

Answering The Call

Meet
Katy Fire
Chief
Marc
Jordan

*Written by
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*Photography by
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"I made my first ambulance call as a volunteer, and that's what got me hooked on EMS. The first call was with Hank Schmidt of Schmidt Funeral Home," says Marc Jordan, Katy's Fire Chief. After that, I volunteered for many, many years."

- Fire Chief Marc Jordan

Katy Fire Chief Marc Jordan at the station





Jordan works over 48 hours each week at the station

Since 1973, Marc Jordan has been doing what he loves best, serving our community, and in 2004 he assumed the reigns as Administrative Director of Fire and EMS.

A True Katy Native

Jordan is a true local, born and raised on a rice farm. His family is one of Katy's originals, and they're all still living here in the Katy area. "My dad is a farmer and rancher north of town. He's been here all his life and he's about to be 83. All of my family lives in Katy, including my brother and two sisters," says Jordan.

He lives with his wife Cathy and three daughters, Haley, 14, Hannah, 12, and Holly, 9. His older son, Matt, 29, lives nearby. Because of his passion for the work, Jordan doesn't have much time for hobbies or other interests. He spends 48-plus hours a week at his second home, the Katy Fire Department. "I spend quite a bit of time up here, depending on the time of year. We do a lot of our training at night, so I'm here quite a bit at night." Says Jordan, jokingly, "I think I can retire when I'm 108."

Educating Katyites

In addition to running the place, Jordan also teaches classes on becoming an EMT. His classes are free and open to those who are interested in the two-year long course. Students from the ages of 18 all the way to 62 have enrolled. "I've been an educator for many years. We teach people to become paramedics and EMTs. We have our own 'little university' here," says Jordan. "Seeing someone you trained do the job is very rewarding for me. I've been blessed to be able to do this." Jordan adds, "If they (students) stay the course and get their credentials, they could be hired here. We firmly believe in homegrown."

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According to Jordan, working for the department requires a special personality. "You can't be real normal and work in this business. Every time the tones drop, something bad is happening and that's an everyday happening. You have to have a different personality to handle that. It's very dangerous and high-stress work on a daily basis. It's not for everyone. When you go home, the stress never goes away," he says. The people who work for him have great admiration and respect. Monica Shiller, a firefighter, EMT, and Jordan's personal secretary, attended his course before working at the department. "He's the best boss in the world. He's honest and he always gives us advice. He's the most positive man I've ever met in my life," says Shiller.

A Passion for People

Of the strong team of 84 members, Brenda Porter says that many of them at the department are paramedics because of him and because of the course that he offers. Jordan's true enthusiasm is evident in his classes and on the job. "I have a great passion for the people. I love people, and I love interacting with them. We're out there trying to help people and trying to prevent

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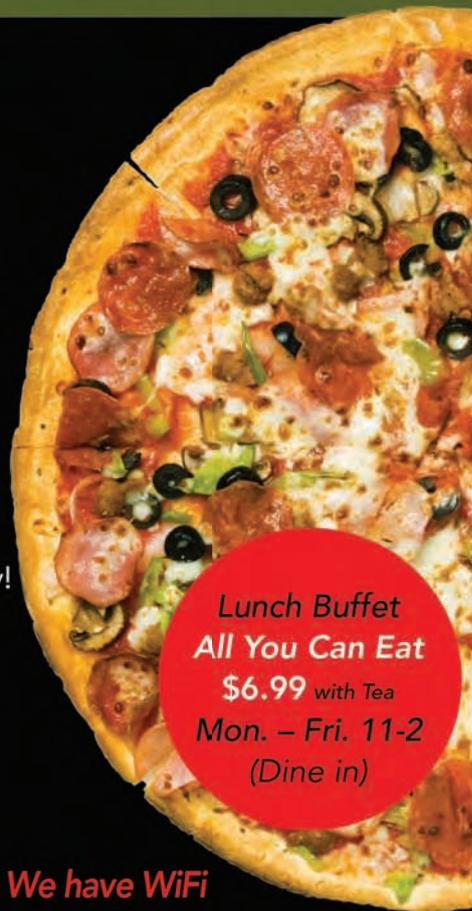
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Katy Fire Chief Marc Jordan has served the Katy area since 1973


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bad things from happening. They're not customers, patients, or victims; they're people. They're someone's brother, sister or mother," says Jordan. "I think that concept is being lost. I'm hometown Katy, and I was raised a completely different way. We do things together; it's all about a team effort."

"It's better to have us and not need us than to need us and not have us. People are afraid to call 911, but sometimes they need to. Everything is relative to what people can mentally and physically handle. If it's something that we can do to help, we would rather you call us. That's what we're here for," says Jordan.

"I think every day has its own special memories. Every day produces a new challenge. Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and all of that mess would be the biggest one on the books for me," says Jordan. "It's pretty dynamic and very adventurous. I love the business—this is where it's at for me." **KM**

S. SHETYE CYPHER is a freelance writer who lives in Katy with her husband and teenage son. She's lived in Katy intermittently since 1976. She's written for several Houston publications and is also the journalism teacher and publications advisor at Mayde Creek High School.

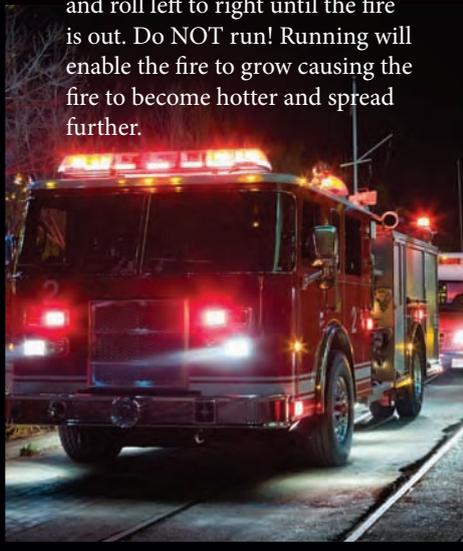
Do you know someone who should be profiled in Katy People?

Email editor@katymagazine.com

Top Four Safety Tips

By Chief Marc Jordan
and Captain Kenneth Redding

- 1** Have a working smoke detector in every room on every floor of your home. Be sure to change the batteries when you change your clock for daylight savings twice a year. If you have gas in your house you should also have a carbon monoxide detector.
- 2** Stay Low. If you encounter a fire in a building or residence get as low to the ground as you can. Smoke and heat will rise, leaving clean air low to the floor which will enable you to breath and see better.
- 3** Plan and Practice. Every family should have a plan in the event of an emergency. If a fire should occur or a smoke detector is activated, each member of your family should have a rapid means of exiting the house along with a backup plan should the first one become blocked. Have a meeting place that is safe and everyone knows.
- 4** Stop, Drop, and Roll. We learned this when we were kids and we need to practice it with our families today. If your clothes catch on fire, stop where you are. Use your hands to cover your face. Drop to the ground and roll left to right until the fire is out. Do NOT run! Running will enable the fire to grow causing the fire to become hotter and spread further.



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