

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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*Originally posted on July 4, 2018*

David Wolf lives in a dream world. He drives a souped-up bright red pickup truck with life-saving equipment tucked into every nook and cranny, and he has 40 followers who will do just about anything he asks with precision and speed. In minutes he can assemble several millions of dollars in equipment and resources which quite literally could save the world. David is the Chief of the Estes Valley Fire Protection District and has proven through his actions that he is a “leader’s leader”. Chief Wolf routinely performs every skill and task that he might ask a firefighter to complete and has surprised local community leaders with his effective approach of encouraging volunteer members to participate more often and increase the intensity of their commitment to training.

Hiring Chief Wolf was a bit of a gamble by the Fire District Board in 2016 since he had no experience as a fire chief, and at 33 years old he was young in the world of fire department leadership. David’s experience with, and commitment to running a fire department with volunteer staffing has paid off, as the team morale and ‘family feeling’ of the members is at an all-time peak with new members knocking on the door. Estes Park has become a model for how a fire district should be operated, in the face of declining volunteerism across the country - with much of the credit due to the planning and skill of Chief Wolf. You might think he works 25 hours a day, 8 days a week and we also wonder how he gets it all done. No one can remember ever seeing him without an FD emblem on his clothing or hat - he is always ‘on’.

Fortunately, his wife Danielle (who is on the local School Board) and two young boys keep David grounded, and provide a supportive home base that he operates from. A week doesn’t pass that his family isn’t enjoying their dream environment outdoors in the Estes Valley hiking every trail, or exploring the community they plan to retire in. Estes Park was not in the Wolf family plan just a few years ago. When David applied for the Estes Valley position he was working as a research geologist with Shell International Exploration based out of Texas and had volunteered as a firefighter and officer during that career. One of many events that contributed to his character happened in Houston on April 18, 2016 when his agency responded to 700 calls for service in one day, an impossible task for any rescuer. The defining moment was the determination of the crews, although exhausted, knew they needed to keep working until the job was complete. It was also the day the EVFPD offered him the position to lead our district and would change his family's life.

Today, Chief Wolf is constantly learning and teaching skills in areas like technical rescue, extrication, swiftwater, wildland, and fireground tactics, and recently even budgeting and finance for State Fire Chiefs. It should be no surprise that the excitement of the fire service for him comes from the challenging range of skills required to get the job done. A quote that helps guide his passion: "Almost every successful person begins with two beliefs: The future can be better than the present, and I have the power to make it so". That sums up Chief Wolf, as he leads and teaches others to lead and each contribute to change our community for the better.

