



April 2010

Dear Howlett Hill Fire District resident,

As we approach Spring-time, the officers and members of your fire department want to take the time to share information relative to the department.

We are excited to advise you that we have completed a project we started a couple of years ago and have operational at this time a station generator. Now, in case of a prolonged power outage affecting the area, the station will be fully operational. We thank those of you who contributed to this "grass roots" initiative. Combined with your donations, the department also sold some liquid assets that we had no need for any longer allowing completion of the project. The department is in contact with the local chapter of the American Red Cross for insights in properly outfitting an emergency shelter. We are excited to be able to provide a safe haven for our community residents to visit when needed. This is especially useful for those of you with special needs dependent on electricity. The completion of this dream further extends our desire and mission to serve the Howlett Hill community. We will dedicate this great asset during our OPEN HOUSE on Sunday, May 2nd between 11:00AM and 3:00PM, and you are invited.

In the past 9 months, 6 new young members have joined the department as "RAMS" or Restricted Access Members" Our RAM membership program focuses on young adults aged 16 – 18 who have an interest in serving their community in the fire service. RAMs participate in training classes, perform a limited set of tasks at emergency scenes, help perform operational tasks around the fire station, all under the watchful eye of a mentor program. RAMs are not allowed to enter a fire environment. Once RAMs reach their 18th birthday, they become full members of the department. In fact, two RAMs have moved from the RAM program to full membership, thus sustaining the retention process within the department. Since recruiting and retaining interested volunteers is a critical function of the department, we encourage any young person who might be interested in becoming a RAM to visit the fire station any Monday evening at 7:00PM, or any Tuesday during the day time hours as we fully staff an Engine and Medical crew to cover much of the Town of Onondaga and Camillus.

The HHFD Banquet Room at the fire station is available to district residents to rent at for nominal fee. The room can hold approximately 85 people, we have round and long tables, chairs and provide access to our kitchen, refrigerator/freezer and ice machine. Alcohol is prohibited and there is no smoking allowed in the building. We do require a deposit and a copy of proof of liability coverage from your insurance carrier. If interested to schedule a date, contact the Vice President at 673-1817. Feel free to leave a message if needed.

This past September, a young couple urgently attempting to reach Community General Hospital for the impending birth of their child, fell a few miles short of their intended birthing destination. Birth became imminent as the couple approached the intersection of W. Seneca Turnpike and Kasson Road. They pulled their mini-van on the shoulder of Kasson and called 911. As the call taker assessed their situation, your Howlett Hill Fire Department was dispatched to assist at the scene. Within minutes, then Deputy Chief Paul Doner arrived in his vehicle, followed by a crew on HHFD Rescue 2. Chief Doner, having been updated via radio on the situation immediately went to assist Mom in the delivery. Within seconds, baby Emily was born. Chief Doner gave the honor of cutting the umbilical cord to the proud father. Marcellus Ambulance arrived and transported the family the rest of the journey to the hospital. Two weeks later, the family brought Baby Emily and big sister to the fire station for a belated birthday party. (Both girls were born on the same month and date). Gifts for the girls and cake were shared, along with a picture of Chief Doner holding the baby at the hospital where he works full time. For their efforts, Chief Doner and 911 Center Call Taker, Chris Carr, were honored on December 2, 2009 at the American Red Cross Real Heroes gathering at the OnCenter in Syracuse. Having a truly happy ending was a treat for the entire department.

In keeping on the path of good news, it's never too soon to plan on attending the 6th Annual **HHFD King's Feast and Raffle**. In keeping with your feedback, we scheduled the feast during an away game for the Syracuse Orangemen



football team. This year's feast runs from 1:00PM to 7:00PM on Saturday, September 11th. Enjoy food and drink from start to finish, culminating with the famous Feast bar-b-que chicken dinner cooked in our own charcoal pit. Games of chance will be playing throughout the feast for your entertainment (and obviously, a fund raiser for the department). Additionally, we hope you will be inclined to consider participating in our annual King's Feast Raffle. We only sell 300 tickets for \$100 each. The grand prize winner receives up to \$10,000 !!! Generous prizes exist for 2nd, 3rd place along with multiple opportunities to receive \$25 prizes for those purchasing their Raffle ticket early in the process. Early Bird drawings take place in June, July, August and September. This is the largest, most important fundraiser for the department each year, we hope you can participate to some extent.

OPEN HOUSE at Howlett Hill Fire Station ! On Sunday, May 2nd from 11:00AM until 3:00PM, the Howlett Hill Fire station will be open for your visiting. Come meet with our members, feel free to ask questions about any range of topics from how apparatus works to responding to alarms. We will have demonstrations on Stop/Drop and Roll for the kids and we can go over the EDITH program with adults (EDITH = **Exit Drills In The Home**). Your fire department, as are many other departments in Onondaga County, is open on May 2nd as part of a county-wide fire department awareness program. Feel free stopping at the fire station as we will have hot dogs and soft drinks to share. We're proud of our stewardship of your fire department and want to share that pride with you.

Lastly, we have two items to pass along to help assure your safety. Number one involves our ability to quickly find your home in case you have an emergency. We've noticed a lack of visible house numbers on many homes in the district. Not having visible house numbers either on BOTH sides of your mailbox or clearly visible on your house slows our ability to arrive at your door. Ideally, house numbers should be reflective material and 3 ½ to 4 inches high. Locating the numbers on both sides of your rural mailbox assures we can see your numbers regardless of direction of travel along your street.

The second consideration to enhance your safety is also a New York State law recently enacted. "Amanda's Law" requires at least one, operational Carbon Monoxide detector in each residence. The law was named after a young girl who fell victim to the toxic nature of this killer gas. Prime sources of carbon monoxide in the residence are issues with your furnace, your hot water heater or your stove. Why run the risk of not safeguarding yourself, CO detectors can be purchased for a nominal fee at all big box and home supplies stores. If it helps in your decision: Remember, it's the law !

Enjoy the return of milder weather, and remember, we are always here to respond to your emergency needs. Just dial 911, we'll respond.

Sincerely,

Paul Doner
Chief HHFD

Frank Valls
President

Kurt Kraus
Chairman