



# Flame Spread



**North Carolina State Firemen's Association**  
323 West Jones Street, Suite 401  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27603  
2008 Winter Newsletter

## Off The Presidents Desk



Chief Wesley Hutchins  
2007—2008 NCSFA President

"Who Do We Serve...?"

In the book of Acts, the Apostle Paul teaches us that God does not waste our time – he will use our past and present so we may serve him with our future. As servants to our communities we are called to help others. Service is the occupation of serving others by helping. Simply put, it is work done for others as an occupation. As firefighters we have chosen to be servants.

When you hear the word servant what do you think? The word sometime carries a negative connotation in this world. Often people think being a servant is someone that is of lower class or economic status. This is not the case. Throughout the course of time, the firefighter has been called into service to help those in need.

There is no better feeling in life than doing a job that consistently serves others. In a time of need, the firefighter exemplifies the definition of service. In a recent CNN/USA Today Gallup Poll honesty and ethics of professions were measured. It was no surprise that firefighters rank first for their honesty and integrity, with 90% of Americans rating them "high" or "very high" on these characteristics! What an honor. Those we serve trust and respect us.

Whether we serve in a career or volunteer capacity, as the officer, Chief, or simply the firefighter, we are called to do just that – serve! Often we get the feeling that our service goes unnoticed and the services we perform are not appreciated; still, we continue to serve. Sometimes the services we render seem to be pointless – think of the most unsatisfying service you have ever performed in your career. Was it the time you responded to get the family pet out of the stuck drainage pipe while it poured rain? Was it the time you responded to a fire alarm at 3:00 AM in 10 degree weather? Or was it the time you simply did not want to be there as someone rendering a service?

Don't get me wrong, not all of our service falls by the wayside. Once again, think of your service. That time you saved a life, or helped someone in distress and got a big thank you. Those are the times you honored the word firefighter! Those times of thanks far outweigh the negative parts of serving and I am sure you were very proud to be a servant.

So go ahead and call me a servant and I will say *Thank you* with a big smile on my face! As servants to you, your board of directors for the North Carolina State Firemen's Association are there to help. Never hesitate to contact me, any of our board members, executive director or staff in the office in Raleigh if you have questions, comments or concerns – *"we are there to serve."* Be safe out there as you serve those who depend on you.

Wesley D. Hutchins  
NCSFA President

**National Volunteer Fire Council Update**  
**By: Chief Jeff Cash, NC Delegate NVFC**

**National Junior Firefighter Program**

The NVFC's National Junior Firefighter Program has made great strides since its launch in July 2007. As part of the Program, the NVFC is offering ten \$5,000 scholarships to junior firefighters nationwide who demonstrate commitment and dedication to their local junior firefighter program and the fire service. The departments of each of the winning students will also receive a grant of \$5,000. The application and criteria for the competitive scholarships will be available online at [www.nvfc.org/juniors](http://www.nvfc.org/juniors) no later than April 1. The deadline for applications is **May 15**. This program was created by the NVFC and Spartan Motors with additional funding from Dunkin' Brands Community Foundation.

**Retention and Recruitment Podcast**

The NVFC teamed up with Firehouse.com to record a podcast on two of the biggest challenges facing volunteer fire departments – retention and recruitment. The podcast served as part of Radio@Firehouse.com's lineup of broadcasts for fire and emergency professionals. Listen to the podcast on the NVFC web site at [www.nvfc.org](http://www.nvfc.org).

**Trade Shows**

Check out the NVFC booth and all it has to offer at the following national trade shows in 2008:

Fire Department Instructors Conference Indianapolis, IN April 7-12, 2008	Fire Expo Harrisburg, PA May 16-18, 2008
Firehouse Expo Baltimore, MD July 22-27, 2008	Fire-Rescue International Denver, CO August 14-16, 2008

**Legislative Advocacy**

The NVFC was busy in 2007 working with a new Congress to promote the interests of the volunteer fire and emergency services. Several victories were made, including the passage of the Volunteer Responder Incentive Protection Act, granting volunteer emergency responders federal tax relief on benefits they receive from state and local units of government. The NVFC also spent a significant amount of time and energy communicating with Congress, the Department of Justice (DoJ), and our constituents regarding implementation of the Hometown Heroes Survivors' Benefits Act.

In December, Congress passed FY 2008 appropriations legislation funding the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program at \$560 million and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response program at \$190 million. This marked the second straight year that both programs received funding increases. On March 9, 2007, Cherryville Fire Chief and NVFC North Carolina State Director Jeff Cash testified before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security regarding the AFG program. In 2006, Senior Deputy North Carolina State Fire Marshall and Mebane Volunteer Fire Department Assistant Chief Tim Bradley testified on behalf of the NVFC at a hearing addressing first responder communications interoperability.

## NCSFA Welcomes a New Employee

As many of you know the North Carolina State Firemen's Association has been seeking an individual to serve in the capacity of Program Coordinator. We are proud to announce that this position has been filled. Kris Wyatt will be your Program Coordinator, and Kris began work on March 6<sup>th</sup>. She will be managing our current programs and actively seeking new benefits and funding for new programs for our membership. In addition she will manage our annual Conference. Kris comes to us from the NC Association of County Directors of Social Services with a solid background in conference planning and management. Kris was the 2008 winner of the Meeting Professionals To Watch Award presented by Convention South Magazine.



She is married to Mark Wyatt and has beautiful 11 year old twin girls, Kaela & Liana Wyatt. We know you will enjoy working with Kris, and we all hope to see great things happen in the life of the NCSFA in

## 2008 Short Session Legislation

It was agreed at Gateway that the fire service would concentrate their efforts on two issues during the short session. First, is the **House Bill 1563** which extends the death benefit to fire and rescue instructors who are eligible for the benefits but who are currently not covered while conducting fire and rescue training out their own departments. This will cover those eligible while in training situations. Second, is to introduce legislation that will allow career firefighters to draw their pension at age 55 and 20 years of service without having to retire. This will treat career and volunteers equally.

## “Click...”

North Carolina General Statute, 20-135.2A. Is a state law that makes seat belt use mandatory. This is the law, period! According to a research report from the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA), seat belts save approximately 13,000 lives in the US each year. Further, the NHTSA estimates that 7,000 US car accident fatalities would have been avoided if the victims had been wearing seatbelts. Nearly all safety experts agree that buckling up dramatically increases your chances of surviving an automobile accident. Once again, according to the NHTSA, seatbelts reduce the risk of death for a front seat car occupant by about 50 percent.

The eleventh initiative of the *National Fallen Firefighters Foundation* program **Everyone Goes Home**, states that “National standards for emergency response policies and procedures should be developed and championed.” This initiative goes a bit further and states that seatbelt use in apparatus and personal owned vehicles should be part of your standard operating procedures.

Your board of directors for the North Carolina State Firemen's Association recently posted a seatbelt position paper on our web site; please take a moment to read it. It only takes seconds to buckle up. Please join us in driving home the message of mandatory seatbelt use – it's the law in North Carolina!

If your department has not taken the National Seatbelt pledge, please take time to do so and sign up at [www.trainingdivision.com/seatbeltpledge.asp](http://www.trainingdivision.com/seatbeltpledge.asp) Take the pledge, it may save your life...

Wesley Hutchins, President

## NCSFA Gives Thanks



Special thanks to C. W. Williams Fire Equipment for their generous donation to the North Carolina State Firemen's Association. They presented the NCSFA with a beautiful podium to be used at conference and other special events. To President Jim Edwards and the entire staff of C.W. Williams we say thank you for your kind and wonderful gift. It will be used often and we will think of you each time we use it.

North Carolina State Firemen's Association  
323 West Jones Street, Suite 401  
Raleigh, NC 27603