

VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF FIRST RESPONDERS



MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

State Office and Training Center
2535 Turkey Creek Road, Oilville, VA 23129
Phone: (804) 749-8191 Fax: (804) 749-8910 Website: vafr.org

WHAT IS YOUR WHY?

The heart of human excellence often begins to beat when you discover a pursuit that absorbs you, frees you, challenges you, or gives you a sense of meaning, joy or passion. - Terry Orlick, PhD

There are many reasons why individuals answer the call to work in the EMS field whether it be on a volunteer or paid career basis. You may have chosen the EMS field to carry on a family legacy, or have had a personal experience and needed fire, rescue or police at some point in your life. You may have experienced some not so nice EMTs as a patient yourself and decided to become an EMT so you could treat patients the way you would have wanted to be treated. Your why may be to build upon a resume to pave the way for medical school or maybe you just simply want to do something different and help your community. No matter your why, you will inevitably find yourself in a situation that will alter your life in ways you could never have imagined. You will find yourself in situations where you realize this life is bigger than yourself and just maybe you are not in complete control. The VAFR family understands these experiences and all the feelings, and thoughts that go along with these life experiences. We encourage, support and are there for one another to remind us of our why and help one another make sense of those life alternating situations.

Rescue squads, fire departments, EMS agencies, ambulance services, municipalities and counties also have their own why. Some want to take advantage of the training opportunities offered at no additional cost to their members. They want to support their members as much as possible by providing convenient broad-based training opportunities so each member in their agency can rest easy knowing they are fully trained in whatever awaits them when the tones go off. For others it is to have a source of assistance with their needs above and beyond that which they can do for themselves. Yet for others it is to be associated with other agencies to build relationships and community so they can meet like-minded individuals to dialogue, continue to improve upon their skills, grow, learn and support one another. Whatever the need, whatever the why, the VAFR is committed to assisting its members in meeting those needs and fulfilling the why. Any individual, business, agency, association or organization that provides or supports emergency medical services from simple transportation to paramedic level providers and everything in between will benefit from membership in the Virginia Association of First Responders.

No matter your why, we are here to help. The VAFR understands the drive and desire to meet the needs of community, of being there for that infected in-grown toenail and that life altering accident or illness at all hours of the day and night. We shed tears because of our compassion for our communities and for one another because in the end, everyone deserves to have a tear shed for them. We are constantly evolving, hoping to do things just a little bit better than the day before and understanding the importance of relationship. It is our hope that you will join us on this journey and become a part of the VAFR family.



HISTORY



Julian Stanley Wise (1900 – July 22, 1985), was the founder of the Roanoke Life Saving and First Aid Crew, the first volunteer rescue squad in the United States. In 1909, Wise was walking along the banks of the Roanoke River in Roanoke, Virginia, when he witnessed two men capsize a canoe in deep, rough water. Though many onlookers saw the accident, none of them had the equipment or training to offer help and both men drowned. Wise later said of the incident, "I vowed that never again would I watch a man die when he could have been saved if only those around him knew how." On May 28, 1928, Wise and nine coworkers at the Norfolk and Western Railway began the first volunteer rescue squad. The city of Roanoke agreed

to provide communication support. A local funeral home donated an ambulance, and Wise's vision became a reality. By 1966, when the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act was passed, thousands of rescue squads had sprung up throughout the world. Training standards for Emergency Medical Technicians were enacted with the passage of the Highway Safety Act.

The rescue squad idea was not entirely new when Julian Wise's crew responded to its first call in 1928. The volunteer Goodwill Fire Department in Pottstown, Pennsylvania had added a horse-drawn ambulance as early as 1890 and had begun to offer first aid in 1911. Wise's innovation was to combine rescue, first aid, and lifesaving into one independent agency. The nine members of the original crew all worked with Wise at the railroad. Citizens were invited to call in alarms to a phone that rang on the desk of the chief clerk, Harry Avis. Avis sent word to his fellow crew members, who rushed to the scene of the emergency. "At that time, we could keep all our equipment in my Reo," Wise said. The squad's first-aid kit was a \$3 fishing-tackle box, stocked with poison ivy wash, tannic acid compound, ammonia inhalant, and tincture of Merthiolate. In 1931, Wise and his men were called out for a drowning. They reached the scene in eleven minutes and effectively revived a sixteen year-old boy. Wise, a tireless promoter of his cause, traveled to cities in Virginia, the Carolinas, and elsewhere to help start squads, many of which copied the structure and philosophy of his crew.

On February 12, 1935, a meeting was called at the Hotel Roanoke by Captain Julian S. Wise of the Roanoke Life Saving and First Aid Crew. The meeting was well attended by interested citizens from all parts of the state as well as local rescue squads. After much deliberation, the name "Virginia Association of Rescue Squads" was chosen.

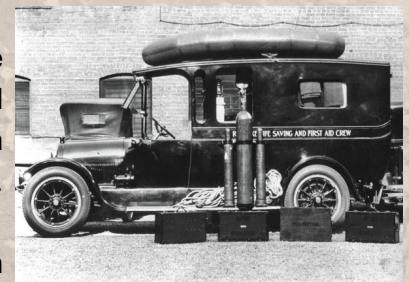
Virginia Association of Rescue Squads held its first convention on September 28, 1935, in Lynchburg and Julian Wise was elected the first president. At the Convention in September, 1963, the Board of Governors resolved that all applications for membership in the Virginia Association of Rescue Squads be a volunteer organization and that no charges be made for their services. In May of 1975, the name Virginia Association of Rescue Squads was officially changed to Virginia Association of Volunteer Rescue Squads.

On Saturday, May 30, 1998, the VAVRS State Office Headquarters was dedicated on 2.6 acres of land purchased in 1996 for \$61,154 in Oilville, Virginia. The \$600,000 headquarters is a 6400 square foot two story brick building, which features offices, conference rooms and a lobby on the main floor. The lower level has a training room, large kitchen, storage area and a 2 bay garage.

The VAVRS has advocated for emergency medical services departments in state government and supported passage of legislation to gain funding for an office and executive director position in 1976, established the Rescue Squad Assistance Fund in 1978, and instituted the \$1.00 for Life program to support regional councils in 1983. This funding has increased substantially to \$2.00 in 1990 and \$4.00 in 2002.

"This was like all other fine adventures," Julian Wise said looking back on his life in volunteer rescue. "All we need to do is reach out and there are people to respond."

Wise died on a July afternoon in 1985.



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Virginia Association of First Responders is committed to supporting and empowering First Responders across the Commonwealth of Virginia.

ABOUT US

The VAVRS dba VAFR is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization with an extensive history of assisting and advocating for EMS agencies in Virginia since 1935. Today we represent over 400 agencies with approximately 20,000 members. We are dedicated to meeting the ever-changing demands of emergency medical responders from all backgrounds and experiences. We provide high quality training and a collaborative environment for all emergency medical responders.

OUR LEADERSHIP

The leadership structure of the VAFR is a bit unique. Under the guidance of the Executive Director, the office staff operates at the direction of the all-volunteer Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is comprised of elected officers who generally hold their office for two consecutive years. The 2025 - 2026 Board of Directors are:

President - Andy Neagle
Vice President - Jeff Grimm
Secretary - Kenneth Williams
Treasurer - Steve Reese
Training Officer - Chris Craft
Chaplain - Nick Brown
Immediate Past President - John Craig III
Parliamentarian - Ken Morgan
Parliamentarian Emeritus - J.C. Phillips
Editor - Gary Dalton
Chief Rescue Officer - Steve Southworth

District 1 VP - Greg Burton
District 2 VP - Kay Laws
District 3 VP - Kathy Eubank
District 5 VP - Woody Conner
District 6 VP - Daniel Murphy
District 7 VP - Ted Harris
District 9 VP - Maxie Skeen
District 10 VP - Patricia Copeland



THE VAVRS OFFICE TEAM

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Bubby Bish

(804) 719-9265

bubbybish@vafr.org

COMMUNICATION

Communication is one of the reasons agencies are encouraged to become members of the VAFR. As an association, we pride ourselves on keeping an open line of communication with all our agency and individual members. We communicate through our officers at district meetings, mailings, publications and open access to the state office. Our website, vafr.org is also available as a means of keeping updated information flowing to our members. VAFR represents members from all coroners of the Commonwealth. The state is currently divided into eight districts.

As members of the Board of Directors, each District Vice President receives information from the Board to be disseminated to the members within their district at district meetings. This is an opportunity for each agency to communicate their training and members needs to the VAFR and to build relationships amongst themselves and with the VAFR. The District Vice President reports all feed back to the state office.

VAVRS DISTRICT MAP

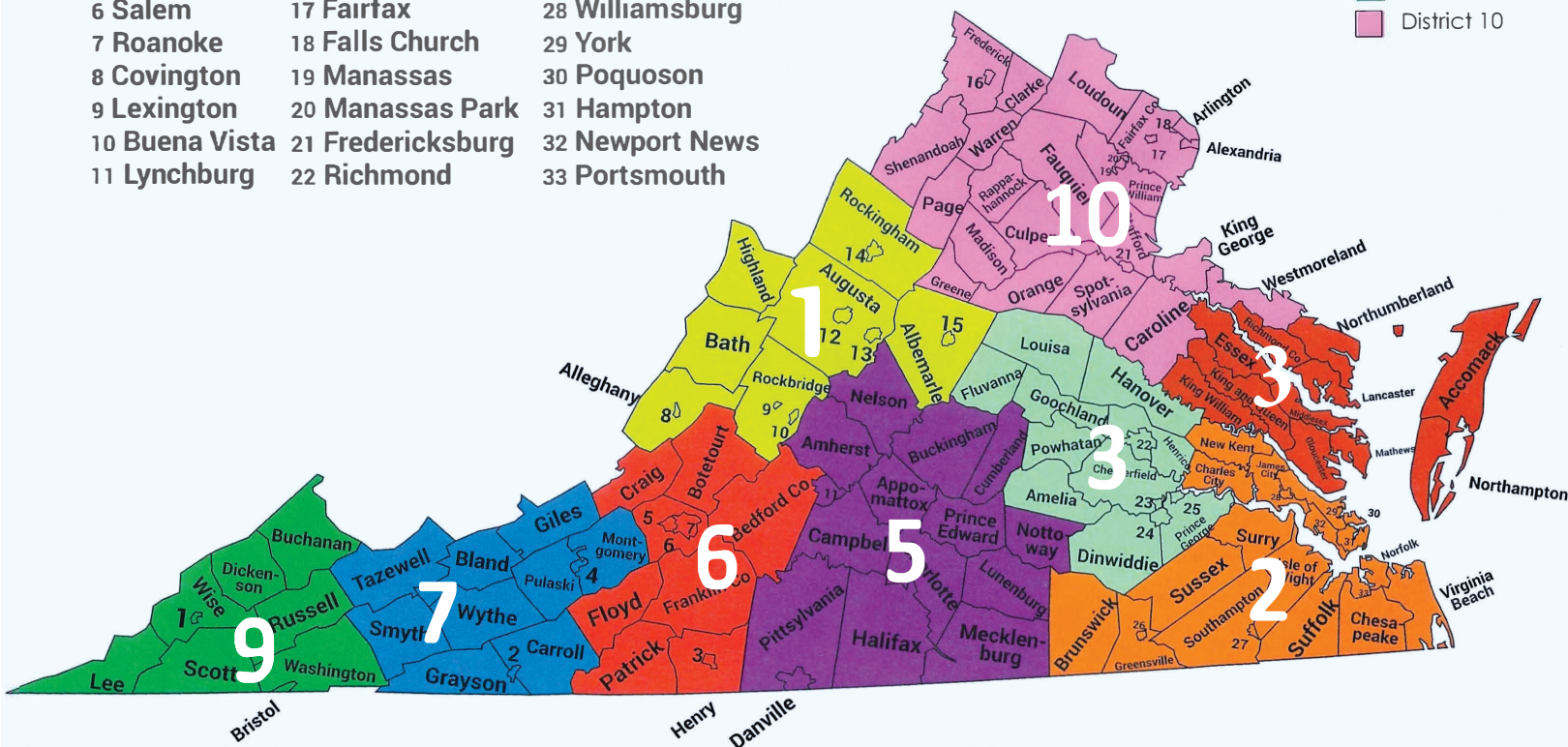
Including counties and major cities

VAVRS DISTRICTS

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Norton | 12 Staunton | 23 Colonial Heights |
| 2 Galax | 13 Waynesboro | 24 Petersburg |
| 3 Martinsville | 14 Harrisonburg | 25 Hopewell |
| 4 Radford | 15 Charlottesville | 26 Emporia |
| 5 Roanoke Co | 16 Winchester | 27 Franklin |
| 6 Salem | 17 Fairfax | 28 Williamsburg |
| 7 Roanoke | 18 Falls Church | 29 York |
| 8 Covington | 19 Manassas | 30 Poquoson |
| 9 Lexington | 20 Manassas Park | 31 Hampton |
| 10 Buena Vista | 21 Fredericksburg | 32 Newport News |
| 11 Lynchburg | 22 Richmond | 33 Portsmouth |

**District 8 has been
formally absorbed
by District 3*

- District 1
- District 2
- District 3
- District 5
- District 6
- District 7
- District 3*
- District 9
- District 10

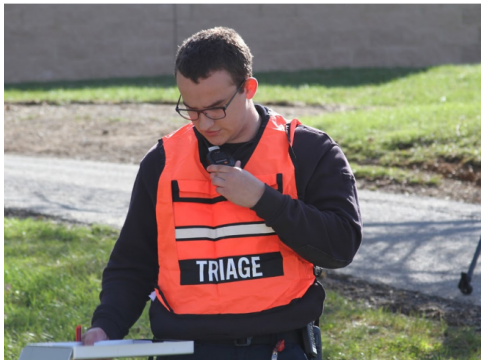


QUALITY, BROAD-BASED TRAINING



VAFR instructors are certified in various areas of expertise and stand ready to teach to all levels of first responders throughout the Commonwealth. If your agency would like to host a specific class, simply email the state office at vafr@vafr.org or give the office a call at (804) 749-8191 and our competent and responsive staff will put you in touch with one of our skilled instructors.

LEADERSHIP COURSES



ROPES COURSES



EXTRICATION COURSES



The VAFR offers a wide variety of training, taught by highly-qualified instructors, that is ever-evolving to meet the needs of Virginia's emergency medical responders.

EVOC

The Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC) is patterned after the State Office of Transportation Safety EVOC guide. The course includes Vehicle Classes 1, 2 and 3 and provides 8 hours of classroom and driving range instruction. Upon completion of the VAFR EVOC course, five points can be added to the driver's record in the Commonwealth of Virginia. This point system for your license is allowed only once every two (2) years.



WATER RESCUE COURSES

Introduction to Swift Water Rescue - Students will be introduced to the gear, logistics and hazards associated with water rescues. This course is a prerequisite to Swift Water Rescue.

Swift Water Rescue - designed to give students an understanding of the logistics, strategies, and tactics employed in a rescue situation. Emphasis is placed on rescuer safety and hazards encountered in a rescue situation. Practical exercises are used to demonstrate various techniques. Successful completion of a swim test is required before the practical evolutions.

SCHOOL BUS EXTRICATION

The School Bus Rescue program was developed by the VAFR to give students a well rounded education in the subjects of bus construction, types of buses and stabilization techniques. This course focuses on the basic and advanced techniques for utilization in bus accidents and techniques of bus extrication. This course contains both classroom and practical portions.



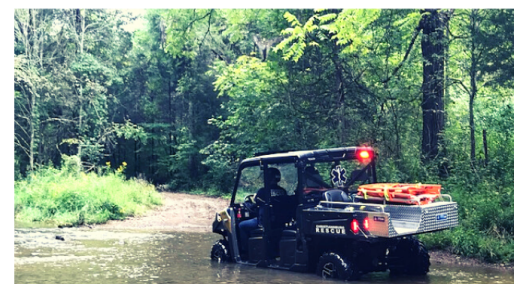
WATER RESCUE COURSES



EVOC COURSES



UTV/ATV COURSES



ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

Death Benefit Plan

The VAFR offers a Death Benefit Plan to Agency, Individual and Support with Training memberships. The beneficiary is paid a determined amount upon the death of the participant who is covered in the plan. There are no medical requirements, the cause of death does not need to be in the line of duty and the plan is open to all members of your agency as well as individual members as long as you are in good standing with the VAFR. Additionally, a VAFR state chaplain is available to assist with funerals and other related duties.



Legislative Representation

VAFR has a strong legislative committee that actively participates during the General Assembly to champion laws that affect EMS and its providers. The VAFR was primarily responsible for the original "\$1 for Life" which has now grown to "\$4 for Life" funding for members of the EMS community.

Auxiliary

The main function of any Auxiliary is to assist and support their local squad in any way they can. This may be fund-raising, cleaning the building, feeding them before their meetings, providing supplies, etc. The AVAVRS brings those auxiliaries together to share resources and experiences. The AVAVRS has six districts throughout the Commonwealth. Each district elects its own officers and holds district meetings. The AVAVRS feels "A small group can accomplish many things, but an organized group achieves great things!" That's why we want your auxiliary to be a part of our AVAVRS. We need you to keep the volunteer movement alive. It is a rewarding experience. You can find more detailed information regarding our AVAVRS on our website at vafr.org.

Juniors

The VAJVRS is the youth division of the VAFR. Any member agency is eligible to participate in a junior program. It is the association's goal to offer guidance and channel the enthusiasm of young adults into education and leadership skills. The VAJVRS cultivates an interest in pre-hospital care. Juniors will learn from senior members, understand first hand the importance of volunteerism and what it means to give back to their community. The leadership skills, camaraderie and being an active part of the community in which they live will provide valuable life lessons that will give them an opportunity to be a part of something bigger than themselves. You can find detailed information on VAJVRS on our website at vafr.org.

Events

The VAFR is a family. The bond of providers who participate in a common lifestyle is another benefit of being a member of the VAFR. Events hosted by the VAFR include unique social opportunities through district meetings and events such as Camporee, Annual Convention and Rescue College. Additionally, the VAFR State Office has a volunteer program where representatives of any member agency or individual member in good standing can offer to volunteer their time to help with the needs of the office. This is a great opportunity to participate in the organizing of any of our events, get to know the office staff and assist with the day to day processes of the VAFR. You can find out more about our events and legislative updates on our website at <https://vafr.org>.



VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF FIRST RESPONDERS DEATH BENEFIT PLAN APPLICATION

(Mail the completed application to the state office with the \$6 application fee)

Please type or print legibly.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Full Legal Name: _____ Common Name: _____
(First Name) (Middle Name) (Last Name)

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Social Security Number: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Email Address: _____

VAFR Membership Type: ☐ Agency ☐ Individual

For Applicant's Agency Use Only

I certify that the above applicant is a member in good standing with _____.

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

(Agency Representative Name/Title) _____
(Signature) Date: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Email Address: _____

BENEFICIARY INFORMATION

Primary Beneficiary

Full Legal Name: _____ Relationship: _____
(First Name) (Middle Name) (Last Name)

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Contingent Beneficiary *(Receives the benefits if the primary beneficiary predeceases the applicant.)*

Full Legal Name: _____ Relationship: _____
(First Name) (Middle Name) (Last Name)

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

For VAFR Use Only

Received By: _____ Date Received: _____

Entered into Database By: _____ Date Entered: _____

RESOURCES

When your agency chooses to become a member of the VAFR, you open your members up to a whole new landscape of opportunity within the EMS community. Each agency has those members that have a desire to change the world starting with their own community. As such, your leadership can encourage those members to get involved in the VAFR by recognizing their potential. Tap into those glimmers of leadership abilities and build upon them. Encouraging your members to become involved in your agency and ultimately the VAFR is a great way to find out what hidden talents exist within your agency. Members can begin to get involved by assisting instructors, writing an article for the quarterly LIFELINE publication, offer to assist with the website or just spend time at the VAFR state office and learn about the organization through our volunteer program. They can also become a liaison between your agency and the VAFR. They may ultimately become a District VP, a member of the VAFR Board of Directors, help the Training Officer and ultimately become an officer themselves. Sometimes it just takes one person to recognize the potential in another and a gentle nudge to set someone on a leadership trajectory they never thought was possible.



The VAFR state office has resources for its member agencies such as certificates you can fill out and present to your members, member's employers and family members at no charge. We have patches and rockers that are available for purchase as well as VAFR flags.

The state office has a large training room for meetings with a full kitchen and restrooms as well as a large upstairs conference room. If you would like to use the state office facilities, please give us a call and we will do our best to accommodate your needs. Whether you want to learn about the legislative process as it pertains to EMS, are looking for leadership opportunities, become an instructor, take a class, want to recognize a member in your agency or community or simply want to spend a day to help out and experience a day in the life of the VAFR, give us a call and we will do all we can to help you reach your goals and maximize the leadership potential of your members.

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS AND BENEFITS

BENEFITS	AGENCY		INDIVIDUAL
Membership Certificate and welcome packet			
Quarterly Lifeline publication			
Opportunity to attend VAFR Annual Convention			
Access to state office resources including appreciation certifications, patches, pins, books and other resources as available			
Participation in training classes at no additional cost.			
Opportunity to participate in VAFR Death Benefit Plan			
Mentorship opportunities with VAFR state officers			
Opportunity to attend Rescue College at reduced rate			
Exhibit at Annual Convention at reduced rate			
Voting rights on matters related to the VAFR			
ANNUAL DUES	1-49 Members \$200 50+ Members \$400		\$100

Membership renewals will be billed annually in January.



VAFR MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please indicate type of membership by checking the circle

PLEASE APPLY ONLINE AT VAFR.ORG TO PAY WITH A CREDIT CARD.



Agency



Individual

SECTION 1 – ALL APPLICANTS

Name of Applicant (<i>Individual Name or Organization/Agency</i>)			Date Application Submitted
Physical Address	City	State	Zip Mailing
Address (<i>including zip code</i>)			
() Business Phone	() Cell Phone	() Fax No.	E-Mail Address

SECTION 2: AGENCY APPLICANTS (*Individual applicants skip to section 3*)

Agency # _____ Agency is (**circle one**) *independent, county or municipality* run? Name of parent agency _____

Type of Agency ☐ Rescue ☐ Fire ☐ Transport ☐ PD ☐ Health System ☐ Other (*specify*) _____

Paid members? Yes () No () If yes, 24/7, daytime only, nighttime only or mixed? _____

Volunteer Members _____ # Career Staff _____ Volunteer + Career = _____ Active Members

Member Certifications (*equal to total number of active volunteer and career staff above*):

EMT _____ AEMT _____ PMEDIC _____ DRIVER ONLY _____ PD _____ FIRE _____ OTHER _____

Date voted to join VAFR _____ Charge for service? Yes () No () How are calls dispatched? _____

Do you have an auxiliary? Yes () No () Would you like information on VAFR Auxiliary? Yes () No ()

Do you have a Junior program? Yes () No () Would you like information on VAFR Juniors? Yes () No ()

AGENCY OFFICERS

TITLE	NAME	EMAIL ADDRESS	CELL PHONE
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SECTION 3: ALL APPLICANTS

I certify, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the above information is true and correct and that I/my organization/ my business has agreed to accept all rules and regulations of the VAFR.

Method of payment:

Attached to this application is a:

☐ Check in the amount of \$_____ to cover _____ members for an Agency Membership. As an Agency Membership with voting rights, our Board of Governors representative is _____(please print)

1-49 Members \$200.00

50+ Members \$400.00

☐ Check in the amount of \$75 to cover the cost of an **Individual** Membership

Credit Card:

PLEASE APPLY ONLINE AT VAFR.ORG IF PAYING BY CREDIT CARD or CALL VAFR STATE OFFICE STAFF 800-833-0602

REASON FOR JOINING:_____

Signed _____
Agency Representative/Title

Signed _____
Individual (for Individual Membership)

Print Name _____

Print Name _____

Date _____

Date _____

For Office Use only

Application Received: _____ District: _____ District VP Notified: _____

Payment Received: _____ Check No. _____ Paypal: _____ Accepted: yes/no: _____

Added to Lifeline: _____ VAFR Representative _____
Signature/Print

Date: _____



Volunteers are a resilient lot who learn to walk a narrow path between cynicism and sentimentality, between callousness and tears. But the reason for enduring the countless hours of training, drills, and meetings, the frivolous calls and the horrific calls, the danger and the drudgery, is clear. The sense of fulfillment is worth more than any paycheck.

- Jack Kelly, American Heritage, "Rescue Squad", May/June 1996, Vol. 47, Issue 3



"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." St. John 15:13