



Trumann Fire Department
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May 4th, 2022

Arkansas State Firefighters' Association
ATTN: FF OF THE YEAR NOMINATION
District Trustees
610 Stewart Dr
Marion, AR 72364

To Whom It May Concern,

It is my honor to write to you with my submission of Lieutenant Donald Chaudoin and Firefighter/Paramedic Bailey Fisher of the Trumann Fire Department for the 2022 Firefighter of the Year Award. It is my opinion that they are most deserving of this award and hope that I can provide you with adequate information necessary for them to receive this coveted award.

December 10, 2021, the City of Monette was struck by a tornado causing major damage to a nursing home, with multiple injuries reported. I contacted two of my most dependable firefighters, both of whom were already out storm spotting, and asked if they would respond to Monette and help with the devastation caused by this storm. Like always, they both agreed, returned to the station, gathered gear and responded to Monette. Little did they know that this act of selflessness would put them in the perfect position to make multiple life saves in the City of Trumann.

Just as they arrived on scene of Monette, they were informed that the City of Trumann was in the direct path of another possible tornado. They immediately cleared scene and started back to Trumann. Inside the Squad Truck, the two firefighters could see the F2 Tornado as it tore through the City of Trumann and exited near the St. Francis River. Young Firefighter, 21-year-old, Bailey Fisher turned to his Lieutenant, a veteran firefighter, 49-year-old Donald Chaudoin and asked "is that a tornado?" Lieutenant Chaudoin said "it sure is" we have to stop and ride this out in the ditch.

These two firefighters were the very first to arrive in the area of the most devastation to residential homes in the entire City, and was unreachable from any other area except where they were. They left the Squad Truck on the side of the road, grabbed their gear, and trekked into the neighborhood of what used to be homes, but was now a mass of twisted debris and downed powerlines. Firefighter Fisher, a paramedic, had our ALS medical bag with him, and Lieutenant Chaudoin, a rope rescue technician, had our rescue gear with him. The two firefighters immediately began to start making rescues. They treated multiple victims requiring ALS care; tourniquets, IVs, chest decompression, etc. were used. I remember very distinctly, their request for spine boards, ambulances, and manpower from me in the Incident Command Post. I could hear their desperation and was doing everything I could to get them the assets they were requesting. The cries of the patients could be heard in the background of the radio traffic. Like the Marine's motto, they had to improvise, adapt, and overcome. They began to utilize residential doors blown from the hinges and commandeered a truck that had the keys in it to transport patients to an area where ambulances could reach them. They made 9 confined space rescues on that night and treated countless patients. In a debriefing shortly after this event I asked them to write down their accounts of that night while it fresh on their minds. The one thing that stands out to me is when both firefighters spoke

about hearing the screams for help all around them in pitch black conditions and having to make the decisions on who to help first.

There were over 100 patients treated in triage with no deaths recorded in the City of Trumann during this incident. It is my opinion that these two firefighters are the primary reason for no deaths that night and are true American Heroes. The dedication of service before self is what drives these two firefighters and sets them apart from everyone else.

I could tell story after story about the things that these two firefighters did on that night, but I hope that given you a good idea of what they accomplished. I am happy to provide additional information as your committee desires.

Thank you for considering Lieutenant Donald Chaudoin and Firefighter/Paramedic Bailey Fisher of the Trumann Fire Department for the Arkansas Firefighter of the Year Award 2022.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Revis Kemper". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "R" at the beginning.

Fire Chief
Revis Kemper