

## **Copeland Funeral Service Beaufort, South Carolina**

### **ANNUAL FIRE SERVICE BAR-B-Q**

In 2011, we sponsored our first annual Fire Service Bar-B-Q for ALL career and volunteer fire service personnel in Beaufort County. The annual Bar-B-Q is held during Fire Prevention Week in October. The event is held at the Lady's Island Fire Department Headquarters on Lady's Island, South Carolina. There are twenty fire departments in Beaufort County. A few weeks before the Bar-B-Q, we send an invitation to all the fire chiefs in the county to let them know the day of the event and to ask them to provide us with a count of the personnel who will be eating.

Our menu includes a half of bar-b-q chicken, potato salad, baked beans, bread, ice tea and cake for desert. Prior to the day of the BBQ our funeral home orders and pays for all food and supplies. We take all food and supplies and meet at headquarters bright and early on the morning of the BBQ. We assist Chief Bruce Kline of the Lady's Island/St. Helena Fire Department and Chief Josh Horton of the Fripp Island Fire Department with the cooking. While some of us are cooking, the others are setting up the tables and chairs, packaging the baked beans and potato salad, and cutting the cake. Some of the dinners are take out. In 2013, we added the Copeland Funeral Service logo to the carry- out containers. In 2015, we had some employees from the South Carolina State Firefighters' Association, Columbia, South Carolina, come and witnessed what we do for the local firefighters and first responders. In 2014, at the South Carolina State Firefighters Annual Convention, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, J. Edward Gamble III, CFSP, received the Citizenship Award.

In 2013, (our third year), we included all communications, Fire Commissioners, and Emergency Medical Services staff persons. We also added Daufuskie Island Fire Department. The only way to get to Daufuskie Island is by boat and or ferry. It is approximately a fifteen minute ride by ferry. By feeding the ferry captain, we bartered with him to deliver the Daufuskie Island Fire Department their meals. In 2014, (our fourth year) we included firefighters from Paris Island, United States Marine Corps and from MCAS (Marine Corps Air Station). In 2015, we included on duty personnel from Lady's Island on the day of the BBQ. We also added personnel from the Beaufort County Coroner's office. In 2016, we added some of the Military Police at Paris Island, United States Marine Corps. We are trying to gradually increase our invitees and one day plan to include all the law enforcement officers in our county. In 2017, we were able to include members of the Beaufort County Sheriff's Department who were on duty and patrolling Lady's Island and we also added the Military Police at the Beaufort Marine Corps Air Station. In 2018, we were able to include some officers from other fire departments to see what we do for our local first responders. This included members from North Charleston Fire Department, Newberry City Fire Department, and Clarendon Country Fire Department. Our first year, there were approximately one hundred fifty dinners served. This year our Bar-B-Q was held on October 5, 2021 and we served over 375 dinners. The numbers were a little down from previous years, due to Covid 19.

This is a service provided by our funeral home and is done without any cost to our friends in public service. This has been a very positive outreach for our funeral home. We have received a large number of "thank yous" from the departments and individuals. On March 15, 2012, Copeland Funeral Service received a plaque from the Beaufort County Fire Chiefs Association. On the plaque it states "We present this plaque to show our gratitude for generosity and support to the firefighters of Beaufort County." This past year we received a letter for Mr. Gordon Bowers, Commission Chairman of Lady's Island-St. Helena Fire District, thanking us for the service we provide to the men and women.

We are committed to continuing with this appreciation dinner.

May 12, 2021, Copeland Funeral Service made a donation to Burton Fire Department in order for the department to complete their goal of placing a Jacobkit in every one of the country schools and in every classroom. The trauma kit was named after Jacob Hall, a 6 year old student wounded in a 2016 school shooting in Townsville, SC. Jacob survived the wound but died three days later due to massive blood loss. The Jacobkit is an individual first aid bleeding control kit that is specially equipped to provide essential medical supplies to help stop life threatening bleeding.