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Being prepared was a common theme among those chosen for the Burleson Fire Department's top awards for 2014. Fire Lt. Greg Mason earned the Fire Officer of the Year honor for supervising the department's pre-plan program and small engine service program. Fire Engineer Robert Schoonover took home Firefighter of the Year, also for his work with the pre-plan program.

"Over the past year Lt. Mason supervised these programs, took numerous phone calls, and utilized Engineer Schoonover to help make this process work as smooth as possible," Lt. Mike Jones said in his nomination letter. "Lt. Mason was able to recognize the strength of his crew members and assign them different roles to meet the needs of the department."

Mason has been part of the Burleson Fire Department, as a volunteer and a career firefighter, for more than half his life. The 46-year-old Burleson native started volunteering with Burleson in August 1990. He was hired as a career firefighter in April 1999.

"I wanted to be a firefighter where I grew up. When the department changed to career firefighters, I knew that was what I wanted to do," Mason said.

Mason attended college for two years. He is certified as an Emergency Medical Technician-Intermediate, swift water rescue, hazardous materials technician, high angle rescue, and trench.

Jones praised his fellow lieutenant for his leadership.

"I have seen Lt. Mason be able to be a friend to his crew members, but also assume the role of supervisor when the time was needed. We have worked together at Fire Station #1 this past year and he has always been approachable when you need to voice a concern. We may not always agree on the outcome, but I respect the fact that I can approach him and talk it out," Jones said.

Both lieutenants, along with fellow lieutenant Jeremiah Lozier, were recognized for their 15 years of service to the department.

Greg Mason graduated from Burleson High School in 1987. His brother, Steve, is a firefighter/paramedic with the Lewisville Fire Department. Mason's family includes his wife April; two sons, 17-year-old Jack and 15-year-old Walker; and daughter, 5-year-old Kenlee.