#### September 2016

#### FEATURING:

### **50years** OF PHIL July 5, 1966 - July 5, 2016

Fireline's Portables Manager Phil Bowers retires on his 50th anniversary with the company.

#### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- NFPA Technical Committee
- Topic of the Quarter
- 3rd Party Reporting

Fireline Fire Flyer Vol. Need, No. Need

President's Pen

#### A note from Anna Gavin

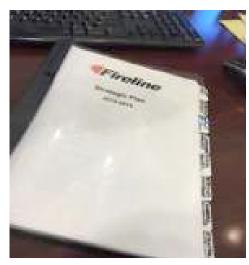
About four years ago we were meeting in groups and finalizing research for a long term strategy that would last from 2013-2016. The final document was 97 pages long and many here were patient enough to sit through my two hour presentation of the plan (I promise I will keep them shorter in the future!). If anyone wants to come see the plan you are welcome to stop by my office. A chart summarizing it is posted on my wall for all to see.

Yet we are now coming to the end of that timeline and I am reflecting on all that we have done.

Overall there were eight major objectives with various amounts of initiatives within each. A lot can change in four years including the direction of the company and the market. Something that seemed important four years ago may no longer be an issue. While I am a big advocate for our annual planning, I was not sure how a long term plan would pan out.

Of the thirty-five initiatives on the list we completed twenty-seven. Not bad considering some of these were very large projects (PZ for one!). Initiatives varied from sales goals to career development to succession planning.





My well-worn copy of the plan.

I am quite impressed with all we have achieved in this time. Especially with regards to our organizational structure and leadership development.

With the two new Director of Operations positions I am confident that we are finally structured for success and well managed growth. In just the past month that Rich and Shannon have been in these roles I have already seen incredible promise for our departments.

These positions will allow me more time to work on the business and not in it. My first priority? Another long term plan. Next year I will be asking for volunteers to assist with everything from identifying business opportunities to performing a competitive analysis.

There is so much happening here at Fireline and I look forward to sharing the planning of its future with all of you!

# FROM THE FIELD **OUTTAKES**







This was me squeezing my large self into a18"x18" trash shoot today at Frederick Douglas Apartments in West Baltimore installing a dry sidewall sprinkler head after it caught fire last month. It's a DIRTY job, but someone's gotta do it! Lol

Text Message

Craig Steibock stuck in a tight spot.

# Never search for your paystub again.



See Elizabeth Zeledon x270 for more information.

https://workforcenow.adp.com

#### **TOPIC OF THE QUARTER** How has a co-worker changed your outlook or your career?

We spend quite a lot of time with our co-workers each day. There is no question that they make an impact on our lives. Good or bad we learn from each other, motivate each other and change as a result. This edition we asked **"How has a co-worker changed your outlook or your career?"** 



**FRANK CHENOWETH:** I was working a summer job for a small contractor when I was about 16. I was low man so I was the gopher. One Friday the boss decided to buy lunch for us all. He gave me money and the food

order and I drove off to the sub shop. I went down the list and ordered all of the meals. When I got to the boss' order they didn't have what he wanted. Since there were no cell phones at that time, I couldn't ask him what else he might want. I got the rest of the orders and returned to the job site. Everyone got their food and I explained to the boss that they didn't have what he wanted so I didn't get him anything. The hungry and unhappy boss took his change and said "Not making a decision is sometimes the worst decision".



**BILL GIBB:** About 15 years ago I wanted to step up my involvement with Fireline. Phil Bowers suggested I run a Safety Committee. Actually he went to Steve Waters and Steve said, "Bill, Your Chairman of the

Safety Committee". Phil sat on the new Safety Committee and helped steer the Committee in a direction that was compatible with Fireline Business Plan. And this allowed me to become more involved with Fireline employee's safety and eventually led me to my current role as Materials Resource Manager. Thank you Phil Bowers.



AMANDA DRURY: I started my first full time job when I was 19. This job was where I remained for almost 8 years. My boss there was someone who taught me many valuable lessons. One thing I took away from him was to

treat my daily tasks as if the company's success depended on it. This helped me learn to take pride in the work I do. It also helped me see that everyone's job, no matter the size, plays a huge roll in any company's success or failure! Keeping this in mind helps me continue to grow and develop my skills daily.



MARVIN NAGEL: I began my career in the Fire Sprinkler Industry in 1989. I was working as an electrician's helper when I was approached by the owner of a small fire protection company. He took the time to teach

me about the industry and the importance of fire protection and how it saves lives. Later, when returning from Desert Storm, I worked for several companies. I cannot say that there has been any particular co-worker or company that has influenced my career. I can say that along the way I have learned many different traits on how to become a successful Fire Sprinkler Technician and now Supervisor. When I was hired here at Fireline I knew it was going to be a great career move for me. The staff welcomed me as if I had been employed here my whole career in the industry. Anna and Karen have given me the opportunity to use my years of knowledge in the industry to pass along to new and upcoming Fire Sprinkler Techs. I am proud to be a part of the Fireline family.



# TOPIC OF THE QUARTER continued



**BARB HAAS:** I had just barely been at Fireline for 9 months when Jen Austin, former service dispatcher and service administrator, went into premature labor. I had trained with Jen once or twice briefly to help enter contracts for when she would go on maternity leave. Baby Austin had a different plan and that lead to a change of path for me. With Jen needing to be by Ben's side Steve Waters had faith in me and ask me to move to the service department. How do you say no to Steve and pass up a great opportunity to move up in the company? But boy was I out of my element! Frank Chenoweth was the service manager at the time of approximately 15 – 20 techs. The job consisted of dispatching, contract entry, pricing tickets, filing the customer folders (before we were paperless), customer service, monitoring and anything else in between. I quickly found that dispatching was the one part of the job I wasn't cutout or meant to do. After expressing my concern to Frank we both agreed I'd better fit being strictly the service administrator.

Through all of this Frank has played a huge role in my growth at Fireline. Frank has been my own personal technical advisor for the past 17 years. He is my go to for part #'s, monitoring questions, pricing, difficult technicians, customer service and anything and everything in between. I envy Frank for his customer service skills, I've witnessed this man convince the most difficult customer that they are responsible for that costly invoice and then have the customer thank us! Frank has been the calm to my crazy and has taught me to stop and analyze things over the years. He always has an answer. Even though it may take time getting him to the point (land the plane Frank).

Frank has helped me grow into the employee/person I am today. He has helped build my confidence in this field of men and mentored me throughout every task. Even though we don't work together as we used to I know I can go to him for anything and he won't hesitate to help me. Frank thank you for everything past, present and future – signed your previous work wife!



**CHRIS TROUTMAN:** I remember back when the economy was bad in 2008-2009 Norm and I were having a conversation. I asked him how Fireline was doing and if we were going to be affected by the slowdown since our recent work had dried up and we were a little slow. I was thinking about buying a house and staying in Maryland (which if you know me was a BIG step), but wanted to make sure that I wasn't going to be looking for a job if things got worse. He told me, "Everything is okay, and long as I have a job here, you have a job here." No one had ever said anything like that to me before, and that made me realize that I worked at a place that really appreciated me. I knew I worked for a guy that valued what I did and that I had found my place.











# **50years** OF PHIL

Fireline's Portables Manager Phil Bowers retires on his 50th anniversary with the company.

How many people can say they have been at a company for fifty years? Phil Bowers impresses us all with this achievement. There is no question Phil is one of the most dedicated and loyal employees out there. Fireline could not be more fortunate to have such a smart, hardworking and caring man be part of our team for all these years.

While we all miss Phil, we sure had a great time honoring him and the fifty years he has been here. In various celebrations we honored "Fireline Phil" with everything from jokes to a caricature and a bobblehead. Phil fans shared lots of memories, comments about food preferences, and talk of his generous heart.

### 50 Fun Facts About Fireline Phil

- 1. Started at Fireline in 1966
- 2. Made \$0.78 an hour servicing soda acid extinguishers on the road
- 3. Loves Utz chips
- **4.** Goes home to rest on his lunch break
- 5. Makes killer fudge
- 6. Drives the exact speed limit
- 7. Whistles while he walks (we always hear him coming)
- 8. Great story teller
- 9. Favorite work trip was to Mexico on the Love Boat
- 10. Hates tomatoes
- 11. Has been to Disney World 15 times!
- 12. Was in the Army
- **13.** Leaving for Vietnam was not only the first time he left the country, but Maryland as well
- 14. Has worked here as... a Fx tech
- 15. a Salesman
- 16. a Manager
- 17. Has a whole Skeeball game in his basement.
- 18. Will play golf when he retires
- Hired by long time service manager Wade Dillow
- 20. Likes Hardee's sandwiches
- **21.** Dressed as a Ninja Turtle at company picnic (Donatello)
- **22.** Loves Pretzels and usually has a large container in his office.
- **23.** Plays poker (has been known to cheat according to Steve Clark!)
- 24. Managed the AR department for a few years
- 25. Plays pool every week at the Moose
- **26.** Has to have the latest in technology (can't figure it out though)
- 27. His favorite number is 34
- 28. Is a big softy at heart
- **29.** Favorite beer is Coors Light
- **30.** Favorite cocktail Jack and Coke

- **31.** Favorite game in the casino is roulette (plays favorite number)
- **32.** The money screams as it comes out of his wallet.
- 33. Has been married 42 years
- **34.** Confused Steve Waters when he came to company picnic fully disguised as a clown.
- **35.** His hair grows on company time so he gets it cut on company time (during lunch break)
- **36.** First job was in the "Salt Mines" the Soda Acid Extinguisher Shop
- **37.** Drinks Starbucks hot venti cafe mocha with a straw
- **38.** Won't go outside in the morning until he washes his hair
- **39.** Was hesitant to leave the "street" to take a sales job
- 40. Sleeps in late every weekend
- **41.** Steak and shrimp subs are his favorite at Fireline's favorite restaurant Snyders
- **42.** Likes to go to Cracker Barrel with Dee (well Dee likes to go and he tags along)
- **43.** Nick named "Lil Phil" when first here due to father's name being "Big Phil"
- 44. Wears pressed "dungeries"
- 45. Loves to bake cookies
- 46. Love all things Greek Especially his wife
- **47.** Owns a Jukebox
- **48.** Least favorite customer was Baltimore Grain Elevator
- **49.** Favorite customer was Joseph Banks
- 50. Very happy with how he is leaving the department strongest team he has ever had

### **50**years OF PHIL continued



















### **50**years OF PHIL continued









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# **3rd Party Reporting**

#### By Dave Taylor

Fireline, along with all other licensed contractors who inspect, repair and test fire protection systems, have been mandated by several jurisdictions to comply with a new process for electronic submission of inspection and test reports. It is typically known as "third party reporting" and uses an online provider to collect and disseminate inspection reports and testing results. While not all localities have adopted this requirement, as of July 1, 2016 the City of Gaithersburg, Ocean City, Howard County, Worcester County and Maryland State Fire Marshal (State-owned properties) have and it is likely to become more commonplace in the near future.

The various third party reporting systems require the contractor to register, pay a fee and upload all inspection reports within a specified period of time. There is also a small fee to submit each individual report which will be identified as a separate line item on our invoice. The jurisdictions that have adopted this process will be using it to review the reports, assess deficiencies and track any necessary repairs.

What does this mean for Fireline? First of all, accurate and timely submission of inspection reports is a must. Since the web-based services will aggregate,



track and streamline the collection of compliance data, failure to submit reports in a timely manner may result in administrative sanctions from the participating jurisdictions. Second, they will be monitoring the repair process, so we must be proactive in submitting deficiency correction quotes and scheduling the work.

There are pros and cons to third party reporting. Some of the benefits include holding property owners responsible for failing to conduct regular inspections (they will be flagged by local authorities) and it should limit non-licensed contractors from working in jurisdictions where it is required. In addition, with local authorities reviewing inspection reports there is less chance that life safety repairs will be overlooked by customers and renewal notifications sent by local authorities will identify Fireline as the contractor of record, increasing our ability to retain customers.

On the other hand there are disadvantages. Every third party reporting provider operates differently. They have different software, different payment processes and different uploading procedures. It also increases the cost of inspections to the end user and decreases efficiencies in processing reports and completing deficiency repairs. In addition, there are concerns that proprietary inspection reports may become public information for competitors to use.

Third-party reporting is another of the technological advances that present challenges and potential benefits. We need to become familiar with each of the software programs used by the jurisdictions we service. We must also educate the customer to understand that this process has been implemented by local authorities and regulatory compliance by Fireline (and the customer) is mandatory.

# Babies & Grandbabies



Born to David Henson: David Henson, Jr. July 10, 2016 • 8lbs 3oz and 22"



**Born to Alley Heffington:** Liam Albert born July 11th at 5:30 pm., he weighed 8lbs 1 oz

and was 20 1/2 inches.



Born to Shaun Austin: Aaron Mayer Austin July 4, 2016 • 5lbs 11oz and 18.5" Born to Dylan Fogle: Charlotte Quinn Fogle April 23, 2016 9lbs 7oz and 22"







Fireline Trucks at safety Training Day



Tony Cadogan testing a Fire Alarm System



Happy Birthday!

#### **SEPTEMBER**

Ken Humphrey	1
Lou Lucas	1
Erik Noffsinger	2
Matt Benfield	3
Amber Topi	5
Jackie Ulloa	6
Harry Lowman	8
Dwon Bess	13
Steve Bilz	15
Janet Griffin	18
Ralph Mason	19
Jim Colgan	21
Dennis Perez	22
Robert Stallings, Jr	24
Mary Meyer	24
Rachel Gibb	29

#### **OCTOBER**

Norm Mason4
James Porter4
Dan Evangelisti6
Steve Hale10
TJ Simpson10
Ken Barnhart12
Mike Grow12
Mike Levasseur17
Heather Meyer18
Ken Scholl23
Paul DeMaria24
TJ Smallwood II26
Elizabeth Adkins31

#### **NOVEMBER**

#### **DECEMBER**

Ted Reitterer	2
Steve Weiss	3
Julio Castro	5
Eric Robertson	
Karen Cobb	6
Cindy Rueppel	6
John Oliver	8
Laurie Pryor	9
Jay Doyle	.11
Brandon Slacum	.11
Ross Dyott	.12
Daryl Blow	.14
Clinton Shell	.16
Jared Fishback	.18
Rupert Mangal	.18
Sean Parsons	.18
Derrick Meilhammer	.19
Jake Smallwood	.23
Ricky Gardner, Jr	.24
Lane Villers, Jr	.25
Dustin Breeden	.26
Corey Marriott	.26
Santos Castillo	.27
Mike Bryant	.30
John Hupman	.30
Angela Lester	.30
Jason Miller	.30

# **NFPA Technical Committee**

#### By Frank Chenoweth

Have you ever wondered how the NFPA codes get written and changed? If you are a code geek like me you probably have.

Some of you may know that I now sit on the NFPA 72 technical committee for the testing, maintenance, and service (SIG-TMS). I have been on the committee for several years, but up until this year I was an alternate and never actually attended one of the meetings. This year I was at the first draft meeting and was involved first hand in the code writing process.

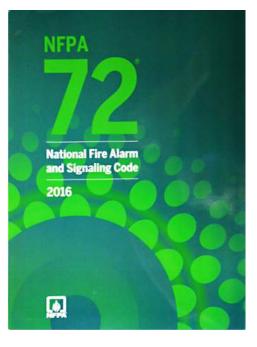
#### HERE IS HOW IT WORKS:

- The new code is released at the end of the 3 year cycle (around September 2015 for the 2016 version NFPA-72).
- On January 1st 2016, the window opens for public input. Public input is the opportunity for anyone to suggest changes or additions to the current version of the code. This could be as simple as a grammatical error or a recommendation to change a particular test frequency. Public input is done through the NFPA website and anyone can do it. Once it is entered, it is given a PI number.
- On June 29th, the PI window closes.
- The NFPA correlating committee then filters through all of the PI's, (this year there were nearly 800), and assigns them to the corresponding technical committee (there are currently 10 committees).

- In July, the technical committees meet for a "First Draft" to discuss and vote their group of PI's.
- Each committee then has the task of reviewing each PI and then deciding to, (1) Keep the PI as it is, (2) Make a change and submit the modified PI, or (3) "Resolve" the PI, which is a nice word for delete it.
- The modifications then go back to NFPA where they filter down the list again, remove the deleted PI's and send them back out for public comment.
- The technical committees meet again the following July for a "Second Draft". During this meeting they will discuss and vote on the updated list. They also refine the grammar and update it to be more code like if necessary (should's and shall's).
- This whole process happens one more time the following spring for the "Final" meeting. At this point the PI's are fine-tuned and made ready to be added to the code.
- The new code is then compiled and released at the end of the year.
- Then back to the top and the process starts all over.

Now you know how it works and why the process takes 3 whole years to complete!











#### **COREY MARRIOT**

#### From a customer:

"I have one of your techs on site this morning doing some pretesting and we needed to add 1 Notifier fmm module. I didn't have one onsite so your tech Corey gave me one off his truck. Cory has been awesome and very helpful and I wanted to put in a good word."

#### From a customer:

"Excellent job Cory Marriott from Fireline......alarms have been cleared and duct detectors were cleaned. Thank you and Bravo Zulu Cory. "

#### **GARY HODDINOTT**

#### From a co-worker:

"Just to let you know, the reason we got a look at this job was because they really liked working with Gary Hoddinott on some install jobs. Gary really set up the dance floor for this and he deserves some praise."

"I again feel compelled to write to you about two of your staff. I had an extreme

#### MATT WILLIAMS AND MATT BENFIELD



amount of work here to complete, with the six year damper testing and annual sprinkler inspections. I had only inspected the dampers one time before, and in truth was not particularly looking forward to it. I worked with Matt Williams and Matt Benfield for nine days straight, I could not have been more pleased with the outcome! In order to complete such a massive job it requires all contractors to strictly adhere to our policies. I am never truly able to let my guard down while having contractors on site. These guys really understand the type of environment that they are in, and act accordingly. Thank you very much for having such trained, and professional staff. Job well done! "



#### **FAWN DYSON**

"I wanted to thank you once again for all the help you have provided to Reed and Thomas in solving any issues we have had on this project. You have gone out of your way to "make it happen ". I do all the scheduling and know how hard it is to pull people off projects to make something else happen at the last moment! Fireline is lucky to have you as an employee!!"

.....



#### **BRANDON SLACUM AND DYLAN FOGLE**

"I wanted to let you all know the techs we had out today, Brandon Slacum and Dylan Fogle, went above and beyond here at 2700 N. Charles Street. I normally have very good service from you all but today was nothing short of exceptional. Not only did they clear up issues we have had a few people look into, they also looked into mapping out for a new fire system as I have been requesting for over a year. I was thoroughly impressed with their professionalism and their customer service. Techs like those gentlemen are the reason I would recommend Fireline to other companies."



#### MATT MEYERS AND MIKE MALOY

#### From a friendly competitor:

"I am sure you are already aware of the high level of skill of your staff, but I would like to specifically extend our appreciation for the professionalism and superior efforts your technicians Matt Myers and Mike Maloy provided to ATS and our customer in getting this system back up and functioning. I understand this was not a very cooperative system to diagnose, plus it was not an original Fireline installation.



The potential for proposal after proposal for replacement components and delays was there, yet these guys kept digging into it to pinpoint the problems and avoided that situation completely. You just don't see the level of technical ability and work ethic that shines this brightly all that often, and I wanted you to know that it was noticed."



GARY COX From a customer: "Gary worked well throughout the process, ensuring that things went as planned. When there was a minor glitch, he quickly made adjustments to the program to finalize the test. Because this was a process involving many different groups, GSA SSA and GPI, and the nature of the building the stress level was high. He helped to quell the situation by being effective."



**DESHAWN BROWN** From a customer: "This is a good man. Knows his

business. And like all the FL techs he is courteous and cooperative eager to make things right and quite capable to do so. You should be proud to have him. "



JIM COLGAN From a customer: "I'm glad it went smoothly and they had the panel. Jim from Fireline was great. He really knew his stuff."

Hydrant test





Stephen Dryer testing a system with PZ Mobile



Shannon Adkins working on a smoke detector



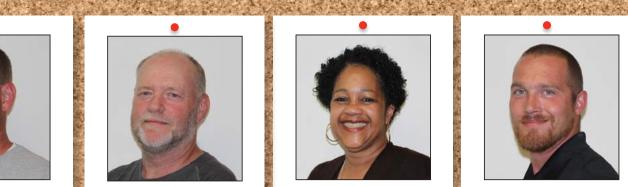


## New to the Team

Join us in welcoming these new Fireline employees. Lots of new faces to learn so take note!



Tim Goodman · 6/7/16 Leesburg Restaurant Technician



Bruce Jones · 7/11/16 Vehicle Service Technician



Angela Lester · 6/28/16 Receptionist



Dan Kiser · 6/28/16 Suppression System Mechanical Technician



Francisco Martinez · 1/18/16 Suppression System Mechanical Technician



Kyle Miller · 7/11/16 Vehicle Service Technician



Joe Murray · 1/25/16 Suppression System Mechanical Technician



Adam Prager • 1/25/16 Suppression System Electrical Technician



Amber Topi · 5/2/16 Contract Administrator



Bladimir Ventura · 8/9/16 Fire Alarm Designer

# Quotes From the Field { "What was the most memorable thing that has happened to you at a customer site?"

I was inspecting a Verizon site a couple months back that run underneath the bldg. At this particular site I was in the cable vault with little to no light. At the back of the vault I could see a bunch of red dots which I thought were some kind of led bulbs on a controller. As I made my way to the back of the vault I found that these little red lights were the eyes of bats..... Pretty creepy!!!!!!

~Stephen Dreyer

"I felt so proud to have the amazing privilege to install the sprinkler system to one of the greatest historic places - George Washington's house at Mount Vernon."

~Santos Castillo

I was doing an inspection at "The Castle" Ravens training facility. One of the valves is in the coaches locker room. As I came walking in - there was General Manager Ozzie Newsome standing there totally naked!"

~Fred Anders

"I enjoyed a full access tour of the USS Constellation after a service call on the historic vessel. Yes there is a fire alarm system on board!!"

~Marvin Clark



I was working in a not so nice neighborhood on a kitchen hood system in a convenience store. The owner was an Asian man who didn't speak English very well. He motioned for me to follow him and led me into the back of the store where he and his family lived. There was a hand gun on an end table next to the stairs leading to the basement.

He pointed for me to go down the stairs to check pilot on the water heater. As I headed down the stairs I saw out of the corner of my eye the man pick up the gun.

I got down the steps guickly and stepped to the side to look back at him. He showed me where the water heater was and on edge - I warily checked to see that it was lit. This was a C.O.D. job. I didn't want to bring that up just then.

He pointed to the far wall and said, "Sometimes my customers get me stressed out and I come down here to blow off steam". The wall was riddled with bullet holes. He offered me the gun and asked if I wanted to take a couple of shots. I smiled and said, "thanks but no thanks" and he wrote out the check.

~Marty lbbott



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Find peace and harmony in your daily IT needs.

You

Email <u>support@fireline.zendesk.com</u> for any IT issues you may have and your request will be monitored and updated until a solution is found.







JASON D'ALFONZO • APRIL



**DENNIS PEREZ • MAY** 



ALBERTO ARMESTO • JUNE





### EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD































aters playing some ball



The Fire Alarm Design Team

NIFAD conference 2016. Anna Gavin and Rich Sigethy with Richard Bauer, Vice President of Global Sales at Honeywell Fire Systems (center).





Smart CEO Family Business Awards -



#### **SEPTEMBER**

#### **NOVEMBER**

Cindy Rueppel
Erik Noffsinger
Ted Reitterer
Dan Evangelisti
Justin Fishback
Matt Williams
Brad Mays
Robbie Kershner
Kevin Federline
Alan Holmes
Patrick Levdahl
Shane Nagel
Kirsten Chandler
Collin Creighton

#### **OCTOBER**

Frank Chenoweth **Jim Colgan Dennis Perez** Laurie Pryor **Ken Humphrey** Shannon Adkins Dan Vecchioni Matt Benefield **Mike Levasseur Deshawn Brown Marvin Clark Jason Litten** Jay Doyle **Steve Sensibaugh** 

2 Years	
1 Year	
1 Year	
32 Years	
11 Years	
10 Years	
10 Years	
8 Years	
7 Years	
7 Years	
5 Years	
5 Years	
2 Years	
2 Years	
2 Years	

1 Year

1 Year

38 Years	Kelly Coon	37 Years
19 Years	Bill Gibb 🛛 🔍	20 Years
19 Years	Ralph Mason	20 Years
12 Years	Dan Davidson	18 Years
12 Years	Ron Eure	8 Years
10 Years	Jared Fishback	6 Years
7 Years	Elizabeth Adkins	3 Years
6 Years	Fred Anders	2 Years
5 Years	Keith Chaffman	2 Years
2 Years	Kyle Dean	2 Years
2 Years	Jimmy Keedy	2 Years
2 Years	Carrie Schyan-Watl	kins 1 Year
1 Year	Samuel Jean	1 Year
1 Year	Tyler Smith	1 Year

#### DECEMBER

**Todd Everitt** Ike Austin Nancy Larsen **Dennis Bryant** Jeremy Mohney TJ Smallwood II Lane Villers, Jr. Vee Ouk

33 Years 32 Years 30 Years 20 Years 14 Years 14 Years 12 Years 3 Years