



Valley Regional Fire Authority – *Serving the communities of Algona, Auburn, Pacific & KC Fire District 31*

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Deputy Chief Kevin Olson Retires After 28 Years of Service

After 28 years of service to the Algona, Auburn and Pacific communities, Deputy Chief Kevin Olson has retired.

After volunteering for nearly a year with Pierce County Fire Protection District No. 5, Olson was hired as a probationary firefighter with the legacy Auburn Fire Department in April 1991. At the Washington State Fire Training Academy he was named Valedictorian of his class and was chosen as a member of the prestigious “Chiefs’ Company” at graduation.

During his seven years as a firefighter, Olson served on several teams and committees including; pre-fire planning, communications, public education as well as a rescue specialist performing dive and high angle rope rescues.

In May of 1999, Olson was promoted to Captain and worked in both operations and training where he completed several strategic objectives to improve training, records management and reporting processes.



In September of 2006, he was promoted to Battalion Chief (BC). He spent the first two years as a BC leading the Training and Safety Division. In 2008 he returned to shift where he managed six fire stations and 25 personnel. He made his way back to training in 2015 and was appointed the first VRFA Training Chief at the South King County Fire Training Consortium. At the consortium he managed suppression training and compliance for 800 firefighters and officers.

Olson’s final promotion came in early 2017 when he was promoted to Deputy Chief of the Technical Services Division where he managed Fire Prevention, Planning and Logistics, Training, EMS, Emergency Management and Public Information. He will complete his career with the VRFA as the Deputy Chief of Operations when he retires at the end of June.

Over the span of his 28 year career, Olson continuously worked to expand his knowledge by completing several certifications including; Executive Chief Officer, Blue Card Certified Instructor, Ace Certified Peer Fitness Instructor, Fire Officer II and Incident Safety Officer. In 2003, he received an Associate of Applied Science in Fire Science and in 2013 he received a Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences in Fire Administration from Eastern Oregon University. Olson has been named Fire Officer of the Year twice during his career in 2004 and 2016 and was awarded Meritorious Unit Citations in 1995, 1996, 1997 and 1998.

“I’ve never known anyone who displayed more integrity, insight and enthusiasm for the fire service and our community. Kevin embodies everything great about the VRFA. I’ll profoundly miss his leadership and advice,” said Fire Chief Brent Swearingen.

Olson says, "As I reflect back, the one thing I did right was take advantage of opportunities; and for those opportunities I am most grateful! I am forever in debt to the City of Auburn and the VRFA for allowing me to serve in this capacity."

Over the years, Olson has given back to the Auburn community by coaching Auburn Youth Soccer and serving on the Blue Ribbon Committee for Auburn.

"Kevin's work ethic and energy was off the charts. Whatever he set out to accomplish, he did it 100%. Kevin's high standards provided an example for all personnel to follow. You always wanted to be on Kevin's team because you knew his team would be competitive and successful," says Deputy Chief Larberg.

The people are what Chief Olson says he will miss the most about the VRFA. "I have had some amazing opportunities to work with some of the best people in the region and have learned so much from them. I have a tremendous amount of respect and admiration for the work they do which makes this difficult to walk away from," says Olson.

As he heads off into the next chapter of retirement, Olson says the home he is building on Hood Canal with his wife, Carla, will keep him busy for the remainder of this year. After that he is looking forward to slowing down a bit and enjoying time with his family and friends. He also says he will be happy to never have to drive through Tacoma traffic again!

We congratulate Deputy Chief Kevin Olson on a stellar career! He will be greatly missed but we wish him all the best in his much deserved retirement.

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