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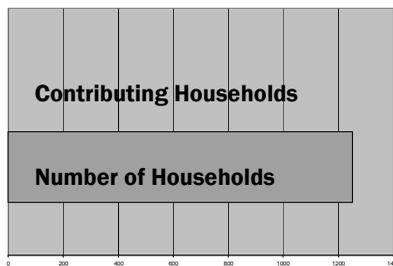
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The Bulldog Bulletin®

Volume No. 1 Issue No. 21 March 2009

Greenfield Township
Volunteer Fire Company
(GTVFC) Fire/EMS Station 24
424 Route 106
Greenfield Twp., PA 18407



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GREENFIELD NEEDS YOU!



GTVFC Saves One of Its Own

By J. Apostololakes—Firefighter

It wasn't on the fire ground or an accident, or even on the dangerous interstate highway—there were no warning signs—just a physical that the fire station requires. The chief is always asking if everyone went for his or her physical; and the answer is normally, “yes” or “I have an appointment.” I was one of the lucky ones.

I have been a volunteer firefighter for Greenfield Township Volunteer Fire Company (www.greenfieldtownship.org) for three years. Greenfield is a small town in northeastern Pennsylvania with a population just over 2,400. The coverage area is about 32 square miles including a small section of Interstate 81. The department has approximately 30 active members.

I am one who procrastinates as long as possible when it comes to doctor visits or physicals. I have always felt fine; I normally do what I do with the fire company; with no physical signs, no worries about going to see the doctor. I am probably like most people; I do not like seeing the doctor—but mostly, afraid of test results.

All my life I played sports. I was very active in ice hockey and I always felt like a 27-year old. I am 47 years old now and I have always thought myself to be in pretty-good shape, so I asked myself “what do I have to lose; going to see the doctor?” I went to see my family doctor, who ordered a blood test and everything looked good. Two days later, the doctor called and wanted to see me again. I thought, “Okay, I must have snuck in a snack during my fast before the blood test.” Well, I was wrong. The doctor told me that my cholesterol was pretty high. Because of my family history, he wanted to schedule a stress test. I thought again, “no problem.” I took the stress test on a treadmill and my heart rate would not even go up high enough for the doctor to be alarmed and in the back of my mind, I was laughing. Well, pictures tell a different story. After going for an MRI, the pictures showed a blockage in my heart. My doctor told me I was on the verge of having a heart attack. I kept telling myself it was not true and I felt fine. **Well, two weeks later and a heart catheterization, I'm feeling like a 27-year old again.**

So here is advice from an average person: because of my department's requirement, my life was saved from a silent killer. A blockage in my heart could have ended my life—at home, or on the fire ground, trying to save another life such as a fire victim or one of my brothers. What was really interesting to me was that while I was having the procedure done, one of the Physicians Assistant asked me what made me go to the doctor, and did I have symptoms? I told him there were no symptoms just a required physical from my fire department. The Physicians Assistant told me that he belongs to a fire department and they don't require physicals. About a week after I recovered, I did some research by speaking to my fellow firefighters around our community and even firefighters that I know from out of state. I was surprised to find that departments they belong to do not require physicals at all. If your department doesn't require a physical, it should. You will not regret it and it will save your life. It saved mine.

Editor's comment: This article illustrates just one of the benefits of belonging to GTVFC. Our firefighters are critical to our community. GTVFC, by requirement, is fighting to keep our firefighters fit and healthy to serve. John received one of the greatest benefits, the gift of life extension, because of the requirements of our organization. He will continue to serve the community and be one of Greenfield's Heroes.

How About You?

Third Great Chicago Fire?

By F. Bales— CFPS, CFI, Fire Chief GTVFC

We reviewed the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 and the Iroquois Theater Fire of 1903. Let us look at how another Chicago fire changed the face of fire safety in our schools.

On that fateful day on December 1, 1958, more than 1,600 students, Kindergarten through 8th grade, were in Our Lady of the Angels Catholic School, when the building caught fire. Built in 1910, renovations and expansions took place many times before the fire. (It is important to note that the floors were waxed with a petroleum-based wax every year, which was the custom during that time. Also, of equal importance, the school had only one fire escape, and did not have a sprinkler, fire doors, or automatic fire detection.) Some time around 2:00 p.m., a fire started in a trash can in the basement of the northwest stairwell. The stairwell rapidly filled with smoke. Heat from the fire broke a window at the base of the stairwell, allowing fresh air to fan the flames. The highly waxed floors caught fire almost immediately on contact with the flames. A lack of fire doors allowed super-heated smoke to fill the second floor hallway almost instantly.

Without a smoke detection system, teachers were not alerted to the fire until one of the nuns opened a door to the hall. However, by that time, the main hallway filled with smoke and the north staircase was ablaze. The opening of doors caused another in-rush of air that allowed the fire to race across the second floor. The highly waxed floors ignited, trapping students in their classrooms. Students and teachers (Catholic School nuns) were trapped with only the second floor windows as an escape route—a 25-foot drop to the rocky courtyard—so they jumped, or many of them did. As firefighters arrived on scene, they were met by a roaring fire, coming from the roof area and several classrooms, and the sight of “their children” jumping, clothes on fire, from the second floor. As firefighters tried to raise ladders to the second floor, they watched nuns trying to lower students to the ground with their own robes. Despite heroic efforts by the nuns and firefighters, 92 children

(Kindergarten through 8th grade) and three nuns died from the fire.

LIFE Magazine provided the most chilling realization of the fire with a single photograph. It was a picture of firefighter Richard Scheidt, carrying the lifeless body of 10-year old John Jajkowski, from the building. Little John died under a window in the rear of room 212 from smoke inhalation. Of all the photographs taken that sad day, none captured the horror of children killed in the very place that their parents thought would be most safe. (View LIFE Magazine photo of firefighter Richard Scheidt and John Jajkowski at <http://www.greenfieldtownship.org>. WARNING: photo contains graphic image).

The events and conditions of this tragic fire led to many fire code improvements and requirements that are in place today for schools, such as elevated floors that must have windows designed for rescue; prohibiting flammable floor finishes; restriction on wall covering flammability; and self-closing fire doors. Of all the code changes, the most significant is the mandatory presence of smoke and fire detection equipment.

This is the third in a series of articles on fire prevention and historic fires.

For more information on the tragic fire at Our Lady of Angels School, please visit the memorial website at <http://www.olafire.com>.



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Holding Contractors Accountable

Reprinted from the AARP Bulletin, Dec. 2008 Issue

To help protect homeowners against fraud, state legislators have passed a law requiring home improvement contractors to register with the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection. AARP supported the measure, which Gov. Ed Rendell, D, signed in October. The law goes into effect July 1, 2009. Problems with home improvement contractors consistently rank among the top complaints the bureau receives. In the past year, legal actions involving “no show” contractors and substandard work in Pennsylvania sought nearly \$2 million in refunds, fines and civil penalties. The new law requires written contracts for all home improvement work exceeding \$500. In addition, the bureau will set up a toll-free number for consumers to check contractor's status. For more information, visit www.aarp.org/pa.

Favorite Recipes

By M. Karolyi—Administrative Member

Sweet & Sour Pork with Pineapple

We use a cast iron Dutch oven to brown pork on the stove top and after adding the other ingredients, with sufficient water to cover the meat, finish off in the oven at 325 F for approx 1 hour.

- 1 1/2 lb boneless pork, cut into fork size pieces
- 2 Tbsp. soy sauce, 3 Tbsp. oil, 1 clove garlic
- 2 onions, cut into eights (medallions)
- 1 green pepper, chopped, 2 cups crushed pineapple
- 1/2 cup sugar, 3 Tbsp flour, 2 Tbsp. tomato paste
- 1 1/2 oz. apple cider vinegar, salt & pepper to taste

Toss pork cubes coating with flour and brown, adding onions and green pepper after. Mix other ingredients, except pineapple, and add when onions and green pepper are sautéed. Stir in pineapple. Add water. (If using a cast iron pot/pan preheat water so as not to crack the pot/pan.)



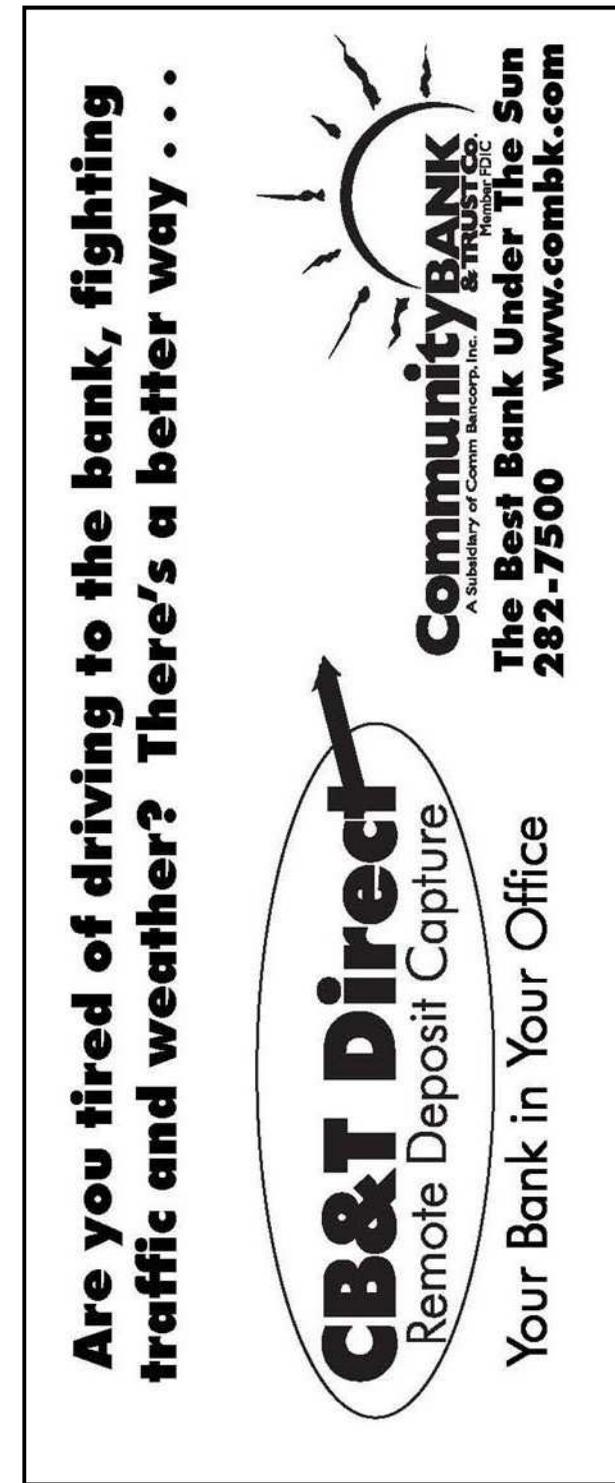
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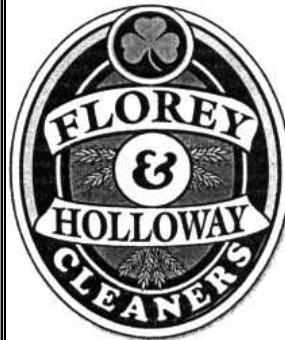
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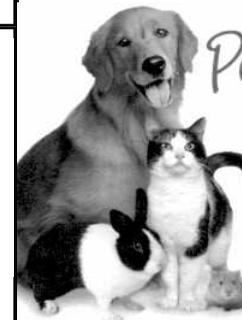


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