



Grand Junction Fire Department



2022 Annual Report

From the Chief

As the Fire Chief of our vibrant community, I am thrilled to present the 2022 annual report, giving you a glimpse of the work and dedication of our personnel, while sharing many of our accomplishments from this past year.

After three years of persistent effort, we reached a major milestone in 2022 by achieving International Accreditation, one of the highest honors for a fire department. This recognition showcases our unwavering commitment to continuous improvement and delivering exceptional service to you, our valued community members.

We have effectively managed department expansion through increased recruiting and the construction of new fire stations and in 2022, we proudly inaugurated a modern station to replace Station 3. This facility represents our department's growth, the advancement of our community, and the hardworking individuals within it.

In 2022, we successfully ran two fire academies, training and adding skilled firefighters, EMTs, and paramedics to our team. This investment helps ensure that we can continue to provide excellent service to those in need as our community grows.

Recognizing the importance of mental health support for our first responders, we expanded our peer

support team by over 15 individuals. These compassionate team members play a crucial role in offering better mental health assistance to our first responders, supporting their well-being as they tirelessly serve our community.

Fire prevention, community protection, and collaborative partnerships remain top priorities for GJFD. In collaboration with the other City departments, we completed our first-ever wildfire mitigation project along the No Thoroughfare trail. This proactive initiative helps safeguard a portion of our community and its natural surroundings.

We witnessed unprecedented growth, progress, and dedication within our department and with this growth, the composition of our Grand Junction Fire Department is evolving. To assist, we engaged an outside agency to complete an organizational analysis of our structure and service delivery and provide recommendations for the future. This emphasis on continuous improvement and service delivery is a core value and underscores our commitment to serving you and ensuring your safety.

The accomplishments of 2022 fill us with pride, and we're honored to share how we have enhanced our services together as we continue to provide another year of exceptional service.

Ken Watkins
Fire Chief

GJFD Becomes Nationally Accredited Department

The Fire Department completed the final step in the accreditation process when City representatives appeared before the Commission on Fire Accreditation International in Orlando, Florida on March 22nd. The road to accreditation was a lengthy process that required collaboration from the the Grand Junction Regional Communication Center and the City of Grand Junction. GJFD is now one of only twenty accredited fire departments in Colorado.



AP Triton Study

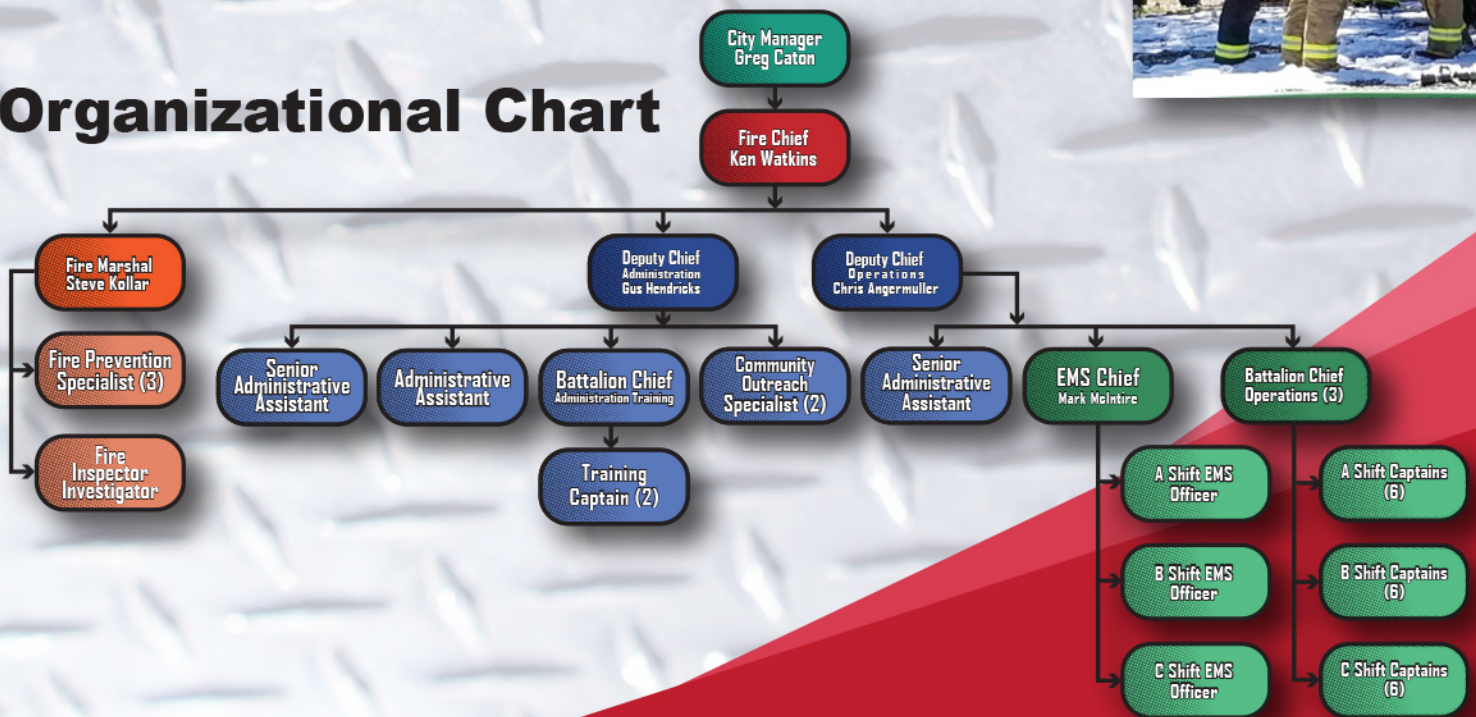
To aid in the development of our strategic plan and future growth, the Department tasked the consultant, AP Triton, with performing a study on two operational topics. The first part of this study was to evaluate the staffing and resource needs of the Department currently and in the future. The consultant evaluated the Department against 10 other fire departments and their observations determined their recommendations. In addition to observations, they performed on-site interviews with various members of the department and reviewed department records. The organizational structure/service delivery study was completed in January of 2023 with the consultant recommending 31 issues for consideration by the department. The department has reviewed the recommendations and has completed 8 recommendations and another 12 in progress. The remaining 11 recommendations are under consideration or slated for future implementation. AP Triton also completed a study to determine whether a cooperative service agreement between the Clifton Fire Protection District (CFPD) and the Grand Junction Fire Department would be feasible.



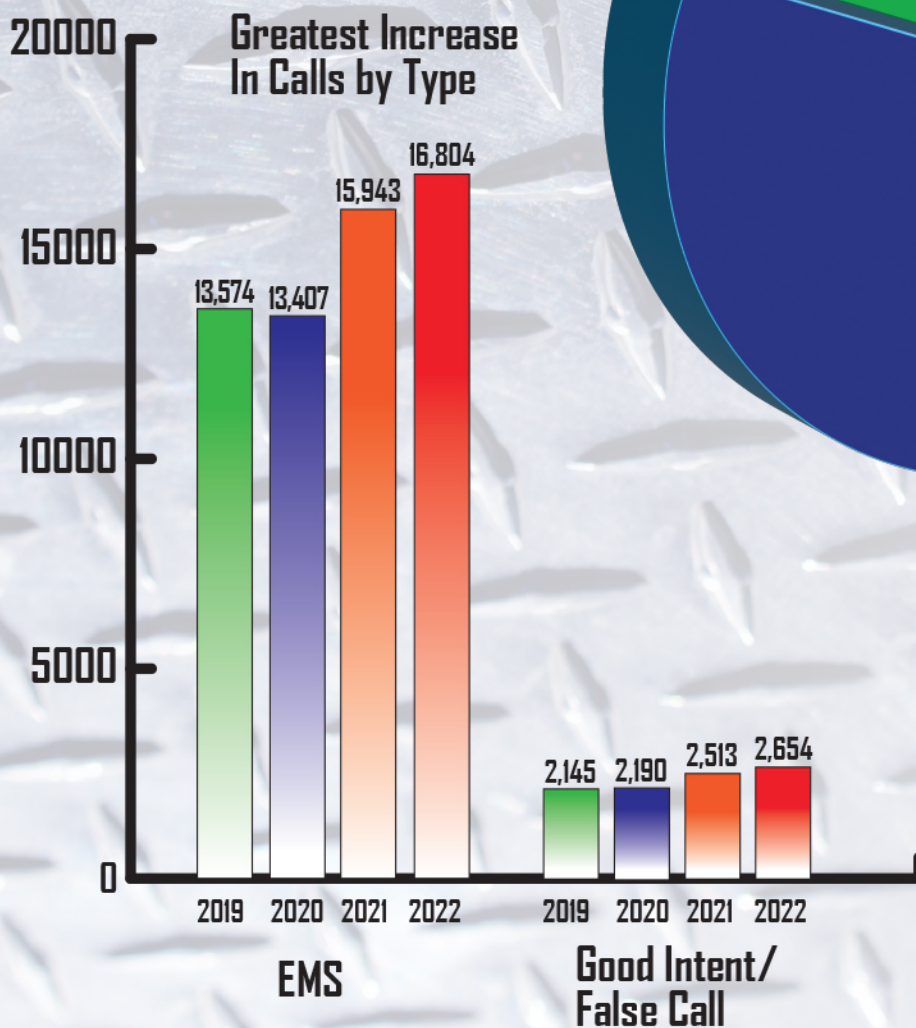
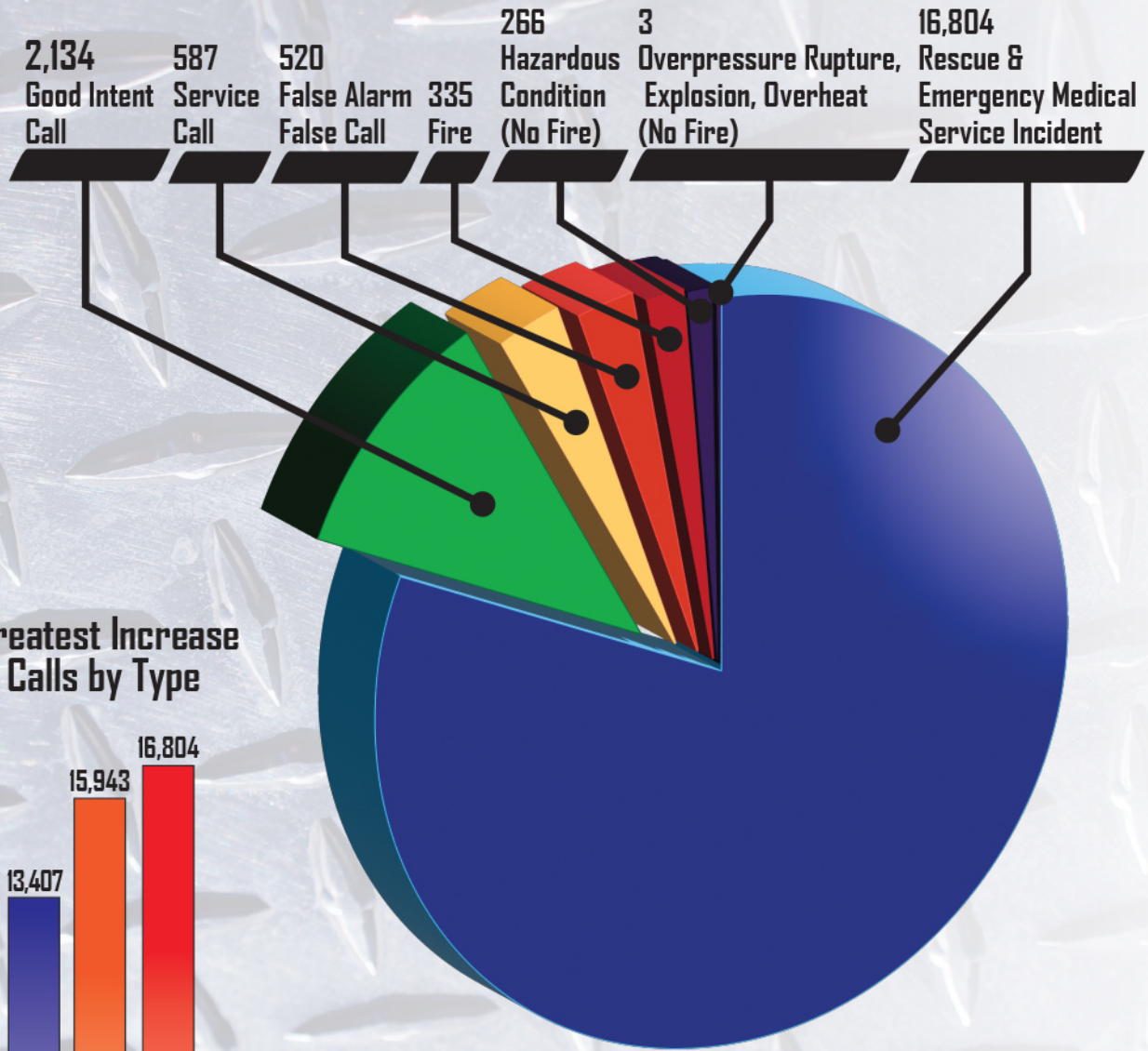
(Above) Crews respond to a motor vehicle fire in this photo from August 2022. GJFD responded to 52 motor vehicle fires in 2022.



Organizational Chart



2022 Stats



Total Number of Calls - 20,652

Station 1

Incidents	3,432
Responses	8,309
Responses by Apparatus	
AM1	3,202
TK1	2,305
MED1	1,875
BT1	533
RS1	67

Station 3

Incidents	4,647
Responses	6,251
Response by Apparatus	
AM3	3,432
EN3	2,810
HZ3	9

Station 5

Incidents	1,050
Responses	1,097
Response by Apparatus	
EN5	1,065
BR5	24
WT5	8

Fire Prevention

Plan Reviews	1,041
New Construction Permit Inspections	729
General Fire Inspections	1,296
Company Fire Inspections	905

Station 2

Incidents	5,561
Responses	10,624
Response by Apparatus	
EN2	4,139
AM2	3,332
AM12	3,153

Station 4

Incidents	2,418
Responses	4,090
Response by Apparatus	
EN4	2,025
AM4	2,019
BR4	46

Station 6

Incidents	2,980
Responses	7,681
Response by Apparatus	
AM6	3,256
TK6	2,462
AM16	1685
BR6	26
ATV1/ATV2	6

Social Media Stats

Facebook Reach	159,822 (+11%)
Instagram Reach	78,645 (+309%)
Nextdoor Impressions	198,967 (+46%)



GJFD Implements CPAT Testing

The Fire Department has implemented a new skills-based annual assessment for employees. Previously, the department used a Physical Ability course to assess both potential job applicants and the annual physical evaluation of existing employees. The department recently adopted the Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT), a nationally recognized physical fitness assessment test, for potential hires. A new Firefighter Skills Course was also implemented as an update to the Physical Ability test for current employees. The skills course features nine individual components designed to evaluate the firefighter's basic mobility and ensure a reasonable level of physical fitness. Unlike the previous test, this skills-based assessment is not timed and is judged on completion. The test will be proctored to ensure the firefighter is operating within departmental guidelines. Upon completing the test, the firefighter will receive coaching and recommendations for improvement.



Station 8 Groundbreaking

The Department began construction of the new Fire Station 8 with a groundbreaking ceremony on March 31st. Located at 441 31 Road, the new station serves areas currently covered by Station 2 and Station 4 in an effort to improve service in this growing area. The new facility is based on the Station 6 and Station 3 designs and includes modern safety upgrades which include cancer prevention features found in other existing fire stations. Station 8 construction and staffing are funded through the First Responder Tax, passed by voters in 2019. The First Responder Tax allocated funds for the construction, equipment, and staffing of three additional fire stations in Grand Junction. Station 8 is the second of the three promised stations, with the last of the three stations expected to be complete by 2025.



Construction and Demolition of Station 3



The new Fire Station 3 officially went into service on May 31, 2022. The hose uncoupling ceremony was held two weeks earlier to allow participation by students from Pomona Elementary School during their last week of school. This same group was part of the groundbreaking event at the beginning of the school year in August, 2021. The Fire Department hosted a hose uncoupling/art dedication ceremony with help from Mayor ProTem Herman, Council Member McDaniel, D51 Superintendent Dr. Diana Sirko and 2nd graders from Pomona Elementary School. The Blythe Group designed the station and FCI coordinated the project with over 20 subcontractors to complete construction in less than eight months.



The original Station 3 built in 1975.



Demolition of the original Station 3.



Hose uncoupling at the new Station 3.

There was a two-week transition period from hose uncoupling to running the first call from the new building which allowed the contractors time to finish last-minute detail work and the firefighters time to move equipment from the old station to the new station. The City's Information Technology Department worked diligently to make the "cut-over" from old to new as seamless as possible.

Artist Ken Williams and crew installed the sculpture comprised of individual bricks that had to be carefully numbered and installed in precise order to depict firefighters battling a HAZMAT fire. The image was chosen in recognition of Station 3 being the home of the GJFD's HAZMAT response team.

Following the completed construction of the new station the old station's property was converted into a parking area for School District 51 and the Kronkright Sports Complex. The original Fire Station 3 was in constant service since 1975.



Artist Ken Williams and crew install the exterior artwork at Station 3.

GJFD Awarded \$184,212 COSWAP Grant

The City of Grand Junction was selected as a recipient of Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program (COSWAP) Workforce Development funding for several fire mitigation projects. COSWAP awarded Grand Junction 17 weeks of wildland mitigation work valued at \$184,212. The resources for wildfire fuel reduction from this grant will be focused on the Gunnison and Colorado River corridors. These corridors cover approximately 70 acres and will create shaded fuel breaks that will protect critical infrastructure and areas with a history of fire that is a significant risk to people and property. To ensure the work being done provides the most benefit to the community, project areas were chosen collaboratively by the Grand Junction Fire Department, Parks and Recreation, Police Department, Utilities Department, Public Works, General Services, and Finance Department.



No Thoroughfare Trail Fire Mitigation Work

Grand Junction Fire, Parks, and Project team completed a two-acre wildfire mitigation project along the No Thoroughfare trail by the Broadway Bridge. This was the first fire mitigation project conducted completely by City crews. By the numbers, this project:

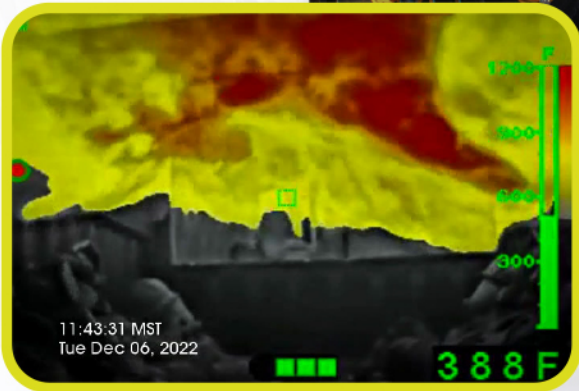
- Protects 15 homes and one business in the immediate area.
- Filled three grapple trucks and 14 chipper trucks with removed green waste.
- Ten wildland firefighting team members gained the training hours required for certifications.



Flashover Chamber



(Above) Representatives from Dräger and members of the GJFD Training Cadre install the flashover chamber at the GJFD Live Fire Training Facility.



(Left) Crews use a thermal imaging camera to observe fire development inside the flashover chamber.

The Fire Department has installed a new flashover training simulator at the department's training facility. Flashover occurs when, during a fire, combustible materials reach the point that everything in the room becomes engulfed in flames. The fires that firefighters are seeing today burn hotter and faster than fires in the past due to the makeup of the materials in today's homes. Because of this, flashover is more common and is extremely dangerous for occupants and firefighters. This simulator allows the firefighters to witness the development of a flashover from a safe position so they can recognize the danger. Providing this training to firefighters will ensure their safety and a better understanding of fire behavior.

Wildland Training



During the week of April 25, all Grand Junction Fire Department crews and shifts conducted a wildfire training refresher in the Redlands. Thanks to Bluffs HOA, the crew was able to familiarize themselves with a high-risk neighborhood, evaluate access for firefighting, and train on essential operational skills. GJFD Outreach is also working with the HOA to support them in pursuing grant funding to continue reducing wildfire fuels in their neighborhood, creating defensible space, and educating the neighborhood on wildfire preparedness.

Community Outreach



Water Festival

The Grand Junction Utilities Department co-hosted and co-lead event planning for the 27th Annual Western Colorado Children's Water Festival in May at Las Colonias Park. 1,500 fifth-grade students from School District 51 spent a day learning about the importance of water. Students learned through a variety of hands-on activity classes which ranged from microbiology, water conservation, cloud seeding, and wastewater treatment. The GJFD Community Outreach team along with 20 other City employees from the Utilities Department and representatives from other partners including Ute Water, Clifton Water, the U.S. Forest Service, and Mesa County shared information about water conservation, management, and river safety. In addition to educational benefits, students were exposed to career opportunities in the fire service and water industry. This was the first year the event was held at the new Las Colonias venue and supported by the City's Parks & Recreation Department.

Problem Based Learning

GJFD collaborated with Rivers Edge West and School District 51 to present a Problem-Based Learning Program for fifth-grade students from Pomona Elementary. Students were presented with lessons on fire behavior, ecology, and social vulnerability to demonstrate the dangers of wildfires and the critical importance of mitigating the land so that wildfires become less prevalent in the state of Colorado. This program was held at the recently mitigated site on No Thoroughfare Trail.



Station 4 Signage

After several delays, GJFD Station 4 has received new signage designed by GJFD staff and carved from sandstone by Carlson Memorials. The monument was placed with assistance from Grand Junction Parks crews that cleared and prepared the ground.

Station 4 signage being installed by Carlson Memorials.

Station 6 Exterior Art



In February 2022, artist Jeff Bates completed the installation of the exterior artwork at Station 6. Bates submitted the winning bid to create art based on historical photos from GJFD focusing on our first horse-drawn fire apparatus used in the 1890s. The piece prominently features Sam and Jack, the original wagon team trained to automatically respond to the front of the carriage at the sound of an alarm. Bates spent approximately three months creating the piece in close collaboration with the GJFD Administrative Team, and representatives from Parks and Recreation and Public Works.



Photo by Ken Redding

Missing in America Project Memorial Ceremony

GJFD was proud to participate in a ceremony commemorating 25 military veterans and two spouses of veterans that were laid to rest in the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado. The event was a collaboration between the Missing in America Project (MIAP) and Callahan-Edfast Mortuary and Crematory to locate, identify, and inter the unclaimed cremated remains of American veterans. A GJFD crew and Battalion attended the ceremony and flew the Veterans Cemetery garrison flag from Truck 1.



Crews hang the garrison flag from Truck 1 during the Missing in America Project memorial ceremony.

Colorado Fallen Firefighter Memorial Recognizes Captain John Bennett

The Department participated in the Colorado Fallen Firefighter Memorial ceremony in Lakewood on May 7th. The fallen firefighter foundation recognized Grand Junction Fire Captain John Bennett, who passed away June 19, 1973, after suffering a heart attack on duty. At the time of Captain Bennett's death, cardiac arrest was not recognized as a line-of-duty death but that has changed and is now recognized. The Bennett family, the GJFD Honor Guard, and Chief Watkins participated in the ceremony.



Captain Bennett creates a hole in the roof of a home to vent heat and smoke in this photo from the GJFD archives.

2022 Promotions



EMS Chief



EMS Training Captain



Captain



Captain



Captain



Captain



Captain



Engineer



Engineer



Engineer



Engineer



Engineer



Firefighter/Paramedic



Firefighter/Paramedic



Firefighter/Paramedic



Firefighter/Paramedic



Paramedic

Employee of the Year

Stacy Rollins is known as the work-horse of the department. He personally builds most of our training props, hose racks, and custom additions to our brush trucks. Additionally, acts as one of our wildland coordinators.

Stacy was asked to outfit our newly purchased Engine 8 including ordering and installing all tools and equipment. He inherited this project with multiple unknowns and a tight budget. He was able to keep the project on track and steered it to a successful completion. To

complete all these projects, Stacy gives selflessly of his personal time,

frequently working on his day off to get them completed. In addition, to support the continuous ordering of EMS supplies, Stacy (along with Ted Weber) graciously

stepped in to keep the EMS supply room organized, track incoming orders, and send EMS Chief McIntire a weekly order sheet. He also monitors what is being ordered at all seven stations and resolves any issues that come up. In the pursuit of constant improvement, Stacy teaches others how to do all these tasks to build resiliency within the department. Stacy goes above and beyond his job duties and deserves the honor of being selected as the 2022 Employee of the Year.



Hero of the Year

Gareth Parks was recognized as the fire department Hero of the Year during the 2022 CMU All Services Ball. Gareth is a United States Marine Corps veteran and serves as a Captain at Fire Station 3. Gareth is active on several department specialty teams and committees including the joint GJPD/GJFD Bomb Team, the Hazardous Materials Response Team, and the Honor Guard, as well as

chairing the department Steering Committee. This committee is filled by a cross-section of department members who evaluate proposed new equipment purchases and write new policies and procedures for the department. Gareth was recently recognized by the Colorado Bureau of Investigation for his contribution to a Montrose Police Department investigation into a murder with a HAZMAT component and was recognized by the department as GJFD Co-Employee of the Year in 2021.



