

Humboldt Fire Department ready to battle any and all blazes

BY DANNY WADE

When fires erupt in Humboldt, rest assured there are trained men who are ready and able to battle even the largest blazes. The Humboldt Fire Department is well equipped and manned for the job.

With veteran leadership by Chief Chester Owens and Assistant Chief Leroy Kail, there are almost three-quarters of a century's worth of experience leading the department. Chief Owens has been with HFD for 42 years, while Assistant Chief Kail has proudly served for 32 years. With 74 years of experience, there is very little, as

it relates to firefighting, these men have not seen.

Humboldt Fire Department has two stations, Station #1 is located on Main Street and Station #2 is at the corner of the Hwy. 45 Bypass and Avondale. Both stations are fully equipped with fire trucks, emergency gear and trained fire fighters.

The first fire station was located on 10th Ave. about a block off Main Street. Kail said that station dates back to the early 1900s. In the early years, volunteers manned the fire department. The Main Street station was built in the early

1950s. The bypass station was built in the mid 1970s. With the railroad tracks splitting the city, the fire department needed a station on both sides of the tracks in order to have faster response times.

Although the HFD is a few men short, just like practically all fire departments, each shift has seven men manning the stations. Each shift has a lieutenant as shift leader. The department runs three shifts, each is 24 hours. There are always firefighters on duty 24 hours and day, seven days a week, 365 days a year including holidays.

Chief Owens said the fire department currently has 25 firefighters on staff. This includes the two chiefs, a captain and three lieutenants. With the department being a few men short of a full staff, they are always recruiting new hires for the department. New recruits will go through training with HFD where they must pass written and agility tests before enrolling in the Tennessee Fire Codes Academy, which is a 10-week training. Once a fire

fighter completes the academy, they earn Fire Fighter 1. Additional testing is required to receive Fire fighter 2 designation.

Recruits that attend the academy must sign a two-year contract with the Humboldt Fire Department since the city pays for them to attend the academy. If they leave before the two years have been fulfilled, they must repay the city on a prorated scale.

Assistant Chief Kail is HFD's arson investigator. He is also the chief training officer and works with fire fighters for 16 hours as required by the state. After they complete Kail's training, he turns them over to his lieutenants for further training.

Captain Greg Lencioni serves as the city's fire inspector.

Lieutenants Michael Lewis, Robert Ward and Jackie McClinton are lead officers for each shift and train firefighters.

Fire fighters currently on staff are Randal Jimenez, Stephen Lewoczko, Lucas Reasons, Daniel

see page 5

We Salute the Humboldt Fire Department!



Humboldt Service Co.

Appliance Sales & Service

114 South 14th Ave., Humboldt • 731-784-5831



Reinhausen Manufacturing

*We are Proud
of Our
Hometown Heroes!*

(731) 784-7681

2549 N 9th Ave, Humboldt, TN 38343

