



Firehouse Notes

January
2007

Reverend Deborah Drash Leaves Post as St. George Chaplain

The St. George Fire Department has lost the sole volunteer (no pun intended) on its roster; its chaplain. Reverend Debbie Drash and her husband, Joe, have moved to Lakeland, Florida - near Tampa. The move was precipitated by a career opportunity for Joe and also to be nearer Debbie's family.

As your PIO, it has been my pleasure to work with "Rev Deb" and to get to know her husband. They really are two of the finest people one could ever meet.

As our chaplain, Reverend Drash lent her grace and presence to our official functions such as graduations and station dedications. She also stood at the ready to offer any needed comfort and counsel to department members and their families.

Additionally, Debbie was trained as a Critical Incident Stress Management Counselor. Along with fire chaplains from around the country, she took part in several chaplaincy missions after Hurricane Katrina.

In her "day job," Reverend Drash is a Methodist minister. She was affiliated with St. Andrew's United Methodist Church. She also served as a hospice counselor for several hospice agencies.

She became our volunteer chaplain shortly after the 9/11 tragedy. Her dedication and desire to serve the fire service came about as a memorial tribute to her husband's favorite uncle, who had been a career firefighter in Pennsylvania.

In an email shortly before her departure from Baton Rouge Debbie shared the following: "I will intensely miss all my extended family in Baton Rouge, and particularly my 'band of brothers and sisters' of the St. George Fire Department. My association and connection with St. George has become what I deeply feel is one of the high points of my life and ministry in Louisiana and beyond."

We offer Reverend Drash our sincere thanks for her loyal service and offer her and Joe our continued best wishes.

Do You Have Anything You'd Like to Share? ... Graduation, Wedding, or New Addition to The Family? ... Please Share It With Us.

The News is Even Better Than We Thought

Marine Lance Corporal Jordan H. Buhler, the son of Don and Leslie Fleury, who was wounded in Iraq in November, is expected to make a full recovery from his injuries. We knew that last month. What we didn't know was that when Don and Leslie went to visit him at the Bethesda Naval Hospital in December was that Jordan was able to return home with them. This is truly great news.

Board Member Frank Collura "Retires"

After 30 years of serving the citizens of the St. George Fire Protection District from the tailboard to the board table, Commissioner Frank Collura announced he would not seek re-appointment to the Board from the Metro Council. His years as a Commissioner included terms as President and Secretary of the Board of Commissioners.

He was presented with a commemorative fire axe at a surprise reception following his final Board meeting in December. As one of the people who truly helped chart the path of this organization from the volunteer department he joined to the progressive career organization he left, the public owes Frank a greater debt of gratitude than it knows.

Many of the more senior members of the Department served alongside Frank - back in the day. Frank comes from a fire service family. His father served as Fire Chief of the city of Hammond, LA. The current Hammond Fire Chief, Paul Collura, is Frank's brother. .

Frank is an employee of Albemarle. He is moving out of the District to the rolling hills north of us. So, along with our sincere thanks for his many years of selfless service, we wish him many enjoyable years of hunting, fishing, and being a gentleman farmer in his retirement.