

# WLLVFD NEWS

ISSUE: 2

SUMMER 2024

## Free Smoke Detectors



Is your home protected? See what the NFPA recommends and find out how you can get free smoke detectors installed in your home.

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## Community Events



Check out our upcoming events.

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## Community Calls



Close call at the Old Union Shell station. Read Griff's report.

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## Member Spotlight



Captain Debbie Gerrard is one of the many valued members at West Lake Limestone Volunteer Fire Department.

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## West Lake Limestone Volunteer Fire Department

We are in the process of purchasing a new fire engine, like the one pictured, to be delivered by the Spring of 2025. Your donations for this purchase would be greatly appreciated.



**Thank You!**



Position phone camera over the QR Code above. Click on "Open in your browser," donate to your firefighters!

**Support Those Who Support You!**

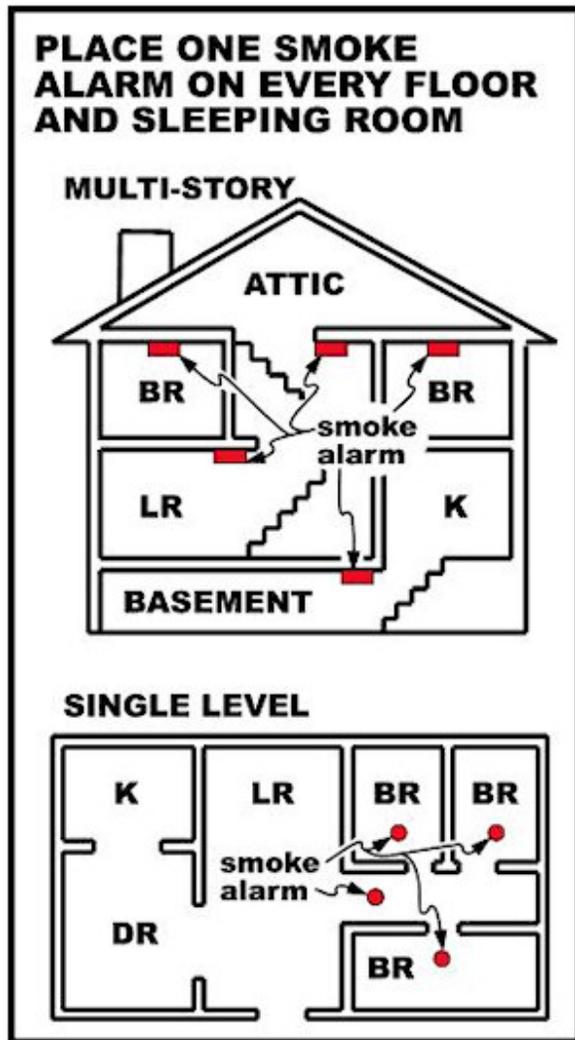
## Message from the Chief



Read what Chief Robert Moore has to say regarding WLLVFD.

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All WLLVFD meetings are open to the public. Business meetings are on the first Tuesday of the month beginning at 7:00 p.m. at Fire Station 1 located at 6614 FM 937 Thornton, TX 76687.



With our partnership with the American Red Cross, we are able to provide free smoke alarms to our service area. There are numerous types that can be installed depending on the home's occupants needs. Fire department members are giving their time to install these smoke detectors within our service area. If you are in need of smoke detectors call or text:

Secretary Kelly Witten at (254) 537-2565, or email at [kwitten59@gmail.com](mailto:kwitten59@gmail.com).

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), smoke detectors should be installed on every level of your home, including basements and attics, in every bedroom, and outside of every sleeping area. They should also be installed high on walls or near the center of ceilings, and at least 10 feet away from cooking appliances.

Here are some other recommendations for smoke detector placement:

- If you mount alarms on the ceiling, place them 4 inches from the wall.
- If your alarms are on the wall, they should be 4 to 12 inches from the ceiling.
- Don't install alarms near bathrooms, heating appliances, or close to ceiling fans.
- Make sure no door or other obstruction could keep smoke from reaching the smoke alarms.
- If your home has multiple sleeping areas, install a unit in each.
- If a hall is more than 40 feet long, install a unit at each end.

According to the NFPA, interconnected smoke alarms increase safety. When smoke alarms are on all floors, they sound in 37% of fires and alert occupants in 15%. When smoke alarms are not on all floors, they sound in only 4% of the fires and alert occupants in only 2%.

**WLLVFD installed 68 free smoke detectors in area households in the Spring of 2024. Don't Wait! Get on the list today!**

# Community Calendar



## Sept. 28<sup>th</sup> Saturday – Association Fundraiser

Where/When: Limestone County Fairgrounds / 9a.m. - Midnight.

## Oct. 19<sup>th</sup> Saturday – Fish Fry & Blood Drive

Where: WLLVFD Station 1 @ 6614 FM 937

When: Blood Drive is 10:00a.m. – 2p.m and Fish Fry is from 11:00a.m. - 2:00p.m.

## Nov. 16<sup>th</sup> Saturday – Paint Party

Where/When: WLLVFD Station 1 @ 6614 FM 937 / 2:00p.m. – 4:00p.m.

## Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> Saturday – Breakfast with Santa

Where/When: WLLVFD Station 1 @ 6614 FM 937 / 9:00a.m. – 11:00a.m.

**Notice: The WLLVFD has decommissioned hoses for sale. Hoses are 1.5 & 2.5" diameter. Price is \$1 per foot. Contact Cathy (254) 424-4297.**

## WLLVFD “A Story of the Stairs”

Station 1 on FM 937 was built in 2012. It had an attic area that could only be reached by a straight ladder, which made it difficult to store anything. This year the board started looking into possibly building stairs up to the attic. Before we knew it, the stairs were being built. Local contractor and member of the fire department, Jeff Chavers, started building the stairs and a platform to the attic. He did a marvelous job as seen by the picture. He and member, Griff Griffin, who donated most of the metal supplies, while Jeff donated his talent and time, saved the department a great deal of money. We thank Jeff and Griff for their contributions.



# Too Close for Comfort!

By J. "Griff" Griffin

On Tuesday July 18th, 2024, a regular summer day with clear skies and a heat index over 100°F, the West Lake Limestone Volunteer Fire Department members were alerted to a vehicle fire at the Lake Limestone Store. The nearest firefighters responded with Rescue Engine 2502.



They arrived on scene within minutes to see a pickup truck fully engulfed in flames, threatening nearby fuel pumps, other people's vehicles, and the Lake Limestone store.



Led by Lt. Jeff Chavers, firefighters in full bunker gear engaged with an attack hose to bring the fire under control as a second fire truck, Heavy Brush 2501, arrived with another firefighter. Working together a total of 5 Fire Department personnel managed the incident scene, preventing fire from spreading and limiting damage to the pickup truck. As the fire was thought to be out, West Lake personnel used battery powered rescue tools to cut off the vehicle's hood



and pry open the driver door. A lithium battery within the console continued to burn, requiring further efforts to extinguish the fire. Firefighters conducted a survey of the burnt vehicle using a thermal imager to confirm the fire was out and the temperatures were cooling.

After a brief water break and verifying no one was injured or suffering from heat stress, a clean up was conducted to contain the debris, followed by coordinated teamwork that quickly restored all equipment, hoses and Firefighter bunker gear. Both fire department vehicles refueled, returning to Station 1 to refill their water tanks and conduct post operational checks.



We were ready to answer the next call.

Overhaul photo - VFD President Cathy Rayburn serves as the Safety Observer and Emergency Medical Responder for her team as they conduct buddy checks and plan their next actions after the fire was confirmed as out.

## Member Spotlight Captain Debbie Gerrard



Debbie Gerrard is a true example of a public servant. Debbie came to the U.S. from the Isle of Man, part of the British Isles, and has lived on Lake Limestone with her husband Sean for 7 years. She enjoys lake life with Sean and their 7 dogs. She still has family on the Isle of Man and travels back regularly for visits. She wanted to help her community, so she joined the WLLVFD 4 years ago. Simply being a member of the fire department was not enough, she wanted to do more for our community, so she attended an Emergency Medical Technician Course and

became a certified EMT. This was not a small task but Debbie's drive to give the best care possible drove her to do this.

In the past 4 years Debbie has continued to take on more responsibilities within the fire department. Her efforts have definitely made a big impact on the fire department's ability to serve you. Due to her drive and knowledge gained by attending training classes, she was promoted to the rank of Captain. This position is one of the most important positions in any fire department. The Captain position has many administrative and operational responsibilities and Debbie does them all well.

As the Chief of the department Debbie has become one of my most trusted members. I have watched her grow in the Captain position and am completely comfortable in her abilities to lead the fire department. If I have a task that needs completion, I know I can go to Debbie to make it happen. If you have the same desire to help our community as Debbie, the fire department is a great way to accomplish that.

If you see Debbie out and about in the community, please thank her for her service, desire to help, and for what she does with the WLLVFD.





## Chief's Message



First, I want to thank the men and women who make up the West Lake Limestone Volunteer Fire Department for their commitment to serving the community we live in. They do a great job supporting the needs of our community from running EMS First

Responder calls, running fire calls, to cutting up trees that may be blocking the roads during storms. These men and women are committed to providing the best service possible.

Let's talk about what it means to be a volunteer fire department member. It's the *satisfaction* of knowing you are giving back to the community. It's the *satisfaction* of helping your neighbor when needed. It's the *satisfaction* of saving lives and property. It's the *satisfaction* of knowing you are doing your part for the community you live in and love.

As I talk to people within our community about joining our department, I have found there is a misconception that the fire department is a social club. That misconception is the furthest thing from the truth. Our men and women are in the department for the above reasons, (*SATISFACTION*). The fire service in the U.S. has always been viewed as a family and I am proud to be part of the WLLVFD family. If you want to know more about the department, we meet on Tuesday nights at Station 1 located at 6614 FM 937. We would love for you to come visit and see what your fire department is about and the fire service family we are.

There are a lot of good things happening in the fire department.

- We have two new members since our last newsletter, which is a blessing. We are still in need of more members and welcome all who are interested.
- Most of you are aware we have a new fire engine on order and should arrive in March of 2025. We are going to the factory in September for the pre-build meeting. Our goal is to be able to pay for this engine without the need to finance it so you will see various fundraisers coming.
- We are waiting for our new communications tower to be erected. The foundation has been poured and is in the curing process. Once the tower is erected, we will install a new radio repeater, which will greatly enhance communication in our district.
- We are putting more concentration on training for our members. Our goal is to have a minimum of one training session during our Tuesday meeting nights each month. We currently have a Saturday training session scheduled, Traffic Safety Management, which will be delivered by Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service instructors (TEEX). We have invited fire departments from throughout the county to attend.
- WLLVFD is a member of the Limestone County Firefighters Association. The association will be having a fundraiser on September 28<sup>th</sup> at the fairgrounds. The event goes from 9AM to midnight and there will be food, a cornhole tournament and live bands. Please mark your calendars and come by and see us.

In closing, as the Chief of the WLLVFD, I want to thank you for your support. It means the world to us knowing we have the support of the community. Again we would love to see you at the fire station on Tuesday nights and hopefully join our department and gain the *SATISFACTION* we all have.