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This isn't the first time that James Pribble has taken home Firefighter of the Year honors. He won the award in 2006, and repeated in 2015. The latest kudos were presented Feb. 20 at the Burleson Fire Department's banquet.

"Being born and raised here in Burleson and being brought up in the Burleson Fire Department my entire life made it an easy choice to work here," the award winner, who is a fire engineer, said. "I knew from a very young age that this was for me. By hiring on with Burleson when the career side was still pretty small, I've been able to watch and be part of the growth here. That has been very rewarding."

Firefighting is definitely in Pribble's blood. His father Robert Pribble and grandfather Foy Dunaway were volunteer firefighters who retired from Burleson after serving for 20-plus years each. His brother Chris Pribble is a battalion chief for the Joshua Volunteer Fire Department; sister, Holly Hill works for the Hurst Police Department; brother-in-law Diron Hill is a police officer with Southlake; and sister-in-law Stephanie Pribble works for the Cleburne Fire Department.

Lt. Claude Scally nominated Pribble for the honor.

"James has always been considered a leader among his peers. He has the respect and has been a great mentor to many firefighters on the department," Scally said. "He has always had the ability to have others follow his lead. He currently oversees several projects including logistics for the EMS program, which includes ordering supplies, managing station inventory, and overseeing the City AED program. James also assisted in writing several of the current EMS Standard Operating Procedures.

"James has always strived to be the best firefighter he could be for the Burleson Fire Department. He has accomplished this with being a very humble and compassionate person. These qualities are a must for becoming a much respected person in the fire service. James has the ability to teach and mentor the future of the fire service for many years to come," Scally said.

James Pribble secured a career firefighter position with Burleson on May 26, 2003. His firefighting career includes volunteering for the Briaroaks Fire Department (started in 1995 and worked up the ranks to assistant chief/2010-2013) for 15 years and Burleson for one year. He also worked for the Forest Hill Fire Department in 2002 and was part-time fire chief for the Johnson County Emergency Services District, 2013-2015.

“You have to take becoming a firefighter into careful consideration,” Pribble said. “You have to be dedicated to the choice you make. You have to have a lot of courage and want to risk your life to save other people. You have to be very unselfish and devoted. Being a firefighter is not an easy task. It takes a lot of long hours of studying and training and it is a very competitive and tough career. It's long hours. But for the men and women who have become a firefighter, the rewards of saving a life and touching so many lives is gratifying.”

The 1996 graduate of Burleson High School is certified as an Advance Firefighter, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Hazardous Materials Technician, Swift Water Rescue Technician, Instructor, Driver/Operator, and Fire Officer.

The 39-year-old Burleson resident and his wife Leslie share one daughter, London.