

Raleigh Fire Academy Graduation to Be Held Friday at Convention Center

12/15/10 117 W, 1 I - + 10 - 8

The Raleigh Fire Department will hold a graduation ceremony for Fire Academy 36 at the Raleigh Convention Center on Friday, December 17, at 7:00 p.m. As [this press release notes](#), the 24 graduates have spent the last 30 weeks attending classes covering topics ranging from fire suppression to emergency medical training.

They'll graduate state-certified as Level II firefighters and Emergency Medical Technicians. And be assigned to their fire stations beginning December 20. Congratulations to all! Good luck in your careers as members of the Raleigh Fire Department. See you soon!

Thursday update. Here's are the graduates as [photographed this week](#) by Lee Wilson. Click to enlarge:



Lee Wilson photo

Congratulations to our newest members!

A.C. Rich - 12/15/10 - 22:43

And then follow a long line of predecessors. The 35 prior academies have graduated 724 firefighters since 1978. That includes 17 recruits from outside Raleigh, during the early 1990s.

Going farther back, my best guesstimation puts them around the 1,440th to 1,464th uniformed members since the career department started in 1912. Prior to that point, the volunteer Raleigh Fire Department protected the Capitol City. That lineage goes back even more decades.

Legeros - 12/15/10 - 23:02

looks like ladder 9 might be going into service soon.

charlie - 12/15/10 - 23:28

Don't think so...

Silver - 12/16/10 - 00:00

Forgot...Congrats to the Probies as they have just started their journey. Good Luck with your COMPANY assignments, and remember; two ears/ one mouth.

Silver - 12/16/10 - 00:04

Photo added.

Charlie, the recruits will fill existing vacant positions.

Legeros - 12/16/10 - 08:16

And an earlier thread on "advice for rookies" from a couple years ago, though the new guys and gals are probably over-saturated by veteran wisdom by now: <http://www.legeros.com/ralwake/photos/we..>

And advice told our class in 1989, by our old Training Chief. He told us about "three things: banks, politics, and goats." His explanation: "the firehouse is not a lending institution. Don't loan money to firemen. What happens between you and your wife is political. Don't talk about politics in the firehouse. And, finally, don't let firemen get your goat." The last one. VERY important.

Legeros - 12/16/10 - 08:25

Mike, do you know what year they stopped recycling F-numbers?

gen3fire - 12/16/10 - 13:20

Congrats to all the recruits. A few of us from New Bern are heading that way to attend

NBFRvollie - 12/16/10 - 14:37

Hahaha! Mike, I remember those words well!

A.C. Rich - 12/16/10 - 14:57

Speaking of F-Numbers....if I had a 4 digit 4 number, let alone a 4 digit F-number that high, I'd beat myself silly!

been there - done that - 12/16/10 - 19:38

Classic line....oh if I had a nickel for every time I heard someone say that!!

Silver - 12/16/10 - 20:29

KC, offhand, I do not know that answer. Let me look in my records and see if that answer presents itself.

Legeros - 12/16/10 - 21:21

Who has the lowest F Number that is on still on duty. Chief Bagwell, Captain Mullen?

Rob Mitchell - 12/17/10 - 12:19

Bagwell (F268), Mullen (F284), Poole (F286). According to photo system

gen3fire - 12/17/10 - 13:43

I just saw the email on their station assignments. A-Shift on 12-20, B-Shift on 12-21, C-Shift 12-22. We have needed them on shift terribly bad. I agree on the high F#'s! Whew, I'm glad I've got single digit years left ahead of me. (F447)

A.C. Rich - 12/18/10 - 00:09

What in the world is an F-number?

F-#? - 12/18/10 - 10:02

F numbers are an internal number assigned to all new employees of the Raleigh Fire Department. They were started in the Eighties. Mine was probably F440-something, since I was hired at the same time as A.C.

Legeros - 12/18/10 - 10:13

i guess the f-numbers started when they stopped giving badge numbers. What do you think Mike.

gen3fire - 12/18/10 - 10:26

More context for our readers. Raleigh firefighter badges had numbers that were displayed in the middle of the Maltese cross. Here's a picture: <http://raleighfirehistory.org/photos/dah..>

The badge numbers were started sometime between 1920 and 1940. The badges were worn on uniform coats and uniform caps only. There were no uniform shirts.

Looks like, from photos, that there were maybe two or three types of badges. Chief / Chief Officer and firefighters. Later badges for Drivers

and Captains are still decades away.

Looks like, from photos, that bugle pins were also utilized, and worn on uniform coat lapels and dress caps. These would have distinguished Captains and Chief Officers. Don't know if the Drivers (now Lieutenants) had them.

In addition to the badge numbers, helmet shields also had numbers. Should have been the same number.

But in later decades, by the eighties, helmet numbers were being recycled. Were the badge numbers gone by then?

Badge numbers were also recently, it seems. To complicate matters more, Yours Truly hasn't found any lists of badge numbers. Despite years of peeking and poking through department records, no single list has yet surfaced.

Seems reasonable to suspect badge numbers stopped around the time of starting F numbers.

Digging through my records, it looks like F numbers started at F100 or maybe F101. The latter was A.G. Stell, hired 1956, retired 1994 as District Chief.

It looks like F numbers were assigned based on seniority. So the first F numbers were assigned to the earliest-hired members. Atkinson, Narron, Best, R. M. King, etc.

But I cannot readily tell when the first new firefighters were assigned newly issued F numbers. There's no gaps or discontinuity in my records to show. Guess I'll ask the retirees when I see them next. Who remembers being issued an F number when they were hired?

Maybe that was a system implemented with a new Chief? Maybe Chief Keith or Kuster or even Pickard, if they started that late.

Some answers, but more questions! Let me see what answers I can further find.

Legeros - 12/18/10 - 11:26

Joe's badge was 53, never heard him say of having an F number served from 1955-1975. Stan's badge was 181 which also was his F number served from 1971-1996.

gen3fire - 12/18/10 - 22:36

Chief Brock and I discussing this question last night and agreed the "current" F#'s started when RFD initiated the Pegasus mail system on our first dial-up modem based "intra-net" system in 1992-1993 (by our then IT Manager Dist Chief Donald Sykes). Each person was assigned a number based on their tenure and it was actually their email address on that system. As Mike stated, they started with (I believe) in the low 100's, and were a carryover from the the existing numbers members had at that time (i.e. Stan Ray's at 181). I believe at that time, DC A.G. Stell or maybe DC Ronnie Atkinson had the lowest numbers(?). It appears they have remained consistent over the years for data and record tracking to the precedence they have today. Recycle them... who knows...

A.C. Rich - 12/19/10 - 11:45

No F number recycling is what I am hearing from folks. Still researching...

Legeros - 12/19/10 - 14:27

There wouldnt have been any F-number recycling, but badge number recycling was a possibility unless they used some other sort of system in the first part of the 1900s.

gen3fire - 12/19/10 - 15:43

Yes for badge recycling, which I also hearing from folks. Will summarize and post as separate posting when all information has been received.

Legeros - 12/19/10 - 18:06

Name: (real name
preferred)

Remember personal info?

Yes