

# WLLVFD NEWS

## Former Junior Firefighter Graduates!



*Read Leighton's Story on page 3*

## Note From the Editor

Well, it is late June of 2025 and if you are anywhere close to my age you know how time moves faster as you get older. It's going on summer and we did not get a newsletter published for either the winter of 2024 nor the spring of 2025. I will try to catch you up on events and such that occurred during that time in this edition.

The department has been very busy doing the usual things like putting out fires and making medical calls in between doing yearly inventories, working out radio issues, welcoming new members and saying farewell to others, and dealing with our own family issues. Remember, we are all volunteers.

All that aside, hopefully we are back on track for a while and will keep you updated on our news. We would love for you to attend our business meeting that we have on the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. so you can hear the news in person!

Happy Reading,

Editor – Kelly Witten

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Station 1 is located at 6614 FM 937, just south of Old Union at the intersection of FM 937 & FM 3371. Business Meetings are the 1st Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. We are open to the public.



This April the department got new uniforms for the membership.

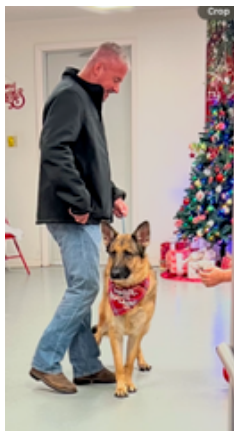
## AWARDS BANQUET

West Lake Limestone VFD held it's annual banquet in December at the Farm House restaurant in Mexia. The majority of members were able to attend along with members of Emergency Services District 2 and a few county commissioners. Everyone enjoyed a nice meal and good fellowship. WLLVFD members were awarded their annual Service Awards along with two members who received special awards – Adam Collett received Responder of the Year Award and Kelly Witten received Volunteer of the Year Award.



## BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

WLLVFD's Annual Breakfast with Santa was a huge success with a free pancake breakfast for members of the community. Children got to spend time with Mr. & Mrs. Clause (who were accompanied by a feisty elf) and whisper their Christmas wishes to Santa while getting a free picture to remember the day.





## Leighton Mackey Graduates



For as long as he can remember, Leighton Mackey wanted to be a firefighter. That dream took root early, as he grew up around the local volunteer fire department where both his parents served. By age 12, he was already attending training nights with them, staying behind afterward to help refill the trucks—small tasks that stoked a big ambition. His first real call came at 14, when a series of major fires swept through the county. With crews spread thin, Leighton was asked to assist in landing a medical helicopter, an experience that deepened his resolve to pursue the fire service.

At 15, he formally joined the department as a junior member, committing to weekly Wednesday morning training sessions and gradually taking on more responsibility. Over the next two years, he gained hands-on experience and a deep respect for the work of first responders. When he turned 18, Leighton transitioned to full firefighter status, responding to calls alongside seasoned team members. At 20, his dedication was recognized with a full-ride scholarship from the department to attend the prestigious TEEX A&M Fire Academy.

Today, Leighton continues to chase the dream he's had since childhood. With the fire academy now behind him, he is working toward earning his EMT certification—a key milestone on the path to becoming a professional firefighter. What began as a childhood aspiration has become a lifelong calling, fueled by training, experience, and a steadfast commitment to serving his community.

The officers and members of WLLVFD are proud to have Leighton working alongside them.



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## WLLVFD hosts Paint Party with painting instructor, Amy Eagan!



*A total of 16 ladies enjoyed spending time together and painting beautiful pictures at the Paint Party on Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup>.*

## FIRE INCIDENTS

### A CLOSE CALL by J. "Griff" Griffin

On the afternoon of Monday April 21st, 2025, two (2) Ladies were travelling westbound on State Highway 164 when another motorist flagged them down to stop. The Ladies were driving in a Class C motorhome with a towed vehicle behind it. The engine compartment of the towed vehicle had thick, dark smoke and flames coming from under the hood. Once pulled over one of the ladies got the fire extinguisher from the RV, thinking to control or limit any spread of fire. The heat and flames proved to be too much to get close to, and once the vehicles were stopped on the side of the roadway, the winds pushed the flames, heat and smoke towards the rear of the RV, transitioning from the towed vehicle to the RV catching on fire.



Passerby's had stopped to try to help and ensure the safety of the driver and passenger, calling 911 to report the situation. Multiple fire departments were dispatched as Limestone County Sheriff's and Texas Highway Patrol shut down traffic in both directions. Fire apparatus came from Groesbeck VFD, East Lake Limestone VFD, and West Lake Limestone VFD. Additional responders travelling in the personal vehicles arrived on the scene to assist with resource management, communications, establish traffic control and medical personnel to evaluate the Ladies and Fire Fighters involved in extinguishing the vehicles.

The RV and towed vehicle were both completely destroyed by the fire, which also scorched and damaged the roadway, and partially spread into the ditch and nearby pasture area. All fires were extinguished and overhauled, preparing the burned carcasses for clearing from the roadway. Traffic was able to start moving in the South side highway lane, coordinated by responders with hand signs, safety vests and radio communications. Texas Towing provided 3 recovery units to help clear the scene, consisting of 2 rollback towing platforms and a trailer with a skid-steer and additional recovery gear.



While no one was injured, either the occupants or responders, the potential for further incident was high - environmental temperatures and humidity was into the 90's, visibility was

obscured by smoke, fire spread to the nearby pasture, and the vehicles had fuel tanks of both gasoline and propane. Once the overhaul and site cleanup was conducted the Texas Highway Department was called in by the Texas Department of Safety to assess the road damage for future repairs.

The entirety of the event lasted approximately 3.5 hours, involving 4 different Fire Departments and 6 Fire trucks, 3 Law Enforcement units, 3 Towing units and a total of 21 Responders.





## FIRE INCIDENTS CONT.

Sometimes your controlled burn can get away from your abilities to control it. It always helps if you call in before you burn.

WLLVFD Station 1  
(254) 729-0165



This rehab unit is a much-appreciated source of snacks, drinks and rest.



Lieutenant Jerry Germany is ready with more water if responders Leighton Mackey and Walter Keaton need it as they water down some hay bales.

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT – Warren Miller, Fleet Manager

I started with WLLVFD in 2003. We were very small at that time but growth has skyrocketed since. I was still working and traveling. I also spent much time at Ft. Hood.



I joined the Army at 17 and spent twenty years as a Motor Sergeant (Maintenance Supervisor). I was also a Platoon Sergeant part of the time.

After retiring from the Army in early '83, I went to work as a Field Service Rep for FMC Corporation. Having been with the IFV Task Force was instrumental in the fielding of the Bradley Fighting Vehicle (BFV) for about 12 years. I was also part of the Fielding Team for the Paladin Howitzer and the Hercules Recovery Vehicle.

I was well suited to maintaining and operating Fire Apparatus. I attended Pump School at TEEX and was certified as F3 EVT.

## CHIEF ROBERT'S MESSAGE



Hello to all from the West Lake Limestone VFD. I hope each of you is having a great 2025. Summertime is upon us and the temperatures are going up so please stay hydrated. We love seeing everyone but not during a medical crisis.

Recently we have added a few new members to the department but are still in need of additional volunteers. If you are interested, I would love to discuss the possibility of you becoming a member. Our members are only expected to perform to their ability and training level. We will never put you in a situation that you are not comfortable with. The jobs you want to do, you will receive necessary training. SO COME JOIN OUR FAMILY!!

I want to give you an update on our new Fire Engine. I know we have talked about a new engine for a while but now we have a date. Department members will travel to Florida (where the truck is being built) on July 10<sup>th</sup> and do the final inspection. Once this is complete, the fire engine will be delivered. After we receive the engine we will have an open house to all interested can come and see it. This will be a big day for our fire department since this will be the first new fire engine it has had.

In closing, the members of your fire department want to thank everyone for all the support we receive. We are here to protect and serve you, but could not do that without your help and understanding.

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER