



August 7, 2017

Dear Residents:

I learned of the recent retirements of Kevin Smith and Lee Thelen from Westphalia Township Fire Department (WTFD) after 30 years of dedicated service. Congratulations to Kevin and Lee and thank you for your many years of dedication to the Village, Township and surrounding communities.

Being a firefighter/first responder is a tough job, especially in a small community where the people you are called to help are also often people you personally know. I have the utmost respect and admiration for all who have served, and continue to serve, in this very important capacity. We are extremely fortunate to have such competent and dedicated people serving the community when we need them the most. The professionalism of the firefighters is second to none. Thank you to Fire Chief Kevin Wieber for his leadership and the Westphalia Township Board for their continued support of the WTFD.

Second only to the personnel on the fire department are the trucks and equipment they have to respond to emergencies. It was so impressive to see the full fleet in the 4th of July parade. The recent addition of a new 4-door rescue truck and a 4-door brush fire truck allow more firefighters to be transported to emergency locations quickly. In addition, a new pumper truck was purchased in 2016 (the old 1990 pumper truck was retained for extra backup) and the big tanker truck is a 2005 model which is in excellent condition. This is a very impressive fleet for a small township. The efforts of the WTFD are also reflected by a great fire rating for our area, which helps lower insurance rates for local homeowners.

The fire department personnel do all they can to keep cost down and pride themselves in being as efficient as possible. From maintaining the trucks and equipment, to putting on the fireman's breakfast, they try to put as many resources back into the department as possible. They also accept donations which are used to purchase and update equipment. A recent donation from a local estate allowed them to purchase an airbag which can be used to lift a vehicle or other heavy object off an injured victim – a potentially life-saving addition. Please consider making a donation and/or remembering the WTFD in your estate planning.

I'm sure like many of you, I was a bit sad to see the old Crystal Flash building torn down. It was an iconic landmark in town for a long time. The structural condition of the building made it impractical for restoration. We appreciate Hengesbach Cabinetry's cleanup of the site and the renovations to the apartment building that is now more visible with the removal of the old building.

Although summer is winding down, there is still plenty of time to get out and enjoy the warm weather.

Sincerely,

Dean Kohagen, President
Village of Westphalia