
The Spanner



Winter 2009

www.lfco.org

Issue 13

Lingohocken Fire Company · Post Office Box 102 · Wycombe, PA 18980 · Telephone 215-598-3500

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A LETTER FROM THE DESK OF THE CHIEF

Hello and Happy Holidays to all during this season of giving. I would like to personally thank you for taking the time to review "The Spanner" and assisting us with our 2009 fund drive. The officers and members of the Lingohocken Fire Company truly thank you for your support.

This was a great year for getting out in the public and getting acquainted with new members of the community. We had our first Car Show at the Grange Fair grounds this past June, and despite having to utilize our rain date, we still managed to have 87 cars attend the event. 25 awards were distributed for 1st and 2nd places in many divisions, including antique and classic cars, hot rods, muscle cars, trucks, and motorcycles. Thanks to those in the community who helped organize, as well as the car owners who came out to support us and make the show a success. For those of you who are interested in participating in next year's event, please continue to look at our web site for more information.

As fire prevention goes we had another successful year, contacting 500 students at 9 different locations. Many students participated in our annual poster contest, which is designed to instill the ideas of fire prevention to our elementary school students. This year we tipped our hats to the Wrightstown Township Board of Supervisors for recognizing the students who participated in this annual event and presenting them with citations for their fire prevention efforts. If you have elementary school age students who attend other schools and would like to participate in next year's event, please contact us so we can get you the poster board. We also provided 60 adults with work place safety, fire prevention and extinguishment

techniques. If you have a business in our area, please contact us to see how we can help you.

Time is of the essence in case of emergency and one of our biggest problems with our ever-expanding coverage area is locating your address in an emergency. Two years ago, we started our address sign campaign. As you drive around the community, you will notice the "Blue Reflective" signs at the end of driveways marking the address. If you are one of those families who have purchased and affixed the sign to your post or mailbox, we thank you so very much. Even after providing this identification system, many residents still Do Not meet the code standard, set in place by the zoning ordinance. If you or someone you know does not have driveway marking at the end of their driveway or they are not visible or reflective at night, please purchase a sign today. Please check out our website or stop by the township building for a sign application.

Just as a reminder, notify your insurance company that the Lingohocken Fire Company now has an ISO rating of seven and by spring we hope to reach six. So far, residents have let us know that they have seen savings between \$70 and \$600 dollars on homeowners' insurance by notifying their insurance company of the ISO rating. Please look at our web site for more information.

Have a safe and joyous holiday season and thank you so much for taking the time to read "The Spanner" and assisting with our fund drive. Also, please feel free to stop by any Tuesday night to see who we are and how you can get involved.

Wayne G. Murphy, Jr, BS, NREMT-P
Chief, Lingohocken Fire Company

WOMAN RESCUED FROM FIERY CRASH

On the morning of January 24, 2008, Lingohocken and Central Bucks Ambulance were dispatched to Swamp Road near Mozart Road in Buckingham Township for a single-vehicle auto extrication. The auto hit a tree. Lingohocken Firefighter Chas McHenry came upon the scene on his way to the station. He found a woman trapped in the vehicle with a fire starting in the engine compartment. Chas and a passer-by were able to rescue the woman from the vehicle prior to the arrival of fire apparatus and before the car became involved in fire. For his lifesaving actions, Chas was awarded the Burpee Special Services Award by the Central Bucks Chamber of Commerce at their annual Emergency Services Recognition Dinner in October.

A REPORT ON 2008

Most of the community becomes aware of the presence of our firefighters when the siren blows or the fire trucks are moving quickly to a call. However, before any of that can happen, a lot of preparation has taken place. This past year offers a good sampling of that background work.

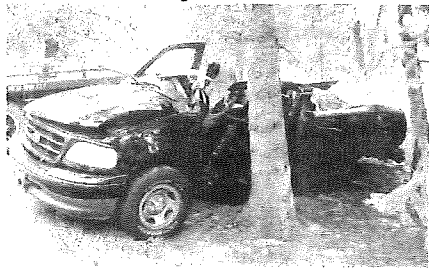
In order to be trained to a point where a "rookie" can ride the truck to a call, he/she must have completed about 120 hours of training. Two new recruits have done this.

In the past twelve months we have had 186 calls, and the firefighters and fire police have given 1,333 man-hours of service. They also have put in 1,351 man-hours for training. The firefighters and our Associate members donated 1,182 man-hours to work details such as the Grange Fair parking, the Car Show, Pancake Breakfast, Fund Drive mailings and escorting Santa on his annual trip on our fire truck just before Christmas. All of this adds up to 4,000 man-hours freely donated to the citizens of our service area.

In addition to the figures above, countless hours have been spent in business and committee meetings, and in planning sessions - all designed to improve our service to you.

DRIVE CAREFULLY

We carry an extensive array of tools and equipment to extricate drivers from vehicle crashes. These tools and equipment are quite expensive to purchase and maintain. Unfortunately, we have to utilize these tools far too often - in the past 12 months we have had to put this equipment and our training to work a dozen times. From September 2007 through August 2008, we performed nine extrications on Swamp Road alone. These are only the most serious accidents to which we



respond - there are numerous less serious accidents in our coverage area.

Many of the major roadways in our beautiful and scenic coverage area -

Swamp Road, Forest Grove Road, Second Street Pike, and Route 413 have speed limits of up to 45 MPH and have little or no shoulders.

Deer and other animals tend to share the road. It only takes a moment to need to suddenly swerve, or to have your wheels drop off onto the soft shoulder causing you to lose control of your vehicle, rolling over or striking a tree or electric pole. Then we get the call.

Our roads can be quite hazardous. Follow the speed limits - they are posted for a reason and stay focused on the road. Don't be distracted by using cell phones or other electronic devices. Wear your seatbelt, it's the law and we regularly see victims with minimal injuries because they wore their belt, and victims more seriously injured or killed because they did not.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Your Fire Company is always looking for new members to help us accomplish our mission. Young men and women can start their training as young as the age of 14. All training and equipment costs are covered by the Fire Company. In 2008, Lingohocken was awarded a four-year Federal SAFER Grant for recruiting costs and to establish a length of service retirement program that will provide a token financial benefit to firefighters upon retiring from active service after 10 years or more. You will see more recruiting activities in the coming months. These activities will include a membership brochure, an updated website, and recruiting signs around town. If you want to join us as a firefighter or in an administrative or fundraising capacity, call us or visit us online. Better yet, stop by our Wycombe station one Tuesday evening.

NEW AND RETURNING MEMBERS

In August we welcomed back former member Duane Smith of Wycombe. Duane is the son of former fire chief, the late Calvin Smith. Duane began as a Junior Firefighter when he was 14 and served seven years before leaving the department. He has now returned to active firefighting and is an employee of the Wrightstown Township Road Department.

This past summer we also welcomed Tim Weber, of Wycombe, and Tanner Chilson of Penns Park as Junior Firefighters. Tim is student at Notre Dame High School in New Jersey. Tanner is a student at the Middle Bucks Institute of Technology's Public Safety training. This summer both completed Firefighter I For Juniors training and upon reaching age 18 will do their final training to qualify them for interior firefighting.

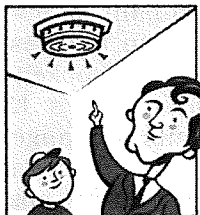
FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR - JOHN MYERS

At its annual awards dinner held at Spring Mill Country Club on October 26, the Central Bucks County Chamber of Commerce recognized the outstanding firefighters and emergency workers selected by their colleagues in the fire and EMS services. This year's winner from Lingohocken Fire Company was John Myers, our Fire Police Captain. He was selected for the honor because of his extraordinary dedication, generous sharing of time and effort in creating projects and following through on them. He was the driving force behind our Car Show and has worked hard on the Fire Prevention program. He also assisted other municipalities in his role as a volunteer, and his personnel file is filled with commendations from police chiefs near and far. He exemplifies the best of the volunteer spirit.

ALARM CALLS

Over the past twelve months, we have been dispatched to 186 calls. Of these, 53 have been for alarm system activations - smoke detectors and CO alarms. These devices do save lives, but they also comprise about 1/3 of our call volume. Calls for alarm systems that prove to be accidental or "false alarms" present unnecessary wear and tear on our vehicles and personnel. These incidents can be reduced by following some simple steps:

1. Cover the detector with paper or plastic bags when dusty work is to be done. Tell your contractor or workmen to do this, and be sure that he uncovers the detectors when the work is completed.
2. Check and replace batteries in your detectors annually. Even the hard-wired



- alarms have back-up batteries that sound an alert when they wear down.
3. Follow the NFPA recommendation to replace detectors every 10 years.
4. Vacuum the detector periodically to remove spider webs as they can cause false activations.

We always will respond to check out an alarm call. However, in 2008 many of these calls turned to be non-emergency incidents that could have easily been avoided had simple maintenance been performed.

FIREFIGHTING SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Like all other professionals, firefighters need to keep learning in order to maintain our basic skills as well as become familiar with new technologies that continue to develop as new needs and new challenges are presented in our community. As the world around us becomes more complex, the emergencies that we are asked to mitigate have become more complex as well. These new challenges have ranged from hybrid automobiles and their battery and electrical systems to ethanol in modern fuel tanks, requiring slightly different firefighting techniques.

The two pumpers we built in 2003 - one for each of our stations - have CAFS (Compressed Air Foam Systems) which has proven quite effective in extinguishing fires but has required changes in operating the pumps as well as new handling techniques for our firefighters. Unfortunately, we respond to a significant number of serious car accidents each year. The rapidly changing vehicle technologies have required us to continue to purchase new tools for extricating trapped victims from these wrecks swiftly and effectively. Using these tools safely requires practice, and we now have both laptop and hardcopy reference materials. These materials give us detailed information about the buildings in our coverage area, including drawings and annotated photographs. We also have vehicle details at our fingertips such as construction, airbag schematics, battery location etc. This material permits us to focus our rescue efforts in the right place. No longer is the battery "under the hood" on all automobiles.

We conduct training drills on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Tuesday evening of each month except December. Two drills each month are devoted to review of learned skills or to acquire new ones. The other drill is used to check and maintain our air packs to be certain that these lifesaving devices are immediately operable at an emergency scene. The placement of the air packs on the trucks is rotated each month so that they receive equal use.

On that same evening, we also check saws and other portable equipment to ensure readiness.

Some of our training is done in the classroom but much of it is done out in the field. Several area home and business owners have donated homes and buildings slated for demolition to us for training. Recently, the Heritage Building Group was kind enough to give us use of a commercial building on York Road to utilize for forcible entry and overhaul training. The ability to practice our trade on a real building provides some of our best training, and we appreciate the communities' willingness to cooperate with us. If you have a vehicle or building that may be available for training purposes, please let us know.

In 2008 we focused on a review of the basics and covered interior firefighting's most serious problems - flashovers, backdrafts, and serious burns. Engine company and ladder operations along with ventilation practices were also reviewed. Drafting from the dry hydrants fed from ponds in our area was practiced, along with pump practice and hydrant work. In July, we focused on rescue work with a special emphasis on farm equipment rescue.

We spent August reviewing hazardous materials incidents and practicing spill control. A building slated for demolition afforded us an opportunity to learn and practice techniques for forcing entry into locked areas.

In October, one drill was devoted to practice with a large caliber, engine-mounted deck "gun" as well as portable deck "guns" that allow us to flow large quantities of water. We utilized another abandoned structure to conduct search and rescue evolutions with the Warwick Township Fire.

Our dedicated firefighters turn out month after month, regardless of the weather, to train and prepare for whatever challenge is next. Each firefighter training session also helps to improve our ISO insurance rating.

We clearly understand that no two emergencies are alike; so we train and prepare so that we are ready for every emergency situation we are called upon to handle.

UPPER MAKEFIELD EXTENDS CONTRACT

For 95 years, Lingohocken Fire Company has been providing fire protection to portions of Upper Makefield Township. For the past 35 years, we have been working under a contract which trusted us with fire protection in the western portion of the township. The contract also provided for payment of 66% of the fire tax collected in the portion of the township serviced and the ability to solicit donations from residences and businesses.

In October, the Upper Makefield Fire Company a made a proposal to the Upper Makefield Board of Supervisors to change fire protection coverage in the western portions of that township. They proposed to transfer fire protection responsibilities from Lingohocken to Upper Makefield. While this proposed change would impact Lingohocken financially, resulting in a 13% reduction in revenues, this is not the main concern. For residents, the proposal represents a change in fire protection coverage. Upper Makefield Fire Company would use a one-truck substation located on Eagle Road to cover this area of the township. While the substation is closer to some of the areas Lingohocken covers in Upper Makefield, it would mean coverage in that area of the township would be provided from the single engine instead of the current, full services of Lingohocken Fire Company. Lingohocken was afforded the opportunity to discuss its fire protection capabilities with the Supervisors at a Board Meeting. We thank all those residents who came out to the Township meetings to express their concern regarding the proposed service change, and to provide support. We thank the Upper Makefield Supervisors for allowing us to serve Upper Makefield Township residents for the past 35 years and we look forward to continuing to do so.

GRANGE FAIR & CAR SHOW EVENTS

The **Grange Fair** is always held over a five-day period, ending on the third weekend in August, and for us this is a key fundraising activity. For years three local fire companies, Lingohocken, Newtown and Upper Makefield, have participated in parking duties including collection of admission fees and guidance of the thousands of drivers who attend, exhibit, or work the fair. The fire companies follow a rotating calendar with two companies working two days, and the third company taking Saturday, the busiest day. Each day requires 32 volunteers working in shifts.

All admission receipts are turned over to the Grange. The Grange maintains half of the receipts with the remainder being divided evenly between the three fire companies. The maximum per company is set at \$10,000. This money can be used to pay bills, buy equipment, or to meet other expenses. We work hard for this donation but it is well worth the effort.

The **Rockin' At Lingohocken Car Show** in June was led by John Myers, our Fire Police Captain. The Show had been scheduled for Sunday, June 22nd at the Grange Fair grounds, but predicted rain and a threatened hail storm caused us to move the event. The date change resulted in fewer entries and a reduced number of attendees but we learned a lot while having a good time admiring those beautifully cared-for automobiles, trucks and some vintage military vehicles.

Fifteen firefighters, nine Associates and local Boy Scouts made this event happen.

We are planning another show for summer 2009 and are getting some expert help from several interested neighbors. As soon as the date is set, we will announce it on our website. We look forward to seeing you there. If you would like to help, please call us.

SANTA CLAUS RUN - SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2008

<p>2:00PM - 3:00PM Devonshire Estates: Oxfordshire Phase 1 Gazebo Playground Phase 2 Gazebo Phase 3 Gazebo Buckinghamshire 3:15PM - 3:45PM Heritage Center: Rosemont Meadowview 4:00PM - 5:00PM Buckingham Forest: Powder Horn @ Trotters, @ Green Ridge Green Ridge @ Hedgerow, @ Forest Hill, @ Deer Meadow, @ Wheatfield, Powder Horn @ Spring Hollow</p>	<p>5:15PM - 6:00PM Windsor Square: Springtown @ Winterbridge Forest Grove Church Upper Mountain Road Edge Hill Road 6:15PM - 7:15PM Buckingham Springs Spring Meadow Community Center 2:00PM - 2:45PM Buckingham Valley Nursing Home 3:00PM - 3:30PM Fox Hill @ Martindell Warner Meadows 3:45PM - 4:45PM Alexanders Ct. Skoures Ln. Jericho Valley @Warner Way, @Fire Creek, @Fire Thorn, @Hunters Woods, @Ridge,</p>	<p>Williams @Ridge, @Woodland, @Ranch Brownsburg @ Colts Neck 5:00PM - 6:30PM Wrenwood Way J. Chapman Dr. West Hampton Court White Gate: Buckman @ Maher Neshaminy Cliffs Hallowell @ Wooley Run 2:00PM - 2:30PM Rushland Post Office Estates of Balamore Swamp Rd @ Mega Way Swamp Rd @ Apple Hill Smith btwn Forest Grove & Swamp 2:45PM - 3:45PM Dark Hollow @ MacClesfield, @ Camelot Mozart Road</p>	<p>Lower Mountain @ Franklyn, @ Devonshire Creek @ Lookaway, @ No Name, @Holicong Holicong @ New Hope, @ New Ridge, @ Towerview 4:00PM - 5:00PM Street Rd. @Windy Hollow, @ Lurgan, @Eastburn Buckmanville Road Pineville Road Pine Lane 5:10PM - 6:00PM Township Line @ Brian Cherry @ Benjamin Park to Durham (incl. Perry) Cherry @ Washington Cedar Lane Penns Park @ Cedar Penns Park Church</p>
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