

Fort Washington Fire Company No. 1 Station 88



Newsletter

Proudly Serving Upper Dublin Since 1908

January, 2009

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This is one of a series of newsletters from the Fort Washington Fire Company No.1 in an effort to keep the citizens and taxpayers of Upper Dublin informed about the many and varied activities carried out by our organization. Anyone may opt out of receiving these e-mailed newsletters by clicking on the unsubscribe link at the bottom of this Newsletter. In each newsletter we will endeavor to provide information that is informative, useful and even entertaining.

This Month Around The Fire House

In December the Fort Washington Fire Company responded to 45 Alarms, averaging 21.1 responders per call, totaling 328 responder hours.

For All of 2008 the Fort Washington Fire Company responded to 544 Alarms, averaging 19 responders per call and totaling 4813 responder hours

For a multi-year comparison [click here](#).



Profile Of The Month —

By Denny Zwicker

Each month we profile one of the many Volunteers that make up the Fort Washington Fire Company.

As we start a new year, it seems appropriate that we profile one of the fire company's newest members, Mike McSpadden. Mike was born in Holy Redeemer Hospital 28 years ago and raised in Roslyn with his younger sister. From an early age he got a thrill from watching Roslyn Fire Company's big red trucks rumble down Easton Rd. His parents bought him a programmable scanner when he was 10 so now he could even tell where they were going.

After graduating from Abington High School where he played trumpet in the concert band, Mike moved on to West Chester University where he continued his love of music by majoring in piano which he has played since childhood.

Mike and his wife, Theresa, are the proud parents of Sarah, 3 and Noah, 1. Mike is the manager of the Sherwin-Williams store in Upper Providence. Now with a very young family and a demanding job that is not exactly around the corner from his home in Ardsley, there is an obvious question: why start a brand new (volunteer) career in a job requiring never-ending training, no set hours, i. e, 24/7/365, where you



Meet Michael McSpadden



Visit our Website www.FortWashingtonFC.org

Profile, Continued

sometimes see and have to do nasty things, don't make a dime and can get hurt or worse?

Mike grinned at the question and acknowledged that it was a very good one. After thinking for a moment, Mike said that he has had an interest in the emergency services for a long time and has considered becoming a police officer. His uncle was a firefighter with North Penn in North Wales and he has a friend who is a firefighter with Willow Grove. He also has a connection with the emergency communications end of the job as he is a licensed, amateur "ham" radio operator, available to provide back-up communications in the event of a disaster. The amateur radio operators were of invaluable assistance to the Gulf Coast communities devastated by Hurricane Katrina.

Mike has attended the Montgomery County Amateur Radio Emergency Service Communication drills during which the members of the club test their ability to contact other ham operators from around the country. They are available to provide radio back-up to the local county communications centers if necessary.

Although he has been attending in-house training for several months and has started responding to fire calls, Mike is eager to begin his formal fire academy training. In order to obtain his national certification, Mike will begin Firefighting I in a couple of weeks. We welcome Mike to the Fort and wish him the best of luck.

Member Milestones

By Denny Zwicker



The Fort Washington Fire Co. is proud to announce a milestone achievement by our own Bob Wise. Bob was recently honored by the American Red Cross as the Outstanding Volunteer of the Year, Emergency Communications. The award was presented by Tom Foley, left, Chief Executive Officer of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Chapter and Harry McHugh, right, Chairman of the Board of Directors.

Bob has volunteered with the Red Cross for a combined total of 25 years, the last 5 in Philadelphia.

As an emergency dispatcher, Bob has two primary responsibilities. The first is communicating emergency messages to members of the military regarding family issues. The second task is the processing and dispatching of Disaster Action Teams (DAT) to assist at local disasters such as fires, floods, storms etc. Locally, there are 6 DAT teams: Philadelphia, Chester County, Delaware County, Upper Bucks County and Eastern and Western Montgomery County. In 2007, the Southeastern chapter responded to over 900 local disasters.

Bob has held numerous fire police positions since joining the fire company 18 years ago including several years as Captain of the unit. He lives in Horsham with his wife Nancy and son, Scott.



Join Us — Become A Volunteer

The Fort Washington Fire Company is a 100% volunteer organization and is always seeking new members. We have several types of membership, which do not all involve fire fighting. All training and equipment is provided by the fire company.

Junior Members-Age 16-17.

Go through regular training and provide fire ground support functions, but are not permitted to operate in hazardous environments until they reach the age of 18. Many of our current members started as junior members.

Firefighters-Age 18 and up.

Respond to fire calls and undergo extensive training at one of the local fire academies as well as in-house training through the fire company.

Fire Police-

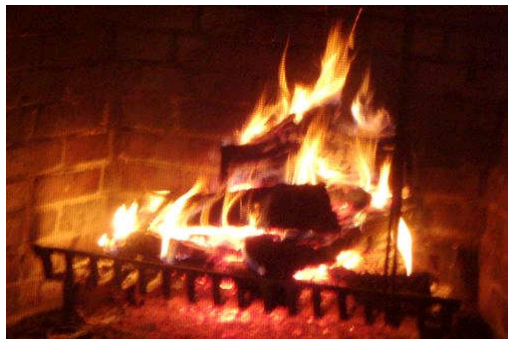
Provide traffic control and crowd control at emergency scenes as well as special events such as parades and carnivals.

Associate Members-

Provide administrative support to the fire company. These administrative functions include, but are not limited to, accounting, clerical, computer networking and programming, facility management, etc

Fire Place Safety

By Robert Toner Jr.



During the winter months a roaring fire in the fireplace makes the home cozy and warm. It can also become a dangerous threat to the home. Please remember these points whenever using your fireplace!

- Always make sure the damper is open, especially before the first fire of the season
- Have your chimney cleaned annually. The creosote buildup in a chimney can create a chimney fire which can lead to damage or destruction to your home
- Have your chimney inspected annually to make sure there is no damage to the flu.
- Never burn "green" wood, it has a lot of sap which helps creates creosote, burn only seasoned wood
- Never build a large roaring fire in the fireplace. These can quickly get out of control and extend into the room.
- Always place the fire screen in front of the fireplace and or close the screen or glass doors. These keep sparks and embers in the fireplace.
- Never put combustibles directly in front of the fireplace.
- Never put a carpet on the hearth as it easily can ignite.

- Always wait 2 to 3 days after a fire in the fireplace to empty the ash. There still can be hot embers in the ash.

NEVER empty the fireplace ash into a paper or plastic bag. Only use a metal trash can with a lid. Never put the trash can in you garage or next to your house as it can cause a fire. Put it outside away from any combustible objects.

CHIMNEY FIRES:

- Chimney fires occur because of the creosote buildup inside the flu. Creosote is the buildup of carbon materials in chimneys from wood-burning fires.
- Typically a chimney fire sounds like a freight train is running up your chimney, this is the large volume of air it draws in when the creosote is burning. Outside you may see flames or sparks with a large volume of smoke pushing out the top of the chimney.
- If you think you have a chimney fire, FIRST call 911 to summon the Fire department
- Don't put any more wood on the fire, close the fireplace doors and any air vents.
- Evacuate the home and wait for the fire department

Do not attempt to extinguish the chimney fire with a garden hose. This can cause the chimney to crack and allow the fire to extend to the rest of the house! Wait for the fire company to arrive to handle the fire.



Station A
220 Summit Ave
Fort Washington PA
19034



Station B
Susquehanna and
Twining Roads
Dresher PA 19025



Fire Training Grounds
Twining Road

**We Hold drills each
Monday Night at 7 PM**

**Our Business Meetings
are held the 2nd
Thursday of each
month at 7:30 PM**

Contact Information
220 Summit Avenue
Fort Washington PA
19034

215-646-2555

A Message From the Chief By Brian Newhall

On behalf of the officers and the members of the Fort Washington Fire Company, I would like to wish you a happy and healthy New Year and thank you for subscribing to our Newsletter

I feel very privileged and honored to be among the leadership of the fire company. 2009 is going to be the 101st year that this all volunteer fire company has served Upper Dublin Township and the surrounding communities providing fire and rescue services. It is going to be an exciting year for us. There will be challenges that we will face; some will be new and some old, but we will meet them the way we always have: with dedication, professionalism, and enthusiasm.

Our members are among the best trained, most experienced, and most dedicated volunteer firefighters in Montgomery County. Although they are not paid, they are still proud professionals. They train to established standards, and respond to all calls for help.

I would like to encourage the members of our community to visit the fire stations and meet the members. As a volunteer organization, we are always looking for people who would like to help their community, and there are many ways to help. Please look around our web site and see if anything might interest you.

Again, thanks for visiting, and have a happy, safe, and healthy New Year.

Brian Newhall
Chief



Chief Newhall Announces New Officer Lineup for 2009

At the annual Re-organization Meeting on Sunday, January 4th, Chief Newhall presented his list of officers to the Fire Company's Board of Directors as called for in the Company Bylaws. The Board unanimously approved the slate of officers

Operations

Brian Newhall	Chief 88
Ernie Racz	Assistant 88
Michael Bodo	Assistant 88-1
Richard Roberts	Battalion 88
Eric Clauson	Battalion 88-1
Andrew Rathfon	Captain 88
Bob Lester	Lieutenant 88
Zach Velivis	Lieutenant 88-1
Brian Adams	Lieutenant 88-2
Sean Keenan	Sergeant 88
Denise Zwicker	Safety Officer

Engineers

Gordon Languell	Chief Engineer
Kevin McCann	Assistant Engineer
Kelly Rines	Assistant Engineer
Robert Scheswohl Jr.	Assistant Engineer
Anthony Squadrito	Assistant Engineer