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O'Dell Named 2016 Dexter Firefighter of the Year

DECEMBER 22ND 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Dexter, Missouri - The Dexter Fire Department held their annual Christmas banquet on Tuesday, December 20, 2016. Todd O'Dell, a 15 year veteran of the Dexter Fire Department was named the 2016 Firefighter of the Year.

The Dexter firemen vote each year as to who has gone above and beyond the call of duty and who exemplifies the spirit of the department.

Presenting the award to O'Dell is the 2015 recipient, Jeffrey Hueckel.

Mark Stidham, City of Dexter Manager, spoke during the celebration. "We have come a long way over the years," commented Stidham. "You guys are working efficiently. I'd like to brag on all of you and put you up against any fire department in southeast Missouri."

"We try to address every need that Don has asked for over the years," Stidham said of Don Seymore, Fire Chief. "The city of Dexter appreciates each and everyone of you!"

Amy Palmer with SCAD, guest speaker, also said a few words about the Dexter Fire Department.

"You guys do a fantastic job. You are all heroes to EMS," stated Palmer. "We know without a doubt you will have our back. We sometimes don't take the time to thank you and let you know how much you are appreciated."

"You put your lives in front of us. We park our vehicles next to the fire engines and you protect our vehicles and us while we work. Thank you!"

Don Seymore, Fire Chief, also spoke about some of the most interesting and unfortunately tragic situations the firemen and rescue have had to deal with during the 2015 year. One of course was the recent train wreck taking the lives of two adults and two children. With tears filling his eyes he spoke of that tragic day being one he will never forget and if any fireman needed to talk his door was open.

"Days like that one will stick with you forever during your career and life. You are never completely prepared for that type of tragedy," stated Seymore.

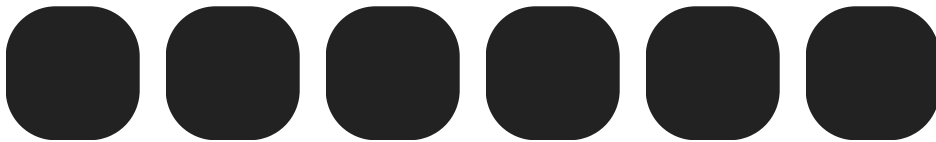
On a much lighter note he spoke of the recent water rescue and the amazing efforts by everyone involved to rescue a young lady partially submerged in a ditch on Arvin Road. She received very few injuries and was a very lucky lady. "Who would have guess a water rescue in Dexter. It's flat here and not many water sources except the lagoon, but the ditch was full of water and well we did what we had to do to rescue that person."

Jeffery Hueckel received his 5 year pin. Todd O'Dell and Terry Battles received their 15 year pins.

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