LAGRANGE
FIRE & RESCUE

309 North First Avenue, LaGrange, KY 40031 ● 502-222-1143 Phone ● 502-222-3168 Fax

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 11, 2026

LaGrange Fire & Rescue Announces Appointment of Donald "Bart" Lace as New Fire Chief

Veteran fire service leader brings more than 30 years of experience in emergency operations, organizational leadership, and firefighter development.

LaGrange, Kentucky — The LaGrange Fire Protection District Board of Trustees is pleased to announce the appointment of Donald "Bart" Lace as the next Fire Chief of LaGrange Fire & Rescue. Chief Lace has accepted the position and is scheduled to officially begin his duties on December 1, 2026.



Donald "Bart" Lace

Chief Lace brings more than three decades of fire service experience, including leadership positions in career, volunteer, and military fire service organizations. His extensive background in emergency operations, strategic planning, organizational development, and firefighter training will provide valuable leadership as LaGrange Fire & Rescue continues to evolve to meet the needs of its growing community.

"We are extremely excited to welcome Chief Lace to LaGrange Fire & Rescue," said Gary Jones, Chairman of the LaGrange Fire Protection District Board of Trustees. "His experience, leadership background, and understanding of combination fire departments make him well-suited to lead our organization into the future."

A Distinguished Career in Public Service

Chief Lace began his fire service career in December 1991 as a volunteer firefighter in Woodbridge, Virginia. In 1996, he enlisted in the United States Air Force and graduated from the Louis F. Garland Department of Defense Fire Academy at Goodfellow Air Force Base in Texas.

While stationed at RAF Lakenheath in England, his crew received recognition as the United States Air Forces in Europe Firefighters of the Year following the successful rescue of an F-15E pilot and weapons systems officer from a burning aircraft.

In 2001, Chief Lace joined Stafford County Fire & Rescue in Virginia, where he advanced through the ranks to serve as Operations Deputy Chief and Shift Commander. He also served nearly six years as Special Operations Chief, overseeing specialized emergency response programs, operational readiness, and personnel development.

His career includes significant experience in complex incident command, countywide emergency operations, organizational change, officer development, recruitment and retention, and long-term capital and apparatus planning.

Chief Lace has also remained actively involved in the volunteer fire service. He is a Life Member of the Stafford Volunteer Fire Department and has served as an Engineer and Training Captain with the Gordonsville Volunteer Fire Company in Virginia.

Commitment to Education and Leadership Development

Chief Lace earned a Bachelor of Science in Fire Science from Columbia Southern University and has completed graduate-level coursework in Executive Leadership at Liberty University. He is also a graduate of the University of Virginia's LEAD Program and the Northern Virginia Leadership and Development Institute Command Officer Program.

LAGRANGE
FIRE & RESCUE

309 North First Avenue, LaGrange, KY 40031 ● 502-222-1143 Phone ● 502-222-3168 Fax

Beyond his operational responsibilities, Chief Lace has demonstrated a longstanding commitment to firefighter education. He serves as an adjunct instructor with the Virginia Department of Fire Programs and has taught for more than a decade at the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) Annual Municipal Fire School.

His professional experience reflects an emphasis on leadership development, firefighter safety, operational preparedness, and building effective emergency response organizations.

A Vision for the Future

As Fire Chief, Lace will lead a combination fire department consisting of career and volunteer personnel serving the City of LaGrange and surrounding areas of Oldham County.

His appointment comes at an important time for LaGrange Fire & Rescue as the district continues to evaluate future staffing needs, strengthen operational capabilities, and implement long-term organizational improvements.

Chief Lace has emphasized that his initial priorities will center on listening to department members, building relationships, understanding the organization, and developing the trust necessary for continued success.

“I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to serve as the next Fire Chief of La Grange Fire & Rescue,” said Chief Lace. “My first priority is to get to know our people, listen, learn, and build the relationships and trust that are so important to a successful department.”

Chief Lace also expressed his enthusiasm for becoming part of the LaGrange community.

“We have a proud history to build upon, and I’m excited about all we will accomplish together.”

Welcoming the Lace Family to LaGrange

Chief Lace and his wife, Genesis, are looking forward to relocating to LaGrange and becoming active members of the community. Together, they have ten grown children and nine grandchildren.

The LaGrange Fire Protection District Board of Trustees and the members of LaGrange Fire & Rescue look forward to welcoming Chief Lace and his family as the department begins this new chapter of leadership and continued service to the community.

About LaGrange Fire & Rescue

LaGrange Fire & Rescue serves the City of LaGrange and surrounding communities in Oldham County, Kentucky. Operating as a combination fire department with career and volunteer personnel, the organization provides fire suppression, rescue services, emergency response, and community fire prevention programs.

The department remains committed to protecting lives and property through professionalism, training, operational readiness, and dedicated public service.

Media Contact

Adrian Doleman, Deputy Chief
LaGrange Fire & Rescue
309 North First Avenue
LaGrange, KY 40031
adoleman@lfrd.org | 502-222-1143

###