

AURORA FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

Issue 1, May 17, 2004

Welcome to our e-mail newsletter, a trial run, to let our friends know what is happening in the Department. This month's coverage is on one member and one county team that our Department supports. We hope to follow this format in future issues, featuring one member, as well as an activity, specialized team, or equipment. If any of you, our readers, have suggestions or questions you would like answered, please submit them to the editor. We plan to send out four issues per year, hoping that you, and we, will not find that too much to read/write. If you know of anyone who would like to receive our newsletter, please send their e-mail address to avfd@rochester.rr.com and we will add them to the list. Copies will also be available at The Aurora Free Library.

Contributing to this issue were Frank Zimdahl, Marie Taylor and Ann Balloni. Thanks to Sara Miller for her great ideas and Ethan MacCormick for his computer skills.

By way of introduction, below is a list of the members of The Aurora Volunteer Fire Department.

The Aurora Volunteer Fire Department

Life Members

Ralph Yale
David Brooks
Thomas Gunderson
Arthur Myers
Marie Taylor (EMT)
Kenneth Kabelac
Judith Warren
George Yann (Fire Police)
Phil Murphy
James Weber

Active Members

Ronald Jones (Asst. Safety Officer)
James Bailey
Kenneth Zabriskie (Asst. Chief)
James Chase
Thomas Yale (Ladder Captain)
Thomas Vawter (EMT)
Katharine Chase (Treasurer, EMT)
Frank Piechuta (Safety Officer)
Mark Bailey (Asst. Chief)
Kevin Murphy
Carl Whiffen (Fire Police)
Edward Heslop (EMS Captain, Medic)

Sarah Homick	(President, Engine Captain, EMT)
Kevin Jones	(Tanker Captain, EMT)
Frank Zimdahl	(Chief)
Jessie Shutter	
Laura Martin-Reed	(Paramedic)
Larry Mattingly	
George Farenthold	(EMT)
Virgil Farlow	(Vice President)
Maeve Gould	
Ethan MacCormick	(Rescue Captain, EMT)
Ann Balloni	(Secretary)
Richard Bradley	(EMT)
Sara Miller	(EMT)
Jeremy Yann	
Chris Frank	

Probation

Rebecca Garbinsky
Nicholas Garbinsky

Auxiliary

Faith Bailey
Alice Bradley
Linda Kabelac
Betty Townsend
Sandy Hilliard
Faye Marion
Judy Bailey

Know your Fire Department



Meet Ron Jones. Ron has been an active member of our department for 48 years. He lives in Levanna with his wife, Cindy and together they've raised eight children. Their two youngest, Sarah and Kevin, are active members of our department. Two others, Ronnie and Craig were members until they moved away.

Ron joined the department in 1956 at the age of 18. His father had been a member years before. The department had one truck, a 1937 Brockway parked behind the Heary building. There was no medical, no sanctioned drills and training was on the job.

Ron and some of the other younger members began drilling on their own when the department purchased a new 1959 LaFrance fire truck. When Ron, Tom Gunderson, Gary Shook and Art Myers went against department protocol and tested the hose line

on the LaFrance, the chief quit as a result.

Ron's progressive attitude has been a constant asset to the fire department. He can operate every piece of equipment and is always willing to share his knowledge with the rest of us. As the department's assistant safety officer, Ron helps ensure that members have the training and equipment necessary when responding to an emergency.

Along with his duties as a firefighter, Ron was also one of our first EMTs (Emergency Medical Technicians) and continued his certification for 31 years. He was a founding, and still active member, of the Cayuga County High Angle Rescue Team (see adjacent article) and the trainer for our Ice Rescue Team.

There have been numerous changes in the department since Ron first joined. The EMS service went from a converted "old bread truck" to a Suburban type ambulance to the state of the art advanced life service rig that we have now. Our ambulance service began with a "load and go" operation to administering much of the treatment on scene. When Ron started, the chief was called at his house if there was a fire and blew the siren from a button located in his house, followed by Shirley Maassen calling each member by phone. Now everyone has a pager and we're summoned from the 911 center. Where once firefighters were only equipped with a rubber raincoat, now we're all issued Nomex turnout gear and Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA).

One thing that hasn't changed in the last 48 years is the excitement and camaraderie among members of the fire department. Ron believes this is why people join and why they stay. Even through the tragedies, there is satisfaction from being able to help put the pieces back together. After so many years it's reasonable to assume that Ron has seen it all. However, just last summer, a call came over the monitor that a plane had crashed near Ron's home. Fortunately, there were no injuries and the resulting fire of the small engine plane was quickly extinguished. Upon returning to the firehouse, Ron turned to the chief and said with a big smile on his face: "I've been here 47 years. I never thought I'd hear aircraft crash come over the monitor."

Much more could be written about Ron's experiences. Suffice it to say, Ron exemplifies the spirit and tradition of the volunteer firefighter. This community owes a great deal of thanks to Ron Jones for helping to build and continue the professional organization that is the Aurora Volunteer Fire Department. Thank you Ron and congratulations on your long and distinguished career as a member of this department.

Specialized Emergency Response Teams

Cayuga County High Angle Rescue Team

The Cayuga-Tompkins High Angle Rescue Team was formed on February 20, 1984. In 1992 it became the Cayuga County High Angle Rescue Team (CHART). The high angle rescue team was established as a result of several difficult rescue and/or recovery situations in the county. One of these involved the rescue of a woman at Moonshine Falls. Ron Jones, a founding member, remembers the complications the department personnel faced trying to reach the woman and realized they had to come up with a plan for future rescues.

The team was originally formed to deal with emergencies on cliffs and gullies. They have since developed techniques to effect rescues from silos, grain elevators, storage structures, high rise buildings & roofs, construction sites, radio towers, gravel pits, dug wells, fast water streams and other situations that require special equipment and techniques not normally possessed by fire departments. They have over 100 hours of training in rope rescue and Ron gives basic instruction to our department members at one of our monthly drills.

CHART averages about 20 members in 10 departments around the county. Along with Ron Jones, the Aurora Volunteer Fire Department currently has three members on the High Angle Rescue Team: Sarah Homick (Ron's daughter), Kevin Jones (his son) and Mark Bailey. They meet on the second Sunday of the month and are available for special demonstrations or slide presentations. Contact one of the members for details.

Look for our summer issue of the newsletter sometime in July.

Our next chicken BBQ is June 20th. Remember you can order ahead by e-mailing to avfd@rochester.rr.com