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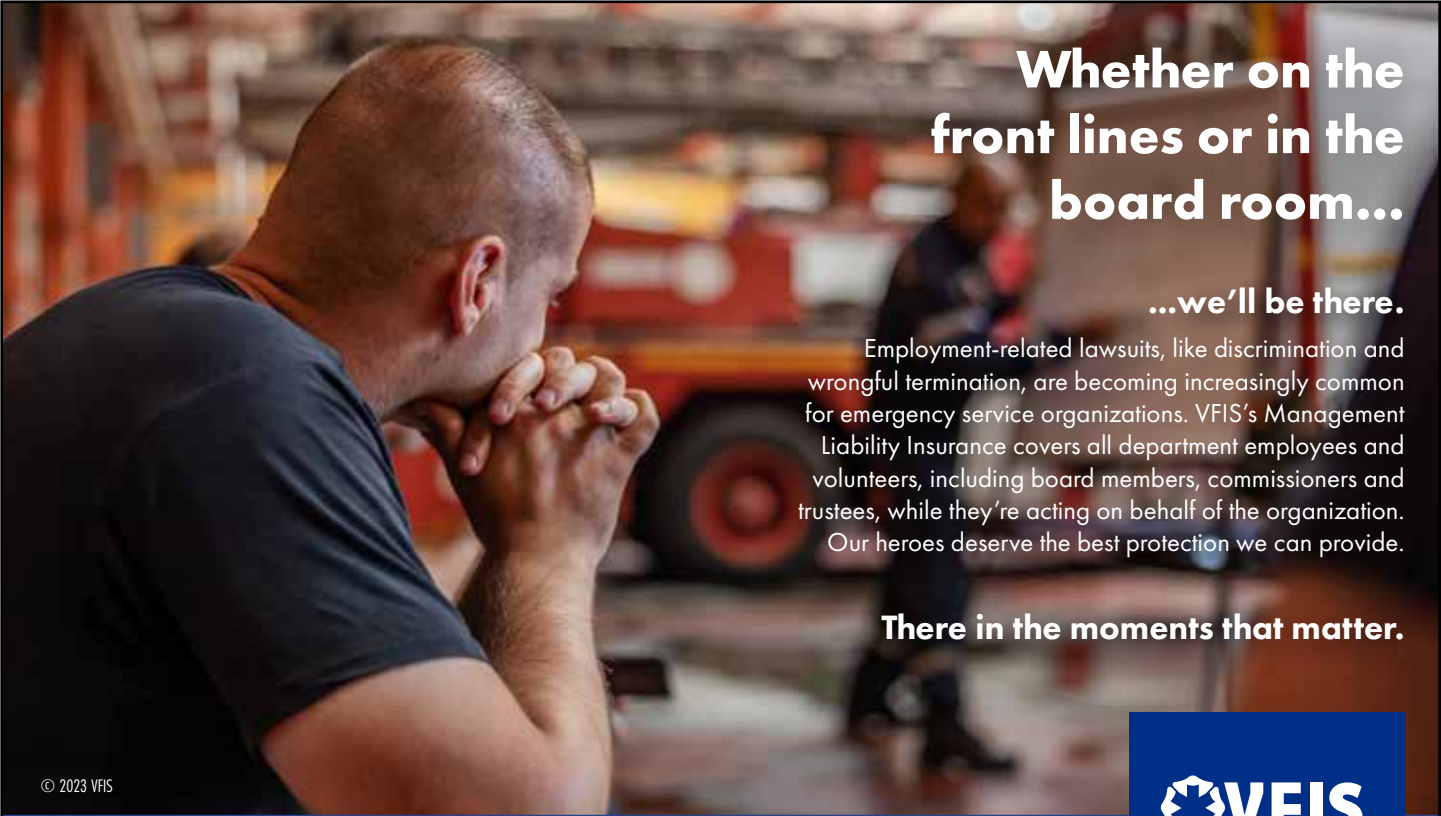
July | August 2026
Vol. 79 | Issue 1

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF THE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

Pursuant to the order of the Board of Directors of the Firefighters Association of the State of New York (FASNY or Corporation), the NPCL and the By-Laws of the Firefighters Association of the State of New York, the Annual Meeting of members of the Corporation will commence on Aug. 19, 2026, starting at 9 a.m. The Annual Meeting will be held at the Holiday Valley Resort, 6557 Holiday Valley Road, Ellicottville, N.Y., 14731. The purpose of the meeting is to consider and act on the matters of the election of President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, two (2) FASNY Directors (Class of 2031), one (1) FASNY Director (for a two year term), four (4) Trustees of the FASNY Firefighter's Home, the approval or rejection of the Annual Budget of the FASNY Firefighter's Home, and the transaction of such business as may be properly brought before the meeting.

Regular members in good standing, with full dues paid 15 calendar days prior to the Annual Meeting, are eligible to vote. Delegate Designation Forms must be returned to the FASNY office, or postmarked, by Aug. 10, 2026.

John S. D'Alessandro | John S. D'Alessandro, *Association Secretary*



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FIREFIGHTER[®]

THE VOLUNTEER

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

EUGENE J. PERRY, JR.

PRESIDENT

As my term as President comes to a close, I have been reflecting where FASNY has been in these last two years. I can certainly say it has been a series of highs and lows, especially over the last 18 months.

I am pleased that the New York State Assembly passed an increase to the Volunteer Firefighter State Income Tax Credit, quadrupling it from \$200 to \$800. The legislation also removes the prohibition preventing a volunteer from being able to take both the state income tax credit and the local real property tax exemption. I thank the bill sponsors – Assemblywoman Karen McMahon and Sen. Monica Martinez – for their work on this critical issue. We are currently waiting for the legislation to go to Gov. Hochul to sign. FASNY has initiated a Voter Voice campaign to urge the Governor to quickly sign this important legislation. All members who have an email registered with FASNY should have received this Voter Voice call to action urging the Governor to act. It only takes a few seconds to put in the requested information, and it will automatically send a letter directly to the Governor. I encourage every volunteer firefighter to join us and work to get this important bill signed by the Governor.

The proposed changes from the existing Fire Brigade Standard to the proposed Emergency Response Standard (OSHA 29 CFR 1910.156) have consumed an immense amount of time for FASNY and the entire volunteer fire service. Early in the review process, and after reviewing the document with our counsel, FASNY recommended several changes to the proposal. It was also determined that if these recommendations were not accepted, the volunteer fire service should be exempt from the proposed rule, and it should only be used as an aspirational goal. If this outcome occurs, FASNY is committed to working with OSHA to develop a rule, through a full negotiated rulemaking process, that is relevant and achievable by the volunteer fire service. The rulemaking process must also afford volunteer fire and EMS stakeholders the opportunity to provide input and data necessary to satisfy OSHA's burden of proof prior to the issuance of a proposed rule. As of this writing, OSHA has not decided on the proposed standard.

The concept of nominal compensation for volunteer firefighters has also been the subject of much debate within the volunteer fire service. There has long been an issue with fire companies and fire districts being unable to compensate volunteers for

any type of activity because of VFBL and LOSAP. The volunteer fire service is extremely grateful to Assemblywomen Michaelle Solages and Sen. Monica Martinez for introducing legislation that would correct this situation. FASNY has always been in support of nominal compensation if there was a state funding stream for distressed fire companies and fire departments, as well as oversight requirements so there is no waste, fraud or abuse of the program. The legislation that has been introduced in both houses of the Legislature does this and more. We look forward to this legislation advancing through both houses and getting it to Gov. Hochul's desk.

To the entire FASNY membership, I would like to thank all of you for your support over the past six years I have been in FASNY leadership. Special thanks to my home company, the Van Guard Hose Company #1 of the Patchogue Fire Department. Also, to the members of the Suffolk County and Southern New York Volunteer Firefighters Associations for promoting me across the state so I could attain these positions.

There is someone I must personally thank for always having my back since I first wandered into the firehouse when I was 16 years old. He took me under his wing and showed me what it took to be a backstep firefighter. He also told me some firefighters go on to become line officers and Chiefs. And then there are some who go to work behind the scenes to advocate for the 80,000 volunteer firefighters who make up 90 percent of the firefighters in the state. I took that advice and this is where it has brought me to today. To my firehouse mentor, Ex-Chief Tom Newham, Jr., thank you so very much for being at the firehouse when I showed up that day. I really do not know where I would be today if I had not found you there. Over the years we have had our differences, but your friendship and unconditional support throughout my career have always kept me grounded and on track. You're my best friend, and I will never forget everything you've taught me and done for me.

Again, thank you all for your support, confidence, and all the friendships I've made over 31 years as a member of FASNY. I will always cherish them for the rest of my life. Continue to always be true to the volunteer fire service and always continue to be safe!





LEGALCORNER

TIMOTHY C. HANNIGAN
General Counsel

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CHANGES TO TAX INCENTIVES FOR VOLUNTEER FIRE AND EMS PERSONNEL

FASNY has long advocated for greater incentives for volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel. Foremost among those are tax-advantaged incentives like the income tax credit and the partial real property tax exemption for volunteer fire and ambulance personnel. I am pleased to report that both houses of the New York State Legislature passed a bill in late May 2026 calling for meaningful changes to both. This article covers what those changes could mean for you, and what is needed to make that bill a law.

FIRST THINGS FIRST: WHAT IS A TAX CREDIT?

A tax credit is like a coupon that reduces what you owe the government at tax time. If you owe \$1,000 in state income taxes and you have a \$200 credit, you pay \$800. If the credit is bigger than what you owe, New York will send you a refund check for the difference. That last part did not change. It was already in the law.

BIG CHANGE 1: AN INCREASE TO THE TAX CREDIT

Under the old law, an individual volunteer received a \$200 credit each year. Starting with tax year 2026, that number jumps to \$800. For spouses who both volunteer as fire or EMS personnel, the credit is now \$1,600 total (\$800 each).

Basic eligibility terms remain the same. To get the credit, you must be an active volunteer for the entire tax year. For example, if you joined in June, you would need to wait until after you complete a full calendar year of service to claim the credit.

BIG CHANGE 2: ABILITY TO CLAIM BOTH THE TAX CREDIT AND THE PARTIAL REAL PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION

Here is where the new bill addresses another issue FASNY advocated on. Many volunteers own homes and receive a separate benefit called a partial real property tax exemption – basically a discount on their property tax bill – as an incentive for their service. You may recall that such an exemption became available statewide in December 2022 for the 2023 tax year, subject to local opt-in. Currently, any county, town, city, village, school district, fire district, or other taxing jurisdiction can exempt up to 10 percent of the assessed valuation of a volunteer's primary residence for property tax purposes.

However, under the current Tax Law provision that creates the tax credit, volunteers had to choose: take either the income tax credit or the real property tax exemption. A volunteer could not have both.

Under the new bill, that either-or rule is erased. Volunteers can now receive both benefits at the same time. If you are a volunteer firefighter who owns a home and already gets a property tax exemption for your service, you no longer have to give that up to claim the new \$800 income tax credit. The bill would allow you to claim both incentives.

ONE MORE TECHNICAL FIX: THE LIST OF QUALIFYING TAXING DISTRICTS

The new bill also updated a separate section of the Real Property Tax Law § 466-a to add school districts, special districts, and fire districts to the list of places where the property tax exemption can apply. This was a technical correction to bring that list in line with what the law already intended.

WHEN DOES THIS TAKE EFFECT? WE NEED YOUR HELP!

If signed by the Governor, the new law takes effect on April 1 following the date it is signed. The higher credit amounts apply beginning with the 2026 tax year, meaning volunteers would see the difference when they file their 2026 income tax returns in early 2027.

With the bill now awaiting delivery to Gov. Hochul for signature, your help is needed to ensure she signs the bill into law when she receives it. Contact Gov. Hochul's office today and explain the need for these common-sense, tax-advantaged incentives for the volunteer fire service. Information on how to do so is available on the homepage of FASNY.com, under the heading "NYS Legislature Passes Tax Credit Bill."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Timothy C. Hannigan, Esq. serves as General Counsel to FASNY, and is a volunteer firefighter with the Elsmere Fire Company, Inc. in Delmar, N.Y. *Please note that the information contained herein does not establish an attorney-client relationship between the author and the reader. Matters addressed are for information purposes only and the reader should seek advice from competent local counsel in regard to acting on any matters addressed herein. This article may not be reprinted or republished in whole or in part without the express written permission of the author and FASNY.*

¹ Complete bill language is accessible at: <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2025/S6233/amendment/A>

² See Real Property Tax Law § 466-a.

³ Prior versions of this column have explored the partial real property tax exemption law in detail. For more information, see The Volunteer Firefighter Volume No. 75, Issue 4 (January-February 2023); Volume 76, Issue 3 (November-December 2023); and Volume No. 77, Issue 3 (November-December 2024).



MEMBERMATTERS

DYLAN REECE

Assistant Director of Operations

With the 2026 renewal season now wrapped up, the membership team and I are looking toward the summer with optimism as we explore new benefits and find new ways to deliver value to our members. As always, feel free to reach out if there is anything you would like to see.

If you are a primary contact for FASNY, please make sure you are reviewing any pending affiliation requests for your organization. If you are receiving these notifications but are unable to manage the task, please let us know who within your organization should be responsible, and we will update our records accordingly. As a reminder, affiliation requests are FASNY's way of putting control back into the hands of our members by allowing organizations and individuals to manage their affiliations with one another.

On a related note, your digital membership card shows your current affiliations as an individual. If you are ever curious about which organization we have on file as your primary affiliation, or which organization is paying for your FASNY membership, your digital card is a great resource. You can download it by signing in to FASNY.com. The card also includes helpful account information, such as how long you have been a member and when your membership expires.

Over the next few months, take some time to download your card and explore the benefits available to you on FASNY.com. If you have any questions or would like to make changes to your account, please give us a call.

YOUR FASNY MEMBERSHIP, NOW DIGITIZED!

We're making it easier than ever to stay connected! Your new digital membership card will soon replace the physical card, giving you quick access to your FASNY ID, primary affiliation, membership term, and more.

Watch for an email with all the details and instructions to get your card. Questions? Reach out to fasny@fasny.com.

**FASNY MEMBERSHIP,
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FINGERTIPS!**





ALBANYUPDATE

JILL BEHRMANN

Legislative Representative, Albany Strategic Advisors

2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION DELIVERS MOMENTUM FOR NEW YORK'S VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY SERVICES

The 2026 Legislative Session concluded in June after another busy and often unpredictable year in Albany.

Following the latest state budget passage in 16 years, lawmakers worked in a compressed legislative finish to session, advancing hundreds of bills before returning home to their districts and, for many, immediately turning their attention to this year's elections.

For the volunteer fire and emergency services community, however, the story of 2026 was not defined by Albany politics alone. Rather it was another year of steady progress in a multi-year effort to strengthen recruitment and retention, improve responder health and safety, and modernize the laws and benefits that support New York's volunteer emergency responders.

Most notably, both houses passed legislation increasing New York's volunteer firefighter and ambulance worker income tax credit for the first time since its inception. As detailed elsewhere in this edition, the measure would increase the credit from \$200 to \$800 for eligible volunteers, while also allowing volunteers to receive both the state income tax credit and local property tax exemption. The legislation represents years of advocacy by FASNY members and reflects growing recognition among policymakers that meaningful support is necessary to sustain volunteer emergency services across the state.

While the tax credit understandably received much of the attention this year, it was far from the only priority that advanced. Additional priorities also continued to gain momentum: the First Responder Peer Support Program Act once again passed the Senate and advanced further in the Assembly than in prior years, reflecting growing awareness of the mental health challenges facing emergency responders. Legislation establishing a Parkinson's Disease presumption for firefighters also advanced in both houses, continuing the broader effort to recognize and address occupational illnesses associated with emergency service. Other proposals involving modernization of the Volunteer

Firefighters' Benefit Law, retirement incentives for volunteer responders, and additional recruitment and retention tools continued to receive legislative attention. While these measures did not reach the finish line this year, important groundwork was laid for future consideration.

As any long-time advocate knows, meaningful policy changes rarely happen overnight. Many of the successes celebrated today began as conversations years earlier, and the progress achieved this session positions several remaining priorities for renewed consideration when lawmakers return to Albany in January.

Beyond specific legislation, this year's policy discussions reinforced a reality FASNY members experience every day. As communities across New York confront workforce shortages, fiscal pressures, and growing demands on emergency services, volunteer firefighters and emergency responders remain an indispensable part of the public safety system. Lawmakers increasingly recognize that supporting volunteer emergency services is not merely a local issue, but that it is a statewide necessity.

Looking ahead, the 2027 Legislative Session will begin amid a changing political landscape shaped by post-election sentiment, retirements, and new lawmakers. Regardless of those changes, FASNY will remain focused on the priorities that matter most to its members: recruitment and retention, responder health and safety, and ensuring departments have the resources necessary to continue protecting their communities.

As always, the Association's success is made possible by the engagement of its members. Whether through visits to Albany, conversations with legislators in their districts, or sharing stories from their departments, FASNY members continue to be the most effective advocates for New York's volunteer emergency services. The progress achieved in 2026 demonstrates what can be accomplished when that collective voice is heard.

FIRESAFEFIRESMART

DARRYL BUORNAT

Vice Chair, Fire Prevention and Life Safety Committee

CAMPUS FIRE SAFETY

As we enter the middle of the summer season, it is hard to think about anything other than warm days, picnics, and pool parties. However, as summer comes to an end, many young adults will begin a new chapter in their lives as college freshmen or returning students.

For many, it will be their first time living away from home and making decisions without the guidance of their parents. Some will live in college-owned housing, while others will choose off-campus apartments or houses. No matter where they live, fire safety must remain an important part of college life.

The U.S. Fire Administration reports that there are more than 3,200 structure fires in campus housing each year. Cooking is responsible for 75 to 88 percent of these incidents. In 58 percent of fatal fires, smoke alarms were missing or had been tampered with, and none of the buildings were protected by sprinkler systems. According to the Center for Campus Fire Safety, from 2000 to 2022 there were 94 fatal fires in college dormitories, Greek housing, and off-campus housing, claiming a total of 134 lives.

So, what can we do as fire and life safety educators?

Many recent graduates still follow their high school's social media accounts. Work with your local schools to share fire safety messages before students leave for college. If your department has community events planned, make an effort to connect with soon-to-be college students. Consider posting campus fire safety tips on your department's social media pages. We have been teaching many of these lessons for years; students may simply need a little reinforcement before heading off on their own.

CAMPUS FIRE SAFETY TIPS

- Keep an eye on what you are cooking and only cook in designated areas.

- Use only appliances approved by the campus.
- Keep candles away from anything that can burn and never leave them unattended. Better yet, use flameless candles.
- Do not overload outlets, and use power strips with built-in overload protection.
- Encourage anyone who smokes not to do so when they are drinking alcohol or feeling drowsy.
- When choosing campus housing, look for buildings protected by automatic sprinkler systems. In New York state, colleges must inform students in writing if campus housing is not sprinklered.
- Treat every fire alarm as a real emergency and evacuate immediately. Know your evacuation routes and never tamper with smoke alarms, sprinkler heads, fire extinguishers, or any other fire protection equipment.

If your fire district covers a college campus, work closely with campus safety officials to provide students with fire safety information and help ensure compliance with applicable fire and life safety codes.

As mentioned earlier, this is the first time many of these young adults will be on their own. They will be making important decisions and living with the consequences of those choices. When it comes to fire safety, encourage them to pause and ask themselves a simple question:

"AM I MAKING THE RIGHT DECISION?"

That one question may prevent a fire, save a life, and help ensure a successful college experience.

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FOR THE LATEST NEWS AND UPDATES!



5 QUESTIONS

TOM BASHER, JR.
Deputy Fire Coordinator & Technical Rescue Chief

Tom Basher, Jr., based in the Finger Lakes, is a Deputy Fire Coordinator and Technical Rescue Chief for Seneca County, and a veteran fire service instructor with more than 30 years of emergency response experience.

A former career officer with the City of Ithaca Fire Department, he has served in leadership and training roles across municipal and state fire service programs, including the New York State Fire Academy and the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, and has delivered numerous training sessions for FASNY.



He is also the founder and lead instructor of Meridian Fire Training Solutions LLC, providing hands-on and classroom-based emergency services training.

Basher will present a two-part technical rescue program at FASNY's 154th Convention focused on the evolution of rope rescue practices and real-world application in challenging terrain environments.

Q How did you get started in the fire service, and what's shaped your 30+ years in the field?

A My father and grandfather were volunteers in the Tarrytown NY FD and my next-door neighbor growing up was the Fire Chief, so when I turned 16, I joined and began my journey in the fire service. I went to Ithaca College and was accepted into the Bunker Program with the Ithaca FD. I spent six years living in a fire house, learning everything I could from some of the best instructors, leaders and mentors. While working construction to pay the bills, my buddies and I would travel all over the country taking FD tests. In 1999 I was lucky enough to get on the job full time with the Ithaca Fire Dept. I had a great career with them, being promoted to Lieutenant in 2012 and Asst. Chief in 2019. I was made the Municipal Training Officer as well as the Public Information Officer and was Shift Commander of the B Shift before I retired in 2023. I am very proud of what we accomplished during my tenure.

Q What's changed most in rope rescue systems and equipment over your career?

A It's amazing. The technology improvement over the past 10 years is mind blowing. Things we were told to never do in the past are now doable. We have anchor straps the size of shoelaces now, which would make us cringe in the old days. Complicated systems that were difficult to set up and time consuming to switch from lower to raise are now done in minutes. The background and base of rope rescue I was taught by the best of the best back in the 90s has had a huge impact on my rescue career. And while the legacy gear and set ups still work fine, the new technology has made things safer, faster and more efficient. For fire departments with limited manpower, it is truly a game changer.

Q In "Rope Rescue Old vs. New," what's worth keeping – and what needs to go?

A I always laugh when someone wants to throw out an "old" tool. Don't do that. Put it on a shelf, wait a few years and someone will find a new use for it. Rope rescue is the same. The new descent control devices, rope grabs, progress captures and anchor straps are excellent and I highly recommend them. But the old gear will still work in a pinch. Most people like to train on a sunny day, set up a system, rescue one victim, pat themselves on the back and head back to the station. That's nice, but it isn't real. The calls we responded to were cars into ravines, multiple victims, pouring rain, nighttime rescues, and rope rescues in ice suites, and from bridges and into gorges. Those old techniques and gear can get you out of trouble when you run out of equipment or have multiple technical rescue calls at the same time.

Q Why is low-angle rescue like a "car over the embankment" scenario so challenging in real-world conditions?



A I don't know that it is that challenging, if you train for it. I always encourage fire departments to ask themselves, "What's our plan? What if this happens? Can we handle this type of emergency?... and if not, who can we call?" If you have a solid team in your area, great. Lean on them, get them coming soon, and support their efforts. But if you don't, then you better train for these events. Every department has hills and ravines. Every department has cars driving through it. If one of those cars goes over the embankment, what's your plan? Remember, there isn't a 9-1-2. It's you, so train for it!

Q What should firefighters take away from your FASNY sessions?

A Step up. Literally, step up and put your hands on things and learn this craft of ours. Some people may not like



technical rescue because of how they were taught or something scares them. Step up, learn this art form. Let us show you how to make rope rescue another emergency you can handle for your community and put another tool in your toolbox.



THE LEARNING CURVE

JESSICA ELLERBE

Member, Training and Education Committee

THE FIREHOUSE IS THE CLASSROOM: CREATE THE DRILL NIGHT THEY WON'T MISS

Every summer, firefighters and all first responders across New York look forward to Convention season. We attend classes, watch demonstrations, network with other departments, and return home full of new ideas and perspectives. Events like the annual FASNY Convention 2026 continue to bring firefighters together in ways that encourage learning, leadership, teamwork, and growth throughout the fire service. There is something motivating about being surrounded by people who are passionate about improving themselves and their departments. The challenge is carrying that same energy back into our own firehouses and creating training members continue to talk about after drill night ends.

Today's firefighters learn through involvement, interaction and experience, and strong instructors recognize that. The departments creating the strongest training cultures are the ones striving to make drill night engaging, hands-on, and collaborative. Members positively respond when they feel included in the learning process and when training feels connected to real situations they may encounter on and off the fireground.

Some of the most successful drill nights are built around participation. Allowing members to suggest drill topics, lead portions of training, or rotate through leadership roles during evolutions creates investment and confidence. Small relay-

style competitions, radio communication scenarios, timed challenges, and realistic problem-solving drills help members concentrate under pressure while building teamwork at the same time. Even simple activities like icebreakers encourage firefighters to work with members outside of their usual groups and can strengthen communication and relationships throughout the department.

The firehouse has always been more than a place to store apparatus. It is where firefighters grow, mentorship begins, and department culture is shaped. Training nights create opportunities for experienced members to pass down knowledge while also giving newer firefighters a voice and a chance to contribute. When members feel involved, supported, and challenged, they continue showing up ready to learn more.

Convention season reminds us that the fire service is always evolving, and our training should evolve alongside it. Departments that create meaningful, interactive, and welcoming drill nights build confident firefighters, united teams, and lasting success for the fire service. Retention starts long before applications slow down. It starts with the environment we create and maintain every time the bay doors open for drill night.



WELLNESSWAY

BRENDA GAUSBY

Member, Behavioral/Mental Health Committee

THE HEALING POWER OF BLUE SPACE: WHY BEING IN, ON, OR AROUND WATER SUPPORTS MENTAL WELLBEING

Emerging research continues to confirm what many people intuitively feel: being near water has measurable benefits for both mental and physical health. Researchers refer to lakes, rivers, oceans, ponds, and even therapeutic float environments as “blue spaces” – natural or designed water settings that promote restoration, stress relief, and emotional regulation. Systematic reviews have found consistent associations between blue space exposure and improved mood, lower perceived stress, reduced anxiety, and enhanced overall well-being.

Water appears to benefit the brain through what psychologists call soft fascination – the gentle sensory engagement created by moving water, rhythmic sounds, and reflective light patterns. Unlike overstimulating environments, water captures attention just enough to quiet mental chatter, while allowing the nervous system to downshift into a restorative state. This can reduce cognitive fatigue and support mindfulness, emotional processing, and mental clarity.

Float therapy offers a more concentrated version of this effect. By floating effortlessly in warm, high-density salt water, the body experiences a near total reduction in gravitational load and external sensory input. This creates several somatic benefits, including:

- Reduced muscle tension and fascial holding patterns
- Decompression of joints and spinal structures
- Lowered sympathetic nervous system activation (“fight or flight”)
- Increased parasympathetic activity (“rest and digest”)
- Improved body awareness and interoception
- Enhanced breath regulation and relaxation response

These physical shifts often produce significant mental health benefits, such as:

- Decreased anxiety and hypervigilance
- Improved emotional regulation
- Reduced rumination and intrusive thought patterns
- Enhanced focus and mental clarity
- Better sleep quality
- Greater sense of calm, groundedness, and nervous system reset

Studies of blue space interventions, including floating, paddling, swimming, and simply sitting near water, suggest these experiences can have lasting effects, improving resilience and emotional wellbeing well beyond the immediate activity itself. Even virtual exposure to water imagery and sound has demonstrated measurable relaxation effects, underscoring the profound influence water has on the human nervous system.

In a world of constant stimulation, water offers something increasingly rare: a space where the body can soften, the mind can settle, and healing can begin.

Notes: Research studies traditionally use salt water in controlled settings.

Safety message: Please enjoy these activities safely by wearing U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets (PFDs) for boating or swimming, using the buddy system and being familiar with the water you’ll be enjoying.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Brenda Gausby is a volunteer firefighter and BLS-EMT with a disaster recovery background. She is a clinician in private practice, an adjunct professor in the psychology department at Russell Sage College in Troy, and a member of FASNY’s Mental/Behavioral Health Committee.

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FOR THE LATEST NEWS AND UPDATES!



NEXTGEN

JERRY PRESTA

Vice Chair, Youth in the Fire Service Committee

MORE THAN “JUST A JUNIOR FIREFIGHTER”

When Junior firefighters are seen wearing their department jackets or shirts, they are often asked, “Are you with the fire department?” Many respond, “No, I’m just a Junior.”

Just a Junior?

Nothing could be further from the truth.

Junior firefighters are more than participants in a youth program – they are members of the fire service and dedicated individuals who have chosen to serve their communities. They represent the future of our departments and the future of volunteer firefighting. We should never underestimate the commitment, passion, and potential of these young men and women.

So, what is a Junior firefighter?

Firefighters are often viewed as leaders within their communities, and Junior firefighters should see themselves in the same light. Like every member of the department, they represent not only their organization, but also the values of the fire service as a whole.

While Junior programs teach firematic skills and safety practices, they provide much more than operational knowledge. They teach leadership, teamwork, responsibility, communication, and the importance of setting and achieving goals. These are life skills that will benefit young people long before they respond to their first emergency call.

Many Juniors join their local fire department with the dream of becoming firefighters when they reach the appropriate age. Along that journey they learn how to lead, work with others, and serve something greater than themselves. A Junior who stands before 12 peers to run a meeting or present an idea may not realize it at the time, but they are developing skills that will one day help them address a classroom, lead a workplace team, or command a fireground.

Few organizations offer young people the opportunity to gain both practical and leadership experience in a meaningful way.

Junior firefighters also build relationships with members from neighboring departments and Junior organizations. These connections foster camaraderie, friendship, and communication, while creating bonds that often last a lifetime. They learn the importance of working together, supporting one another, and becoming part of something larger than themselves.

At the heart of every successful Junior firefighter is a desire to serve. It is our responsibility as firefighters, officers, advisors, and mentors to recognize that desire and help develop it. By investing our time and experience in these young people, we are helping to shape the next generation of firefighters and community leaders.

Studies and experience have shown that a significant percentage of Junior firefighters continue in the fire service when they become eligible. The benefits are clear for everyone involved. Young people gain valuable life experiences and leadership skills, while departments develop motivated, trained, and dedicated future members.

But none of this happens without a Junior firefighter program.

As departments across the country continue to face recruitment and retention challenges, we must ask ourselves an important question: Can we afford not to invest in our future?

The answer is simple.

They are not “just” Junior firefighters.

They are the next generation of firefighters, officers, Chiefs, and leaders who will carry our traditions, values, and commitment to service forward for years to come.

Do you have a Junior program?

If not, ask yourself, is it because you have a waiting list of members wanting to join?

FASNY MEMBERSHIP DIGITIZED

NOW AT YOUR FINGERTIPS!



THE *REKINDLED* SPIRIT

REV. BARRIE-LYN FOSTER
Chaplain

CHANGES, CONTROVERSIES, OPINIONS AND IDEAS. CAN WE HANDLE IT? OF COURSE WE CAN.

I don't suppose you have ever met a grumpy firefighter. What? You have? Oh dear, that is troublesome. Please handle with care.

We all joined our companies to help. An added benefit is becoming part of the family at the station. We may joke about families having a weird or eccentric relative, but every family is unique. As a dear friend recently said: "Family isn't just blood, it is who you love and feel at home with." We chose this family.

Dealing with personalities can take some grace and wisdom. No worries, our Lord gives wisdom freely to all who ask. So please, go ahead and ask!

Sometimes when it looks and sounds like a person is complaining, they may honestly be trying to help and make things better. Motives matter. Intention matters too. Tone, temper, and volume can drown out the intended message. So can hormones (I'm thinking testosterone and estrogen here).

Funny story from when I was an Assistant Chief: At a structure fire, I was very vocal about the downed live power line in the front yard. As I was guarding it, a neighboring mutual aid Chief approached from the opposite side yelling at me. I waved my arms and yelled back. We couldn't hear one another due to scene noise. He took another step and his yelling increased. So did mine. Then we both realized at the same time we were saying the same thing and were concerned for the other's life. The intensity was essential. The relief after the communication finally reached mutual understanding was wonderful. We still laugh about it, but it was potentially life threatening.

Did you ever notice how some people can bark out an order and no one is offended, and hurt feelings just don't exist? I've met many such folks. They have an amazing gift for communicating, especially at our more stressful EMS and fire scenes. They are a joy to work with. You feel seen, cared for, and appreciated for what you did right. When corrected, you are glad for their honesty in showing you a better way. It's good and very good.

For those of you who have met the occasional grumpy type, be kind. Maybe their years of experience were barely validated. Perhaps their blood sugar is low, or high. Look past the prickly words to see what is underneath. Maybe it is someone who just needs a friend, or a person who prefers to work hard and be left alone, or something else that has absolutely nothing to do with you.

There are a million reasons why someone we work with could be grumpy. Don't give it back in return. That poor attitude of any who constantly ridicule and criticize may run like wildfire through your organization. Call it out and don't let those 'grumpy seeds' grow. Be the one who stops it. Plant "kindness seeds" instead. It works so much better.

It may even help your department with retention!

"Whatever a man sows, this he will also reap ... Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary ... So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people." (GALATIANS 6:7,9,10)

NOW READ
"THE VOLUNTEER
FIREFIGHTER"
ONLINE!
VISIT FASNY.COM



TEN EMS PEARLS I WISH SOMEONE TOLD ME ON DAY ONE

Whether on an ambulance or fire apparatus, volunteering in emergency services is unlike any other commitment. We respond to people in their most vulnerable moments because they depend on us, not because we are paid to do it.

When I first became an EMT, I focused on mastering skills, memorizing protocols, avoiding critical fails, and staying calm under pressure. Those things matter, but the most valuable lessons came from experience in the field rather than the classroom.

If I could sit with the new EMT I once was, this is what I would share.

1. LOOK AND LISTEN BEFORE YOU TOUCH

Slow down before you act. Observe the scene and listen to the patient. Let the situation speak to you. Many patients will tell you what is wrong if you give them time. Your best tools are your eyes, ears, and instincts.

2. TREAT THE PERSON, NOT THE TECHNOLOGY

Monitors are helpful, but they do not replace clinical judgment. A patient can look critically ill even when the numbers appear normal. Always prioritize your assessment over the screen.

3. FAMILIES ARE PATIENTS TOO

You are not treating one person. You are treating everyone who loves them. A few moments spent explaining what is happening or offering reassurance can reduce panic and confusion for families who feel powerless.

4. THE QUIET PATIENT

The sickest patient is not always the loudest. A patient who is quiet, confused, withdrawn, or simply does not look right should raise concern. Subtle changes often signal serious problems early.

5. TRUST YOUR GUT

Intuition is experience speaking. It should never replace a full assessment, but it should never be ignored either. If something feels off, take another look. You may find what the numbers miss.

6. YOUR PRESENCE MATTERS MORE THAN YOU THINK

Patients may forget specific interventions, but they remember your tone, your calm, and your reassurance. Small acts of presence often reduce fear more than any equipment or medication.

7. YOU CANNOT POUR FROM AN EMPTY CUP

Burnout, fatigue, and stress are real occupational hazards in EMS. Taking care of your mental and physical health is not optional. It is necessary to continue doing the work well. Reach out when you need support.

8. EVERY CALL HAS SOMETHING TO TEACH YOU

Even routine calls offer lessons. The best providers remain students throughout their careers. They reflect on what went well and what could be improved after each patient encounter.

9. FREQUENT FLYERS

We all know them. Before frustration sets in, reframe the call. Imagine this is someone you love. Many frequent callers are dealing with loneliness, chronic illness, or lack of support. While we may not solve the root cause, we can always offer dignity, patience, and kindness.

10. REMEMBER YOUR WHY

There will be hard days that make you question your impact. In those moments, remember why you started. Think of the grateful family, the relieved patient, or the simple thank you after a difficult call. Those moments are the real measure of service.

Volunteering is built on a simple principle. Ordinary people choose to help others. Skills can be taught, protocols will change, and equipment will evolve, but compassion, service, and commitment remain constant.

Long after the call ends, people may forget what we did, but they rarely forget how we made them feel.



**BY ANGELA
OUTHOUSE,
MSN, RN, EMT**

Angela is the acting Chair of the Behavioral and Mental Health Committee, a member of FASNY's EMS Committee, Past President of the Westchester County Volunteer Firefighters' Association, Trustee of Buchanan Engine Company No. 1, Inc., Chairman of the Board of Croton EMS, Inc., and Sgt.-at-Arms of the Hudson Valley Volunteer Firefighters' Association.

PRODUCTS FOR FIREFIGHTERS ELECTROLYTE

With the weather heating up, staying hydrated is more important than ever. Electrolytes are a key part of staying hydrated on shift, but with so many products out there, which one do you choose?

MEGAN LAUTZ, MS, RD, CSCS, TSAC-F

Lautz is an award-winning registered dietitian who specializes in first responders. She develops practical nutrition strategies that boost energy, improve body composition, and reduce stress for firefighters and other first responders. Lautz was the recipient of the ASPDA Trailblazer Award, recognizing her work advancing dietetics in public safety. She owns RescueRD LLC, which provides custom nutrition programs for departments nationwide. Follow @Rescue.RD on Instagram and TikTok for first responder-specific tips.



ELECTROLYTES 101

Electrolytes are minerals that carry an electrical charge, including sodium, chloride, potassium, and magnesium. These particles are essential for fluid balance, muscle contraction, and heart function.

A drastic change in electrolyte levels can significantly impact performance and body function. With sweat losses on the fireground clocking in at up to 40 oz per 30 minutes, this can happen quickly. Making replacement essential to continue activity and assist with rehydration.

So, how do electrolyte products assist with rehydration? Electrolytes control the flow of water into cells. The ion channels found on cell membranes regulate the flow of electrolytes into cells. Water follows, flowing to the side of the membrane with more electrolytes (aka osmosis). Therefore, electrolytes are essential for rehydrating and holding onto fluid.



ELECTROLYTE PRODUCTS



There are many hydration products on the market, and it's easy to just buy the one on sale at Costco that month (I've been there). However, some products work better in different scenarios. Since shifts can range from sitting around to running into a burning building, it may help to trial a few options in different scenarios to see what works for you!

Oral Rehydration Solutions (ORS)

WHEN TO USE: Hot, active shifts. Fire-related calls. Workouts in the heat lasting more than one hour.

To optimize rehydration fast, opt for an oral rehydration solution like DripDrop, Liquid I.V., or Pedialyte Sport. These products have half the sugar and double the sodium of sports drinks and are 20% more effective than sports drinks. ORS products were developed for the cholera epidemic and can rehydrate and IV fluids for mild to moderate dehydration.

Opt for the original products with sugar (not sugar-free). A little bit of glucose (10-15 g) can speed up rehydration by providing access to the sodium-glucose cotransporter on the cell. Glucose is co-transported with sodium in the intestinal tract, and water is absorbed through the osmotic gradient created by sodium and glucose. Note that you can absorb sodium and water without glucose; it will just take more time. For a dehydrated firefighter with more work to do, speed is essential. Keep a few packs in a go bag or on your assigned unit just in case.

Sugar-Free Electrolyte Products

WHEN TO USE: You're on keto or are a super salty sweater.

As mentioned, sugar-free electrolyte products help rehydrate, though they may not be as fast as those containing a bit of sugar. LMNT or FireSalt falls into this category and contains even more sodium than DripDrop or Liquid I.V. (1000 mg vs. 600 mg). For very salty sweaters, this can be a lifesaver. Salty sweaters often have a white rim around their duty shirt, hat, or hood. Try a Gatorade Sweat Patch to see where your sweat losses clock in if you are a numbers person. You may need to tape it to your forearm if you are really sweaty.

Sports Drink

WHEN TO USE: Workouts in the heat lasting longer than one hour or this is what is available at fire-related calls.

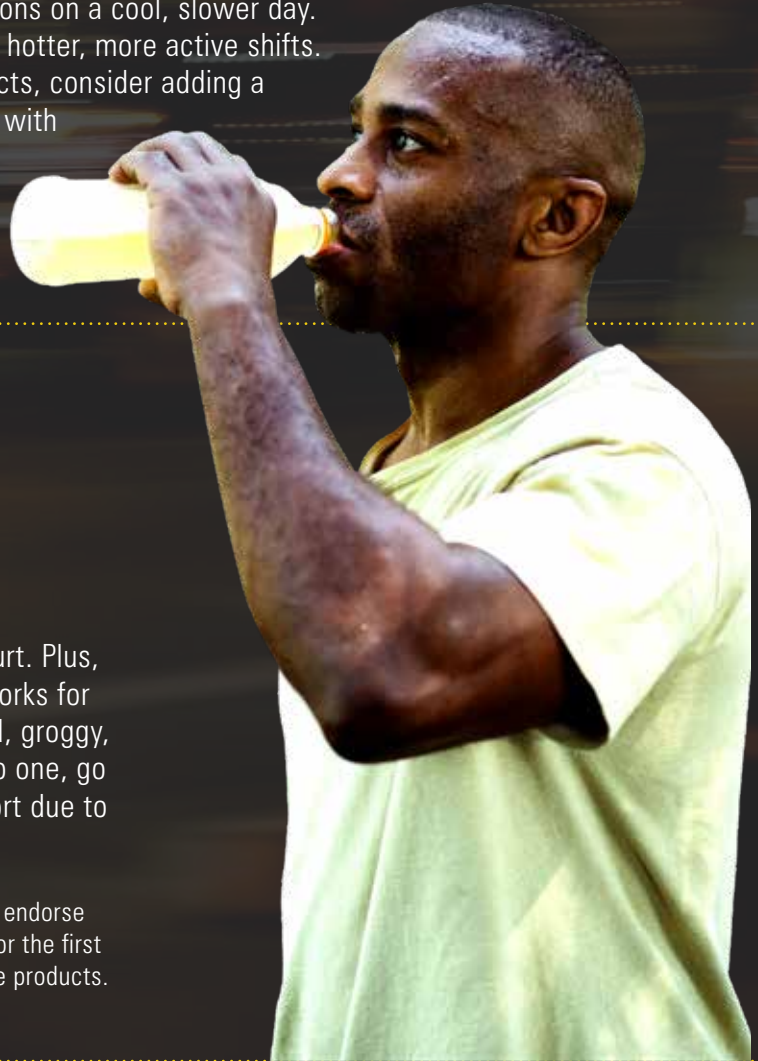
Standard sports drinks like Gatorade or Powerade may not have enough sodium (190 mg per 16 oz) to replace fireground losses, which is why many departments are switching to ORS products like DripDrop or Liquid I.V. However, sport drink also tastes less salty than many electrolyte options, which is important for rehydrating as well. These may be better for non-fire-related drills or workouts lasting an hour or more. Basically, trainings that are active but not super sweaty.



Low Sodium Hydration Products

WHEN TO USE: Cool and slow shifts. You're bored with plain water.

As mentioned above, sodium is one of the main electrolytes lost in sweat in large amounts and is essential to assisting fluid into the cells. Often, these lower sodium options are coconut-water-based, like Prime or Body Armour. The potassium content is great, but both clock in at 40 mg sodium per 16 oz. These could work to mix up your hydration options on a cool, slower day. The sodium is too low for hotter, more active shifts. If you prefer these products, consider adding a salt packet or drinking with a salty snack like pretzels.



WHICH SHOULD I CHOOSE?

As mentioned, having options based on the shift might not hurt. Plus, it is important to trial a few different products to see what works for you. You know the product worked if you do not get that tired, groggy, drained feeling after a hot call or drill. If you want to limit it to one, go with an ORS packet like Liquid I.V., DripDrop, or Pedialyte Sport due to the rehydration speed and portability.

DISCLAIMER: Palm Beach County Fire and Rescue or Megan Lautz do not endorse products mentioned in this article. The provided information is intended for the first responder to make the best-educated purchase if interested in electrolyte products.

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2026 CONVENTION AGENDA*

*Locations are subject to change. For the most up-to-date version, view our digital schedule.



TUESDAY AUGUST 18

4:30 P.M. – 6 P.M. Registration (Only for those pre-registered!)

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 19

7:30 A.M. – 9 A.M. Enjoy Breakfast with a View of the Mountains!
7:30 A.M. – 3:30 P.M. Registration
9 A.M. – 10:30 A.M. Our First Business Session & Introductions of the 2026 Candidates
10:30 A.M. – 3:30 P.M. Voting on 2026 Candidates
12 P.M. – 1:30 P.M. Lunch with Networking Opportunities
1:30 P.M. – 3 P.M. Join us for an Interactive Recruitment & Retention Roundtable
4:30 P.M. – 6 P.M. Registration
5 P.M. Business Session and Announcement of the Election Winners

THURSDAY AUGUST 20

7:30 A.M. – 9 A.M. Enjoy Breakfast at the Holiday Valley Lodge
7:30 A.M. – 3:30 P.M. Registration
9 A.M. – 10 A.M. Opening Ceremonies and Introductions
10 A.M. Honor the Deceased Members from Volunteer Fire Departments During the Memorial Ceremony
11 A.M. Recognize and Honor Our 2026 Firefighter of the Year During the Heroes Awards
12 P.M. – 1:30 P.M. Lunch at the Holiday Valley Lodge
1:30 P.M. – 2:30 P.M. Keynote Speaker, Frank Viscuso on Leadership
2:30 P.M. – 4 P.M. Business Session
6 P.M. – 8 P.M. Unwind and Get Creative at the Paint and Sip with Joe Schaefer, Putting Contest, and Games

FRIDAY AUGUST 21

7:30 A.M. – 9 A.M. Start Day Three with Breakfast at Holiday Valley Lodge
7:30 A.M. – 3:30 P.M. Registration
8:30 A.M. – 9 A.M. FASNY FCU Member Meeting
9 A.M. – 11 A.M. Morning Business Session
10:30 A.M. – 12:30 P.M. *Hero Maintenance* with Tom Basher
10:30 A.M. – 12 P.M. *Management Training for Today's Fire Company Board of Directors* with FASNY Counsels Terrence Hannigan, Tim Hannigan, and FASNY Treasurer Sean Kerwin
12 P.M. – 1:30 P.M. Lunch
2:00 P.M. – 4 P.M. 2% Training with NYS Government Agencies
6:00 P.M. – 11 P.M. Try Your Luck at the FASNY Scholarship Casino Night at Yodeler Lodge

SATURDAY AUGUST 22

7:30 A.M. – 9 A.M. Soak in the Views at Day Four Breakfast
7:30 A.M. – 2 P.M. Registration
9 A.M. Closing Business Session, Acceptance Speeches, & Swearing in of New Officers
10:30 A.M. – 12 P.M. *Rope Rescue Old vs. New – Getting Out of the Dark Ages* with Tom Basher
12 P.M. – 1:30 P.M. Lunch with Networking Opportunities
2 P.M. – 3:30 P.M. Hands-on-Training: *Car Over Embankment* with Tom Basher
6 P.M. 4th Annual Testimonial Dinner Honoring Past Presidents

SUNDAY AUGUST 23

7:30 A.M. – 9 A.M. Final Breakfast at Holiday Valley

2026 *Convention*

HOLIDAY VALLEY

WEDNESDAY-SATURDAY,
AUGUST 19-22



A SUMMER *Mountain Escape*

At the base of Holiday Valley in Ellicottville, this summer mountain setting is part of Western New York's largest year-round resort, with rolling greens, scenic views, and a walkable village nearby. The Inn at Holiday Valley offers convenient slope side lodging overlooking the golf course, with comfortable rooms and suites, plus indoor and outdoor pools, a hot tub, and fitness room. In August, the resort is in full summer swing with warm days outdoors and long evenings for relaxing and gathering. Onsite dining, spa services, pools, and open spaces make it easy to unwind between Convention events.



PLAY, EXPLORE, *Unwind*

Summer at Holiday Valley is made for getting outside and making the most of the day. Tee off on the 18-hole golf course, explore hiking and biking trails, or head into Sky High Adventure Park for zip lines, bridges, and aerial challenges. The Sky Flyer Mountain Coaster winds down the mountainside with a ride you control, offering either a thrill or a relaxed glide. Pools, scenic lift rides, and family activities round out the experience, making it easy to find your pace. Whether active or relaxed, the mountain is yours to enjoy.

LOCAL FLAVOR

Mountain Views

Dining is casual, local, and full of variety. Onsite, Edna's at the Tamarack Club serves pizzas, burgers, salads, and desserts with slope side views. McCarty Café offers coffee, breakfast, and quick bites throughout the day. Just steps away, Ellicottville offers a lively mix of restaurants, cafés, breweries, and pubs, all within walking distance.



REGISTER *Now*

We are now accepting reservations. Scan the QR code to book or modify your hotel reservation. Pre-registration closes Aug. 10. Secure your spot today!

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



FRANK VISCUSO

Deputy Chief (Ret.)

Join Deputy Chief (Ret.) Frank Viscuso for Step Up and Lead, a high energy keynote on leading with purpose in today's fire service. Drawing from

his best-selling book, he challenges officers and aspiring leaders to strengthen accountability, communication, mentoring, and culture building. Through real world stories and practical takeaways, this session is designed to inspire action and provide tools attendees can use immediately in their departments.

EVENTS



SCHOLARSHIP CASINO

Night

Step into an evening of classic casino energy with blackjack, roulette, craps, and three-card

poker. Try your luck, play a few hands, and enjoy a relaxed night of friendly competition and conversation.



PAINT AND SIP AND

Putting Contest

Take a break with a Paint and Sip session or a lighthearted putting contest. Whether painting, sipping, or sinking a putt, it is an easygoing way to unwind and connect with fellow attendees!

TRAINING

MANAGEMENT TRAINING FOR TODAY'S FIRE COMPANY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Join FASNY Treasurer Sean Kerwin and FASNY Counsels Terry and Tim Hannigan for an interactive overview of the legal and financial responsibilities involved in the proper operation of a volunteer fire company. This session offers practical guidance for officers and board members navigating governance, finance, and compliance.

ENHANCE YOUR ROPE RESCUE SKILLS

Led by Chief Tom Basher, NYS Fire Instructor II, who brings more than 30 years of fire and rescue experience, these two classroom programs explore modern rope rescue techniques and equipment. Participants will compare legacy systems with current best practices to improve safety and efficiency.

OLD VS NEW: GETTING OUT OF THE DARK AGES

This session examines how rope rescue techniques have evolved, highlighting new equipment, systems, and safer methods for all skill levels from beginner to experienced rescuers.

CAR OVER THE EMBANKMENT

A second session will focus on low-angle rescue operations, including patient packaging, team coordination, and efficient system use. Multiple practical reps included for all experience levels.

HERO MAINTENANCE

Emergency responders are trained to take care of everyone else, but the stress of the job can accumulate over time and affect both professional and personal life. Join Chief Tom Basher for a "Hero Maintenance" session, which addresses PTSD, suicide, and the cumulative impact of stress in the fire service.

2% TAX FORUM

This forum brings together representatives from New York state agencies to discuss 2 percent tax usage, distribution, and reporting. Attendees may submit questions in advance, with answers provided during the session. A certificate of attendance will be issued.

YOUTH SUMMER GAMES

Join us for an action-packed day where youth firefighters trade the fireground for friendly competition, teamwork, and bragging rights!



BEYOND FEMA:

A Fire Department Guide to Grants & Funding



BY
JOHN
PROBERT

Does this sound familiar? “We need funding for equipment, training and vehicles. We should apply for a grant.”

Then the conversation shifts: how do we make that happen?

Grants are an important source of support for fire departments. They can provide funding for training, equipment, and capital needs. However, most departments typically think about funding through the Federal Emergency Management Agency, including the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, the Fire Prevention and Safety Grant Program and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant Program. These are among the leading grant

programs for fire departments nationwide.

However, there are other options that may also work for your department, including:

State & Federal Appropriations

Federal and state legislators periodically put in requests for support through the annual budget process. These amounts vary, and departments often need to have conversations with elected officials about these requests. These appropriations are typically geared toward infrastructure and capital improvements.

New York State Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Services – V-FIRE Program

The Volunteer Fire Infrastructure and Response V-FIRE Grant Program provides support for important capital and equipment needs for volunteer fire departments. In 2024, 88 awards were made, and 2026 applications closed in February of this year.

U.S. Department of Agriculture – Community Facilities Program

This program helps provide critical loans and grants for primarily rural communities, and fire department

TIVE BUILDING

needs are listed on the USDA website as a funding parameter.

Community Development Block Grants

These are federal funds through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and administered by local municipalities, based on low- and moderate-income levels in the community. You need to speak with your local government officials to apply for support for capital needs. You can work with your municipality to supply information, but the municipality must submit the application.

Community Foundations

Community foundations steward donors' dollars to help benefit charities in different regions. You need to have a conversation with a program officer to identify potential ways to work together so support for your projects can meet a donor's wishes for their gifts to make an impact. A program officer is someone who oversees funding tranches and usually manages donor relations.

Please note that award amounts and deadlines vary across these programs. It is always good to reach out directly to a program administrator for information before applying, or checking what is publicly posted.

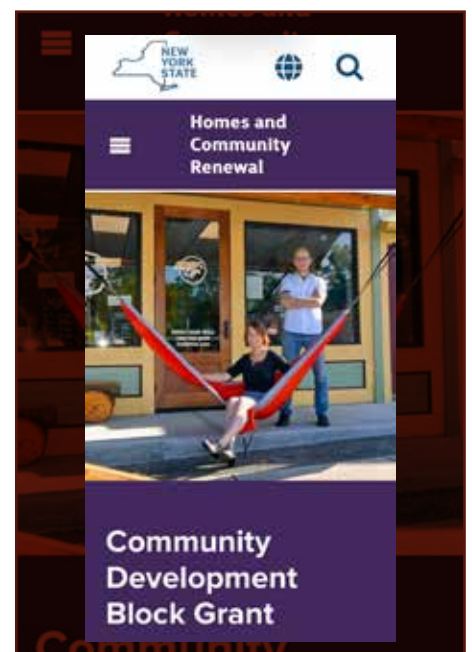
After reviewing these options, many departments find themselves thinking the same thing: maybe we should apply for a grant. The challenge then becomes navigating the process and following the rules of grant writing.

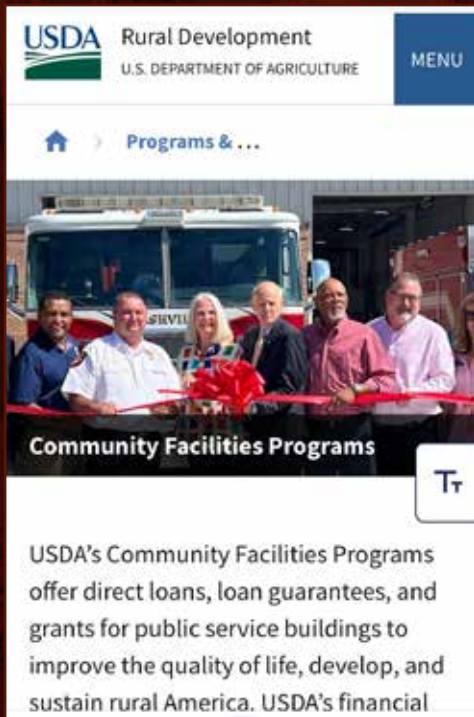
HERE ARE A FEW RULES I ADHERE TO:

1. Start With the Fine Print

Grant requests will clearly state the deadline to apply, often including not just the date but the time. You do not want to pursue a grant without fully reading the requirements. Go through the application from beginning to end so you do not miss anything or run into surprises at submission. You also need to understand timelines for

decisions and how long you have to spend the funds. Some grants give a year to close out. Others may allow two or three. It is not optional to ignore this. You need to track it from the start. It is also important to create your own checklist to ensure everything is submitted correctly, which helps set internal review deadlines.





GRANT SUCCESS CHECKLIST

Before submitting a grant application, ask:

- ☐ Have we reviewed all application materials and deadlines?
- ☐ Have we spoken with the program administrator?
- ☐ Does our request align with the funder's priorities?
- ☐ Can we clearly demonstrate need with data?
- ☐ Do we have examples that illustrate community impact?
- ☐ Have we secured strong letters of support?
- ☐ Has someone else reviewed the application?
- ☐ Do we have alternative plans if we are not selected?
- ☐ Do we have systems in place to manage the award and reporting requirements if funded?

2. Don't Go in Cold

It is always a good idea to speak with someone administering the grant. They can help clarify questions and guide you through the process. That said, you need to go in prepared. Read the application first, develop specific questions, and make it a productive conversation. That signals competence to reviewers.

3. Alignment Wins Grants

Sometimes what you are seeking funding for is not something a funder will support. Make sure your request aligns with the goals of the funding source.

4. Know Your Numbers

When someone is evaluating a grant request, they want to understand impact. You need to know your numbers, whether that is call volume, average member age, staffing levels, or how many members hold different certifications that support operations. If you cannot quantify your department, you cannot justify your request. Numbers help people understand fiscal impact.

5. Put a Face to the Data

Grants are designed to help uplift people and organizations. It is important to have stories on hand to talk about how the work you do changes lives, and what that support

means if awarded funds. Stories move hearts and minds.

6. Let Others Speak for You

Recommendation letters from people in the community can carry great weight. You want them to write in their own words, with their own experience about your department, and how this project would help impact your work. That helps showcase community buy-in and signals to funders how important supporting your request is. Make sure you ask for these early in the process. Some grants request them, and some letters can be included as supplementary materials.

7. Get a Second Set of Eyes

It's always good to put your best foot forward when writing a grant. But your perspective may differ from someone else's on how to answer a question. And after reading it 10 times, it's easy to miss an error! Multiple sets of eyes help reduce mistakes and improve your score with reviewers.

8. No Guarantees in Grants

You can do everything right and still lose. Just because you submit a grant does not mean you will be selected.

Another applicant may score higher, or another proposal may simply be more competitive. That is the reality of grant funding. You need to plan





for that upfront, not after the denial. You should not put all your eggs in one basket on a single request.

9. Keep Files Organized

From grant submission to grant management, there are several important documents you will need to provide. You need to keep them in a way that is accessible and trackable. For example, if a funder decides to randomly audit a grant from two years ago, you should have everything from that two-year period in a dedicated file broken down by category. That can include reports, expenses, names of members involved with the project, etc.

You must keep that information, and when accepting a grant agreement, you should have a plan in place to retain records as specified in the agreement. You are required to keep this information, and when accepting an award, you should already have a plan in place for retention as outlined in the grant agreement. If you cannot produce documentation, you are exposed in an audit.

CONCLUSION

Following these rules will make the proposal process smoother and improve your chances of success. But even when everything is done correctly, grant writing and

administration are still demanding work, especially for departments with limited time and staffing. This is the reality for many fire departments. That is why many departments benefit from working with a grant professional who can help manage the process and keep things on track.

Grants will continue to be a critical source of funding for equipment, training, and capital needs. But success comes down to the fundamentals: understand what funders want, support your request with data, and manage awards responsibly. Departments that do this well will be more competitive and are less likely to leave funding on the table.

About the Author

John Probert is President of Axiom Grants Management and has more than seven years of experience in grant development and administration across non-profit and municipal sectors, including government, foundation, and corporate funding programs. In 2025 he secured more than \$2.5 million in grant funding. He holds a bachelor's degree from George Mason University. He can be reached by email at jprobert@axiomgrantsmanagement.com.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE & GRANT WRITING

After reading this, some may think: "I'll just use AI to write my grant and that will take care of it."

AI is not something you should rely on as the foundation of a winning proposal.

If 50 departments apply for funding for a new fire truck and most use similar AI tools, the applications start to look very similar. I have spoken with funders who are already seeing more AI-generated submissions, which increases review time and makes competition tighter.

These systems also tend to produce writing with a recognizable cadence. Over time, you can start to spot patterns in AI-generated text.



Artificial intelligence also makes mistakes. I have tested systems where I provided reports and asked questions based on them, and it missed key caveats or generated information that was not in the source material. This is based on tests conducted as recently as June 2026.

That said, AI can be useful when used correctly. It can build checklists, summarize guidance, suggest structure, and reduce repetitive administrative work. I have also used it to help clarify grant language and identify additional resources.

But it must be used carefully. Some information may be outdated or incorrect, and if not verified, it can hurt an application. It should support the process, not replace judgment.

Even if AI helps prepare a grant, you still need to understand the award and manage it properly if funded.

One question remains: if you need AI to write your grant, can you clearly explain, on your own, why your department should be selected?



2ND ANNUAL LAKE GEORGE FIREFIGHTERS SYMPOSIUM DRAWS RECORD ATTENDANCE

More than 140 volunteer firefighters converged on Lake George May 15-17 for a sold-out 2nd Annual Symposium, nearly tripling attendance from last year.



The weekend kicked off Friday with the annual golf tournament at Cronin's Golf Course. The 18-hole scramble brought firefighters of all skill levels together for a day centered on camaraderie, friendly competition, and connection, followed by a BBQ dinner to close out the opening day. For those arriving early, a lunchtime boat ride on Lake George offered a relaxed start to the weekend, courtesy of ESIP by McNeil & Co.

Held at the Fort William Henry Hotel, the symposium drew firefighters from across



the state for a weekend focused on education, leadership, networking, and camaraderie. Attendees participated in classroom sessions and presentations on private dwelling fires, engine company tactics, and leadership, while also connecting informally throughout the weekend. Organizers said feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with participants noting they plan to bring the knowledge gained back to their departments to strengthen operations statewide.

Among those in attendance was Gage Lyons, a volunteer firefighter with the Farmington Volunteer Fire Association, who traveled from the Rochester area to participate. He described the weekend as an immersive learning experience that pushed him to think more critically



about how firefighters operate under pressure.

Lyons said one of his biggest takeaways was the importance of communication during chaotic, high-stress incidents and the need for crews to understand not just what they are doing on scene, but why they are doing it. He emphasized that breakdowns in communication can



quickly become a limiting factor during emergency operations and said improving that shared understanding is something he plans to bring back and reinforce within his department's training.

"I always look for opportunities to become more trained and gain more knowledge so I can be the best firefighter I can be," said Lyons, who



started firefighting just 18 months ago. "This symposium is exactly that kind of environment. You are surrounded by people who want to learn and improve, and you bring that experience back with you. It is not just training. It is something you live through and carry back to your department."

Thank you to this year's sponsors A&P Master Images, VFIS, FASNY Federal Credit Union, Emergency Services Insurance Program, MEGA Energy, GBC Fundraising, LeChase Construction, and Bank of Greene County for your support in making this event a success.

Missed this year's symposium? Save the date for the next Annual Training Symposium, May 13-16, 2027, at: tinyurl.com/2s3h7sez



THE CROWN JEWEL OF MINEOLA:

50 Years of The Junior Fire Department

By Ex-Chief Robert Connolly



A community is more than people sharing a place. It is a network of individuals connected by shared values, responsibility, and a sense of belonging. Communities thrive when their members take ownership of one another's success and commit themselves to something greater than themselves.

In the Village of Mineola, the fabric of the community has a golden thread that is the Mineola Junior Fire Department (MJFD).

Formed in 1976, the MJFD started as Explorer Post 160. This is in tribute to our radio call sign "160," as we are First Battalion-Sixth Department.

Initially we started with a small group of teens who were permitted into the firehouse just two nights a month for one meeting and a training session.

As time went on, it became evident to the firefighters that this youth group would be key to the department's sustained success. The enthusiasm of



set up trainings with partner departments and made sure our Juniors had an informative learning experience. Billy is one of the original social media influencers, publishing countless on-line videos and photo montages chronicling the success of the MJFD. Never one to act his age, "Goobie," as he is affectionately known, was also a regular on the rollercoasters on Juniors' trips to the amusement park.

its Explorers rejuvenated the spirit of the senior members, and the program began to expand. Juniors began helping at cleanings, marching in parades and filling seats in first aid classes. Some Juniors learned how to work the radio room dispatcher's position, which freed up a firefighter to respond to alarms. The program became a magnet to youth interested in joining the fire service.

The MFD community thrived with the support of the Juniors. Many advisors helped build out the organization, but the most impactful advisors have undoubtedly been Ex-Chief Gary Mazur and Hon. Chief Bill Gresalfi. They recognized the importance of community and wanted our Juniors to experience what it takes to nurture and support the values that make Mineola great.

Hon. Chief Bill Gresalfi brought a passion and enthusiasm to the program that rivaled the energy of the teens. Through the years he

Chief Mazur continues to grow the organization, constantly introducing new candidates to the program. As Head Advisor, he is always looking for ways to have a positive impact on the community. When someone needs help, Gary hatches a plan and the Juniors are on the way. Working with the youths, they have organized food drives for the local pantry, cancer fundraisers when a community member needed assistance, and clothing collections for earthquake victims overseas. When Hurricane Sandy battered neighboring communities, the Juniors headed down to serve meals to the beleaguered residents and rescue workers.

Community Ambassadors

Back in town the Juniors have become community ambassadors. In addition to their service to MFD, they are often found volunteering at fun runs, serving food at community events



and bringing holiday cheer through "Operation Santa." Each year the Juniors spend hundreds of hours visiting local children during the holidays dressed in costumes to deliver gifts.

The goodwill of the Juniors extends beyond our borders. Our Junior FD has played host to a contingent from the Japanese fire service who came to study the success of our program. The MJFD was the first program in New York state to facilitate an international exchange program. We hosted members from a German Junior FD and then traveled to Germany to experience their culture. This exchange was repeated twice and recently a new partnership began with Juniors from Panama.

Work Hard, Play Hard

We have grown from two nights a month to twice a week.



Throughout the year the Juniors regularly come down to the firehouse to assist with cleaning and maintenance on the rigs. They also participate in department trainings and company drills. Whether it's washing a truck or changing an SCBA, they take on every task with purpose. When the alarm sounds, they can often be found helping at the scene connecting to the hydrant or packing hose.

Each year the advisors set up a trip to Lake George to reward the Juniors for their hard work throughout the year. They enjoy boating on the lake, amusement parks and the local favorite – Martha's Ice Cream. For many of these teens, this is the greatest vacation they have ever had.

Tradition of Excellence

Through the last 50 years, the Junior program has provided future leaders of the fire service. Eight Mineola Fire Department Chiefs have come from the ranks of MJFD. In fact, all three current Chiefs of the Mineola FD are former Junior firefighters. Several Mineola Junior FD alumni have gone on to hold rank in public safety organizations across our region, including FDNY, NYPD, Nassau County PD and the Nassau County Fire Service Academy. A testament to the solid foundation they received in the Juniors.



The Secret: Community Support.

The Mineola Junior Fire Department continues to strive even as the fire service experiences a decline in volunteerism. This can be attributed to the strong leadership from MJFD as well as the support from the community. Each year for the past 29 years, the community comes out in the winter months to share a meal at the MJFD pasta dinner. Everyone comes together in the community center gym and enjoys an afternoon of hearty food and fun. Local merchants donate prizes and raffles continue



throughout the day. The planning and logistics of this event teach the Juniors the importance of organization and teamwork.

As we celebrate the 250th anniversary of our great country, it is organizations like MJFD that set us apart. Fifty years strong, today's MJFD is a diverse group of young men and women from all different ethnic, economic and religious backgrounds. The common thread is a desire to serve. Ex-Chief Scott Strauss (former Junior firefighter and former Mineola Mayor) once described MJFD as "the Crown Jewel of our community." The advisors and members take that honor to heart and look forward to continuing to shine a positive light on our beloved village.



2026 *Award* — RECIPIENTS —

CELEBRATING SERVICE. HONORING EXCELLENCE.

Each year, FASNY recognizes the extraordinary volunteers who go above and beyond in service to their departments, neighbors and communities.

Nominated by their peers from across New York state, these individuals exemplify courage, dedication and the highest ideals of the volunteer fire and EMS service.

In this special section, we proudly introduce the recipients of FASNY's 2026 awards and commend their remarkable contributions to protecting and strengthening the communities they serve.



**JOIN US AT THE 2026 FASNY CONVENTION AS WE
PRESENT THE FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR AWARD
AND CELEBRATE THIS YEAR'S HONOREES.**

Fire Service COMMUNITY - ACHIEVEMENT AWARD -

Corey **ROOKER**

Port Byron Fire Department



Chief

Chief Corey Rooker has served the Port Byron Fire Department and surrounding community for 35 years, building a career defined by leadership, service and commitment to safety. Coming from a long family history of firefighters, he proudly continues that tradition as Fire Chief.

An interior firefighter and EMT, Rooker is known for prioritizing member safety while maintaining a dependable emergency response. His leadership style is hand son and shaped by decades of experience.

Beyond the fire service, Rooker holds several roles within the Port Byron Central School District, including Chief Emergency Officer, Transportation Supervisor, Facilities and Maintenance Supervisor and Fitness Center Manager. He supports daily operations, emergency planning and school safety initiatives, while remaining a familiar presence at school events. During emergencies on school grounds, he provides immediate EMT-level care and leadership.

At the county level, Rooker serves with the Cayuga County Emergency Management Office as an Intelligence Liaison Officer. He provides regional training on terrorism indicators and suspicious activity reporting for fire and EMS personnel and helps educate new EMT students through hands-on instruction.

From emergency response and school safety to regional preparedness training, Rooker's commitment to service continues to strengthen the communities he serves.



Youth Mentor

- OF THE YEAR -

Mark **SWING**

Borodino Fire Department

Mark Swing, Chief of the Borodino Fire Department, has dedicated his career to mentoring young people and guiding them toward volunteer fire service. As founder of the department's Fire Cadet program, he created a structured pathway for youth to learn, train and become part of the firehouse community.

Swing's commitment to youth development extends beyond firefighting skills. Drawing on experience mentoring Civil Air Patrol cadets, he built a program centered on leadership,

responsibility and teamwork in a safe and supportive environment.

The Borodino Fire Cadet Program gives participants hands-on exposure to fire service training through drills, department activities and attendance at county fire meetings and seminars. These experiences help cadets understand the expectations and culture of volunteer firefighting while building strong connections within the department.

Beyond firematic training, Swing emphasizes life skills and personal development. Cadets receive guidance

in budgeting, financial responsibility and time management. When needed, he also connects students with academic support through firefighter-educators within the department.

Swing is known for making cadets feel included from day one, welcoming them as part of the team during training, department events and informal gatherings. Through consistent mentorship and personal investment, he has created a lasting pipeline for the next generation of volunteer firefighters.



Past Chief

Fire Safety Educator

- OF THE YEAR -

David MORTENSEN

Branchport Keuka Park Fire Department

For more than three decades, David Mortensen has been a driving force in fire prevention education within the Branchport Keuka Park Fire Department and throughout the Finger Lakes region.

A past Chief and current Chairman of the Board of Commissioners for the Branchport Keuka Park Fire District, Mortensen has dedicated his service to promoting fire safety as a shared community responsibility.

He began leading organized fire safety programs in the early 1990s at Branchport Elementary School,

where he became known to students as "Fireman Dave." His curriculum focused on home escape planning, smoke alarm awareness, stay-low-and-go techniques and emergency response. These programs continue to be delivered several times each year.

After the elementary school closed due to consolidation, Mortensen expanded the program into the Penn Yan Central School District, continuing instruction across district lines. With support from the department, including apparatus, educational materials and firefighter and

EMS volunteers, he reinforced lessons through hands-on engagement.

Over time, Mortensen expanded outreach to homeschool groups, summer camps around Keuka Lake and schools within the local Mennonite community. He also introduced ice safety education focused on cold-water survival, ice thickness awareness and self-rescue skills tailored to regional hazards.

For more than 30 years, Mortensen has ensured fire prevention education remains active, evolving and accessible across generations.

Recruitment

- AND RETENTION AWARD -

GETZVILLE

Fire Department



The Getzville Fire Company has built its recruitment and retention efforts around a simple goal: bringing people into the firehouse and turning first visits into lasting membership.

Through a mix of traditional outreach and modern recruitment tools, the department has created a welcoming path into volunteer fire service. RecruitNY events, annual open houses, blood drives and children's activities encourage residents to interact directly with members and better understand

the role of volunteer firefighters and emergency responders in the community.

Retention efforts focus on inclusion and family involvement. Department leadership emphasizes that volunteering is a family commitment, with events such as the annual Labor Day Picnic and Children's Christmas Party helping strengthen long-term connections among members, families and the fire company.

In 2025, Getzville introduced geo-tagged QR code recruitment flyers throughout

the fire district. The codes directed potential applicants to the department website while tracking scan locations and activity, allowing the Recruitment Committee to identify hotspots and adjust outreach efforts in real time.

The strategy produced immediate results. Applications more than doubled from previous years, resulting in 13 new members by the end of 2025 — one of the department's strongest recruitment years in recent memory.

Teacher

- OF THE YEAR -

Aurora KOLB

Germantown Central School



Aurora Kolb has spent nearly two decades transforming life safety education into hands-on training that prepares students for real-world emergencies.

As a health and family and consumer sciences teacher at Germantown Central School, she teaches students through hands-on, applied learning.

She teaches Health 5/6, Health 7, Health 12, and FACS, covering CPR, AED use, first aid, choking response, fire safety, and emergency preparedness. Her work is informed by her background as an EMT,

bringing authenticity and urgency to every lesson.

A standout activity is the "AED Relay," a timed simulation in which student teams perform CPR, call 911, retrieve an AED trainer, and deliver a shock within two minutes. She has used similar experiential approaches for nearly 20 years.

Fire safety education begins in elementary grades with home fire escape plans developed alongside families. In middle school, students complete prevention-based projects on fire safety, poisoning,

drowning, falls, and environmental hazards. Her "Protect Your Brain" project connects helmet and seatbelt use to brain anatomy and real-world injury prevention.

Kolb also serves as chair of the school safety team, coordinating CPR/AED and Stop the Bleed training and supporting districtwide emergency preparedness.

Through sustained innovation and leadership, she has made life safety education practical, engaging, and enduring.

Youth Group

- OF THE YEAR -

WEST SAYVILLE

Junior Fire Department,



Founded in 1895, the West Sayville Junior Fire Department has spent more than a century developing young people into future firefighters and community leaders. Known as the "Future of Tradition," the program remains a cornerstone of recruitment and retention for the West Sayville Fire Department.

Members, who are between 8 and 18 years old, attend monthly meetings modeled after the senior department. Monthly training includes hands-on

instruction in hose handling, ladders, forcible entry, search and rescue, radio use, vehicle placement and Hurst tool operations. Juniors also receive CPR, first aid and Stop the Bleed training. Older members participate in leadership classes and advanced training that builds responsibility and prepares them for future service.

Community service is central to the program. Members take part in Memorial Day ceremonies, grave

decorating, parades, and fire prevention events, as well as food drives and other charitable fundraisers and activities, which support local organizations.

Through training, service and leadership development, the West Sayville Junior Fire Department continues to produce generations of volunteer firefighters and civic leaders serving in fire, EMS, military and public safety careers.

2026

Gerard J. Buckenmeyer Memorial FASNY Volunteer - SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS -

Leadership, volunteerism, and community commitment are hallmarks of the Gerard J. Buckenmeyer Memorial FASNY Volunteer Scholarship. This year, FASNY is proud to recognize 25 exceptional students from across New York state who have distinguished themselves both in the classroom and through their dedication to helping others. Chosen from a competitive pool of nearly 100 applicants, each recipient will receive a \$1,500 scholarship.



Caitlyn Armendola Old Forge Fire Dept.

Carisa Benjamin Haines Falls Fire Co.

Brody Chapman Eaton Fire Department

Christopher Chenier Wendelville Fire Dept.

Payton Dempsey Windham Hose Co. #1

Mallory Dodge Verona Volunteer Fire Dept.

Gabriella Ferro West Babylon Fire Dept.

Eric Hammond Village of Geneseo Fire Dept.

Chloe Hatch Rushford Volunteer Fire Dept.

Colin Hess Patterson Volunteer Fire Dept.

Brendan Horn Vestal Volunteer Fire Dept.

Emery Kaltenborn Hastings Volunteer Fire Dept.

Ryan King Edmeston Fire Dept.

Alexander Krawczyk New Hyde Park Fire Dept.

Jackson Kruszynski Ellicottville Fire Co.

Kayleigh Kuzmiak Bullville Fire Dept.

Bianca Lamour Elmont Fire Dept.

Matthew Pierce Mount Kisco Fire Dept.

Cadence Pooley Hastings Volunteer Fire Dept.

Hailee Rannazzisi Saint James Fire Dept.

Abigail Scaccia Lindenhurst Fire Dept.

Emily Shufelt Remsen Fire Dept.

Nicholas Streiff Sanborn Fire Co.

Louis Tunno Westbrookville Vol. Fire Co. #1 Inc.

Mason Williams New Hartford Fire Dept.



From **CONCEPT TO CONSENSUS:** *How FASNY Helped Shape New York's Nominal Compensation Legislation*

For years volunteer fire service leaders across New York have grappled with recruiting and retaining volunteers. While New York's volunteer fire departments continue to provide exceptional emergency response to communities across the state, demographic changes, competing demands on volunteers' time, and evolving training requirements have prompted policymakers and fire service leaders alike to explore new tools to strengthen volunteer recruitment and retention.



Photos by Sidewinder Photography



One proposal that has gained significant attention is the concept of “nominal compensation,” a practice that would allow volunteer firefighters to receive modest stipends for responding to calls or participating in standby activities while maintaining their volunteer status. While the concept has generated considerable interest, it also has raised important questions about equity, oversight, funding, and the potential unintended consequences for the volunteer fire service.

Throughout the legislative process, FASNY played a central role in ensuring those questions were answered before legislation moved forward.

Supporting the Goal, Improving the Policy

From the outset FASNY recognized nominal compensation could become an important tool in a broader recruitment and retention strategy. At the same time, the Association made clear any program must be carefully structured to preserve the integrity of New York’s volunteer fire service and protect departments operating in communities with limited financial

resources. FASNY’s position was straightforward: New York needs additional tools to attract and retain volunteer firefighters, but those tools must be implemented responsibly. The Association consistently emphasized volunteer departments continue to provide outstanding service across the state and rejected claims that the current volunteer system is failing. Instead FASNY advocated for a balanced approach that would strengthen recruitment while preserving the volunteer tradition that serves millions of New Yorkers.

Working closely with bill sponsors and respective Chairs of each house’s Local Government committees, Sen. Monica Martinez and Assemblymember Michaelle Solages, FASNY participated in extensive discussions regarding the framework of a potential nominal compensation program. Those conversations focused on ensuring accountability for taxpayer dollars, maintaining volunteer status protections, establishing clear program standards, and preventing wealthier communities from gaining an unfair advantage over departments in less affluent areas.



A Seat at the Table

As legislation evolved FASNY worked alongside lawmakers and our partners at the New York State Association of Fire Chiefs, the Association of Fire Districts of the State of New York and the New York State Association of Fire Coordinators to address practical concerns surrounding implementation. FASNY repeatedly stressed the importance of establishing meaningful oversight mechanisms and safeguards to ensure nominal compensation programs would operate transparently and responsibly.

Particular attention was devoted to the challenge of equity. Without safeguards communities with greater financial resources could potentially offer larger stipends than neighboring districts, creating recruitment disparities and placing additional strain on departments already facing financial challenges. FASNY urged lawmakers to recognize this concern and incorporate measures that would help ensure all departments had access to the program, regardless of local wealth. According to Association leaders, the final product reflects months of dialogue, revisions, and collaboration among legislators, fire service organizations, local governments and other stakeholders. “This is the culmination of a great deal of work by legislators who were willing to listen to different voices within the fire service and thoughtfully respond to those concerns,” FASNY First Vice President Donnie Farrell noted during the legislative process.



Key Improvements in the Final Legislation

The final bill incorporates many of the principles FASNY identified as essential to creating a workable program.

First, the legislation clearly establishes that participation in a pay-per-call or paid-on-call stipend program does not alter a firefighter's volunteer status. Volunteer firefighters remain volunteers for purposes of state law, labor law, civil service law, workers' compensation protections, and volunteer firefighter benefits.

Second, the legislation creates significant accountability requirements. Local governments authorizing nominal compensation programs must adopt rules and procedures governing administration of the program. Firefighters must remain active members in good standing, meet training requirements, satisfy attendance standards, and comply with physical examination requirements established by their departments.

Third, the bill incorporates robust financial oversight provisions. Departments receiving state

assistance must comply with reporting requirements, submit documentation to the Office of the State Comptroller, and remain subject to audit and review.

Perhaps most importantly, the legislation establishes a Volunteer Fire Service Nominal Compensation Assistance Fund, initially authorized at \$15 million. The fund is specifically designed to assist smaller departments and communities that may not otherwise have the financial resources to implement nominal compensation programs on their own. The assistance fund directly addresses one of FASNY's longstanding concerns: ensuring departments in disadvantaged communities are not left behind while wealthier jurisdictions gain a recruitment advantage. Under the legislation priority is given to eligible departments with lower revenues and greater demonstrated need.

Building a Stronger Recruitment Toolbox

FASNY has consistently maintained nominal compensation should not be viewed as a standalone solution. Instead it should be considered one component of a larger recruitment and retention strategy that includes property tax relief, service award programs, educational incentives, training support, and other volunteer-friendly policies. The Association continues to advocate for reforms that provide local governments with greater flexibility to support volunteer firefighters while preserving the

unique character of New York's volunteer fire service. The final nominal compensation legislation reflects that broader philosophy. Rather than replacing volunteerism, the bill provides communities with an additional tool that may help recruit new members, retain experienced firefighters, and strengthen emergency response capabilities statewide.

The Value of Collaboration

Legislation affecting New York's volunteer fire service is rarely simple. Questions involving labor law, municipal finance, tax policy, workers' compensation protections, volunteer firefighter benefits, and local government authority create a complex policy landscape. FASNY's involvement throughout this process demonstrates the importance of having knowledgeable fire service advocates engaged in legislative discussions from the beginning. By working constructively with sponsors, identifying potential challenges, and proposing practical solutions, the Association helped shape legislation that reflects the realities faced by volunteer firefighters and fire departments throughout New York.

As the bill potentially advances next session, FASNY remains committed to ensuring any new recruitment and retention tools strengthen the volunteer fire service while protecting the traditions, protections, and community-focused mission that have defined New York's volunteer firefighters for generations.

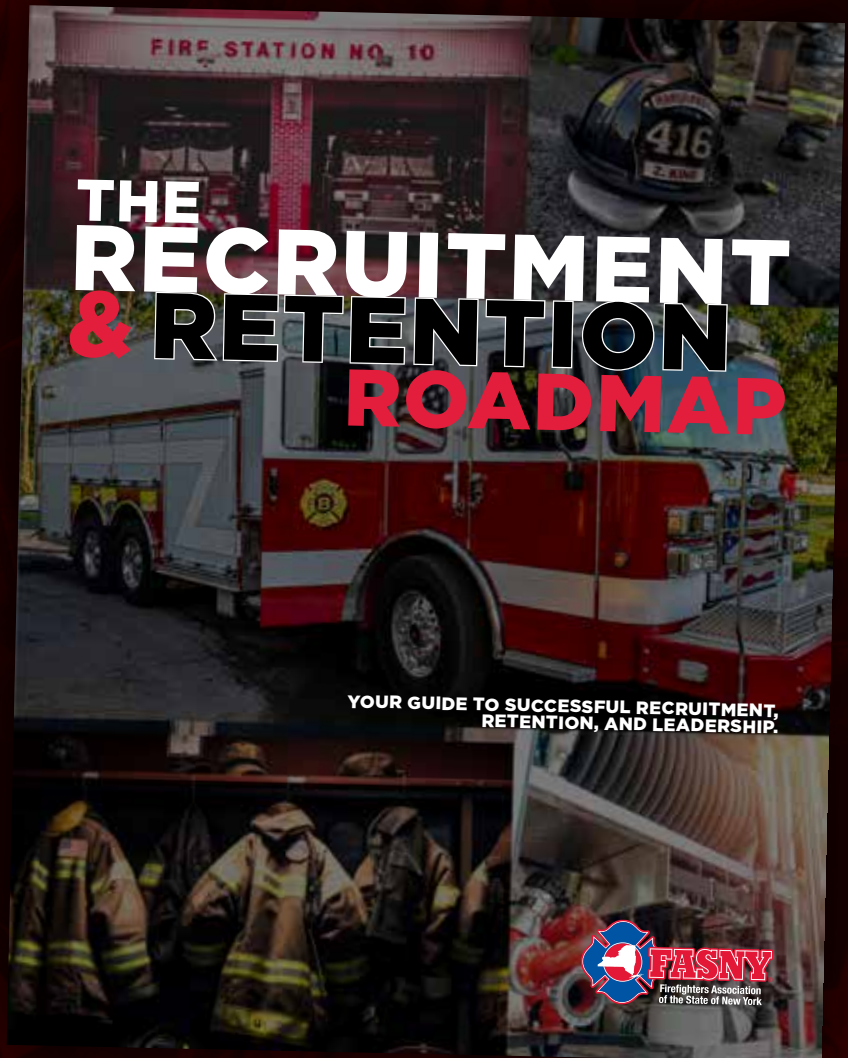
Build a Stronger Crew. Starting Today.

Volunteer fire departments are the backbone of New York, but recruiting and retaining members has become increasingly difficult.

The FASNY Recruitment & Retention Roadmap gives you the tools to change that.

With proven strategies and ready-to-use marketing assets, this digital kit helps you recruit smarter, retain more volunteers, and strengthen your department.

You've got the print version. Now get the full toolkit online and put it to work immediately!



Download the
full Roadmap



Stronger crew. Stronger community.

MAMARONECK Student Firefighters Take *Tax Credit Advocacy* *to Albany*



By Jill Behrmann, Vice President, Albany Strategic Advisors

For eight Mamaroneck High School students, a recent trip to Albany was more than a class assignment – it was an opportunity to help shape legislation they believe will strengthen the future of New York's volunteer fire service.

On May 27 Dylan Studdert, Dylan Barnard, Jared Barrios, Daniel Darby, Jonah Latzman, Chris Lemus, Elsy O'Connor and Liam Studdert traveled to the State Capitol as part of Mamaroneck Public Schools' Civics Class elective. The students, most of whom are active Junior volunteer firefighters participating in Explorer programs, spent the day

advocating for legislation that would expand tax incentives for volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel.

Their focus was S6233-A, sponsored by Sen. Monica R. Martinez, and A6790-A, sponsored by Assemblymember Karen McMahon, language that has been a longtime legislative priority of FASNY. The measure would increase the volunteer firefighter and EMS worker income tax credit and eliminate a restriction that currently prevents volunteers from receiving both the state tax credit and local property tax exemptions. In their class the students proactively identified an issue they had noticed in their own time volunteering – there

is a need for more kids like them, and perhaps better incentivizing could lead to more recruits. They identified this legislation on their own as a practical solution, and have been working on it ever since.

Throughout the day the students met with lawmakers and legislative staff, including Senate Deputy Majority Leader Mike Gianaris and Assemblymember Steve Otis, who represents Mamaroneck. They also spent time with Sens. Jamaal Bailey,



April Baskin, Jose Serrano, Jessica Scarcella-Spanton, James Skoufis, Joe Addabbo, Brian Kavanagh, Shelley Mayer and Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins' team, with whom they shared their lived experiences as young volunteers and explained why stronger recruitment and retention incentives are critical for local fire departments.

According to Joseph Liberti, Founder and Director of Original Civic

Research & Action at Mamaroneck High School, the students quickly found their footing as advocates.

"While students developed an agenda for the meetings ahead of time, they were understandably very nervous during their first meeting," explained Liberti. "However, the students became much more confident about advocating with each subsequent meeting. By the end they were very excited to have played a part in the larger push for meaningful legislation."

The students' visit came at a pivotal moment in the legislative process. Earlier in the month, the Assembly passed this bill for the first time. The momentum could be felt during their visit, and five days after their trip to Albany, the Senate passed the bill, joining the Assembly in approving the measure. The bill now waits to be called up for the Governor's action before the end of the calendar year.

If signed into law, the bill would quadruple the existing tax credit, increasing it to \$800 for individual filers and \$1,600 for joint filers. It would also allow active volunteers to claim both the expanded state income tax credit and local property tax exemptions, thereby ending the "either-or" requirement.



A photograph of four men standing in a grand hall with red seating. From left to right: a young man in a grey blazer, a man in a blue suit and yellow tie, a young man in a dark blazer, and a young man in a dark blue VMFD uniform. They are all smiling and standing behind a wooden railing. The background features ornate architecture with red seats and columns.

adults," Liberti said. "When students experience senators and staffers taking them seriously, it increases their sense of efficacy. The students began to understand they can play a role in the legislative process. They see how their data-driven arguments and personal narratives can create momentum, which is something that students cannot get from a worksheet, textbook, or video."

He added that the students' advocacy reflects a broader commitment to public service.

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Deadlines to Apply

Spring Semester - March 15

Fall Semester - October 15



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PRIORITIES



PERSONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY FOR FIREFIGHTER HEALTH

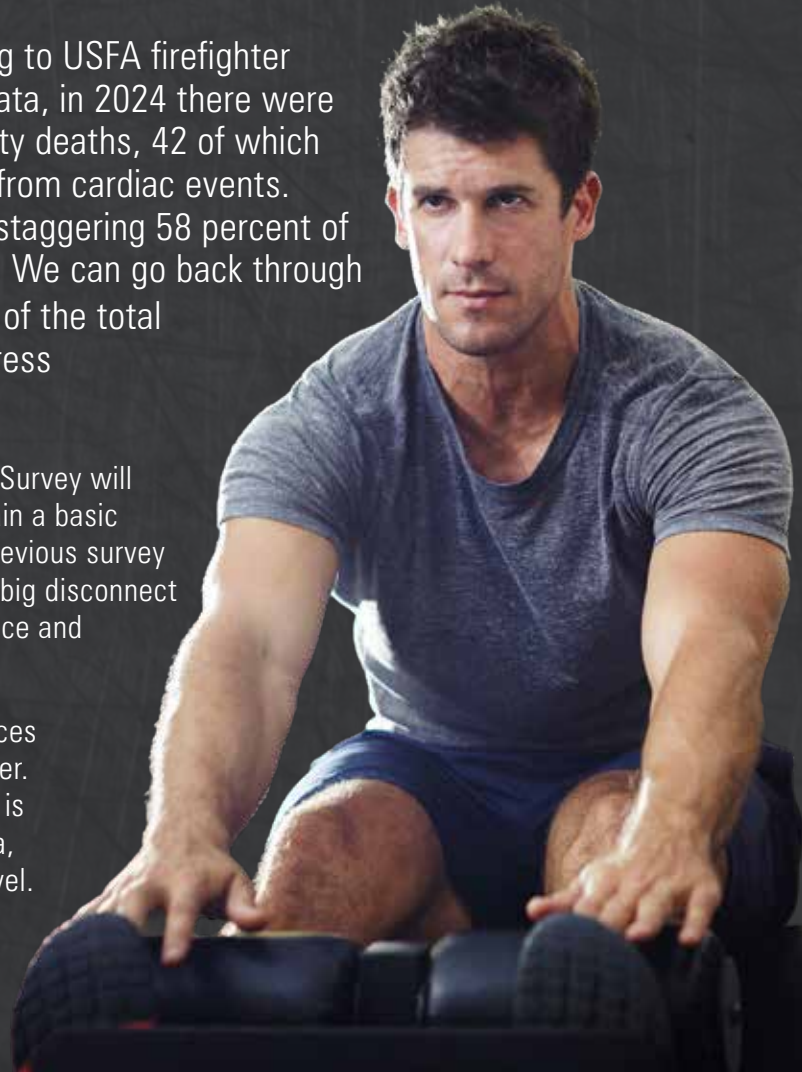
Dan Kerrigan is a 37-year fire service veteran serving in capacities from firefighter through Fire Chief. He is co-author of *Firefighter Functional Fitness: The Essential Guide to Optimal Firefighter Performance and Longevity*, and serves on the IAFC Safety Health and Survival Board of Directors and the First Responder Center for Excellence Health and Fitness Advisory Committee. He is a certified Fit to Thrive (Peer Fitness) Trainer, certified Group Fitness Instructor, and an international speaker, panelist, and presenter on a wide range of responder health and wellness topics. He can be reached at Dankerrigan911@gmail.com.

According to USFA firefighter fatality data, in 2024 there were 72 on-duty deaths, 42 of which resulted from cardiac events. That's a staggering 58 percent of the total! We can go back through

previous data and see that each year, regardless of the total number of on-duty deaths, the leading killer is stress and overexertion.

The soon to be published NFPA 2025 Needs Assessment Survey will show that only 32 percent of departments have or maintain a basic health and wellness program. While this is up from the previous survey in 2020 (27 percent), I think you will agree there is still a big disconnect between acknowledging the health issues in the fire service and acting on them.

We all know that in the fire service, there are circumstances we cannot control. It is part of the risk of being a firefighter. But our own health is something we can control, and this is where we can have a positive impact not only on the data, but more importantly, on a personal and organizational level.



Fitness and health are important for everyone, but as a firefighter, the risks are amplified. It should be everyone's goal to improve performance, reduce the risk of injury, and perhaps most importantly, have not only a long fire service career but also a long and healthy retirement.

Let's consider apparatus and equipment preventive maintenance programs. Why has the fire service put these programs in place for decades, and how can we use this model to justify taking care of our most important assets – our people?

1. Proactive vs. Reactive

Emergency repairs are often much more costly than addressing issues when they are small. Implementing health and wellness programs reduces the costs associated with treating major injuries and illnesses by diagnosing them early, often saving lives as well.

2. Lifespan

Our equipment, when cared for properly, will last longer. When it comes to health and wellness, the same concept holds true. The more attention we place on our own personal health and the health of the crews will serve to increase longevity and reduce the chances of serious injury.

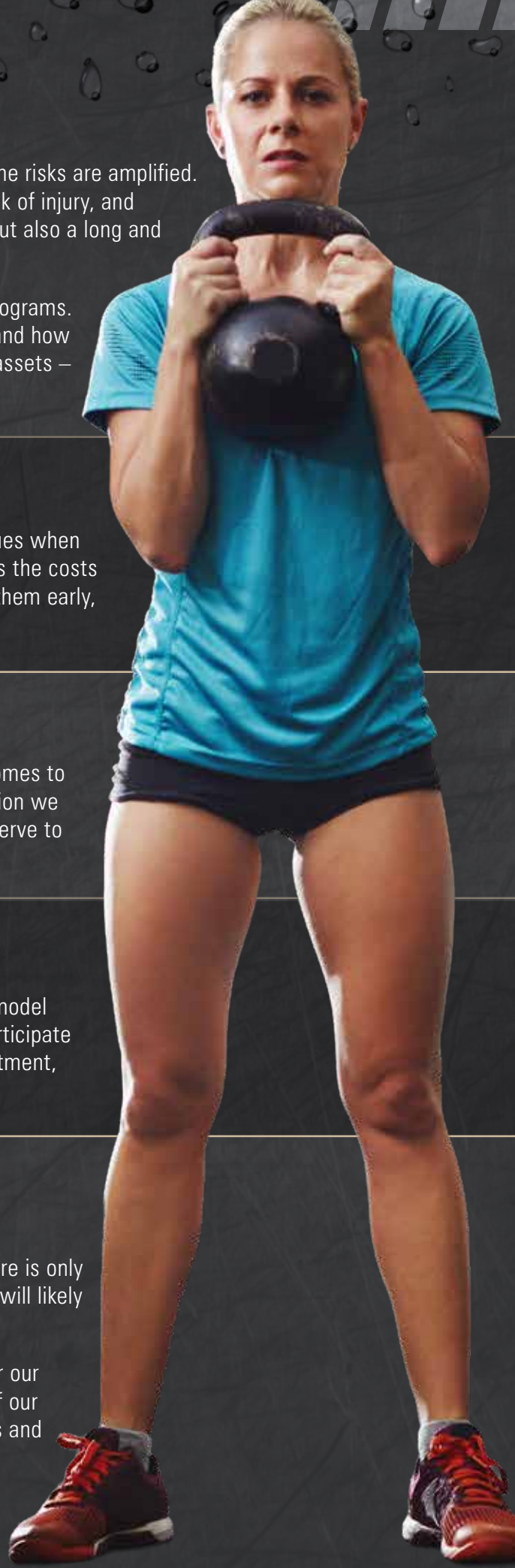
3. Productivity

Preventive maintenance programs reduce downtime. Applying the model to our own people will help reduce lost time and the inability to participate in response-related activities, which impacts everyone in the department, especially from a safety standpoint.

4. Insurance Costs

Implementing health and wellness programs can reduce the cost of insurance premiums by creating a lower risk profile. Remember, there is only so much money in the budget. If the cost of insurance increases, it will likely result in less funding in other areas.

It's time we started prioritizing our own people as we have done for our apparatus and equipment. The sooner we start taking better care of our people, the sooner we will see a true reduction in firefighter injuries and fatalities from circumstances we can control.



VOLUNTEERS ACTION

Got action-packed photos of your department? Share them with rueckert@fasny.com for a chance to be featured! Photos should be 500K-1MB for optimal print quality. Include a brief caption with action details, location, date, and name of photographer.

JEFF BELSCHWINDER | SIDEWINDER PHOTOGRAPHY

The Menands Fire Department suffered a devastating station fire on May 24, after a fire apparatus caught fire inside an engine bay. Firefighters from Menands, Shaker Road, Latham, Watervliet Arsenal, Boght Community, West Albany, Colonie EMS, local police, and the Town of Colonie, responded to battle the blaze. The fire caused millions of dollars in damage and left the department without much of its apparatus and equipment.



ALDEN HOOK & LADDER COMPANY

On June 21, the Alden Fire Department Water Rescue Team assisted the North Java Fire Company at Java Lake during a search for a missing boater. Alden crews deployed rescue boat and dive resources, working alongside multiple fire, EMS, law enforcement, and specialized water rescue agencies.



CHEMUNG COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE DRONE TEAM

On May 25, the Chemung County River Task Force was activated after two people were reported in the water. Volunteer firefighters from the Wellsburg and Chemung fire departments responded to the incident. One person reached shore independently, and a second was rescued from an island. The response was supported by Chemung County Fire Coordinators and the Chemung County Sheriff's Office.



DAVID MORALES | GETZVILLE FIRE COMPANY

On April 20, the Getzville Fire Company hosted its annual "GRIT" Rapid Intervention Training weekend. The event brought together volunteer and career firefighters from across Western New York and beyond for two days of intensive, real-world rescue scenarios focused on saving lost, injured, or trapped firefighters.

REBECCA SMITH | VESTAL FIRE DEPARTMENT

Members of the Vestal Fire Department recently welcomed an elementary school class to Vestal Station 3 for a field trip featuring fire safety education, a station tour, and participation in hands-on drills.



youth focus



BRETT & BRADLEY Jacobs

BY BOB SCHALIT

BRETT AND BRADLEY JACOBS ARE BROTHERS FROM ONEONTA. BUT THEIR BOND GOES WELL BEYOND BIOLOGY. BECAUSE BOTH ARE PASSIONATE, DEEPLY COMMITTED MEMBERS OF THE BROTHERHOOD AND SISTERHOOD OF THE VOLUNTEER FIRE SERVICE.



Brett is a member of Pindars Corners VFD and a bunk-in firefighter/EMT with the North Syracuse Fire Department.

He just completed his freshman year at Onondaga Community College, where he is pursuing an associate degree in fire protection technology, and plans to become a career firefighter.

Brett heard about the bunk-in program in Onondaga County from a friend. He was originally enrolled to attend SUNY Plattsburgh but quickly unenrolled from there and started at Onondaga Community College instead.

"I REACHED OUT TO A FEW FIREHOUSES ABOUT THEIR BUNK-IN PROGRAMS, AND NORTH SYRACUSE WAS THE QUICKEST TO GET BACK TO ME. THEY PROVIDED ME WITH A BED, FULL KITCHEN, LAUNDRY, GAMING ROOM AND GYM AT NO COST. IT'S A GREAT PROGRAM AND REALLY HELPS YOU GROW YOUR SKILLS IN THE FIRE SERVICE."

Before coming to North Syracuse, Brett only had his Basic Exterior Firefighting Operations (BEFO) state certification, but the professors and instructors

helped him earn his Firefighter I and II, Hazmat Awareness and Operations, and EMT-B.

"ASIDE FROM MY CERTIFICATIONS, I RECEIVED A TON OF VALUABLE TRAINING FROM THE EXPERIENCED FIREFIGHTERS WHO TAUGHT OUR CLASSES AND SHARED THEIR TRICKS OF THE TRADE."

When Brett was a boy, fighting fires wasn't exactly something he envisioned in his future.

"I ALWAYS THOUGHT BEING A FIREFIGHTER WAS SCARY WHEN I WAS YOUNG. BUT AS MY BROTHER GOT INVOLVED IN THE VOLUNTEER FIRE SERVICE, IT BEGAN TO PIQUE MY INTEREST,"



HE SAID. "SO WHEN I TURNED 16, I JOINED PINDARS CORNERS AS A JUNIOR. FROM THERE I NEVER TURNED BACK, AND NOW I'M DIVING DEEPER INTO THAT CAREER PATH."

An experience he is extremely proud of is one of the many suicide attempt calls he had during his first semester at college.

"THE COUNTY RECEIVED A CALL FOR A MAN WHO HAD ATTEMPTED TO KILL HIMSELF WITH A SHOTGUN," HE EXPLAINED. "HE WAS ON THE FARTHEST END OF OUR DISTRICT, AND THE NEAREST AMBULANCE WAS MILES OUT. LUCKILY, WE HAD AN AMAZING CREW AND A VERY EXPERIENCED PARAMEDIC WHO SAVED THIS MAN'S LIFE. FOR OUR EFFORTS, ALL OF US RECEIVED AN EMS AWARD."

Brett said volunteering is fun and interesting and makes him think strategically.

"BUT THE PRIMARY REASON I VOLUNTEER IS BECAUSE OF THE FEELINGS IT BRINGS YOU AND WHAT IT MEANS TO OTHERS," HE SAID. "I CAN'T DESCRIBE HOW GOOD IT FEELS TO BE THE PILLAR FOR SOMEONE DURING THEIR WORST TIMES."

"THE FIREFIGHTING BROTHERHOOD AND CULTURE IS ONE OF THE THINGS I ALWAYS TELL FRIENDS AND FAMILY ABOUT," HE EXPLAINED. "THE CAMARADERIE AND SUPPORT FROM ONE ANOTHER ARE SOMETHING WORDS CAN'T DESCRIBE."

Older brother Bradley Jacobs is a member of the West Oneonta Volunteer Fire Department and a mutual aid member of the Pindars Corners VFD.

He recently graduated from the State University of New York Oswego, where he majored in meteorology and minored in mathematics, and plans to pursue a career in meteorology.

At SUNY Bradley served as a broadcast meteorologist with the college's radio and television stations. He was also a member of Oswego

State Singers and the school's meteorology club and worked as a line cook at Rudy's Lakeside Drive-In and a manager at McDonald's.

When he's not off chasing storms or fighting fires, he enjoys fishing, camping, hiking, sports, and collecting sports trading cards.

"I FIRST GOT ACTIVE WITH THE WEST ONEONTA VFD BEGINNING IN THE SPRING OF 2019," HE SAID. "I'VE ALWAYS HAD AN INTEREST IN FIREFIGHTING, BUT WHEN I FOUND OUT THAT MOST OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENTS IN THE U.S. WERE VOLUNTEER BASED, IT GAVE ME MORE MOTIVATION TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER MYSELF."

"GIVING BACK AND SERVING MY COMMUNITY IS A MAJOR PASSION OF MINE, BUT HAVING FUN AND A BROTHERHOOD BEHIND YOU WITH SIMILAR INTERESTS GIVES IT A WHOLE OTHER MEANING, TOO," HE CONTINUED.

One of Bradley's most memorable experiences was on the scene of a structure fire, one of his first fires after completing his BEFO training.

"FLAMES WERE COMING OUT FROM ONE OF THE WINDOWS. AT THAT TIME, THE THOUGHT OF ADJUSTING THE NOZZLE TO THE 'FOG' SETTING CAME TO MIND," HE EXPLAINED. "I WANTED TO USE PHYSICS TO MY ADVANTAGE, AND ONCE I HAD ADJUSTED THE NOZZLE, IT BEGAN PULLING HEAT AND FLAMES OUT OF THE WINDOW AND STRUCTURE, AND IT ALLOWED FOR COOLER AIR AND WATER TO FILL THE HOT ROOM."

Bradley said his primary motivation for volunteering is the opportunity to help people during some of the roughest times in their lives.



"IT ALSO BRINGS A SENSE OF COMMUNITY, OF COMING TOGETHER," HE SAID. "BEING ABLE TO PROVIDE THIS SERVICE BRINGS A LOT OF JOY TO ME, ASIDE FROM HAVING FUN WITH LEARNING ALL THE SKILLS AND OTHER EVENTS AND SERVICES WE RUN."

He also said he values the knowledge and experience gained from each call, and the importance of building good, positive relationships and connections in the communities he serves.

"IN MY YEARS IN THE SERVICE, I HAVE MADE PHENOMENAL CONNECTIONS WITH MANY BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN OUR FIELD," HE CONCLUDED. "IT'S ALWAYS BEEN VERY WELCOMING WHEREVER I HAVE SERVED SO FAR. MAKING THESE CONNECTIONS AND BUILDING NEW FRIENDSHIPS HAVE IMPACTED MY LIFE IN MANY POSITIVE WAYS."





The crew from the May 21, 2026, 29-acre prescribed burn at Big Bend Preserve, part of Moreau Lake State Park. Museum Educator Kathy Slade is pictured third from right in the front row.

Museum Educator Kathy Slade was named a 2026 Smokey Bear Award recipient for her work in wildfire prevention education. She teaches museum visitors about fire safety and volunteers as a wildland firefighter in New York.



MUSEUM EDUCATOR RECOGNIZED NATIONALLY FOR WILDFIRE PREVENTION EFFORTS

BY JAMIE SMITH QUINN,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Museum Educator Kathy Slade of the FASNY Museum of Firefighting has received the 2026 Smokey Bear Award for her outstanding contributions to wildfire prevention.

The Smokey Bear Awards honor those making a significant, lasting impact in wildfire prevention. This year five individuals and four teams achieved national recognition for their fire prevention work in their communities.

"Wildfire prevention saves millions of dollars in suppression costs each year while helping save lives and property," said Mark Goeller, NASF Vice President of Fire Programs. "This year's Smokey Bear Award



NYS DEC Forest Ranger Steve Jackson speaks with a group of Scouts about his experiences fighting wildfires and preventing human-caused fires in New York state. This program was part of the museum's partnership with Scouting America.

Forest Rangers interact with families and share tips on how to reduce the risks of human-caused wildfires here in New York state. Also, through the museum's partnership with DEC Forest Rangers, Smokey Bear, the big man himself, visits the museum and shares his wildfire safety messages with the community.

winners have implemented meaningful wildfire prevention that has reduced and will continue to reduce wildfire impacts at the state, regional, and national levels."

"This year's Smokey Bear Award recipients have demonstrated exceptional dedication to wildfire prevention," added Michelle Hillman, Ad Council Chief Campaign Development Officer. "Their efforts embody Smokey Bear's spirit and enduring message, making a meaningful impact in their communities and across the country. We're honored to recognize them and their contributions."

Slade is a certified wildland firefighter and has incorporated her passion for

wildfire prevention into the educational programs at the FASNY Museum of Firefighting. Now students, teachers, and parents who visit the museum for in-person or virtual field trips are taught not only at-home fire safety and prevention but also wildfire safety and prevention. She uses props, such as a giant marshmallow on a stick and an inflatable campfire, to teach students and adults how to properly extinguish a campfire. Slade, in her always entertaining style, shows them how to "Drown it, stir it, drown it, feel it," just like Smokey Bear.

Slade has also fostered several community partnerships that have promoted wildfire safety in the Hudson Valley and beyond. One partnership she has cultivated is with New York

Another community partnership Slade has helped forge is with Scouting America. Every February the museum hosts a Fire Safety Merit Badge Day. This event allows scouts from across the region to fulfill all the requirements for their Fire Safety merit badge, including



As part of the museum's wildfire education efforts, new interpretive panels have been added to several pieces of apparatus. This panel describes Indian Tanks – portable 5-gallon backpack pumps used to help suppress wildfires in remote areas.

State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Forest Rangers. The DEC Forest Rangers have brought their frontline wildfire expertise to many of the museum's programs, such as Big Truck Day, Smokey Bear Day, and Dalmatian Day.



Lt. John Gullen poses with Smokey Bear during a Super Saturday event at the museum. "Smokey Bear and His Wildlife Friends" celebrates wildfire prevention and highlights Smokey's woodland companions.



Kathy Slade poses with her brother, NYS DEC Forest Ranger Lt. Kevin Slade, after their first prescribed burn together at Big Bend Preserve in Moreau. The wildfire community, like the volunteer firefighting community, is rooted in family and shared service.

campfire safety and learning about human-caused wildfires. The badge is completed through stations throughout the museum, covering campfire safety, wildfire causes and fire service tools.

One of the stations is presented by a Forest Ranger, who provides frontline wildfire expertise and presents the wildfire portion of the badge. Scouts enjoy learning about wildfires and how to prevent human-caused wildfires from a first responder with experience fighting wildfires. Another station is run by another of the museum's community partners, the Greenport Fire Department. Captain Casey Simmons of Greenport Pumper #1 brings an engine to the museum and talks with scouts about the fire service and walks them through all the tools and equipment on the engine. The museum hosted its fifth

Fire Safety Merit Badge Day on Feb. 17, 2026.

"Kathy is a Museum Educator at the Firefighters Association of the State of New York (FASNY) Museum of Firefighting who went above and beyond to incorporate wildfire prevention programming and educate the next generation of firefighters and wildfire prevention professionals," said the National Association of State Foresters in a statement. "She developed partnerships with the New York Department of Environmental Conservation Rangers and

Scouting America to ensure information is accurate and creatively engage youth visitors. Kathy even became a certified Wildland Firefighter Type II and conducted prescribed burns!"

Slade's expertise in wildfire prevention was also highlighted on a recent PBS special, *Rolling Thru*. In episode 7, "A Changing Landscape in the Hudson Valley," host Pat Kelly visits the museum and talks with her about wildfires in New York state. Molly the Museum

Dog also makes an appearance in the episode and charms the host with her cuteness. The episode is currently on the PBS website at tinyurl.com/y2nnsba5

Slade is not the only person with a growing interest in wildfires. The museum receives visitors from across the country and around the world, many of whom have been affected by wildfires in their own communities. To spark awareness about wildfires here in New York, the museum team is currently creating a new wildfire exhibit. The museum's new wildfire exhibit will discuss the tools, equipment, and resources used to fight and prevent wildfires. Most wildfires in the Empire State are human caused by the illegal burning of debris or improperly extinguished campfires. The exhibit will feature an interactive area where kids and adults can learn Smokey Bear's method for building and extinguishing campfires. The exhibit will also feature several brush trucks visitors can go in and explore, as well as helmets and gear to try on. Stop in and see this new exhibit as it evolves over the summer and be sure to stop in the museum's gift shop to get some Smokey Bear swag of your own.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE AWARD AND READ THE PRESS RELEASE, VISIT [TINYURL.COM/58MXFXRM](https://tinyurl.com/58MXFXRM)



The museum team is developing a new interactive wildfire exhibit. It currently features two Discovery Brush Trucks for families to explore, along with a display of vintage Smokey Bear artifacts.

FASNY Firefighter's Home

Residents' Birthdays

The following residents of the Firefighter's Home celebrate their birthdays in the months of July, August and September. Please feel free to send cards or happy birthday wishes. These brighten up their day and always put a smile on their faces.

JULY

- 2 Edgar J. Brennen III, Sleepy Hollow Volunteer Fire Company
- 5 Linda J. Relyea, Pleasant Valley Fire Company No. 1
- 6 James A. Brahm, Niverville Fire Department
- 9 Mildred B. Oram, Clermont Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary
- 10 George W. King, Jr., Fort Hunter Engine And Hose Co. Inc.
- 10 Thomas M. Moore, Phoenix Hose Co.#5,
Hudson Fire Department
- 10 Nancy Weaver, A.B. Shaw Ladies Auxiliary
- 17 David L. Curran, Cranesville Fire District
- 18 Joyce A. Falcone, Blenheim Hose Company Ladies Auxiliary
- 24 Carol Vollmer, Catskill Amosborn Hose Co #2
- 26 Marian C. Pesce, Churchtown Fire Company Ladies Auxiliary
- 29 Wayne M. Price, Forestburgh Fire Company #1

AUGUST

- 2 Frederick L. Bauckham, Ardsley Fire Department
- 6 Ellen C. Groll, Greenport Fire District Auxiliary
- 7 Franklin D. Shufelt, Becraft Pumper Company No. 2
- 10 Robert Vollmer, Leeds Hose Company #1 Inc.
- 21 Louise K. Kehr, Round Top Voln. Fire Company Ladies Auxiliary
- 21 Jason D. Wheatley, Verdoy Volunteer Fire Department
- 31 Russell Wheeler, New Lebanon Valley Protective Association

SEPTEMBER

- 6 Manuel H. Fonseca-Flores, Mellor Engine
& Hose Co. No. 3, Port Chester
- 10 Robert J. Salmon, Mechanicville Fire Department
- 11 Joseph J. Abiuso Jr., Woodmere Fire Department
- 15 William Lee Sr., Hopewell Hose Fire Co.
- 24 Margaret Fischer, Redrock Volunteer Fire Company
- 25 Francis Gallagher Jr., Rescue Hose Fire Co., Sleepy Hollow

STRENGTH TO SERVE CHALLENGE



Do You Have What it Takes?

OBSTACLE COURSE INSPIRED BY FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING ♦ ALL ARE WELCOME ♦ RUN. CLIMB. CARRY. CONQUER

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2026**

**FAYETTEVILLE
NEW YORK**

**GREEN LAKES
STATE PARK**


 Scan here

By Colleen Simo



INAUGURAL FIREFIGHTER'S HOME CAR SHOW DEFIES THE WEATHER AND DELIVERS A STRONG FIRST-YEAR SUCCESS

Sat., May 30 began with 40-mile-per-hour winds, periods of rain, and a chill that seemed to go right through you. The skies remained overcast throughout the morning, creating conditions that were far from ideal for the first-ever Firefighter's Home Car Show. For an event organizers hoped would become an annual tradition, the weather forecast was enough to make anyone nervous.

In fact, much of the week leading up to the show was spent discussing whether it would be wiser to cancel and reschedule or move forward despite the forecast. Event organizers carefully weighed the options, knowing months of planning had gone into the show and participants would be traveling from throughout the region to attend.

Ultimately, the decision was made to move forward. After all, a determined group of retired firefighters is not easily discouraged by a little rain and wind. The event's primary partner, Michael Kilmer – better known throughout the car show community as “Camaro Mike” – shared that determination and was fully committed to making the show a success.

For those who have never organized or participated in a car show, the amount of preparation required can be surprising. Long before the first vehicle arrives, organizers must coordinate registration, judging, awards, vendors, food service, parking, promotion, and countless logistical details. Most successful car shows begin planning many months in advance and are often placed on annual event calendars well before the start of the season.

The Firefighter's Home Car Show Committee began its work in January, which meant organizers were entering the planning process later than many established shows. Once an event is announced, information spreads quickly through Facebook groups, specialty car show websites, local newspapers, social media pages, and in our case, the amazing FASNY family community. Building awareness and attracting participants takes time, making the committee's accomplishment even more impressive.

The idea for the event originated in a conversation between former Trustee President Marilyn Schrader and Resident Council President Robert Gillman before the Memorial Service in May 2025. What began as a simple discussion continued to gain momentum throughout the following months. By December the Resident Council formally requested approval from the trustees to create a new annual event. With that approval, planning officially began for what would become the inaugural Firefighter's Home Car Show.

Resident Council President Robert Gillman and Council First Vice President Carl Avery stepped forward to lead the committee, bringing together residents, staff, trustees, and volunteers who shared a common goal: creating an event that would showcase the Home, engage the community, and provide a memorable experience for participants and visitors alike.

One of the most important developments came when Directors Howard Montague and Victoria Ozga connected

the committee with Michael Kilmer. Known throughout the Hudson Valley car show circuit as Camaro Mike, Kilmer brought years of experience and an extensive network of car show contacts.

When Mike attended his first committee meeting, he arrived with ideas, recommendations, and a proven process for organizing successful events. From trophies and judging criteria to marketing and event promotion, he helped guide the committee through every stage of planning. Leveraging his connections within the regional car show community, he promoted the event through numerous channels and designed flyers and banners that were in place by early spring.

Although the committee was working within a compressed timeline, Mike's expertise helped transform an ambitious idea into a well-organized event that attracted participants from across New York and beyond.

Despite the unfavorable weather, the turnout exceeded expectations. The event welcomed 82 entries, including 78 classic and specialty vehicles, three fire trucks, two ambulances, and three motorcycles. The variety of vehicles provided something for everyone and reflected the strong support the show received from both automotive enthusiasts and members of the fire service community.

Participants traveled significant distances to attend. One volunteer firefighter came all the way from Vermont and expressed how impressed he was not only with the show itself but also with the Firefighter's Home and its beautiful campus. Comments like these reinforced the event's value as both a community gathering and an opportunity to introduce new visitors to the Home.

The success of the show was made possible through the support of many volunteers and community partners. Although organizers were unable to secure sponsorships from local automobile dealerships for our first year, numerous individuals and organizations stepped forward to help. Support came from members of the Civil Air Patrol; local resident and Stuyvesant Fire Chief Steve Montie, who served as the event DJ; Big Top Portable Toilets; the Greene and Columbia County Fire Police; Frank Roberts, Sr., who handled the 50/50 raffle ticket sales; and dedicated members of the Home's staff.

Several vendors also contributed to the atmosphere and success of the event. Food trucks proved especially popular, with Smile's Ice Cream and Mamma Jean's Food



Truck serving attendees throughout the day. Auto Gods attracted considerable interest with its selection of T-shirts, mugs, and firefighter-themed memorabilia on sale.

At the conclusion of the event, the sun came out and judges presented 20 trophies and 10 championship-style rings, like those awarded to professional sports champions, recognizing outstanding vehicles and their owners. Special awards were also presented to honor Marilyn Schrader and Keith Henchey. Keith also served as the event's Master of Ceremonies and helped keep the day running smoothly.

Beyond the awards and recognition, the event achieved an important financial goal. Net proceeds from the show will enable the Resident Council to continue supporting programs and activities that recognize staff members, celebrate members and their families, enhance the sense of community, and create a sense of purpose for our members that makes the Firefighter's Home such a special place.

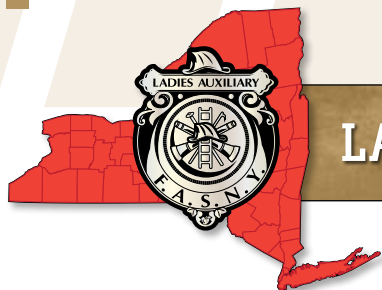
Most importantly, the inaugural Firefighter's Home Car Show demonstrated what can be accomplished through collaboration, perseverance, and community spirit. Faced with challenging weather and a limited planning window, organizers delivered an event that exceeded expectations and laid the foundation for future success.

Planning for the 2027 Firefighter's Home Car Show is already underway. With additional time to prepare, organizers are looking forward to expanding the event, attracting even more participants and vendors, and building on the momentum created this year.

The committee is also hoping for a little more cooperation from Mother Nature. Mark your calendar now! The 2027 Firefighter's Home Car Show is scheduled for June 26, 2027, with June 27 designated as the rain date. If this year's inaugural event is any indication, the future of the Firefighter's Home Car Show is bright!



SECTIONALS



LAFASNY

BARBARA STONE
fiveriders@optonline.net

The LAFASNY officers are looking forward to seeing all of you at our 78th Annual Convention at the Holiday Valley Conference Resort, The Inn at Holiday Valley in Ellicottville. The Convention will be held Aug. 19-23. The Convention is a great place to reacquaint ourselves with old friends and make new ones. The annual joint Memorial Service for FASNY and LAFASNY will take place Thurs., Aug. 20 at 10 a.m. LAFASNY will start its meeting at 8:30 a.m. and then the auxiliary will attend the Memorial Service. The installation of the newly elected LAFASNY officers will be on Friday evening at 5 p.m. Refer to the LAFASNY Convention mailing or the FASNY website for more information. If you have any questions, contact Jean Christensen at fdaux@aol.com. To avoid standing in line at Convention, mail your dues to Financial Secretary Karen McDonald at 3 Andrews Road, Apt. 11, Troy, N.Y. 12180.

LAFASNY 2026 CONVENTION SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

WED., AUG. 19

9 a.m. Executive Board Meeting and Audit
2-5 p.m. Registration and Dues - Ways and Means

THURS., AUG. 20

7:30-8:15 a.m. Registration and Dues
8:30 a.m. 78th LAFASNY Convention Called to Order
10 a.m. FASNY/LAFASNY Joint Memorial Service
12 p.m. Luncheon
1:30 p.m. Convention Meeting Reconvened

FRI., AUG. 21

9:30 a.m. Convention Meeting Reconvened
5 p.m. Installation of LAFASNY Officers

SAT., AUG. 22

9 a.m. Executive Board Meeting

The Birthday Ladies have been busy at the Firefighters' Home. At the April Birthday gathering, the theme was horse racing. In the picture above, you see our members manning the races as the residents await their horse to cross the finish line. This is a favorite at the Home.



NEWS AROUND THE STATE:

ALBANY COUNTY

The Menands Fire Company Auxiliary's newly elected President Joyce McGovern-Miller received the President's Service Award for her many years of service to the fire company. Congratulations to the Menands Fire Auxiliary 2026-27 officers. President Joyce McGovern Miller, Vice President Kerry Hyatt Wroblewski, Secretary Valecia Parker, Treasurer Lisa Neuman, Sergeant-at-Arms Kevin Schwebke, Chaplain Susan Handerhan, Trustee 3-Year Lisa Proskin Pierce, Trustee 2-Year Kerry Franklin, Trustee 1-Year Mary Miles.

On April 18 Past President Karen McDonald had the honor of attending The Shaker Road Loudonville Ladies Auxiliary Life Membership Dinner. Karen presented Marylou Hoefer a certificate for her 75 years of service to the auxiliary.



CORTLAND COUNTY

On April 27 Florence Stanton, President of the Ladies Auxiliary of Central New York Firefighters Association, installed the new officers of the Cortland County Ladies Auxiliary. President Gina Norse, Vice President Donna Raymond, Treasurer Nancy Parkhurst, and Secretary Rich Carpenter. On May 1 President Florence attended the installation of the Madison County Firemen and Ladies Auxiliary in Canastota. The Central Ladies Auxiliary met at the Lafayette Firehouse on June 20 and presented three 80-year certificates as well as a replica of a 1940 pumper truck.

NASSAU COUNTY

The Ladies Auxiliary to the Wantagh Fire Department held a Breakfast for our Bravest on



May 3. This event was in honor of all the members of the fire department for their dedication and service to their community. The ladies served the members pancakes with bacon and wonderfully tasty desserts. It was a huge success and the department greatly appreciated being honored and thanked for their volunteer service. The ladies are looking forward to having a breakfast again next year.

PUTNAM COUNTY

The Brewster Fire Department held its annual Installation Dinner on March 27 at Villa Barone Hilltop Manor in Mahopac. The members of the Ladies Auxiliary, who play an important part in the fire department, took their oath of office. Newly installed officers were Eleanor Merrill, President; Mary Pasquarelli, Vice President; Sheri King, Secretary; and Karen Smith, Treasurer. Eleanor Merrill has been leading these ladies proudly for 10 years.

Then on April 25, the Carmel Fire Department and Auxiliary held its annual Installation Dinner. The following Carmel Fire Department Auxiliary officers were installed by Honorary Chief, Doctor Michael J Nesheiwat: Alicia Madden-Canfield, President; Dori Venezia, Vice President; Heidi Wheelock, Secretary; Gina-Marie Pacicca, Treasurer; Carol Madden, Director; and, Louise Roberts, Director.

SOUTHERN NEW YORK LADIES AUXILIARY

The Southern New York Ladies Auxiliary held its Annual Convention on Wed., May 27 at the West Sayville Fire



House. The newly elected officers were installed by Southern NYVFA President Frank Guarino. At left are the newly elected officers (L to R): 2nd Vice President, Marybeth Asbell; 1st Vice President, Mary Catherine Dolan; Secretary, Joan Gunther; President, Jean Christensen; Treasurer, B.J. Gilmor; and Financial Secretary, Ruth Ivarson.

SUFFOLK COUNTY

On Wed., May 13, the Suffolk County Ladies held its Installation/Awards Dinner at the Holbrook Fire House.



The new officers for the '26/'27 year are President, Marybeth Asbell; Vice President, Jean Christensen;

Recording Secretary, Doreene DeRuiter; Corresponding Secretary, Lori Zatorski; and Treasurer, AnnMarie St. John. Directors are Marilyn Galletto, Nancy Lopiccolo, Mary Edsell, Linda Garnett and Ellen Komonsinski. A tribute of thanks was given to outgoing President Doreene DeRuiter for all her dedication to their auxiliary.

Past President Doreene DeRuiter (left) presented the



President's Award this year to Linda Garnett of the East Islip Ladies Auxiliary. Linda is always willing to step in whenever needed. She was thanked for all her hard work and dedication to their organization. Two members achieved 50 years of service. At the dinner Shirley Iwasiuk of the West Islip FD Ladies

Auxiliary was honored. Marilyn Galletto of Islip will be honored later. Congratulations and sincere thanks to Shirley and Marilyn for your service to the organization.

The Riverhead Fire Department held its annual Memorial



Service on Sun., May 3 for their deceased firefighters and ladies auxiliary members. Auxiliary members remembered were Marie Madigan and Joan Fleischman. At the May 13 ladies auxiliary meeting, Diane Densieski was sworn in as Sergeant-at-Arms by Third Assistant Chief Baycan Fideli.

WARREN COUNTY

On April 11 the President of the Ladies Aux. Hudson Valley V. F. A. Gina-Marie Pacicca



was proud to present the Ladies Auxiliary of Lake George Volunteer Fire Department with a certificate honoring its auxiliary for 80 years of service and dedication. As a

Director for LAFASNY, Gina-Marie also congratulated and presented a certificate on LAFASNY's behalf. Accepting these certificates was President Patty McKinney-Schuster. Gail Corlew was presented a certificate for 15 years of service. A certificate was presented to the family of Charter Member Margaret Earl, who passed away at 102, for her 80 years of dedicated service to the community. Pictured above are Gina-Marie Pacicca, Patty McKinney-Schuster and Margaret Earl's family.

The Bay Ridge Volunteer Fire Company, LA HVVFA Past President Beth Brundage and member Leisha McKinney



honored Sue Mellon for her 65 years of service to the auxiliary and firefighters of the fire company.

WESTCHESTER COUNTY

The Verplanck Ladies Auxiliary elected and installed its '26/'27 officers. Congratulations to: President, Lisa Talbot-Davis;

SECTIONALS

Vice President, Emily Stewart; Secretary, Barbara Pavone Stewart; and Treasurer Josephine Ross Burns.



Contributors: Financial Secretary, Karen McDonald; 4-Year Director, Gina Pacicca; Past President, Jean Christensen; and members Janet Griffiths, Barbara Stone, and Kathy Berezny.



A big thank you to the Aurelius Fire Department and Co-chairs Barrie Lyn and Kevin Foster for hosting the annual Convention June 10-12. All who attended this annual event were treated to a fun and informative weekend. Past FASNY Home Trustee and current Central Treasurer Fred Griffiths was honored in receiving the Ray Sherburne-John Haley Lifetime Achievement Award for Fred's many years of dedication to the New York Mills FD, Central and FASNY. Well deserved and congratulations Fred! Janet Griffiths was also thanked for her support and contributions to the fire service, and for supporting Fred over the years.

The Vienna, Sylvan Beach and North Bay Fire Departments from Oneida County were honored in receiving the Firefighters of the Year Award for their life saving actions on Sun., June 22, 2025. At approximately 4:15 a.m., the Vienna Fire Department was dispatched to a tree on a camper at 2796 Kellogg Road, Lot 9 at the Landings Campgrounds. Vienna Car 1, Chief Roberts acknowledged enroute immediately after being dispatched and was advised there were people trapped in the camper. Chief Roberts arrived on scene at approximately 4:20 a.m. to find a fifth wheel camper severely damaged underneath a very large tree. Multiple other campers were already on the scene and were able to hear the trapped occupants but were unable to see them or assist with any rescue. Chief Roberts requested second tones for all manpower with mutual aid from the Sylvan Beach and North Bay Fire Departments. Shortly after initial size up and unsuccessful attempts to obtain a tree service response, the Vienna Department of Public Works was notified and requested to respond with heavy equipment.

Firefighters began to stabilize the tree with large cribbing blocks and rescue struts at multiple points underneath the tree. Once the Vienna DPW arrived with a Gradall, a large

section of the tree was secured with chains from the Gradall and cut off near the base of the tree. As the DPW Operator lifted the tree in small increments, fire crew removed part of the camper's roof and other debris from on top of the occupants. For more than 90 minutes, the fire crews from all three fire departments worked tirelessly in heavy rain, high winds, thunderstorms and lightning to free the two trapped individuals. Once they got to the two trapped individuals, the male and female were extricated and care was turned over to Vineall Ambulance, which transported them to SUNY Upstate Hospital in Syracuse. Both individuals sustained serious life-threatening injuries, but both later made a full recovery.

The joint efforts of the firefighters from Vienna, Sylvan Beach and North Bay Fire Departments, and the training these departments received, ensured the success of the rescue. All those firefighters should be honored and proud of their achievements. The individuals these firefighters saved that day were Patrick Evans, an honorary member of the Oriskany Independent Fire & Hose Company, and his wife Barbara (Bonnie).

Congratulations to Chief William Owen III of the Stittville Fire Department, Oneida County for being elected and sworn in as the President of the New York State Association of Fire Chiefs. Bill will do a fantastic job in leading this great association. Also, congratulations to VFIS Education Specialist and Past East Greenbush Fire District Chief Timothy E. Boel on being elected 1st Vice President.

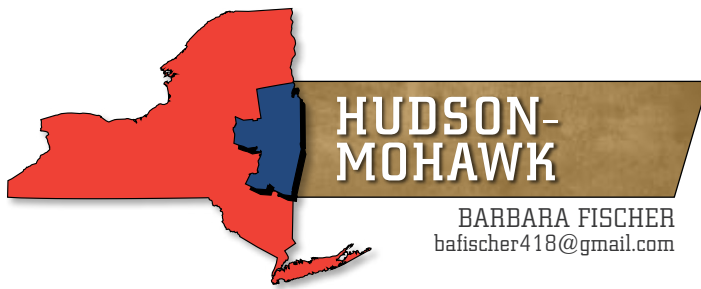
Central is seeking additional hard-working firefighters. Directors from Chenango, Ontario, Otsego, Schohaire, Seneca, Wayne counties are needed. If you're from any of these counties and wish to volunteer your services, contact President Patrick Gavin.

Please support Central and get your Lottery Raffle ticket. Drawing when all 200 tickets are sold. Three prizes of New York State Lottery scratch-off tickets. 1st prize \$300, 2nd prize \$200 and 3rd prize \$100. Only \$10 donation per ticket. Contact Tom Rothdiener, oriskany140@hotmail.com for more information.

Next meeting is Oct. 10 at the Southport Fire Dept., 1001 Carl St., Elmira, N.Y. 14904 in Chemung County. Committees at 11:00 a.m., lunch at noon with meeting to follow at 12:30 p.m.

Please follow us on our website, centralnyfire.org, or Facebook. If you have any information you would like to post on our website, contact Past President Tom Rothdiener, oriskany140@hotmail.com, 315-617-2478 or Facebook, Past President Jeff Martin, jmartin9503@yahoo.com, 315-263-9588.

UNTIL NEXT TIME, BE SAFE



Happy summer everyone! We finally made it. Spend time with your family and friends as much as you can because time moves so quickly!

On April 18 the New Baltimore Fire Department once again sponsored the Hudson Valley Volunteer Firefighters' Association Ken Merriman Fire Police Seminar. More than 75 attendees took in a lot of information. One of the speakers was Central NY Region Vice President Mike Bower from the Empire State Towing and Recovery Association (ESTRA). The title of his presentation was "Towing and Incident Response."

A lot of valuable information was shared that day, and we extend our thanks to the New Baltimore Fire Department for another excellent job hosting the event.



Mike Bower from Empire State Towing and Recovery Association gave a presentation on "Towing

and Incident Response" at the New Baltimore Fire Station in Greene County.

On May 8 local area judges from the Columbia County Magistrates Association presented challenge coins to members of the Firefighters' Home and trustees, as well as Administrator Keith Henchey, in recognition of their military service ahead of Memorial Day. Home members unable to attend the ceremony were given their challenge coins in their rooms. Thank you to all our veterans far and wide across our great land for your service.



In 2023 the Columbia County Magistrates Association began the "Shared Values Program," which recognizes the shared values

of duty, honor, justice, and country among active duty service members and veterans. Through this program, commemorative challenge coins are presented on behalf of

the Columbia County Town and Village Judges, led by Hon. Dr. Carrie A. O'Hare.



Town of Greenport, NY (Columbia County) Judge John Porreca, Firefighters' Home Administrator Keith Henchey, Trustees James Interdonati, Walter

Frame, and Thomas Rothdiener, and Town of Stuyvesant Judge Hon. Dr. Carrie A. O'Hare, honoring the Trustees and Administrator for their military service outside the Firefighters' Home Chapel on May 8.



The Columbia County Magistrates Association visits the Firefighters' Home in Hudson, thanking attending veterans for their service

ahead of Memorial Day. Standing behind the Home members (L to R): Town of Claverack Judge Hon. Michael Brandon, Administrator Keith Henchey, Home Trustee Walter Frame, Home Trustee Thomas Rothdiener, Columbia County Veterans Service Agency Director Rachel Hamilton, Town of Greenport Judge Hon. John Porreca, and Town of Stuyvesant Judge Hon. Dr. Carrie A. O'Hare.

On Fri., May 8, the Fuller Road Fire Department kicked off its yearlong celebration of 100 Years of Service at the Marriott Hotel on Wolf Road in Colonie. The room was filled with past and present fire department and auxiliary members, as well as guests from mutual aid partners. The venue was elegantly decorated to commemorate the occasion, and several members were invited to share memories of what it has been like to be part of this "family" of firefighters over the years. Thank you again, Fuller Road, for many years of keeping your community safe. We look forward to your next 100 years.



The Fuller Road Fire Department Banquet celebrates 100 years of dedicated service to its community.



A history display of turnout gear and uniforms over the years at Fuller Road FD.

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On Sat., May 30, the Resident Council of the Firefighters' Home held its first (hopefully annual) Car Show on the grounds of the Firefighters' Home. The day began cold, windy, dreary, and rainy, but that didn't stop more than 78 car enthusiasts from showing up to support Home residents. A lot of hard work by the council members and the Home's staff paid off. The day eventually turned sunny, though still windy and cool, and everyone had a great time.

Members were fortunate to have assistance from the Schenectady Civil Air Patrol Cadet Unit, who helped guide residents around to view the cars, motorcycles, and fire trucks on display. Thank you also to the food vendors and DJ Chief Steve Montie of the Stuyvesant Fire Department for providing great food and music throughout the day.

Awards were presented to car show participants at the end of the day, and it was a great success for all who attended. We look forward to next year.

HAVE A GREAT REST OF THE SUMMER AND PLEASE STAY WELL AND SAFE OUT THERE!



On May 13 the Albany County Volunteer Fireman's Association held its Annual Meeting at the Westmere Fire House. The following were elected to office for the coming year: Tom Cascone of Voorheesville as President, Matt Wilcenski of Delmar as 1st Vice President, Emily Hausman of Westmere as 2nd Vice President, Fred Pettingell of S.W. Pitts as Treasurer, John Webb of Coeymans Hollow as Secretary, Clayton Ash of Guilderland Center as Financial Secretary, Jonathan Hough of Elsmere as Chaplain, Don Champion of Knox as Sgt.-at-Arms, and Frank Papa of Voorheesville as Second Battalion Director.

Greene County Volunteer Firemen's Association Officers 2025-2026: President, Jason Haines; 1st VP, Jeffrey Coyne; 2nd VP, Theodore Nugent, Jr.; Secretary, Liza Down; Treasurer, Maureen Kaminisk; Financial Secretary, George Stacey. The 138th GCVFA Convention will be hosted by Ashland VFD Sept. 9-12.

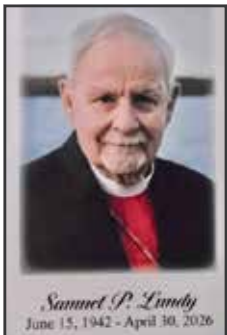
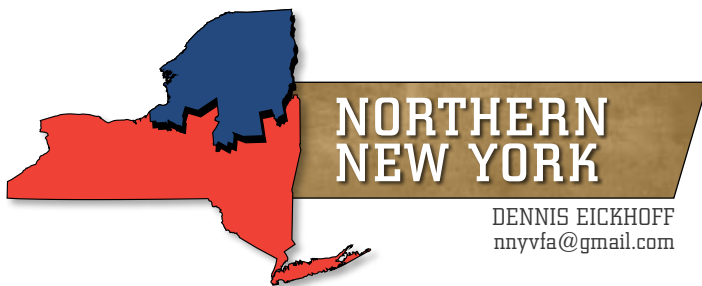
Departments across Rensselaer County are offering fish fries, pizza nights, BBQ, car shows, and breakfasts. Up-to-date details are available on most organizations' Facebook pages. A county-wide panel and open discussion titled "Future of the Fire Service" was held on May 18 at Hudson Valley Community College's Bulmer Tech Center, bringing together Chiefs, officers, firefighters, Commissioners, and town and village board members to explore the proposed NYS legislation on nominal compensation. East Greenbush FD anticipates the completion of a new station in early summer. The Hudson Mohawk Volunteer Firefighter's Association Convention took place in East Greenbush, with an auxiliary meeting on Thurs., July 16 and the General Association Meeting on Sun., July 19. It began with light refreshments followed by the meeting in the pavilion.

There is always a need for training, so on May 12 Clifton Park VFD and Hillcrest Fire Department teamed up at CPVFD's firehouse for a Ladder Company Drill. Separately, Malta Ridge VFC held a Recruit NY Open House on Sat., April 18. Earlier this year the Jonesville VFD held a memorial for one of its esteemed Chiefs. A mentor to so many, Chief Louis Pasquarelli Jr., #34, died unexpectedly in 2013. A plaque in his honor can be seen at their firehouse.

Guilderland Fire Dept. was proud to be part of this year's YMCA Kids Day in town. It was a fun day for all, and

one of the highlights of the day for many of the kids was getting hands on and having the chance to spray a real fire hose. Niskayuna Fire Districts #1 & #2 "painted the town red!" on Sat., May 16 by participating in the 45th Annual NiskaDay Celebration, an all-day community festival of fun, food, rides, a parade, fireworks, and more. It's an action-packed day thanks to its numerous participating sponsors and its conjunction with its Community Action Program.

On March 20-23 Dutchess County Weekend 2026 brought together 136 firefighters from across the county for three days of intensive, hands-on training in a wide range of firematic disciplines. The event was sponsored by the Dutchess County Fire Chiefs Council and supported by the DC Fire Districts Association, DCVFA, and NYS OFPC. Again, this year it was hosted at East Fishkill Fire District's Training Center with remote training sites at Hopewell Hose Co. 1, New Hackensack Fire District, and the Dutchess Community College Bldg. at the Mid-Hudson Regional Airport. The program offered classes in areas such as live-fire operations, EMS skills, leadership development, and fire-police highway safety. Now in its 30th year, the weekend continues to strengthen the skills, confidence, and teamwork of both new and veteran firefighters, reinforcing its role as one of Dutchess County's most valuable and enduring training traditions.



Rev. Canon Samuel P. Lundy, NNYVFA Chaplain, passed away on April 30. Sam served NNYVFA as Chair of the Memorial Committee for many years. He also served as a Chaplain for many Jefferson County fire departments. Sam was a kind man with a great sense of humor, and he will be missed by all those in fire, rescue and law enforcement.

Secretary Eickhoff is working on putting together a directory of fire Chaplains who serve fire departments in our 10-county sectional. Our sectional includes the counties of Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Oneida, Oswego and St. Lawrence. Please forward any names, addresses, phone numbers and emails to nnyvfva@gmail.com.

The reorganizational meeting of NNYVFA took place Sun., July 19 at the Madrid Fire Station. Officers, Steering Committee members and committee Chairs attended.

The NNYVFA Ladies Auxiliary is conducting a raffle for the month of September. The drawings will be daily using the daily lotto numbers. Prize monies awarded will be \$25 on weekdays, \$50 on Saturday and Sunday, \$200 on Labor Day and \$343 for the drawing on 9-11. The donation is \$5 per ticket. Anyone interested should send their name, address and phone number to Mary Enslow, 3 Debra Drive, A213, Potsdam, N.Y. 13676. The deadline for purchase is Aug. 15. Checks should be made payable to NNYLA.

JEFFERSON

Members of the Adams Center Fire Department congratulated past Chief and firefighter Mark Thomas on receiving its 2025 Firefighter of the Year Award.

The Deferiet Fire Department held its Annual Banquet and Award Ceremony. The Firefighter of the Year Award went to Austin Russell, and Junior Firefighter of the Year went to Carson Babcock. Joseph Kuehnle and Troy Babcock received EMS Providers of the Year. Recognized for years of service were Andy Cody Bierman (five years); Christopher Champagne, Joseph Kuehnle, and Sean Rossignol (10 years). Chief/EMT-B Troy Babcock, Firefighter/EMT-B Austin Russell, and Deputy Ryan Snyder were recognized for their quick actions and dedication to saving lives at a structure fire in the Village of Deferiet on March 11, when a resident was still inside the home.

The Black River Fire Department held its Annual Banquet and Award Ceremony. Years of Service Awards were given to firefighter Lee Carpenter for five years, Lt. Paul Shepard and firefighter Wayne Robbe for 10 years, Capt. Jon Gaines and Lt. William Mustare for 20 years, and firefighter Joseph Payne for 25 years. The Member of the Year Award went to firefighter Mike Gaines. Capt. Dan Ruggini was recognized by Black River Ambulance for actions taken on Dec. 9, 2025, which resulted in saving a life by performing CPR.

LEWIS

The Castorland Fire Department held its Annual Banquet and Award Ceremony. Andrew Loomis received Fireman of the Year. The Chief's Award was given to Clifford Lehman. Timothy Mulvaney received the President's Award. Recognition of years of service were given out to James Young, Kevin Meyers, Shawn Stanford and Nick Astafan for five years; Pat Planck and Nik Mellnitz for 10 years; Tom Schantz, Michael Beller, Myron Beller and Tyler Ashline for 15 years; Andy Schantz for 25 years; and Mark Birchenough and Perry Planck for 40 years.

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ST. LAWRENCE

The Colton Fire Department held its Annual Banquet on Sat., April 25 at the Pierrepont Fire Hall. Awards were given to the following members: Abby Smith and Thomas Hickman received department jackets. Service awards were presented to Tim Moore and Dkota Wright for five years; RJ Thayer for 10 years; Ben Johnson for 15 years; Bill Smith, Trevor Wood, and Ed Harcourt for 20 years; Kevin Phelix, Jackie Johnson, Denise Scovil, and Chuck Wright for 25 years; and Jeff Scovil and Dennis Eickhoff for 45 years. Mason Clemo received the Captain's Award, and Dkota Wright received the Chief's Award. Joe Briggs of Pierrepont Fire received an EMS award, and Holly Sharlow received the Provider of the Year Award.

Gouverneur Fire Department elections were held with the following being elected for the coming year: Chief Engineer, Thomas Haynes; 1st Assistant, Vincent Dagostino; 2nd Assistant, Steve Bos; Hose Co. #1 Captain, Thomas Gore; Hose Co. #2 Captain, Amber Haynes; Rescue Hook & Ladder Captain, Nathan Sheen.

The Hopkinton-Ft. Jackson Fire Department elected the following for 2026: Chief, Steve Parker; 1st Assistant Chief, Greg Crump; 2nd Assistant, Will Votra; 3rd Assistant, Mathew Razis; Secretary, Allison Perham; Treasurer, Kristina Parker-Shattuck; Directors, Eric Scovil, John Hewey, Chris Shattuck, Carl Pitts, Gus Wood, and BJ Planty; and, Captain, Paul Lashomb, Lt. Brianna Parker and John Hewey.

The Massena Fire Department will host its 7th Annual Firehouse Scramble Aug. 29 at the Cedar View Golf Course, Massena beginning at 9 a.m. Go to massenafd.org to get a registration form.

The North Lawrence Fire Department held its annual ATV Ride on July 25.

The Parishville Fire Department held its Annual Election, electing the following for the coming year: Dive Team, Captain, Dave Taylor; Lieutenant, Mike Caringi; Surface Support Coordinator, John Parmeter; and, Secretary, Jen Stowe. Rescue Squad, Captain Nick "Tiny" Jerome; 1st Assistant Captain, Chrissy Cool; Secretary, Connie Harper, and Safety Officer, James Taylor. Fire Department, Chief, Ed Cool; 1st Assistant, Jeff McGregor; 2nd Assistant, Kevin Sullivan; 3rd Assistant, Scott Mere; Captain, Danielle Rose; Secretary, Connie Harper; Treasurer, Jen Taylor; Safety Officers, Calvin Thomas and Tom Demo.

The Parishville Fire Department held its Annual Banquet, and awards were given to John Parmeter for Rookie of the Year; Fireman of the Year, John Liebfred; and the Chief's

Award went to Jimmy Taylor, Nick Jerome, Jay Zenger and Tom Demo. Calvin Thomas was recognized for 35 years of service, while EMT Provider of the Year went to Nick Jerome. The Parishville Dive Teams Captain Award went to Jim Taylor, the Propeller Award was given to Dave Taylor, and the Diver of the Year was given to Glen Smith.

The St. Lawrence County Fire Chief's Association held its Annual Meeting and Election of Officers at the Lawrenceville Fire Station on Thurs., May 21. The following were elected for the coming year: President, James Blackburn, Rensselaer Falls; 1st Vice President, John Lashomb, Lawrenceville; 2nd Vice President, Tom Schwann, Pyrites; Secretary, Karin Blackburn, Rensselaer Falls; Treasurer, Laurie Hance, Hannawa Falls and 2-Year Director, Corey Barney, Rensselaer Falls. No one was elected to the 1-Year Director seat. If someone is interested in filling this slot, they are asked to contact the association Secretary.

The St. Lawrence County County Training Center officers for the coming year are Chairman, Bob Kerr, Norfolk; Vice-Chairman, Jeremy Willard, Norfolk; Secretary, Karin Blackburn, Rensselaer Falls; Treasurer, Mike Morgan, Canton; Directors, Mark Bomyea, Rensselaer Falls, and Mark Watson, Madrid.

The cost of the dinner for the county meeting will rise to \$20 per person, beginning with the July meeting. This is due to rising food costs.

Bob Kerr, Chairman of the training center, reported Alcoa did its annual training there May 12-19.

John Lashomb received a plaque for 60 years of service to the Lawrenceville Fire Department. The award was presented at the St. Lawrence County Fire Chief's Association meeting from his department.

The St. Lawrence County Fire Chief's Association held a meeting Thurs., July 16 at the Brier Hill Fire Hall. Social hour was followed by a meal and dinner. The association is looking for meeting hosts for September, November, January and March. Please contact the Association Secretary if your department is willing to host.

The St. Lawrence County Youth in the Fire Service Day is scheduled for Sat., Aug. 22 at the SLC Training Center, 45 Blanchard Road, Potsdam. The session is for Junior firefighters, RAMS and Explorers. The training is open to any fire department with a youth program, not just St. Lawrence County. The schedule begins with registration/breakfast at 7:30 a.m., followed by introductions. The training begins with Map Compass Orienteering at 9 a.m. with Stephen Ellis, NYS Forest Ranger; 10 a.m., Advancing Line to Targets with Nick Rolley, Tupper Lake

Fire; and 11 a.m., Taser/Drone Demonstration with Adam Clark, Canton Police Dept. Lunch will be provided and served at noon. Following lunch at 1 p.m., there will be a TIMS Training with UCV1 with Rick Rusaw, St. Lawrence County Emergency Services. At 2 p.m., Erik Johnson of the Canton Fire Department will be doing Extrication Training with Rescue. The program will end with water ball at approximately 4 p.m.

As always, if you have newsworthy items, be sure to send them to me at nnvfva@gmail.com.



Northern Central held its April meeting at the Williamson Fire Department located at Route 21 in the Town of Williamson in Wayne County. The Ladies Auxiliary met in the meeting room while the firefighters met in the truck bay.

Williamson is a town about 25 miles east of Rochester. Its total land area is 36 square miles. The population is about 6,900. The Town of Williamson does not have a village but has a downtown area. Williamson, East Williamson, and Pultneyville are hamlets within the Town of Williamson, and each has a volunteer fire company. State Routes 104 and 21 are major roads that intersect Williamson. Lake Ontario is at the northern border, where the Hamlet of Pultneyville sits. Like other areas of Wayne County, Williamson is an important agricultural area, producing



large quantities of apples, cherries, pears, cabbage, snap beans, corn and potatoes. Motts has a processing plant, and Baldwin Richardson Foods has a warehouse in Williamson.

Williamson Fire Company President Miles Shove welcomed the association to the department.



The dais included Treasurer Bonnie Sweet, Secretary Dorothy Orr, President Marvin Tryon, 1st Vice President Michael Orr and Financial Secretary David Sweet. Tending to some

business with Secretary Orr is Kathleen Heighton from the auxiliary.

A wonderful meal provided by Dorothy and Mike Orr followed the meetings of both groups.

Northern Central held a one-day Convention at the Rush Volunteer Fire Department in Monroe County on June 13. The packed day started with coffee and light refreshments during registration time. A Memorial Service was at 10 a.m. with meetings of both the auxiliary and the firefighter's association. There was a noontime lunch. The Convention meeting was followed by a training session, then a dinner was served to conclude the event. Complete details of what transpired at the Convention will be shared in the next issue.



The Southern New York Firefighters Association held its annual awards dinner on May 29 at the Bar Association in Mineola. Captain Dennis Solares from the Central Islip Fire Department was honored as our Firefighter of the Year for



2025 for a daring rescue he made.



The Glen Cove Fire Department was awarded a unit citation for several rescues it made at a 2025 apartment fire. Past Chief Anthony Tripp was present to accept the award.

Photo: Robert Sutton

The Red Knights NY 25 Motorcycle Club, joined by fellow Red Knights from across the state, participated in the 20th annual Red Knights Blessing and Motorcycle Run at the North Sea Fire Department on May 17. The event supports the Suffolk County Volunteer Firefighters Burn Center at



Stony Brook Hospital. Over the past 20 years, the RKNY25 has donated more than \$215,000 to the Burn Center.

Photo: Vincent Ammirati

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The newly elected Suffolk County Volunteer Firefighters Ladies Auxiliary executive board for 2026-2027 was installed during its annual Installation of Officers, and dinner was held at the Holbrook Firehouse on May

13. Congratulations to all, and best wishes for a successful and prosperous year ahead. *Photo: Vincent Ammirati*



Southern New York was well represented at the 40th annual Firefighters' Home Memorial held in Hudson on May 8. Pictured are SNYVFA Director at Large Vincent Ammirati, past SNYVFA Suffolk County Trustee Peter Cincotta, Past Suffolk County Ladies President Lori

Zatorski, Past President Jean Christensen, and LAFASNY Past President Ann LaFountain. *Photo: Vincent Ammirati*



The Suffolk County Ladies and the West Islip Fire Department congratulate Shirley Iwassiuk, who was recognized May 13 at the Holbrook FD during the

Suffolk County Ladies Auxiliary Dinner for 50 years of service. Shirley's passion and dedication to her community stand as an inspiration to all. *Photo: Vincent Ammirati*



Looking Back: Pictured is East Farmingdale's 1951 Mack engine that was the overall winner at last year's muster at the Firefighters Museum of Nassau County.

Come out on Sat., Aug. 29 to see who this year's winner will be. All are welcome.

Are you from the Southern New York area and would like to submit an event, news item, anniversary, or other information for *The Volunteer Firefighter*, please send items to kmcelynn@gmail.com and include SNYVFA in the subject line. Photos are welcome and may be included. I aim to represent the entire Southern New York area and will work with you to get your story posted. Our website is also up and running with the latest membership information at snyvfa.com. If you would like content posted there, please email me and I will be happy to assist.



As another successful Southwestern Association of Volunteer Firefighters Convention comes to a close, it is time to start looking ahead to what promises to be an exciting and memorable gathering in 2027.

The 119th Annual SWAVF Convention will be hosted by the Woodlawn Fire Company and the Blasdel Exempts. Planning is already underway as both organizations work to create a Convention experience that celebrates the traditions of the volunteer fire service while providing plenty of opportunities for fellowship, entertainment, and friendly competition.

The theme for the 2027 Convention is "Beach Party on 5," inspired by Woodlawn Beach, and the welcoming atmosphere attendees can expect throughout the weekend. The Convention will be held as a Friday and Saturday event, offering two days packed with activities designed to bring together members from across the Southwestern Association.

Departments are encouraged to begin preparing now. If your organization plans to bring a dugout, please contact J.M. Jewett to begin coordinating arrangements. Early planning helps ensure a smooth setup process and allows hosts to accommodate everyone as efficiently as possible.

One event already generating excitement is the planned Softball Tournament. Departments are encouraged to start assembling their teams and preparing for what is expected to be a fun and competitive event. Whether your team is aiming for a championship or simply looking to enjoy time with fellow members, the tournament will be a great opportunity to build camaraderie and association spirit.

The entertainment lineup is also taking shape. Convention attendees can look forward to live music both Friday and Saturday evenings. Friday night will feature Strictly Hip, whose performances are always a crowd favorite. Plans for Saturday evening's entertainment are currently being finalized and will be announced in the coming months.

While many details are still being developed, one thing is certain: the Woodlawn and Blasdel teams are committed to creating an event firefighters, EMS providers, auxiliaries, family members, and supporters will not want to miss. From the beach-themed atmosphere to the

entertainment, competitions, and opportunities to reconnect with old friends and make new ones, the 2027 Convention is shaping up to be a standout event on the SWAVF calendar.

Mark your calendars, start organizing your teams, and make plans to join us in Woodlawn in 2027. We look forward to welcoming you for a weekend filled with tradition, fellowship, and plenty of fun along the shores of Lake Erie.



Fire department anniversaries are being marked across New York state this year, including two in Monroe County.

One of them is the West Henrietta Volunteer Fire Department, which was organized in 1926 as the second volunteer company in Henrietta, Monroe County. Like many departments, it was founded in response to a community need. The department began operating in a small space inside Meyer's across from New York State Garage on the former Cartwrights Inn property in the hamlet of West Henrietta. In 1929 it moved across the street to an 1866 brick schoolhouse, where it remains today. The building is also shared with a branch of the U.S. Post Office.

The Henrietta Fire District has seven stations. Four are district owned with paid staff, and three are company-owned independent volunteer stations within the district. The town of Henrietta spans a total land area of 35.6 square miles and is home to a population of approximately 48,000 residents.

The West Henrietta Fire Department has played a significant role in the leadership of the Henrietta Fire District. Harold Page, then Chief of West Henrietta, became the Henrietta Fire District's first Chief following the consolidation in 1969. Francis Byrne served as the first Battalion Chief, later becoming Fire District Chief (1978-1980) and Fire Commissioner; the Henrietta Fire District Training Center located at Station 6 is dedicated in his honor. To date at least five District Chiefs have come from the ranks of West Henrietta.

West Henrietta Volunteer Fire Department celebrated its 100th anniversary on Fri., April 11 at the RIT Inn and Conference Center. At the banquet three members were

honored for extended length of service. Honorees were current President Robert Laux for 55 years of service, Thomas Schey for 60 years of service, and David Chase for 70 years of service.



Pictured is Past FASNY Director Diana Pfersick with President Robert Laux, who was presented with both the Department 100-Year Proclamation and his Proclamation for 55 Years of Service from FASNY.



One of the cakes served at the banquet sported the West Henrietta logo.

Another Monroe County department celebrating 100 years of service is West Webster Fire Department. Check them out at westwebsterfd.org.



NEW YORK CITY

BY ED WILMARTH III
ewilmarthiii@broadchannelvfd.org

Since our last sectional, the Volunteer Firemen's Association of the City of New York has hosted its annual Officer's

Installation Dinner, celebrating our 142nd year of service since our organization on Feb. 22, 1884. It took place at the Rockaway Point/Breezy Point Catholic Club next door to Rockaway Point VFD's headquarters in Queens on Sat., April 18. It was a large turnout, with representation from all nine of NYC's volunteer fire companies as well as the FDNY, FDNY EMS, FDNY Emerald Society, FASNY, the Nassau County Fire Service Academy, and Councilwoman Joann Ariola and her staff.

This year's association honorees were outgoing Vice President and Ex-Chief Richard M. Bogart of Broad Channel VFD for 10 years of service to our organization, and Lifetime Achievement Award recipient and former association Secretary and Ex-Chief Arthur Lighthall of Rockaway Point VFD for his more than 25 years of service to our organization and more than 50 years of service as a NYC volunteer firefighter.

Our formal honorees were Councilwoman Joann Ariola's Chief of Staff Phyllis Inserillo, Chief Instructor of the Nassau County Fire Service Academy Paul Wilders, and the 36th Fire

SECTIONALS

Commissioner of the FDNY, Mark Guerra. Our association and member departments have developed a great working relationship with all the above-named organizations, and we hope to continue the level of mutual respect we have garnered from each other over the last number of years. This only strengthens the need for our volunteer fire departments to continue operating when their actions are recognized and appreciated by the best in the business.



Councilwoman Joann Ariola, outgoing FDNY Commissioner Mark Guerra and Ariola's Chief of Staff Phyllis Inzerillo with many of the Chiefs and officers of NYC's VFDs.

Chief of Dept. George Conklin of Broad Channel VFD in Queens reported that on March 31, Outlaw Engine Co. 2 and Ambulance 308, under the command of Chief Conklin and Assistant Chief Michael Delgado, with mutual aid from West Hamilton Beach VFD Chief Spinelli, operated alongside the FDNY at a fully involved 3-alarm private dwelling fire. Broad Channel has also hit an unfortunate hurdle in the construction of its new firehouse and may have to seek



Broad Channel 3-Alarm fire at 35 Van Brunt Rd.

a new contractor, as the former is allegedly in legal trouble.

Chief of Department Dan Cavanagh of Gerritsen Beach VFD in Brooklyn shared that brush

fire season has already started in his response area, as his members have responded to several of them over the last month. Chief Cavanagh, who is also the President of our association, is working on a unique CAD system specifically designed for our NYC volunteer fire departments that will not only interact with each department's I Am Responding application, but also successfully interface with the forthcoming installation of each department's FDNY teleprinter alert system. More on that as it develops.

Commissioner James Morton of Rockaway Point VFD noted the early arrival of warm weather in the Jamaica Bay area has caused a number of bodies, or "floaters" as they're often referred, to rise to the surface and wash ashore all along the bay this past month. It is an unfortunate but very real part of the responses of six of our volunteer departments situated along Jamaica Bay to have to encounter these types of incidents.

No further reports were received from our other departments before the deadline.

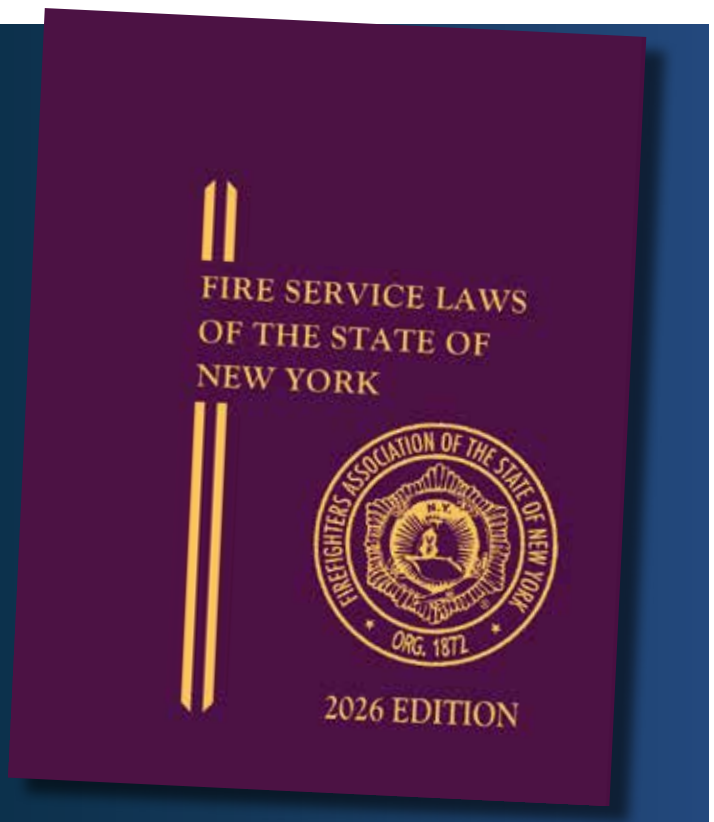
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Mitchell Holmes
Michael Kodak
Michael Smith

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FIRE DEPARTMENT, INC.
William Hempstead

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS
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Laiba Rajput

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PRESENTED APRIL 2026

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY
Hanover Hose Co. No. 1
Steven D'Angelo 55
Steven Peters 50

CHEMUNG COUNTY
Millport Fire Department 100
Michael Hesser 50

COLUMBIA COUNTY
Chatham Fire Department - Sanford W.
Smith Hook & Ladder Company
Bernard J. Kelleher, Jr. 50
Patrick Wernitt 25
Gary C. Westover 50

Greenport Fire District
- Greenport Pumper Company No. 1, Inc.
Wilfred Butterworth 50
Antonio Merante, Jr. 50
Thomas Merante, Sr. 50

Greenport Fire District
- Greenport Pumper Company No. 3
Michael Super 50

Taghkanic Volunteer Fire Co. #1
Arthur Griffith 65
Anthony P. LaSalvia 50

DELAWARE COUNTY
East Meredith Fire Department
Michael Henry MacClintock 50

DUTCHESS COUNTY
Dover Fire Department
- John H. Ketcham Hose Company, Inc.
Larry Harrison 50
Robert Sartori 50

Millbrook Engine Hook & Ladder
Company No. 1
Richard Cross 55
John V. Manzi, Jr. 60

ERIE COUNTY
Doyle Volunteer Hose Co. No. 2, Inc.
Donald Jagodzinski 50
Lawrence Rydzynski 50

Elma Volunteer Fire Company, Inc.
William Smith 50

Lake View Fire District
Michael Lewis 50

North Bailey Fire Company, Inc.
Paul Infanti 50

North Boston Volunteer
Fire Company, Inc.
Thomas A. Edington 50

FULTON COUNTY
Perth Volunteer Fire Company, Inc.
David Lee Saltsman 50

GREENE COUNTY
Coxsackie Fire Department
- Coxsackie Hose Company No. 3
Yale Frank, Sr. 50

JEFFERSON COUNTY
Theresa Fire Department, Inc.
John C. Sutton, Jr. 60

LEWIS COUNTY
New Bremen Fire Department
Richard "Rick" Buell 50

FIRE SERVICE AWARDS MILESTONES

MADISON COUNTY

Erieville Fire Department

Richard L. Marris 50
John E. Smith 50

MONROE COUNTY

Chili Fire Department, Inc.

Michael Farrell 50

West Henrietta Fire Department, Inc. 100

David F. Chase 70
Robert B. Laux, Jr. 55
Thomas Schey 60

NASSAU COUNTY

Albertson Hook & Ladder, Engine & Hose Company No. 1, Inc.

William T. Ammann 50
William J. Clark, Jr. 50

Island Park Fire Department

Joseph M. Annarella 50
Edward V. Madden 50

Mineola Fire Department - Mineola Fire Department Truck Company No. 2

Andrew Martone, Sr. 50

Port Washington Fire Department - Atlantic Hook & Ladder Company No. 1

Andrew Waterson 50

Port Washington Fire Department - Port Washington Protection Engine Company No. 1

Robert J. Kropacek 50

South Hempstead Fire Department

Walter Denton 75
50

Westbury Fire Department

Thomas J. Durnan 50

NIAGARA COUNTY

Wheatfield Volunteer Firefighters Benevolent Association

- Adams Fire Company, Inc. 50
Keith Lange 50
James M. Mihalko 50

ONONDAGA COUNTY

LaFayette Fire Department

80

ORANGE COUNTY

Coldenham Fire Company, Inc.

Daniel S. Dempsey, Jr. 60

Warwick Fire Department

James Gerstner, Sr. 50
Harry Sayre, III 50
Arthur Wendel 50

RICHMOND COUNTY

Oceanic Hook & Ladder Company No. 1

150

SUFFOLK COUNTY

Islip Engine Company No. 1

Thomas Butler, Sr. 50

Northport Volunteer Fire Department

Nicholas Hughes 50
Brett Jones 50
William H. Marsden, Jr. 50

ULSTER COUNTY

Napanoch Fire Company

Edward J. Wilhelm 100
James Wyncoop 50
65

Rosendale Fire Department

William J. McNamara 50

WYOMING COUNTY

Arcade Fire Department

Len Connelly 60

Gainesville Fire Department

Kip Falkner 50
Robert Zuidema 50

PRESENTED MAY 2026

ALBANY COUNTY

Fuller Road Fire Department, Inc. 100

BROOME COUNTY

Town of Broome Fire Department

Donald Chichester 55

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY

M. M. Fenner Hose Company No. 2

E. Lawrence Barter 50

CHENANGO COUNTY

Norwich Fire Department

- Maydole Hose Company No. 2 50
Steve Crawford 50

COLUMBIA COUNTY

Hudson Fire Department

- H. W. Rogers Hose Company No. 2 50
Carl Brash 50
Daniel Hickey, Sr. 50
Carmen Nero 50

DELAWARE COUNTY

Hobart Fire Department

Kenneth Muthig 50

DUTCHESS COUNTY

East Fishkill Fire District

Linda M. Gallo 50
Mike Gallo, Sr. 55
William Jackson 50
David Palin 55
John Paraskeva 55

Rombout Fire Company, Inc.

Brian Allison 50

Tivoli Fire Company, Inc.

Ralph Torchia 55

ERIE COUNTY

Niagara Hose Company No. 3

Vito Gelose 50
David King 50

Kenneth Lips 50
Gerald Long 50
Michael O'Connor 50
Daniel Reinbolt 50

ESSEX COUNTY

Lake Placid Volunteer Fire Department

Robert Whitney, Jr. 50

Westport Hose Company No. 1

John E. Tefoe 50

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Saranac Lake Volunteer Fire Company, Inc.

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JEFFERSON COUNTY

Redwood Volunteer Fire Department

Alan Felder 60
Jack Giordano 60

NASSAU COUNTY

Island Park Fire Department

Edward V. Madden 50

Island Park Fire Department - Island Park Fire Department, Hose Company No. 1

Joseph Annarella 50

Lawrence-Cedarhurst Fire Department - Lawrence-Cedarhurst Fire Department, Hook & Ladder Company No. 1

James T. Cavanagh, Jr. 50
Michael S. Rizzo 50

Oyster Bay Fire Company No. 1

Robert McEvoy 50

Valley Stream Fire Department

Allen Hay 50
Paul Jurgens 50
Joseph M. Piccione, Sr. 50
Richard Skellington 50

NIAGARA COUNTY

North Tonawanda Fire Department - Columbia Hook & Ladder Company No. 1

150

ONEIDA COUNTY

Clinton Fire Department

Kevin Griffen 55
John Nester 50
Gary Schreppel 50
J Williams 60
Rick Young 50

New London Fire Department

Carolyn Prosser 60

ONTARIO COUNTY

East Bloomfield-Holcomb Fire Department

Steve Murnan 50
Dave Norman 60
Mike Slusser 50

ORANGE COUNTY

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Sloatsburg Fire Department, Inc.
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Schenevus Fire Department
Scott A. Gaston 50
Paul T. Neske 50

West Edmeston Volunteer Fire Department
Arthur Layton 50

STEUBEN COUNTY

Hammondsport Volunteer Fire Department
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Don "Ducky" Howard 50
Oscar VanDelinder 75

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Richard Lynster, Jr. 50
Stanley J. Roberts 50
James Sodergren 50

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Dennis Lyman 60
Joseph Muratore 60
Carl Siciliano 50

Lindenhurst Fire Department, Inc. - Lindenhurst Chemical & Rescue Company No. 1, Inc. 100

Lindenhurst Fire Department, Inc. - Lindenhurst Chemical & Salvage Company No. 2, Inc. 100

Lindenhurst Fire Department, Inc. - Lindenhurst Hook, Ladder & Engine Company No. 2. 100

Quogue Fire Department
Thomas Mullen 50

Shelter Island Fire Department
Keith Clark 50
Lawrence Lechmanski 50

Smithtown Fire Department, Inc.
Thomas Hawthorne 50
Christopher Mele 50
Gerald Melvin, Jr. 70

Smithtown Fire Department, Inc. Company 1
Thomas Hawthorne 50
Gerald Melvin, Jr. 70

Smithtown Fire Department, Inc. Company 3
Christopher Mele 50

SULLIVAN COUNTY

Neversink Fire Department
Thomas R. Mitchell 50

WARREN COUNTY

Bolton Fire Company
Donald J. Volkmann 50

WYOMING COUNTY

Warsaw Fire Department
Ralph Millen 50

Wyoming Hook & Ladder Company, Inc.
Walter Strathearn 50

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Branchport/Keuka Park Fire Department
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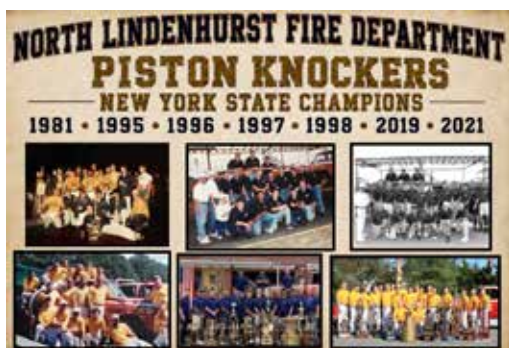


DRILL TEAM

By Paul Susskind

State Drill Championship Returns to Hempstead on Championship Saturday

The temperature has finally warmed up, and the competition hasn't lagged far behind as the first half of the season ends, and teams begin jockeying for position in hopes of becoming State Champions in mid-August. This year's race for glory will take place in Hempstead on Aug. 15 and promises to be a fantastic event at one of racing's most thrilling venues. It will be the 11th time Championship Saturday has been held at the Weir Street location, which holds the distinction of being the longest continuously used track in the sport, and we look back at the previous 10 State Drills, many of which were contested right down to the final bucket dumped.



The first State Drill at Hempstead in 1964 saw the Rough Riders of Oyster Bay win their sixth of seven titles. In 1978 the hometown

Hempstead Flukes led the drill by two and a half points going into the final contest only to succumb to the Central Islip Hoboes, which won it in Buckets. The fastest run in the history of the Efficiency contest, still as of today, was run by those same Hoboes in the 1980 State Drill at Weir St., but that was not enough for them to overcome a half-point loss

to the Patchogue 40 Thieves, which scored a fifth place in the last contest and held on to be champions for the second year in a row.

Five years later, the hometown Hempstead Yellow Hornets outlasted the North Lindenhurst Piston Knockers in the final contest to become the first team ever to win a championship on their home track.

In 1993, after breaking the B Ladder record, Central Islip broke the backs of the competition by the end of B Hose, a rare occasion when the State Drill was clinched early. The hometown Hornets were up two going into the Bucket contest in 1997 when the Piston Knockers wrestled the title from their hands late, and in 2005 the West Sayville Flying Dutchmen had it all but locked up before Buckets for their eighth championship. Four years later it came down to Buckets again and only five points separated the top five at the end of a day that saw the Flying Dutchmen win the State Drill at Hempstead for the second time.

The 2013 and 2017 Championships at the Nassau County locale saw Central Islip win for its third and fourth titles out of the 10 State Drills held there. The drill in 2013 was a 10-point win for the Hoboes centered around record-breaking runs in C Ladder and Buckets, while the 2017 victory was a comeback of monumental proportions. Down six points overall and with only four points on their scorecard, Central Islip came roaring back to win the last three contests and capture the title in Buckets by one point over North Lindenhurst.

The thrills throughout the last 10 State Drills at Hempstead have been tremendous, and this year promises more of the same. The drill begins at 10 a.m. on Aug. 15 and is expected to run through 6 p.m. If you're looking for exciting action on a summer Saturday, make your way to the drill track and see the state's fastest volunteers at their best. On Sunday, Aug. 16 at 1 p.m., the annual State Parade will take place in South Hempstead. Departments not yet signed up and wishing to participate should inquire at nysfddrillteams.com, and we encourage anyone who enjoys fire department parades to come out and support the biggest parade of the summer.

Congratulations to the North Lindenhurst Piston Knockers on its recognition of excellence by the Suffolk County Sports Hall of Fame. The team was honored for its achievements on the track over the years, as well as its service as volunteers in the community. It joins the drill teams of Islip, West Sayville, and Patchogue, which have previously been recognized by the Suffolk Hall of Fame.

The Bay Shore Fire Department drill team recently celebrated its 100th anniversary with a banquet honoring its achievements over the years. While different companies within the department began competing as early as 1886, it was in 1926 that it consolidated to form a single competitive squad. In conjunction with the anniversary, the team also hosted the Suffolk County Parade and Drill in early July.



We hope summer is treating you well and the remaining weeks are full of enjoyment. Check in with us in the next edition, where we will have a recap of this summer's exciting contests and drill winners. You can also access nysfddrillteams.com for times and places of the remaining drills as well as a ton of other information about drill team competition past and present.

We look forward to seeing you at the track!



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