



THE SMOKE SIGNAL

Cobb County Fire & Emergency Services

March, 2006

NEW STATION 14 IS NOW UNDERWAY!

With the new Station 11 in Acworth complete, another major construction project kicked off with the groundbreaking of new Station 14 on November 17, 2005.

The new 2.5 acre site is located at 2905 Library Lane, directly behind the existing Station 14. This complex is unofficially known as the Mountain View Complex, where numerous other County facilities are situated.

The facility will be a one-story building with three drive-through bays, the capability of housing a 10-person crew, and parking space for 29 vehicles. It is planned to move the 3rd Battalion Chief to this location upon completion.



Participating in the groundbreaking ceremony were (left to right): Property Management Director John Reida, Architect Bill Howell, Contractor Floyd Ward, DPS Major Bobby Hulsey, Commissioner Tim Lee, County Manager David Hankerson, Facilities Supervisor Von Redman, Commissioner Joe L. Thompson, Commissioner Annette Kesting, Chief Rebecca Denlinger, Commissioner Helen Goreham, Capt. Steve Crider, and Deputy Chiefs Mike Ellington and Sam Heaton.

CCFES GAINS NATIONAL ACCREDITATION

On August 10, 2005, Cobb Fire was awarded National Accreditation by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI). This award was the culmination of several years of intense preparation and self-assessment on the part of the department. The project was spearheaded by Accreditation Manager Mike Ellington. He was assisted throughout the project by Stu Shannonhouse, Cherie Brumelow, and many others in the department (see page 4).

Based on the recommendation of a 5-person team of trained CFAI assessors, who spent a week in April closely inspecting CCFES, CFAI presented the award of accreditation to Chief Denlinger at their semi-annual conference in Denver, making CCFES one of only 5 accredited agencies in Georgia (the other departments are Atlanta, Fayette County, Covington, and Columbus).

The process of accreditation is one that Police, E-911 and Fire agencies enter voluntarily, and is a designation that not many departments can attain. It involves compliance to literally hundreds of standards of national excellence, and conformance to industry best practices. A department is basically opening itself up to intense scrutiny by experts in

their respective fields to pay a week-long, on-site visit to examine files, facilities, equipment, policies, and all aspects of department operations.

This process requires a commitment to these national standards of excellence from the elected officials and all levels of the organization. Benefits include decreased liability, safer and more efficient levels of service delivery, an effective management model, and increased public confidence.

Cobb County is one of only a handful of jurisdictions in the U.S. that have achieved what has come to be known as the "Triple Crown", which occurs when Law Enforcement, E-911, and Fire and Emergency Services in the same jurisdiction are nationally accredited.

Cobb Police and E-911 were accredited by The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA). While this is a separate accrediting body, the processes are similar, and have the same intent.



PERSONNEL CORNER

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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

The Smoke Signal is for employees and friends of Cobb Fire. If you would like to see a subject covered in future issues or would like to submit items for possible future publication, please forward to Ellen Black at Fire Headquarters.

Editors:

Ellen Black
Chief Rebecca Denlinger
Kim York
Cherie Brumelow

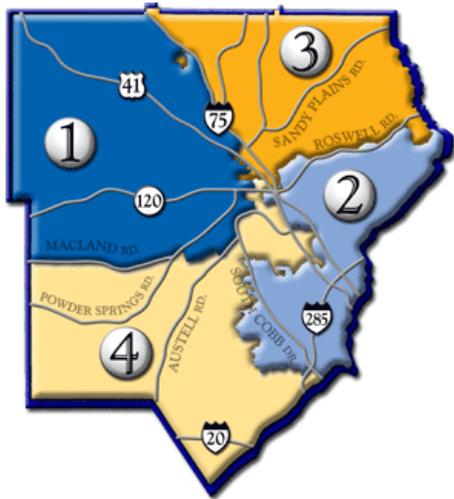
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Samuel S. Olens, Commission Chairman
 Helen Goreham, District 1 Commissioner
 Joe L. Thompson, District 2 Commissioner
 Tim Lee, District 3 Commissioner
 Annette Kesting, District 4 Commissioner
 David Hankerson, County Manager



Cobb County...Expect the Best!

Firefighter James O'Shields from Station 1-A was selected out of 15 2005 Quarterly winners as the 2005 Customer Service Award Winner.

As those who know James are aware, his commitment to the fire service is exemplary. In addition to being a true team player, he spends much of his spare time helping the Education Division, CERT, and JFS programs. James is also active with the Georgia Burn Foundation activities and volunteers each summer at Camp Oo-U-La (the children's burn camp), and has served as the coordinator for the Boot Drive. Well done, James!

Captain Randy Crider was recently promoted to Deputy Chief of Preparedness. Randy will be over the Training and Education Divisions, Facilities Management, and Apparatus Maintenance.

The Cobb Chamber of Commerce presented Chief Becky Denlinger with the Public Safety Employee of the Year Award in October. Chief Denlinger was recognized for her work within and outside the department, and for furthering the efforts of the fire service and Public Safety. The Chief's vision for the Fire Service was noted most recently in her membership on President Bush's National Infrastructure Advisory Council, and her plans for the new Cobb County Safety Village.

Firefighter Eric Newkirk of Station 19 B-Shift has recently completed his second Bachelors Degree, being awarded a BA in Modern Language and Culture from Kennesaw State University.

NEW PERSONNEL

Many of you in the stations know that in August, CCFES brought a new Mail Services Technician on board. Kenneth Cole comes to Cobb Fire after retiring with 30 years service with the U.S. Postal Service. Ken has also served 4 years with the Marine Corps as an Air Traffic Controller.

Christopher Pharham came to CCFES in December to fill a newly created position of Fiscal Tech III in the Apparatus Maintenance Division. Chris is a Gulf War Veteran, serving in the U.S. Air Force, and has extensive experience in the field of inventory control. Chris also recently welcomed his third son, born in January.



Firefighter James O'Shields wins the Cobb County Service Award for 2005.

2005 RETIREMENTS

A retirement reception was held on January 12 at the West Cobb Senior Center for seven dedicated employees who retired during 2005:

- Milton Blalock 28 Years
- Mike Chambley 30 Years
- Marvin Hill 32 Years
- K. Mark Johnson 26 Years
- Mike McDonough 27 Years
- Arlen Moore 27 Years
- Danny Wilson 30 Years

Joy Allen has been selected to fill the Administrative Specialist III position vacated by the retirement of Mary Dowda. Joy came on board on January 30, having extensive experience as an Office Manager, most recently at CMC Steel Group. A native of Blue Ridge, Joy is a longtime resident of Metro Atlanta. She is married with 3 sons and 1 granddaughter.



Retired Battalion Chief K. Mark Johnson shares stories with Major Mike Payne.

SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

The annual Service Anniversary Luncheon was held recently, honoring all Cobb County employees who have served Cobb County Government for at least 20 years. The following Cobb Fire personnel were recognized:

- Scott Allison 20 Years
- Mike Chambley 30 Years
- Marshall Conner 20 Years
- Michael Craft 25 Years
- Taft Champion 20 Years
- Ron Darby 20 Years
- Terry Duncan 30 Years
- Scott Ferguson 20 Years
- Marty Gable 25 Years
- Perry Marcus 30 Years
- Mark Gresham 20 Years
- Steve Grogan 20 Years
- Ken Hankinson 20 Years
- Sam Heaton 20 Years
- Benny Hines 20 Years
- Tom Hudson 20 Years
- Mike Hughes 25 Years
- Norm Spafard 20 Years
- John Kelly 25 Years
- Diane Kinsey 20 Years
- Toby Koby 20 Years
- John Lee 20 Years
- Scott Malcolm 20 Years
- Mark McCravy 25 Years
- Richard McLean 30 Years
- David Myers 20 Years
- Jim Mykytyn 25 Years
- Billy Newsome 20 Years
- Ed Pittman 25 Years
- Jeff Quilter 20 Years
- David Shelton 20 Years
- Tom Simler 20 Years
- Pat Tobin 25 Years
- Steve Tucker 20 Years
- Danny Wilson 30 Years

IS THERE LIFE AFTER RETIREMENT?

By Bob Foran

I thought it would be interesting to ask a few people who had recently retired a few questions that would give active employees some insight into life after the fire department. The three questions were: 1.) What have you been doing after retirement? 2.) If you had the chance to go through your career again, would you do anything differently? 3.) How do you think our service delivery will change in the future, and how will that change us?

The four people I spoke to had, by all accounts, very successful careers, so my second question may have looked a little odd, but it evoked some good comments. They were Battalion Chiefs Danny Wilson, Mark Johnson, Perry Marcus, along with Deputy Chief C.J. Freeman. All were very forthcoming and thoughtful with their responses and were also great fun to talk to.

Danny said he was enjoying his retirement. He said he was driving for Cobb Senior Services a couple of days a week, and occasionally helping various family members on small projects. He added he was very content with his career and really wouldn't change much, and predicted the future would hold many more technological changes. He feels that he's confident we would adapt to any and all changes well because we are progressive as a fire department, but also because our personnel have an exceptional ability to figure things out quickly. He said there would always be people out in the community who need our services, and he was confident we would figure out how to deliver that help to them.

Mark said he was traveling, collecting his Coca Cola stuff, and just really enjoying his family. On question #2, he responded that he wouldn't do much differently, except maybe not to retire as early because he missed our people so much. He said he did the best he could every day he worked. He thinks the department has been on the right track, and will continue moving in the right direction in the future. He said we try to deliver our best on every call and that will always keep us headed in the right direction as a department.

Perry said he was working hard to pay for the expenses he had incurred putting his kids through college. He said if he had the chance, he would have gotten more formal education earlier in his career. He said it was much more difficult to go to school when your family started growing both from a time management as well as an economical standpoint. More paperwork and more technology to handle the paperwork is in our future according to Perry. He said this would be part of complying with more regulations.

CJ said he was playing golf, having fun, and enjoying his children and grandchildren. He would have stayed on longer if he could do it again. He also said he would have tried to be a little more patient and worked within the system more to solve problems. This would involve trusting the system to a larger degree, but in the long run, it would be much more productive for the individual as well as the department. Such trusting and patience can only be accomplished if a person is ready to accept change more readily, which CJ said he was not always very willing to do. He said such a willingness to accept change would help us in the future. Environmental issues and the threat of terrorism would also affect us. CJ predicts we might even have firefighting robots one day. He ended with reminding me that we should always balance our commitment to safety with our obligation to do our job.

I really had a blast talking to these fine folks, and I would like to thank them for taking the time with me. I suggest we regularly talk to retired personnel, prod them for advice, and learn from their stories.

RIGHT: Retired Battalion Chief Danny Wilson reflects on his recent retirement with Capt. Stoney Bowles.



Sharron Garner and Diane Kinsey set up refreshments.



Retired Chief David Hilton visits with Cobb PD Major Rolla Green.

*Congratulations to Cobb Fire's
selected participants in the 2006-
2007 EXCEL Class:
Tom Simler
Bob Foran*

WANTED:

If you have any ideas for future issues of the Smoke Signal or the Cobb Fire website, we would like to hear from you!

Please call or e-mail
Ellen Black
at Fire Headquarters
at

770-528-8306, or
Ellen.Black@cobbcounty.org

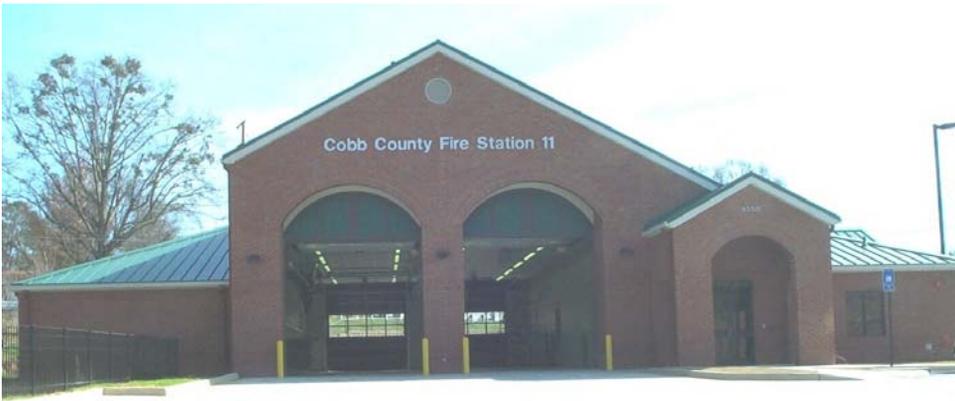
THANKS TO THE ACCREDITATION CONTRIBUTORS!

April Alexander	Scott Allison	Kelly Bailey	Chuck Baird	Rick Bennett
Steven Bentley	Ellen Black	Bob Boyd	Mike Brewer	Cherie Brumelow
DeWayne Campbell	Donnell Campbell	Chuck Carter	Walt Clark	Greg Cloer
Kathy Crawford	Randy Crider	Joe Davidson	Bill Dawson	Scott Demkowski
Becky Denlinger	Scott Dodson	Mary Dowda	Bill Duffy	Darrell Dunlap
Jim Dunn	Dan Dupree	Todd Ellerbee	Mike Ellington	Joe Ethridge
Ron Fagan	Ryan Fleeman	Mike Flowers	Bob Foran	Jodi Gabelmann
Sharron Garner	Cindy Carroll	Alan Gibson	John Graham	Mark Gresham
Jolene Hagan	Sam Heaton	Chris Hilton	Lee Ann Jean	Gary Jolly
Rob Kerr	Kellay Kidney	Jim Killcreas	Diane Kinsey	Ken LeCroy
George Lehner	Steve Lester	Mark Magill	Scott Malcolm	Terry Martin
Lee Mathews	Mike McIntosh	Ty Mitchell	Jeff Moss	Lynda Paradise
Brian Perry	Roger Priest	Lee Proctor	Cory Purcell	Sheral Race
Von Redman	Jon Redwine	Bryan Reid	Rod Sanders	Brad Sexton
Stu Shannonhouse	David Simister	Tom Simler	Chris Sobieski	Sara Stanger
Scott Starnes	Chris Stone	Pat Sweeney	Steve Tatum	Jimmy Taylor
Dennis Thayer	Mark Thompson	Tony Thompson	Scott Tolar	Steve Tucker
Wesley Vann	Norm Weber	Jay Westbrook	Greg White	Kim York
Tate Young	Wes Durham	Bill Goodson	Mark Johnson	Perry Marcus
Nick McAlpine	Greg Moore	Danny Wilson		



The CFAI Assessment Team poses for a photo with Chief Denlinger and Commissioner Helen Goreham (left to right):

Battalion Chief Ralph Ensign (Highland Park, IL. FD)
 Dep. Chief John Clark (Honolulu, HI FD)
 Capt. Cindy Bonham (Charlotte, NC FD)
 Retired Chief Warren Savage, Team Leader
 (Santee Chamber of Commerce, CA)
 Dep. Chief Gary Mann (Ontario, Canada FD)



Station 11 opened on January 27, 2006 at its new location at 4550 Cowan Road near historic downtown Acworth. Similar in design to Station 14 presently under construction, this \$1.5 million, 8,040 square foot facility has two drive-through bays, houses a crew of eight per shift, and has an attached community room. Open House is scheduled for Saturday, April 1, 2006 from 9:45 am until 2:00 pm. Stop by for a visit!

Cobb Fire has been awarded 5th Place in the Georgia Firefighters Burn Foundation Annual Boot Driving, raising \$31,769.50. Thanks to all who participated, especially Co-Chairs Dennis Thayer, James O'Shields, and Sean Bogess.



UPDATE ON TONY MITCHELL

In November of 2003, Firefighter Anthony Mitchell of Station 15-B was involved in a serious accident in Forsyth County where he sustained multiple serious injuries. While driving in his Nissan truck with his then 6-year old son, they were struck by a juvenile driver head-on who crossed into their lane. While Tony's son suffered minor injuries, Tony was not so lucky. He sustained a closed head injury, internal injuries, broken jaw and teeth, and multiple fractures to various bones in both legs. After several operations and stays in the hospital (the first time was 10 weeks; 4 of them in ICU), Tony went home to recuperate over the next 2 years. Through the kindness of friends like Jamey Baker and fellow CCFES personnel and administration, Tony was able to return to work in November 2005 in a temporary position in the Internal Affairs Unit while seeking a permanent position with Cobb County. While he cannot return to full duty as a firefighter, Tony is thankful to his friends at Cobb Fire, and wanted to share that gratitude with us:

"When you choose your friends, you don't know how dear and important these friends will be to you, and how they will give you the strength to handle almost anything. All of you have stood by my family and me, giving us your love, strength, and prayers. Through your help and support, we have made it through this crisis. Our prayer is to be able to repay the love and support that has been given to us. Until then, I want all of you to know how much I appreciate and thank you for all you have done and continue to do for my family."

WELCOME BACK, TONY!



Chief's Office Administrative Specialist Mary Dowda retired February 24, 2006 after 20 years of service. Thanks to everyone who helped make her retirement celebration and gift such a success! Also, many thanks to Robert Quigley of Communications and Kim York for playing the parts of Pat Sajak and Vanna White. Above, Mary wins a game of Wheel of Fortune with Sam Heaton and Randy Crider. The "prize" was a gift from members of the Department of a trip to the Grand Canyon and Las Vegas.