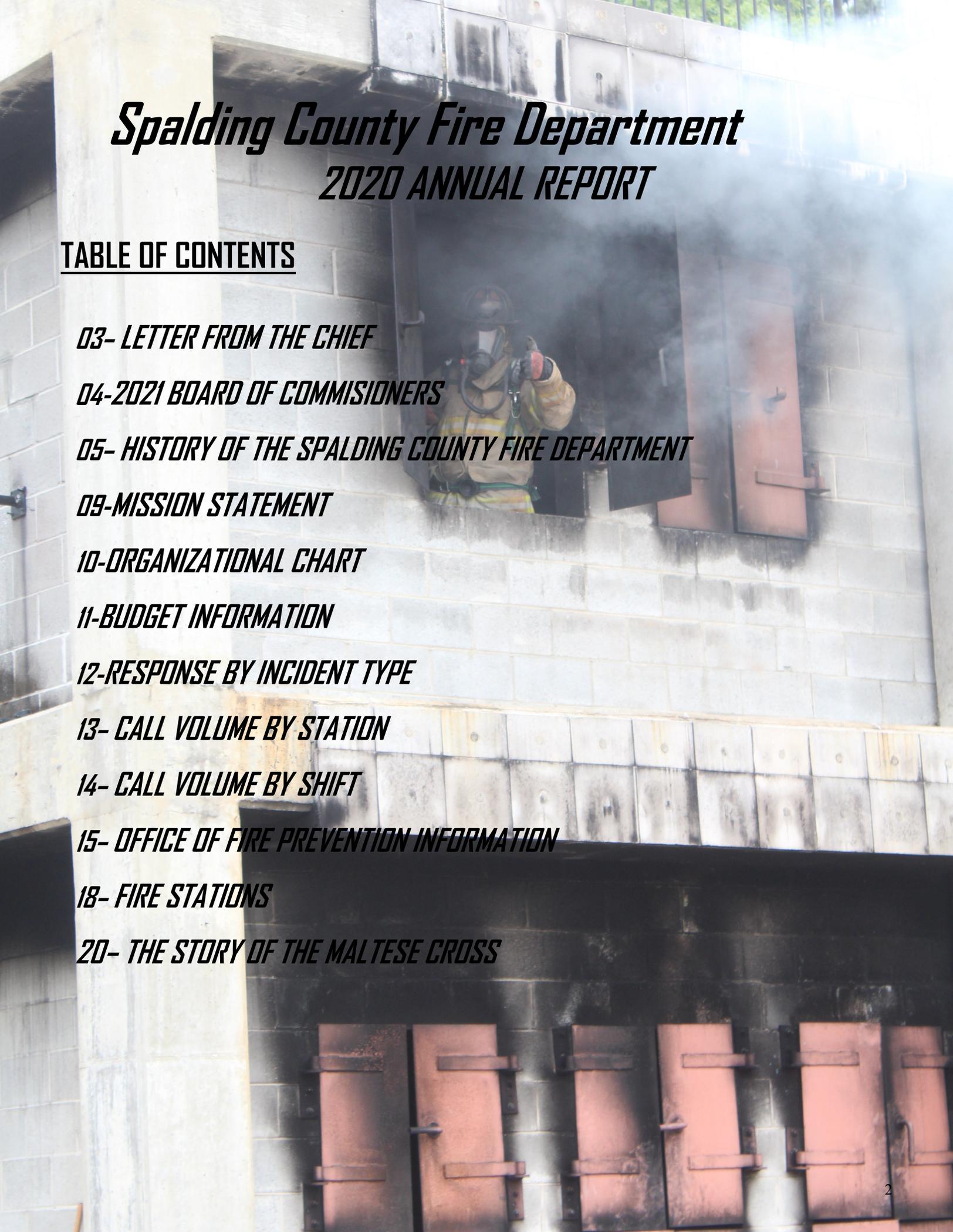


# ***2020 ANNUAL REPORT***

## ***SPALDING COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT***





# ***Spalding County Fire Department 2020 ANNUAL REPORT***

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Greetings,

It is our pleasure to present to you the 2020 Spalding County Fire Department and Spalding County Emergency Management Annual Report. This document will provide a comprehensive reflection of our operations, responses, accomplishments, and challenges faced throughout 2020. It is our hope that you will enjoy reading this report and find the information contained herein both engaging and informative as well. We also would like to express our appreciation for all the support we have received from our elected officials, county management, and our citizens as well.

The year 2020 proved to be one of the most challenging in most of our lifetimes with the onset of the global pandemic. The pandemic impacted everyone in this country in many ways, in addition to causing irreparable damage to families all over the world. With that in mind, it is with utmost sympathy and compassion, that we would like to express our deepest condolences for those who lost a family member, loved one, or friend.

The pandemic also impacted Fire Department operations as well. First responders have always faced many risks related to infectious diseases; however, COVID-19 required new protocols to keep our responders safe. As a result, we found ourselves having to restrict public access to our stations, eliminate face to face public education events, and even make changes to how we conducted our training.

It is nearly impossible to express the level of pride we have taken in our staff with regard to how they responded to this crisis. Even in the face of potentially becoming sick and risking taking the virus home to their families, they fearlessly continued to report to work every shift like the heroes they truly are. To say that it is a pleasure to be associated with such determined individuals would be a vast understatement.

In closing, it must also be stated that we are humbled at having been allowed the honor to serve this amazing department as the Deputy Chief of Operations and Deputy Chief of Administration/Emergency Management. We look forward to the growth and opportunity that the future must certainly hold.

With Great Respect,

**Mike Byrd**, *Deputy Chief of Operations*

**Glenn Polk**, *Deputy Chief of Administration/Emergency Management Director*

# *2021 BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS*



**GWEN FLOWERS -TAYLOR  
DISTRICT 1**



**JAMES R. DUTTON  
DISTRICT 2  
VICE CHAIRMAN**



**RITA JOHNSON  
DISTRICT 3**



**RYAN BOWLDEN  
DISTRICT 4**



**CLAY DAVIS III  
DISTRICT 5  
CHAIRMAN**

# *COUNTY ADMINISTRATION*



**COUNTY MANAGER  
WILLIAM P. WILSON**



**ASSISTANT COUNTY MANAGER  
MICHELLE IRAZZARY**



# *HISTORY OF THE SPALDING COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT*



In 1851, before the United States Civil War, the first Spalding County Board of Commissioners conducted their first meeting. At that time, there was no organized fire department or any other type of emergency services for Spalding County. Sometime in the mid-1900s, it was determined that due to the population growth and industrialization, fire protection was not only a much needed, but also necessary and essential service. At the time, Dundee Mills, a prominent employer in Spalding County had organized their first fire department and opened a fire station on Railroad Avenue in Experiment, across from the now demolished Dundee Mills Plant Number 1. The Dundee Mills Fire Department consisted of volunteer firefighters and Kenneth Roberts, Fire Chief. Together they furnished fire protection for the "Mill Villages", where many employees resided, in addition to protection for as much of Spalding County as was possible using available resources.

While the incorporated areas of the City of Griffin had their own full-time fire department which dated back to the 1800s, Spalding County still did not. This was due largely in part to several factors, among which were low population, low tax base as well as fewer houses. The "Dundee Volunteer Department" as it came to be known, continued to furnish fire protection and later opened two more stations. One of which was located on 6<sup>th</sup> Street in East Griffin (No. 2) and Station No. 3 which was located on the old Zebulon Road (U.S. Hwy 19) just North of the Everee Inn Road intersection. From the three stations, the Dundee Volunteer Fire Department provided fire protection to the citizens of Spalding County and later would go on to begin performing light rescue work at motor vehicle accidents and other emergencies.

In 1977, the directors of the Dundee Volunteer Fire Department realized that the county had grown to such an extent that it was becoming extremely difficult as well as costly to continue to furnish fire protection. Also, the number people who desired to "volunteer" to risk their lives firefighting was fast diminishing while diametrically, the number of fire and other emergencies was increasing at an alarming rate. Federal laws were also being enacted that would require more extensive management of fire departments, which included liabilities for the actions of firefighters. In addition, there were training issues that had not been addressed as well as personnel health and safety issues. In short, despite their best intentions, the Dundee Volunteer Fire Department was no longer able to keep up with the growing pace of a larger, much busier Spalding County. As a result of this realization, and after much deliberation and soul searching, it was determined by the directors that they would have to dissolve their fire department due to no longer being able to provide the quality of fire protection services that the citizens of Spalding County both required and deserved. The Spalding County Commissioners were notified of the dire situation and a referendum vote was held among citizens to determine whether a full-time fire department was what they desired. The vote passed overwhelmingly.

In September 1978, Clarence Sanders was hired as the first Spalding County Fire Department employee and began serving as fire chief. Plans were developed to obtain fire trucks, equipment, land upon which new stations would be built as well as employees to man the new stations. On February 14, 1979, three experienced, full time firefighters (Gary Kendrick, Chipper Gardner and Bobo Whitley) were hired to assist the new chief. Three trucks that had been formerly in use by the Dundee Volunteer Department were placed into service until two new trucks were purchased by the Spalding County Fire Department. The county firefighters would also continue to operate out of the three Dundee stations until new ones could be built.

# ***HISTORY OF THE SPALDING COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT***

On May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1979, the first wave of 15 full time firefighters were hired. A few of whom had some prior experience. Shortly afterwards they were sent to attend a two week "crash course" from a certified fire instructor from the City of Griffin Fire Department. The new hires received PPE (personal protective equipment) and were taught the principles of fire suppression, equipment familiarization, and how to drive and operate a fire apparatus. During this period, it was determined that an EMS (emergency medical service) was needed. This would also become a part of the new fire department. Although EMS would later go on to obtain its own chief, budget, etc., many things would continue to be shared with the fire department including housing EMS personnel and ambulances at the various fire stations. Because the county started with only one ambulance and the firefighters worked "one per station" for many years, most of the EMS personnel were cross trained as firefighters and many firefighters obtained EMT (emergency medical technician) certifications so that staffing levels could be maintained as well as increasing the availability of help during emergency scenes. To further ensure the efficiency of operations, a secretary was hired to assist the fire chief, in addition to four full time radio dispatchers whose job was to receive calls from the public and transmit the proper alarm information to fire and EMS crews.

On May 29, 1979, the Spalding County Fire Department and EMS officially began providing fire and emergency services to the citizens of Spalding County, including the communities of Sunnyside and Orchard Hill. Also, in 1979, construction began on five fire stations. The first of which was located at 600 Carver Road and was considered the headquarters station. It has since been renamed C.H. Sanders Fire Station, after the first fire chief. The last of the stations to be completed during that early time period would be the Blalock Fire Station, located at 5756 Newnan Highway. In 1996 construction was completed on Gary Reid Station (named for Spalding County's first African American commissioner) located at 1843 North Hill Street Extension. The EMS division would remain a part of Spalding County Fire and continued to work under the control of the board of commissioners until the county sold both its hospital and EMS to a private hospital group in the late 1980s.

Earlier in the 1980s, the three original firefighters were promoted to lieutenants and became the first shift officers of the three 24 hour rotating shifts. Later, their titles were changed to captain and other officers were added as needed. After the departure of Clarence Sanders, Warren Kelley became the second fire chief of Spalding County Fire Department. Kelley would later resign to take on a position with the state of Georgia and was replaced by Chipper Gardner, one of the three original firefighters hired in 1979. Gardner would go on to lead the department for many years. During this time, he promoted \*\* Kenny West to the position of assistant chief and would also oversee the purchasing of several E-one fire apparatuses. It was also during this time that the construction of Norton, the county's most recently built station, located at 765 Vaughn School Road was completed.

After Gardner retired in 2009, assistant chief Kenny West was selected as the new department chief in 2010. In 2013, West promoted at the time battalion chiefs Jamie Clark and Glen Polk to the newly created rank of deputy chief. Clark would serve as Deputy Chief of Operations with Polk assuming the role of the department's Deputy Chief of Administration. After West's retirement in 2018 the two would serve in their respective capacities, assuming overall responsibility for the day to day operations of the department which, for the first time since it's establishment, did not have a singular figure operating as fire chief. In late 2019, Deputy Chief Clark retired after 35 years of service. Shortly afterwards, current Deputy Chief of Operations and former Spalding County firefighter Mike Byrd was hired to assume the role.

# ***HISTORY OF THE SPALDING COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT***

Continuing its growth, the department has added many more positions over the years including a fire marshal, a battalion chief for each shift, two captains per shift, lieutenants, and a fire safety officer. Also added were more fire and rescue apparatuses, including an 1,836 gallon “tanker” unit used for water supply in rural areas, and a rescue boat along with several ATVs. The department has also purchased a wealth of up to date, specialized equipment such as “E-Tools”, a modern, battery operated version of the “Jaws of life”, as well as state of the art AEDs (automatic external defibrillators.) In 2019, two QRV (quick response vehicle) units were added to the fleet which provide personnel with access to areas typically not accessible by a traditional fire apparatus.

At current, the Spalding County Fire Department has seven stations as well as an administrative facility that doubles as a classroom for all Spalding County employees. Several personnel are members of L.A.W.S (land, air, water, search), and the Departments Emergency Management Agency (EMA), led by Deputy Chief Polk. The Spalding County EMA is regarded as one of the most distinguished in the region and has received praise for its effective handling of the COVID-19 pandemic due to a strong partnership with the Department of Public Health. What began as a large-scale logistics operation involving the acquisition of PPE (personal protective equipment) at the onset of the pandemic would eventually evolve into the utilization of the “drive thru” model to dispense vaccinations to the citizens of Spalding County. To date, through a collaborative effort between Spalding County Fire Department, District 4 Public Health, City of Griffin Fire and Rescue, Wellstar, Spalding County Public Works and Spalding County Parks and Recreation, over 8000 local citizens have been successfully vaccinated against COVID-19, one of the highest vaccination success rates in the region.

At the time of this publication, Spalding County Fire Department has roughly 75 full time, paid personnel, and seven stations throughout the county’s 200 square mile radius. Starting salary is \$36,035 per year with expanded benefits including health and life insurance, dental and vision coverage as well as a Deferred Compensation Retirement Plan. Personnel also enjoy a monthly leave accrual, annual, sick and holiday leave, as well as a 4% mandatory contributory Defined Benefit Retirement Plan. There is also an option to become a member of the much lauded Georgia Firefighter’s Pension Fund.

The Spalding County Fire Department considers itself a “customer service” oriented agency as is outlined in our mission statement. It will always be our honor and priority to offer the highest level of emergency services to the citizens of Spalding County. It is our goal to ensure that this will always be made possible through the utilization of quality, courteous, and skilled personnel. We will always strive to maintain and encourage an environment of continuing education and training in order to provide a rapid and professional response whenever the need arises. We consider ourselves a growing, progressive department that complies with all federal, state and local laws for its employees. In addition to providing the most modern and up to date firefighting resources available, we adhere to the highest safety guidelines in all daily activities. It is our hope that this model approach will guarantee not only the success of our department for years to come, but also serve as a reminder that our people, including the citizens of Spalding County, will forever be our greatest resource.

# *HISTORY OF THE SPALDING COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT*



*L-R Clarence Sanders (Chief of Spalding County Fire Department ), Ruth Martin (County Commissioner), Lawrence Roberts (Assistant Chief, Dundee Volunteer Fire Department), Frank Thomas (County Commissioner), Kenneth Roberts (Chief of Dundee Volunteer Fire Department)*

On May 29, 1979, Chief Kenneth Roberts (Dundee Volunteer Fire Department) passed the station keys to Chief Clarence Sanders who, as newly selected Chief of the Spalding County Fire Department would now assume fire protection responsibilities for all unincorporated areas of Spalding County, including the towns of Orchard Hill and Sunnyside.

## *HISTORY OF THE PATCH*



Designed by Chief Clarence Sanders, the department patch is not only unique in it's design but also reflects the history of Spalding County.

- ◆ **Maltese Cross**- The time honored symbol of fire departments all over the world.
- ◆ **Gold Stars**- The three outside stars represent the cities of Atlanta, Columbus and Macon, which were referred to as "the Golden Triangle" at the time due to projections that this area would see tremendous growth in the years to come. The fourth star, located in the center of the cross represents Spalding County's position in the middle of the triangle.
- ◆ **1851**- Refers to the first meeting of the Spalding County Board of Commissioners
- ◆ **1978**- Refers to the establishment of the Spalding County Fire Department

# MISSION STATEMENT

THE MEMBERS OF SPALDING COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT ARE COMMITTED TO GIVE OUR BEST EFFORT TO SERVE THE PEOPLE BY PROTECTING THEIR LIVES, ENVIRONMENT, AND PROPERTY THROUGH THE PROMOTION OF COURTEOUS AND RESPONSIBLE SERVICES.





SPALDING COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT  
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Deputy Chief -  
Administration

Deputy Chief -  
Operations

Homeland Security  
/ Emergency  
Management-  
Director

Administrative  
Assistant

OHS / EMA  
Volunteers

Fire Marshal

Fire Safety Officer

Battalion Chiefs

Training Officer

Budget

Grant  
Management

Information  
Technology

Captain

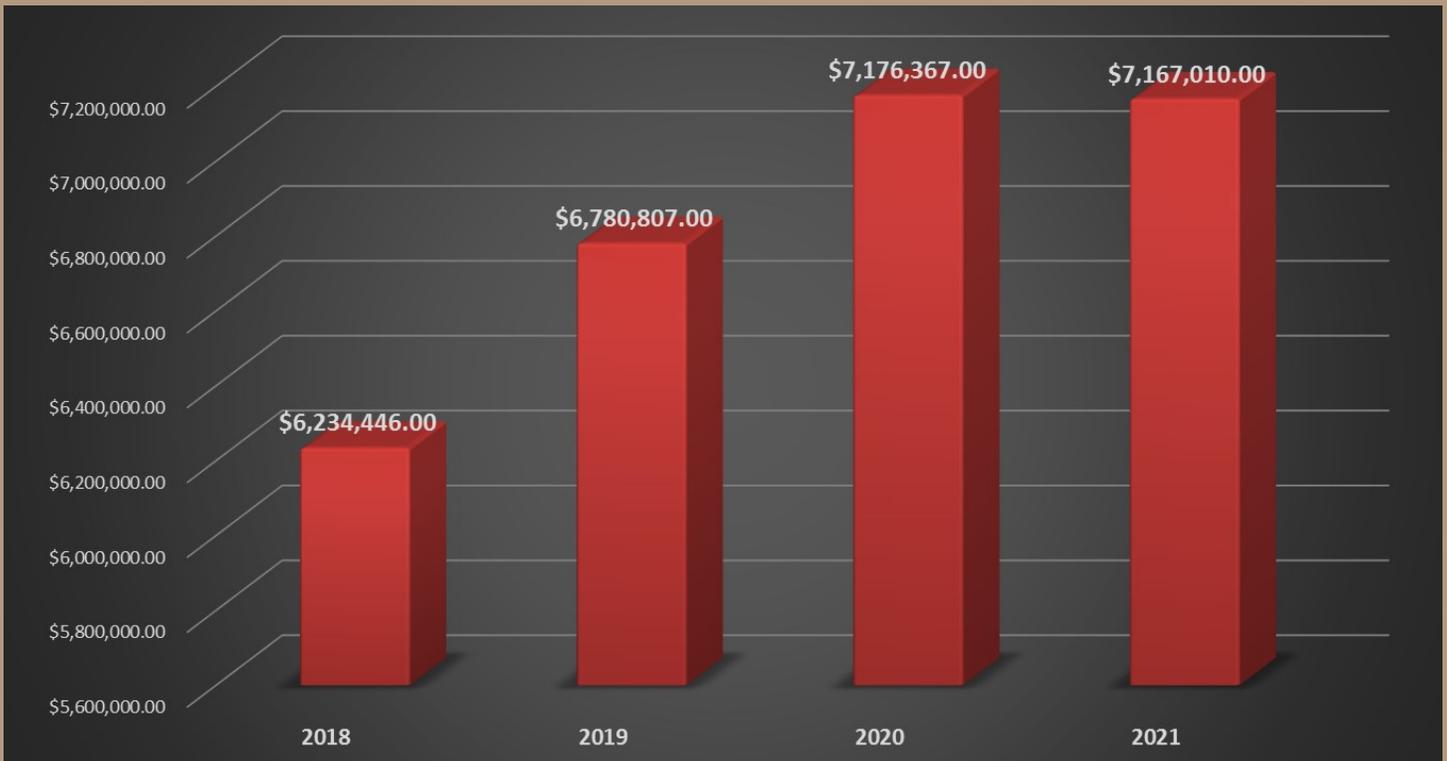
Lieutenants

Firefighters

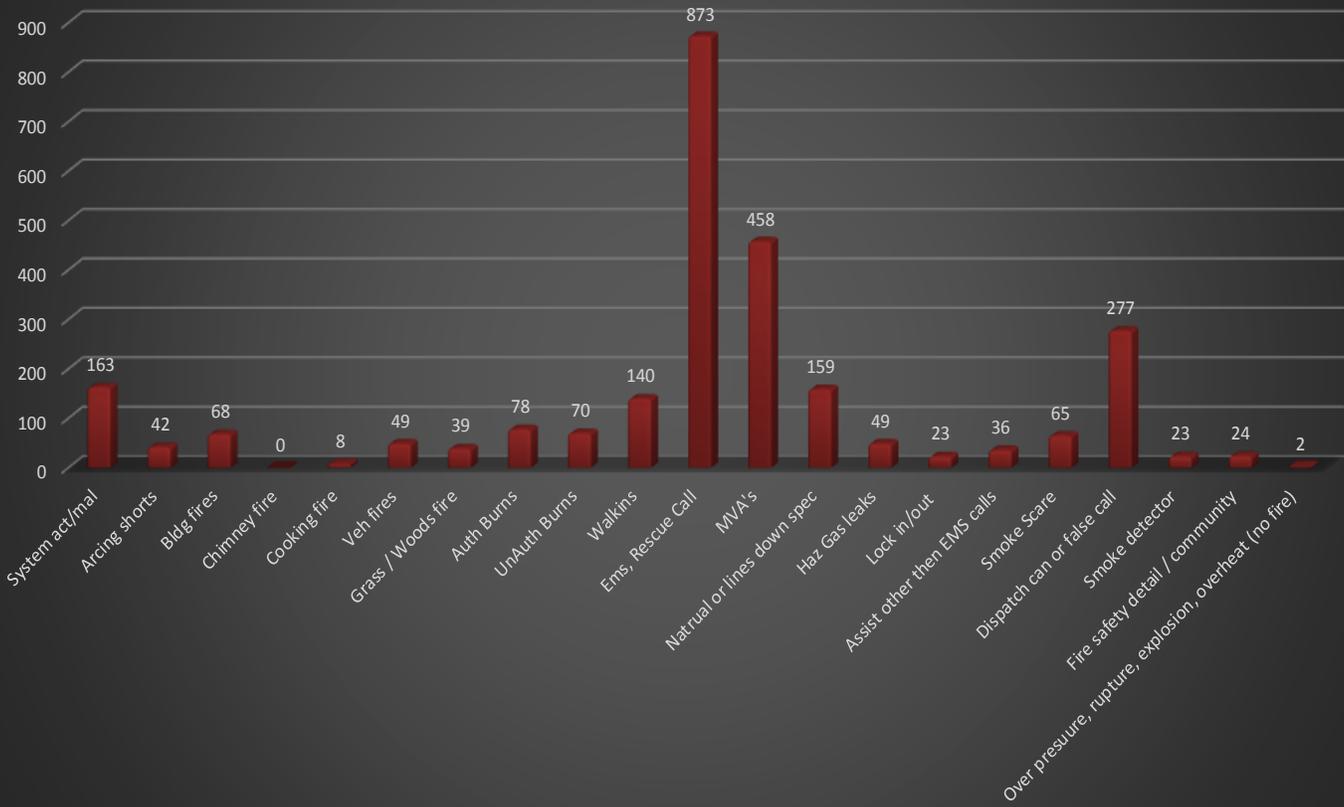
Volunteer  
Firefighters



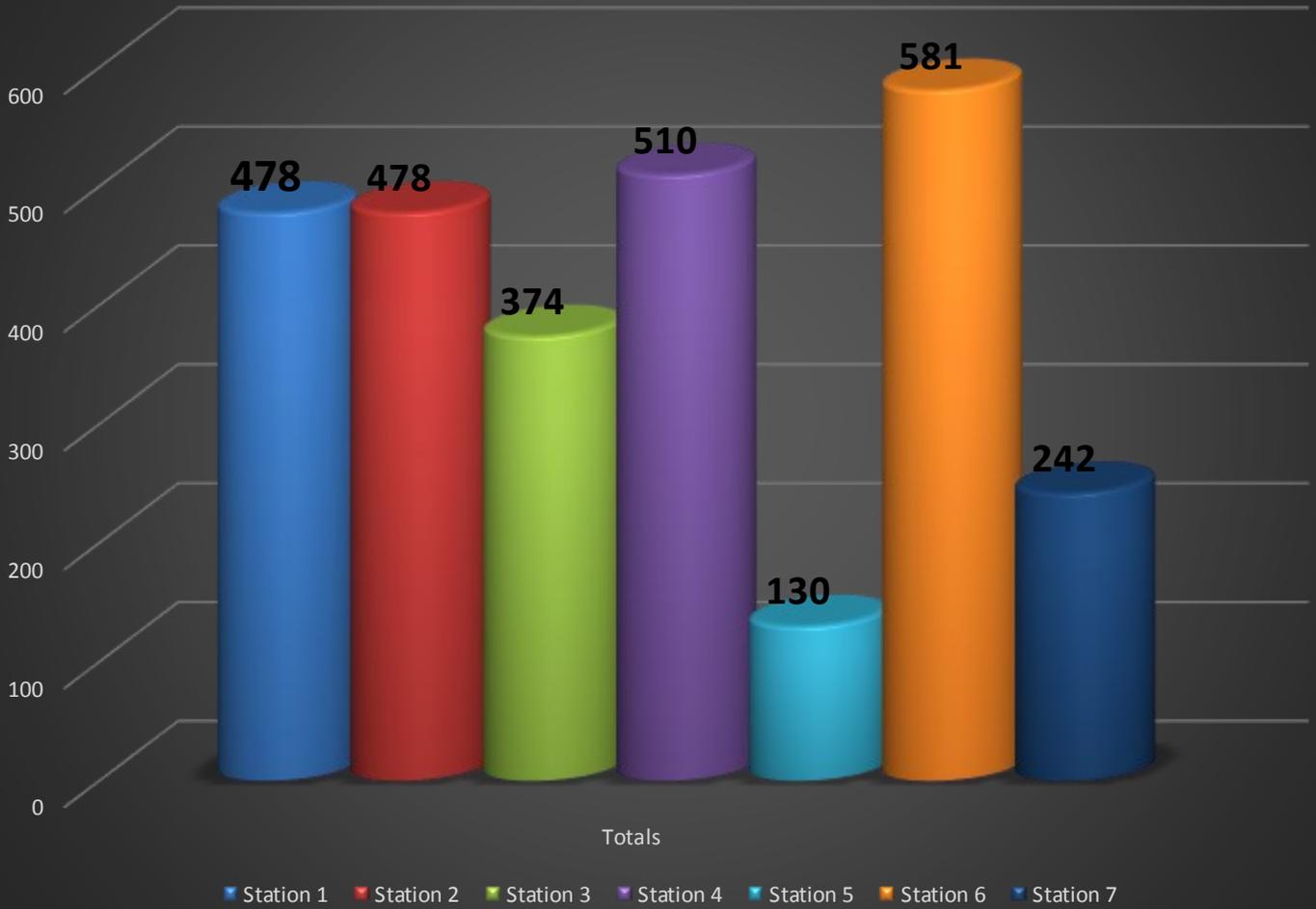
# OPERATIONAL BUDGET



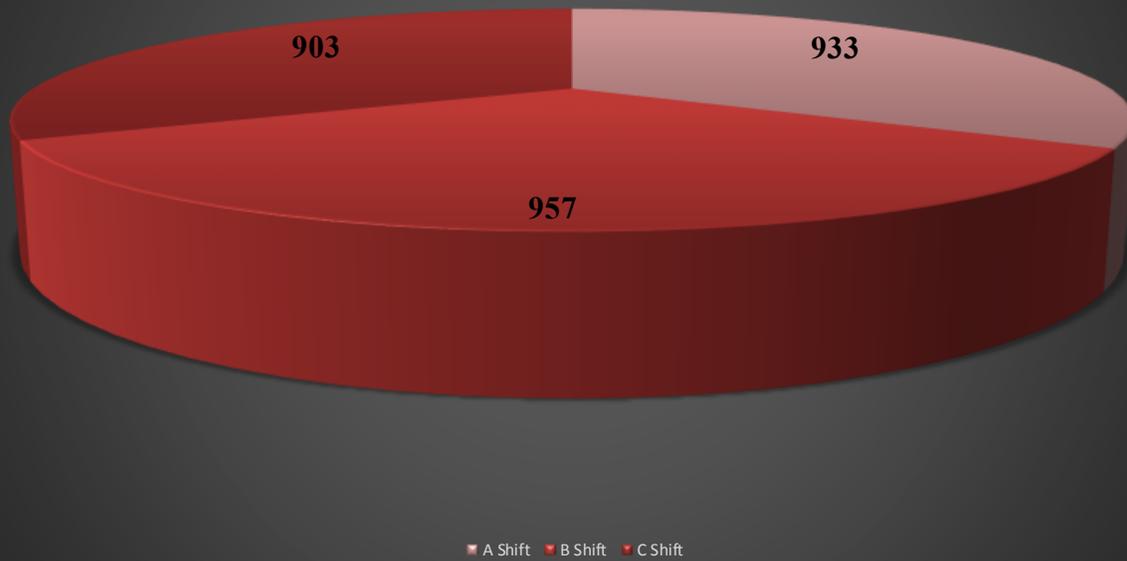
## 2020 Response By Incident Type



# Call Volume By Station



## Call Volume By Shift



### ***Did you know?***

Firefighters generally work in long shifts that include weekends and holidays. These shifts might differ from one city to another. The two most common types of shifts for firefighters are 24/48, or 10- to 12-hour shifts for three to four days in a row.

Spalding County Fire Department follows the 24/48 schedule. This uses three teams (A shift, B shift, C shift) to provide 24/7 coverage. It consists of a 3-day cycle where each team works one 24-hour shift followed by 2 consecutive days (48 hours) off duty.

# OFFICE OF FIRE PREVENTION

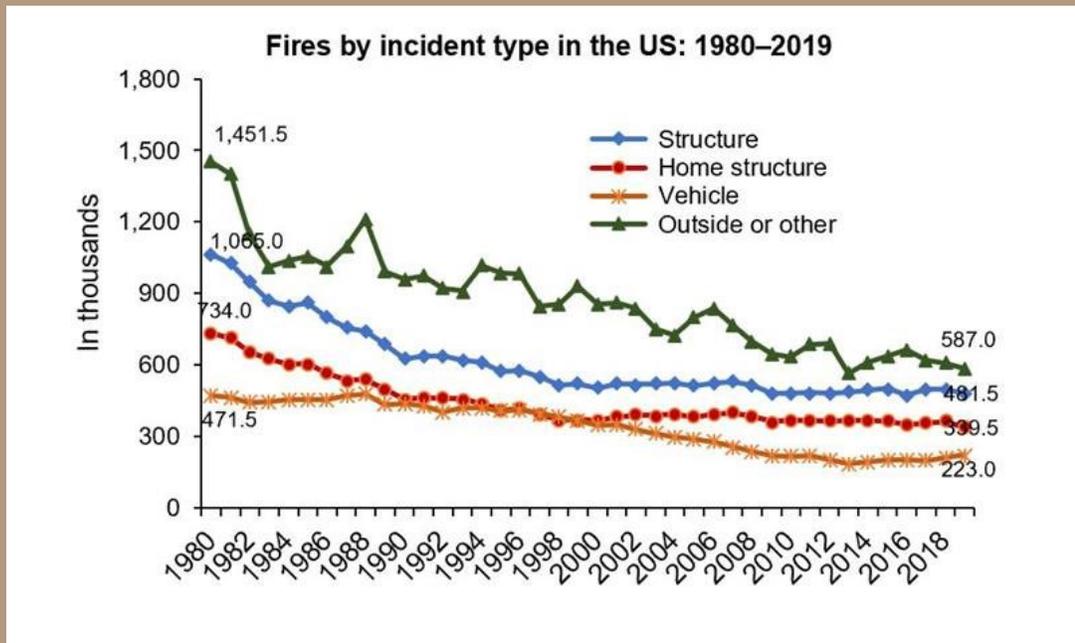
	Inspections	Plan Reviews	Safety Details	Special Permits	C O's	Investigations
Jan	21	5	1	1	0	13
Feb	42	6	3	0	0	10
Mar	17	2	5	0	0	6
Apr	6	4	1	0	0	12
May	28	6	0	0	0	8
Jun	43	5	0	1	0	5
Jul	42	10	2	0	0	16
Aug	20	6	0	0	0	12
Sept	15	3	3	1	0	12
Oct	34	5	6	0	0	7
Nov	38	8	1	0	0	7
Dec	26	5	2	0	0	15
Totals	332	65	24	3	0	123



## DID YOU KNOW?

All smoke alarms are not created equal. There are actually two types of smoke alarms: ionization and photoelectric. Ionization smoke alarms have a flow of ions inside made possible with the help of two electrically charged plates and a small amount of radioactive material. When smoke enters the chamber, it disrupts that ion flow, prompting the device to emit an audible alert. This is the most common type smoke alarm found in residential dwellings and is best suited for fast, flaming fires. Photoelectric smoke alarms have a small light sensor inside of them instead of the plates and radioactive material. When smoke enters and blocks the light, it will trigger the alarm system as well. Photoelectric smoke alarms are best suited for early detection of smoldering type fires. In 2020, Spalding County Fire Department installed over 40 smoke alarms in homes throughout the community.

# NATIONAL STATISTICS



- ◆ Local fire departments responded to 1,291,500 fires in 2019. These fires caused roughly 3,700 civilian deaths, 16,600 civilian injuries and \$14.8 billion in property damage
- ◆ Every 24 seconds, a fire department in the United States responds to a fire somewhere in the nation. A fire occurs in a structure at the rate of one every 65 seconds, and a home fire occurs every 93 seconds.
- ◆ Seventy-five percent of all fire deaths and 73 percent of all injuries were caused by home fires.
- ◆ Sixty-five percent of all fire deaths resulted from fires in one- or two-family homes and 10 percent were caused by fires in apartments or other multi-family housing.
- ◆ Seventeen percent of fire deaths were caused by vehicle fires

## COOKING FIRES

- ◆ US fire departments responded to an estimated average of 172,900 home structure fires per year started by cooking activities in 2014–2018. These fires caused an average of 550 civilian deaths, 4,820 reported civilian fire injuries, and more than \$1 billion in direct property damage per year.
- ◆ Home fires caused by cooking peaked at Thanksgiving and Christmas. In 2018, fire departments responded to an average of 470 home cooking fires per day.
- ◆ Ranges or cooktops were involved in the 61% of reported home cooking fires, 87% of cooking fire deaths and 78% of cooking fire injuries.
- ◆ Households that use electric ranges have a higher risk of cooking fires and associated losses than those using gas ranges.
- ◆ Unattended cooking was the leading cause of cooking fires and casualties. Clothing was the item first ignited in less than 1% of these fires, but clothing ignitions led to 8% of the home cooking fire deaths.
- ◆ More than one-quarter of the people killed by cooking fires were sleeping at the time. More than half of the non-fatal injuries occurred when people tried to control the fire themselves.



February 23, 2021

Spalding County Fire Department  
1005 Memorial Dr  
Griffin GA 30223

Dear Komen Friend,

Thank you for your generous gift of \$1,600.00 received on February 10, 2021. You have helped save a life by providing breast cancer patients, survivors and those living with breast cancer, along with their families, with needed support during what may be the most difficult journey of their lives!

Thanks to your support, Susan G. Komen is the only organization in the world with a comprehensive approach to fighting breast cancer. We are making progress in our vision to create a world without breast cancer. With your support, we advocate for patients with policymakers, drive research breakthroughs, improve access to high-quality care, provide patients with support and empower people with trustworthy information.

Thank you again for partnering with Komen. Your generosity will allow us to support even more people as we fight to end breast cancer. Together we will save lives!

With my heartfelt thanks,

Paula Schneider  
President and CEO, Susan G. Komen®



In 2020, the Spalding County Fire Department sold t-shirts to help raise funds and awareness as a show of solidarity with the many individuals whose lives have been impacted by breast cancer. The shirts, designed by firefighter Ketisha Rouseau, not only generated a tremendous amount of public interest and support, but also managed to raise \$1600, all of which was donated to the Susan G. Komen Foundation.



# ***FIRE STATIONS***



***STATION 1 (SANDERS) 600 CARVER ROAD***



***STATION 2 (ROBERTS) 841 SOUTH MCDONOUGH ROAD***



***STATION 3 (CABIN) 3865 JACKSON ROAD***



***STATION 4 (WOODROOF) 4245 OLD ATLANTA ROAD***



***STATION 5 (BLALOCK) 5756 NEWNAN HIGHWAY***



***STATION 6 (GARY REID) 1843 NORTH HILL STREET EXT.***

# FIRE STATIONS



*STATION 7 (NORTON) 765 VAUGHN SCHOOL ROAD*

## *DID YOU KNOW?*

The estimated number of firefighters working in the U.S. is 1,115,000. Of that number, 370,000 are career firefighters and 745,000 are volunteers.

## TOOLS OF THE TRADE



**HYDRAULIC RESCUE TOOLS** are used by emergency rescue personnel to assist vehicle extrication of crash victims, as well as other rescues from confined spaces. These tools include cutters, spreaders, and rams. The first use of such a device was in 1963, where it was developed as a means of freeing trapped race car drivers from their vehicles after a crash. Modern versions use battery technology. This is considered a significant improvement over earlier models which utilized hydraulic fluid lines and a generator to power the unit.

Easily identified as the signature sound of an approaching emergency vehicle, the **Q-SIREN** is typically mounted on the bumper of the apparatus and is operated by a foot switch on either the driver or passenger side of the vehicle. Known for its distinct sound, the electromechanical siren provides a long distance warning to other vehicles and pedestrians during an emergency response.



A **HYDRANT WRENCH** is a tool used to remove fire hydrant caps and open the valve of the hydrant. They are usually adjustable so as to fit different sized hydrant nuts.



# *THE STORY OF THE MALTESE CROSS*



The eight point Maltese Cross is the international symbol of the fire service's willingness to make great sacrifices in order to protect others from the ravages of fire. The Maltese Cross is a symbol of protection and a badge of honor. Its story is hundreds of years old.

When a courageous band of crusaders known as the knights of St. John fought the Saracens for possession of the holy land, they encountered a new weapon unknown to European warriors. It was a simple, but a horrible device of war; it brought excruciating pain and agonizing death upon the brave fighters for the cross. The Saracen's weapon was fire.

As the crusaders advanced on the walls of the city, glass bombs containing naphtha struck them. When they became saturated with the highly flammable liquid, the Saracens hurled a flaming torch into their midst. Hundreds of the knights were burned alive; others risked their lives to save their brothers-in-arms from dying painful, fiery deaths.

Thus, these men became our first firemen and the first of a long list of courageous firefighters. Their heroic efforts were recognized by fellow crusaders who awarded each with a badge of honor – a cross, similar to the one worn by firefighters today. Since the Knights of St. John lived for close to four centuries on a little island in the Mediterranean Sea named Malta, the cross came to be known as the Maltese Cross.

The Maltese Cross is the symbol of protection. It means that the firefighter who wears this cross is willing to lay down his life, just as the crusaders sacrificed their lives for their fellow man so many years ago. The Maltese Cross is a firefighters badge of honor signifying that he works in courage – a ladder rung away from death.

**Credit:** *Windsor Fire and Rescue Services*



Follow us!!



SPALDING COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT  
1005 MEMORIAL DRIVE  
GRIFFIN GEORGIA, 30223  
770-228-2129  
[http://www.spaldingcounty.com/fire\\_department.php](http://www.spaldingcounty.com/fire_department.php)