

The Bandera PROPHEET

July 29, 2021

Fire Marshal submits resignation

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The Bandera Prophet

Bandera County Fire Marshal John Stith has submitted his letter of resignation, which will become effective Aug. 31.

“It’s time to retire,” Stith said, who has spent 42 years in the field, the last 10 of which as fire marshal.

In 2011, Stith - a veteran fire fighter and retired district chief - replaced Ralph Dresser, who volunteered as the county fire marshal for 14 years.

“He did a good job,” Stith said. “I believe I was able to upgrade the department and enhance safety through fire code enforcement as a fire inspector and investigator, and arson investigator. When I came in, there really weren’t any inspections being done. I was able to move forward on following up with fire investigations, and charging and indicting people who committed arson. As a full-time county fire marshal, having the certifications I have, I’ve brought a lot of professionalism to the department.”

Stith said much of his job involves assisting people who have suffered losses from home fires. He helps them find shelter, clothes and food, by liaising between victims and volunteer fire departments, the Red Cross and other agencies.

“Whatever it takes to try to make a bad situation better,” Stith said.

County commissioners are expected to discuss Stith’s resignation and their plans for the fire marshal’s office during a future session.

“I want to send sincere thanks to all the people in the county who have treated me so well and trusted me to be the guy to keep things safe. It’s been an honor to work for the commissioners, who have always treated

me very, very well,” Stith said. “It’s kind of a sad thing. I really love my job. I hope whoever takes over the department can enhance it.” Stith said he will remain in the county as a retired civilian.