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Steve Haas grew up in Burleson and has a multitude of family members in firefighting so it was no surprise when he joined the Burleson Fire Department as a volunteer firefighter in April 1998. What may be a surprise is the path that the now 36-year-old husband and father of two took to get there.

The father of one of Haas' friends was the fire chief in Burleson so the two boys hung out at the old Fire Station #1 at the corner of Eldred and Bransom streets and rode on the fire trucks in parades. Haas later moved to Hillsboro, where he joined the Hillsboro Volunteer Fire Department in 1995. He became assistant chief in 1996 and chief in 1997.

"When I moved back to Burleson from Hillsboro, I knew it was just natural for me to be a firefighter in my hometown so I decided to go to fire school in Kilgore. I graduated then applied for the Burleson Fire Department and got accepted."

He earned his basic structural firefighter certification from the Texas Commission on Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)-Basic certification from the Texas Department of State Health Services.

The volunteer firefighter program was phased out in October 2010. The department's six volunteer firefighters received special honors at the March 22 annual firefighter banquet. Haas receives an axe for his 12 years as a volunteer firefighter.

"I am thankful that I have been a part of a department that has progressed from where it was when I got on to where it is today," Haas said.

The Burleson Fire Department has three fire stations and 33 career firefighters, including the chief and two battalion fire chiefs.

The yearning to be a firefighter comes from Haas' great-great grandfather William J. Haas, who was a captain with the Fort Worth Fire Department in 1900; grandfather Clifford McCargar who was a volunteer firefighter in Union Gap, Wash., in the 1950s; Uncle Randy McCargar who is the EMS chief for the Cherry Hill, N.J., Fire Department; and, Uncle Randy Polson who is a lieutenant with the Fort Worth Fire Department.

“I’d like to thank former volunteer Foy Dunaway, Battalion Chief Tom Foster, and Fire Marshal (and fellow volunteer firefighter) Stacy Singleton for all their guidance and knowledge that they have passed on that made me the firefighter I am today,” Haas said.

He did have some downtime to spend with his wife Rachel, daughter Kylie and son Zane, but Haas is now a volunteer firefighter with the Briaroaks Fire Department. He is also the logistics officer for the City’s Emergency Operations Center (emergency management).