

# FIRST RESPONDERS

## OUR HEROES ON THE HOME FRONT

The Daily Home

May 2020

### THANK YOU FOR GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND

#### Communities appreciate the work of first responders



Regional Paramedical Services/Submitted

This photograph, taken before the COVID-19 pandemic began, encapsulates the tense, emotional and life-and-death situations first responders find themselves dealing with in the line of duty. Such selfless and dedicated individuals play a critical and necessary role in local communities.



**BY KELLI TIPTON**

Special to The Daily Home

In May of 2016, The Daily Home began honoring first responders in Talladega and St. Clair counties with an annual special issue that recognizes their contributions and crucial roles in our communities.

It has been a way for us to show our appreciation and gratitude for their courage, their commitment and dedication and their willingness to put themselves in harm's way to provide life-saving medical treatment to the seriously injured or gravely ill people they encounter when they are dispatched to the scene of an emergency.

This year, in an unprecedented glob-

al pandemic, our first responders are on the front lines battling a highly contagious, potentially deadly novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

And so are hundreds of doctors and nurses who are at risk for exposure every time they report to work, but they bravely put themselves in the path of this virus to care for patients who are brought into emergency rooms with some or all of the known symptoms.

Patients who test positive for the virus are admitted to special designated COVID-19 units that are separated from other patients. Nurses who care for these patients administer medications, monitor their vital signs and temperatures, and perform other tests and procedures which require them to be in close proximity to the patients, their bedding and any surfaces that may be contaminated.

And while the duties and responsibilities of doctors and nurses are a calling and the reason they chose a career in the medical field, this contagion has changed procedures and protocols and added extra duties to their jobs.

For example, the requirement for all hospital personnel to wear a face mask was necessary, but it makes communication with patients and with each other difficult.

The extra training and information they

are required to learn is often presented in webinars. These add extra hours to their days, and the information changes with each new directive, mandate or government regulation put in place to curb the virus from spreading and ultimately eradicate it.

One nurse I spoke with told me that first limiting bedside visitors and then prohibiting them altogether added a whole new set of responsibilities to her already extremely busy shift. The phones at the front desk would not stop ringing, as one concerned family member after another called to check on their loved one. A new rule was adopted that required the patient to choose one contact person, and calls to the contact were scheduled to provide them with updated information.

Some doctors have found that using Skype or Facetime on their cell phone is a great way to speak to a patient's family while doing their rounds, and allowing loved ones to see any changes in the patient's condition. These short chats often made everyone smile, including the doctor.

But every first responder I spoke with, especially officers in law enforcement, said that COVID-19 and social distancing and facemasks they are required to wear makes their job more difficult by limiting their ability to interact with and be a part of their com-

munity. A necessary precaution they're following, to be sure, but a definite challenge.

Community policing involves being out among the citizens they serve and protect. With schools closed, they can't hold educational assemblies to inform students about the dangers of using drugs or becoming involved in gang activity. And they are responding to an increasing number of domestic violence calls resulting from the stress of self-isolation and loss of income families are experiencing.

When they enter a home, they must be hyper-vigilant and aware of their surroundings and any movements made by residents. Masks obscure facial expressions that usually indicate a person is about to engage them in a fight, and make it difficult to de-escalate a tense situation. And they must assume everyone has the virus and stay 6 feet from them while in the home.

Our police officers, firefighters, medical professionals and essential workers deserve our thanks for their ability to adapt to and overcome these changes while keeping their emotions under control. We also appreciate their efforts to boost morale in the communities they serve by never complaining about these added responsibilities. Their willingness to go above and beyond is admirable and exemplary.

## Saluting the heroes of Talladega and St. Clair counties

First responders – peace officers, firefighters, emergency services providers, 911 dispatchers, medical professionals – have been described as those who run toward danger, rather than away from it, to provide order and safety, life-saving medical care and comfort to those who have been affected by traffic accidents, crimes, fires, natural disasters and threats to public health.

Talladega and St. Clair counties are home to hun-

dreds of dedicated, service-minded individuals who make up the first responder organizations recognized in this special publication. Efforts were made to reach out to every law enforcement agency, fire department, emergency services organization and hospital in both counties, and we have endeavored to have as many as possible represented in these pages.

However, not all of the first responders invited to contribute information for this publication were able

to respond to our request. That's understandable, given all of the demands on their time and attention. They remain constantly on call, ready to provide assistance whenever and wherever it is needed. Many are volunteers, serving their communities without pay while working full-time jobs and caring for family responsibilities.

See directory of agencies on pages 6A and 7A



# Health care professionals are on the front lines battling COVID-19 Pandemic has been 'emotionally draining' on local medical staffs

BY SAM PRICKETT  
AND DENISE SINCLAIR  
Special to The Daily Home

Many individuals have been staying at home since mid-March due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has necessitated social distancing measures to prevent the disease from spreading. But some don't have that option — particularly nurses, doctors and hospital personnel, who have found themselves on the front lines of the battle against the coronavirus, often at great risk to themselves.

Three local medical professionals spoke to The Daily Home this month about the additional stresses that COVID-19 has placed on their jobs, as well as about what keeps them motivated during this unprecedented and dangerous time.

April Abel,  
St. Vincent's St. Clair



April Abel serves as the hospital's nursing house supervisor for the night shift. "I'm in charge of the nurses in general — scheduling, staffing, and I also help out in the different units as they need me, and make rounds of the different units," she says. "It's kind of a busy job, an important job and kind of a stressful job at times."

Despite her experience — she won the DAISS Award for Extraordinary Nurses earlier this year — she's never quite had to deal with something like the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We've had people with other illnesses like flu or other things like that, but this particular virus is just more deadly, of course, and can spread more easily to other people. It's very scary when you watch the news and you see other areas like New York and places like that, where this has had such an impact on people. And it's also just had such an impact on our lives in general, because schools are closed, churches are closed, people can't live their daily lives. People are out of work. It's very stressful, emotionally and physically."

Now, Abel says, nurses at St. Vincent's are operating under new regulations "in order to care for people and keep ourselves safe at the same time." That means a greater focus on protective gear and new rules for how to dispose of gowns, masks, gloves, hat covers and shoe cutters, "so that we don't spread any germs to anyone else."

"We're required at this point to always have a mask on," she says. "I've gotten to where I just keep my mask on all the time. We have to change it out frequently, of course. You also have to be aware of everyone around you, making sure they're wearing their masks and doing what they're supposed to do."

The staff at St. Vincent's St. Clair has always been a "close-knit" group because of the hospital's small size, according to Abel, but the staff has had to work even closer together to avoid inadvertently spreading the virus. "I just think everybody's been taking this very well," she says. "It's been difficult because it's been very different, but I think everyone's worked together."

"One night in particular, one nurse had, like, four patients. She had one patient with a possibility of having COVID-19, and they were isolated." But seeing the other three patients meant that the nurse would have to "dress out" multiple times, so Abel took the reins.

"I said, 'Look, let me just take the patient and you continue on with your others, because I didn't want there to be even a slight chance that there might be exposure.' A lot of times, so that nurses don't have to dress out multiple times, I will just take that one potentially exposed patient on my own and take care of them."

While the COVID-19 pandemic has caused an influx of patients for many hospitals, St. Vincent's St. Clair has seen a decrease in one type of patient: emergency room visitors. That's because, Abel says, "people are just fearful that if they come to an emergency room they might be exposed to COVID-19 in some way. I think that's been a big issue."

St. Vincent's, she says, has taken significant steps to assuage those fears, including taking patients' temperatures at the door and preventing non-patients from entering. "If somebody brings you to the ER, they actually have to wait in the car. We don't allow anyone in — unless, of course, it's a parent with their child. Anyone else has to sit in their car, so we don't have anybody in the waiting room that could expose somebody to the virus."

She's had to coax at least one patient into the hospital — a man who drove to the hospital because he was experiencing chest pain, but couldn't bring himself to go inside. "He was afraid to come inside at all," says Abel, who met him in the parking lot. "He had actually been in his car for a little while. He asked me if it was safe to come inside, and I said, 'Absolutely.'"

Meg Grey,  
Citizens Baptist Medical Center



Being a health care professional during the COVID-19 pandemic has been "intense," says Meg Grey, "but it has always been intense by the nature of the profession."

Grey is the director of the emergency department at Citizens Baptist in Talladega, where she also serves as the infection prevention nurse. Before COVID-19, she'd also managed the hospital's intensive care unit (ICU), though she had to delegate that responsibility to another nurse when the coronavirus "became a real threat to our community." Now, her full attention is focused on the "emergency management portion of COVID-19," in other words, how the hospital processes potentially infected patients.

"Initially, our first priority was to solidify our process to identify and separate potentially infectious patients that presented for treatment," she says. "We set up an alternative treatment area for those patients that were stable and would not require hospitalization. There was also a tremendous amount of information that was sent our way daily. Recommendations and guidelines changed frequently, which necessitated that we adapt our processes and how we delivered care to our patients."

Much like the staff of St. Vincent's St. Clair, Grey says the staff at Citizens Baptist is "close-knit because we are a smaller hospital and rely so heavily on one another." The pandemic has drawn them even closer together.

"In the beginning, I saw my coworkers more than I saw my husband and children," she says. "We just pull together and get the job done. There is still so much that is unknown about COVID-19. As a team, we have to draw from each others' expertise and make the best decision we can for our patients."

For example, when the hospital resumed elective procedures on April 30 — the result of a statewide order from Gov. Kay Ivey — Grey says she worked with the hospital's director of surgical services and patient access manager to establish a COVID-19 testing procedure for elective patients. "This sounds simple enough but proved to be a complicated task," she says. "We could not have accomplished this had we not worked together well as a team."

But her primary focus, of course, is on the patients, many of whom have also experienced painful changes as a result of the pandemic. "As a nurse, I have always treated my patients like I would want a member of my family to be treated. Taking care of the patient's family is part of taking care of the patient. When COVID-19 became our new

reality, visitation to the hospital stopped. It has been difficult to see patients separated from their support person, knowing that someone is sick and alone in the hospital."

Grey does worry about contracting the virus herself — "I'd be dishonest if I said I did not," she says — but concentrating on the patients keeps that fear from weighing too heavily on her mind.

"I became a nurse to help others. You cannot panic and be effective as a nurse. I have to trust the science and remember that I am protecting myself every day, the most effective way I can. I wear my PPE, wash my hands and social distance whenever I can. When I cannot, I am protected by the equipment I wear. I wear a mask every time I leave my house... When recommendations are made to the general public for social distancing and facial coverings, please know it is not just for your protection, but also for the protection of our healthcare workers. The more people are unprotected, the greater the risk."

Grey says she's also motivated by her family "to keep pushing forward" through the interminable pandemic. "I would want someone to be there to care for my family if I could not. I just try and pay it forward."

Dr. Pallavi Sunni,  
Coosa Valley Medical Center



Taking care of patients during this pandemic has been "emotionally challenging" for medical responders at Coosa Valley, according to the medical director of the center's emergency department.

While providing medical care to patients with a virus for which there is no cure yet, Dr. Pallavi Sunni knows first-hand how dangerous COVID-19 is. Sunni said the hospital was ready to treat patients as they started coming to the emergency department, "but

it is also a scary realization about the virus. It is emotionally challenging in so many ways."

The medical director said CDC criteria is followed when testing and treating COVID-19 patients. "Testing is not provided to everyone, just those individuals with symptoms," she said. Symptoms include fever, coughing and shortness of breath.

"Those testing positive with less symptoms were sent home to quarantine in place and told to have their family members to do the same. Those more serious patients were hospitalized, again, all on criteria set forth by the CDC," she explained.

The emergency department also set up a car triage. "We went to cars in some cases to make it more convenient for those suspecting they had COVID-19. This was another way to keep from exposing others."

Sunni said those being treated for COVID-19 "seemed to know all about it," yet medical staff made sure they understood the facts about the virus.

"The community has been responsive about what this virus is and have accepted what the hospital needs to do. They understand the process and all are receptive," the doctor pointed out.

The emergency department personnel works to keep themselves from getting the virus and also to prevent taking it home to their families.

One way the medical staff does this is by taking a shower when getting to the hospital, then changing into hospital scrubs. At the end of their shift, they take another shower before leaving.

Sunni said the most difficult part of this pandemic has been not being able to be close to her family.

"I couldn't hug my children or be around them. Again, that was so emotionally challenging. I am thankful for the support of my family, friends and co-workers. Amy (Price) would text me every day and say 'hang in there.'" Price is chief nursing/operating officer at CVMC.

The hospital employs more than 550 individuals, and no additional staff has been added during the pandemic. Since March 1, CVMC's emergency department tested 159 patients, with 14 testing positive. The number of patients being tested for COVID-19 has slowed down the last two weeks, Sunni said.

A board-certified physician, she has worked in emergency medicine since 2013. Before working in the ER, she worked as a hospitalist and had her own internal medicine practice.

Price said the hospital is grateful for all of its medical staff members and their leadership during the pandemic.

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Bob Crisp/The Daily Home  
Officer Trey Miller of the Lincoln Police Department was nominated for the Greater Talladega Chamber of Commerce's 2020 Valor First Responder of the Year award.

# Miller: 'I could not do the job I do without public support' Local peace officer praises community for backing first responders

BY TAYLOR MITCHELL  
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The COVID-19 pandemic has been a disruption for many, but for one Lincoln police officer, it has caused a major shake up to his job.

Trey Miller is the school resource officer (SRO) for Lincoln schools, and when the schools closed, Miller's job changed. Miller's normal work involves protecting and serving children in all three of Lincoln's schools. He describes his job as law enforcement officer, teacher and counselor all in one.

He is a native of Talladega, where his father Donnie Miller once served as a city councilman and now owns Miller's BBQ. Dealing with the public has always been a part of his life, and he has always loved talking to people.

With this in mind, when he was offered a position with the Talladega Police Department in 2013, he happily took it. Since then, he has moved to Lincoln Police Department and has been serving as the SRO for two years.

Miller said that a large portion of his job is to provide outreach to children. He said that his job helps him to solve one of the largest problems he feels law enforcement faces: fear of police officers that parents sometimes build in children.

Sometimes, he says, when he walks into a store he will hear a mother caution a child that if they do not behave they will call the police on them. This often causes a fear of law enforcement in children.

"It gets under my skin," Miller said, adding that when he sees it happen, he always

tries to inform the child that they can rely on him. Building trust with students is often the crux of his job as SRO.

He considers the hardest part of his job to be seeing students have to deal with the consequences of their wrong actions. He said that oftentimes he knows that a student is usually a great kid that made a bad decision.

"I know that kid made a judgment call," Miller said, adding that he always tells those students that they need to learn from their mistakes. Still, it is often hard to deal with seeing those consequences, no matter what they are.

Miller said his job has changed in many ways since schools have closed and he has returned to normal patrol work. "It's different." But he has tried to keep in touch with students as much as he can.

He said one of the things he misses most is not being able to interact with special needs students, which is often incredibly rewarding. One experience he found particularly rewarding involved a request from a graduating student to be able to wear his vest, and he was able to make that happen by meeting the student at the football field.

Another aspect of his work that he feels is very important is public support. "I could not do the job I do without public support. It would make our job 10 times harder."

He said that he feels Lincoln is a particularly good place to work because the city does support its police department. "I think 90 percent of people in Lincoln love the police." In many ways, his role as a peace officer is important in creating that support, as he continues to protect and support the city's children.



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# Serving as a first responder during unusually stressful times *Pell City police officer trades the gridiron for the patrol car*

BY TAYLOR MITCHELL  
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The coronavirus pandemic has been a stressful time for everyone no matter their profession or background, but for local first responders, it has now become another part of the normal work day.

Officer Thomas Gray of the Pell City Police Department describes COVID-19 as part of the job. "It's one more thing we have to add to our knowledge of how to handle things," Gray said, adding that the pandemic does add some stress to his job but that it's important to understand that police work can always be stressful.

He said that all it really took was adapting to the new circumstances. It also helps to have some experience. Gray has spent six years working for PCPD.

Officer Gray is a native of Vestavia Hills and went to Samford University. Police work wasn't exactly his first career choice, however, as after college, he played offense for the Tennessee Titans in the National Football League. An old college friend had gone into law enforcement and got him interested in the field. He said he chose to come to Pell City due to family in the area and an opening the department had at the time.

While some might not see anything in common between football and fighting crime, Gray said it's not as different as they might think. For him, it was another process in adapting. "You never stop protecting, I guess."

He currently serves as one of the school resource officers for Pell City Schools, a position that has also seen him go through some adaptation as schools closed down. He said that while school is shut down he

has been working normal patrol duty, but has also been checking on students. On May 8, he actually spent the day delivering cards of congratulation to graduating seniors.

Despite the pandemic, Gray said one of the biggest challenges he has encountered in police work is public perception. He said a lot of people watch crime shows and subsequently develop unrealistic expectations of the system. One of the biggest misconceptions is just how long handling certain matters can take.

Part of a policeman's job now involves explaining that to the people they serve, and that sometimes it may take awhile, but officers always want to get it right. Another challenge Gray said he deals with is coping emotionally with some of the distressing situations officers have to see and become involved in. "You struggle dealing with those situations."

For his specific job, the issue is that he often deals with situations involving children. He said that he always wants to be sure that situations come to positive resolutions, as he is there to support the students more than anything else. "You try to be there for them," he said.

Gray said that one of the best parts of his job is working in Pell City and knowing that many parents trust him to protect their children, saying that is a sign of real trust. But he believes that trust is one of the great things about the city in general and that people in Pell City are constantly supporting their officers.

While people may be seeing that support more than usual during the pandemic, with residents and businesses donating items such as masks to the department, it has certainly always been there, he said.



Submitted photo  
Officer Thomas Gray, right, was named Police Officer of the Year by the Pell City Chamber of Commerce during the organization's annual awards ceremony in January. Gray accepts the award from Chief Paul Irwin.

**"There are a lot of great men and women within the police department and within the community who make great things happen in Pell City." — Police Chief Paul Irwin**

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# ‘There’s so much that goes on behind the scenes’ Sylacauga’s new fire chief describes life as a first responder

BY SHANE DUNAWAY  
sdunaway@dailyhome.com

In some alternate timeline, Sylacauga Fire Chief Nate Osgood very well could have been serving as a police chief or climbing the ranks in a different first responder field.

“I actually grew up most of my childhood wanting to go into law enforcement,” Osgood said. “When I turned 18, I joined my local volunteer fire department to get a taste of the public service world, and the rest is history. I just fell in love with it and never looked back.”

A firefighter for more than 12 years, Osgood has worked for Sylacauga for eight years. An Eclectic native, he was named chief of the Sylacauga Fire Department in March.

Prior to working in Sylacauga, Osgood served with the Wetumpka Fire Department.

“It was definitely an early career goal of mine to make chief,” Osgood said. “It happened faster than average for me, which was a blessing. I’m excited to be in this position early in my career and have an opportunity to really set the city of Sylacauga up for long-term growth and stability, knowing that I’m not going to be retiring in the next 3-5 years.”

Osgood said the firefighter field features many diverse roles, with some looking to reach the highest point they can reach in their careers, while others opt to specialize in a portion of the process they enjoy and excel in the most.

“The wonderful thing about the world is that it takes all types to make it go around, right?” he said. “We have guys who, all they want to do is drive the fire engine, and when they sign on as a rookie, they make it up to that point to where they get to drive the truck, and they’re happy. They don’t want to go any higher or any further, but they’re going to be the best driver that you could ever possibly ask for.”

“You have those firefighters who want to be that nozzle guy. They want to be the nozzle man. They want to be the first one in the door. They don’t care about advancement, but they’re going to be the guy that you know that you can depend on to go in there and take

care of business when it needs to get done.”

He added the level of support for the general public in this region of the county, particularly the South and especially Sylacauga, makes it easier to brush aside misconceptions about first responders or rumblings from people who say they just sit around watching TV or washing fire trucks.

“There’s so much more than that that goes on behind the scenes,” Osgood said. “We train regularly. We have to be prepared for what we call an ‘all-hazard’ response. Basically, if somebody doesn’t need the police department or doesn’t need an ambulance, but they have a problem they don’t know how to solve, they’re going to call the fire department. When we show up, we have to be able to figure it out.”

Osgood said figuring it out when no one else could ought to be the first line of a firefighter’s job description.

“It really doesn’t matter what the problem is -- we see a little bit of everything,” he said. “We have to be ready if that happens, whatever ‘that’ event is, whether it’s a hazardous materials spill, a large multi-acre grass fire or woods fire, a large commercial structure that’s on fire or a vehicle accident with extrication -- you name it. When it happens, we have to be trained and ready to go. There’s never an excuse for us to show up and not know that.”

That vigilance and determination persists on days when calls may come less frequently.

“There are some days where we may not have a lot going on, or we may not answer many calls on a given day,” Osgood said. “That doesn’t mean we’re not ready to at the drop of a hat. That’s one of the things that makes the dedication of our firefighters so awesome.”

Osgood said being a first responder can take a mental and emotional toll on those who are sacrificing time away from families and those who’ve worked some particularly tough calls in their careers.

“There’s a lot of focus right now in the fire service on psychological health and psychological well-being because of that,” he said. “It can be, but it’s not always, that one incident or one call you answer that does that. It’s just a cumulative effect of 20 or 25 years of

seeing the same things over and over again.”

Being a first responder during the coronavirus pandemic brings its own challenges, but Osgood said Talladega County has been fortunate to not have been impacted as heavily as other communities.

“We have made a lot of preparations,” he said. “We’ve adjusted staffing and scheduling in responses. We’ve implemented new procedures for how to handle it if we have a call with a suspected case and for communications between the hospital, the E911 center and us. It’s a lot of behind-the-scenes work to make sure we are ready, but we haven’t had direct contact or calls that are directly related to the pandemic like so many other places in the country have seen.”

Osgood said he’s grateful for the public

support for first responders who serve the community when they’re working through difficult circumstances..

“Time and time again, especially after some large-scale national event such as a large tornado down here in Alabama, a hurricane, the COVID-19 response or 9/11, it really showcases how the community does care about us,” he said. “We get calls from people wanting to bring us lunch or pay for our lunch when we go out to eat or those types of things. While yes, there are times where this is a thankless job, there are times when we really feel the community rallying around us, and that means so much because we know that what we’re doing is worth it and other people understand that we’re there for them.”

## Honoring Our First Responders



We appreciate all of our first responders who are the heart of our communities and who make it a safer place to live and raise our families. You serve us selflessly with no regard for yourselves and the many holidays or special occasions that you miss.

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Submitted photo

Nate Osgood is the new chief of the Sylacauga Fire Department.

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**Childersburg Fire Department**  
122 6th Avenue SW, Childersburg  
256-378-7062

**Munford Police Department**  
115 Lions Road, Munford  
256-358-9050

**Berney Station Volunteer Fire Department**  
6256 Berney Station Road, Talladega  
256-223-8109

**County Line Volunteer Fire Department**  
55 Lake Tate Road, Sylacauga  
256-872-1104

**Eastaboga Volunteer Fire Department**  
5810 Patton Chapel Road, Eastaboga  
256-689-6022

**East Providence Volunteer Fire Department**  
3456 Providence Road, Talladega  
256-675-6869

**Fayetteville Volunteer Fire Department**  
171 Fayetteville Circle, Sylacauga  
256-404-9465

**Ironaton Volunteer Fire Department**  
4025 Ironaton Road, Talladega  
256-493-1460

**Lanier Volunteer Fire Department**  
4435 Kings Chapel Road, Alpine  
205-525-0081

**Lay Lake Volunteer Fire Department**  
716 Heasletts Road, Childersburg  
256-510-2580

**Munford Volunteer Fire Department**  
35 Martin Lane, Munford  
256-521-1963

**Oak Grove Volunteer Fire Department**  
2364 Forest Glenn Road, Oak Grove  
256-626-8885

**Renfroe Volunteer Fire Department**  
7191 Renfroe Road, Talladega  
256-223-2625

**Stemley Volunteer Fire Department**  
125 Rock Church Road, Talladega  
205-542-5343

**Sycamore Volunteer Fire Department**  
423 Main Street, Sycamore  
256-626-0935

**Waldo Volunteer Fire Department**  
39 Sorghum Lane, Talladega  
256-589-3372

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**Winterboro Volunteer Fire and Rescue**  
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**Citizens Baptist Medical Center**  
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256-362-8111

**Coosa Valley Medical Center**  
315 W Hickory Street, Sylacauga  
256-401-4000

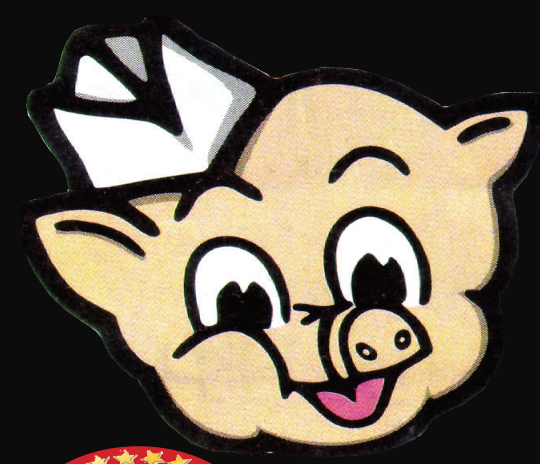
**St. Clair County Sheriff's Office**  
1610 Cogswell Avenue, Pell City  
205-884-6840

**Argo Police Department**  
100 Blackjack Road, Trusville  
205-352-2135

**Ashville Police Department**  
211 8th Street, Ashville  
205-594-4152



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**Margaret Police Department**  
125 School Street, Margaret  
205-629-5501

**Moody Police Department**  
670 Park Avenue, Moody  
205-640-0337

**Odenville Police Department**  
183 Alabama Street, Odenville  
205-629-6366

**Pell City Police Department**  
1905 1st Avenue North, Pell City  
205-884-3334

**Ragland Police Department**  
220 Fredia Street Suite 102, Ragland  
205-472-2153

**Riverside Police Department**  
379 Depot Street, Riverside  
205-338-7692

**Springville Police Department**  
6327 U.S. Highway 11, Springville  
205-467-2701

**Steele Police Department**  
4025 Pope Ave, Steele  
256-538-8145

**Argo Fire & Rescue**  
Station 1: 100 Blackjack Road, Trussville  
Station 2: 44 Hunter Drive, Trussville  
205-352-2109

**Ashville Fire & Rescue**  
2222 7th Avenue, Ashville  
205-594-5186

**Cook Springs Volunteer Fire Department**  
555 Mt. Top Loop Road, Pell City

**Cool Springs Volunteer Fire Department**  
10496 County Road 31, Ashville  
205-594-3312

**Davis Lake Volunteer Fire Department**  
221 Marietta Road, Springville  
205-467-3533

**Friendship Volunteer Fire & Rescue**  
19484 U.S. Highway 411, Springville  
205-629-2927

**Gallant Fire Department**  
Station 1: 9090 Gallant Road, Gallant  
256-538-9957  
Station 2: 14280 Gallant Road, Gallant  
256-538-5811

**Margaret Fire & Rescue**  
1120 County Road 12, Margaret  
205-629-3091

**Moody Fire & Rescue**  
911 Firefighter Boulevard, Moody  
205-640-5121 Ext. 2

**New London Volunteer Fire Department**  
4040 Logan Martin Dam Road  
205-525-5460

**Northeast St. Clair Volunteer Fire & Rescue**  
12855 County Road 24, Ashville  
205-594-4228

**Odenville Fire & Rescue**  
12618 U.S. Highway 11, Odenville  
205-629-2232

**Pell City Fire & Rescue**  
3040 Cogswell Avenue, Pell City  
Station 1: 205-338-6006  
Station 2: 205-338-7329  
Station 3: 205-338-1099  
Station 4: 205-814-0356

**Pinedale Volunteer Fire Department**  
88 Shore Drive, Ashville  
205-352-2317

**Pleasant Hill Volunteer Fire Department**  
12670 U.S. Highway 11, Springville  
205-594-7605

**Ragland Volunteer Fire Department**  
94 Church Street, Ragland  
205-472-2200

**Ragland Rescue**  
9861 County Road 26, Ragland  
205-472-2200

**Riverside Fire & Rescue**  
379 Depot Street, Riverside  
205-338-7692 ext. 3

**Shoal Creek Volunteer Fire Department**  
Station 1: 13370 Shoal Creek Road, Ashville  
Station 2: 4170 Shoal Creek Road, Ashville

**Springville Fire & Rescue**  
200 Walker Drive, Springville  
205-467-2703

**Steele Fire & Medics**  
4025 Pope Avenue, Steele  
256-538-8145

**Wattsville Fire & Rescue**  
990 Alabama Highway 144, Ragland  
205-338-9502

**Wolf Creek Volunteer Fire Department**  
4980 Wolf Creek Road South, Pell City  
205-338-9400

**Whitney Fire & Rescue**  
2973 Double Bridge Road, Steele  
205-594-3260

**Alabama Forestry Commission**  
18909 U.S. Highway 411, Springville  
205-629-6421

**St. Clair County Fire & EMS Association**  
James Robinson, president  
P.O. Box 462, Springville  
jrobinson9773@gmail.com

**St. Vincent's St. Clair**  
7063 Veterans Parkway, Pell City  
256-338-3301



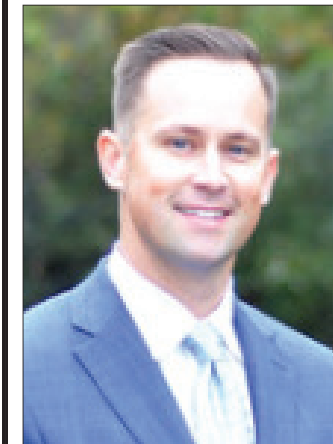
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**FIRST RESPONDERS and ESSENTIAL WORKERS**

On behalf of myself and our entire staff in the Talladega County Probate Office, we would like to tip our hats, raise our glasses with a toast, sing several verses of "For He/She's a Jolly Good Fellow" and shout out several "Atta Boy/ Girl" to all of our First Responders & Essential Workers. We acknowledge the job you do and its importance, especially in today's world. We realize many of you we will never meet until we find ourselves in a time of need. Nevertheless, today we proudly stand and salute you for always being there first!

**PROBATE JUDGE Randy Jinks & Staff**

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*Thank You*

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*We want to thank you and let you know how much we appreciate all your sacrifices and for putting your life on the line for our community!*

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# THANK YOU

## FIRST RESPONDERS FRONTLINERS



TO FIRST RESPONDERS, police officers, deputies, firefighters, medics, rescue squads, emergency medical technicians, and dispatchers. To our protectors, military, National Guard, prison and probation staff, and border security. To our frontline nurses, doctors, residents, pharmacies, home health aides, admissions, technicians, coroners and medical examiners, as well as janitorial staff. To educators, private childcare workers, lunchroom workers, school staff, bus drivers, volunteers, social workers, religious staff, charity workers, senior care and disability care providers. To farmers, agricultural workers, manufacturers, warehouse workers, rail and air transportation workers, and truck drivers. To retail workers, stockers and cashiers, and gas station attendants. To maintenance technicians, information technology and telecommunications employees, call center greeters, sanitation workers, and those working to provide fuel, keep the power on, water running clean, and sewage draining. To postal workers, mail carriers, bank and credit union workers, those who keep our legal system and financial markets operating, as well as our local, state, and national administrators. To all of you who have worked through the COVID-19 pandemic - whether on site or at home - and have not been acknowledged.

*Thank you.*



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## Regional Paramedical Services

"Our team members are absolutely all about serving their community," says director Chris Key. "That's what allows them to do the things that put their lives and their families' lives in danger day in and day out responding to such emergencies as this: treating patients for a disease that could just as easily infect them, or even worse their families. We could not ask to work with a better group of people."

"As far as coping, we have been doing fine. We have had very few infections to date. We have had adequate PPE to this point, but we are starting to run thin on certain items. Our employees have remained upbeat and compliant with not only our rules but all the federal guidelines and recommendations. This has changed the way we do things in so many aspects. Some things for the better, and some things have required an adjustment."

"The support of our community is everything to us. Otherwise, what are we doing this for? Our sole purpose is to protect the members of our communities, to keep them safe and take care of them in the event something happens to them. We could not do this without their support and we see so many signs every day. Little things like a wave or a thank you mean so much to these guys and girls, knowing that what we are doing is making a difference."



## Sylacauga Fire Department

Members of the department are:

**A-Shift** — Lieutenant Jarrod Cunningham, Lieutenant Ron Machen, Firefighter Josh Forbus, Firefighter Cass Patterson, Firefighter Jake Tubbs and Firefighter Clay Upchurch,

**B-Shift** — Lieutenant Don Blair, Lieutenant Scott Kines, Firefighter Sam Ogilvie, Firefighter Kyle Moseley, Firefighter John Bryan, Firefighter AJ Tubbs and Firefighter Tim Lawley.

**C-Shift** — Lieutenant Tommy Chamberlain, Firefighter Brian Black, Firefighter Reid Tapley, Firefighter Harmony Kelley, Firefighter Chad Toland and Firefighter Jeremy Sanford.



## Eastaboga VFD

"Our members are very dedicated to serving our community, they go out of their way to do the best job they can," says Chief Stevie Bruce. "We enjoy helping people and serving our community any way that we can."

"We are taking all of the precautionary measures that we can. The pandemic has made us more aware and more cautious of situations, but when it comes down to it, when we respond to a call we are going to do what it takes to help. This may require wearing more PPE that wasn't required several months ago."

"The support of our community means a great deal to our department. Our community is why we are here. We love serving our community."



Department members are Anthony Espeleta, Stephanie Dulaney, Patrick Morgan, Blake Phillips, Raegan Sanders, John Mitchell, Shane Blackwood, Jonathan Owens, Tyler Bishop, Jaylon Dulaney, Robert Horsley, Auburn Blackwood, Jon Pence, Ashley Pence, Jonathan Foster, Dylan Badgett, Tammy Collins, Steve Parker, Lamar Maddox and Geoff Percival.



## Thank You FIRST RESPONDERS

No words seem adequate to express my admiration and gratitude for those who run towards danger to selflessly save others... My thoughts and prayers are with you.

**Cindy Pennington**



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# FIRST RESPONDERS Thank You!

To ALL of the First Responders.  
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## Thank You FIRST RESPONDERS

We take this time to let ALL First Responders know how much we appreciate and are so thankful for what they do each and everyday to keep us safe.

## Thank You to All Our First Responders!



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In the midst of the coronavirus pandemic - first responders, healthcare employees, and essential workers continue to go to work and keep us safe and healthy.

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**THANK YOU TO THE HELPERS.**  
#helpers

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Stemley Fire & Rescue

"To do what we do, let alone volunteer at it, takes a very special kind of person," says Chief Chris Kennedy. "We all have families, jobs and other responsibilities. Add to that how we drop what we are in the middle of to come to the aid of someone with an emergency.

"I believe our world is turning into a 'me'-centered mentality. We are neighbors helping neighbors. It's how it should be done. No one on Earth has ever seen a pandemic like we are faced with today. The last one was over 100 years ago. COVID-19 brings uncertainties that we just don't know how to cope with.

"Our membership at Stemley Volunteer Fire Department is low, just as in other small rural communities. With membership low and with funding low all around, Stemley VFD is unable to protect ourselves with the proper personal protective equipment. It's not that we individually are afraid to respond, it's just that we are thinking about our families, the ones we leave in the middle of the night to help someone else. We can bring home anything we

get exposed to. It's not limited to COVID-19, either. We can bring back blood-borne pathogens and other viruses, all the way to physical and emotional stress. Suicide rates among public safety/first responders is higher than a normal citizen.

"Stemley VFD is here for our community when they need us most. Stemley VFD also needs the community to be here for us when we need it the most. All Talladega County's volunteer fire departments get very little financial support. Money is just one way the community can help us. Our members come from this community, as well as just outside it. We need and will take all the support we can get. Support doesn't just come in giving money or fighting fires. We need help with fundraising, custodial tasks, administration... there's a job for everyone!

"Stemley VFD has weekly meetings every Tuesday at 6 p.m. They are at Station 1 located at 125 Rock Church Road, right across from The Shack BBQ, and everyone knows where that is! We look forward to seeing everyone there."

Department members are Brian Bunt, Pete Gaither, Iva Gaither, Alicia Pope, John Jacks, Danny Miller, JD Schall, Andrew Bohannon and Chrissy Bunt.

St. Clair County Sheriff's Office

"It is a challenging time for law enforcement," says Sheriff Billy Murray. "I am proud each day to work with the honest, dedicated and hard working men and women of the St. Clair County Sheriff's Office. It is our honor and privilege to serve the citizens of St. Clair County each day to the best of our ability.

"Because of the work ethic and untiring dedication of all our sheriff's office personnel, we have been able to continue to provide the best possible safety and protection to our citizens. COVID-19 has brought unprecedented challenges but each one has been faced by your Sheriff's Office with a determined focus.

"The sheriff's office could not adequately perform its duties without the tremendous support of our communities. We exist to serve and protect and it is an honor to work side by side with our citizens."



The St. Clair County Sheriff's Office personnel includes John McWaters, Naomi Bowie, Jeannie Canas, Cathy Goodwin, Lori Mullins, Cynthia Stefaniak, Freddie Turrentine, Jerry Robertson, Gregory Watson, Roger Isbell, Owen Walton, John Long, Joseph Brown, Lionel Callendar, Jonathan VanPelt, Kathy Brasher, Matthew Coupland, Deborah Huey, Karen Thompson, Greg Walker, Joseph Layton, Jacob Mitchell, Philip Watson, Jason Munkus, Michael Doss, James Seals, Wayne Knight, Jimmy Tyler, Philip Barnard, Bryon Jenkins, Jacque Corbin, Mark Slezak, David Ashely, James Otwell, Paul Monk, William Morris, Patrick Adams, Scott Wamble, Alexander Bosworth, Matthew Cone, Shane Roe, Evan Kavli, Brian Ebner, Ronnie Brasher, Greg Turley, Buddy McBride, Kyle Howard, Delmetrius Bishop, Trent Cox, Dustin Spruiell, Holly Miller, Joe Morgan, Caleb Wise, Brandon Wiggins, David Darby, Jason Brooks, Harley Hamer, Leonard Griffin, Joe Sweatt, Austin Nash, D.K. Jones, Randy Hurst, Jeff King, Tommy Dixon, Roy Forman, Lorrie Dark-Bishop, Melinda Thomas, Aubrey Glasscock, Chris Cross, James McGowan, Jonathan Spann, Kenneth Sams, Richard Cox, Timothy Kimbrough, Thomas Alexander, Tracie Wright, John Kitchens, Joretha Mitchell, Daniel Gaither, Phyllis Farmer, Charles Cox, Palmer Murry, Amber Hamilton, Susan Towerly, Marty Gatson, Eric Murphree, Katherine Dawkins, Ladesta Mostella, Shawn Caine, Jennifer Ragsdale, Ashley Ann Cain, Paul Grimes, Eugene Broadhead, Lonzo Williams, Jill Hurst, Kerry McIntyre, Misty Johnson, Andrew Thomas, Ashley Smith, Amanda Catron, Daniel Sloan, Kellie Headley, Randy Hall, Erica Carslile, Michelle Evans, Kevin Cantrell, David Wilson, Shaneka Elston, Hollie Holman, Jack Johnston, Ray Bentley, Robert Rutledge, Jeff Parrish, Robbie Young, Kathy McCombs, Kristy Laughter, Tina Davis, Ashley Smith, Shannon Hyatt, Ashely O'Rear, Julia Perez, Brandi Jenkins, Jennifer Clifton, Heather Scott, Anna Melton, Audra Owens, Amanda Ramsey, Tony Glanze, Desirae Cash, Hannah Jo Bamberg, Caleb Clapper, Christopher Regular, Christi White, Zac Grice, Isabella Keith, Leah Williams, Steven Webb, Melody Joy Perkins, Keri Harrison and Trevor Mellow.

# THE CITY OF CHILDERSBURG

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The City of Childersburg would like to thank all first responders. Thank you for keeping us safe daily. Your sacrifices don't go unnoticed. We know that you put your life on the line each day for us and we want you to know we appreciate everything you do.

**Because of each one of you our Historic Childersburg is a safer place.**

# THANK YOU FIRST RESPONDERS





### Pell City Police Department

"When it comes to being dedicated to serving our community, I believe we do a great job," says Chief Paul Irwin. "We have a great relationship with our citizens and community. I would even say that we don't encounter too many complex residents.

"In relation to COVID-19, we are being cautious with citizens and tight on domestic violence with the increase of the situation with people not working causing some tension in some households. We are in difficult times, but we are trying to protect the people as best we can. However, I do not see this whole pandemic ordeal as something bad

because in some cases, families are getting back together and certain things are changing. It's a unique situation.

"Support from our community means everything, and they definitely show their support and appreciation of us with plenty of good treats such as donuts and cards. We even have a good relationship with the

schools in the area. On behalf of current circumstances, we have been delivering cards to high school seniors and the kids graduating from kindergarten.

"Our continued goal is to let citizens know we care. Having a strong relationship with them and letting them know they are calling a friend and not just enforcement."

Members of the department include Captain Josh Herren, Lt. Vince Warrington, Lt. Doug Carden, Sgt. Sam McGuffie, Sgt. Shenandoah McInnish, Sgt. Eddie Branham, Sgt. Philip Rowe, Sgt. Don Newton, Sgt. Jon Herren, Sgt. Jonathan Swiney, Investigator Autumn Garlick, Investigator Brandon McWaters, Investigator Chris Norris, Officer Justin Wilson, Officer Barry Wathen, Officer Mac Pruitt, Officer Larry Byars, Officer Matthew Newton, Officer Cory Mitchell, Officer Joseph White, Officer Brian Scott, Officer Jessie Burgos, Officer Billy Beavers, Officer Manuel Diaz, Officer Daryle Wilhite, Officer Justin Cooper, Officer Thomas Gray and Officer Greg Howell.

### Pinedale VFD

"We are extremely dedicated to serving our community even as volunteers," says Angel Spratlin, the department's secretary/treasurer.

"We have been taking every precaution we can to keep our members and community safe. COVID-19 affects our department work in every aspect. We are now having to work under very risky conditions.

"Having the support of our community is very very important to our department."

Department members include Doug Densmore, John Crowder, Wayne Grantham, Tricia Densmore, Angel Spratlin, Thomas Smith, Jason Spratlin, Greg Williams, Kayla Williams, Jose Chacon, Allen Hayes, Shannon Hayes, Duncan Grantham and Mikey Grantham.



*Thank You All First Responders and Essential Workers!*

*We truly appreciate each of you for what you do each day to keep us safe!*

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### Moody Police Department

"Moody Police Department is very committed to serving the citizens of Moody," says Chief Thomas Hunt. "We have added several new programs throughout the year to help our citizens understand the law enforcement profession better.

"We have worked well with our community during COVID-19. We have issued the proper masks, gloves, and sanitizers needed to each officer so that we can still serve our community effectively when a call comes in.

"Support from our community means a lot to our officers. We see so much negativity throughout our nation on police. It's nice when the community thanks you or shows you their appreciation for the job we do each day."

Members of the department include Assistant Chief Rusty Freeman, Captain Daniel Praytor, Lieutenant Pete Hicks, Sergeant Chris Johnson, Sergeant Ron Richardson, SRO, Sergeant Reece Smith, SRO, Sergeant Devin Downing, Sergeant Steven Humber, Sergeant Jonathan Melton, Sergeant Stephen Williams, Detective Mark Smith, Officer Troy Dunlap, Officer Trenton Wicks, Officer Will Simpson, Officer Austin Burns, Officer Harley Hamer, Officer Brodie McGuffie, Officer Johnny Brasher, Officer Charles Moody, Officer Carl Locklear, Officer Milton Gilmore, Officer Edward Hill, Officer Alex Gonzalez, Officer Jeremy Jenkins, Officer Mason Causey, Officer Jared Dunn and Police Clerk Sylvia Sheffield.

### Steele Fire & Rescue

"We at Steele Fire and Rescue are a very small department of only about 10-15 volunteer members supported by two paid personnel," says Chief James Martin. "Our volunteer core, however, is what we rely on so heavily.

"They do a superb job and are very dedicated to their community. They train every Thursday night and work hard to ensure the safety of the community and each other. We are a very proud department and close-knit family. We love each other and our community we serve.

"Since February, we have only had one COVID-19 positive patient in town and haven't really had very many issues. We already had a well-supplied EMS inventory and ALS unit. We have seen a slight decline in 911 calls over the last few months.

"Our community has supported us 100 percent in every aspect of our operation. From donations to making masks here in the last few months to just saying thanks, they are always there for us for anything we need. Our businesses support us as well, from our larger industries giving donations to our small gas stations bringing us food and water on house fires."



Members of the department include Robert McHugh, Robert Pierce Sr, Bill Payne, Phillip Barnard, Kevin Hyatt, Jason Green, Jimmy Taylor, Cody Rayford, Zac Gilliland, Marcus Graves, Ethan Fuller, Andrew Meeks, Caleb Wise, Robert Pierce Jr, Tyler Givens, Ashley Crawford and Cathy Taylor.

### Childersburg Fire Department

"Serving the community is who we are," says Chief Jimmy Daniel. "Without the community we do not exist. Our team is 100 percent dedicated to caring for our community as if they were caring for their own family. When we get dispatched to a call we are always ready to respond with care, compassion, professionalism, courage and commitment for a devoted city.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us now more than ever that we are needed in the city. We ensured that we were educated with the facts and use all appropriate protection to establish the safety of ourselves and all of the community members we serve. We stand ready during the pandemic of COVID-19 crisis. Our

municipality is our number one priority. We will answer the call.

"The support of the municipality is very important to the department. We are a part of the community and we could not do what we do without their support. We are committed to the care of our community above all else."

Members of the department include Chief James Daniel, Captain Christopher Williams, captain Jeff Moseley, Lieutenant Zach Fuller, Lieutenant Caleb Williams, Lieutenant Edward Sharpe, Trey Beeghly Logan Blake, Chris Wilkerson, Tyler Meadows, Nick Griffith, Brian Godby, Major Abernathy, Jeffery Whitfield, Patrick Jordan, Tim Lawley and Scott Kines.



# City of Springville



#### SPRINGVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

From left to right: Back row- Cpl. B. Keith, Ofc. J. Thompson, Reserve Ofc. L. Williams, Ofc. R. Jones, Ofc. K. Stewart, Ofc. T. Dison. Front row- Ofc. M. Milazzo, Sgt. M. Long, Chief B. Crapet, Inv. F. Mathews, Sgt. B. Williams, Reserve Ofc. J. Brummett.



#### SPRINGVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

From left to right: Captain James Robinson, Pierson Paddock, Firefighter/Paramedic; Channing Gallups, Firefighter/EMT; Shree Bostick, Firefighter/Paramedic; Captain Graham Darnell, Johnnie Eidson, Firefighter/Paramedic; Richard Meadows, Firefighter/EMT; Fire Chief Richard Harvey.

Personnel not pictured: Lieutenant Dennis Putnam, Dakota Putnam, Firefighter/Paramedic; Christian Gonzalez, Firefighter/Paramedic; Mark Allred, Firefighter/Paramedic; Patrick Eskew, Firefighter/Paramedic; Newman Davis, Firefighter/AEMT; Daniel Caudle, Firefighter/EMT; Colby Stanford, Firefighter/EMT; Jimmy Briggs, Firefighter/EMT; Tommy Sullivan, Certified Volunteer FF; Derrick Thompson, Volunteer; Thomas Harvey, Certified FF Volunteer/EMT; Nicole Robinson, Certified Volunteer FF/EMT; Daniel Perry, Certified Volunteer FF; Jayme Robinson, Certified Volunteer FF/EMT; Matthew Brown, Certified Volunteer Firefighter.



**Honor, courage, dedication:** These are just a few of the words we use to describe our first responders, those who never fail to answer the call to help their community members in need.

**Instead of turning away from danger or uncertainty, first responders risk their lives to save others or protect property.**

**We honor all police officers, firefighters, nurses, rescue, EMS and all essential workers for their heroism and service to others. These are the brave men and women committed to protecting the people and communities they serve.**

**You are family, and we thank you for all that you do every day.**

**160 Walker Drive, Springville, AL 35146**  
**Phone (205) 467-6133**



### Lincoln Police Department

"We are very fortunate to have an extremely dedicated group of people working for the Lincoln Police Department," said Chief Darren Britton. "These men and women make many personal sacrifices to serve the citizens they are sworn to protect. Many of them are from Lincoln, and many of them have made Lincoln their home. They truly care about their city."

"We have put certain practices in place to limit the amount of personal contact with the public, but for the most part we have been business as usual."

"Community support is vital to police officers. It means a lot to an officer to be appreciated for the sacrifices they make. We are fortunate in this city that most of our citizens are very supportive."



Members of the department include Chief Darren Britton, Captain Zack Tuten, Captain Shannon Hallmark, Lieutenant Britt Robbins, Lieutenant Troy Jones, Lieutenant Luis Mejia, Lieutenant Ryan Lundy, Investigator Amanda Crow, Investigator Matt Martin, Officer Dillon Garrison, Officer Eric Johnson, Officer Trey Miller, Officer Zack Buchholz, Officer Justin Gable, Officer Dalton Lucas, Officer Derek Turner, Officer Duncan Hellums, Officer Weston Perry, Animal Control Officer Tiffany Dickie, Records Clerk Lin Estes and DTF Agent Mike Brewer.

## Honoring Our First Responders

*Remembering Our Heroes...*

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and Essential Workers**

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*No words seem adequate  
to express our admiration  
and gratitude for the brave men  
and women who run towards  
danger to selflessly save others...*

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First Responders, Public Safety Officers  
and All Essential Workers

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## Pell City Fire & Rescue Service

"Our personnel place a high priority on the safety of our community and show great dedication each and every day to providing the best emergency and community services possible," said Chief Timothy Kurzejeski. "We operate four fire stations throughout the city 24 hours a day 7 days a week, and each station has some of the best in the business who look forward to providing whatever it takes and take pride in each and every shift they come to work."

"Our personnel have not missed a beat. They report to work each day with a positive outlook and attitude to provide a continuous high standard of care. Each of us look out for one another and our families. The men and women of the Pell City Fire & Rescue Service take pride in the job they perform and have not let the current pandemic alter that in any way."

"The current pandemic has only

increased an already high work ethic to get out and take care of our citizen's emergencies in their time of need. Now more than ever our crews are ready to be there for our residents. Additionally, COVID-19 has brought our department closer together as a family, and we continue to provide a high standard of provided service to highlight our department mission."

"Throughout this pandemic we have had so many residents and businesses in our community provide meals to all of our stations and drop off different goody baskets as well. The support we receive from our city means more to our crews than most can imagine. This is one of the primary reasons all of us feel so fortunate to be able to work for the Pell City Fire & Rescue Service. The backing and support from our community is our driving force and makes working here so amazing."



Members of the department are Fire Chief Timothy Kurzejeski, Firefighter Rod Swain, Assistant Chief Shaun Clevenger, Firefighter Frank Johnson, Battalion Chief Jonathan Harris, Firefighter Jason Watson, Battalion Chief Joey Vaughan, Firefighter Danny Lewis, Battalion Chief Jerry Dailey, Firefighter Nick Dillashaw, Captain Eric Littleton, FireMedic Blake Harbison, Captain Jeff Rogers, FireMedic Joey Winfrey, Captain Andy Simpson, FireMedic John Tyson, Lieutenant Jim Banks, FireMedic Wes Hudson, Lieutenant Brad Presley, FireMedic Dakota Morehead, Lieutenant Steve Cavender, Firefighter Tony Ferguson, Fire Marshal Caleb Walker, Firefighter Don Baker, Training Officer Jeff Parrish, Firefighter Aaron Vines, Firefighter Adam Manning, Firefighter Chris Hall, Firefighter Steven Kearns, Firefighter Scott Rhoades, Firefighter Levi Christian, Firefighter Jared Cain, Firefighter Cody Byrd, FireMedic Alan Rickles, Firefighter Wyndner Edmonds, FireMedic Andrew Minyard, FireMedic Tabitha Langner, FireMedic Kent Dunaway, FireMedic Randy Hall, FireMedic Jeremy Davis, FireMedic John Edge, FireMedic Tyler Wright, FireMedic Barry Wright, FireMedic Jason Lane, FireMedic Hunter Rich, Firefighter Dewayne Harry, FireMedic Matt George, Firefighter Paco May and FireMedic Mike Platts.

## Childersburg Police Department

"We are 150% dedicated to serving our community," says Chief Richard McClelland. "My hat goes off to them and their work they put in daily. We are short staffed, but we make it work and get things done."

"Due to the current pandemic, we are taking the necessary precautions with masks and gloves, but we work like any other day. There is no pick-and-choose for us. No part of this pandemic is affecting our work ethic. We are answering every call. We can't let it affect the way we do our job."

"The support of the community means the world to us, and we have great relationships with everyone, but our goal is to try to improve every day."



Chief  
Richard McClelland



Captain  
Tommy Wallace



Investigator  
Kevin Koss



Lt.  
B.J. Keller



Lt.  
Donald Elkins



Sgt.  
Brandon Hughes



Sgt.  
Mike Moore



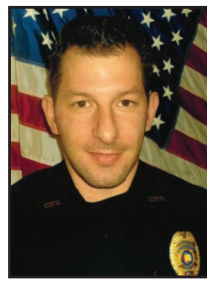
Animal Control  
Officer Susie Wimmer



Officer  
Dustin Shaw



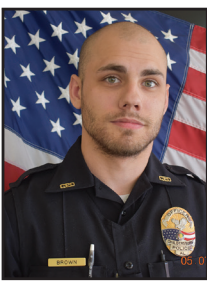
Officer  
Jeremy Brooks



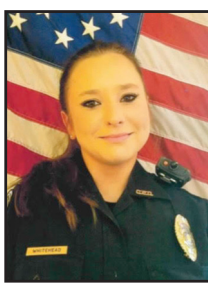
Officer  
Joe Mosser



Officer  
Lee Harris



Officer  
Zach Brown



Officer  
Maddie Whitehead



Officer  
Steven Fleeting



Officer  
Trenton Davenport

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day after day.



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**Jimmy Roberts**

District 4 Commissioner

**Paul Manning**

Commission Chairman

**Jeff Brown**

District 1 Commissioner

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### Springville Police Department

"The dedicated professionals of the Springville police department include 11 sworn police officers and two reserved officers," says Chief Belinda Crapet. "The members of the department truly care about the safety of the community and providing support when needed.

"Our officers respond to the public safety needs of the community with the most effective measures within our existing resources available with the primary focus of ensuring the safety and well being of our citizens and visitors.

"During these unprecedented times related to COVID-19, our officers' response times, dedication and regard to the general public have not wavered. Our department has been

and will continue to take the necessary steps to limit the spread of the virus in the community and keep our officers safe while they are on duty.

"Our policing balances a foundation of traditional policing concepts with innovative and progressive methods to help evolve with our citizens into the future. Community issues are best addressed by working in a partnership with the citizens of our great city.

"Therefore, Springville PD will continue to strive on improving public relations and increase public confidence. The men and women of the Springville Police Department take great pride in the relationship they have built with citizens of Springville and look forward to continuing to answer the needs of our community."

Members of the Springville Police Department include B. Keith, J. Thompson, L. Williams, R. Jones, K. Stewart, T. Dison, M. Milazzo, M. Long, B. Carpet, F. Matthews, B. Williams, and J. Brummett.



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## First Responders



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While we at Town & Country Ford can never truly relay our gratitude for all that you do and have done, the sacrifices you and your families make and your demonstrated drive to go above and beyond for our safety and care. We can only hope that each and every one of you can hear us say

**“Thank You”**

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### Lay Lake VFD

"I can't say enough about the dedication of our members," says Chief Tim Butler. "At 4 a.m., a call comes in and I will always have several members respond and some on stand by. We train every Thursday night from 6 till 9. Every week we check off our equipment, clean the station, maintain the storm shelter, etc. This is all done after we all get off work from our paying jobs.

"Plus I have several fire fighters that also attend fire school twice a week on top of our normal duties. This is all done with zero pay, but every call gets answered. We at Lay Lake Volunteer Fire Department are blessed to have the dedication we have from our members and very proud of each and every one of them.

"During the pandemic, we have limited our response to two firemen on a call unless it's a life threatening situation. We take the safety steps put in place by the CDC.

"The pandemic has certainly changed things but it has not affected the work ethic of our duties. Not one single fireman has refused to do what is asked of them, and never has. Volunteer firemen have more heart and compassion for their fellow man than most people will ever know.

"Without the support of the community, we would not be here. Very seldom does a day go by that someone in our community doesn't stop me and ask me about our department or thank us for what we did to help someone in need. The support from the community is the backbone of any volunteer fire department."



Department members include, from left, FF Kenneth Thrash (now transferred to Oak Grove FD), JFR Joshua McRaney, Assistant Chief Rod MacLeroy, FR Grace McRaney, Chief Tim Butler, FR Chrickett Thrash (now transferred to Oak Grove FD), Lt. Dylan Jenkins, JFR Steven MacLeroy and FF Jonathon McRaney. Not pictured are FF Yancey Brown and FR Michael Bowden.



### Ragland Rescue Service

"Our department is completely a volunteer dept," says Chief Jeff French. "We are very dedicated to serve our community and those in need. I am very proud of our department and the care that our members show for each other and those we run calls on.

"Before things got bad with the pandemic and before the stay-at-home order went into effect, I ordered PPE supplies for our department. I wanted to make sure everyone was protected if they went on a call that may possibly involve symptoms of the coronavirus. So far, we have managed very well and will continue to use every safety measure possible.

"The pandemic does not affect our work ethic at all. We still provide treatment to everyone regardless of symptoms. When someone needs us and we are paged out, we are provided with information about whether they have any COVID-19 symptoms, but regardless, we are there for everyone.

"The support of our community means a great deal to us. We are so appreciative to everyone. Many of the people in our community will send us a message, post on Facebook or simply tell us how much we are needed and appreciated. That makes us want to work harder to provide service to our people. Also, the support of our town's mayor and council means a lot.

Members of the department are, from left, Chris Gardner, Cathy Riggs, Russell Bean, Matt Gardner, Lisa Johns and Chief Jeff French. Not shown are Justin Bishop, Derrick Crowe, Josh Burnham, Robert Burnham, Pam French and Tesla Gardner.

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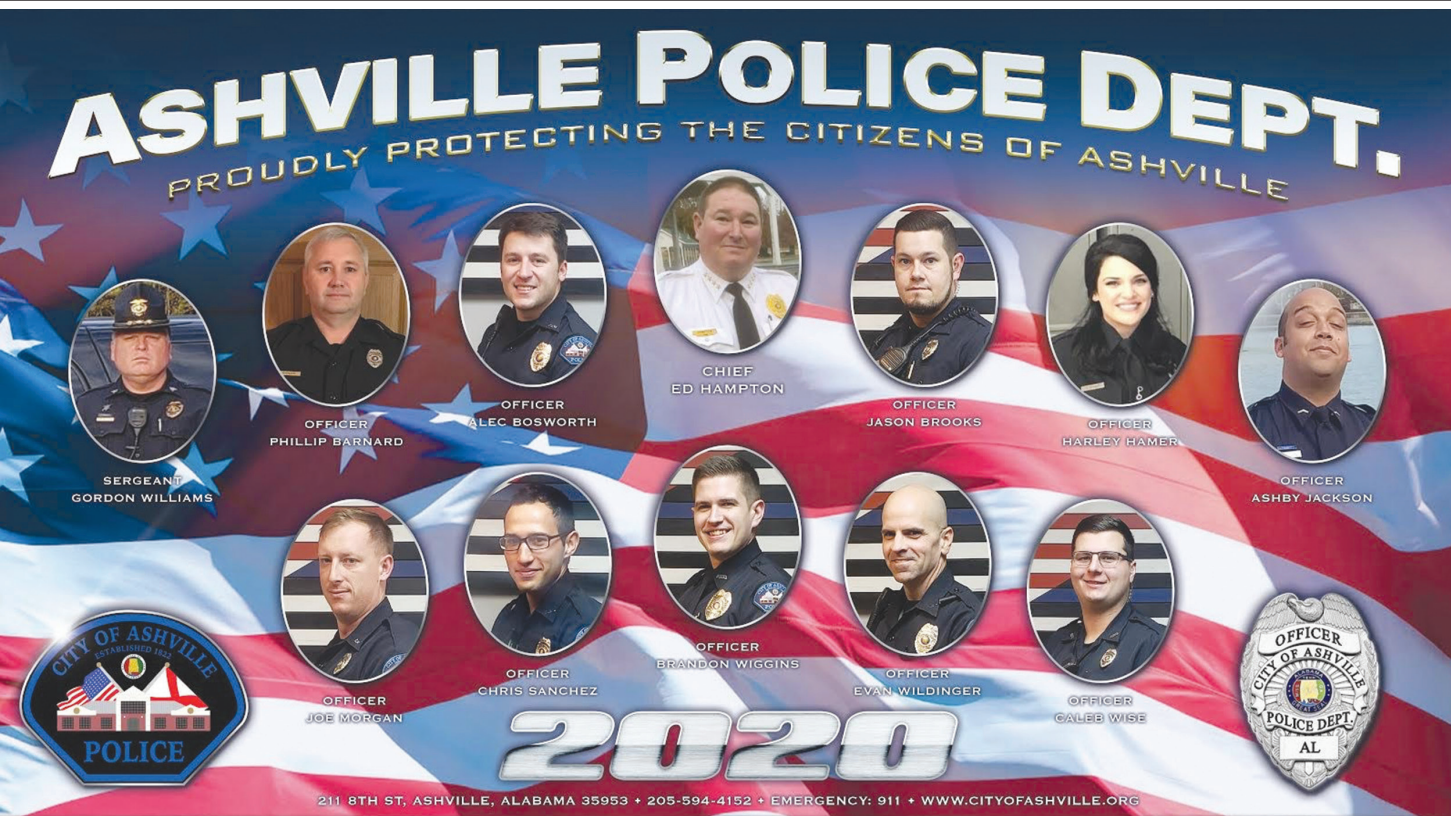
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For All You Do!

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**Ashville Police Department**

"Our community and I are lucky to have the officers that we have," says Chief Ed Hampton. "They put in long hours and work hard to help the citizens of our city and to keep them safe, and I wish I had had several more like them. They are ready and willing to do mostly anything that is asked of them and are always going above and beyond to ensure that we have a good department that our community can be proud of."

"We have continued to function as normal for the most part during COVID-19. All our court dates have been postponed, and we are taking reports via the phone for non-emergency situations, but we still end up responding to most of the calls we get. Also, we have been using a lot of hand sanitizer and gloves."

"It means a great deal to have our community's support. I believe the key to having a good police department starts with having a good relationship with the community. It's something that I strive to make better every day."

**Springville Fire & Rescue**

"When it comes to serving our community, true value for us is family and community, and a lot of our community members are like family for us," says Chief Richard Harvey. "Our service and dedication to the community is a way to give back and that enhances the support."

"When it comes to this pandemic, we are taking the proper procedures to make sure every citizen, our families and loved ones are safe and protected."

"Support from the community is the life of the department. Without it, we would not be here."

Department personnel includes, from left, Captain James Robinson, Pierson Paddock, Firefighter/Paramedic; Channing Gallups, Firefighter/EMT; Shree Bostick, Firefighter/Paramedic; Captain Graham Darnell, Johnnie Eidson, Firefighter/Paramedic; Richard Meadows, Firefighter/EMT and Fire Chief Richard Harvey; not shown, Lieutenant Dennis Putnam, Dakota Putnam, Firefighter/Paramedic; Christian Gonzalez, Firefighter/Paramedic; Mark Allred, Firefighter/Paramedic; Patrick Eskew, Firefighter/Paramedic; Newman Davis, Firefighter/AEMT; Daniel Caudle, Firefighter/ EMT; Colby Stanford, Firefighter/EMT; Jimmy Briggs, Firefighter /EMT; Tommy Sullivan, Certified Volunteer FF; Derrick Thompson, Volunteer; Thomas Harvey, Certified FF Volunteer/EMT; Nicole Robinson, Certified Volunteer FF/EMT; Daniel Perry, Certified Volunteer FF; Jayme Robinson, Certified Volunteer FF/EMT; and Matthew Brown, Certified Volunteer Firefighter.



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### Munford Police Department

"The members of my department are very dedicated," says Chief Jeff Rutledge. "We are not big, but I do believe we are the best and certainly offer great quality."

"Despite all that is going on, I think everything is going good. We are a small town, and if anything people are just stressed more so than usual with having to adjust to everything due to the pandemic."

"The support of our community means everything to us. In fact, it dictates how we police, but I grew up in this very area and a lot of people that work on the force grew up around here too. I say we're like Mayberry."



Chief  
Jeff Rutledge



Officer  
Rick Pettitt



Officer  
Shannon Payne



Officer  
Wes Johnson



Officer Eddie Dempsey  
and Buster

### Pleasant Hill VFD

"I have a good group of volunteers," says Chief Billy Reynolds. "They all have jobs, but they're still ready to serve our community. It's been a hard year for us, but we continue to all come together and work harder."

"During COVID-19, we have only had one suspicious call, but it's something everybody would be nervous about, but I have to give a big thanks to St. Clair dispatch because they have us determine how we handle the call. Overall, I think we are dealing with the whole ordeal pretty well. Everyone is still working, nobody is slacking off. I'm proud of my crew."

"We don't get any negative feedback in our community. When we ask for donations, a pretty good amount of the community gives back to the fire department. I think it's because they have confidence in us and that we will take good care of them. For me, I am also a chaplain and to be that support that is needed means as much to me as being a fireman. I just love how we all look out for each other which means a lot when it comes to your community."

Pleasant Hill Fire Department staff includes Marty Smith, assistant chief; Lt. Mike Estock, firefighters Thomas Moss, Cody Deason and Colby Stanford; auxiliary firefighters Devan Wilson, Eric McCullough, Jay Brown and Graham Darnell and Tim Baker; and auxiliary rehab Gayla Reynolds and Shannon Smith.

The Pleasant Hill Volunteer Fire Department honors the memory of firefighter Jared Echols, who died due to a heart attack last year at age 35. The department's truck has been named after Echols, and his number has been retired. "All the department's hard work is in honor of him," said Chief Billy Reynolds.



### Ashville Fire & Rescue

"Our personnel have the highest degree of dedication to our community. They were dedicated before the pandemic and continue it now," says Chief Michael Barry.

"We have been coping well during the pandemic. We have made some changes in both our day-to-day operations as well as in how we respond to potential COVID-19 cases, but we are still here providing service to our city."

"We value community support highly. We have had many people bring food and other items by the fire station for our people, and I would like to thank all of them. We would also like to thank the Ashville Quilt House and all of those who rose to the occasion and made masks for our first responders and other healthcare professionals in the community."



City of Odenville

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First Responders

No words seem adequate to express our admiration and gratitude for the brave men and women who run towards danger to selflessly save others...

*our thoughts & prayers are with you.*



ODENVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Left to right: Zachary Jackson, Christopher Kelley, Joshua McDonalld, Captain Brad Slade, Chief Glenn Walton, Sgt. Michael Rayford, Jason Townes, Christopher Benninger, Shannon Brasher and K-9 Bella in the middle.



ODENVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Left to right: Cory Groover, Jonathan DeGeorge, Melissa Wyatt, Captain Jared Wyatt, Chief David Davis Nick Dillashaw, Justin Mason, Casey Rager, Paid not in picture Eric Glover, Steven Phillips, Gary Tarvin, Levi Christian, Chase Coleman, Joseph Borrello, Channing Gallups, Michael Jenkins, Brad Crosby, Chase Trammell, Volunteer not in picture James Henderson, Jaden Hayes, Creighton Crump, Josh Davis, Richard Hayes, Krystopher Stathers, Kevin Henry, Dale Trottier, Samantha Phillips, Derrick Thompson, Skyler Cope.



### Talladega Fire & Rescue Department

"The fire service profession evolved over the decade," says Chief Danny B. Warwick. "The career/vocation revamped from traditional blue-collar extinguishing fires to firefighters being well-versed with advanced knowledge in physics and chemistry, yet implementing the customary values."

"Service demands are continuously intensifying. This is evident by the increasing size of apparatus, which is equipped to carry everything, including the kitchen sink. Firefighting, EMS, hazardous material and technical rescue are some of the threats encountered daily. This does not include other specialties, such as fire inspections, pre-plans, and administrative duties."

"Today's firefighters are an example of the next generation

of fire savant leadership. They are committed to excellent service to residents and businesses. Firefighters take pride in being able to respond to emergencies, well-trained, and professional as possible.

"We adjusted our operations due to COVID-19. Central dispatch-911 screen calls for COVID-19 symptoms. If a patient complains of symptoms such as cough, fever or shortness of breath, information is relayed to responding units to respond in PPE."

"We've adjusted our response standard operating procedures to calls. We send a minimum number of personnel to assess the situation or patient. If additional help is needed, the

crew radios the engine crew to bring in equipment. Ideally, if a patient is able to do so, he/she walks to meet firefighters or EMS crews. It's not always possible, and adjustments are made to put the patient first."

"Our community support provides something unique for first responders, something that we all look for: a sense of belonging. The feeling of being connected and accepted by the community impacts our personal growth and development. By feeling like we belong, it gives us the confidence to try new things to improve services; which is the way we grow as professional firefighters."



Fire Chief Danny B. Warwick and Assistant Chief Ron Goodenough. Not shown is administrative assistant Sandra M. Beavers.



Members of A Shift are Captain John Tyson, Lt. Wesley Hudson, Sgt. Dewayne Harry and firefighters Garen Mullen, Jacob Coshatt, Will Thompson, Wesley Mims, Ryan Wisenhunt, Billy Miller, Gary Vernedore and Tommy Dulaney.



Members of B Shift are Captain Anthony Pitts, Lt. Nick Cochran, Sgt. Thomas Churchey and firefighters Kevin Painter, Chad Toland, Lee Hunter, Devin Ragsdale, Will Davis, Jusitn Bishop, Richard Alverson and Zachary Osborne.



Members of C Shift are Captain Ron Harrell, Lt. Tom Rogers, Sgt. Charles Fuller and firefighters James Harvell, Chadrick Hill, Cecil Lawley, Matthew Loggins, Cody Byrd, Daniel Toland and Dereh Abernathy.

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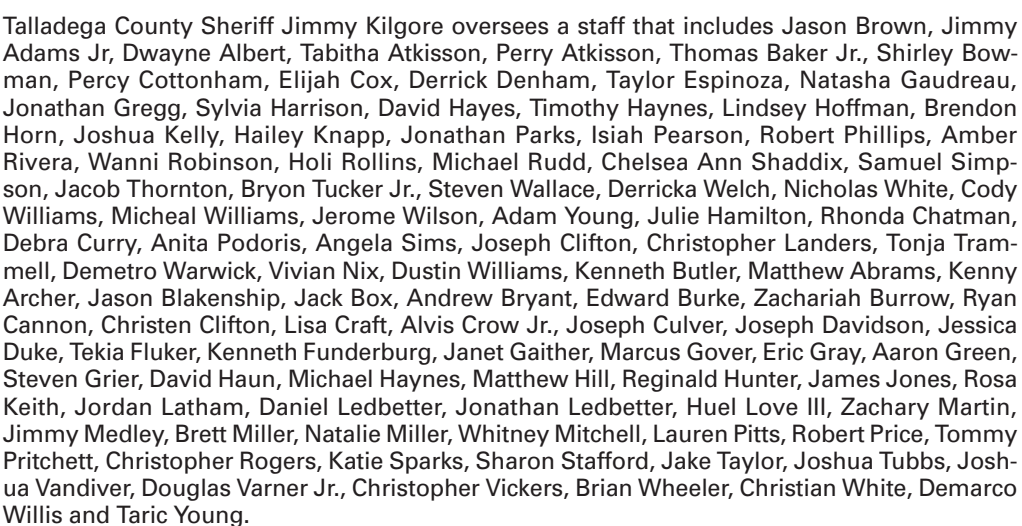
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"The support we have received from our community during this has been amazing. We have so many of our citizens, churches and local businesses call and thank us for what we do. That is always great to hear and it reminds us why we chose to serve."



"I feel all the members of the Moody Fire Department are both dedicated and committed to serving our community," says Chief Larry Horton. "Each one of them has the desire to serve others in their time of need. It takes that type of commitment to do this job."

"For most, this is a blue-collar profession that is typically underpaid, so each member not only has to have the desire and the commitment to serve, but across the fire service, personnel in general feels that this is a calling. Because of that, the satisfaction of knowing you were able to make a difference in the life of someone on their worst day makes it all worth it.

"In general, our day to day outlook hasn't changed drastically during COVID-19. In our profession we never know from one minute to the next what we may be faced with. I think because of that we look at this situation' and so many other situations, maybe a little differently than the general public. We are continually faced with the 'unknown,'so we take it as it comes. Granted, this is another type of incident that we have never faced, but just like all the other 'first-time' calls, we use the training and the guidance that is available and do our job. We have taken all the recommended precautions, ut the bottom line is it's our job to respond when called, and we will.

"The individuals that do this job

are dedicated and have a desire to fulfill their calling. So whether it's a fire, wreck, medical, hazmat, alarm or any other from the long list of calls that we respond to, this pandemic is no different. We still have a job to do. No different than the doctors and nurses. We all could be faced with the possibility of contracting something on any given call, and that didn't start with this pandemic. We know that, but we don't dwell on it. We depend on our training and we use all the precautions available to protect ourselves and continue to provide the service the public has come to expect.

"Community support means everything. Firemen are human, so knowing that they have the support and the backing of the community means everything. It's that support that gives them the satisfaction of knowing that they are appreciated and the service they provide is making a positive difference in the lives of the people in their community."

Members of the department include Eric Littleton, Hunter Knight, Barry Wright, Newman Davis, Nick Dilashaw, Kevin Goolsby, Chris Hall, Randy Hall, Andrew Stewart, Gary Tarvin, Jeremy Weems, Joseph Winfrey, Brain Anderton, James Banks, Jonathan Brown, Jarred Cain, David Davis, Brandon Garner, Blake Harbison, James Mulkey, Garen Mullen, Samuel Neal and Stephen Phillips.

*City of Asheville*

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***In this terrible time that we are all going through with the Corona Virus, it makes us feel a little safer knowing that all First Responders are out every day doing their job and taking a risk so we can stay home and be safe.  
We cannot thank each of you enough!***

*Thank You!*  
from

# Pell City Board of Education

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A close-up, slightly blurred image of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes. The flag is draped and occupies the left side of the frame, with the stars visible in the upper left corner.

# Honoring Our Heroes

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FIRST RESPONDERS and  
ESSENTIAL WORKERS**



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## Talladega Police Department

"The officers of the Talladega Police Department show their dedication to serving the community by how hard they work," says Chief Jason Busby. "They truly care about reducing crime and work hard to make our community safer."

"During the Covid-19 pandemic, we have added some precautionary measures, but we're still out there doing our job. The officers have handled everything well and are still out there trying to address trends in crime as they always have. The detectives are also still working cases as they always have."

"The only effect on the work ethic we've seen during the pandemic is there have actually been fewer officers asking off for vacation or holiday time. The officers want to come to work, and when they're at work, they work hard."

"Community support is very important to the department. Community support shows that the officers are conducting themselves professionally; it also shows that the work they are doing is having a positive impact. Everyone loves to hear "good job" and community support does that."

Members of the department include Patrick Thornton, John McCoy, Bob Curtis, John Staehly, Kevin Kirk, Tyler Sharp, Cory Phillips, Tyler Sharp, Ron McElrath, Allen Cavender, Kyle Evitts, DeShawn Garrett, Mathew Balsizer, Eric Dean, Darrell Garrett, Chad McKleroy, Cass Taylor, Glen Nabors, Roman Denty, Jasmine Graham, Austin Pitts, Jimmy Thompson, Lisa Garrett, Todd Williamson, Dennis McDaniel, Quadarius Cochran, Leland Brazier, Jacob Watkins, Avery Burr, Rashad Billingsley, Ashley Mann, Josh Shears, Jeff Hamm, Jarred Tomlin, Erica Williams, Jeremy Falkner, Angie Thomas, Rhiannon Harris, Mallory Parton, Will Fowler, Chris Gillis, Jeremy King, Roger Fetner, Bailey Vinson, Josh East, Josh Blankenship, Tameka Garrett, Matt Thacker, Loren Vincent and Cory Sears.



Talladega Police Officer Rashad Billingsley



Talladega Police Officer DeShawn Garrett



Talladega Police Officer Bailey Vinson



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### Sylacauga Police Department

"Members of the Sylacauga Police Department make me proud each and every day," says Chief Kelly Johnson. "The members of the police department have served our community proudly to this point in time and will continue to be dedicated to maintaining loyal service to the people of Sylacauga from this point forward. We will one day return to some form of normalcy."

"Sylacauga Police Department has managed to cope very well during the COVID-19 pandemic. We had a couple of scares with possible third party con-

tacts that had received a positive test result for COVID-19, but all of our officers tested negative or quarantined for 14 days to return with no symptoms ever shown.

"The support from our community is a main factor when dealing with law enforcement. We depend on our citizens for many things. Our job is made so much easier by having good relations with our community. We love and appreciate everyone that lives in and around Sylacauga and I hope that those we have contacted are pleased with the professional response given to them by our officers and staff."

Members of the Sylacauga Police Department include Kelley B. Johnson, Rondell Muse, Jason McNeill, Renea Cummings, Willis Whatley, Mike Moore, Donnie Landers, Ryan Gaither, Lee Davenport, Shane Bland, Charlton Kircus, Stephen Blake McGhee, Lamar Taylor, Adam Peoples, Chris Wykoff, Terry Gallahair, Jason Williamson, Tim Collier, David Kimbrough, Adam Grantham, Angela Tait, Josh Morris, Kyle Smith, Josh Jones, Andy Layton, Chris Vinson, Keith Thomas, Aaron Osbourn, Scot Meador, Ben Layton, Stephen Ledbetter, Harry Brown Jr., Austin Pitts, Curt Looney, Matt Cook, Roman Hubbard, Kelly White, Willis Whatley, Sgt. Gaither, Chris Vinson, Adam Peoples, Blake McGhee, Roman Hubbard, Kassey Epperson, Doug Kemp, Larry McConatha, Bryan Kevin Kite, Daniel Calfee, Steve Foster, Phillip Epperson, Mark Ledbetter and Rhonda Ledbetter.



### Cook Springs Fire & Rescue

"We are all volunteers," says Chief Howard Downs. "We are not paid for what we do. We do it because we want to help our community. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, our call volume has increased, and our 33 volunteer firefighters have continued to respond to every emergency call without regard to the additional risk they now face on every call."

"Due to social distancing, we have suspended our regular business meetings and moved all of our training activities outside. Our calls for service have increased, not only medical calls but also fires and wrecks. On all of our calls we are wearing masks to protect both the public and our members when close personal contact is involved. We have increased our emphasis on cleaning equipment to reduce the risk of transmitting the virus to other patients or ourselves."

"It is our job as a fire and rescue service to protect our community. COVID-19 is just another hazard for us to deal with, just as we deal with fire, wrecks and hazardous materials. The job remains the same. This is just another problem we have to deal with."

"A volunteer fire department survives based on the support of their community. We get federal grants and some state and county money but without the volunteers and donations from the community we would not exist."

Members of the department include Gale Bunt, Jeter Bunt, Brandon Davis, Lukas Dickerson, Howard Downs, Sandra Downs, Shannon Eckman, Taylor Eckman, Ray Ferguson, Rickey Ferguson, Derek Freeman, Robert Fulton, Loretta Garrigan, Chris Goulet, Paul Goulet, Zack Harrison, Faye Howard, Pat Hodgins, Phil Hodgins, Blake Isbell, Tasha Isbell, Jacob Matherson, Mark Matherson, Rusty Matthews, Kerrigan McGowin, Danny Pardue, John Pardue, Skylar Patterson, Spencer Perry, Corey Potts, Jim Price, Jen Przybylski, Jon Przybylski, Brenda Rowe, Larry Rowe, Mike Shaw, Beth Staples, Danny Staples and Landon Stinson.



### Steele Police Department

"When it comes to serving our community we are very dedicated," says Chief Mark Ward.

"For this pandemic, we say our prayers, be protected, and still do our job as if it isn't a pandemic."

"The support of our community means everything to us. We have a program called R U Okay, where we check on the elderly once a week. Without the community we wouldn't exist."

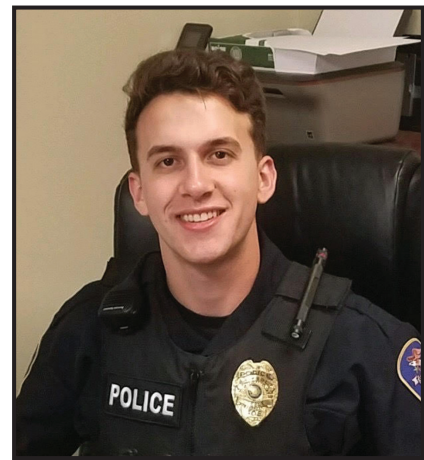
The department includes full-time officers Whit Burttram, Jim Clay and Chief Mark Ward and part-time officers John Bowlin, Alec Bosworth and Brian Ebner.



Chief Mark Ward



Officer Jim Clay



Officer Whitt Burttram

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