



Tennessee Fire Chiefs Association

P.O. BOX 25052, NASHVILLE, TN 37202
WWW.TNFIRECHIEFS.COM

Dear Tennessee Fire Service:

I am truly honored and humbled to serve you and this great association as your 54th President. I look forward to continuing the vital mission of the Tennessee Fire Chiefs Association: providing leadership to career and volunteer chiefs, officers, and emergency service managers across our great state.

This year marks my 37th year in the fire service. I have served in many different roles throughout my career, but serving as your president is my greatest honor.

A journey like this is never walked alone, and I have many people to thank. First and foremost, my family. My wife, Dana, has stood by my side for over 29 years. She has always supported me, even when the pager went off at all hours of the day and night. To our three children—Marianna, Jarrett, and Joshua—thank you for your understanding whenever I suddenly had to leave in the middle of a family event.

Many mentors in the fire service have guided me since I first started in 1989. I want to specifically recognize Chief Jimmy Dickey, Assistant Chief Roger Hawley, and Chief Gary West. I also want to remember Chief Lynn Murphy—I deeply miss his phone calls to discuss grants and so many other things.

Thank you to my Mayor, Kevin Davis and Hardin County commissioners for your support in the past 22 years.

Today, I am blessed with an amazing staff and dedicated volunteers in my department who support me and get the job done every single day. They live out our department's core mission statement every day: **Be Kind, Help People.**

Together, we will keep moving this association forward, just as the past presidents have done before us. I pledge to maintain an open-door policy and to remain transparent in everything we do. I look forward to working closely with the executive committee and the entire board to continue our great work.

As we look to the year ahead, these are my top priorities:

- **Grow Membership & Sponsorships:** If every current member recruits just one person, we double our size. If you know a chief or officer who isn't a member yet, reach out to them. Sponsorships fund our organization, remember to support those who support us.
- **Support the Fallen Firefighter Board:** We will continue backing their incredible work. Chief Eric Turner and Chief Gary West will serve on the board to represent our chiefs. The memorial is a sacred place to honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

- **Statewide Collaboration:** We will build on the momentum started by Chief Biggs, continuing regular leadership meetings across all state fire organizations.
- **Legislative Action:** Led by Josh Evans, our legislative committee will continue pushing for volunteer fire equipment and training grants. We are also committed to changing the minimum training law to encompass all 95 counties in Tennessee. I challenge each of you to meet with your local legislators while they are home—don't wait until they get to Nashville.
- **Other Committees:**
 - **The EMS Committee** (led by Chief Beaman) Will continue providing a voice for the Tn Fire service on the state EMS board.
 - **The Hall of Fame Committee** (Chief Summers, Chief Duncan, Chief Lee Turner, and Chief West as advisor) will preserve our legacy.
 - **The Chaplain's Section** (led by David Woody) will step up to support critical peer-to-peer mental health training.
 - **The Codes Committee** (led by Chief Duncan) will ensure we maintain a strong voice at the State Fire Marshal's Office regarding modern, updated codes.
 - **The Mutual Aid Committee** (led by Chief Mitchell) will strengthen the Tennessee Fire Chiefs Mutual Aid System. It remains a national model, allowing us to deploy accurate, rapid resources across Tennessee or wherever else we are needed.
 - **The Professional Development Committee** (led by Ronnie Beasley) will leverage Ronnie's fantastic energy to continue producing great educational results.
 - **The Communications & Social Media Committee** (led by Amy Maxwell with assistance from LaRae Smiley Sliger) Will continue our message of a united fire service in Tennessee.
 - **The Volunteer Committee** (led by Chief Billy Roach) will serve as a voice for our volunteers across this great State.
 - **The Safety, Health and Wellness Committee** (led by chief Rich Hartfield will continue to advocate for the health and safety of our firefighters, with a legislative goal of providing EAP assistance to our volunteer firefighters.
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The Tennessee Fire Chiefs Association has long been the leading voice of the fire service in this state. We have so many accomplishments to be proud of, but our work is never finished. My phone is always on, (731-607-0346) and my door is always open to you.

As we step into this next chapter together, I ask you to remember these four simple words: **Be Kind, Help People**. That is the foundation of everything we do. We are here to help people on their very worst day.

Thank you, stay safe, God Bless, and let's have a great year.

Sincerely,

Melvin Martin, Hardin County Fire Chief