



Speaking of Fire

50TH ANNIVERSARY
SPECIAL EDITION

A publication from YOUR Shawnee Township Fire Department

2526 Ft. Amanda Rd. Lima, OH 45804 | (419)222-2986 | www.shawneetwpfire.com

Shawnee Firefighters Welcome You

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The Members of the Shawnee Twp. Fire Dept. dedicate our efforts to deliver a highly trained staff that provide professional & compassionate service at all times.

WELCOME TO YOUR FIRE DEPARTMENT

Welcome to your Shawnee Township Fire Department. The members hope you enjoy your visit to our home. Pictured above:

- A Shift: Platoon Chief Paul Way, Captain Jim Painter, Firefighter/Paramedics- Steve Kennedy, Brady Seddelmeyer, Zach Welch, Joe Lafferty and Matt Reaman
- B Shift: Platoon Chief Matt Briggs, Captain Bryon Stumbaugh, Firefighter/Paramedics- Ed DeMoss, Ryan Schott, Bill McCullough, Josh Hodges and Jeff Jones
- C Shift: Platoon Chief John Norris, Captain Matt Myers, Firefighter/Paramedics- Ron Luttrell, Mark Biedenbarn, Travis Jackson, Mike Hasenstaub and Mike Smith

Decisions on the State level, may affect your Fire Dept.

Fire Chief Todd Truesdale

Previously the tax dollars collected in our township and voted on by our taxpayers for the tangible personal property has now been converted over to the Commercial Activity Tax (C.A.T.) by state legislators. These state legislators that configured this setup did not consider the end result to the local government or its taxpayers. The result of this is a 35% reduction in our Fire Department budget alone. The replacement of the C.A.T. has now reached the phase where it is running out for the local governments and starting towards making the "State of Ohio whole", as Tax Commissioner explained in a meeting that took place with myself and Chief Goddard of the Allen Township Fire Department. This same issue is tied to several other local issues like the schools, parks, libraries, and local government funding.

Most would agree to the reduction of taxes to stimulate businesses locating in a specific are or State. The issue that has a big economic downside affecting the fire service is if we do not have the funding we will have to make cuts to services that will overall affect our ability to provide services to our community. These cuts would be by services and personnel.

This would ultimately affect our Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating. This rating affects ALL business and residents on their direct cost of insurance policies. Currently we are a 4/9 which means a 4 rating in areas with fire hydrants and 9 in rural with no fire hydrants. We have just been re-evaluated and are waiting on the results of where we are at now and are hoping to move to at least a lower number in the rural area. The lower the number the more savings on insurance, as you can see if we cut back our services (with the first cuts being our Inspection Bureau) it would drastically affect economic development by not having plan reviews on new construction and not fire inspections to promote fire safety. Ultimately this would result in higher premiums for all especially the businesses we are trying to draw in to our local governments.

We continue to work on this issue with meetings and letter writing to Senator Faber, Rep. Huffman, and Govenor Strickland with this simple point - Make the local governments whole for fire protection because there is economic implications not thought about that will affect future growth of business in Ohio.

If you would like to, you may contact Chief Truesdale by either calling the Fire Dept. business line at (419) 224-2636 or via chief@shawneetwpfire.com

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50 Years of Service

Prior to 1960, fire protection for Shawnee Township was provided by the Hume Volunteer Fire Department and the Lima Fire Department. Then Shawnee Township Trustees Dale Hover, Lloyd Bowsher & Fred Zuber pursued the idea of having our own fire department. Then Hume Chief Arthur Yoakam was approached by the Board to determine the equipment and manning needed. A special levy was placed on the ballot to fund this venture. In 1959, Arthur Yoakam was hired as the Department's first Fire Chief for \$7200/Year. The Fire House was built by Stedke Construction Company on Ft. Amanda Rd. on land leased from Allen County.

The First fire truck arrived in late 1959 before any firefighters were hired. It made its first official response out of the newly constructed station on a car fire at Buckeye and Ft Amanda roads. Chief Yoakam and the Fire Chief from St Marys were on station before anyone else had been hired.

The first firefighters hired as full-timers made up 2 platoons working an average of 76 hours per work week. Ten were hired and paid \$363 per month each. Volunteers were also placed on the roster in 1960, 20 members originally joined. Initial equipment consisted of: 1959 Ford 75' Pirsch Ladder Truck, 1959 Ford 1000 gpm pumper / 600 gallons of water, 1959 Ford 750 gpm pumper / 1000 gallons of water and a 1959 Chevy panel truck / 250 gallons.

Radios and pagers were not available so notifying the volunteer firefighters was accomplished by a large 7 ½ hp siren mounted on top of the roof of the hose tower. (Still in service) Dispatching was done out of the fire department by firefighters at first, after that, by retirees. The department was preparing to officially answer alarms in June 1960 but after crews were formed and before all training was complete the community started calling their own department.

Dispatch facilities remained in the Fire Dept. for several years until the new administration building was completed. In July 1965 the first crew Officers were appointed: Robert Deubler - Captain, Harold Rahrig - Captain, John Feison - Lieutenant & Farrel Welch - Lieutenant

In 1974 Emergency Ambulance service established and 9 more personnel were hired. Crews advanced training and in 1977 Advanced Life Support Services were now provided by Paramedics to the residents of Shawnee Township.

In 1979 the Fire Prevention Bureau was established and headed by John Truesdale. This position remains today. In February 1986, The Hume Fire Department transferred to the STFD a building, 2 trucks and 15 Volunteer Firefighters and all turn-out Gear. Initially this building was identified as Shawnee District 2 station. District 2 Hume station was decommissioned in 2005 as it became obsolete to keep it open.

In February 2009, Shawnee Ladder 3 was destroyed in a tragic accident near Toledo. Firefighter Dick Oder was injured in the accident and retired in late 2009. Ladder 5 was purchased with insurance funds and placed into service in August of 2009 to protect the Township.



Apparatus Floor Gets a New Look at a HUGE savings

Over the last few weeks, the firefighters have been busy, not only fighting a fires and responding on EMS calls, but providing labor that will help preserve a 50 year old apparatus floor, but save taxpayers thousands of dollars. To replace an aging and cracking floor would have cost an estimated \$120,000.00 but with firefighter labor, the department spent less than \$10,000.00 to seal cracks, and provide a slip resistant epoxy floor that should last for years to come. "I am so thankful to have the group of guys I have working here", stated a proud Chief Truesdale. "Every guy chipped in here hours at a time for over a week prepping and working on this floor". The project consisted of grinding off the top layer of sealer on the floor, filling cracks, priming, applying a non-skid additive, painting, then sealing. Chief Truesdale added "Without the help of Whitney Painting and of course Sherwin Williams, we couldn't have done any of this either."



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