

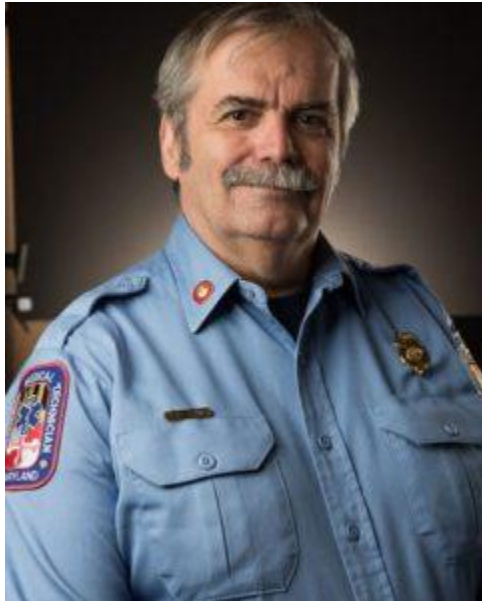
Cumberland Valley Volunteer Firefighters Association

Archived News 2023

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An End of the Year Report From President Dave Lewis



I want to take this opportunity to communicate with you the activities of the Cumberland Valley Volunteer Firefighters Association since the Fall meeting in October.

At our meeting, a resolution was unanimously approved to change the name of our association from Cumberland Valley Volunteer Firemen's Association to be now known as the Cumberland Valley Volunteer Firefighters Association. Much work lies ahead to formalize this change, but we will be using that name for all communications from this point forward. Remember, our mission has not changed. We are only changing our name to recognize the diversity that already exists within our organization. As a part of the change, there has

been much discussion on what our logo should look like going forward. Several proposals have been reviewed and the Officers have decided that the selection of a new logo should be left to the membership. Look for additional information as we prepare for the spring meeting.

Crash Responder Safety Week (CRSW) was recognized during the week of November 13-17, 2023. This annual event is an opportunity to promote road user awareness and adherence to Move Over laws and advocate for Traffic Incident Management Training (TIM) Responder Training for all traffic incident responders. CVVFA has a large part in the activities during CRSW, including representation on the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Executive Leadership Group (ELG). I attended the in-person ELG meeting at FHWA Headquarters in Washington, DC, to commemorate CRSW. To each of you, as members of the CVVFA, you owe it to your members and your communities to reduce roadway fatalities by advocating for safe roadway practices. What actions did the personnel in your department take during CRSW?

Also, during CRSW, CVVFA was represented at the American Towman Expo in Baltimore, MD on November 16-18. Thank you to Doug DeHaven, Bob Cumberland and John Dewees, for joining me as we represented CVVFA/ERSI with a display booth. This was our second year exhibiting at the Towman's Expo and it has provided some great opportunities to engage with tow operators to help them work safely on the roadways

and inform them of resources available through the Responder Safety Learning Network.

CVVFA/ERSI was contracted by the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) in April 2023 to design a new training program about automated vehicle technology for emergency responders. A combination of research and conversations with autonomous vehicle OEMs was done to gather as much relevant information as possible in a field where technology is changing almost daily. Jack Sullivan and Richard Brooks traveled to Maple Plain, MN, to deliver the pilot presentation “Automated Vehicle Technology for Emergency Responders”, on November 29. The presentation was attended by 50 responders representing fire/EMS, law enforcement, towing/recovery, DOT, and state/local officials. The intent of GHSA is to distribute this training nationwide to GHSA members.

Automated vehicle technology is moving at such a fast pace that it is difficult to keep up with it. Several CVVFA members are active within Connected and Automated Vehicles (CAV) working groups to review and assess the impact that these vehicles will have on roadway safety. Jack Sullivan attended the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI) “Automated Driving System Demonstration Event” on October 24, and I attended a meeting and demonstrations held by the Maryland Connected and Automated Vehicle Working Group on December 7.

CVVFA/ERSI always has the interest of our users in mind when developing and delivering responder safety programs. On October 26, a Town Hall Listening Session was held to gather feedback and input from ERSI users. This feedback is important to help guide future development of programs to meet the needs of responders of roadway incidents.

Through member support, CVVFA purchased a Dogwood tree and memorial plaque in memory of Past President Walter Robertson. This memorial site, hosted by the Virginia State Firefighters Association (VSFA), brings lasting tributes to the many members who provided lifelong support of the activities of the VSFA. At the 2023 Convention, a motion was made for CVVFA to sponsor a memorial in Walter’s name. Funding was made through the generous contributions from our members.

Make your plans now to attend our spring meeting on March 16-17, 2024, hosted by the Citizens Fire Company in Newport, PA. A hotel block is being held at the Fairfield Inn and Suites, Harrisburg West/Mechanicsburg. We will be planning for some training activity on Saturday afternoon and our meeting will be held starting Sunday morning. Monitor the CVVFA website for additional information.

I’ll close this communication by wishing each of you a happy and safe holiday season. It is important during this time that we take time to spend with family and friends and

give thanks for the time we have together. God bless each and every one of you and Merry Christmas to all.

President David Lewis

President Walter Robinson Remembered with a Unique Tribute

Walter Robertson, a leader in the VA Volunteer Fire Service, and two-time CVVFA President died on January 26, 2023. The CVVFA, because of Walter's exemplary service to the Association, sponsored a Dogwood tree in his memory. Virginia is the only state that its state flower is actually a tree. The tree and accompanying marker is in a special location at the Amelia Courthouse Veterans Cemetery is located southwest of Richmond on US 360.



How the Dogwood Tree Became a Symbol to Honor Firefighters

While the Virginia Firefighters Memorial Dogwood Grove is new, the tradition began with the Auxiliary to the Virginia State Firefighters Association (VSFA), founded in 1928. After the memorial service at each annual conference or convention, a dogwood tree was given to local VSFA member organizations. Over the decades trees were planted all around the Commonwealth.

In 2019, Pete Kirby, Past President of VSFA and past fire chief/life member of the Centreville Volunteer Fire Department, had an idea: "It struck me that if one collected all of these trees in one place, it would be a powerful image. The dream was to create a

Firefighters Dogwood Memorial Forest somewhere in Virginia where all could visit and enjoy the splendor of Dogwoods all in bloom at once. It would be spectacular." Accompanied by President Carol Stickley of the VSFA Auxiliary they met with Virginia's Secretary of Agriculture Bettina Ring (herself a longtime Virginia forester and wildland firefighter) and Deputy State Forester Ed Zimmer of the Virginia Department of Forestry. VDOF facilitated contact with the Virginia Department of Veterans Services that graciously made land available at the Amelia Courthouse, Suffolk, and Dublin Veteran's Cemetery sites where the memorial Dogwoods could be planted in groves.

History courtesy of the VSFA

17 Oct 2023

We Are Changing Our Name But Not Our Mission

During the Cumberland Valley VFA Fall Meeting in Odenton MD, members unanimously adopted a Resolution stating that the organization will be known as Cumberland Valley Volunteer Firefighters Association (CVVFA) going forward.

This change is largely ceremonial to reflect the dedication and operations of that CVVFA displayed for the last 122 years. According to our Constitution and By-Laws the legal change to our name must take place at the Annual Convention. Because we are forward thinking, we decided to begin calling ourselves a “Firefighters” Association now reflecting the makeup of our membership.



What once began as a collaboration between four neighboring states, CVVFA is now a nationwide organization, comprised on men and women who not only are members of fire and EMS departments but also law enforcement agencies, tow operators and more. We started with a mission to standardize hose couplings in 1901 and have further expanded our focus on responder safety at roadway incidents, community risk reduction

and reputational risk management.

Over the next months, CVVFA will continue to enhance our brand under the new name as we head to our 123rd CVVFA Convention in Halfway, MD in August where the official name change will take place.

CVVFA Name Change Resolution adopted 10-15-2023

22 Aug 2023

Sandy Cullen CVVFA Member and Past President of the Firefighters Association of PA Dies



Sandy Cullen a long time CVVFA Member died on August 15. She had been in declining health for sometime. Sandy had the distinction of serving the fire service in many ways. She was active with Erie County Firefighters Association and Crawford County Firemen's and Fire Chiefs Association, where she was secretary for several years. She belonged to the Firemen's Association of the State of Pennsylvania, holding the offices of Chairman of the Fire Safety Education Committee, Northwest Director, Western Vice President, Senior Vice President, President in 2014, and Chairperson of the Fire Safety Education. Her husband Tom also served at President of the FASP. Sandy joined the CVVFA during the period that Tom was progressing through the chairs and

began attending CVVFA President Council meetings. By the time she was elected President she was familiar with many of her fellow state fire association presidents. Sandy will be missed at the many meetings and events she attended. A memorial service will be held October 14th from 11 am to 2 pm at the Union City PA Fire Company Social Hall.

11 Aug 2023

David Lewis Elected CVVFA President



David Lewis of the Odenton MD Volunteer Fire Company was elected and installed as President of the CVVFA for the coming year. Also elected were Chief John Gonzalez of Toms River NJ, 1st VP and Chief Terry Jester of Lincoln DE, 2nd VP.

David is a Past President at Odenton and served as President of the MD State Firemen's Association. He is recognized lecturer on many fire service topics and teaches on behalf of the National Fire Academy and the MD Fire and Rescue Institute around the nation. David is a Maryland Director of the National Volunteer Fire Council. President Lewis's expertise not only includes fire ground operation, he also is a subject matter expert on strategic planning, fire service reputation management and behavioral

health issues among other topics. President Lewis pledged to communicate with the membership and advance the programs of the association in his acceptance speech August 4th. The next meeting of the Association is scheduled for Odenton in October.

Update: President Lewis forwarded a message to all CVVFA members through our Newsletter the CVVFA Express. Check you inbox.

04 Jun 2023

Tell Us What Your Opinion Is About Future Meetings

Share Your Opinion About Future Meetings

What's your preference about our future meetings? At the Spring 2023 meeting of the CVVFA, there was discussion of what may be the best day and time for our spring and fall meeting. We are asking that our members complete this survey asking for your input on options that may be preferable to you. The officers will review these results to determine the best format for future spring and fall meetings. Thanks in advance for your time and support of the CVVFA.

01 May 2023

Got News About the CVVFA or Our Members?

A reminder to send any photos/stories our members what to share in Fire News to President McDonald at mycdevelopment@gmail.com for submission to Fire News. Speaking of Fire News, if your dues are current, you are receiving a copy of Fire News in your mail box. If not contact Financial Secretary Jim Watson and correct your address.

Past President Baldwin Elected as President of the VA State Fire Chiefs



Allen Baldwin, President of the CVVFA in 2019-2020 was elected President of the Virginia State Fire Chiefs Association. Chief Baldwin has a distinguished career in Pennsylvania and Virginia in the volunteer and career fire service. He currently serves as Deputy Chief/Deputy Director of the York County Virginia Department of Fire and Life Safety. President Baldwin's career as an association leader was cemented when he successfully led the CVVFA through the COVID pandemic. He vowed, even as he and his family contracted the virus, that he would not accept COVID as an excuse for non-performance. As a result of his leadership, the CVVFA met virtually and all of its programs, budget and membership improved over previous years. The CVVFA congratulates Allen and stands ready to assist him in any way possible in his new venture.

27 Jan 2023

CVVFA Past President Walter Robertson Passes Away



Walter Robertson, a leader in the VA Volunteer Fire Service, and 2-time CVVFA President died on January 26, 2023. He had suffered a fall at home followed by a cardiac event on his way to the hospital in the ambulance.

Walter was a former life member of the Wilson Volunteer Fire Company and a President of the Augusta County Fire/Rescue Inc and Augusta County Station 11. Walter was a long time EVOC instructor in Virginia. Walter was also active in the VA State Firefighters Association for many years.

He joined the CVVFA in 2004 as a member of the Verona VA VFC. Throughout the years he held several positions in the Association including President in 2009 and 2014. At the time of his death, he was a member

of CVVFA Board of Directions.

Walter retired as a Children's Supervisor at the Shenandoah Valley Juvenile Detention Center. He was committed to helping young people as exemplified by his generous donation to the CVVFA Scholarship Program.

Dr. Candice McDonald, CVVFA President, upon learning of Walter's passing, spoke of his long commitment to the Association and his kindness and caring toward his fellow members of the fire service. "I will miss Walter and our Association will not be the same without him. I speak for all our members in saying we appreciate the leadership and friendship he provided over many years."

Service Information and Obituary