

# *West Lake Limestone VFD*

*And*

## *Emergency Services District #2*

**e-NEWSLETTER – 4TH QTR. DECEMBER 2021**

### **NEW GENERATOR**

Installation is now complete on the 20Kw generator at fire station one! It is fueled by its own exclusive 500-gallon propane tank that will ensure station one can remain fully functional off-grid for up to two weeks.



This generator at station one, along with the new propane heaters at stations two and three will enable the VFD to protect the apparatus from freezing and provide uninterrupted service to the community even during an extended power outage like the one we endured during Winter Storm Uri last year.

### **TRAINING UPDATE**

Three of the members who have been taking the Emergency Medical Responder training have been approved to take the National Finals!

Our firefighters who are taking the Wildland Firefighter Training have completed the online courses and some have begun the hands-on training at the Groesbeck VFD. When they successfully complete the hands-on training, they will be fully certified to deploy to wildfires anywhere in the state!



On February 12, Groesbeck Fire Department hosted a hands-on class with final exam for area fire fighters who had taken the online S-190 and S-130 to get fully certified. In attendance from Westlake were Austin Proctor, Debbie Gerrard, and David and Lesa Nobles.

Several other members enrolled in and took the online portion of the classes but did not take the final exam and hands on portions - Warren Miller, Amanda Coleman, Steve Hicks.

In addition, James Coleman - already wildland fire certified - took additional classes (RT-130 and S-290) to further his own wildland certification.

## GREAT BOWLS OF FIRE!

WLLVFD is holding a chili cookoff on March 12 at fire station one located at 6614 FM 937. The cooking will be from 8am to 3pm and the categories are Hot & Spicy, Vegetarian, Old Family Recipe, Kid-Friendly, and Secret Ingredient.

The best chili from each category will receive a trophy and a cash prize! Second and Third place winners for each category will get trophies.

There will be a public chili tasting from 1pm-3pm and for a \$5 tasting fee you can get a taste from each of the entries and vote for who gets the People's Choice trophy.



There will also be a silent auction bake sale and a 50/50 raffle drawing. The silent auction, raffle drawing and chili award winners will be announced at 3:30pm.

Several teams have already signed up to make their specialty chili. The March 1 deadline has passed, but it's not too late to sign up. The registration fee is \$25 for each category, and we will accept late entries between 8am and 9am on March 12. The rules and registration form can be downloaded from our website at <https://wllvfdesd2.org/announcements>. Hope to see you there!

## NEW ESD BOARD COMMISSIONER



Randy Denzer and his wife Jana moved to Lake Limestone in May of last year to get away from

the big city and return to their rural roots. They brought their only children, Goose and Ziva Ray, two large German Rottweilers with them. Jana is a registered Interior Designer and loves gardening.

Their first night actually living on the lake was spent assisting the West Lake Volunteer Fire Department at a structure fire.

Randy first entered the fire service in 1979 as a member of the Ft. Morrow Volunteer Fire department in Waldo, Ohio. Since then, he has volunteered, worked part time or full time at seven different fire departments in both Arizona and in Texas. Randy just retired from the Austin Fire Department in January, after 24 years of service. He wrapped up his career at the AFD as the Battalion Chief over Battalion 2 B Shift. He continues to work for the International Association of Fire Fighters as a Wildland Urban Interface expert and lead instructor throughout North America. He is very active within the TIFMAS system and has taken Task Forces and Strike Teams to all the recent California deployments.

When Randy is not doing firefighting stuff, he enjoys storm chasing, fishing, and traveling. Randy and Jana's favorite thing about our community is how friendly and accepting everyone is.

## COMMISSIONERS ATTEND THE SAFE-D 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Four of our ESD#2 Commissioners refreshed and expanded their knowledge of ESD operations by participating in the *Texas State Association of Fire and Emergency Districts* (SAFE-D) Annual Conference held February 17th-19th in Round Rock. Commissioners Beall, Behringer, Eastburn, and Loeffler attended two days of intense plenary sessions and courses and interacted with ESD Commissioners from across the state. In the conference center's exhibit hall, they saw numerous fire engines and emergency vehicles, innovations in tools and equipment, and discussed with vendors services provided to ESDs.

The lengthy plenary sessions included the annual presentation, "ESD 101." *Emergency Services Districts* (ESDs) are small government entities established by the citizens of a defined geographic area. Their primary role is to provide fire protection and emergency medical services to citizens in their first response area and mutual aid to departments in surrounding areas. ESDs were created in 1989 by legislative statute (Health and Safety Code Title 9, Subtitle B, Chapter 775.) This session was presented by a noted Austin attorney experienced with ESDs of all sizes. He is one of the major contributors to SAFE-D's "*ESD Handbook*", a 76-page manual for the administration of ESDs. He spent three hours guiding us through best practices and the "dos and don'ts" of being an ESD Commissioner.

The other plenary session was presented by the Chief of the *Texas Division of Emergency Management* (TDEM) which is responsible for the state's emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation in the context of major disasters. *Federal Emergency Management Agency* (FEMA) and *National*

*Incident Management Systems* (NIMS) are federal agencies. TDEM and *Texas Intrastate Fire Mutual Aid System* (TIFMAS) are state agencies. Management and control during major disasters flow from FEMA and TDEM to Limestone County Office of Emergency Management. ESDs and VFDs provide



disaster response in cooperation with these agencies. ESDs are complex in that they are interconnected within a large span of agencies that serve the citizens. Your ESD#2 and *West Lake Limestone Volunteer Fire Department* (WLLVFD) are members of and contribute to these organizations as your local first responders during disasters.

Over 40, one-hour courses presented topics like ESD audits, records retention requirements, Board/Fire Chief relationships, sales and use tax implementation, public information requirements, open meetings requirements, mutual/automatic aid, commissioner ethics, FEMA grant opportunities, strategic and long-term planning, fire codes and fire prevention, as well as state laws governing ESDs. By legislative statute, all ESD Commissioners are required to participate in continuing education programs which develop and maintain their expertise and competence. They need to know how to best operate an ESD that is appropriate for the character of their district and within the confines of the tax revenues that limit annual



budgets. They are legally charged with providing emergency services within their district. (In our case, this occurs through a Service Provider Contract with WLLVFD, our partners who are responsible for daily, hands-on operation and delivery of emergency services.)

We four Commissioners attended this conference to better ourselves to support our WLLVFD and the citizens of our district. Our experiences are already providing greater perspective as we address the upcoming strategic planning/budgeting cycle.

## **FROM THE FIRE CHIEF**

This quarter has been very busy, due to the weather. The humidity values have been very low, for this reason the burn ban has been in place and will continue to be in place for the immediate future. We have had several very large wildfires due to burn ban violations in our district this past quarter. However, we are not the only Fire Dept. that has been affected; we have been called out for mutual aid all over the county for other large wildfires as well.

For this reason, I want to take this opportunity to remind everyone to call before you burn. Even the smallest of fires can start wildfires destroying property and threatening lives. We at WLLVFD have been hard at work training in all aspects of firefighting. Several members recently completed the Emergency Medical Responder training, and several have become Wildland Firefighter Certified. At WLLVFD we are committed to giving the best training we can, as constant training improves our firefighting capabilities and on-scene safety.

This summer has been predicted to be hot and dry, therefore we expect this to be another record setting year for our call volume, so I want to ask that you communicate with your neighbors about the burn ban as they may not be getting the communications from our Office

of Emergency Management (OEM) to know if there is a burn ban currently in place for Limestone County. There is a link to HOTCOG where you can sign up for burn ban alerts, inclement weather, and other types of alerts on our [website](#).

As you may have noticed, our population is growing rapidly around the lake and a lot of the new neighbors are only at their properties on the weekends. For this reason, let's do the neighborly thing and remind them to check the status and/or call before they burn. The information on the burn ban can be found on the [Limestone County website](#) or on our website <https://wllvfdesd2.org/>.

## **WE NEED VOLUNTEERS**

We need members of our community to help in many areas. There are many roles that can contribute to the department's broader mission in addition to being Firefighters and Medical First Responders.

No experience is necessary. We provide the equipment and training for all our members. If you would like to help and be a part of this great team of "neighbors helping neighbors", please stop by Fire Station 1 at 6614 FM 937 to pick up an application or download one from the home page of our website from the [link](#) below.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Fire Chief: David Nobles  
(254) 729-0165; [westlakelimestonevfd@gmail.com](mailto:westlakelimestonevfd@gmail.com)

ESD#2 Board President: Paul Loeffler  
[wllvfdfire@gmail.com](mailto:wllvfdfire@gmail.com)

Newsletter Editor: Tami Griffin  
[westlakeeso@gmail.com](mailto:westlakeeso@gmail.com)

Website: [wllvfdesd2.org](https://wllvfdesd2.org)