



Communications Department

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JFD awards ceremony to honor firefighter, officer of year

Jonesboro Fire Department's prestigious firefighter and officer of the year awards will be presented at the department's annual honors ceremony, 6 p.m. Monday at Station No. 3, 2212 Brazos Street.

Fire Chief Kevin Miller invites the public to the presentation, where Tommy Hall will receive the highest honor bestowed each year upon a JFD firefighter. Hall is JFD's 2016 Firefighter of the Year, an award presented to the firefighter deemed to best exemplify qualities critical to achieving the Jonesboro Fire Department's mission to protect lives, property and the environment of the City of Jonesboro.

Driver Keith Carter will receive the 2016 Officer of the Year award. That award goes to the officer who exemplifies the leadership and dedication to duty that allows the members under their leadership to achieve the Jonesboro Fire Department mission.

The award winners were chosen by a committee that took and reviewed nominations from their peers.

Carter is a driver who has been with JFD for 13 years. The letter nominating him for the honor described Carter as "the moral and ethical compass of his crew.

"He has shown a high level of selflessness and continually demonstrated good and sound judgment on emergency scenes and around the station. He is eager and willing to help any member of the department whether on duty or off. He is constantly eager to better himself, continuing training drills on his own after others are done just because he wants to be better at whatever task is at hand. He performs his duties near flawlessly, whether it is operating a fire pump, driving the rig, maneuvering an aerial ladder into position, or giving an educational presentation to kids who have come to tour the station."

His crew mates credit him with "reviving" Sparky the animatronics dog, which he found it in a training room closet. "He is the reason we wedge that heavy thing into the back of the engine

when we do school presentations – because he loves kids and wants them to have the best experience possible,” wrote a crew member in Carter’s nomination. “Keith is the one who we’ll find cleaning equipment on the apparatus immediately after radio check. His hard work and commitment is what makes Driver Keith Carter truly deserving to be the Jonesboro Fire Department’s “2016 Officer of the Year!”

Hall is a four-year JFD firefighter who “has shown great enthusiasm for the job and has been very active in gaining knowledge to make himself a great asset to the department,” according to his nomination. “Tommy is always willing to train on new techniques, as well as becoming more proficient at the basics.

“He has a ‘good is not good enough’ attitude, never settling for minimum or subpar performance. He spends countless hours studying and training to be the very best at what he does. He has been very active in the SORT and HAZMAT teams. He has taken every class he can to make himself one of the most knowledgeable and go-to guys on both teams.

“Tommy is an integral part of his crew and making sure every member is trained to proficiency by initiating training and passing on what knowledge he has acquired.”

Also Monday, a Distinguished Career award – the firefighter’s version of a Hall of Fame induction, will be bestowed upon a JFD retiree, and members of a MedicOne ambulance team that helped rescue victims from a December structure fire in Jonesboro will be honored.

A swearing in ceremony for new firefighters and officers also will be held, as well as a badge-pinning ceremony for Capt. Donnie Smith, driver Josh Rook and firefighter Parker Copeland.

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