



# FIRE DEPARTMENT CONNECTION

For and About the Employees of the Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department

## Chief's Corner

Lt. Henry Carrow is among the dozens of personnel who were nominated for a meritorious award in our department. The cover story describes the afternoon in May 2018 that Carrow saved a young man from drowning.

Carrow's actions prompted JFRD's Awards Committee to recommend him for Firefighter of the Year. He didn't see the recognition coming. Nor is he certain who nominated him. But that's not really important. What matters most is the save and second to that is how we can celebrate that he was there when he really could make a difference. Carrow figured he was going to enjoy the proverbial day at the beach. He didn't see a sprint into rough waters and a challenging swim back to shore as part of his day off, but that's what happened.

None of us can predict when our skills and willingness to react might be called into action, but we are members of an organization full of people who stand ready to make a critical difference in another person's life. That is worth celebrating.

Speaking of celebrating, JFRD's Awards Ceremony is April 4 at Local 122's Union Hall on Stockton Street. The list of recipients is well beyond 100 names. You might be one of them. If so, please accept my congratulations.

We are fortunate to have a dedicated group serving on the Awards Committee. It's a considerable amount of work to evaluate each nomination, notify the recipients, produce the framed awards, write the script, and bring the annual event to life. It's one of JFRD's most celebratory evenings. I hope to see you there.

**Kurt Wilson**  
Chief of Department

## Carrow is Firefighter of the Year

Next time Lt. Henry Carrow saves somebody from drowning, he'd rather be wearing fins.

"It's a lot easier," said Engine 2's Carrow, who was a rescue swimmer during his career in the United States Navy.

Carrow left active duty more than 25 years ago, but recently he's dove into the Atlantic Ocean not once but twice while off duty to come to the aid of someone in distress. The first time was in 2016 at Hanna Park. That save occurred during an annual Mother's Day family outing for the women in his immediate and extended family. Carrow's actions escaped the attention of local news and co-workers, and that anonymity was absolutely fine by him.

In an uncanny repeat of history, another scenario unfolded on Mother's Day 2018. This time, it happened during



Engine 2's Lt. Henry Carrow

another family outing, but on St. Augustine Beach. Most of Carrow's family had gone home by mid-afternoon, and he and his wife and friends were relaxing on the beach when Carrow noticed a St. Johns County police cruiser speeding down the shoreline. Driving on the beach is permitted in St. Johns County, but the officer's

*Continued on page 2.*

## A Rescue Unit in Every Station

Whether it was Chief of Department Kurt Wilson, Rescue Division Chief David Castleman or a well-researched report, JFRD has been promoting the concept of expanding rescue for years.

Mayor Lenny Curry and City Council have not only paid attention, they have supported the addition of 15 rescue units in the last two-and-a-half years.

"This is the single largest growth

in JFRD's Rescue Division since its inception more than 50 years ago," Wilson said.

Last month's announcement about JFRD adding Rescues 11, 12 and 41 signaled another milestone: the department will soon have a rescue unit in every fire station and community. The three newest units are scheduled to go into service in early June.

"This expansion is a great moment

*Continued on page 2.*

# Rescue's Expansion

Continued from page 1.

for the Rescue Division, for the people who serve in the division, and for our community," Castleman said. "It's so encouraging to receive such consistent and strong support from Chief Wilson, Mayor Curry and City Council."

One of the most influential factors in the expansion, Castleman said, was a 2016 impact study on rescue call volumes and utilization. The report described how the demand for EMS was outpacing resources and would continue to do so. EMS call volumes in 2015 numbered 117,088; last year, there were 129,032. The report, authored by Assistant Chief Mark Rowley, also detailed the stressful effects on rescue personnel.

When JFRD published the report,



Photo by Wes Lester

(L-R) Division Chief of Rescue David Castleman, Mayor Lenny Curry, District 2 Council Member Al Ferraro and members assigned to Station 37 celebrate the recent addition of Rescue 37. During the Feb. 13 ceremony, Mayor Curry also announced the upcoming addition of rescues 11, 12 and 41. When that occurs in June, every JFRD station will have a rescue unit.

there were 41 full-time rescue units in service. "Our response times were lagging in areas of the community that had long been underserved. This

expansion is vital because in our business, every second matters," Castleman said.

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# Navy Veteran Carrow is a Rescue Swimmer Once More

Continued from page 1.

high speed initially puzzled Carrow. Then it all made sense.

"My buddy was looking at me, and I knew," Carrow said. "I threw off my

hat and glasses and started."

Carrow entered the rough water and swam 50 yards or more to a young man in distress.

"He just kept saying, 'I'm going to drown,'" Carrow recalled. "I told him 'No you're not.'"

But the retired rescue swimmer had his own doubts as he became fatigued. "It was the first time I thought this might not work out," said Carrow. "It's a lot easier when you're in your 20s."

The 50-something Carrow delivered on his promise to rescue the boy. Carrow also left the beach before media arrived. But this time, some of his anonymity was overcome by JFRD's Awards Committee, which recently selected him as JFRD's Firefighter of the Year.

Local media did cover the incident, and one TV station reported a retired firefighter was believed to have carried out the rescue. So for the most part, Carrow has remained below the radar.



Engine 2's Lt. Henry Carrow (center) is JFRD's Firefighter of the Year. His A-shift crew includes Eng. Ben Pickett (left) and Firefighter Garrett Powers. Carrow has been on the job for 22 years.

# Congratulations to JFRD's Newest Leaders



**Capt. Thomas Barber**



**Capt. Sharaad Christopher**



**Capt. John Davis III**



**Capt. Jason Gruentzel**



**Capt. Jesse Modican**



**Capt. Jeremy Pilcher**



**Capt. Eric Prosswimmer**



**Capt. Tyler Ring**



**Capt. Timothy Smith**



**Capt. Jonna White**



**Lt. Brannon Blom**



**Lt. Maurice Brown**



**Lt. Sharon Gould**



**Lt. Michael Hargrove**



**Lt. Adam Kirk**

# Congratulations to JFRD's Newest Leaders



**Lt. William Mahon III**



**Lt. Jonathan Ortiz**



**Lt. Philip Overby**



**Lt. Joseph Phillips**



**Lt. Chad Remsen**



**Lt. Chance Wilms**



**Eng. Joshua Acevedo**



**Eng. Keenen Benton**



**Eng. Felter Blake**



**Eng. Miguel DiPierri**



**Eng. Michael Dixon**



**Eng. Monica Flores**



**Eng. Lucinda Ford**



**Eng. Matthew Griggs**



**Eng. John Grissett III**

# Congratulations to JFRD's Newest Leaders



**Eng. Ray Howard**



**Eng. Ronschelle Laidler**



**Eng. Laurie Lecas**



**Eng. Khambrell Milton**



**Eng. Tyler Mulkey**



**Eng. Theodore Patterson**



**Eng. Marcus Redmond**



**Eng. Jarmar Smith**



**Eng. Jason Souter**



**Eng. Lorelei Vollmer**



*Promotion  
Extras*



**Capt. Thomas Barber and Family**



**Capt. Sharaad Christopher and Family**



**Lt. William Mahon III and Family**



**Eng. Michael Dixon and Family**

# #Jax Rescuers for Rescues Launches on JFRD Twitter



Engineer Doug Lee makes a connection with Tinsel, a puppy up for adoption.

Engineer Doug Lee went above and beyond in his volunteer role to market a local pet adoption initiative known as “Jax Rescuers for Rescues” on JFRD’s Twitter. He kissed a puppy. Or was it the other way around?

“Maybe I am mistaken; however, I thought Tinsel leaned in toward me,” he explained about their bonding during a photo shoot for @JFRDJAX. “I may have misread the dog’s intentions, but I just went for it.”

Lee owns three chihuahuas, and the dog lover in him wanted to help with JFRD’s new and unique partnership with Jacksonville’s Animal Care & Protective Services division (ACPS).

Chief of Department Kurt Wilson was aware that the ACPS shelter had plenty of pets for adoption. Then he saw an article in Fire Service magazine describing Fernandina Beach Fire Department’s partnership with their city’s animal shelter. In 2018, Fernandina firefighters posed individually with 50-plus pets available from Fernandina’s shelter and periodically posted the photos and details on social media. Last month, Fire Service reported that only a couple of the pets had yet to be adopted. When Wilson suggested JFRD using the concept for ACPS, the shelter staff were raring to go.

Wilson called for volunteers to pose for photos with the pets, and Capt. Eric Prosswimmer has since photographed about 20 JFRD members and posted many of the photos on @JFRD-JAX. Stay tuned for the adoption results, or even better, visit ACPS and find your new best friend.

Lt. Johnnie Buchanan is among the 20 JFRD members helping to market a pet adoption campaign with the city’s Animal Care & Protective Services.



## Local 122’s Firefighter Ball Fills Room with Pride, Camaraderie

It all started at a wedding party. District Chief Mike Bilodeau and his wife were talking with Chief of Department Kurt Wilson about social events for JFRD.

Amanda Bilodeau suggested something that would appeal to women. Soon after, the concept of a formal dress event emerged, and Wilson e-mailed the field to determine interest. Capt. John Long was among the first to reply. He said Local 122 was interested in bringing the idea to life. Then Station 1’s Eng. Jeff Feltman got involved with research and logistics. All the while, there was uncertainty about a firefighter ball.

“We weren’t sure there was going to be interest,” Feltman said.

Attendance reached a successful 425 that year, and Feltman continues to coordinate the event which is hosted by Local 122. This year’s FireBall is March 30 at the Lexington Hotel on the Southbank. It will be the fifth FireBall, and Feltman has a good idea of what to expect.

“350 is the perfect number,” said Feltman of the attendance. “We’ve maintained that number for years.”

Rescue 71’s Lt. Tom Crow, who is the event’s disc jockey, says the event is unlike any other in JFRD.

“The sole reason for this event was a sense of camaraderie,” Crow said. “I see a group of brothers and sisters getting together and enjoying each other’s company.”

Crow and Feltman agree that wearing the Class A uniform and coat fills the room with pride for the profession. That’s heightened by JFRD’s Pipes & Drums which opens the event.

The fun starts early for those who stay at the hotel. They have afternoon access to a private hospitality room and the pool area which features a band. Everyone can attend social hour just before the ball, and there’s always anticipation about who will win the 50/50 drawing that evening, Feltman said. In addition to the steak and shrimp dinner and dancing, the evening includes a tribute to firefighters who are active duty military and veterans. The event also honors JFRD’s line of duty deaths and active duty deceased firefighters.

Crow is very busy during the event, but he finds time to say hello to co-workers, some of whom he hasn’t seen in years.

“I would go even if I wasn’t deejaying,” he said. “It’s a great opportunity to re-establish friendships.”



Photo by Fire 5 Battalion Chief Jack Griggs.

(L-R front row) Lt. Josh Swanson, Eng. Oleg Boyarovsky, Firefighter Jason Rivera, Mrs. Miller, Lt. Wil Hightower, and Eng. Robert Lane. (L-R back row: Firefighter Amber Mazten, Firefighter Geoffrey Bunk and Firefighter Ben Foreman.

## *Station 22 Ramps up Patient Connection*

Life's a little easier for Mrs. Miller thanks to Fire Station 22.

In late February, the A-shift first met her outside her home where she'd fallen. Fortunately, she just needed assistance back into her home.

As Engine 22's Eng. Oleg Boyarovsky helped her, he noticed the wooden ramp that led to her door was in disrepair, including a few exposed nails. When Boyarovsky got back in the engine, he told Lt. Josh Swanson he was determined to help.

"I said 'You want to make her day?'" Boyarovsky explained.

Swanson, Boyarovsky and the entire shift did just that. The next morning, Boyarovsky picked up the necessary lumber and supplies and he returned to Miller's home. She didn't answer the door, so he left her a note with his contact information. Eventually, she called Boyarovsky and told him she appreciated the gesture but she didn't want to be a bother.

"I said 'Let us be a blessing to you,'" Boyarovsky recalls.

The next A-shift, Engine 22, Rescue 22 and Engine 122 returned to Miller's home to repair the ramp. "Everybody was jumping at the opportunity to help," Boyarovsky said.

In just over an hour, which included a few calls for emergency service, the firefighters replaced rails where necessary, as well as several planks and footers. When the Jacksonville Association of Firefighters heard about 22's efforts, the organization reimbursed Boyarovsky and the other crew members for lumber and supplies.



Squad 63's Firefighter Henry Rivera holds students' attention at Primrose School of Glen Kernan on March 1 as part of Read Across America.



Children's books by Dr. Seuss were a popular choice during Squad 63's participation in the reading event at Primrose School. Lt. Aaron Hertzberg is quizzing students on some of the situations and characters in the book he is reading.



Engine 19's Eng. Seth Blackstone enjoys some of the humor in the book he is reading to students at Primrose School of Glen Kernan. Blackstone was riding with Squad 63 for the day.

## Squad 63-C Participates in 'Read Across America'

In early March, the National Education Association (NEA) observes Read Across America, a national event to motivate children to read and improve academic achievement. NEA chose early March because March 2 is the birthday of renowned children's author Dr. Seuss.

Coast to coast, schools invite public figures, elected officials, athletes and public safety personnel to read to students in the classroom and to encourage students to read. Locally, the Primrose School of Glen Kernan invited JFRD to participate on March 1. Squad 63's C-shift visited several classrooms at Primrose and read to nearly 100 children in about an hour.



Squad 63's Firefighter Andres Roller-Valdes shares some of the illustrations in a Dr. Seuss book he is reading to students at Primrose School of Glen Kernan on March 1 during the Read Across America Event.