

West Lake Limestone VFD and Emergency Services District #2

YOUR E-NEWSLETTER AND E-MAIL ADDRESSES

Hopefully, you should have received last quarter's newsletter which was sent by normal US mail because we have email coverage for only about 10% of those in the district. Please share this newsletter with others and encourage them to give us their email address by contacting me at wllvfdfire@gmail.com. Help us spread the word!!

STRATEGIC PLANNING: Where do we go from here?

The ESD and the WLLVFD have begun a strategic planning process with the intent of developing a Five-Year Plan for our "emergency services organization." Recognizing that the ESD and the West Lake VFD leadership work in tandem, a combined committee has been established to take on this important task. The committee, chaired by with Chief Allen McWhirter, consists of Mike Thompson and Paul Loeffler from the ESD, and Warren Miller and Adam Collett from the VFD, with Vernon Davis (ESD) and Kim McWhirter(VFD) as alternates.

We invite your input and ideas regarding the direction of the WLLVFD and what our organizations should "look like" by 2025. Please talk to the committee members who you know and offer up your thoughts and concerns via email. Everyone in our district will be critical to determining our direction and growth in the next five years. We welcome your assistance.

A strategic planning exercise helped guide the fire department during the last five years. In 2014, in order to create their Five-Year Plan, the West Lake members employed a "COWS" procedure: Challenges & Opportunities; Weaknesses & Strengths. This took tons of honest introspection and hard work! After identifying elements of the COWS process, goals and objectives were developed, and then priorities, timelines, and estimated cost were established. Finally, a Five-Year Plan and 1-3-5-Year Budget were published. It is truly amazing what the members have done since 2014. Here's just a couple of the fulfilled goals. These are impressive accomplishments!

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| One significant, but often overlooked, goal and objectives from 2014 was to better manage the training requirement's impact on members. | <i>We currently provide training in: First Aid, Firefighter I&II, Fire Officer and the Incident Command System through online training that corresponds to monthly hands-on training and we schedule individual training sessions when requested.</i> |
| They identified the needed apparatus, facilities, and equipment necessary to improve fire suppression services offered to the community | <i>This resulted in the acquisition of additional fire engines and a new brush truck, NFPA equipment, as well as the construction of station-3 on FM 3371. Note: It also identified the need for a tender/tanker and renovations to stations -1 & -2 which are outstanding challenges.</i> |
| The need to establish a sufficient firefighting water supply for our remote, 91-sq. mi. first response area was deemed imperative. | <i>When you drive by stations -2 &-3 you see the new tanks with 16,000 gallons of water, but what you don't see the are the plans for peripheral tankage and dry hydrants. This effort has been achieved through another 2014 goal: establishing a grants program.</i> |
| The study defined another important objective, having a much stronger medical first responder program. | <i>We attained our First Responder Organization Certification from the Texas State Department of Health. The department acquired all the equipment necessary to provide Basic Life Support interventions, and supports certification and enhanced training in First Aid, and at EMR and EMT levels for interested member at TEEXs.</i> |
| These goals reflect inward improvements, but the 2014 plan also challenged the department to develop more effective community involvement and public relations programs. | <i>The Chief established regular meetings with the ESD President and the County Judge, and has further engaged with the County Office of Emergency Management and the Limestone County Firefighters Association. The department as created a newsletter, a website and a Facebook page, and has expanded its community outreach activities to include neighborhood picnics.</i> |

Our 2019 strategic planning effort is following the same “COWS” process. The committee has met several times. So far only the first steps have been accomplished: reexamining the 2014 mission statement and values statements, and institutional values, and then, expanding those for our whole “emergency services organization.”

2020-2025 NEWLY APPROVED PRINCIPLES AND IDEALS

Mission Statement

"To progress as a model, rural Emergency Services Organization dedicated to the preservation of life, property, and the environment."

Vision Statements

To exceed the community's expectation of professional service

To provide members with tools, skills, and equipment to serve the community

To promote a sense of belonging where members feel valued and supported

To establish a rewards/recognition system that acknowledges engagement and improvement

Values

Our People: Every member and their unique contribution
Safety First: Policies that demonstrate a culture of "Safety First"

Exemplary Behavior: An organization that promotes trust, integrity, and ethical behavior

Fiscal Responsibility: Management practices that uphold fiscal responsibility

Financial Stability: Financial stewardship that fosters improvement and growth

Open Communication: Leaders and members that practice open and honest communication

Our Community: Initiatives that encourage community involvement

Pride: Presenting ourselves so that it is obvious there is great pride in our organization

Service: Service to our neighbors and our mutual aid Partners

OUTSTANDING MEMBER FOR THIS QUARTER



Tami Griffin is one of our newest members. She is originally from Corpus Christi and moved here from Austin a little over a year ago. Tami has around 30-years experience in Information Technology. She has supported a wide variety of companies in the private sector as well as government and non-profit organizations. She is already using some of the skills she gained through her career to help the department grow to better meet the needs of our neighbors. Since joining WLLVFD she has been training to be a First Responder with plans for continued training to be a Firefighter as well so she can be an even greater asset to the department. In addition to training and responding to calls, Tami is updating our website and is bringing a lot of ideas to modernize our online presence. She has committed herself to keeping the content fresh and interesting to keep our neighbors informed and involved.

FINAL THOUGHTS

In this season of Thanksgiving let us give thanks for all the blessings He has provided, to include those who have given so much of themselves in service to our community, AND to God and country.

"Happy Thanksgiving" from those of us at the WLLVFD and ESD#2.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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+Fire Chief, * President ESD#2, #Editor

Remember:

"BREAKFAST WITH SANTA"

Saturday, December 7th, 9:00-11:00 at the main fire station (6614 FM 937)

Kids can get their pictures with Santa & Mrs. Claus and see the reindeer

(well...actually the fire engines!) PLEASE JOIN US FOR PANCAKES!!