



SIRENS

Summer 2021

News & Information for Albemarle County Fire Rescue



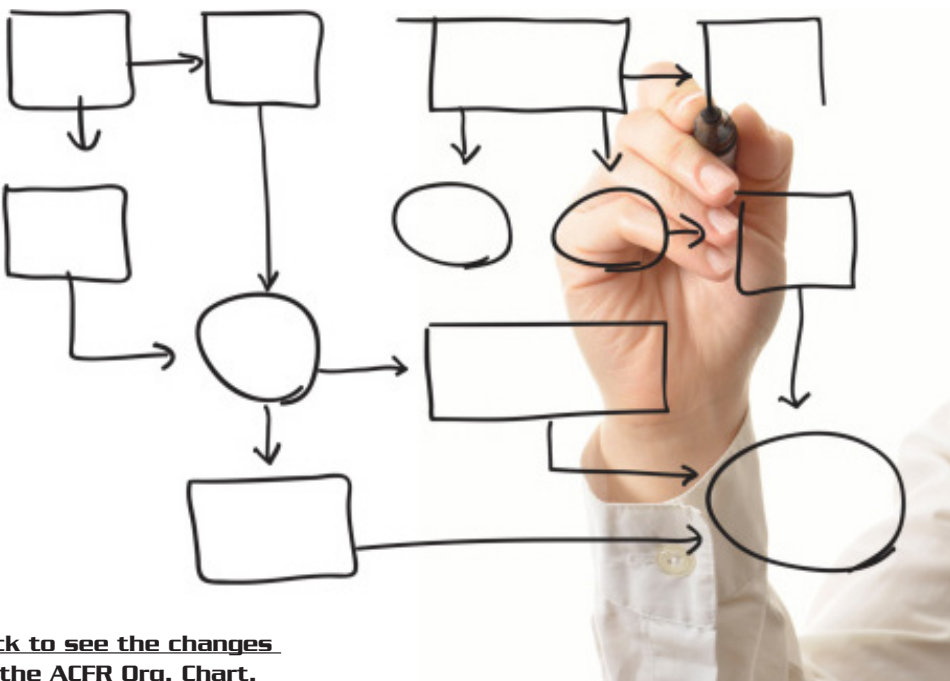
Office Reorganization

On August 4, the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors authorized two new positions, a fleet mechanic and a member services analyst, for ACFR. These positions are part of an ACFR administrative reorganization to create additional capacity in the department, address unmet needs, and work more efficiently.

A series of retirements and long-term leave for key personnel within ACFR during a period of department growth and increased need for service prompted ACFR to evaluate the current structure of our administrative personnel against the changing needs of our department. During this process, we evaluated costs, known needs, and feedback from employees in affected positions. As a result of this process, ACFR proposes restructuring the Member Services and Operations administrative staff to better meet the needs of our department.

As the operational force of ACFR has grown and become more complex to meet the needs of our growing community, the administrative personnel in ACFR have felt the strain of meeting increased and changing demands while remaining relatively stagnant. During the employee feedback process, we consistently heard that employees struggle with work/life balance due to capacity, workload, and the need to take on responsibilities outside the scope of their position. To combat this and stabilize our administrative workforce, ACFR proposes the addition of non-uniformed positions – a fleet mechanic and a member services analyst. The cost of these two new positions will be offset by other fleet repair and personnel savings.

Additionally, ACFR will convert three existing positions from uniformed to non-uniformed roles. After careful evaluation,



[Click to see the changes to the ACFR Org. Chart.](#)

ACFR determined that the functions of these positions could be accomplished at the same level of effectiveness with non-uniformed personnel while recognizing significant benefits. Filling this position with non-uniformed personnel will allow us to expand our applicant pool to find the person with the right knowledge, skills, and abilities for the job. Additionally, this allows us to eliminate the need for rotating the uniformed personnel back into the field and creates stability in those positions. Finally, converting uniformed positions to non-uniformed positions is more cost-effective.

This restructuring ensures that our office staff are best aligned to meet the needs of our growing and changing department. Restructuring these positions creates additional capacity in the department, addresses unmet needs, and allows work to be accomplished more effectively.

Calls for Service

Jan. 1 - July 31, 2021	
EMS	6,090
Fire.....	1557
HM	257
Rescue	596
Other	20
Grand Total.....	8,519

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Letter From the Chief

This fall, ACFR will implement exciting service enhancements as we address emerging needs in our community. Beginning on October 2, ACFR will provide 24/7 Advanced Life Support Emergency Medical Services (ALS EMS) coverage at the Ivy and Pantops stations, a cross-staffed engine and ambulance at the East Rivanna station, and minimum staffing

of two at Earlysville, Stony Point, and East Rivanna stations.

These changes are the third and final phase of an ambitious staffing initiative adopted by the Board of Supervisors in the FY 21 budget. This staffing plan, implemented in three phases over an 18-month period, included 22 new FTEs for ACFR in FY 21. Twelve positions, hired last July in Recruit School 18, were needed to provide coverage at the Ivy and Pantops stations, as well as the related Battalion Chief staffing. These positions also allowed ACFR to conduct an in-house paramedic program, which concluded on August 27.

Ten of those positions were funded by a FEMA Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant and they were hired in January as part of Recruit School 19, which graduated on June 24. Those 10 positions allowed us to staff daytime engines at the Crozet and Pantops stations without having to reallocate staff assigned to Stony Point and East Rivanna stations

This staffing plan allows us to address the growing demand in the development areas while maintaining a presence in the rural areas where we currently provide staff. This is something we will continue to support in FY 22, with 5 new FTEs included to provide daytime staffing for North Garden Volunteer Fire Department. Additionally, we applied for another FEMA SAFER Grant that would allow us to not only hire the 5 positions for North Garden, but an additional 5 positions to reduce our need to rely on dynamic staffing. We recently received notification that we were awarded this grant.

As our County continues to grow, meeting the needs of our community while we work to put these positions in the field has been a challenge. I am proud of the dedication and professionalism I have seen from you all as you've stepped up to meet that challenge.

—Chief Dan Eggleston

C-ARS Receives Regional Award for Outstanding Contribution to EMS Health & Safety

C-ARS was very proactive, establishing a COVID Workgroup in mid-March 2020 consisting of both of the organization's Operational Medical Directors (critical care intensivists at UVA Health), the Director of Infectious Disease Control, Chief and Division Chiefs. Their goal, to continue to safely run while protecting the health and wellbeing of our volunteers. They immediately developed rigid protocols and pushed them out into the organization. Overnight entrance to the station was restricted to those on shift. When members arrived at the building they had to wash their hands, take their temperature and sign-in. Masks were mandatory at all times.

They immediately began exploring sustainable, reusable personal protective equipment (PPE) options. They worked collaboratively with UVA and UVA Health, and forged a new relationship with Cville Craft Aid. They were quickly able to



(L-R) R. John Lye, TJEMS President; Jon Howard, C-ARS Board President, Kevin Livingstone, C-ARS DICO

secure face shields, reusable cloth gowns, and other needed supplies and they kept meticulous track of their use.

C-ARS had several volunteers certified to fit test P100s. All providers were fitted and received respirators. They changed their model of care, having the Attendant-in-Charge solely evaluate the patient and then ask for assistance as needed

from the other providers who waited outside, to minimize COVID exposure. Every volunteer wore their gown, P100, goggles, shield and gloves on every call.

The Workgroup provided a weekly email update to all C-ARS members. They also built and maintained a page on the C-ARS website devoted to detailing policies and protocols to promote transparency both inside and outside the organization.

Additionally, the Workgroup actively monitored every C-ARS member that had a possible COVID exposure regardless of where the exposure occurred. They required quarantines, testing and temperature logs, as needed. They also facilitated vaccinations for all members and tracked each one.

Despite treating and transporting hundreds of COVID-positive patients, C-ARS has not had a provider test positive for COVID as a result. Their precautions, protocols and extensive use of PPE paid off. Their providers not only maintained their physical health; but, knowing the C-ARS's COVID Workgroup was doing everything possible to protect them helped support their mental health as well.

Shine the Light

September is National Suicide Prevention Month. As we close in on the month, I want to bring awareness to suicide, and how it affects all first responders, and their families. First responders have a higher risk of suicide than the general public. So how do we even begin to help? We must first start by shining a light on this taboo and stigmatized topic.

Mental Health

The excitement of the job, whether career or volunteer is very rewarding, but the emotional tax can certainly take its toll. When the dues are owed, that tax can be overwhelming to say the least. The repeated trauma from compounded calls can sometimes be too much to handle. Everyone tries to work through their feelings in different ways. Some folks are left grasping for the assistance of certain substances. Many people turn to drugs or alcohol, and when paired with anxiety, depression, and PTSD the outcome is never good. When failed coping mechanism attempts are mixed with mental health struggles, the outcome can lead to thoughts or attempts of suicide. Some people who commit suicide show signs of depression, anxiety, and addiction, but not all. Some talk about planning to take their own life, and some don't.

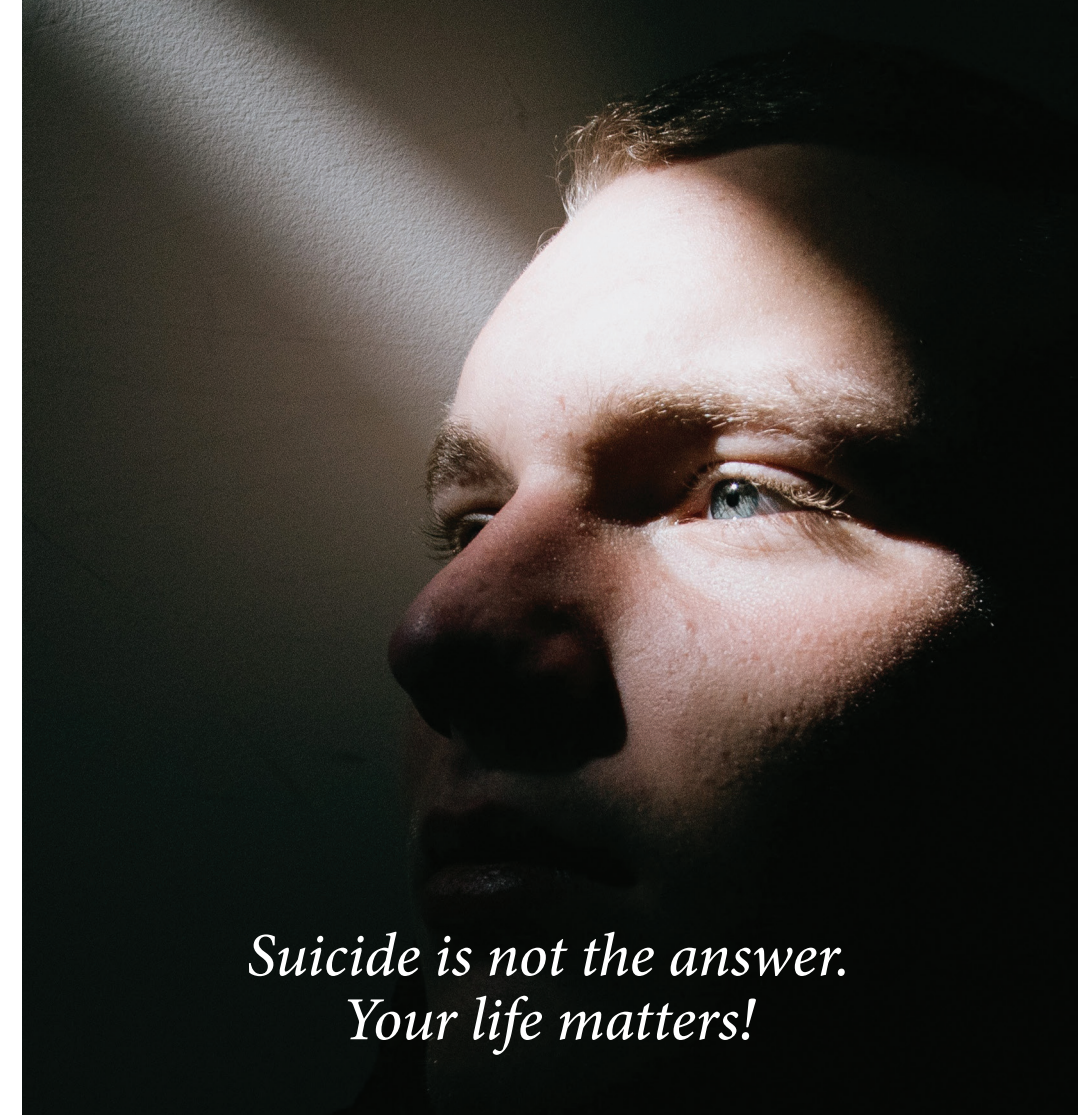
Without Warning

Unfortunately, we don't really know what prompts someone to take their own life. We do know that most always it leaves family and friends asking, was there something I could have done? What did I miss? Sometimes the people most in need are the hardest to help. Mostly the planners are aware they have to keep their intentions a secret. So, if this is the case, what can we do? How can we possibly stop someone?

A fair number of times suicides, (and attempts) don't completely come without warning. Even the most secretive can consciously or unknowingly drop hints. Here are a few small hints, and some big signs that someone you love or know might be struggling with mental health or thoughts of suicide.

Loving Through Mental Illness

Providing support for someone who is suffering from mental illness can be confusing, ex-



*Suicide is not the answer.
Your life matters!*

hausting and overwhelming. Practice being a good listener. Actively listening can assist with opening up lines of communication, which is always a good thing. Some of the most important things to practice are empathy and validation of that person's feelings. You can do both even if you don't necessarily agree with their thought process. Seeing the people that we care about suffering is very hard, especially when we can't sympathize with them. It's important to note that we cannot fix their problems all by ourselves. Helping to encourage them get outside help with a specialized recourse that deals with the different challenges that first responders go through could be the exact key to unlock the right door. It's also important to remember that you yourself may need to talk to someone for support as well. Remembering that we all need help sometimes.

Warning Signs

- Increased drug or alcohol use.
- Feelings of guilt, shame, and self hatred.
- Aggressive behavior.
- Withdrawal from friends, family and community.
- Dramatic mood swings.
- Reckless or impulsive behavior.
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness. No hope for the future.
- Sleeping too much or too little.
- Talking about suicide.

If you are struggling, or are concerned about someone who is, please call the

**NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE
1-800-273-8255 (TALK)**

Recruit School 19 Graduation



Back row from L to R: Maxwell Morgan, Joshua King, Stuart Dalton, Eric Opoku, David Marshall, Brett Turner, Andre Miles-Redmond, Hannah Argbogast
Front row from L to R: Josh Euhus, Michael Karr, Marvin Tapia, Jordan Divine, William Filippelli, Colin Mayry, Caleb Shetler

On June 24th, fourteen probationary firefighters were sworn in at the first in-person graduation ceremony since Recruit School 16's right before the pandemic hit. While the ceremony and gathering in general were not quite like they were in the past, it meant quite a lot to everyone involved to be able to celebrate together. A big thanks to the Training Division staff, Christina Davis, Chief Scott Lambert, Nicole Jones, and Larry Bouterie for making the event possible. Chief Eggleston and the Deputy Chiefs worked together to perform the pinning

ceremony in lieu of the recruit's loved one due to the pandemic restrictions, but it was as poignant a moment as ever. The coveted Seat Three award went to PFF Caleb Shetler. As for the fitness award, the school instructors made the decision to give two since both PFF Andre Miles-Redmond and PFF Maxwell Morgan pushed themselves equally hard in their own way. PFF Josh Euhus was chosen to deliver the recruit class' speech. He highlighted the time the group took to get to know each other. He said, "we all survived the first day, but stayed

late in the parking lot to get to know each other. We quickly found out that while we were all exceptionally qualified, none of us were the same". They agreed right away that they "would have to be real with each other to survive and thrive in [their] new environment". In closing Euhus stated "ready or not here we come" and then signaled Andre Miles-Redmond to lead the group in their motivational call, "19, in it together". The Training Division wishes them the best in their new profession.



Compliance Corner

Signatures & Documentation

Every patient care report (PCR) should have a minimum of 2 signatures. The signatures can be from the following:

- Patient/Patient Representative and/or Hospital Representative
- Primary Care Provider – Should always sign the PCR

If the patient is unable to sign the PCR, make a note on the narrative as to why they patient is unable to sign. An example – The patient is unable to sign due to his/her stress level. **DO NOT** write Patient Unable to Sign or PUTS in the signature box.

Documentation Tips:

- PCRS should be accurate and complete
 - Paint a picture from dispatch to on scene, to transferring care at the hospital. Include details in your narrative.
 - The chief complaint is the main thing the patient is complaining of.
 - The primary impression is your differential diagnosis not what you were dispatched for.
 - For any dispatch that includes a medical response, a PCR should be completed by the crew(s) being dispatched. Regardless of how much or how little of contact a provider has with a patient.
 - If possible, get the patient's insurance information.
 - If photos are taken at the scene, these should be attached to the patient's record.
- NOTE:** Photos should not be taken using personal cell phones.



Emergency Management Minute: Cybersecurity/Cyberinfrastructure

Recently, numerous departments and industries across the United States have been locked out of mission-critical databases, their emails have been held for ransom, and they have been intimidated by attackers threatening to share personnel records on the dark web with hackers and other nefarious people. Even failures of cyber infrastructure, such as the pipeline diversion or the emergency

telecommunications system experienced over the summer, can cause catastrophic problems for services we provide to the community. Best practices to prevent and mitigate cybersecurity and cyberinfrastructure issues include ensuring that all software applications receive up-to-date patches and that all people utilizing technology are aware of strategies to prevent malware and ransomware.

NEW MEMBERS

Crozet	
Ray Dobrican	4/29/2021
Earlsville	
Alexander D Rodriguez.....	5/10/2021
Peter Daniel.....	5/17/2021
David Heetderks	6/23/2021
Seminole Trail Volunteer Fire Department	
Jessica Liu	4/19/2021
Krutik Nigam	4/19/2021
Yasmin Horner	4/19/2021
Sean Keeley.....	4/19/2021
Kendl Kobbervig	6/21/2021
Stony Point Volunteer Fire Company	
Winston Terraine Clark.....	5/12/2021
Samantha Chasse	6/7/2021

RELEASES

FF Eddie Noack	FF
FF Thomas Woods.....	FF
FF Ashley Hodges	FF
FF Mika Meyers	FF
Lee Ann Haluska.....	BLS
FF Colin Bohanon	BLS, EVOC II, FF
FF Amal Mitchell.....	FF
MFF Jean Balderas-Baca	ALS
FF Jay Adams.....	DPO
PFF Josh Euhus.....	BLS, EVOC II
PFF Andre Miles-Redmond	BLS, EVOC II
Nathan Lee.....	BLS
PFF Stuart Dalton	BLS
Chief Jason Tetterton	First Responder EMT
MFF Doug Brede.....	DAO
PFF Brett Turner.....	BLS
PFF Colin Mayry.....	EVOC II
PFF Eric Opoku	BLS
FF Alex Colley	DPO
PFF Joshua King	BLS
PFF Jordan Divine	EVOC II, BLS
PFF Michael Karr	BLS, EVOC II
PFF Caleb Shetler.....	ALS

PROMOTIONS

MFF Jason Wilson	Master Firefighter
MFF Josh Loving	Master Firefighter
MFF Devon Thompson	Master Firefighter
Captain Quen Marchant.....	Captain II



Wallace Robertson
Master Firefighter/
Paramedic

Master Firefighter Wallace Robertson has been serving his community in various public safety roles for 25 years. He started with ACFR 8 years ago as a firefighter, and has since worked up to the rank of Master Firefighter. Wallace is also a Paramedic preceptor, a released DPO, and is part of both the HazMat and Technical Rescue Teams.

gut-instinct, and if something “smells” wrong, it probably is. (3) Just do it. Set your personal “bar” high, write goals & tasks down, and hold yourself accountable.

Q: What are your hopes for our future recruits?

A: To express interest in making a departmental improvement and being afforded the opportunity to do so. I’ve been fortunate during my tenure to work for leaders such as Chief Chris Brooks and Chief Matt Ascoli (and others) to push forward with initiatives that hopefully had a positive impact.

Q: What is something in your professional/academic life you are especially proud of?

A: Though it doesn’t happen all too often, I’ve had opportunities along the way to be in the right place at the right time to make the ultimate difference in someone’s life. It’s been truly rewarding to talk to them afterward, and know the team I was a part of was able to provide assistance.

Q: What is a career goal or ambition you are working towards?

A: To continue my attempt to learn at least one new thing each shift, prevent any significant injuries during my career, and be able to retire with my health intact.

Q: What advice would you tell someone who is interested in your field of work?

A: Believe in yourself, that you can do the job, put in applications with as many departments as possible, and when you get hired, do what it takes to learn your position...and remember that sometimes this requires making the effort to self-study and figure out areas you recognize as weaknesses.

Q: What is something unique about you that other people might not know?

A: Not being comfortable with working at height, I gained employment one summer at a bungee jumping facility with a 95’ drop, and jumped everyday I worked.

Q: What is one of your favorite books, movie, artist, etc.

A: Two books passed along by Chiefs in our department. “Extreme Ownership” (Chief Meade Whitaker) and “401 Things Veteran Firefighters Can Teach You” (Chief Elliott) that offer great life and work lessons to live by. I’ve also shared some of this content with my nine-year-old twin boys after some challenging days.

Q: What kinds of things do you enjoy that involves helping others?

A: Usually people call when they are having a really bad day. When the situation warrants, its okay to step out of our usual role if that’s what it takes to make their day better. Treating them like family usually helps resolve the problem. I witnessed this recently by shift-mate Ryan Mullen, and it reminded me of this important philosophy.

Q: What is your life motto/work mantra?

A: Don’t walk past something that needs to be done...if you see it, own it, and need to do it. (AKA: See It, Own It, Do It!)



Casey Taylor
Lieutenant, Earlysville

Casey Taylor has been a volunteer at Earlysville since 2008 where he joined as a junior member. He is currently a Lieutenant/DPO for A shift. He owns his

own residential and commercial contracting company that officially started in April of 2020. This has been a goal of his for a very long time. When not working or at the fire station his free time is spent enjoying the outdoors going hiking, fishing, hunting, or golfing.

Q: What advice do you have for new recruits or people interested in your industry?

A: For those people interested in the fire service I would tell them to contact their local department first. Find out how they operate and schedule a time to do a ride along or just a station tour. Often I talk to people that say they were interested in joining the fire service but because they didn’t know what to do to get involved. My advice for new recruits is to take initiative whether its on station chores or training. Don’t do the “extra” things to be noticed or try to stand out. Do the “extra” to improve your skills as well as help the people in your organization.

Q: What are three career lessons you’ve learned thus far?

A: (1) Things are always changing in the fire service and its up to you to figure them out (2) Change for the good takes more than one advocate and common sense. (3) Just because “this is how we have always done it” might not be the best way for one thing, it can teach you the best way to do other things.

Q: What are three words that best describe you?

See **Spotlight** on page 8

TECHNICAL RESCUE NEWS

Rescue Winch Operations

by Wallace Robertson

A winch is defined as a mechanical device used to pull in, let out, or otherwise adjust the tension of a rope. Many ACFR apparatuses are equipped with winches (also known as “rescue winches”) and these are great tools for many circumstances. Rescue winches are designed primarily for two scenarios that include; stabilization of an object, or pulling it away from trouble. Its important to keep in mind these devices are not designed for vertical lifting, pulling vehicles up hills or out of the mud. A wrecker should be requested in these situations.

There are a variety of winch styles. ACFR has several types, including mounted winches, portable-mounted, and manual winches. This article provides an overview of these, with a focus on vehicle-mounted winches and their operation. VDFP HTR Instructor John Burruss’s “Rescue Winch Operations” presentation was used as a reference for this article, and can be found on the TRT Sharepoint Page in the HTR Training Folder. Please take a look for more comprehensive information.

Mounted Winches

Mounted winches are installed within a vehicle’s bumper components (not necessarily the frame), and are either electric or hydraulically powered. Electric winches operate at a constant speed, are not able to be “feathered,” require 12 volts & up to 250 amps, and are usually limited to a 25,000 lb capacity. Hydraulic winches can be “feathered,” have capacities up to 100,000 lbs, and are typically found on tow trucks and older heavy squads.

Two styles of “rope,” wire and synthetic, are loaded on mounted winches. Wire rope is traditional, very strong, abrasion resistant, and should be neatly layered when retracting. Nicks and burr are often encountered with wire, so gloves should always be worn. Care should also be taken to ensure it’s not bent, kinked, or run around corners. Synthetic rope on the other hand, is twice as strong as wire, comparable to wire in expense, and can be kinked/bent. A disadvantage of synthetic rope is that sunlight and chemicals can be harmful to its integrity.

Rescue winches are very powerful, and therefore can be very dangerous. A thorough understanding of winch characteristics is vital.

When using a winch equipped with synthetic rope, one full layer must be left on the spool when deploying. In contrast, when using a winch loaded with wire rope, three wraps of wire must be left on the spool. In these minimum wrap states, winches are at their strongest. The more rope layers that are added to the spool, the less pulling power the winch will provide. For example, when using a 12,000 lb winch with one layer of rope, the pull is rated at 12,000 lbs. At the fourth layer, the pull is reduced to 7,850 lbs.

When operating winches, there are safety precautions to be mindful of. When pulling, if the winch vehicle squats, the motor begins to slow down, or “creaking” noises are noticed, operations should stop as the procedure is approaching the maximum rating of the device. Operators should stand to the side of the vehicle’s bumper so they are in a safe zone in the event of a rope failure. (Rope will return back to the truck in this situation.) Apparatus placement is also of utmost importance. When preparing for a straight-line pull, the rope should never be more than 15 degrees off-center. Snatch blocks (CODs) and double line pulls are other options, but are beyond the scope of this discussion. (Please contact a TRT member for further instruction on these techniques.) Additionally, be certain clevis slip/grab hooks are never tip loaded, and always positioned with the hooks up when attached to other system components. Should the hooks straighten or fail, the force will direct the hooks downward toward the ground.

Portable-Mounted Winches

Portable-mounted winches usually have a 9,000 lb capacity and are able to be mounted on various receivers around the truck. Squad 11 has a front mounted 9,000 lb portable-mounted electric winch, and also has class IV 10,000 lb hitch receivers on the sides and rear of the truck. This type of winch is very heavy, and generally requires two people when mounting.

Manual Winches

Manual winches, also known as come-alongs, work well for “light” duty situations. Typically they are rated with a 4,000 lb capacity, but also come in a variety of other sizes. Be certain to

verify the specifications on the device for the intended use, and consult the owner’s manual for additional information. Note: A key safety feature of come-alongs is the handle...if it bends, the tool is being overloaded!

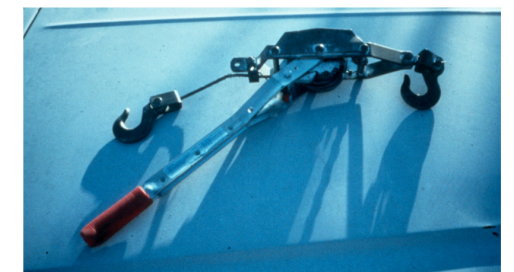
In conclusion, always make the time to learn your equipment, and if you have questions please ask a TRT member for clarification. Winches can be great asset, but also pose great risk if incorrectly used outside of their design limitations.



(L) Portable Mounted Winch (R) Bent Chain Hook



Mounted Winch



Come-Along

Spotlight *Continued from page 6*

A: Passionate, stubborn, and expensive (I tend to break a lot of things by accident).

Q: What would you do (for a career) if you weren't doing this?

A: I am a volunteer, and it may feel like a full-time job however, I do own my own company doing Commercial and Residential Contracting.

Q: What is a career goal or ambition you are working towards?

A: One of my goals for the fire service is to obtain a train the trainer certification for all of the associated fire classes.

Q: What is something you love—and a few details about why you love it?

A: I love music and I mean all types of music. There is nothing else that I have found that can trigger memories, change your mood, or conform to the way you feel. I have an extremely diverse set of playlists and channels that cause a lot of people to give me weird looks. Music can bring vastly different people from all walks of life together. Each song means something different to people and it is something that you can hear over and over again but never mean the same thing to two people.

Q: What is something unique about you that other people might not know?

A: I am a cat dad to three, only because I can't afford more and don't want people judging me for it.

Q: What is one element of your field of work people may be surprised to learn about?

A: HGTV and all these "Home shows" are not real or even realistic. They are all staged or end in massive nightmares for people on them. Yes, we can make your dreams come true, but these things do cost money. There's a reason the shows are fake, because no one can actually do what they claim in such short time frames, especially on the budgets that they claim.

9/11 Events



▲ Rowing Event (Left to Right) Allen Kuser-CFD, Suzanne Herndon-ACFR, David Carnes-ACFR, Chief Elliott-ACFR, Robert Greene-ACFR, Sean Ryan-ACFR, Justin Spanka-ACFR

◀ Rowing Event (Left to Right) Andrew Baxter. David Carnes-ACFR



Stair Climb
Allen Kuser-CFD, Suzanne Herndon-ACFR
Bart Lace-Stafford Fire Department



Stair Climb
Ryan Mullen-ACFR

SIRENS is the official newsletter of Albemarle County Fire Rescue and is published quarterly.

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SUBMISSIONS: Articles, feature stories, cartoons, photographs, upcoming training, station news, and station events and functions are welcome at any time and can be submitted to ACFRSirens@albemarle.org.

