



THE SMOKE SIGNAL

Cobb County Fire & Emergency Services

Fall, 2009

SAFETY VILLAGE GRAND OPENING

Over 1,000 people attended the Cobb County Safety Village Ribbon Cutting Ceremony and Open House on July 31 and August 1.

During the Ribbon Cutting, the Board of Commissioners surprised County Manager David Hankerson by announcing they were naming the main education building in his honor. An extensive static display was on hand during the Open House to show attendees the various emergency response vehicles and equipment from all public safety-related departments within Cobb County.

Situated on nearly 8 acres on Al Bishop Drive, the state-of-the-art complex features a 27,500 square foot education facility with an interactive safety house, auditorium, multipurpose banquet room, office space, and a 3-bay child safety seat inspection station.

The Village is the first of its kind in Georgia, and will be used by children and adults alike. The rest of the Village property will contain scaled-down buildings reflecting Cobb County landmarks, traffic signals, railroads, miniature operating cars, and other interactive safety activities.



A simulated fire burns behind the living room couch in "Sparky's House".

**Cobb County Fire &
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Complimentary copies are distributed to all Cobb Fire and Public Safety facilities, and placed in the Fire Administration Common Files under "Smoke Signal".

This issue will also be uploaded to our website: www.cobbfire.org

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IN MEMORY OF DAMON GENSEL

Cobb Fire lost another member of their family on August 15, as Damon Gensel lost his courageous battle with acute leukemia. Damon was laid to rest on August 18, and is survived by his wife and 2 children. He was loved and will truly be missed.



OTHER PERSONNEL NEWS



Cobb County...Expect the Best!

COBB FIRE IS A DEPARTMENT OF COBB COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Samuel S. Olens, Commission Chairman
Helen Goreham, District 1 Commissioner
Bob Ott., District 2 Commissioner
Tim Lee, District 3 Commissioner
Woody Thompson, District 4 Commissioner
David Hankerson, County Manager

The Cobb Fire Investigations Unit has been selected as the winner of the State of Georgia's Fire Investigators of the Year Award. The award was announced this summer at the annual conference in Savannah by the Georgia Fire Investigator's Association. The unit was chosen based on their service to the organization.

The five members of the Unit are: Chief Fire Investigator Rod Sanders, Fire Investigator I Bill Dawson, Fire Investigator I Ken LeCroy, Fire Investigator I Greg Cloer, and Fire Investigator I Charles Williams.

Collectively, they investigate an average approximately 300 fires a year. The Cobb County Fire Investigations Unit is not unlike other public safety departments throughout the state in regard to investigating fires in their jurisdiction, prosecuting criminal acts, and promoting fire safety awareness to the citizens they serve.

All members of the Cobb County Fire Investigations Unit are actively participating in roles outside their departmental duties. These activities include holding office in organizations, teaching, and assisting other agencies.

These extra roles and activities are taken seriously, voluntarily, and are outside the normal call of duty. During these economical hard times, they are fortunate to enjoy the full support of the Cobb County Fire and Emergency Services Command Staff and County Management to fulfill these obligations. The professionalism and dedication of the Cobb County Fire Investigations Unit makes them a role model for other agencies and a worthy recipient for "Investigator of the Year." Congratulations to these employees!



OTHER PERSONNEL NEWS

Fire Engineer **Dennis J. Thayer** was recently awarded the 2009 Presidential Award by the Georgia Association of Fire Chiefs at their August 8 banquet in Athens. Dennis was recognized for his outstanding commitment and efforts on behalf of GMAG and for his work on seeking indemnification in the Joey Turner fatality case. For those who were not familiar, Joey was a firefighter who died of cardiac arrest at GPSTC during a live fire training exercise and was denied death benefits due to a training stipulation in the state law. Dennis was relentless in his pursuit for benefits for Turner's family. Pictured at right is Dennis receiving the award from GAFC President Craig Tully (photo courtesy of Jim Mykytyn).



Lieutenant **Tom Hancock** was recently awarded the National Fire Safety Award by the Georgia Society Sons of the American Revolution. Tom was recognized for his development and implementation of the "Portable Firefighter Survival Maze". Tom got the idea for the portable maze after seeing several stationary modules at various outside agencies. His rationale was that more personnel could be trained without taking companies out of service if the maze could be fashioned into a portable unit.



The concept of the maze is unlike other training devices, as its features enable firefighters to combine concepts and skills all into one training evolution. In addition to the maze being used in the Metro Atlanta area, Tom has published an article in Fire Engineering Magazine on this subject. Pictured at right is Tom receiving the award.

The crew at Station 1-C and Puckett Ambulance Service Paramedic C. Stone were visited by Cobb Commissioner Woody Thompson to thank them for exceptional patient care. On October 15, 2008, they responded to an ALS call involving a trauma patient in extremely critical condition. Due to their quick and skillful actions, the patient not only survived, but avoided double amputation of his legs. After 8 months of recovery and physical rehabilitation, the patient and Commissioner Thompson provided lunch to the crew in July. (photo courtesy of Capt. W. Tanks)



Twenty-six year CCFES veteran and Battalion Chief **Jimmy Taylor** was promoted to Deputy Chief of Response on July 26. A Cobb County native, Jimmy graduated from McEachern High School, and holds a Fire Science Diploma from West Georgia Technical College. He is married with a 14-year old daughter and 3-year old son.

Firefighter II **Gerald "Jerry" Sluder** retired from CCFES on July 11 after 25 years of service.

Lieutenant **Jerry Stuckey** retired on September 17 after 23 years of service.

Vehicle Maintenance Tech III **Billy Allen** retired September 8 after 14 1/2 years of service. (continued on next page)

EVEN MORE PERSONNEL NEWS

Fire Engineer **Justin Green** was promoted to Lieutenant, effective July 26.
Firefighter **Shawn Ravish** was promoted to Fire Engineer, effective July 26.
Firefighter **Sean Doran** was promoted to Fire Engineer, effective June 14.
Firefighter **David Gentile** was promoted to Fire Engineer, effective June 14.
Firefighter **Robert Harkins** was promoted to Fire Engineer, effective June 14.
Firefighter **Michael Hilley** was promoted to Fire Engineer, effective June 14.
Firefighter **Richard Kenyon** was promoted to Fire Engineer, effective June 14.
Firefighter **Joseph West** was promoted to Fire Engineer, effective June 14.
Firefighter **Darnell Musgrove** was designated to a Firefighter III, effective June 14.

Cobb County Fire & Emergency Services
1595 County Services Parkway
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TO:

GEORGIA MOBILE COMMAND VEHICLE RALLY

Cobb Fire & Emergency Services once again hosted the Georgia Mobile Command Vehicle Rodeo at Whitewater Atlanta on August 15. Open to all command vehicles and their operators, the purpose was to bring together mobile communication vehicles to conduct a mock exercise to gain information and experience. Additionally, issues related to interoperability were explored and strategies discussed,. This allowed the opportunity to test and train on equipment, increase operating proficiency, and share industry best practices and ideas. Over a dozen agencies from the North Georgia area attended, as well as GEMA and FEMA.

Mobile Command Vehicles line up in the Whitewater parking lot for the start of the briefing and exercise.



As Incident Commander, FFIII Michele Ice talks with Safety Officers during the exercise.

