



Magnolia Volunteer Fire Department

P.O. Box 1210 ♦ Magnolia, Texas 77353-1210
107 Gayle Street ♦ Magnolia, Texas 77355
Office (281) 356-3288 ♦ Facsimile (281) 356-1572

Chaplain's Report

On the morning of July 4th, I got up and out early from HFD Sta.64. It was a quiet night so I was good and rested. I took my regular routine to get out the door, I said my good morning hello's to all the guys coming on shift and then got my coffee to go. I was excited and ready to get home to see my wife and son and then to head off to church. I thought to myself that there was not a better day to celebrate the 4th than on a Sunday. After church, my family and I enjoyed the afternoon by eating BBQ, sipping on sweet tea and relaxing by the pool. "How awesome is this?" Where else can you have this much freedom without fear than the good old US of A. But what I also realized was that there was a price that was paid for my excessive lounging by the pool. Later on I was at the Kroger store and I saw an elderly man sitting on the bench in his Kroger uniform outside on his smoke break. I noticed the tattoos on his arms and they did not look like your typical tattoos of today. I started talking to him and I said "by the looks of your tattoos it appears that you served in the Navy". His reply was "I served in WWII on a submarine". I continued to talk with the man and finished by saying "thank you for your service to our country and our freedom and to have a happy 4th". What an awesome day it was. I said goodbye to my wife and son and headed to Sta. 181's for the night shift. On the drive over I reflected on the day's events and thought about the sacrifice of our soldiers. I met Rich at the door and we talked and laughed for a bit, but then he asked me if I had heard the news. Unsure of what he was talking about I replied, "What news"? There was a Wharton Firefighter that was killed this morning in a warehouse fire. I just spent the whole day enjoying my day at church and spending time with family and recalling the goodness of our nation to have that joy and excitement to come crashing down. I got more information about the fireman. Thomas Araguz III was 30 years old, married with two sons and an 11 year veteran of the Wharton Fire Dept. who had just recently been promoted to Captain. Without speculation and not knowing all the details, all I knew was that a brother firefighter was killed in the line of duty. My heart sank and I was asking and searching for reasons why. That's what we fireman do, we want to know. Details, answers, what was the reason, but at the time, there were none. All I knew was that my heart was hurting for his family and fellow firefighters. In moments like these, all we can do is to look to God and pray, "You are the Captain of my soul, without you I am nothing". Let's not forget, we as firefighters serve a very important roll. Don't let anything or anyone discourage you or take that away, but in return, be humble about your service and God will bless you for it. Let's continue to remember the Araguz family and when you have a moment throughout the days ahead, say a prayer for his wife and two sons because now is a critical time when they need a touch from God. Philippians 4:7 May the peace of God which surpasses all understandings will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Mark Akers,
Chaplain

