



LAKELAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Celebrating 100 Years of Service: 1916 - 2016

Lakeland, FL – 2016 is turning out to be a remarkable year for the Lakeland Fire Department (LFD). The new year not only marks the first time in the department's history that it can tout an Insurance Services Office Classification of a 1 (the highest achievable rating in emergency response that a community can receive) but it is also the year in which the Lakeland Fire Department will celebrate 100 years as a career fire department.

This is a historic event not only for the department but for the City of Lakeland. The department was officially made a career fire department by then city commissioners who had the foresight to professionalize emergency response services through an ordinance passed on August 16, 1916. This was done for the benefit of the community in light of several catastrophic fires that had occurred in previous years.

To mark the significance of this achievement and as a way of sharing that pride with the Lakeland community that makes it all possible, the department will be celebrating in several cost effective ways throughout 2016 in honor of its centennial. Centennial Celebration items include:

- Commemorative centennial badges for emergency response personnel (paid for entirely out of pocket by the individual firefighters). The badges capture the department's rich history with patriotic flair (photo attached);
- Custom decals for all apparatus to highlight that LFD is proud to be "Celebrating 100 years of Service". These will be on apparatus through August of 2017;
- Commemorative flags at all stations to highlight the centennial;
- The restoration of Leaping Lena, the department's original 1938 Pirsch Fire Truck to be used at public events like the Lakeland Christmas Parade. Restoration has been ongoing for a year;
- A centennial celebration for the entire community at Fire Station 1 on August 13, 2016. It will be a free and public event to educate the community on the department's past and present as well as fire safety. More information about the event will be provided closer to the event date.

For more information about the department, its history, and the small ways the Lakeland Fire Department is celebrating its 100 years as a career emergency response organization, visit <http://www.lakelandgov.net/lfd>.

You are encouraged to share this information with the community. For more information, interview requests with department representatives, filming, etc. please contact PIO Janel Vasallo.

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Gary Ballard, Fire Chief

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