for instruction in a simple and consistent format that can be located in one place; unless you are fortunate enough to be from a department that has this information preloaded for use.

Consequently, VSFEMSA applied for and received the AFG Fire Prevention and Safety Grant to support this project. The grant project was to create a Community Fire Safety Guide and create a web site containing fire prevention information that all fire departments could use. Over the course of the project the guide and web site were completed with over 700 guides being distributed to fire department in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The information compiled in this fire safety manual is nothing new to the fire service. It is information we all know, and now we have the information in a simple, consistent, format, which is easy to use and found in one location.

The book and web site information provides the basis for us to be able to deliver the same consistent simple instruction for every fire safety program topic covered in this project.

The guide provides a foundation that depending on the level of the audience can be expanded to suit their individual needs. Basically, the topics were designed so that two or three fire safety lessons can easily be covered in the time frame allotted by the meeting agenda (20 to 30 minutes). The following is a brief description of the content:

Program Data Collection

A significant component of this project is to capture program delivery data and successes. By registering your department on the web site and reporting your program deliveries, you will be assisting the Association with making this project a success.

The Association will report back to FEMA the types of deliveries, as well as the numbers of contacts you make with your citizens. No additional department information will be shared with any other organization.

In addition to the User Guide, the Community Fire Safety Operational Guide consists of six additional modules. Each is designed to walk you through the process of developing a consistent and comprehensive fire prevention program that can

be delivered to all segments of your community.

The modules include instructional narratives and participant guidelines for all subjects, and the companion web site and the program CD allow you to customize the information for your individual department.

Each module also includes example documents and matching templates that your organization can customize for their department, through both the CD and the web site.

Community Fire Safety Coalition

Responsibility for the fire safety of your community always falls directly on the local fire department. To ensure your organization has the greatest impact on this critical need, you should include the entire community as you plan your strategies to make your community fire safe.

The simplest way to accomplish this and involve a cross-segment of your population is to take the lead role in the formation of a Community Fire Safety Coalition.

In addition to department members, the department should reach out to citizens, business and industry leaders, school leaders, clergy, media representatives, law enforcement and civic leaders to belong to this valuable group.

In addition to helping deliver fire safety messages to your entire community, this group can assist in raising funds, recruiting members and performing many non-operational duties and tasks for your organization. The Community Fire Safety Coalition becomes your organization's advocate, by speaking and acting as an organized entity on your behalf.

Another key element to your Community Fire Safety Coalition is performing a Community Risk Assessment. This essential survey helps ensure your department is delivering the correct fire safety message to the proper segment of your community.

Utilizing data from several sources, including the National Fire Incident Reporting System, the National Fire Protection Association, local hospital discharge records and department-based smoke detector audits, will provide your organization with a working base to determine where to start your program development and delivery plan.

Scheduling Guidelines

Delivering fire safety programs does not have to be complicated, time consuming or expensive, as the data you gather from

Community Fire Safety Guide

your community risk assessment will lead you toward both your fire problem, as well as your primary target audience.

In many instances, the groups you are targeting are already established; take advantage of delivering programs to school groups, day care centers, service clubs, businesses, churches and senior groups as just a few examples.

Unfortunately, in most of your citizens' collective busy lifestyles, coming to your fire station to request fire safety information for their family does not occur on a consistent basis.

Your challenge is to determine the locations where your citizens gather, as mentioned in the earlier examples. Target these locations and groups as you are planning your delivery schedule; much of the hard work may already be complete.

Participant and Instructor Guidelines

The primary participant and teaching components of the program are included in this module. There are 21 Participant Guidelines, each with a corresponding Instructor Guideline.

The subjects include a wide array of fire safety topics, modules for age-specific groups and a home safety inspection guideline. The fire safety topics can be mixed and matched to customize a program according to the fire safety problem you are targeting or to the request of the group you are teaching.

The guidelines are available to copy from the Community Fire Safety Operational Guide or by utilizing templates included with the companion program CD. These guidelines are also available on the companion program web site through the Virginia State Fire and EMS Association website: www.vsfemsa.org.

The website includes an electronic version that is customizable for your departments contact information.

Smoke Detector Installation Program

One of the greatest impacts your department can have on the fire safety of your citizens is ensuring every home is protected by a properly operating smoke detector.

The easiest way to accomplish this is to establish a Smoke Detector Installation Program. This program will have an impact in several areas. One, you should check the smoke detector in every home where you

respond to an incident. Two, you should establish a smoke detector request process for citizens. Three, your department should target areas in your community that have been identified as having a higher incidence of fires and fire injuries.

Your department should work with local funders to provide smoke detectors to be installed by your organization throughout your community.

These smoke detectors should become a standard piece of equipment carried on all of your apparatus, available for needed installations at each home you respond to for an incident, as well as available for request and during targeted installation campaigns.

Media Relations

Creating a working relationship with the various members of the local media, including print reporters and representatives from television and radio outlets, will prove to be beneficial to your department in many situations. The information in this module will guide your organization through the steps required to establish this working partnership before an emergency incident occurs.

Simple strategies, such as creating a Public Safety Coalition, distributing safety tips through department press releases and involving and inviting your media representatives to planned department functions, are all proactive programs that will build a positive working relationship. It should be your department's goal to build a relationship with the various media contacts in your community through non-emergency activities, including the various fire prevention activities referenced in the Community Fire

Safety Operational Guide.

Appendices and Resources

This module includes example documents referenced in the individual modules and the working templates your department will be able to customize for their individual use.

Once downloaded and customized by your department, you will be able to create letters, public service announcements, participant and instructional guidelines and media press releases to utilize in your community, which all include your personal department name and contact information.

In conclusion, many fire safety education experts reviewed the content of the guide. We took their input to help make the Community Fire Safety Guide accurate and user friendly while at the same time meeting the intent of NFPA public education standards. We encourage you to go the VSFA.org web site, register your department and begin your Fire Safety Delivery journey today.



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Certificate Of Recognition

126th VSFA Annual Conference

It is not too early
to make plans
now to attend the
126th VSFA Annual
Conference in
Hampton, Va.
August 15-18, 2012.



A Virginia State Firefighter's Association "Certificate of Recognition" was presented to Frederick J. Robinson on his 90th birthday by District 9 Representative Lloyd Goddard III for his 51 years of service to the city of Richmond, with 47 of them being one of the original 12 African-American firefighters, hired in 1950.

Family, friends and fellow firefighters were in attendance.

Mr. Robinson attributes his long life and good health to his faith in God.



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Kongming Lantern Safety

State Building Code Technical Review Says "Kongming Lanterns" Cannot Be Released Into The Air

BY MARK L. BUFF

Virginia Department of Fire Programs
Marketing & Communications Manager

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA: – The State Building Code Technical Review Board has issued an official interpretation concerning "Kongming Lanterns."

At their meeting of August 19, the Board determined that these devices fall under the definition of "Recreational Fire" as described in Section 302.1 of the 2009 Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (SFPC).

This interpretation was issued at the request of the State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO).

Recreational Fire. An outdoor fire burning materials other than rubbish where the fuel being burned is not contained in an incinerator, outdoor fireplace, portable outdoor fireplace, barbeque grill or barbeque pit and has a total fuel area of 3 feet (914 mm) or less in diameter and 2 feet (610 mm) or less in height for pleasure, religious, ceremonial, cooking, warmth or similar purposes.

The board further determined that under the definition of recreational fire these devices must be constantly attended according to Section 307.5 of the 2009 Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code. This interpretation essentially makes these devices illegal in Virginia unless they are anchored or tethered in some manner.

Attendance. Open burning, bonfires, recreational fires and use of portable outdoor fireplaces shall be constantly attended until the fire is extinguished.

The marketing of "Kongming Lanterns", sometimes referred to as "sky lanterns or wish lanterns", has generated a number of inquiries to fire officials in the commonwealth of Virginia on the use of such lanterns.

In addition to private citizens making inquiries, the opinion of the SFMO has been sought by a few local fire officials on the appropriateness of using the lanterns and/or if their use violated provisions of the SFPC.

This same inquiry is being discussed by fire officials on a national level via informal forums for the exchange of information and ideas.

In Virginia, some localities have amended the SFPC to prohibit the use of these lanterns unless a permit has been properly secured.

Kongming Lanterns are airborne paper lanterns traditionally found in some Asian cultures.

They are constructed from oiled rice paper on a bamboo frame, and contain a small candle or fuel cell composed of a waxy flammable material. When lit, the flame heats the air inside the lantern, thus lowering its density causing the lantern to rise into the air.

The sky lantern is only airborne for as long as the flame stays alight, after which the lantern floats back to the ground.

Kongming Lanterns are being used in a variety of venues such as weddings, ceremonies and celebrations.

There are a number of safety concerns with these devices, ranging from the obvious fire risks to dangers to livestock and aircraft.

Since sky lanterns contain a flame, there is the danger that they can cause a fire when landing on flammable ground or becoming

entangled in trees. After the balloon lands, the leftover thin wire frame may present a hazard to any animal tempted to swallow it.

Additionally, there have been reports in some countries along coastal areas of the lanterns being mistaken for marine distress flares, triggering unnecessary and costly rescue operations.

In summary, the interpretation by the State Building Code Technical Review Board classifies Kongming Lanterns as illegal in Virginia unless they are constantly attended (anchored or tethered).

Under no circumstances may they be released into the air. Individuals are further advised to check with their local authorities for any additional restrictions their locality may have imposed on the use of these lanterns.

Northern Accomack County Station Handles 17-Hour Haz-Mat Incident

NEW CHURCH — On Thursday Oct. 6th, at about 2329 hours the Eastern Shore Communications Center dispatched Station 1, New Church Fire and Rescue and Station 20, Oak Hall Rescue for a vehicle accident with possible injury involving a tractor trailer on its side at 3496 Davis Road.

Shortly after dispatch Captain 119 W. Kelley arrived on location and advised one tractor trailer on its side as reported, single occupant attempting to climb out.

With units arriving on location, the single driver was able to climb from the cab and jump down on the ground and refused medical treatment uninjured. After checking the tank that he was hauling, requests were made for the Eastern Shore Regional Hazardous Materials Team to respond.

It was found that he was carrying Isopropyl Alcohol at near 90% pure, and it was leaking from two wash out caps on the tank. After a quick check of the ERG two members from New Church VFR, donned safety gear, and placed containers to catch the leak which was at a small rate, while several created an earthen dam down stream of the leak in a ditch. Also it was found that the tractor had leaked a small amount of oil and diesel fuel. Rescue Engine 1 placed two hand lines in to service, both with foam and the crew then evacuated the home in front of the accident location, as it was the only home with in ½ mile of the wreck then they closed the road down with the assistance of VDOT.

Members placed a ladder against the frame of the truck, and entered the cab in

full protective gear and retrieved the shipping papers and MSDS to match the chemical with the ERG.

The Eastern Shore Regional Hazardous Materials Team arrived and began the process of monitoring the area for hazardous atmosphere conditions, and flammable vapor build up. The area was foamed to try and prevent vapors from being able to create a flash fire.

Alcohol Resistant Aqueous Film Forming Foam was brought to the location by the Salisbury Fire Department, and the Ocean City Volunteer Fire Department, both from the State of Maryland. The City of Chesapeake Fire Department responded with an Engine, Battalion Chief and Foam Trailer at the request of VDEM Haz Mat Officer Todd Cannon. An environmental clean up company was brought in to pump out the tank of the 6,400 gallons.

At daylight, they examined the tank and started to work out a plan to pump out the tank into another tank en route to the location from the destination of where the truck was heading. By 1100 hours the offloading had begun after the Haz Mat team performed grounding and bonding of the trucks and pump, and was complete by around 1400.

Firefighters on location then started to remove the grounding and bonding system that was put in place for the incident and pump out, and took a small break to allow some rehab, before the truck was removed by West Service Center of Chesapeake Virginia, contracted by the owner of the tractor trailer. Units were cleared from the scene, and in quarters at 1639 hours.

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- b. Fire Inspector of the Year
- c. EMS Person of the Year

- d. Executive Committeeman of the Year
- e. Fire Prevention Person of the Year
- f. Fire Chief of the Year
- h. Vendor of the Year

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