

September 2018

FEATURING:

# Ike Austin, The Classic Fireline Guy

**ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:**

- DEPARTMENT UPDATES
- BORING DRILL INSPECTION
- FIRELINE "SERVES" OUR MILITARY
- NORM MASON RETIRES
- AND MORE!



## Quality, Integrity and People

*By Anna Gavin*

Unemployment rates are exceptionally low, tracking under 4% and even lower in the Mid-Atlantic region. This is good for the country but tough for employers whose businesses are growing. Finding good employees has been a hot topic in our industry for some time now. The Fireline management team has discussed this at many a meeting.

However, in the past couple of years we have seen an increase in the quality of employees to join our company. Whether it is someone with years of experience or someone coming in entry-level, I am incredibly impressed by the attitudes and work ethics of each new hire I meet.



Several years ago the management team made a decision – stop hiring for technical, start hiring for culture. Hire the people you want to build the company around and then give them the tools to succeed. We decided to invest in more training and bring on employees that we felt we adaptable, smart and understood the value of quality work. We looked at our best legacy employees and what made them so successful. People like our cover employee Ike Austin, who embody all that we believe makes Fireline successful.

The result is one of the strongest teams we have ever had. A blend of long time employees and new fresh faces. We are relying on those tenured employees to help mentor and set great examples. And we are excited to see the energy that our newer staff has brought to the company. As we continue to improve communications, our facility and our sales we will truly bring to life all our core values – Quality, Integrity and People.





# TUBING TRIP IN WEST VIRGINIA







## THIS EDITION'S TOPIC

# Department Updates

### **GUY HORNIG • FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS**

With the retirement of Norm Mason, we were concerned with our sales moving forward in 2018. Fortunately we have brought in some new sales talent, and our existing sales team is teaching and mentoring them to be as successful as they have been. At present we are on target to receive the Multi-Million Dollar award from Notifier which will be our 4th time in the last 4 years. Our design team continues to shine as always- handling any issue or project that gets thrown at them. The installation team has recently begun implementing changes within our field services. One of these changes includes a project management role which will oversee larger projects and those of greater complexity to limit risk and increase profitability. We believe that with our continued success we will continue to look for newer and improved ways to operate.

### **RICH SIGETHY • SPECIAL HAZARD SYSTEMS**

Since the beginning of 2018, the Special Hazards Division has been working on the installation of a new water mist system at Presidents Andrew Jackson's "the man on the twenty dollar bill" mansion called the Hermitage in Nashville Tennessee. This was a challenging project as the installation teams had to coordinate with curators and demolition teams prior to performing any work. The project was completed and commissioned the beginning of August 2018, and the customer is very happy with our installation. I would like to thank Joe Dieumeguard and Joe Dantoni from Sprinkler Service, Eric Robertson from Fire Alarm Install, Edwin Montano and Cleyde Soto from Sprinkler Install who assisted Special Hazards to make this a successful project. Most importantly, I would like to thank the members of the Special Hazards team who spent many of months away from their families and friends working on this project for Fireline. It really showed their hard work and dedication. Thank you Fransisco Martinez, Joe Murray, Alex Curtis, Mike Bryant, Tyler Smith, Gorsha Reitterer, and Todd Everitt.

### **TED REITTERER • SPRINKLER SYSTEMS**

We have moved our offices into the old billing area of building one, a necessary move to accommodate future growth in design. Al Riefflin has graciously volunteered to train the new hire and bring him up to speed before turning him over to Mike Rich. Plus, with the amount of bid invites that we receive in the DC/VA area

we are going to continue to hire in the area so we can more easily access these jobs.

Building 2, the old sprinkler warehouse, has been emptied and is in the process of being gutted to make way for the new portables shop. Cleaning the warehouse out was a huge undertaking and involved relocating material to the main warehouse, 2 storage containers, and an offsite storage unit. On September 1st we take over a new leased warehouse space on Halethorpe Farms Road. This space will be shared with the Special Hazards Group. We are looking forward to building out our new space.

All in all, this year has been strong year for the department and we look to continue this trend for the rest of the year.

### **MIKE LEVASSEUR • BALTIMORE PORTABLES**

The demolition stage of the new Portables shop has officially begun! I would like to thank all who have helped with this transition, especially Ted Reitterer and the Sprinkler department. We know it has not been easy, especially in the hot summer weather. I want to personally thank our shop staff who has managed the chaos and still have been able to learn and keep the shop up and running. Our field team continues to care for our customers and do the amazing job they always do.

With the pending shop renovation, the Baltimore Portables shop has started merging with the Leesburg shop. We will perform certain tasks out of our new shop to efficiently streamline shop production. This will allow Leesburg more room in their shop to handle their increasing business. We are looking forward to making both shops the best in the region!

### **KAREN COBB • MONITORING**

Monitoring is still in the process of converting our accounts to a new vendor. It is a long process, at this time we have pulled over approximately 500 accounts. Ted and Angelo have been conducting surveys to assist the sales team. Stephanie is contacting customers that seem to have consistent phone line failures and is making them aware we have other options we can offer. So far since January (between the sales team and our installation group) we have added over 100 monitoring accounts. We still have a long way to go but are making progress on our FireLink mesh network.



# THIS EDITION'S TOPIC *continued*

## **LINDA ABDOW • ACCOUNTING**

Ask anyone in the accounting department how are things going and we will respond: "We are busy!" This is a consistent theme in the accounting department and will continue as our organization experiences growth. So how does the accounting manage this growth? We are always looking for ways to do our jobs more efficiently by evaluating our processes and implementing new projects. Recent changes include switching our credit card processing vendor which should not only provide cost savings, it will also allow us to integrate credit card processing through Profit Zoom. We are also evaluating other methods to assist in the collections of payments from COD customers.

## **SHANNON ADKINS • PRE-ENGINEERED**

The Pre-Engineered department would like to wish TJ Smallwood a fond fair well and best wishes on his new endeavors. TJ announced his departure mid-June and after 16 years is fast approaching his last day here at Fireline.

Since his announcement it has been a whirlwind of changes and task reallocation within the department. The office staff, as well as field staff, have stepped up and accepted the challenge with grace and an overwhelming amount of support for me in my new role as department manager. They have made this transition a huge success.

Restaurant's now has 4 field techs ready and able to take on service and installation needs and with the guidance and support of Reggie and Deanna are making great progress in our efforts to get caught up on our backlog and begin increasing our recurring revenue portfolio.

Vehicle's is also fully staffed, after several months of bad luck, all field techs are back on the street and requests for service are pouring in. We are looking forward to an exciting 4th quarter as they finally begin to implement PZ mobile into their daily routine.

## **JUSTIN FISHBACK • LEESBURG BRANCH**

Things have been steady here at the Leesburg branch. We have added a couple new technicians, Abe Anderson joins the Restaurant install department and Will McDonald has joined the service department, we are excited to have both here as part of our team. Both have proved to be hard workers and we are excited to see them progress in their careers here. They are a good addition to our already strong service and install teams.

Jackie and Amanda have been working hard to keep up with all the growth in business. They continue to pick up new tasks and take on more work and all with great attitudes.

We are still looking for additional techs for the Northern VA area, if you know of any qualified candidates please have them email me- Jfishback@fireline.com.

## **ANTHONY CAMPO • SYSTEM SERVICE**

There are great things happening in Fireline's System Service department. First, our technicians are doing an amazing job. Month after month we are serving customers to high praise and with terrific turn around times. Even in the summer months with all its challenges, we have continued to push the bar higher and have some of our strongest months of the year.

Also, we have added some amazing new faces recently. Many of you have had a chance to work with a lot of our new people and you have nothing, but good things to say about our new Fireline family. Our growth has been in the areas and has really made us stronger because we've added individuals who are in full support of our mission, vision and our values.

Another exciting development is that we have continued to advance our offerings with new services, such as the pump work that have we brought in house and the alignment testing that we are adding to keep our customers code compliant. Even further to advance what we can do for our customers, many of you have had both in house and some out-of-state training opportunities and that is only going to increase as we get closer to the end of year.

Last but not least, we would like to remind all of you of the amazing job that the administrative team of System Service is doing every single day in service to us all. They are tireless in their efforts to onboard new contracts, schedule, dispatch, price, quote, bill and all the other elements that go into making us successful. We should try to thank them every single day, because without them we would have to send Bill Donohue and Ken Radke out to street corners with sandwich boards that say "Will protect you from fire for money."





# On the Cover

## THE CLASSIC FIRELINE GUY

Fireline is honored to have people who build their career at the company. Ike Austin, a Fireline “lifer” has been a staple in the Portables Department for nearly 34 years. He was recruited to Fireline by his uncle Dave, met his wife Jen here and works in the same department as his son Shaun. A true Fireline Family!

Ike is known for his love of the “classic Fireline things” like his box truck (the only one left in the fleet) and his stripped uniform shirts. But Ike has also adapted to Fireline through all its changes, such as learning the new mobile ticketing software. Ike always does his job with a great attitude – making him beloved by customers and co-workers alike. President Anna Gavin interviews Ike to learn more about his years here at Fireline.

**AG: How did you come to start working at Fireline?**

**IA:** When I was twenty years old I decided to start a family and drop out of college. I was in need of a job and Uncle Dave (Dave Bruchey) hooked me up with an interview with Wade Dillow. That was almost 34 years ago.

**AG: You met your wife Jen here at Fireline. In fact you were our first “Fireline wedding” - any fun stories?**



# On the Cover *continued*

**IA:** Yes we were the first Fireline wedding, it wasn't too funny at the time but the day of our wedding I was very sick, vomiting several times during the actual wedding leaving Jen at the alter while I left to be sick, again and again. The funny thing is your mom and dad were there and said to Jen, Ike doesn't ever get sick and miss time from work, leave it to him to get sick on a Saturday. I barely made it through the ceremony, was a little better at the reception but continued to get sick. It might have been a rocky start, but here we are 20 years later.

**AG:** Do you have any favorite customers? If so why?

**IA:** One of my favorite long term customers is the Goetze candy co. I've been taking care of them for 30 years. They remind me of Fireline, they are a family owned business that takes pride in providing a good work place for their employees. They also supply me with lots of Carmel creams and cow tales. I'm of course happy to promote their products for them.

**AG:** What is the most interesting jobsite you've been to?

**IA:** I think one of the most memorable jobs I did was the Baltimore Zoo many many years ago. What made it so interesting was to be so close to that many animals. I actually had the opportunity to visit the penguin exhibit and hold and pet a baby penguin.

**AG:** Your son Shaun also works at Fireline as an extinguisher tech (and a dang good one at that). Have you ever gotten to work on a job together? Did you give him any fatherly advice before starting here?

**IA:** Shaun and I have done some apartment jobs together in the past. I'd like to think he's adopted my work ethic, he's a hard working guy who produces quality work.

**AG:** What's your favorite extinguisher type?

**IA:** I guess my favorite type of extinguisher is ABC multipurpose powder. It covers all the bases and is affordable.





# BORING DRILL INSPECTION

## **Armando Morales, Lead Tech:**

When I found out we were working on a “Boring” machine I have to admit, I thought they meant a dull machine. Soon it came to light what the project was, and this made the job anything but boring. It involves The Washington DC Clean Rivers program. This machine imported from Italy, is digging three tunnels under the city of DC to help clean up the trash and debris that gather after a heavy rain storm. Jesse Bland and I were in the heart of the machine where the Ansul-A-101-50 manual actuation system was to be inspected. It was an honor to be able to be part of such an extraordinary project.

## **David Gates, Salesman:**

Dillon Fluid Power contacted me about testing a manual industrial system, they provided a cut sheet of the system but I never saw the tunneling/ boring machine it was protection. When I saw the pictures Armando took of the project, I was impressed. I also learned from Armando to ask questions about the project that I never thought to ask. Like, are there OSHA underground requirements? After we were awarded the contract, I found out this was a union job. Dillon Fluid Power had to get approval from management for Fireline to complete the inspection. I have been doing this for 16 years. Still more to experience and learn.







# FIRELINE “SERVES” OUR MILITARY

*by Shannon Adkins*

Fireline provides a variety of Fire Protection services at the US Naval Academy all of which are extremely important but the restaurant suppression systems we inspect are really put to the test every day.

During a recent site walkthrough at the Academy I learned that meal service is offered to 4,000 midshipmen. The cafeteria extends out in 3 directions and all 4,000 men and women are in one room at one time being served food cooked in massive pots, ovens, grills and open ranges.

In the case of a fire our systems not only prevent excessive damage to this historic landmark, 2nd oldest of five U.S. academies, it also protects the lives of midshipmen and workers alike.

While this is no more important than the suppression system protecting the hood at a small café the size and sheer volume of the equipment we protect is mind blowing.



## INVENTORY TIME IS NEARLY HERE!

Currently, we are planning for the physical inventory count which is scheduled for Thursday, September 20th. A select few counts truck counts will begin on Wednesday and reports will be balanced on Friday. If you are involved in this process, please review the Pre-Count and Physical Count Instructions that were recently emailed to you. Technicians can assist by organizing the material on their trucks and requesting inventory from the warehouse by close of business on Wednesday, September 19th. Your cooperation during this process is much appreciated.



# Happy Birthday!

## SEPTEMBER

Ken Humphrey .....	1
Lou Lucas.....	1
Matt Benfield .....	3
Ashley Jones .....	4
Jackie Ulloa .....	6
Harry Lowman .....	8
Jon Morris.....	9
Dwon Bess .....	13
Janet Griffin.....	18
Edwar Hernandez Mejia ....	18
Rob Gardner .....	20
Jim Colgan.....	21
Mark Meyer .....	24
Rob Stallings .....	24
Tyler Confer .....	26
Rachel Gibb .....	29
Keith Knickman.....	29
Alex Curtis.....	30

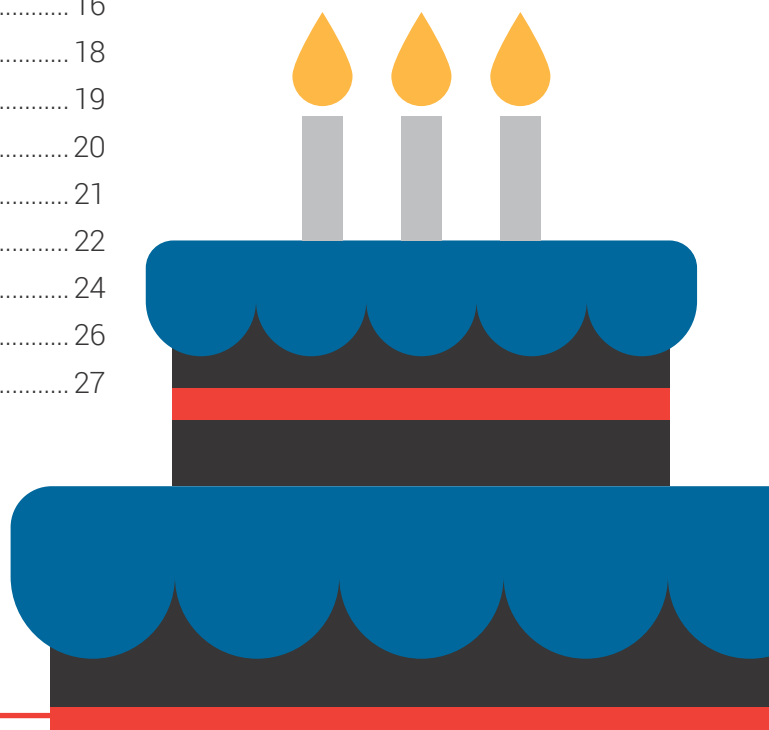
## OCTOBER

Dennis Burns.....	1
James Porter .....	4
Marvin Argueta .....	5
Dan Evangelisti .....	6
Mike Touch .....	9
Steve Hale .....	10
TJ Timpson.....	10
Ken Barnhart .....	12
Mike Grow .....	12
Lisa Tiedemann.....	13

Mike Levasseur.....	17
Heyer Meyer .....	18
Ken Scholl .....	23
Ahmad Harris.....	26
Joseph Hipkins.....	26
TJ Smallwood, II .....	26
Elizabeth Adkins.....	31

## NOVEMBER

Debbie Lanham .....	1
Doug Wright.....	1
Dave Krenzer .....	3
Robbie Kershner.....	4
Neil Walters.....	5
Chris Denbow.....	6
Alley Tucker.....	8
Mike Fuster .....	11
Barb Haas .....	13
Deion Minor .....	13
Patrick Denbow .....	15
Fred Anders .....	16
Mitch D'Angelo.....	18
Craig Steinbock .....	19
George Armstrong.....	20
Amanda Drury.....	21
Sharon Waters .....	22
Cleyde Soto.....	24
Jeremy Mohny .....	26
Fawn Dyson.....	27





# Saving Money for Your 401k, Where Can You Cut Spending?

There is an opportunity cost associated with every one of your purchases. What if you invested that money for your retirement instead?





# Company Snap Shots



*The Fireline Pool*



*At Fenway Park*



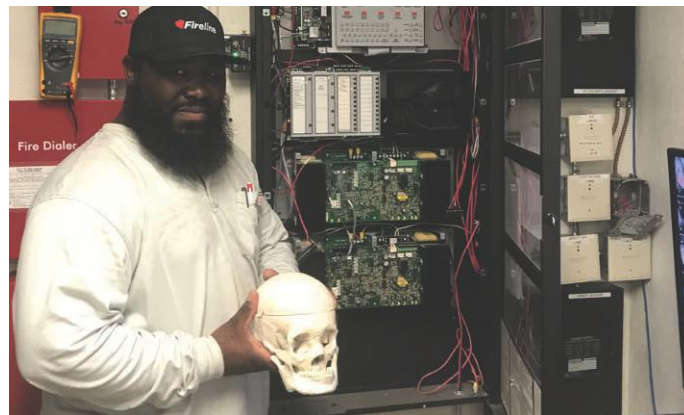
*Fire Pump Training*



*Crazy Socks*



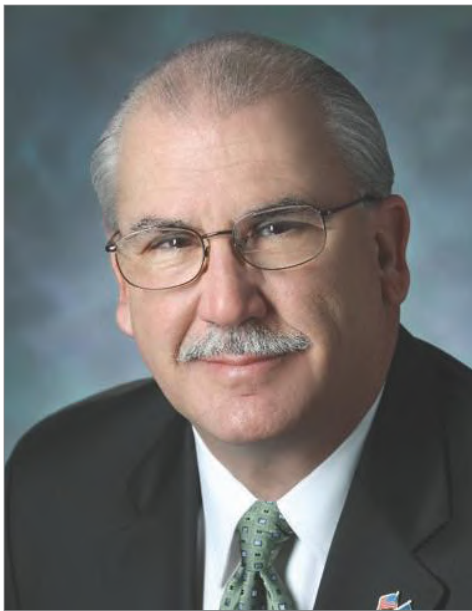
*NIFAD Attendees in Vegas*



*Dwon Studying Alarm and Anatomy*







## Norm Mason – Retiring a Fireline Legend

There are few people here who love working at Fireline more than Norm Mason. Since 1991 he has been the champion of the Fire Alarm department, starting what is now one of the largest departments in the company. The Fire Alarm team has won countless awards for its performance in the industry and much of that success is thanks to Norm's hard work and dedication. Since his first day here he has worked with an incredible passion that has influenced countless people here. His customers adore him (few contractors respond faster to email than Norm) and his staff as well.

It is this love of working here that makes Norm's decision to retire so difficult. Yet Norm agrees that it is time. Norm, thank you. We have been blessed to have you here and wish you many happy days in retirement.

## ORIOLES GAME





## AMANDA WHITEHURST

### *From a customer*

I just wanted to extend my gratitude to your office and staff for the wonderful service we received this week. Our site is currently undergoing some complaints from residents which has the Fire Marshal's involved and they requested we have our fire extinguishers inspected ASAP. I called and spoke with Amanda Whitehurst yesterday and she had our technician John Pierce out here TODAY! She was ever so helpful and John was very knowledgeable, helpful and understanding of our situation.



## KYLE DEAN AND JOSH DOWNEY

### *From a customer*

I wanted to share something with you ... we're doing a bit of construction and as I entered my office this AM, I passed two young Fireline Techs moving sprinklers. Our facilities manager (George) introduced them to me ...

1 - they were friendly and professional (looked me in the eye and shook my hand).

2 - said good things about Fireline... they had already told George about how well they are treated at Fireline.

3 - George also said your guys were flexible, easy to work with and were focused on making him happy.



## ROBBIE KERSHNER

### *From a competitor*

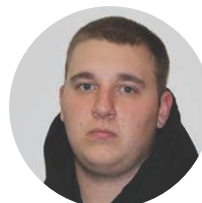
I just wanted to thank you for the awesome job yesterday. Speaking with the customer, they were very impressed with your professionalism and knowledge of the system and how to get it fixed. Thanks for helping us out a huge jam!



## SALLY DEWITT & DENNIS BURNS

### *From a customer*

I spoke to a lady at your office by the name of Sally. She was such a pleasant person to speak to on the phone and very helpful and caring with regards to solving a problem at a different property she manages. She went on to say that the tech we sent out, Dennis Burns, was very professional and knew all about their system. He explained everything that he was going to do and then did it.



## JOSH DOWNEY & DAVID MCKENZIE

### *From a co-worker*

I wanted to thank you for lending Josh Downey and Dave McKenzie to us the help clean out the old sprinkler warehouse. They worked up there in the heat for 2 days and did a great job, it's just about empty now and we're ahead of schedule thanks to them.







## ERIC MCCLOUD

### *From a manager*

Eric went out on a service call Wednesday and Thursday and provided a level of service and expertise that left the customer glowing. The customer told me his confidence in Fireline was diminishing until he worked with Eric. He stated Eric renewed his confidence in Fireline and the level of service we are able to provide. It's awesome to get a "great job" from a customer but when you get a game changing comment like this it makes you proud to be a part of it.



## WOODY WOODWARD

### *From a customer*

Woody is an excellent technician who diagnosed the wiring problem and repaired it to ensure the safety of our staff and patrons. We are thankful that we have a service agreement in place so that Fireline will conduct yearly inspections and maintenance as needed. You and your staff provide excellent customer service! We will highly recommend Fireline to the owners of other businesses who are in need of the services that Fireline provides.



## JANET GRIFFIN

### *From a co-worker*

Customer called Janet because they dumped a Co2 system. She organized and lead effort to transport 40 100lb cylinders for hydro and or refill and had the system back online the same day. She organized this from start to finish. They had to be amazed. As a true, leader, she gave the techs and shop employees full credit.



## THE BWI TEAM

### *From a customer*

I wanted to express my appreciation for the efforts from your team today at Martin State. Fred, Ross, Mike, Ricky, and Tyler all got very dirty and very hot uncovering the leaking sprinkler pipe at Martin State.



## SALLY DEWITT

### *From a co-worker*

Customer was so happy with Sally's help. Customer was worried about

something they forgot to do and Sally spoke so calmly to the customer and took care of the issue it took her stress level down 5 notches! The customer was so impressed with Sally's demeanor and superior customer service. The customer said "Sally was such a pleasure to speak with and what an asset she is to Fireline!"



## MATT BENFIELD & JOHNNY OSBORNE

### *From a customer*

I had two of your technicians here for two days last week. Matt Benfield has been here many times and I know that I do not need to tell you what a great job Matt always does. Johnny Osborne was also here. One of the main reasons that I truly love your company is the way that you consistently find these young people and let them learn a trade. I was very impressed by Johnny and the way that he works and how polite he is. You give people a chance to have more than a job. You give people careers and a chance for good lives. As always, thank you very much!





# New to the Team

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



*Lisa Tiedemann  
Job Billing  
6/11/18*



*Eric McCloud  
Systems Service  
6/25/18*



*Justin Wurtzer  
Portables Service  
7/2/18*



*Marvin Arqueta  
Special Hazards  
7/16/18*



*Dave McKenzie  
Special Hazards  
7/30/18*



*Brad Ramey  
Systems Service  
7/30/18*



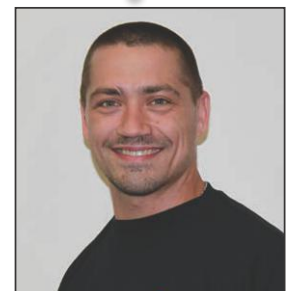
*Ahmad Harris  
Restaurant Systems  
6/4/18*



*Deion Minor  
Fire Alarm Sales  
6/4/18*



*Jeff Richards  
Fire Alarm Systems  
6/4/18*



*Matthew Merson  
Restaurant Systems  
6/4/18*



## NEW TO FIRELINE?

Join our private Facebook Group. Search for "Fireline Employees" and request to be added.



*Luke Schmitt  
Systems Service  
5/21/18*



*Mike Fuster  
Fire Alarm Sales  
5/7/18*



*Mitch D'Angelo  
Portables Shop  
5/7/18*



## Congratulations



**Dan and Kandyce Kiser's  
Daniel Joseph Paul Kiser Jr.  
08-08-18 • 8lbs 4.6oz**



**Troy Moseley's Baby  
Skye Lillian Moseley  
07-03-18 • 8lbs 3oz pounds**



**Tim Custer's  
Timothy Dean Custer III  
8-18-18 at 11:20am  
6lbs 11oz • 18 inches**



**Kyle Dean's  
Kayden Michael Dean  
09-07-18 at 3:35 am  
7lbs 13oz, 20.5 inches long**





# Company Snap Shots



*Reggie and His Plate of Yum*



*Monitoring Tower Repair*



*Edwin Becomes a US Citizen!*



*Service Sales Meeting*



*Twinsies!*



*Supervisor Office Interior Design*



*Vehicle System Team*







# EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD



2ND QUARTER - DANICA MALONE  
SYSTEM SERVICE



2ND QUARTER - DWON BESS  
SYSTEM SALES



2ND QUARTER - TROY MOSELEY



2ND QUARTER - LAURIE PRYOR  
PORTABLES



## *Safety Incentive Program*



TROY MOSELEY • MAY



DERRICK MEILHAMMER • JULY



STEVE HALE • AUGUST



# YES, YOU CONDUIT!

With a little bit of training, you can step up to the next level!  
If you are a seasoned tech looking for knowledge on new systems, or a new tech looking to brush up on old equipment; we have something for you! For training and suggestions for new training ideas, please contact:

**Matt Meyers, Training Coordinator**  
**[mmeyers@fireline.com](mailto:mmeyers@fireline.com), 410-247-1422 x245**





# Fireline Anniversaries

## SEPTEMBER

Nate English	1
Chris Pressley	1
Angelo Santos	1
Doug Wright	1
Alex Curtis	2
Jason Swieczkowski	2
Kirsten Chandler	3
Collin Crieghton	3
Keith Knickman	5
Robbie Kershner	8
Matt Williams	12
Dan Evangelisti	14
Justin Fishback	14
Ted Reitterer	21
Cindy Rueppel	40

## OCTOBER

Dennis Burns	1
Sally DeWitt	1
Mark Nelson	1
Brian Slacum	1
Tommy Welch	1
Daniel Whiteaker	1
Matt Adams	2
Joe Dieumegarde	2
Tim Gott	2
Steve Sensibaugh	3
Matt Benfield	7
Mike Levasseur	7

Shannon Adkins	9
Ken Humphrey	10
Jason Litten	12
Laurie Pryor	12
Jim Colgan	13
Frank Chenoweth	34

## NOVEMBER

Stephen Coleman	1
Alley Tucker	1
Joe Parmer	2
Tyler Smith	3
Fred Anders	4
Kyle Dean	4
Jimmy Keedy	4
Elizabeth Adkins	5
Ron Eure	10
Bill Gibb	22
Kelly Coon	39

