



News

from the

CITY OF SENECA

September 2018

"One of the things I really want to do here is be very community oriented," Caudill said. "I tell a lot of people that 99 percent of the people we protect will never need the fire department, and those are the ones that I want to let know who we are, and that we're here if they ever need us."

Non-Emergency Phone for City of Seneca Fire Department (864) 885-2738

SENECA'S NEW FIRE CHIEF BRINGS EXPERIENCE & A LOVE FOR COMMUNITY

Seneca Mayor Dan Alexander recently made his way over to the Shaver Recreation Complex, where, like most evenings, several youth ballgames were taking place.

And while there was plenty of attention on the games, Alexander said, there was no missing the members of the Seneca Fire Department who were on hand mixing it up with adult and children alike — a type of community involvement that newly hired Fire Chief Charles "Richie" Caudill has identified as one of his top priorities.

The philosophy of community is something Caudill is looking to bring with him from his most recent stop in a lengthy career in the fire service, as he comes to Seneca from Salem after serving as the Fire Chief of the Keowee Fire District for the last 10 years.

Taking over the reins of the SFD from the recently retired Jan Oliver, Caudill takes control of the Seneca Fire District — which includes 16,000 residents and businesses both inside and outside city limits — and will oversee a much different demographic and coverage area in his new role, along with a significantly higher call volume.

But the change is something Caudill feels he's prepared to handle, as he began his career in the fire service in Augusta, Ga., in 1985. He's also served as the Chief of the Beech Island Fire Department in addition to 20 years served as a nuclear fire-fighter at the Savannah River Site.

"I've worked in that city environment before and enjoyed that time tremendously, so that early time at the city really taught me a lot," Caudill said. "When the Seneca job came open, it was just a huge opportunity for me to kind of get back to my roots of where I started in the city environment, and it kind of came full circle.

"I think that's what excites me the most, kind of coming back to where I started."

(continued)



Chief Caudill conducts fire training for school bus drivers on his first day on the job with the City of Seneca Fire Department.

The transition, Caudill added, has been smooth as he takes command of a crew that includes 24 uniformed firefighters, many of whom Caudill already knew prior to taking the job.

Given Caudill's track record, along with his familiarity with the department and his community-oriented approach, Alexander said he feels like Caudill was the ideal candidate for the job.

"I'm really excited to have him on board, he has a lot of experience in fire protection and has run a fire department before for many years," Alexander said. "I know he's very passionate about making sure the firemen not only provide fire protection in our community, but he wants them to be a part of the community, too."

"I just appreciate his leadership, and I'm looking forward to what he'll be able to do for Seneca and the entire fire department."

During his downtime, Caudill can often be found enjoying himself on the lake, while he also enjoys collecting and restoring vintage gas pumps from the 1930s and 40s. He has a 21-year old son, Austin, and is married to his wife, Diane, who was a high school classmate of his.

And Caudill added he doesn't want anyone to be shy about calling the fire department if a need arises, as he said the department is eager to lend a helping hand.

"If anyone even thinks they need anything at all from us, just give us a call, because we want to be a part of helping whoever we can help," he said.



Fire Chief Jan Oliver recognized for 33 years of service at City Council meeting August 14, 2018

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