

# First Custom Fire for Virginia

By Jerry Puryear

In the last issue, I wrote an article on the first and only *Toyne* fire apparatus in Virginia. In this issue, I can report the first *Custom Fire* apparatus to be delivered in the Commonwealth. I can not say this is the only Custom Fire vehicle in Virginia, as a second Custom Fire apparatus was delivered recently to Roanoke County's Catawba Station 4. I have been tracking the first Custom Fire apparatus for Virginia since Stuarts Draft ordered their new pumper some months ago. An email to Jim Featherstone, president of RedStorm Fire & Rescue Apparatus, the company responsible for the sale, put me in touch with Randal Almarode, the chairman of the Stuarts Draft Apparatus Committee. Randal was very helpful, and after one weather related delay, I met up with him in early May for a tour and photographs of the new Engine 73.

The new apparatus arrived in Stuarts Draft on April 1, 2012, and the membership could not be happier with the new vehicle or their partnership with Custom Fire. Every request or suggestion was quickly addressed, and the delivery process went off perfectly.

Engine 73 was constructed on a 2011 International MAXFORCE 7400 4X4 chassis and completed by Custom Fire in



2012. The four-door cab has seating for five firefighters, four in SCBA seats. The rugged vehicle was constructed under Custom Fire SN 12VA02. A 1000 gallon per minute Waterous pump provides water from a 500 gallon tank to a front bumper attack line, two booster reels (booster and forestry), and numerous discharges for hand lines. Also, a 2001 FoamPro system can rely on a 15 gallon foam cell to increase the water's capacity. Coupled with the unit's 4x4 capability is a pump and roll system which makes this a great off road vehicle for field and brush fires.

A Bulldog 12,000 pound winch is located on the front bumper, and equipment is stored behind R.O.M. roll-up compartment doors. A Stadco 6 kW diesel generator provides power for both the onboard and portable lights and power appliances found on

the engine. Ladders, pike poles, and hard sleeves are housed in thru-the-tank storage.

Two rear ladders lead to the hose bed for access to hose packing and up top coffin compartments for extra storage.

I would like to thank Jim, Randall, and Mike Sanders and Taylor Goodman who accompanied me on this visit and assisted with the photographs and information used in this article.

In an upcoming issue, you will be able to learn more about the history, apparatus, and membership of the Stuarts Draft Volunteer Fire Department when a complete profile is published. All of this will be with the assistance of Mr. Almarode. Thanks again Randal.

