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The Alabama Rescuer



3rd Quarter 2025



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2025 COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

MEMBERSHIP

Ray Hogans, CHAIRMAN
Jimmy Looney, East Colbert
Eddie Tigue, Scottsboro-Jackson
Danny Butler, Geraldine
Greg Rogers, South Marengo
Jim Dennis, Childersburg
Curtis Shirley, Southwest Tuscaloosa

RESOLUTIONS

Danny Smith, CHAIRMAN
Johnny Warren, Randolph
Danny Butler, Geraldine

WAYS and MEANS

Danny Smith, CHAIRMAN
Chauncey Wood, Lasar
Johnny Warren, Randolph
Ray Hogans, Lasar
Danny Butler, Geraldine
Candi Davidson, McIntosh
Brian Bailey, Huntsville

EDUCATION and TRAINING

Greg Rogers, CHAIRMAN
Jim Dennis, Childersburg
Dive- John Wade, Lasar
Medical – Jamie Gray, Elmore
SAR – Trevor Graben, Rosalie
K-9 – Susan Hanson, Autauga
Drones – Andy Sims, Carbon Hill

NOMINATIONS

Danny Butler, CHAIRMAN
Johnny Warren, Randolph
Danny Smith, Cherokee
Jimmy Looney, East Colbert
Tina Wood, Lasar

2025 COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS (CONTINUED)

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Jimmy Looney, East Colbert
Matthew Knight, Randolph
Mike Surles, Autauga
Gene Piatkowski, Childersburg
Ray Hogans, Lasar

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Mike Surles, Autauga

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CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Matthew Knight, CHAIRMAN
Chauncey Wood, Lasar
Tina Wood, Lasar
Jimmy Looney, East Colbert
Mechelle Looney, East Colbert
Gwen Stone, Geraldine
Joyce Butler, Geraldine
Ray Hogans, Lasar

AARS HISTORIAN

Gwen Stone, Geraldine



Choctaw County Rescue

FROM THE DESK OF CHAUNCEY WOOD PRESIDENT



I would like to start with a big thank you to Autauga County Search & Rescue, Captain Mike Surles, and Crew for hosting the 2nd quarterly meeting, with a record number of squads, and members in attendance. It's so good to see the squads coming and getting really involved to help make a difference. It was a great time of fellowshiping and delicious food which we all enjoyed.

KUDOS to our Matt Knight for his integrity and professionalism in coordinating, and organizing the AARS Office in regard to quarterly agendas, minutes, distributing meeting material, overseeing financial transactions, budgeting and communications!

Matt also is busy with mid-year renewals, membership additions and deletations as well as getting the Conference Squads Packets ready for distribution at our Aug. 9th meeting. Please be sure to thank Matt for his undying characteristic duties and functions as our Executive Secretary-Treasurer at our next meeting.

Welcome to Highland Home Fire & Rescue, where one of its founding members and also current Chief Richard Jordan and Assistant Chief and Board Member Stephen Wilson were recommended by the Executive Board to the Board of Directors, voted in unanimously. AARS welcomes this squads' added addition of their 5 licenses Paramedics, 3 licensed EMT's with well over 100 years of combined EMS experience.

Thanks to Ray Moody of Southern Star K-9 Search & Rescue and Susan Hanson of Autauga K-9 Search & Rescue along with other AARS K-9 Committee Squad Members for the very informative power point presentation. AARS now has 14 Search & Rescue K-9 Teams throughout the State, be sure to read the "K-9" news in the magazine.

I appreciate our drone Captain Andy Sims of Carbon Hill giving the report and current update on drones. Andy does an awesome job in coordinating the 11 drones the AARS currently have.

2d VP Greg Rogers is learning the ropes of what the Education & Training Committee does and is all about. A lot of training is going on for the second weekend of each month so please I can't say it enough or stress to y'all to stay safe, hydrate and take a break during outside training!

Our Safety Director, Danny Butler, is doing a fine job of keeping a watchful eye on the training sites. Remember safety first!!!

(Continued)

Welcome Back Home to Our Chaplain Tony Dickey from his trip to Israel to assist them in Chaplain and Peer Support. Please be sure and read his message in the “Chaplains Corner of the Alabama Rescuer Magazine.

Please be sure to “Thank” our Editor Keith Bailey for his extraordinary and hard work with our “Alabama Rescuer” Magazine. He has added the “Chaplains Corner”, as well as “K-9” news page. He will also be featuring one of the “NEW” squads to checkout. Contact Keith with any news articles, ads or questions, He’s the MAN!!

In closing, if anyone has ideas for the Conference T-Shirts, please send your design to Matt Knight before August 1st!!

See you in Tuscaloosa at the Alabama Fire College August 9th, until then Please keep the families of the Texas flood in your thoughts and prayers! Our Chaplain is on the scene in Kerrville, TX assisting with Chaplain and Peer Support. Stay safe & God Bless –

Chauncey Wood
President



FROM THE DESK OF
Ray Hogans
1st Vice PRESIDENT



Hello all AARS Members,

We are looking forward to new members in the association. I have been in contact with a few new prospects to become new members in the Association. I have also spoken with a couple of former squads and now hoping they will be returning to our numbers in the very near future.

Those of you who are on the membership committee, I encourage you to seek out new and prospective agencies for possible becoming a part of our group. As of now we have a squad in Florida that has become an Associate member, and we are working with some agencies in Georgia to assist them with coordinating to become affiliated with the AARS and are looking to our members for training. This speaks highly of you as members and the ability to respectfully conduct the mission and of the high capability to deliver quality personnel for the rescue / recovery when called upon.

All AARS squads need to be aware of the new 30 hour requirement for FIRST RESPONDERS. This is posted to the AARS Face Book page with all the requirements to document the training and receive the Alabama Income Tax Credit for your individual filing each year. Please note this is for all FIRE, EMS, and AARS Rescue Squad Members. Please look up and read the posted requirements. This is a great method to put some cash back in your individual account and gain great training credentials at the same time!

Ray Hogans

AARS 1st VP

From The Desk Of

Greg Rogers

2nd Vice President



Hello fellow rescuers. Another quarter has come and gone. First, I want to thank everyone that has participated in the monthly training classes provided by the AARS. We hope you are getting something valuable from this and this program continues to grow. If you have ideas for training topics, please get with Jim Dennis or me and we will be happy to discuss the idea.

I know the Training Coordinator is going to remind everyone, but I really want to put a lot of focus on the conference in Orange Beach this November. Jim has put together a package of classes that should meet training needs for multiple emergency service organizations. Please check out the schedule and make plans soon to register. I would love to see every class fill up this year with AARS department members. See you there in November.

When thinking about other sources of training for your department don't forget the Alabama EMS Challenge, Alabama Fire College, VFIS University (online), National Volunteer Fire Council, respondersafety.com and many others. If you have found creditable sources of training your department uses and willing to share, please let us know so we can pass the word.

I love seeing photos and social media post from AARS member department talking about trainings held, public outreach events and emergency calls. These kinds of events help promote our service to the community and hopefully generate membership and donations. Remember every post and picture shared reflects on all of us so keep it positive and professional.

Stay safe and see you at the meeting.

Greg Rogers, 2nd VP

Minutes of 2nd Quarterly Meeting 2025 hosted by Autauga County Rescue Squad

Meeting called to order by President Chauncey Wood. AARS Honor Guard posted colors. Guest Speakers Elmore Co EMA Keith Barnett; City of Prattville Fire Chief Josh Bingham; Autauga County Commission Chair Jay Thompson.

BOD Meeting called to Order. Prayer by Chaplain Tony Dickey. Official Badge Presentation to Sergeant of Arm Kyle Treadwell. Roll Called. Motion to Suspend the reading of Minutes by Morgan County 2nd by North Baldwin. Motion Carried. Financial Report Given:

General Fund:	\$77,439.61
Ad Val Fund:	\$161,789.58
Conference Fund:	\$14,930.79
Benevolent Fund:	\$3,119.84
Investment Fund:	\$95,079.66
Total:	\$362,359.78

Motion by Calhoun County 2nd by Geraldine. Motion Carried.

Tuscaloosa County Sherriff had surplus radios available for any squad that wanted them. See Lt. Jeff Judd.

Andy Sims reported on Drone and placement and re-registration.

Chaplain Tony Dickey gave a report on Chaplain Training, and he will attend a conference to become certified Train-the-Trainer for Chaplain Training.

Susan Hanson gave a report and presentation on K9 Committee and how they were moving forward with training.

Safety Training Officer Danny Butler gave a report on training classes being taught.

President Wood brought about money being allocated to redo the 22' AARS Training Trailer and thoughts would be better to sale and use money to buy 3 smaller trailers and have them in Training areas. Union Rescue Squad made a motion to sale training trailer to any squad/ department in the association and use money to purchase 3 smaller trailers. 2nd by Childersburg. Motion carried. Exec Sec Treasurer to work up bid process an notify all departments.

Jimmy Looney gave a report on Legislation this past year.

Exec. Sec/Treas Matthew Knight reported on office business and mid-year renewals, Mention that we only had one quarterly meeting spoken for 2026.

1st Vice President Ray Hogans presented Highland Home Fire and Rescue with application to join the Association. Motion by Childersburg. 2nd by Tallaco. Motion Carried and will officialy be voted in by General Membership on afternoon session.

May 31st AquaEye Training Childersburg

New Business for BOD

Legislative Pay discussed Motion by Geraldine 2nd by Randolph County to reimburse Jimmy Looney \$2,000.00 and Chauncey Wood \$6,000.00. Motion Carried.

Faye Ingram from Tallco K9 Addressed the BOD. Motion by Choctaw County to go into Executive Session 2nd by Cleburne County to discuss Good Name and Character.

Motion by Geraldine to come out of Exec Session. 2nd by Desoto.

Lunch

President Wood Called General Business Meeting to Order.

Rolled called for those not in attendance. 52 Squads/Departments present with 2 squads counted that had calls will enroute to meeting.

Motion by Huntsville Cave to suspend Morning reports due to length of BOD meeting. 2nd by Athens Limestone. Motion Carried.

1st Vice President Ray Hogans presented Highland Home Fire and Rescue for membership into the Association. Motion by Elmore Fire and Rescue 2nd by Gearldine. Motion Carried.

2nd Vice President Greg Rogers presented Rescue of Quarter to

Merchandise will be at 3rd quarterly meeting for purchase.

Choctaw County asked about Audit. Danny Smith gave a report on the audit.

Reminder RC&D Grants open 8/1/2025

Reminder about door prizes for the conference.

Motion by Decatur to Adjourn 2nd by Choctaw County. Motion Carried.





Chaplain's Corner

The Carbon Hill Rescue Squad is sad to announce the passing of one of our longest serving members. Delores Richardson was a member of the Rescue Squad for over 45 years. Please keep her family and friends in your thoughts and prayers.



The AARS is organizing a Chaplain program. There will be a representative from the organization that trains the Alabama Fire College Chaplains to present what training is available. Please attend the 3rd quarter meeting to help us organize a Chaplain program for AARS.

Tony Dickey

2025 AARS QUARTERLY MEETING SCHEDULE

August 9th Third Quarter

Alabama Fire College

Tuscaloosa, Alabama

November 5th — 8th Fourth Quarter

AARS 2025 Annual Conference

Orange Beach Event Center

Orange Beach, Alabama

**From The Desk of
Jim Dennis
Training Coordinator**



Hello,

Wow! This year is flying by quickly. Training has been moving along smoothly in most areas. We are still having some areas with poor participation. If you know of something causing this, please let me know. We cannot fix something if we are not aware of it. We are striving to provide strong interesting classes but if you have ideas to make it better, please send me an email with your suggestions. We have had a strong year with many supplies being distributed to multiple squads. If your unit is not picking up, then you are missing a blessing that is available. Year to date, we have just surpassed a million dollars in retail value and more is coming. Please take advantage of this while it is available. Just a reminder, if you are an AARS Instructor and have not taught two classes this year through the training dept., your instructor status will be removed Dec. 31st. Many of you are teaching classes but we have no record of it to provide a certificate. It only takes a minute to file a class with us by filling out a form on the website. Please don't lose status due to not teaching.

We need instructors but we also need to verify classes. I would like to commend the asst. coordinators for their dedication and outstanding work this year. It takes a lot of effort to plan, teach, record, and set up classes. THANK YOU! Conference is fast approaching, and I hope to see you there advancing your training. We have some great classes planned but some require an advance registration. Please register soon as possible as some have limited slots available. One big change is this year; we will have more classes available than previously. What this equates to is in order to keep this going, we will need a lot of participation than in past years. Let's fill the classes up and have some fun learning together! Please stay safe and I look forward to seeing you in November.

Alabama Association Rescue Squads 3rd Quarterly Meeting 2025

Date: August 9th, 2025

Hosting Squads: Tuscaloosa County Sheriff's Office, Southwest Tuscaloosa, AFC, Antioch Rescue

Location: Alabama Fire College

2501 Phoenix Dr.

Tuscaloosa, AL 35405

Contact Information

Name: Lt. Jeff Judd

Phone Number: (205) 464-8636

Contact Email: JJudd@tcsaal.org

Agenda:

Registration:	8:30 – 9:30 am
Welcome:	9:30 am
Board of Directors Meeting:	10:00 am
Lunch:	11:30 am – 1:00 pm (will be provided)
Business Meeting:	1:00 pm

Accommodations:

Country Inn & Suites - ask for Fire Col rate of \$79/night with 2 night min

Address: 4801 McFarland Blvd Tuscaloosa, AL 35405

Greystone Inn (near Mercedes plant 15 miles away) \$78+ tax single \$88+ tax double

Address: 11170 Will Walker Road Vance, AL 35490

Baymont \$109/night + tax

Address: 5021 Oscar Baxter Dr. Tuscaloosa, AL

Courtyard Montgomery

Avid Hotel

Days Inn & Suites

Motel 6

And more

DRONE OPS

Andy Sims

Carbon Hill Rescue Squad

Using Thermal Cameras for Search and Rescue

Thermal cameras are extremely useful in detecting heat signatures, making them ideal for nighttime searches or dense areas where visibility is limited. Here's some tips for using them:

1. Optimal Conditions for Thermal Cameras

Nighttime or early morning: Thermal cameras perform best in cooler environments because the contrast between a human's body heat and the surroundings is higher.

Dense vegetation: Thermal imaging is great for detecting heat through foliage or forested areas where a regular camera might struggle.

Avoiding hotspots: Be cautious of false positives from sunlight-heated rocks, water, or animals.

2. Camera Settings

Color palette: Choose a high-contrast color palette (e.g., white-hot or black-hot) to make it easier to distinguish people from the environment.

Sensitivity settings: Adjust the sensitivity based on weather and terrain—higher sensitivity in cooler temperatures to detect small differences.

Zoom functionality: Use zoom to focus in on suspicious heat signatures to confirm if it's a person.

3. Flying with a Thermal Camera

Altitude: Fly lower than you would with a regular camera to ensure the thermal imaging can accurately detect body heat. Typically, 150-300 feet (45-90 meters) is a good range.

Speed: Fly slower, especially when using thermal, to allow enough time for heat signatures to appear clearly on the screen.

Review areas with high detail: Revisit areas where heat signatures appeared ambiguous or unclear.

(Continued)

4. Identifying Heat Signatures

Human shape: Look for consistent human body shapes—arms, legs, torso.

Behavior of the signature: Unlike inanimate objects, a person's heat signature will often move or shift, even slightly.

Animals vs. humans: Use your camera's zoom to distinguish between humans and animals, since they may produce similar heat signatures.

5. Considerations for Different Environments

Urban areas: Be cautious of heat sources from buildings, vehicles, or paved roads.

Water environments: If searching near water, keep an eye out for warmer heat spots, as bodies of water cool quickly at night.

Stay Safe.

Free SAR K9 Training Weekend October 4 & 5, 2025 Girl Scout Camp Cottaquilla (Anniston, AL)

HRD, Area, Trailing available
Each Group will have one or more leads

Reasonable lodging available at Camp
Cottaquilla or nearby

Available only to teams from Alabama
until June 15th, then open to all

See link to register and get more
information at info@nasdak9.org

Hosted by



SAR K9 Open Training Weekend

The North Alabama Search Dog Association, Southern Star Search and Rescue, and Red Mountain Search Dog Association are hosting a FREE SAR K9 training weekend October 4 & 5, 2025 at Camp Cottaquilla (2500 Cottaquilla Rd Anniston AL 36207).

Training will take place 8-5 Saturday and 8-12ish on Sunday. There will be groups with each discipline and level, with a leader(s) to organize training scenarios and keep things moving along. We ask that you work only one dog and stay in the same class for the duration. We will keep groups small to provide ample opportunity for quality training. We will be offering groups for Area, HRD, and Trailing. We are prioritizing openings for handlers from Alabama first but will open to all handlers after end June 2025.

Camp Cottaquilla offers rustic group cabins for those needing low cost housing. Check in will be Friday afternoon October 3 for those people wanting to arrive Friday. Cabins are \$40 per person (bring your own bedding) for the weekend. If you don't want a cabin, lodging can be found at pet friendly hotels listed below. (I have not called any of these to know about deposits, size restrictions etc). Food is on your own. **NO FOOD WILL BE PROVIDED**. Restaurants are within easy driving distance, but plan to bring your own breakfast and lunch as the classes will remain in the field through lunch.

To make a reservation for the training weekend go to the website below:

[HTTPS://form.Jotform.Com/250914440638154](https://form.jotform.com/250914440638154)

If you are a handler from Alabama, we recommend registering before 15 June 2025. First come, first serve. Class size will be limited.

GROUP LEADERS (subject to change)

Beginner Trailing -Becky Kidd (Ratsar)

Intermediate Trailing-Ray Mooney (Southern Star) & helper:

Advanced Trailing-Laurie Strite (Southern Star) & helper

HRD- Beg/Int- Darcy Harbaugh and Chris Snipes (North Alabama Search Dog Assoc):

HRD Advanced - Eric Carney (Southern Star)& Len Slizewski (NASDA)

Beg/Int Area - Stephen Burton and Tim Haskew (RMSDA):

Advanced Area -Janet Geist, Mary Margaret Eberle, & Terri Slizewski (NASDA)

All hotels are located in Oxford AL

La Quinta Inn, 100 Colonial Dr, 256-294-1258

Hampton Inn & Suites, 210 Colonial Dr, 256-831-8958

Hilton Garden Inn, 280 Colonial Dr, 256-831-0083

Fairfield Inn & Suites, 143 Colonial Dr, 256-831-1921

Super 8, 1600 Al-21, 256-405-0930

Candlewood Suites, 73 Parkway Crossing, 256-525-4044

Autauga County Rescue Squad K9 Handler Susan Hanson and K9 Merk traveled to Troy, TX for a Land and Water Human Remains Detection (HRD) seminar hosted by Crystal and Alan Fields, Team Texas K9s. Team Merk, who previously certified through the National Association for Search and Rescue (NASAR) in both trailing and land HRD, honed its skills in detecting the odor of human decay in water and on land during the last week of May 2025. The Team Texas seminar offered the unique challenges of detecting the odor of human remains that have been in a lake since 2019 at depths up to 20 feet, detecting un-embalmed human remains buried eight feet underground 18 years ago in an area cemetery, and following the track of a live “accident victim” to where the track stopped at human remains. Team Merk’s water and shoreline HRD skills were put to the test by NASAR and United K9 evaluators, resulting in certification by both organizations. The trip was sponsored by the Autauga County Rescue Squad, who recognized the need to have a nationally certified land and water HRD K9 Available to first responders and law enforcement agencies in Autauga County and throughout the state.

Laurie Strite

Featured Squad of the Quarter

Morgan County Rescue Squad

In the early 1960's, a group of men from the Flint area realized the need for an organized emergency response team for the community. The Flint Rescue Squad was organized in the fall of 1964 and operated under that name for 25 years. Upon organization, there was neither money nor equipment available to the Squad. The first dragging operation was accomplished with a borrowed boat. However, since 1964, the Squad has acquired equipment necessary to operate an efficient Rescue Squad.

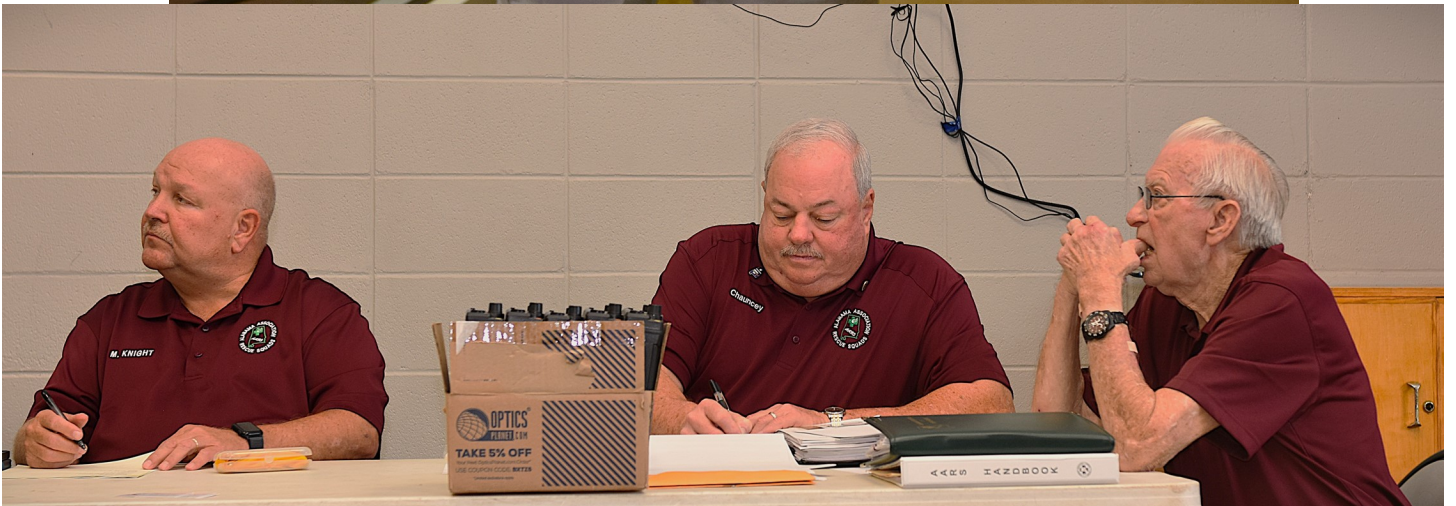
In 1987 the name was changed to Morgan County Rescue Squad, Inc. The Squad members felt that it was more appropriate since the Rescue Squad had expanded their operations serving all of Morgan County. The men and women serving the Squad do so with no compensation. They are on call 24 hours a day, 365 days year-round. The members are professionals who contribute greatly to our area and communities. They are dependent on the public for support since there is not enough guaranteed annual funding from cities within the county, the county itself or the state.

- Search and Rescue on Land, the Tennessee River and its Tributaries within Morgan County.
- Water Rescue & Diving Operations
- Dragging and Recovery Operations
- Provide Transportation for Doctors, Nurses, and other health critical reasons during ice & snow storms
- Evacuation and Rescue during floods
- Rappelling and High Angle Rescue
- Cave Rescue, Search and Recovery
- Emergency response to assist in the evacuation in the event of a problem at Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant
- Assistance to all of the Morgan County Volunteer Fire Departments















- 2025 4th QUARTER MAGAZINE DEADLINE: October 1st 2025
- ANY ARTICLE SUBMITTED AFTER THE DEADLINE IS SUBJECT TO BE PLACED IN NEXT QUARTER'S MAGAZINE!
- 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 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

**ALL REQUESTS FOR AARS ASSISTANCE OUTSIDE OF YOUR
COUNTY SHOULD COME FROM THE INCIDENT
COMMANDER OF THE SCENE AND GO THROUGH A
MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD!**

AARS ORDER FORM

	QTY.	COST	TOTAL
AARS SHOULDER PATCH	_____	x \$ 2.00	_____
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AARS VEHICLE DECAL	_____	x \$ 2.00	_____
AARS FLAG	_____	x \$50.00	_____
GRAND TOTAL \$	_____		

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Roanoke, AL 36274

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***** IF YOU PREFER I WILL BE GLAD TO BRING THE ITEMS TO THE NEXT QUARTERLY MEETING. *****



Unfortunately,
you'll never
know how good
your insurance
company is until
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,
with its principal place of business
in New York, NY.



Insuring America's Heroes

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