

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 18, 2016

Twenty-two year old military vehicle receives new lease on life with Palestine Southside VFD

April 18, 2016 — PALESTINE, Texas — Battle worn and coated with desert sand, the newest member of the Palestine Southside Volunteer Fire Department was greeted with cheers when it rolled in to the department last June.

The 1994 Stewart and Stevenson M1078 two-and-a-half ton military cargo truck was awarded to the Palestine Southside VFD through the Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program, which is administered by Texas A&M Forest Service.

“When we applied for a vehicle we expected an old duce and a half and we got this [newer] style. We were very happy!” said Chief Kevin Warren of the Palestine Southside VFD.

Recipients of this program are required to convert the vehicle into a service-ready unit within 180 days of acquisition.

“We painted the truck ourselves and then put an 1100-gallon tank and pump on it,” Chief Warren said. “The tank fit perfectly in the front of the bed so we had plenty of room for the hose reel, whip line and 20-gallon foam tank with a high pressure foam system.” The foam system was donated through Texas A&M Forest Service’s Helping Hands Program.

The old combat vehicle is now hardly recognizable as it fulfills its new duties as the latest brush truck and high water rescue vehicle in the Palestine area.

Chief Warren said, “We only invested about \$1,500 to get it the way we wanted it. We have had it in two parades [and] are so proud of it!”

All that Palestine Southside VFD needs is more volunteers to drive the truck. “We have an open enrollment for volunteers,” Chief Warren said. “It’s getting kind of hard to find people who want to volunteer.”

Since its initiation in 2005, the DoD Firefighter Property Program has released over 400 retired military trucks to volunteer fire departments across Texas to better help them protect lives and property.

To learn more about this program, Helping Hands and other fire department assistance programs offered by Texas A&M Forest Service, visit <http://texasfd.com>.

