

The Alabama Association of Rescue Squads Presents

# THE ALABAMA RESCUER



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3rd Quarter 2013

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**2013 COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

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**ASST CHAPLAIN...HOYT MCCAGHREN, Lawrence County**

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JIMMY LOONEY, East Colbert  
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BRUCE PATRICK, South Lamar  
CHUCK LANSDELL, Cherokee Rescue  
TIM WILLIS, Cullman County  
RAY HOGANS, LASAR

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TINA THOMPSON, Ider  
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JIMMY LOONEY, East Colbert

# FROM THE DESKS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

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From the Desk of the President

This year is flying by as summer is half over. Kids will be headed back to school soon, so remember to watch out for the buses and use school safety. The K-9 and HB92 bills were signed in, thanks to the ones that sponsored that. Also bills HB97 and HB98 were signed in, I had the opportunity to go to Montgomery for this signing. Thanks to John Merrill and everyone for sponsoring these bills. Also a special thanks to Chauncey and Jimmy for their hard work with the legislation. It's almost time for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarterly meeting so that means conference is just around the corner. Make sure you let Matt know if there are any classes you would like and make sure you sign up for the classes offered, so we can make this a great conference. Remember if you need anything contact me or one of the other officers. Remember to send articles in to the magazine so all squads can see what's going on at the neighboring squads. Hope to see everyone August 17 at the quarterly meeting in Vernon. Enjoy the weather, spend time with your family and enjoy them. Until next time remember to stay safe, train hard and enjoy life.

Jason Heard  
President

From the Desk of the 1st Vice President

Well the year is half over already. Can't believe it's almost time for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarterly meeting. I would like to thank Lake Martin for hosting the last meeting. They always do a great job. The food was great.

The officers made a trip to Montgomery to meet with some of the senators for breakfast which was productive.

I would like to thank Chauncey and Jimmy Looney for all their hard work in Montgomery. It takes more time and effort than most of us realize. Not all of our bills were passed but a few were. Stay in touch with your senators to let them know that the rescue squads in this state need permanent funding. I think they are just now understanding that we are not part of the volunteer fire departments.

Annual training is September 21<sup>st</sup>. Hope to see a good turnout. HCRS has training on their website. I would like to thank Chris Cantrell for all his hard work on the RescueTec Wilderness Search and Rescue class he has been working on. He is trying to get it through the Fire College now.

Hope to see everyone at the Quarterly Meeting and remember the Association belongs to you, so get involved and make a difference.

Brian Bailey  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President

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## 2nd Quarterly Meeting May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013

Meeting called to order by President Jason Heard. Colors posted by the Honor Guard.

Floyd Guthrie opened with prayer. Welcome by Billy Newman.

Roll was called with 50 squads represented. Motion by Daphne to excuse Collinsville Rescue Squad due to a squad function. Seconded by Ider. Motion carried.

Motion by North Baldwin to excuse Morgan County Rescue Squad due to a squad function. Seconded by LASAR. Motion carried.

Minutes were read. Motion to accept minutes made by Ider. Seconded by Desoto. Motion carried.

Financial report was read. Motion to accept by Vina Rescue Squad. Seconded by LASAR. Motion carried.

We received a check from the State of Alabama from the income tax check-off. There was a motion made by Cherokee County Rescue Squad to put the money in an interest bearing account until time to disperse the monies. Seconded by Geraldine Rescue Squad. Motion carried.

Chauncey spoke about the bills. Our bills are on special order for May 20<sup>th</sup>.

Chauncey thanked Autauga County Rescue Squad and Lake Martin Search and Rescue for coming to Montgomery to represent the Association

Chauncey had Sharell Roberts speak about HB92.

Chauncey had Art Faulkner speak about HB97

HB259 – Search and Rescue Dogs

HB98 – Property tax Check-off

HB584 – Motel Tax

HB 145-146 – Constitutional Amendment

Jimmy Looney also spoke about the bills.

Mike Stone about the radio frequency. – check the website

Matt had Chris Cantrell speak about the Wilderness Rescue class

Fall training will be September 21, 2013, will be hosted by Lake Martin

Motion was made by Geraldine Rescue Squad to combine the Board of Directors and General Business Meeting. Seconded by Etowah County Rescue Squad. Motion carried.

There was no Rescuer of the Quarter.

Presented plaque to Mike Hardy for Rescuer of the Quarter for 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter

Presented plaque to Cullman County Rescue Squad for High Attendance for 2012 Conference

Presented plaque to Lake Martin Search and Rescue for High Attendance for 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2013

High Attendance for 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter – Autauga County Rescue Squad

Jason spoke about the magazine and squads contributing to the magazine by submitting articles

Colors retired by Honor Guard

No further business meeting was adjourned

Getting Back To Running  
Etowah County Rescue Squad  
James Miller

The ECRS has been busy doing things this year, most of which have been fundraisers and PR work. These two things go a long way in the function of a volunteer organization. Reaching out to the public and being viewed (in their eyes) as an active group while your members are dressed alike, being like soldiers unified, shows professionalism and says a lot about ones character. Image is important as we all know. For instance, someone comes in off the street, walks into your squad building and observes it is kept clean and also the equipment is clean, serviced and ready to drive at any minute. This shows leadership and membership pride. Now reverse this and it shows the opposite. Respect has to be earned and not just passing the blame or procrastinating to hopefully get things done. Leadership of any organization is like the parental role in their home. First you have to be the parent and the disciplinarian, which is the least popular, then the best friend. This goes on down the chain of command also.

Several members came aboard with the Etowah County Rescue Squad last month. A search dog team and others members that were with a nearby volunteer fire department now wear the Etowah County reds. The uniforms are too large for the dogs so they will be wearing vests. I think they were happy to get vests because they all are wagging their tails and smiling. "Welcome aboard", said Captain Bettis, who has worked hard to get them to join the squad. "I've been talking with them for some time now and they finally decided to join us. I feel we will work well together and do a good job for the public when a call comes in for help." Now we have mans best friend onboard the ECRS wagon.

Some things we as a squad have done are water search, Barbarian challenge, roadblock (well, due to bad weather Captain Bettis has to re-schedule this one) First Responder certification training, EMR training, CPR for the Professional Rescuer, water / intro to scuba class, boating hook up for dragging, dog training, two car shows, picture day, open house with Red Cross Blood Drive, Goodyear gate block and more to come, may have missed a few things but they have all been busy. We also went down to Montgomery to show our support for the AARS bills.

Our court ordeal with the embezzlement case is over. All information is public record for answers to your questions. Our squad finally has the monkey off our back with the back debts and dark clouds from within our membership so it can train to run again. We first learned to crawl and then walk; now we are almost ready. Once we are up and running maybe the law departments can once again call upon us to do diving, land searches and others things and let their people once again go back to being full time crime fighters saving everyone big bucks and putting smiles on faces.

Captain Bettis has put on the gloves for round two and ordered some shoes for everyone so we can run....lets give him a hand, not one of applause but one of joining in and being active!

This has been a rush catch up to get you all informed about our happenings. We hope you and your squad is having a good summer. Thought for now ... Procrastination and Mayhem seem to be kinfolk so lookout for these two, work hard to keep them out!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- \* **2013 THIRD QUARTER MAGAZINE DEADLINE: September 20, 2013**
- \* **The Electronic Version contains the ads and articles and can be found on the AARS Website or by subscribing by sending an email to [rescuer@alars.org](mailto:rescuer@alars.org) please include your name and Squad.**
- \* **THE EDITOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO EDIT ANY ARTICLE SUBMITTED**
- \* **ARTICLES SHOULD BE SENT USING THE EDITOR LINK ON THE AARS WEBSITE OR TO [editor@alars.org](mailto:editor@alars.org) \*\*\***
- \* **Be sure to check the Website regularly for updated information about things of interest.**

**The AARS Website is <http://www.alars.org>**

2013 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarterly Meeting  
Hosted by Vernon Rescue Squad  
August 17, 2013

Vernon City Complex  
44425 Highway 17  
Vernon, AL 35592

Registration.....	8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.
Welcome and Posting of the Colors .....	9:30 a.m.
Board of Directors meeting.....	10:00 a.m.
Lunch .....	12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
General Business meeting.....	1:00 p.m.

Note:

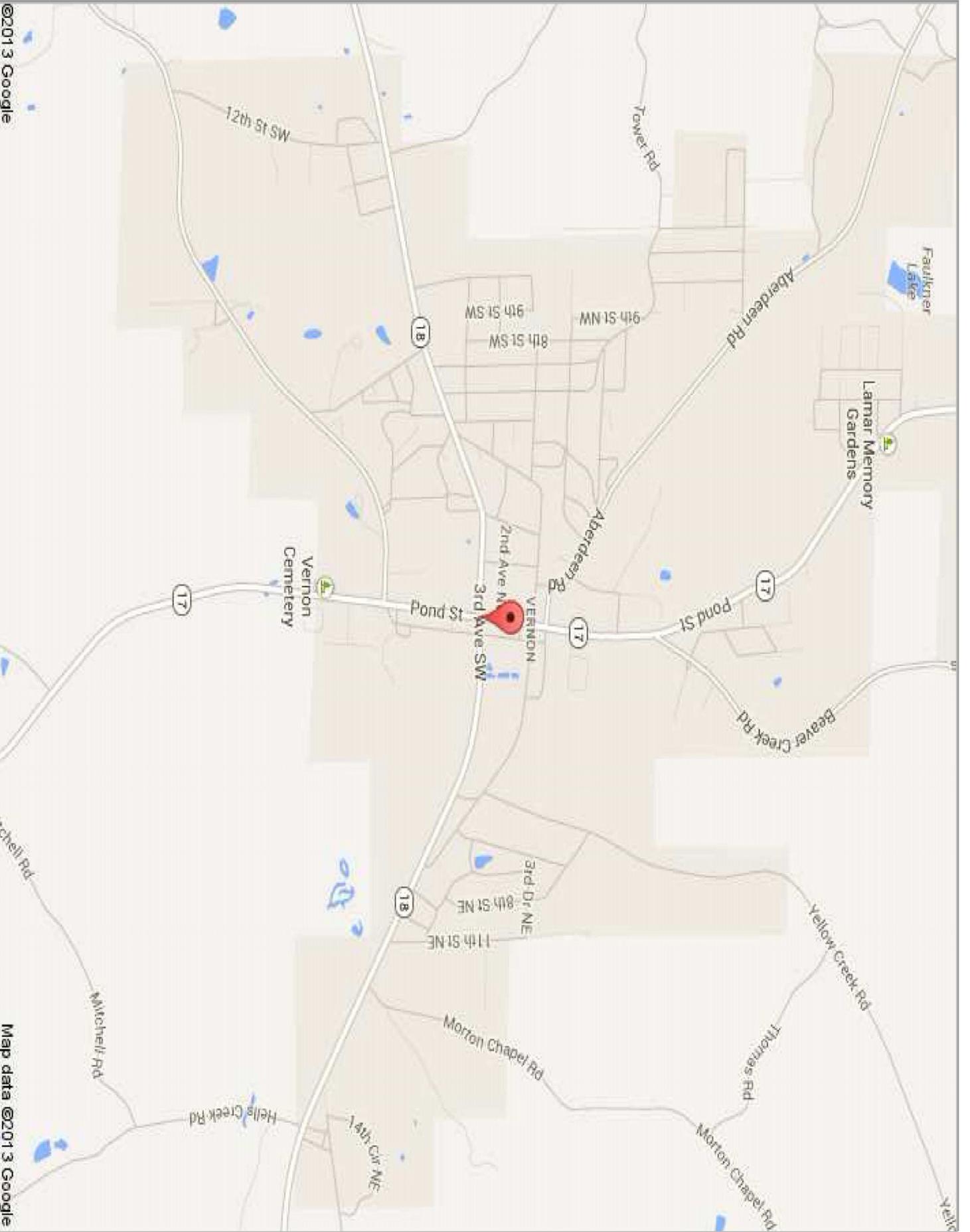
Lunch will be provided by Generations of Vernon, The Nursing Home/Rehab Center

Hotel Information

Vernon Inn  
44454 Highway 17  
Vernon, AL 35592  
205 695-9800

Hampton Inn - Winfield  
(30 miles from Vernon)  
7005 Alabama 129  
Winfield, AL 35594  
205 487-1270

Days Inn - Hamilton  
(35 miles from Vernon)  
1849 Military Street S  
Hamilton, AL 35570  
205 921-1790



When Training is Real  
By Luther Peebles

You never know what a day has in store for you. Most days; you get up, go to work, come home, go to bed. With normal, everyday stuff happening in between. Training days are special though. They take months to plan for and require good participation to be effective.

Saturday, May 18, 2013 was set to be a multi agency training day with North Baldwin Sheriffs SAR, Daphne SAR, Mobile Co. Flotilla, U.S.C.G., Escambia SAR (Florida not Alabama) and a couple of the local VFD's.

The scenario was that two kayakers had left Hurricane Landing (30.841189,-87.902666) for a day trip of the Tensaw Delta and were to be picked up at the Crossover Landing (30.679279,-87.992606) on the causeway at around 1700 hrs. They didn't make it that far. The weather went south and it started raining (thunderstorms) and is/was still raining Saturday morning when we got the call to respond.

OK, good plan. Everything is set up and the General Briefing is 0800 hrs but just before that we get a call from Escambia SAR (Florida not Alabama) saying that they would not be attending the training because of a missing autistic child in Perdido Key, FL. And could we help with the search?

So pack everything up and head south to the Gulf.

Details of the search (actual, not the planned training) were that a young boy and his mother were in Perdido Key, FL. from their home in L.A. for vacation. The boy is an 8year old , 45 lb, white male, with autism. He and his mother had been playing on the beach Friday morning. They came in for lunch, even though the boy wanted to stay on the beach, and his mother lay down with him to take a nap after lunch in their condo (30.281943°, -87.513036). When she awoke, the boy could not be found. The first day was spent trying to get clues for a direction of travel. Several dog teams were employed along with dozens of ground search teams. Two of the dog teams indicated that the boy had walked across the road to a pier. Both Daphne SAR and North Baldwin SAR scanned the area with SI sonar but did not find anything too promising so we dove just to be sure.

On Saturday evening, a credible witness came forward to say that he had seen the boy Friday afternoon playing on the beach (30.282305°, -87.508315°). As the Gulf was pretty rough at this time, a plan was made to come back early Sunday morning to, hopefully, catch the water a little calmer (Gulf winds vs. Land winds) and use both SI sonar and spotters in boats to search the Gulf Beach. If you know anything about scanning on a lake or river, scanning the waters of the Gulf of Mexico is nothing like that. It was relatively calm (1-2 ft waves). Yea, that's right. And we are scanning crossways to the waves and the wind. We came in for lunch and were getting ready to go back out when the boy was found, drowned, in the surf.

There was no evidence of foul play and from what we could tell, he was another victim of rip currents.

Let me take this opportunity to talk a little about Rip currents. Rip currents are extremely dangerous. The problem is that they can exist even when the sky is blue and the birds are chirping and everything about the day is seemingly beautiful. People, listen to me. Rip currents are deadly. Check the local broadcast or printed media for weather to see the surf zone forecast. Look for the flags on the beach. If the flags are anything other than green, stay out of the water. Go online to <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/data/MOB/SRFMOB> and look for this section ...

**SURF ZONE HAZARDS...**

**RIP CURRENT RISK: MODERATE...A MODERATE RISK OF RIP CURRENTS**

**MEANS WIND...WAVE AND/OR TIDAL CONDITIONS  
SUPPORT STRONGER OR MORE FREQUENT RIP  
CURRENTS. ONLY EXPERIENCED SWIMMERS SHOULD  
ENTER THE SURF. REMEMBER...RIP CURRENTS CAN BE  
MORE INTENSE NEAR INLETS...JETTIES AND PIERS.  
IF CAUGHT IN A RIP CURRENT...SWIM PARALLEL TO  
THE BEACH AND YOU WILL EVENTUALLY SWIM OUT OF  
THE DANGEROUS OUTGOING CURRENT. HEED THE  
ADVICE OF THE LOCAL BEACH PATROL AND LOCAL  
FLAG WARNING SYSTEM.**

I don't care how good a swimmer you are, you are not that good. How deep is safe when rip currents exist? If the water gets up to your ankles, you're too deep. There have been at least 7 drownings this year and most were good swimmers. What gets me is when someone spots a shark, everyone gets out of the water. When someone spots a rip current (red flag) not everyone takes it serious. No shark attacks this year, but 7 drownings due to rip currents.

Addison Rescue Squad  
Amanda McGaughy

Wow, this year has already gone by so fast! The third quarter is already upon us, which means conference will be here before you know it. We are getting excited and cannot wait to see everyone.

We have been staying busy here with all of our medical calls and fundraisers. In April we celebrated our 40th Anniversary hosting an open house for our community. We have also had a roadblock to take up donations, which we did very well with. We had our fireworks show for the 4th of July but unfortunately we had to cancel our parade due to heavy rain.

Well, we hope to see everyone soon and we hope everyone stays safe in everything they do!

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Morgan County Rescue Squad  
Stephanie McGrew, Secretary

On Monday April 29th, the Morgan County Rescue Squad lost one of its own. Member Dale Queen. Dale, along with his wife Elizabeth, served diligently in the squad. Dale and Elizabeth were also members of the Oak Ridge Volunteer Fire Department. It was on a VFD call that Dale fell ill and passed away. Dale was survived by his wife and three sons, Tanner, Dakota, and Avery. The Morgan County Rescue Squad would like to thank all the Public Safety agencies that participated in Dale's funeral processional.

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South Marengo Fire and Rescue Squad

The South Marengo Fire and Rescue Squad of Sweet Water, Alabama is excited to announce the arrival of our newest addition to our vehicle inventory. On December 8<sup>th</sup> we were delivered our new Pierce fire pumper/tanker. This pumper is mounted on an International extended cab chassis and has top mount fire controls. The body has full height compartments on both sides to maximize storage space. The pumper has a 1250gpm Waterous pump, 1230 gallon water tank and a 20 gallon foam cell. This pumper will replace our current 1980 pumper truck that has outlived its service to our community.

This pumper truck was obtained with the help of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant which is issued by FEMA. Through this grant our department was also able to purchase a new computer system for our station for training and record keeping as well as physicals for the drivers for our equipment. The truck was purchased through Emergency Equipment Professionals' Alabama office in Pelham. The new apparatus will join a fleet consisting of two water tankers, one brush truck and one rescue truck.

The South Marengo Fire and Rescue Squad, located near Sweet Water, was established in 1975 and provides fire, rescue, and EMS first response. The department is lead by President Richard Rogers, Vice President James Williams, Board of Trustee members, Greg Rogers, John Sommer, Willie Eirby, Linzell Tucker, and Joe Easley, Fire Chief James Gates and Secretary Jackie Williams. The department has a membership of 53 members which includes active, support, and junior members.

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April 27, 2011  
Ider Rescue Squad

April 27, 2011. That day changed so much in our area. Even though Ider was spared for the most part, a lot of our surrounding communities were hit hard with such devastation from the tornadoes. Lives were lost, homes and businesses were demolished, and the landscape became a scarred reminder of nature's fury.

Ider Rescue Squad members responded quickly that day, but the work they started continued for over a year. Squad members began cooking within two days and served up to 1800 meals each day to anyone in need of food. The squad's building became a hub of activity as a place to get a meal, pick up water and supplies, to get a hot shower, and to meet friends and neighbors to share stories of survival and loss.

After the power was restored one week later, the obvious need to continue feeding the community was even stronger. As volunteers came to our area to assist with the clean-up, and later to help rebuild, Ider Rescue Squad still offered warm, home-style cooked meals as a way of thanking them for their contributions.

From this year long commitment to help, a new idea was born. A committee comprised of Joy Wooten, Donald Smith, George Roberts, Jason Mitchell, and then Captain Jason Heard, developed plans to build a larger, improved kitchen in order to expand the squad's ability to serve our community.

By generous donations, hard work, volunteered labor, donated supplies and services, that dream became a reality. In May of this year, the Ider Rescue Squad proudly revealed it's new, state approved, commercial style kitchen.

We do not look forward to another disaster, but yet, we stand ready to serve once again.

Missing Man at Talladega Race Track  
James Miller

It was during the NASCAR Nationwide Series weekend on May 4 at Talladega and a 28-year-old Plainfield, Indiana native was last seen at about 11 p.m., sitting in a lawn chair at the South Park campground at the Talladega Superspeedway. Bower was reported missing from the Speedway the following day. Etowah County Rescue Squad got a call from the Talladega Sheriff's Department Tuesday May 6, requesting help on a missing man, believed to be drowned. The search had begun when Bower did not return to the campsite Sunday morning and was reported missing. Captain Mike Bettis had the tones set off around 3:00 pm and members quickly responded and were on the site by 5:15 pm ready to work. It takes about one hour to drive to this site from our building. Captain Bettis then met at the incident command post for a briefing and informed them of all available resources we had and could get with a phone call.

The ECRS worked several days covering a bit more than 3 miles of swift moving water of the Choccolocco Creek. We were told that this creek was just short of having the required measurements to entitle it to be legally called a river. Squad members waded in the creek used side sonar equipment and found that the creek had a rather hard smooth bottom causing us to think Bower could have moved down creek quite a ways with this current. There was a spillway damn about 3 miles from where the victim was last seen. For the next few days the ECRS worked in and had to deal with more rain fall. The water temperature was rather chilling also. Tuesday morning plans were to work the dam area hard, moving debris that had piled up so things could pass over the dam. The ECRS and others are all happy that everything ended up okay and all personnel and dogs were safe. At 11:49 a.m. on May 14, 2013, Bower's body was spotted by someone in a Sheriff's helicopter floating in Choccolocco Creek just down below the dam. This was a 10 day mission, the ECRS worked during the last 7 days and had several new members to get their eyes opened in many ways. Everyone who helped out with this search we were glad you were there.

Word of caution to everyone who reads this: Please when you're working around a damn like this remember, it may look smooth and easy but it is very deceiving. Be Careful!! Also, remember to use the chain of command on missions. Reason being, the commander should know where everyone is at and have communications set up with each group. They can then make contact to keep everyone updated on how events are going and who needs help or let you know if the mission is over. Accountability and Safety!

It is sad when things like this happen but we as Volunteers do this for the families so that they can have closure. When any person in any position says or does anything to belittle the volunteer search and rescue people of any state, they need to go talk to the victim's family members for their opinion about having a bunch of volunteers come do this humane act of kindness and not be sending them a bill for services rendered. I ask how can department heads, politicians, or anyone not support people like us? The only reason I can think of is they must be thinking how we (volunteers) are keeping someone from making money off of these hours of services rendered! Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of Nicholas Bower.

Talladega Sheriff's Department showed their appreciation to our squad for working with them on this search by inviting us and everyone else involved, to a lunch at the race track. Thanks you for such kindness.

On our way back from the Talladega lunch we made it to Lincoln when we became the first on the scene where two young people had just run off the road. They had somehow missed their turn running off into a deep ditch. After sizing up the scene for safety and finding out no one had any injuries we made contact with 911. We no more than got off the phone when a wrecker came driving by and we were able to get him to stop. Then law enforcement happened by and we were set, can you believe this luck? ECRS members worked traffic and assisted everyone in any way needed.

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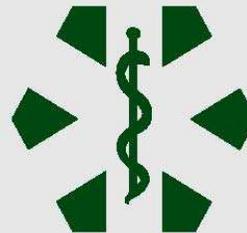
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something bad  
happens.

Emotional pain is something no one can fix.  
Lost income is a different matter. VFIS has  
built its reputation on prompt response and  
the kind of in-depth coverage that goes well  
beyond industry standards. Isn't it nice to  
know that someone else is looking out for  
your family too?

Coverage underwritten by  
National Union Fire Insurance  
Company of Pittsburg, PA,  
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