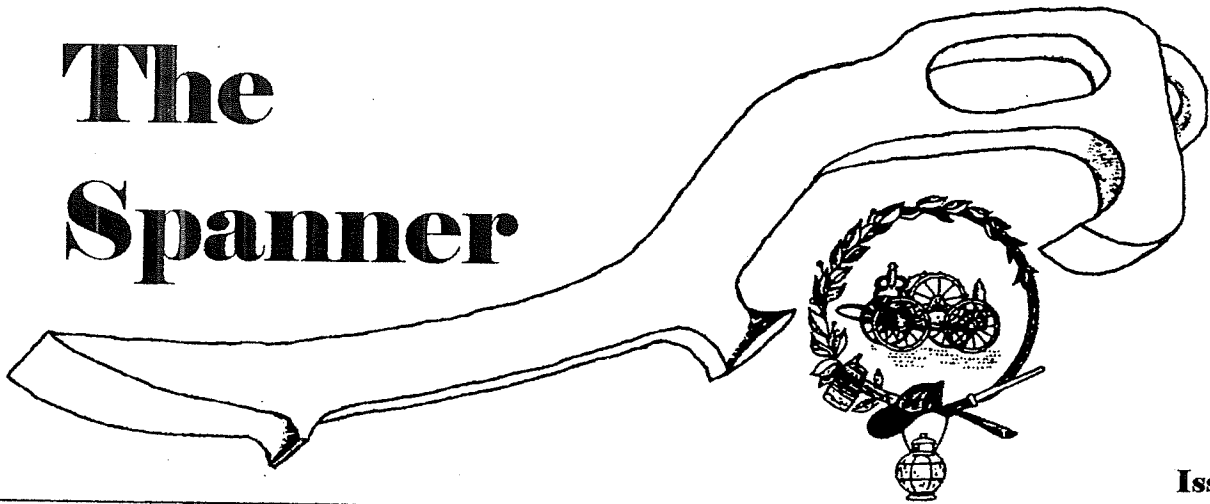


# The Spanner



Autumn 1998

Issue 2

Lingohocken Fire Company • Washington Ave. & Mill Creek Rd. • Wycombe • Telephone 215-598-3500  
Editors: John Bailey • Adam Colombo • Cheryl Gorski • George Rowe

## LINGOHOCKEN FIRE COMPANY

P.O. Box 102  
Wycombe, PA 18980

US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Bulk Rate  
Penns Park, PA  
18943  
Permit No. 1

### THE SPANNER

This past winter several of us in the Fire Company felt that we needed to make an effort in developing community relations. The work of the volunteers who make up the Lingohocken Fire Company has not always been well understood by some members of the community we serve, and we want to get our message out to these neighbors.

We have decided to call the newsletter *The Spanner* because spanners are tools we use to join together hoses. It is in this same spirit that we launch this newsletter to link the Fire Company and the Associates. This newsletter is designed to inform the community of our activities. If you have ideas to share let us know.

GR

## FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

Every year around the date of the Great Chicago Fire which occurred on 8 October 1871, our country observes Fire Prevention Week. In that fire, much of the city burned and 250 lives were lost. On the same day in Peshtigo, Wisconsin, a huge forest fire destroyed that town and killed 1,152 people, the worst loss of life from fire in our country's history.

This year we observe Fire Prevention Week from October 4 to 11. As usual, Lingohocken Fire Company will stage a poster contest for school children, visit the schools and day-care centers and hold an Open House at the fire station in Wycombe on 8 October from 7 to 9 p.m. when winners in the poster contest will be recognized. The theme for this year's Fire Prevention Week is "The Great Escape". If your child attends a school which we are unable to visit, please stop by the station in Wycombe Tuesday evenings at 7:30 p.m. to pick up an entry form and rules. This year's contest winner will be included in a national poster contest!

We are proud of the program we have developed for the different grades and we have seen good results come from it. Last winter a home was filled with smoke in the middle of the night because of a fire in a crawl-space. If the family's young girl had not insisted on having a smoke detector near that space, it is possible that the family would have died. As it was, the family escaped unharmed and our fire fighters rescued their guinea pig and bird.

Quite a few of the fires we have to fight are caused by easily preventable problems. Here are some to avoid:

- Worn insulation on wires and extension cords;
- Extension cords not heavy enough to carry the load (Are they warm?);
- Wrong size fuses or circuit breakers;
- Too many appliances on the same circuit;
- Wiring not installed by a certified electrician;
- Is the wood stove or fireplace chimney clean?
- Has the oil burner been cleaned and serviced properly?
- Are the wood ashes disposed of in metal containers?
- Are smokers careful with their matches and lighters?
- Are the storage areas, basements and garages kept free from combustible items?
- Are smoke detectors properly installed in sleeping areas, the basement and on the first floor?
- Are the detector's batteries charged and tested monthly?
- Is there a fire extinguisher in the kitchen, basement and/or garage?
- Do you know how to use the fire extinguishers you have?
- Do you have a Fire Escape Plan?
- Do you practice that escape plan?

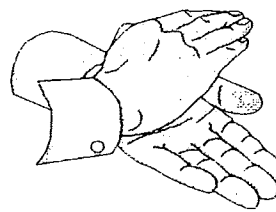
In keeping with this year's Fire Prevention theme, the fire station in Wycombe will sound its siren on Wednesday 7 October at 6 p.m. to alert all residents to practice your own Escape Plan. As this will be practice, please do not perform any potentially unsafe acts such as using a ladder.

If you have any questions about the fire safety in your home, operating fire extinguishers or how to develop a safe Fire Escape Plan, please ask a fire fighter at our Open House.

GR

### Calendar of Events

Wed., October 7 6:00PM	Fire Escape Plan Drill ( <i>Fire Prevention</i> , pg. 2)
Thurs., October 8 7:00 - 9:00PM	Fire Prevention Open House
Sun., October 25 8:00AM - 1:00PM	Pancake Breakfast
Sat., November 21 8:30AM - 11:30AM	413 Adopt-A-Highway Clean Up



Thanks to all those  
who helped park cars  
at the Grange Fair.

We had another great year!

## FIRE, RESCUE AND SAFETY

This summer the fire company was unusually busy. Our substation in Forest Grove is operating well and has drawn much-needed new members. With a number of road closings in the area, the engine company responding from the substation enables us to arrive at an incident from different directions and sometimes quicker than from the main station. Due to these road closings and the heavier traffic load on other roads, we responded to several accidents which required rescue efforts. With the increase in traffic in our area as well as the incident in Montgomery County involving a volunteer fire fighter who was struck by a vehicle, please remember to be careful and considerate of our volunteers working at an incident.

The fire company was particularly busy fighting fire this summer. On 7 July, we responded to a three alarm fire at the Anchor Inn. This fire required assistance from 16 companies, including nine tankers, three ladder trucks, one tower truck and Central Bucks Ambulance Squad. The tankers worked through heavy traffic north and south of the scene to bring the more than 500,000 gallons of water used to extinguish the fire.

Fire fighters were able to utilize thermal imaging cameras to find hidden fire hot spots behind walls and beneath floors. The stone and multiple

stage construction of the Inn made for a very hot and exhausting fire which caused a few fire fighter injuries. This fire remains under investigation.

The following week, the Pineville Antiques business had a fire in one of their buildings used for furniture restoration. This fire was caused by improper wiring and was well-involved before we arrived. Fighting this fire also caused a fire fighter injury.

The third fire in as many weeks involved a residence on Swamp Road. This fire also seems to have been caused by faulty wiring. Fire fighters' efforts were greatly hampered by obstacles stacked throughout the garage near the seat of the fire. These obstacles and the high temperatures caused another fire fighter injury.

In all fire ground operations, safety is foremost. At the Anchor Inn fire, the building was evacuated whenever conditions became unstable. All fire fighters receive extensive training and gain experience before being permitted to enter a burning building, but despite these advantages, accidents occur. In the spirit of Fire Prevention Week, please remember that not only are your home and family in danger in an unsafe house but you endanger the lives of friends and neighbors who are our community volunteer fire fighters. AC

---

## BRIDGING THE GAP

When PennDOT closed the Wycombe bridge on Forest Grove Road, response times for trucks located at our main station were increased by as much as ten minutes. In good conscience as well as by law, these extended response times were unacceptable. In order to remedy this situation, we purchased a building in Forest Grove and opened Lingohocken's substation, Station 95. Due to unexpected costs of the substation, our budget for this year, as well as coming years, is being stretched.

In order to continue providing this newsletter to all of our residents, we need help. A Wrightstown resident endorsed this issue's mailing costs to expand our distribution from our fire fighters and associates to all of Lingohocken Fire Company's residents.

The fire company sincerely thanks this resident for his generosity and extends others to follow his lead. If you are interested in helping with costs or distribution, please contact the fire company at 598-3500 and leave a message. AC

## CHIEF'S REPORT

In early 1997, I read an article about hand-held cameras that actually allowed fire fighters to see through dense smoke. This new development utilizes infrared technology to create images that can be seen through a view finder when the naked eye is completely blinded. Obviously an innovation like this would allow fire fighters to move safely through a burning structure and greatly increase the chances of finding a victim. In addition the camera would aid fire fighters in finding hidden fires that may be traveling through a wall or confined space. As I began to research the purchase of a thermal imaging camera, I found that among all of the positive aspects there was one main drawback: THE PRICE. At a cost of \$25,000 per unit, it seemed that the cameras were out of our reach.

With a long standing commitment to remain at the forefront of technology, we continued to investigate ways to make the cameras possible. In June this year, through a grant from the Buckingham Township Board of Supervisors, we purchased two thermal imaging cameras. In conjunction with the Midway Fire Company and the Doylestown Fire Company a total of six cameras were ordered, all paid for by Buckingham Township. The complete units will feature hand-held operation as well as a video link that enables fire fighters working inside a structure to transmit what they see back to the officer in charge. We feel very fortunate that the local government officials share in our effort to make our community as fire safe as possible.

*Chief John Bailey*

## HELP OUR VOLUNTEERS

Presently the Lingohocken Fire Company has a membership of about 48 active firefighters and fire police. While these numbers seem good, there is a growing problem, and we are trying to find ways to ease it. The Fire Company is structured with three chief officers, two captains (one at each station) and two lieutenants. These are the leaders who direct the fireground activities and who have responsibility for our training and day-to-day operations.

The problem we have is affordable housing. Three of our volunteer officers no longer live in the district for which we are responsible. Each continues to be as active as possible but they have been slowed in their response times for emergencies. As we know, the first minutes of an emergency are critical and having adequate manpower to handle it is vital. We have lost the services of other trained, eager volunteers as they have married and have tried to find affordable housing in which to start their new lives.

Generally the people who volunteer as fire fighters do not live in the large, expensive homes being built in Wrightstown and its environs. There are some homes in our area which are affordable, and there are rentals of houses and apartments which come onto the market. Often these are snapped up before they are even advertised.

If you are considering selling or renting your land or home, or know of someone who is, **please contact us at 598-3500 and leave a message!** You may make it possible for a trained, dedicated volunteer to remain in our area where he or she can be of service to us all.

GR