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102 Years of Service to Volunteer Firemen

# The Signal

www.njnyvfa.org



**Volume 53 No. 5** Official Publication of the NJ & NY Volunteer Firemen's Association **October 2015**



The officers and members of the NJ & NY Volunteer Firemen's Association extend their deepest sympathy to the families of our departed members:

**FF Russell Kunz, Northvale, NJ FD**  
**Ex-Chief Charles R. "Bob" Schaal, Lyndhurst, NJ FD**  
**Ex-Chief Sean Bensen, Sr. Paramus, NJ FD LODD**  
**FF Michael A. Cardone Jr., Lodi NJ FD**  
**FF Howard Flatten, Waldwick, NJ FD**

*Listings of deceased members is published based on their last address on record and may not be the same as the town in which they served.*

### From the President's Pen...

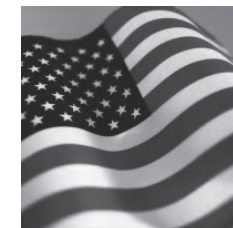
- By the time you read this, Fire Prevention Week will be over...WHEW!!! Being a firefighter in Bergen and Rockland Counties is busy enough year round, but this was cram time. FPW is a lot of work, but statistics have shown that it is worth every minute. There is a theory floating around that every time we respond to a call, somewhere along the line we failed to educate the public on Fire Safety. Some food for thought.
- The Fire Service will be watching Washington DC carefully to see if there is any effect on us with the resignation of the Speaker of the House. The legislative committee will be reporting on this at the next meeting.
- At the September meeting, the first reading was passed for a by-law change that defines a "member in good standing". This was needed as all of our awards and benefits apply only to a "member in good standing". The second reading will take place at the October meeting.
- The Executive Committee has established guidelines for the "Junior F/F Award and it will begin in 2016.
- The IT committee has been authorized to put the Association files on the cloud. This will streamline our e-files and allow the Officers to access any file at any time.
- We will have a guest speaker on "Accountability at the Fire Scene" at our October meeting.
- As of yet, we still don't have a location for our 2016 Convention. Someone needs to step up.
- More to come in the next Signal.

**Stay safe. See you in Bergenfield.....Bill**

## Remember Our Troops

Visit us at  
**www.njnyvfa.org**

Also on



### NJ & NY Volunteer Firemen's Association

Please go to the NJ & NY Volunteer Firemen's Association website **njnyvfa.org** for many excellent Firefighting Training Articles and Videos. Just look under the heading **TRAINING-STAY SMART, STAY SAFE.**

## Upcoming Meetings and Events

### Membership Meetings-Last Friday of the Month

*\*Unless otherwise noted*

<b>2015</b>			
October 30 -	Bergenfield Fire Dept. Prospect Firehouse 230 West Clinton Ave., Bergenfield, NJ 07621	March 25 -	Pearl River Excelsior Fire Engine Co. 1 1 Mike Kernan Dr., Pearl River, NY 10965
November 20* -	New Milford Co. No. 1, New Milford, NJ 249 Center St., New Milford, NJ 07646	April 29 -	Little Ferry H & L 124 Main, Little Ferry, NJ 07643
<b>December -</b>	<b>NO MEETING - MERRY CHRISTMAS HAPPY HANUKKAH</b>	May 2016	NO MEETING
<b>2016</b>		June 3 -	CONVENTION - OPEN
January 29 -	Piermont Fire Dept. 554 Piermont Ave., Piermont, NY 10968	September 30 -	OPEN
February 26 -	Old Tappan Fire Dept. 231 Old Tappan Rd, Old Tappan, NJ 07675	October 28 -	OPEN
		November 18* -	New Milford Fire Co. 2 680 Trenton St., New Milford, NJ 07646

*\*1 week early due to Thanksgiving*

**ALL MEETINGS START AT 8:00 PM**

## TO ALL PERSONAL MEMBERS

Your yearly dues must be paid up for the Death Benefit to be paid to your family. Any member whose dues are not paid for three (3) consecutive current years will be removed from the rolls of the New Jersey & New York Volunteer Firemen's Association and if they are in the Death Benefit Program, the Death Benefit will be cancelled.

This does not apply to Life Members as they are automatically eligible for ALL benefits of the association.

# PANCAKE BREAKFAST

## Knights of Fire MC

Parent Chapter



**East Rutherford Fire Dept. Engine Company #2**

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup> 2015**

**8:00 am until 12:00 pm**

**Engine Company 2's Firehouse, Carlton Avenue, East Rutherford**

**Tickets \$5.00**

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**50/50**

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## Unspoken Words (sometimes silence is not golden)

By Didymus McHugh Correspondent

1st Responder Newspaper

Story Number 082415140

There are many times that we do not keep quiet, when we should but there are times that are worse. It is the time that we should open our mouths but do not. It may be because we are ashamed, or do not know who to talk with, or think that we should be able to handle the situation. Well, there are times to be vocal and this is this time. Start the discussion. We would do a disservice if we never continue the conversation.

Firefighters hurt so many ways but all too often, we have become used to playing hurt and do not want to admit that we have a problem. This subject will be brought up more often. The topic for the month is SUICIDE, in particular firefighter and EMS suicide.

I have been going to classes about suicide and there is so much information, that people ignore. The public may talk about police suicides. This sticks out because the officers have the method of suicide strapped to them, almost all day and night. I reminded the instructor that they forgot about the entire population of firefighters and EMS. They told me that they did not hear about a firefighter going home with an axe and die via suicide. We know so many ways and exposed to many ways and methods.

So far about 675 cases of suicide have been tracked. Out of that number, five deaths were by immolation, that is setting yourself on fire. The major method was via firearms.

There is something wrong going on here. We need to be sensitive to our brothers. We need to know each others' base line behavior, so that we can tell when they are off their game. Remember that you are allowed to have tailboard chats to express your concerns about a brother one on one with nobody around.

One of my friends had a good friend who died via suicide and it was painful. "Why did I not see it coming?" We start asking a lot of questions after it happens, but how about a lot of questions to possibly help the person?. Do you even know what to look for?

According to the American Foundation of Suicide Prevention, these are the Suicide Warning Signs

"People who kill themselves exhibit one or more warning signs, either through what they say or what they do. The more warning signs, the greater the risk.

Talk

If a person talks about:

- Killing themselves
- Being a burden to others
- Unbearable pain
- Having no reason to live
- Feeling trapped

Behavior

A person's suicide risk is greater if a behavior is new or has increased, especially if it's related to a painful event, loss, or change.

- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting recklessly
- Isolating from family and friends
- Visiting or calling people to say goodbye
- Aggression
- Looking for a way to kill themselves, such as searching online for materials or means
- Withdrawing from activities
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Giving away prized possessions

Mood

People who are considering suicide often display one or more of the following moods.

- Depression
- Rage
- Humiliation
- Loss of interest
- Irritability
- Anxiety"

My thoughts are that so many times a death by suicide is swept under the rug and reported a different way. This may be done so that the family receives all the life insurance and death benefits. But people, look at the reasons, how many people know how that the divorce rate for firefighters is, 85%, versus 77% for police?

We walk around with so much stress and just keep burying it inside. We still hold onto the "macho" personality that we can handle anything.

Do we reach out for our help or the help of a brother? Why Not? If we use a CISM team for incidents, and might discuss the incident, why do we hold back? If we keep bottling up our stress, it will come out, this is not too be debated. It can be our health.

I have talked with some people who have attempted death via suicide and found that hope seemed to be missing in their lives. There are many places to find hope.

It is interesting that the number one way of death by suicide for law enforcement is also the number one way of death by suicide for fire and EMS. The most reported deaths by suicide is active firefighters versus retired, fired, resigned or disabled. The high number of death by suicide by age are close from 18 to 50. So far this year, there have been 68 completed suicides and last year was the largest amount since the tracking began and that was 104 deaths. What happened last year?

I personally ask that if you are thinking of hurting yourself or if you of someone thinking about hurting themselves, please call either Serve and Protect at 615-373-8000 or the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255).

Even though times may seem extremely dark, there is hope that can be found and people that are will to assist you. Psalm 23 states "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me." I want you to think about the word "through". We go through the hard times. We do not continue to live there. Granted it may take some time and may be painful but please remember that God is there with you. You may feel alone but it is alright to call out to Him for help. I ask that you do not give up, there is hope.

(If you learn of a fire or EMS death by suicide, please report it to ffba.org, so that we have accurate information to help our brothers and sisters)

Thank you and stay safe.



**ARTICLE VI** (revised 2015)  
(NEW WORDING) {removed wording}

**DUES**

- Sec. 1 Organization membership dues for each single company, each one company department or squad shall be \$25.00 per year. Two companies within a department shall be \$50.00 per year. Where a department is composed of three companies or more, its membership dues shall be \$75.00 per year, unless each company desires individual membership as noted above. Personal member dues shall be \$10.00 per year. All annual membership dues are due and payable on and after January 1st each calendar year. Life members shall be assessed \$3.00 per year to cover the cost of mailing the "SIGNAL". The Financial Secretary shall keep a record of all assessments paid.
- Sec. 2 Any delegate or personal member whose dues "are unpaid after (May 31) APRIL 1 of each calendar year" shall be considered to be delinquent and shall be deprived of his vote and participation in the annual convention and at all subsequent meetings until such dues have been paid in full.
- Sec. 3 Any member whose dues shall remain unpaid for a period of two years, (or more) and in arrears for more than thirty days after written notice of such arrearage shall have been mailed to the member by the Financial Secretary, shall be dropped from the roll. The Association Secretary shall record in the minutes the names of all members dropped from the roll for non-payment of dues.
- Sec. 4 A member dropped for non-payment of dues shall not be eligible for membership in this Association until the arrearage on the books of the Financial Secretary has been paid in full and reinstatement voted by the Association. THE ONLY PRIVILEGE OF ANY SUCH MEMBER SHALL BE TO APPLY FOR REINSTATEMENT AND TO PAY THE DUES ARREARAGE.
- Sec. 5 ANY MEMBER WHO IS NOT THE MEMBERSHIP ROLLS AS A CURRENT MEMBER SHALL NOT BE ELIGIBLE FOR ANY ASSOCIATION BENEFITS WHICH MIGHT ACCRUE TO A MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING.

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**ARTICLE XII** - Amendments (NEW 2014)

- Sec. 1 A All motions to alter, amend or repeal any of these by-laws must be made in writing at a regular meeting of the New Jersey and New York Volunteer Firemens Association, signed by the proposer, and if seconded shall be entered upon the minutes.
- B The motion will then be forwarded to the By-Laws Committee for their recommendations. These recommendations will be reported to the Board of Trustees at their next regular meeting following.
- C The approved by two thirds of the membership of the Board of Trustees, these recommendations will be reported to the Association at the next regular meeting following.
- D If rejected by two thirds of the membership of the Board of Trustees the reasons will be reported to the Association at the next regular meeting following.
- E Thereupon, the amendment shall be presented, read, and passed by a two-thirds vote at two regular meetings of the Association before the same shall go into effect.

# NEW MILFORD FIRE COMPANY 2 HOLDS TO TRADITION FOR 100 YEARS

OCTOBER 8, 2015 LAST UPDATED: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2015, 12:31 AM

BY PHILIP DEVENCENTIS

ASSISTANT EDITOR | TWIN-BORO NEWS

They say the more things change, the more they stay the same, and at the firehouse on Trenton Street in New Milford, that certainly is the case. Men who inhabit that building hold fast to traditions they've seemingly become heir to, while the nature of the fire protection service continues to progress.

A celebration of the 100th anniversary of Company 2 of the New Milford Volunteer Fire Department is as much a nod to the past as it is a welcome to the future.

Festivities began 1 p.m. on Saturday October 10, 2015 with a parade, followed by a party on the field behind the borough hall.

"I'm very proud of the work our volunteer firemen do for the town," Mayor Ann Subrizi said in congratulating Company 2 on its anniversary. "We're pleased to have the opportunity to salute them."

The parade, coordinated by the Northern Valley Fire Chiefs Association, stepped off in front of New Milford High School on River Road.

Firefighters from 17 departments, including New Milford's, participated in the march, which coincides with Fire Prevention Week.

The party featured food, a presentation of trophies, a raffle and a concert by The Flying Mueller Brothers.

Grand marshals of the parade were Gerald Howard, with 50 years of service, who was chief in 1986 and company president twice; George Saigh, with 55 years of service and served as company president for 12 years; and, Robert Heimburg, with 50 years of service, the oldest active ex-chief.

"The fire company definitely has evolved," said Heimburg, who turns 87 next month.

Heimburg also was the first member of the company to twice be chief, in 1972 and 1980.

"What I really like is, I was here for the 50th, 75th and now, the 100th anniversary," he added. "And, I worked on all them."

Angelo DeCarlo, the company's treasurer, who was chief in 1998 and company president in 2009, said members have been planning and saving money for the 100th anniversary celebration for 15 years.

The company's annual golf outing, with all proceeds going toward the celebration, was held just last week at Blue Hill Golf Course in Pearl River, N.Y.

It was the ninth straight year that event was held, but many other customs date back decades.

Beginning in the mid-'60s, for example, Company 2 firefighters participated in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade by walking the massive Smokey Bear balloon through New York City streets. The balloon was retired from the parade, but breakfast still is dished out at the firehouse every Thanksgiving morning.

Firefighters' annual toy drive, a department-wide benefit for Toys for New Milford's needy children, grew out of a Christmas party that once was held on a yearly basis for local children.

On the same token, an exclusive men's holiday party has morphed into a social gathering with their wives.

Heimburg said a gift exchange always was part of the event. "If you had an accident with the truck during the year, you got the fender," said ex-chief and current company president Robert Ryan, recalling one of the many gags members would pull on each other.

There have been ragamuffin parades on Halloween, picnics on Labor Day and spring dances at the site of Woodcrest Health Care Center — it used to be a "big, empty lot," according to Ryan.

Those events fell by the wayside, but the feeling of camaraderie that makes each of them so memorable is a constant presence for members of Company 2.

"The fire service is steeped in tradition," DeCarlo said.

"We call it 'brotherhood' because it only was men back then," he added. "There's a common bond. You can go anywhere in the country, or in the world, and you speak the same language, just different accents."

Company 1 was formed in 1906 — at that time, the Peetzburg section of Palisades Township.

A fire that destroyed a home nine years later at Trenton Street and Zabriskie Place spurred action by locals to form a second company farther south.

An article, published on Dec. 1, 1915, announced the news:

"Residents of River Edge Manor now have fire protection of their own and do not have to depend on the kindness of other fire companies to respond."

River Edge Manor was another section of Palisades Township; New Milford wasn't incorporated as a borough until 1922.

According to the article, members of the company convened for meetings the first Monday of each month — a ritual they continue to follow. In fact, meetings not only are held on the same day of the week, but at the same time of day. DeCarlo said some younger members asked to change the time, but their request was turned down. "It worked for 100 years," he said.

Company 2 has had 417 total members, 42 of whom have been named chief.

But, it wasn't until 1932 that the company saw its first chief. Ever since then, members representing Companies 1 and 2 have alternated the position, a tradition that's codified by ordinance.

No one from Company 2 has been chief more times than Alan Silverman, the borough's fire marshal, who again is expected to lead the department next year.

"The personalities have changed because you're dealing with different generations," said Silverman, who has been chief five times, the last in 2010. "But, it's the same dedication."

Silverman stressed the importance of receiving financial aid from the community.

"I think it's important they realize that, 12 o'clock at night in the rain, and we're out," he added. "One of the biggest things that has hurt us is our fund drive, which we send out. We used to count on residents to support us."

The company, at 28 active members, is in the process of moving into its fourth firehouse, which more than doubles the space it had in its old quarters that was built in 1967.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF NEW MILFORD VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT COMPANY 2

The precursor to the New Milford Volunteer Ambulance Corps was this truck, which Company 2 purchased in 1937 for first aid use. This building served as the first firehouse of Company 2 from 1915 through 1921.

