

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **“Come out fighting” is the motto for the new fleet addition at the Aransas Pass Fire Department**

ARANSAS PASS, Texas – The Aransas Pass Fire Department added an excess Stewart Stevenson military truck to their fleet and it is uniquely dedicated to the 761<sup>st</sup> United States Army Battalion that served under General George Patton during World War II. The Battalion became known for their bravery, commitment and distinguished combat record.

“Our department dedicates our fleet trucks to different branches of the military,” said Aransas Pass Fire Chief Nathan Kelley. “This truck is dedicated to the 761<sup>st</sup> Tank Battalion that was made up primarily of African-American soldiers with many of its members receiving 11 Silver Stars, 69 Bronze Stars, 300 Purple Hearts and a medal of honor. The Battalion’s motto was “Come Out Fighting” which we adopted for this rugged truck conversion.”

The truck was awarded through the Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program and the slip-on unit was purchased with a grant through the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program, both administered by Texas A&M Forest Service.

The brush truck conversion has all-wheel-drive and a central tire inflation system that makes it the perfect addition for the Aransas Pass terrain.

“We had a lot of rain this year which helped the vegetation growth, but that growth increased the fire fuel as the grass starts to dry out in the August heat,” said Kelley. “This new fleet addition with its 600-gallon water tank, foam capability and ability to get into difficult places in sandy soil will really be an asset.”

According to Kelley, almost all the truck conversion was completed in-house by dedicated and talented department members.

“The department is proud of their new FFP brush truck and they are looking forward to using it when needed for wildland fires,” said Texas A&M Forest Service Regional Fire Coordinator Timothy Pierson. “They have worked hard to make it a great brush truck that will meet their needs as a true off-road apparatus.”

Aransas Pass Fire Department has been serving their community since 1929 and offers fire service to a sixty-four square mile area.

Texas A&M Forest Service is an agency operating within the Texas A&M University System and as the administrator of the Department of Defense (DoD) Firefighter Property Program is committed to protecting lives, property and natural resources. The DoD Firefighter Property Program launched in Texas in 2005 and has released over 800 retired military trucks to volunteer fire departments across the state. The agency transports the vehicle from a military installation, performs necessary repairs and delivers it to the volunteer fire department at no cost to them. The Texas A&M Forest Service excess military equipment program is sponsored by the USDA Forest Service which also oversees the national program. For more information on programs offered by Texas A&M Forest Service, please visit <http://texasfd.com>

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