

History

Appleby Fire Department History

The Appleby Fire Dept was started by a group of concerned citizens in January of 1975. They met in a shed under the water tower near Hwy. 59 to discuss plans of creating a fire department that would help protect the City of Appleby's citizens. There are no records from those first meetings but some of the people in attendance were Charles Crawford, R.L. Free, Bob Free, Bert Appleberry, L.E. (Gene) Willis, Gene Wingate, and Monroe Jones. There were others in attendance but with no paperwork we must rely on the recollections by some of those original members.

A Fire Chief was elected but the person holding the position reportedly changed several times the first two months. The first "recognized" Fire Chief was Mr. Monroe Jones who served as chief from April of 1975 through March of 1979, at which time he decided to remove his name as a candidate for re-election. The next elected chief was Paul Miller, who served in the post from April of 1979 through March of 1992. Next in line to be elected chief was Marcus Casper from April of 1992 through April 1996. The current Chief, Tim Hooper assumed the post in April of 1996.

The Appleby Fire Dept. has had many faithful members who served in many capacities over the years, all of which cannot be named, but they are all appreciated. Bert Appleberry was elected the first treasurer in January of 1975 and served in that position until he retired from the department in late 1999. Gene Willis was an active member until his death in 2005. Over the years Mr. Willis served as Assistant Fire Chief on two separate occasions, as well as serving as secretary, training officer, and as a lieutenant many times. Gene Wingate served as Assistant Fire Chief from April of 1975 through approximately March of 1980. R.L. and Bob Free each served in many positions over the years as well. Mr. R.L. was a lieutenant for several years and Bob was the secretary for many years. Jerry Mixon served as secretary in the mid eighties and went on to be elected Assistant Fire Chief, where he served under three different fire chiefs. Jerry retired from the Appleby Fire Dept. in 1999. In the late seventies, Gene Willis served as the training officer and sometime in the early eighties Billy Gillam was elected to the position and served until the early nineties. Tim Tomlin served as training officer for several years in the early nineties, then as a lieutenant and he later served as the first captain for two years. The first woman to join the dept as a firefighter also served as secretary for many years. Her name was Toni Tomlin and she was very likely the first woman to be in fire suppression in Nacogdoches County. These are just a few of the many members who have dedicated their time and effort to help serve and protect the citizens of Appleby.

The Appleby Fire Dept. was the first department in the county, including the city of Nacogdoches, to be a fully functioning medical first responder organization recognized by the Texas Dept. of Health. Medical calls have become the largest percentage of our calls and they continue to increase every year. Currently we have 15 EMT and EMT-I certified personnel. We have three AED's in service: one in the first out engine and two others carried in POV's by active members along with their medical jump kits.