

Volunteer firefighters have protected the Estes Valley since 1907. This #EstesValleyFirefighter series will introduce you to the unique individuals who keep that tradition alive, celebrating their contributions to our fire department and the role they play in our Estes community.

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Jason Hennig made it just in time. A short two months after he joined in 2013 the fire district would be called upon to rescue residents from their homes as floodwaters rose, consuming property, and changing the entire community. Jason remembers that the continuous calls for help during the flood reinforced that he made the right choice, finding his place for service to our community.

Being a member of the EVFPD provides unexpected challenges and opportunities for personal growth to members, with the common goal and benefit of bringing diverse backgrounds together to solve problems. Jason's expertise is operating heavy equipment and machinery, acquired during his 21-year position, now as foreman with Kearney & Sons Excavating. He can look at someone else's troubles and implement a plan to make things better again; he has that common-sense ability that can't be taught which makes a difference in most situations.

Jason is a reliable structural and wildland firefighter and makes quick work of vehicle extrication challenges. He admits that his promotion last year to Lieutenant has challenged him to develop leadership skills, which he does well by example. In fact, many of our members have learned leadership and teamwork by being given those opportunities, in regular operations and specialized fields.

Interestingly, Jason pointed out that it is the support of his wife and daughter that ultimately makes it possible for him to serve, and without that support, he would not be a member of the team. The commitment of each member's family is just as important as the member staying up late at training or answering calls during an historic snowstorm at 2 am. The EVFPD team includes many more 'members' than the uniformed folks you see in the annual group photo.

Particularly parents, but any member volunteering with the EVFPD creates an opportunity to teach others that it's not just fun at training and exciting going to calls (which are both true). Volunteering is making a difference in the world, being a positive change for the greater good, and it takes the whole family team to make that work. Jason is not generally permitted to leave his work, yet he has maintained a high call percentage and was promoted to an officer position because he has the interest, and support of his team at home. He is a great example of what is possible, even if leaving work or other time commitments seem to be a barrier. Jason is humble and would be an easy person to ask what it takes to make time for service with the EVFPD.

