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We value our counties **BRAVE** First Responders

Your courage saves lives every day.





*A Word from*

**Fairfield Volunteer Fire Dept.**

We aren't just volunteer firefighters; we are also community leaders, blue collar workers, parents, paramedics, career firefighters and hold many other responsibilities who dedicate countless hours to honing their skills. We train for every imaginable emergency, from infernos to hazardous spills. We are the heroes who pull victims from wreckage, extinguish flames inch by agonizing inch, and ensure our safety when fear runs rampant.

The Fairfield Fire Department isn't just essential; it's a lifeline. A shield that stands between us and devastation. But to maintain that shield, we covet your support.

The Fairfield Fire Department's unwavering commitment could utilize your unwavering support. Imagine the state-of-the-art equipment that could shave seconds off a rescue, the cutting-edge training that could mean the difference between life and loss.

With your help, you can invest in the very tools and resources that safeguard our community. We value the encouragement you give us when you see us in the grocery store, on the street or out in the community. Thank you for supporting our department during our previous fundraisers and those that will come in the future.

**Fairfield VFD Roster:**



Chief - Anthony Roberts



Captain - Matt Foree



Sr. Lieutenant - Wesley Keeney



Safety Officer - Rhonda James



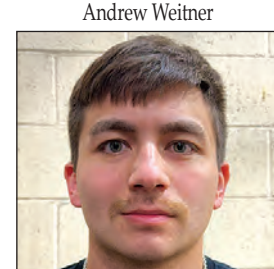
Driver/Operator & Chaplain - Andrew Weitner



Driver/Operator - Joe McCalman



Firefighter - Jeannie Keeney



Probationary Firefighter - Blake Lopez



Probationary Firefighter - Garrett McAdams

**(Not Pictured):**

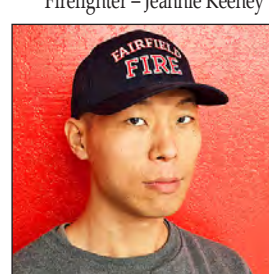
- Firefighter/Secretary - Krystal Walker
- Firefighter - Riley Armstrong
- Firefighter - David Treece
- Probationary Firefighter - Thomas Taylor



Probationary Firefighter - Weston Whiteside



Probationary Firefighter - Christopher Williamson



Probationary Firefighter - Ju Li



**Streetman Volunteer Fire Dept.**

**2024 Roster:**

- Chief (& EMT): Brian Davis
- Assistant Chief (& ECA): Matthew Marfell
- Captain: Kevin Davis
- Secretary/Treasurer (& ECA): Heather Marfell
- Firefighters: Robert Cockerell, John Sutton, John Lindsey, and Brian McNett



**Annual Fundraiser**

Streetman Volunteer Fire Department will be having their Annual Fish Fry and Cake Auction Fundraiser on Saturday, April 27, 2024.

Dinner begins at 5:00 p.m. until they run out of food. Auction begins at 6:00 p.m. Door prizes and a surprise raffle will be on tap as well. Don't miss out on the fun while supporting a great cause.

**We Need Your Help Keep Our Residents Safe From Wild Fires**

Every rural fire department must have the ability to mitigate wild fires. SVFD is no exception. We currently have a grass truck that is over 20 years old. Over the last two summers of extreme hot and dry weather this truck has responded to major fires in Freestone, Navarro and Henderson counties. It has been a real challenge to keep the current truck in service. There were several days this past summer where we could not provide the essential fire protection this type of truck provides because of mechanical issues. Our only option at this point is to replace it. Several generous members of our community have already donated a portion of the entire cost of the new truck which is \$57,000. We would prefer to not incur a significant debt to purchase a new truck since we do not typically operate with a lot of capital to cover our essential, routine expenses. If you would consider supporting this project with a donation of any amount it would



be greatly appreciated and will be used to provide an essential service to our community.

If you have any questions or would like more details, you can contact me at (214) 226-2870.

Or you may mail a donation to:  
**Streetman Vol. Fire Dept.**  
PO 101  
Streetman, TX 75859

Thanks for your consideration,

John Sutton

**Honoring Our First Responders**



**Thank you for your bravery and service to our community**

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While the Solar Eclipse did not draw as many visitors as initially expected, the severe storms and flooding that followed had all County First Responder personnel running ragged.

Freestone County Water Rescue worked high-water calls for most of the day on Tuesday, April 9th.

Teague Fire Department answered more than 15 separate calls, including two residential structure fires, multiple water rescues, trees down, transformer fires, utility lines down, and traffic control.

Thankfully, through all of this chaos, there were no severe injuries reported.

The common thoughts from Freestone County Sheriff's Office, Police Departments, Fire Departments, EMS, Dispatchers, TXDOT, and Commissioners are: Do NOT drive in high water. Turn around, don't drown. You not only put yourself in danger, but also the lives of every emergency personnel. It's not worth the risk. Attempting to drive where you think the road is or was, or going around barricades, and / or ignoring warning signs, could be fatal.

Thank you to all of our First Responders for a job well done and for what you do for our communities on a daily basis. You are all very much appreciated for your hard work and dedication.

*What a great reminder, and the perfect time to feature our first responders, medical emergency personnel, volunteer firefighters, and law enforcement of Freestone County, Texas.*

*We hope our readers will take some time this week to recognize the men and women who serve our communities. We are grateful to each and every one of you!*

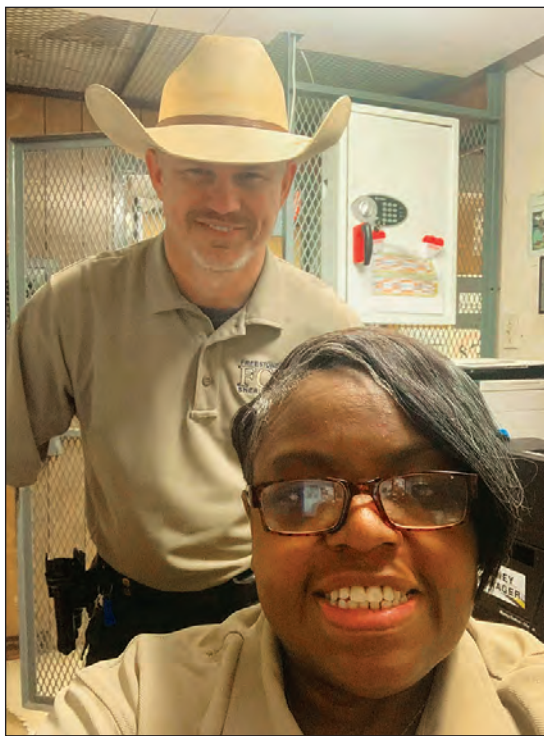
(Photo courtesy of Fairfield VFD)

## Introducing the Men & Women of the Freestone County Sheriff's Office

- Freestone County Sheriff's Office Roster:**
- Sheriff: Jeremy Shipley
  - Chief Deputy: Devin Mowrey
  - Lieutenants: Scott Shaw and Travis Martin
  - Sergeants: Brody Weinmann and Mike Darby
  - Deputies: John Aultman, Gary Dollar, Lee Fogal, Chad Hill, Rick Howerton, Larry Jones, Scott Leatherman, L.J. McAdams, Rowdy Miers, James Pickens, John Steele, and Robert Willis
  - Jailers: Lt. Sheena Wimberly, Sgt. Genell Nelms, Emilee Allen, Brianna Lamb, Evan Lamb, Bobby McCoy, Janice McIntosh, Benjamin Northcutt, Jerrilyn Price, Billy Shelton, Kathy Singleton, and Heather Sutton



- Dispatchers: Lt. Keitha Ashley, Sgt. Leslie Gonzalez, Amy Arman, Amber Brock, Jery Murdock, Jonny Childs, Tammy McKinley, Kelly Price, and Abigail Warren.
- Records Clerk: Karren Townsend
- Sheriff's Admin: Hannah Hale



THE FLOODED UNDERPASS on Highway 84 just west of Teague impeded travellers, causing at least one vehicle to become totally submerged. (Courtesy photo)

**Thank you! Law Enforcement Agencies of Limestone & Freestone County!**

*You are always there whenever, & wherever, you are needed.*

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## Wortham Police Department Serving the Cities of Wortham & Streetman

Wortham Police Department  
2024 Roster:

- Chief: Kelly Butler
- Sergeant: Kelly Craig
- Officers: Ashleigh Daniel, Dylan Thompson, Nick McAlister, and Corey Price
- Reserve Officers: Leonard Jimmerson, Marcus Mason, Amber Faigin, Matt Foree, Gary McKnight, and Brad Butler

Wortham PD patrols for both the Cities of Wortham and Streetman.



**EVERYDAY HEROES**

**Protection Service Dedication**

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# Area Students Earn Title UIL Academic District Champs

High School students in the Freestone County area have been hard at work, competing in UIL Academic contests. Fairfield and Oakwood were named Champions in their Districts. Teams and individual students will be advancing in competitions. Here are the details for Fairfield, Oakwood and Wortham high schools (Teague results were not available at press time. Check back next week):

**Fairfield High School** earned the title of District 20 3A UIL Champions and First Place School overall at the Academic Meet held in Buffalo on Tuesday, April 2nd and Friday, April 5th, 2024. Thirty (30) students are advancing in 14 events and will compete at the Regional Meet at Blinn College in Brenham on Saturday, April 27, 2024. All First Place teams, and all First-Third Place individuals will be participating.

District Results are as follows:

- Accounting:** 1st Place Team, Eashan Kalyanji – 1st, Avie Robinson – 2nd, Preston Scott – 3rd, & Cooper Craddick – 4th
- Calculator:** 2nd Place Team, Avery Thaler – 2nd
- Computer Applications:** 1st Place Team, Preston Scott – 1st, Eashan Kalyanji – 2nd, & Aiden Adams – 3rd
- Computer Science:** 1st Place Team, Newton Hartley – 1st, Luke Cruce – 2nd, Preston Scott – 3rd, & Eashan Kalyanji – 3rd
- Literary Criticism:** 1st Place Team, Anna Moyer – 1st & Lydia Morgan – 2nd
- Math:** 1st Place Team, Newton Hartley – 3rd, Mason Edwards – 4th, Luke Cruce – 6th, & Noah Hoskins – 7th
- Journalism:** 2nd Place Team
- Copy Editing:** Anna Moyer – 2nd
- News Writing:** Kynzee Payne – 5th & Tiffany Jauregui – 6th
- Feature Writing:** Kynzee Payne – 4th & Tiffany Jauregui – 5th
- Editorial Writing:** Carolyn Dunlap – 2nd & Blake Phillips – 6th
- Headline Writing:** Callie Morgan – 2nd, Adalyn Peterson – 3rd, & Antonio Jauregui – 4th
- Number Sense:** 1st Place Team, Alfonso Rodriguez – 1st
- Science:** 1st Place Team; Lydia Morgan – 1st Overall, 1st Chemistry, 1st Physics; Noah Hoskins – 2nd Overall, 1st Biology; Brayden Haley – 3rd Overall; & Laiken Carlson – 4th Overall
- Social Studies:** Kaden McCrory – 6th
- Spelling:** 1st Place Team, Yahir Yopez – 1st, Austin Smith – 3rd, Tevin Eam – 4th, & Madysen Farris – 5th
- Informative Speaking:** Justin Johnson – 5th
- Persuasive Speaking:** Cole Coufal – 5th
- LD Debate:** Claire Guillotte – 3rd, Jerry Draper – 4th, & Aiden Cobb – 5th

Congratulations to these students on a job well done!

**Oakwood High School** is the District UIL Champion, with many teams and students earning top awards. Both the Journalism and Speech Teams brought home 1st Place. The Current Events Team earned 3rd Place and the Mathematics Team took 4th Place. Individual placings are as follows:

- Poetry:** A Peralta – 2nd & A Johnson – 3rd
- Ready Writing:** K Simmons – 1st, G. Kelley – 3rd, & L Releford – 5th
- Social Studies:** K. Koym – 1st
- Lincoln Douglas Debate:** M Brauer – 1st
- Current Events:** K. Koym – 6th
- Persuasive Speaking:** M. Brauer – 1st, A. Peralta – 2nd, & K.

Simmons – 4th

- Informative Speaking:** K. Alatorre – 3rd
- Editorial Writing:** L. Releford – 3rd & K. Simmons – 6th
- Feature Writing:** K. Simmons – 1st, G. Kelley – 3rd, & D. Robinson – 5th
- News Writing:** C. Carr – 1st, L. Releford – 3rd, & G. Kelley – 4th
- Copy Editing:** G. Kelley – 5th
- Headline Writing:** L. Releford – 1st, K. Simmons – 2nd, & K. Koym – 3rd
- Mathematics:** K. Alatorre – 4th

--**Spelling:** K. Walker – 6th  
Great job, ladies and gentlemen!

Wortham High School had several students placed at the District Academic UIL Meet held last week. District Results are as follows:

- Headline Writing:** Nicholas Shelton (Junior) – 1st
- Social Studies:** TJ Grela (Senior) – 1st
- Feature Writing:** Braidee Taylor (Senior) – 3rd & Donald Rosencrans (Senior) – 4th
- Chemistry:** Addison Erler (Sophomore) – 3rd

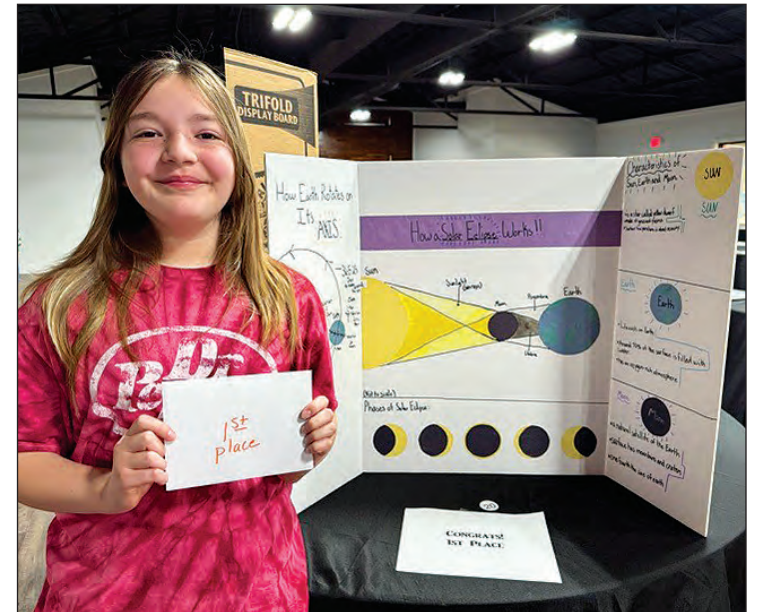
Nicholas, TJ, and Braidee will advance to the Regional Meet. Though they did not advance to regionals, the Calculator Team placed second. Members include TJ Grela (Senior), Trett Carroll (Senior), Donald Rosencrans (Senior), and Megan Cryer (Junior). Congratulations!

# Solar Eclipse & Science Fair

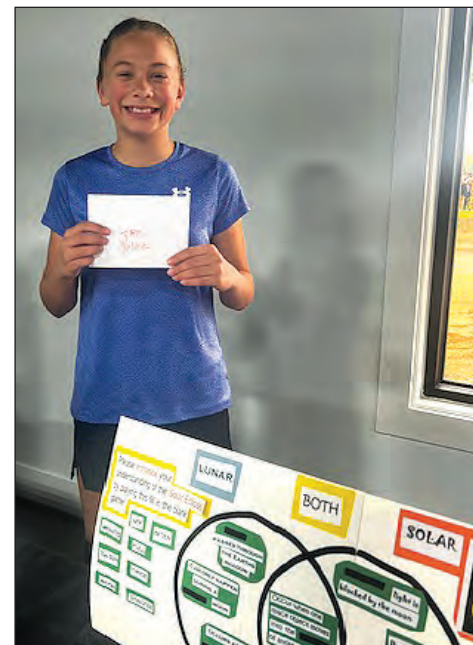
Fairfield Chamber of Commerce's Solar Eclipse Watch Party was a big hit! Visitors from Japan, Australia, Saudi Arabia, California, Houston (below in their galaxy attire), Palestine, and of course Fairfield turned out to view this spectacular event at the Freestone County Fairgrounds on Monday, April 8, 2024. The crowd enjoyed music, food, and activities for the kids. The science fair had 65 projects entered by students from Fairfield, Teague, and Dew. Winners included:

- First Place** – Landree Pineda (right) of Dew
- Second Place** – Isabeth Ross of Dew
- Third Place** – Caroline Elliott of Fairfield

Congratulations to these students! Volunteers for this event were Lisa Nichols, Jason Pate, Gail Farish, Mary Small, The Fairfield Library, Katie Wade, and James Tyus. **SCIENCE FAIR WINNERS** are (clockwise from top): Landree Pineda - 1st; Isabeth Ross - 2nd; and Caroline Elliot - 3rd.



(Photos by Natalia V. Marsters)



# EVERYDAY HEROES

## Celebrating Our Awesome FreeCo Family

*We love our Teachers, Coaches, Support Staff, Resource Officers, Custodial Crew, Nutrition Department, Transportation, IT Support, Maintenance, Administration, School Board and more!  
We are especially thankful for our excellent students and their families.  
Proud to be a part of the Fairfield Independent School District and Eagle Family!*

**Fairfield**  
Independent School District



615 Post Oak Road  
Fairfield, Texas  
(903) 389-2532

fairfieldisd.net



# The Proud Volunteer Firefighters of Southern Oaks VFD

Southern Oaks Volunteer Fire Department was established in 1989 and currently has 30 active members, 10 administrative personnel, 9 EMRs, 1 EMT, and 1 Paramedic currently providing their skills and time to the department.

There are several members who have been on board for more than 20 years.

Five husband & wives pairs serve as Firefighters and/or EMRs.

The department covers about 90 square miles, nearly the whole south side of Richland Chambers Lake, from Southeast County Road 2350, all the way to FM 488, then right to FM 833, and North on FM 488 to US 287, then both directions to the county lines of Navarro and Anderson Counties.



They recently completed the building of a world class emergency helicopter landing pad at New Hope Church on FM 416. It was built by SOVFD members; from the dirt work, building, steel installation, and all electrical and finishing work (above) left-right: Tom Blake, Jeff Grace, Jerry Grimes, Bill Drozd, Danny Pitts, and Harold Steele). The only aspect that was hired out was the pouring of the concrete. Total cost for this project was \$27,000, funded entirely by community donations. This helipad is used approximately 12-15 times per year.

In July of 2023, the department received a new \$317,000 Brush Truck (right).



**Members include:**

--Chief – Van Wagnon

--Assistant Chief – Mark Wilkie

--Captain – Ed Fleming

--Secretary – Patsy Wagnon

--Treasurer – Milton Komegay

--Assistant Treasurer – Bill Drozd

--IT Administrator – Tom Blake

--Chaplain – Ryan Kiblinger

--Board Members – Jerry Grimes, Harold Steele, & Cory White

--Firefighters – Ashraf Ayoub, Brad Emsley, Randie Fenton, Scott Ferguson, Jeff Grace, John Hargis, Linda Hoover, Mike Jeffrey, Andy Jones, Melody Mesmer, Troy Mesmer, Ben Paulsen, Danny Pitts, Leanna Pitts, Curtis Risher, Valerie Steele, Bobby Vaughn, Jason Wilkie, & Summer Wilkie.

--Admin Personnel – Royce English, Dawn Furgason, Christine Grimes, Linda Hargis, Merle Hughes, Brenda Jones, Betsy Metcalf, Pat Metcalf, Cheryl Wangrin, & Bob Wilson.

--Rehab Unit – Cheryl Wangrin, Terry Burroughs, Glenn Cannon, Debby Flemming, Dawn Furgason, Christine Grimes, Linda Hargis, Merle Hughes, Leanna Pitts, Patsy Wagnon, & Carol Wilkie.

*Freestone County puts its trust in the amazing First Responders who selflessly answer the call to service every day, in every situation.*

*Thank You for all that you do to provide safety and peace of mind to all of us!*

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Member FDIC

## Safety First With County Constables, Emergency Management

Serving as Constables in Freestone County:

Pct. 1 – Buck Bonner

Pct. 2 – Daniel Ramsey

Pct. 3 – Richard McGown

Pct. 4 – Ken Sessions

Emergency Management Coordinator is Leonard Smith.

*Thanks to Our*

**Healthcare HEROES**

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Presented by Veteran Partners of Texas on April 27th

# Mudbugs for Heroes 2024

Veteran Partners of Texas is hosting their Mudbugs for Heroes 2024 at Lazy S Ranch on Saturday, April 27th from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Proceeds from this event support Service Members, Veterans, and Family in Central and East Texas Counties of Limestone, Freestone, Falls, Navarro, and more.

Admission is \$25 per adult, \$15 for kids ages 6-12, and free for children 5-years-old and younger. Veterans get in for \$10 each. Admission includes the price of your meal which will be crawfish, corn, sausage links, potatoes, and a drink. Also available will be hamburgers, cheeseburgers, sodas, and more. Food will be served from 11:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., or until it runs out. Take-out available with order minimums.

There will be kids' activities to include aliens, dinosaurs, games, playground, giant ants, and a bounce house.

Circuit Riders Motorcycle Ministry, Fairfield Chapter, will be on site with an information table and motorcycle games to include Slow Race, Ball & Cone, and Water Balloon Toss, beginning at 2:30 p.m.

Waco Chiropractic will also be on hand beginning at 11:00 a.m.

Vendors will set up at 8:00 a.m. and open to guests from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. If you would like to be a vendor, the fee is \$40 per 14x14 foot spot. Vendors wishing to camp may do so for an extra \$10 for one night, or \$15 for two nights. Veterans with booths camp for free.

Primitive over-night camping is available to all on Friday and Saturday nights. The cost is \$40 for one night, or \$75 for 2 nights.

**Schedule of Events**  
10:00 a.m. – Open and Kids Activities  
11:00 a.m. – Start Serving Food, Waco Chiropractic Available, Silent Auction Begins  
12:00 Noon – Former NFL

Players  
12:30 p.m. – Donors Recognition  
1:00 p.m. – Recognition of Active Duty and Veterans  
1:30 p.m. – Briana LaTray  
1:45 p.m. – Flag Retirement Ceremony presented by American Legion Post 31 of Marlin  
2:30 p.m. – Motorcycle Games  
3:00 p.m. – Silent Auction Ends  
3:45 p.m. – Live Auction Begins  
5:00 p.m. – Karaoke Fun  
6:00-8:00 p.m. – Live music by the band 'Knot Today'  
9:00 p.m. – End of Day  
Lazy S Ranch is located at 2352 LCR 486 (Hinchcliffe Road) in Mexia, TX 76667. They can be found on Facebook by searching Lazy S Ranch.

Veteran Partners of Texas is a 501(C)3 Organization located in Mexia. They can be found on Facebook by searching Peer Support 171. They partner with Veterans One Stop, Military Veteran Peer Network, TVC.

For more information, please contact one of the Event Coordinators: Vickie Slaughter (682-702-0673), Sheila Shields (254-221-2652), and Joe Rob (254-723-7810).

**Accessories, Etc.**

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*Blessed be the Lord, my rock, who trains my hands for war and my fingers for battle. He is my steadfast love and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer, my shield, and in whom I take refuge. - Psalm 144:1-2*

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Salute Our First Responders

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# Meet the Officers of Fairfield Police Department

David Utsey - **Chief of Police** - 31 years of law enforcement, 20 years with Fairfield PD  
 Albert Gallegos, Jr. - **Assistant Chief of Police** - 19 years of law enforcement, 15 with Fairfield PD  
 Harold Markham - **Sergeant/Criminal Investigations** - 14 years of law enforcement  
 Jared Scarrow - **Patrol Corporal** - 7 years of law enforcement  
 Mary Warren - **Patrol/Animal Control** - 7 years of law enforcement  
 Josh Ashley - **Patrol/Axon Taser Instructor** - 3 years of law enforcement



Jennifer Beaver - **Patrol** - 1 year with Fairfield PD  
 Bailey Mills - **Patrol** - New officer completed the academy in January  
 Joseph Tinsley - **Patrol** - New officer completed the academy in January

**Officer Ashley** will be attending Blue Shield Defensive tactics training at McKinney PD. He will be a defensive tactics instructor for Fairfield PD.

**Sergeant Markham** has attended numerous training courses regarding crime scene reconstruction with Texas Forensics Associates. He will become the PD's firearms instructor in May.

**Assistant Chief Gallegos** completed FBI Executive, Command, and the Supervisor Leadership Institute. He received the FBI Trilogy leadership award, a prestigious award in Law Enforcement.

**Officer Warren** (at right) is certified as animal control and will be attending intoxilyzer training with the Texas Department of Public Safety in Weatherford.

**Corporal Scarrow** is a Field Training Officer with Fairfield PD and will be attending Basic Instructor School.



**Officers Mills and Tinsley** (bottom right) are a part of Fairfield PD history. They are the first police cadets to be hired by Fairfield PD. They were sent to the Navarro College Police Academy in August 2023; performed exceptionally and successfully passed the State TCOLE exam. Both are currently in Field Training.

**Officer Beaver** has previous experience with several agencies, and past experience as a K9 officer.

*"We want our officers to get the best training and achieve their goals," explains Assistant Chief Gallegos. "Not only to benefit themselves but to enhance the capabilities at Fairfield PD."*



## Fairfield EMS Roster and Years of Service

--Paramedic/Director  
 Ignacio (Billy) W. Perez - 25

--Advanced EMT/Office Manager  
 Debbie Glass - 29

--Advance EMT/Office Billing  
 Leita Poteet - 9

--Paramedic/Supervisor  
 Steven Sanders - 11  
 Kevin Markham - 13  
 Chris Wirtz - 28

--Paramedics  
 Steven Huston - 1  
 Travis Monroe - 1  
 Erica Markham - 1  
 Robyn Tackitt - 3  
 Jaggar Kennedy - 4  
 Ashley Kennedy - 5  
 Casey Giles - 5  
 Devin Davis - 6  
 Hannah Scarborough - 9  
 Tyler Tucker - 10  
 Jeff Price - 15  
 Brandon Glass - 18  
 Melissa D. Perez - 24

--EMTs  
 Anthony Roberts - 1  
 Paige Parkhill - 1  
 Riley Armstrong - 1  
 Matt Foree - 2  
 Thomas Taylor - 2  
 Amanda Ray - 5  
 Quintin Irvin - 7  
 Rhonda Craig - 9  
 Gail Christie - 18



*Real heroes don't wear capes. Real superheroes wear uniforms, and badges, and stethoscopes.*

**THANK YOU** to all the First Responders who serve our communities!

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emergency responders, fire fighters,



law enforcement, and more.



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