

**137TH
ANNUAL
VOLUME NO.
2026**



**CONVENTION
SPECIAL
ISSUE NO.
2 – JUNE**

From the desk of the President

Robert A. Schrader

I hope you have been enjoying a great start of 2026 with good health. We are having lower temperatures and dampness making it hard to believe warmer temperatures are coming. Hopefully this wet season has brought you a lower number of wildfires this spring.

Over the last two months John J. Mulligan and Bill Eck Memorial Haz Mat training was held at Shaker Road - Loudonville Fire Department. In addition, the Ken Merriman Fire Police Seminar was held at Cornell Hook & Ladder Co., New Baltimore. The Fire Police Seminar was well attended and both seminars had outstanding speakers.

As I write this I'm packing for the FASNY 2nd Annual Fire Training Symposium in Lake George with some great speakers. We had our quarterly meeting in Lake George on April 26. At that meeting nominations for 2026-2027 took place. This year nominations were for the Presidents, Secretary, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, and two Directors. Nominated for President was Robert Fritsche, for 1st Vice President was John O'Brien, and 2nd Vice President there was two nominations, Edward Butler from Putnam County and Yale Frank from Greene County. All Presidents nominations are for two-year terms. Those nominated for re-electrician to one year term was George Hill for Treasurer. Nominated for her first one-year term was Jessica Benjamin for Secretary. As Barbara Fischer is stepping down as Secretary to commit more times to the many positions, she holds including Trustee of the Firefighters Home and on the Board of the FASNY Firefighters Museum. We thank Barbara for her time and dedication these past three years. We had no one nominated for Financial Secretary for the one-year term. Joseph Mellan was appointed to fill these vacancies for the last few months of this year. Joe is willing to help and train anyone that runs for this position. Nominated for four-year term of Director were Brenda Gausby for her first four year term. Brenda was appointed back in December to fill in the last five months of a term expiring this June. Director James Hartwick, who has finished his second four year term limit as Director has to step down. We are extremely thankful of Jim's 8 years as a Director. He did an outstanding job for the Association. Two people were nominated to fill this four-year Director position of Jim's. Nominated was Kyle Pottenburgh of Dutchess County. The second nominee is Evan Humphrey of Rockland County. Please go to hvvfa.com to review the candidates endorsement letters for their background and experience.

The 2026 Convention will be held in the Village of Lake George hosted by the Lake George Fire Company with assistance from the Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce from June 11 – June 13. Chair and Chief Matthew Oswald along with assistance from Thomas McKinney, LGFC President Doni Smith and the entire Lake George Fire Company Convention Committee have been hard at work planning the convention. The Annual Golf Outing precedes the opening of the Convention at Cronins Golf Resort in Warrensburg on Wednesday June 10. Both sessions of the Convention will be held at Georgian Lakeside Resort with the first session starting on Thursday June 11 at 9:00 am. The second session starts Friday June 12th at 9:00 am. Thursday afternoon starting at 4:00 pm will be the Red Vest and Blue Vest Outing at Usher Park on the east side of Lake George. Mardi Gras parade on Friday night (June 12) starts at 7:00 pm with line up at 6:00 pm on north end of Canada Street past the High School. Following the parade is a block party on Beach Road on the south end of the lake. The theme for the Mardi Gras parade is "Happy Birthday America!! 250 Years of Independence!" Dress Parade will be on Saturday with line up on the northern end of Lake George Village on Canada Street. The line up starts at 11:00 am with step off at 1:00 pm. Parade will break up on Beach Road at south end of lake. Trophies and fireworks will be later in the evening at the break up point.

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President's Message Continued

the last two years. I have met many wonderful dedicated people, seen many firehouses and fire apparatus, and made many friends along the way. From the heavy population areas of Westchester and Rockland Counties to the back green hills of Sullivan County or back country of Washington and Warren Counties we are all here to serve and protect our communities. Our Association is the glue between all these areas, the inscription on our challenge coins state this best "Promoting A Friendly Relationship Between Active And Exempt Members Of The Volunteer Fire Service." I look forward to seeing you at Lake George.

Robert A. Schrader
President



Albany County Report

Submitted by: Butch Recchia, ACVP/John Webb

On May 13 th the Association held their Annual Meeting at the Westmere Fire House. The following were elected to Office for the coming year: Tom Cascone of Voorheesville as President, Matt Wilcenski of Delmar as First Vice President, Emily Hausman of Westmere as Second Vice President, Fred Pettingell of S. W. Pitts as Treasurer, Secretary is John Webb of Coeymans Hollow, Clayton Ash of Guilderland Centeris Financial Secretary, Chaplain is Jonathan Hough of Elsmere, Sgt-at-Arms is Don Champion of Knox and Second Battalion Director is Frank Papa of Voorheesville.

Dates and Locations for two of the ACVFA important events are all set. Ravena Fire Company will be hosting the Annual Dinner and Quarterly meeting on Sept 16 and the Slingerlands Fire Department will be hosting the Annual Inspection Day on Saturday Sept 19 th .

The Albany County Fire Police Association will be having their Annual Steak Roast and

Installation of Officers on May 27th at the Shaker Road-Loudonville Station 2 Pavilion.

The New Salem Fire Department will be having their 82nd Annual Punkintown Fair on July 23, 24 and 25th. The Fair features a variety of rides and games for all ages and food choices for everyone. Admission is free and there is plenty of parking available. The Fairgrounds is located on Route 85A in New Salem across from the Fire House.

The Association was sorry to hear of the passing of Paul Healy of the Midway Fire Dept. Paul served as one of the Association's Directors for 30 Years.

Congrats to the Fuller Road Fire Department of the Town of Colonie who are celebrating their 100th Anniversary This Year. We hope everyone has a great and safe summer.

Warren County Report

Submitted by: Jessica McKinney-Benjamin, WCVP

Hello everyone, Welcome to summertime! I hope you a had a nice winter!

Many of the Warren County Fire Companies/Departments have had their annual elections of officers and installation dinners. The Horicon Fire Department awarded one of their members a 55-year certificate.

Lake George Fire Company is working hard on putting together a special, fun-filled convention! Please make sure you are following our Facebook page as important information is posted there. As of May 15th, we have 65 companies joining us for the dress parade and 30 for the Mardi Gras parade.

The Lake George Fire Company held a special meeting to discuss the 2027 Convention and it was voted on that we will be submitting a letter of intent to host in 2027 but we will not be pursuing 2028.



Greene County Report

Submitted by: Karen Schrader, GCVF

Greene County Volunteer Firemen's Association
Officers 2025-2026

President – Jason Haines

1st VP – Jeffrey Coyne

2nd VP – Theodore Nugent Jr.

Secretary - Liza Down

Treasurer – Maureen Kaminisk

Fin. Secretary – George Stacey

138th GCVFA Convention will be hosted by
Ashland VFD September 9-12, 2026.

This is a big year for our Country celebrating 250 years. There will be many celebrations throughout this summer as the United States celebrates the anniversary of independence on July 4, 2026, marking a historic milestone.

The HVVFA Convention starts on June 10 with the golf outing, June 11th Opening session starting at 9am, Ladies Auxiliary meeting starting at 10a & Red/Blue Vest outing in the afternoon. June 12th Convention session 2 at 9am & Mardi Gras Parade in the evening. The Dress parade on June 13th.

Fire prevention, NFPA campaign is "Charge into Fire Safety!" Lithium-Ion Batteries in Your Home. This is an extremely important subject that we all need to work together to educate the public on the importance on buying, charging, and recycling safely when it comes to lithium-ion batteries. GCVFA has a fire prevention tent at the Greene County Youth Fair July 23-26, we do demonstrations and educate with the help of Greene County Fire Departments/Companies.

It's a big year for West Athens – Lime Street FC as they celebrate the opening of their new fire house and new apparatus.

GCVFA convention is being held in Ashland starting on September 9th, with the Ladies Dinner and on the 10th will be the Men's Dinner, Memorial Service & Annual Meeting. Friday night the 11th will be the Mardi Gras parade and on the 12th will be the dress parade. This year also marks the 25th Anniversary of the attack on American soil on September 11, 2001. Annually, Greene County holds a ceremony to remember those who lost their lives at the County Emergency Center in Cairo. This year the American Legion is placing a flag representing each individual who lost their life on this

day; this should be an exceptional display showing our support and patriotism.

I look forward to celebrating our Country with everyone.

Rensselaer County Report

Submitted by: Brenda Gausby, Director

Departments across Rensselaer County are offering Fish Frys, pizza nights, BBQ, car shows in addition to breakfasts. Up to date details available on most organization's Facebook pages.

Hoags Corners Fire Company's Second Annual Jeep Show event is June 6th and enthusiasts will enjoy food, fun and possibly get "ducked".

Companies are preparing to participate in local parades as well as the HVVFA convention.

Rensselaer County Fire Chiefs Assn. met on May 11th at Averill Park, Sand Lake FD for an informational presentation by the county DA's office and to enjoy a meal. The next meeting is scheduled for July 20th at Clinton Heights Fire Department, Station two with a presentation from Rensselaer County Search and Rescue.

A county wide panel and open discussion titled "Future of the Fire Service" was held on May 18th at the Hudson Valley Community College's Bulmer Tech Center and brought together Chiefs, Officers, Firefighters, Commissioners, Town and Village Board members to explore the proposed NYS legislation on nominal compensation.

East Greenbush FD anticipates the completion of a new station in early summer. The Hudson Mohawk Volunteer Firefighter's Association convention will take place in East Greensbush; with the Auxiliary meeting on Thursday July 16th 7:00pm and the general association meeting on Sunday July 19th begins at 12:00 for light refreshments and the meeting following at 1:00pm in the pavilion.



HVVFA Ladies Auxiliary
Submitted by: Victoria Dichian
LA-HVVFA Liaison

The Officers and Members of our Auxiliary have been busy during the last few months, within their own Auxiliaries being as well as representing The LA HVVFA at various functions throughout the area.

In Albany County the Menands Fire Company Auxiliary's newly elected President Joyce McGovern-Miller received the President's Service Award for her many years of service to the Fire Company.



April 18, 2026 Past President Karen McDonald had the honor of attending The Shaker Road Loudonville Ladies Auxiliary Life Membership Dinner and presenting Marylou Hoefer a certificate for her 75 years of service to the Auxiliary.



Also receiving certificates were Aelene Dawsor 60 plus years, Katherine Brizzell and Leah Eagan both with 55 years of service to the Auxiliary.

In Putnam County on March 27, 2026, The Brewster Fire Department held its annual installation dinner at Villa Barone Hilltop Manor in Mahopac, NY. The ladies Auxiliary which is an important part of the fire department, took their oath of office. These ladies are part of the backbone of the organization. Eleanor Merrill has been leading these ladies proudly for 10 years.

Then on April 25 th 2026 The Carmel Fire Department and Auxiliary held their annual Installation Dinner. The Carmel Fire Department Auxiliary Officers were installed by an Honorary Chief Doctor Michael J. Nesheiwat.

In Warren County on April 11, 2026 LAHVVFA President Gina-Marie Pacicca had the honor to witness history being made for the Ladies Auxiliary of Lake George Volunteer Fire

She was proud to honor the Auxiliary with 80 years of service and dedication with a certificate presented to President Patty McKinney-Schuster.

Not only was Gina-Marie able to present the certificate on behalf of Ladies Auxiliary of Hudson Valley but also for the Ladies Auxiliary of the State of New York. Gail Corlew was presented a certificate for 15 years of service, A 80 years of service certificate to the children of one of their Charter members Margaret Earl. Margaret Earl dedicated her life to community service and passed away at the young age of 102.



The Bay Ridge Volunteer Fire Company along with LA HVVFA Past President Beth Brundage and member Leisha McKinney honored Sue Mellon! Sue has given 65 years of service to the Auxiliary & firefighters of the Fire Company!



Thank you on behalf of the Officers and Members of the HVVFA Ladies Auxiliary Sue for all you have done and continue to do for everyone

In Westchester County the Verplanck Ladies Auxiliary elected and installed their 2026-27 officers.

As you can see we have been busy! All of the above as well as working with the Lake George Fire Company and Auxiliary preparing for our Convention meeting at the at Holiday Inn Resort, 2223 Canada Street (Route 9) Lake George, NY 12845 on Thursday June 11th starting at 10 AM. All are invited to come, look us over and perhaps join us.

**THANK YOU LADIES
 FOR YOUR CONTINUED
 SUPPORT
 OF THE HVVFA**

Putnam County Report
Submitted by: David Cariddo, PCVP

Well winter has finally left us and the warmth and sunshine is upon us. With that said, our Departments are starting to get busy with different activities.

May started with Putnam County Day at the Home which was well-attended. On May 9th the Carmel FD had a family tag sale at their firehouse. Our County Auxiliary had its annual pickle fundraiser. The monthly meeting of our Association was held on May 18th at the Mahopac FD.

In the upcoming months, on June 12th our County Chiefs Association will be holding its annual golf outing at the famous Cronin's Golf Resort in Lake George. The Mahopac FD will be having its annual Carnival starting on July 23rd which is also the date of the Parade that kicks off the event. The carnival runs from July 23rd thru the 26th, then again on July 30th to August 1st. Carmel FD will be having their Memorial Golf Outing on August 7th at the Putnam County Golf Course.

On behalf of the Officers and Members of our Association we Proudly Endorse Our Past President Ed Butler Jr. for the Office of 2nd Vice President of the HVVFA. We would also like to wish everyone a safe a healthy summer season. God bless our Great Nation on its 250th Anniversary!



ELECT
PAST DIRECTOR, DEPUTY CHIEF
ED BUTLER, JR.

2nd Vice-President
HVVFA

2026
LAKE GEORGE



**THIS PAGE IS PROUDLY SPONSORED BY:
THE OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF
THE ROYAL ORDER OF THE BLUE VESTS**

9/26

FROM THE ROYAL ORDER OF THE BLUE VESTS

Greetings and news from the Nut Busters! What a different weather report since my last article to begin this report – it's actually warm & sunny, a far cry from the winter we all endured for sure!

To catch you up, our March meeting was held at the Brewster FD and, as always, Brewster shared its amazing hospitality with us, giving us a traditional Corned Beef & Cabbage luncheon, complete with appetizers, dessert and, of course, Irish Soda Bread! Thank you to our members in Brewster FD and its Auxiliary for making this happen each year!

Nominations were held that day and there was no opposition to our current Officers who will be headed into the 2026-27 term! As a formality we will bang the gavel to finalize the slate at our May meeting, but the following officers will remain in their current positions for a second term: Pres. Bruce Stockman, 1st VP Ed Butler, 2nd VP Janine Wheeler, Financial Secy/Treasurer George Hill, Sgt-at-Arms Frank Roberts Sr., Chaplains Victoria Dichian and Edgar "Jay" Brennan and I'll remain as Recording Secretary.

The County Delegates will be announced at the annual meeting, which this year is Saturday, May 23rd. This position is not elected by the membership or appointed by the Board but, instead, by the current Delegates who will let us know if they will be staying in that position or another Blue Vests member will take his/her place. The meeting is held at the Firefighter's Home in the Multi-Purpose Building. It is always an enjoyable event for us, especially since the Home members, all of whom are automatic Nut Busters, join us!

Coming up - the HVVFA Convention Outing! This is the joint Blue Vests/Red Vests "Steak Roast" that will be held on Thursday, June 11th beginning at 4PM. This year's outing will be at Usher Park and the caterer is "The Stone Pony" out of Saugerties, who has catered our event a few times before! If you're interested in attending this event, contact me at luannedele@gmail.com and I'll send you details and the reservation form!

A reminder for Convention-bound Nut Busters: Please don't forget to set aside time to march with us on Friday, June 12th in the Mardi Gras parade! This is a 'dress parade' for us, since most of us march with our own units on Saturday, so be sure to bring your white shirt and your black pants/tie/socks/shoes, your blue vests and your beret. That said, if you need a vest, tam (beret) or tie, contact George Hill ahead of time so he can have your items with him that day! His email is bluevests@optonline.net. Our numbers have sadly dwindled over the years and we'd love to show the members of the Home, who ride in the parade with us, and the public enjoying the parade, just how important they are to the Blue Vests!

Last, on behalf of all of the Nut Busters, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Home Administrator Keith Henchey for all the wonderful work he has done over these past six years, making sure that the residents of the Home are always safe, secure and definitely happy in their 'home away from home', and for your welcomes when we are there! You will be greatly missed by the Blue Vests, Keith. All the very best on your retirement! This wraps up the Blue Vests report for this issue! Have a wonderful summer!



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THE ROYAL ORDER OF THE RED VESTS, INC.

9/23

Saratoga County Report

Submitted by: LuAnn Edele, Director

As mentioned the first time I submitted for this Hudson Valley county, there are more than 30 volunteer fire departments (or companies) in this region. Here are a few things I found as I navigated online for some tidbits to share with you!

Halfmoon-Waterford Fire District #1 held a Texas Hold'em fundraiser in late April. It seems this is a popular fundraiser for them as I noticed they also ran one last October! This event came a week after they held their Recruit NY open house. Last ... tis the season for baseball and the HWFD was on the sidelines supporting the Halfmoon Baseball League's Rec Rumble by displaying our American Flag high above the field using its Ladder Truck! Pictures can be found on their Facebook page.

On May 6, the Clifton Park Volunteer FD held a Youth Night at Shenendehowa High School, applauding the students whom they met at the school's earlier Career Day. Several other Saratoga County departments attended – Halfmoon-Waterford Fire District #1, Round Lake NY Fire Department, Vischer Ferry Volunteer Fire Company and West Crescent Hose Fire District WK Mansfield Hose Company.

There is always a need for training so on May 12th, Clifton Park VFD and Hillcrest Fire Department teamed up at CPVFD's firehouse for its Ladder Company drill. Separately, Malta Ridge VFC held a Recruit NY Open House on Sat., April 18.

And last, earlier this year the Jonesville VFD held a Memorial for one of its esteemed Chiefs. A mentor to so many, Chief Louis Pasquarelli Jr, #34, died unexpectedly in 2013. A plaque in his honor can be seen at their firehouse.

Schenectady County Report

Submitted by: LuAnn Edele, Director

Schenectady County does not have a Fire Association but has numerous Fire Departments within its borders. This article mentions a few of its volunteer services' activities.

Guilderland Fire Dept. celebrated our nation's 250th birthday with a Memorial Day Celebration & Parade on Sunday, May 17th. They showed off their 1930's Mack Fire Engine proudly, embodying their past, present and their future. Earlier this year, members of the Guilderland FD were proud to be part of this year's YMCA Kids Day at the Guilderland YMCA. A fun day for all, one of the highlights of the day for many of the kids was getting handson and having the chance to spray a real fire hose!

On May 12th Thomas Corners Fire Dept. responded with other local departments (Stratton ANG Base FD, Alplaus FD, Mohawk Ambulance) to an aircraft incident at the Schenectady airport. A small plane landed belly-up on the runway! Thankfully no injuries were reported

Pine Grove FD and its Auxiliary held an all-day fundraiser on May 2nd. The day started off with the Auxiliary hosting a Garage Sale from 10AM-4PM, with the Department following the Auxiliary event with Chicken BBQ from 4PM-6PM! Sounds like a great day for sure!

Last, Niskayuna Fire Districts #1 & #2 "painted the town red!" on Saturday, May 16th by participating in the 45th Annual "NiskaDay" Celebration, an all-day community festival of fun, food, rides, a parade, fireworks, more! It's an action-packed day thanks to its numerous participating sponsors and in conjunction with its Community Action Program ("CAP"). Hope everyone enjoys the upcoming summer season – stay safe!



Dutchess County Report

Submitted by: Kyle Pottenburgh, DCVP

Summer is on its way so please remember to hydrate, hydrate, hydrate.

Again, this year on March 20 - 23, 2026 Dutchess County Weekend 2026 brought together 136 firefighters from across the county for three days of intensive, hands-on training in a wide range of firematic disciplines. This event was sponsored by the Dutchess County Fire Chiefs Council and supported by the DC Fire Districts Association, DCVFA, and NYS OFPC. Again, this year it was hosted at East Fishkill Fire District's Training center with remote training sites Hopewell Hose Co. 1, New Hackensack Fire district, and the Dutchess Community College Bldg. at the Mid-Hudson Regional Airport., the program offered classes in areas such as live-fire operations, EMS skills, leadership development, and fire-police highway safety. Now in its 30th year, the weekend continues to strengthen the skills, confidence, and teamwork of both new and veteran firefighters, reinforcing its role as one of Dutchess County's most valuable and enduring training traditions.

The Dutchess County Fire Training Center is entering an exciting new chapter as construction begins on a new live-fire training building, a major step in the multi-year effort to revitalize the facility. The previous building was removed late last year, and earlier this year a new concrete pad was installed. Structural components for the new building have also arrived for installation. For years, the county relied on training sites in East Fishkill and New Hackensack to host New York State outreach programs and ensure that Dutchess County firefighters continued to receive high-quality instruction. The new building is a long-awaited investment that will bring this training capacity back to the county, strengthen local readiness, and provide firefighters with a modern, realistic environment to develop their skills for years to come. According to Emergency Response Commissioner William Beale, a dedication ceremony is being planned for late June, although details have not yet been finalized. Future improvements at the training center include upgrades to the yard hydrant system and water supply, along with classroom and office space for instructors. See you all at the convention in Lake George.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

DCVFA Convention Meeting: Tuesday, June 16, 2026 @ 6:30 Millbrook Fire Station, 20 Front St Millbrook NY

DCVFA Convention Parade: Saturday, July 18, 2026, in the Village of Millbrook NY.
Millbrook Fire Company Annual Carnival: July 15 – 18, 2026 @ The Thorne Bldg. 3323 Franklin Ave. Millbrook NY.

Pawling Fire Department Annual Carnival: August 5 – 8, 2026 @ The lakeside park #2 Lakeside Dr. Pawling NY. Firefighters parade Fri. & Fireworks on Sat.

J. H. Ketcham Hose Company Monthly Pancake Breakfast: The 2nd Sunday of each month, Jan – April & Sept – Dec. 8:00am – 11:00am at J. H. Ketcham Hose Co. Station #1 Dover Plains, NY.

Milian Rescue Squad Monthly Pancake Breakfast: The 3rd Sunday of each month, Jan – May & Sept – Dec. 8:00am – 11:00am at the Milan Town Hall. 20 Willcox Circle Red Hook, NY.

Millerton Fire Company Monthly Pancake Breakfast: The 4th Sunday of each month from 7:00am – 11:00am Jan – April & Sept – Dec, at Millerton Fire Station #24 Century Blvd., Millerton, NY.,

Rombout Fire Company Monthly Pancake Breakfast: The 4th Sunday of each month from 8:00am – 11:00am at Rombout Station #1 901 Main St. Fishkill, NY.

Sullivan County Report

Submitted by: Shane LaVecchia, SCVP

The Sullivan County Firefighters Assn. held their meeting on April 14th at the Grahamsville Fire Department. A Discussion was had about moving the memorial stone to the training tower. Guest speakers Michael Schiff and Undersheriff Eric Chaboty spoke. The Grahamsville Fire Department is hosting the SCVFA Parade This year and County Coordinator John Hauschild will be the Grand Marshall for the parade this year.

The annual Sullivan County Firefighters Association Memorial Service was held on May 3rd 2026 at 2pm at the government center in Monticello NY. 29 members of the fire service who passed away in 2025 were honored. A flower was given to each of the fallen firefighters families that were honored.

Sullivan County Bureau of Fire Recruitment and Retention Task Force attended several career days at different schools throughout Sullivan County. They are planning on attending the Wurtsboro Street Fair, Bagel Festival and The Little World's Fair.

On April 16th 2026 the Sullivan County Fire Police Association held their meeting and annual elections at the Lava Fire Department and the following are the officers for 2026.

President -Shane LaVecchia

1st VP- Ralph LaVecchia

2nd VP Pat Mallon

Financial & Recording Secretary - Nancy McLain

Treasurer - Jim Lund

If you are in Sullivan County and are interested in joining the fire service please contact joinsullivanfire@gmail.com.

Rockland County Report

Submitted by: Lisa Castaldo, RCVF

The RC Fire Chiefs Old Timers Dinner, was held on Sun, Mar 1 at the Haverstraw Elks Club. Smoky Fales Award: Glenn Zahlmann, Hillcrest FD, Glenn Wilson Suffern H&L, Michael Yannazzone Sr, Sparkill FD. William V Harris Award: Don Arterburn, Pearl River FD. Jerome Trachtenberg Service Award: Vincent Pacella, Nanuet FD The Andrew A. Fredricks Memorial Instructor of the Year Award: Michael Perri, West Haverstraw FD President's Award: Kevin Huslinger, Stony Point FD (Past President of the RCFA)

At the March meeting in South Spring Valley Evan Humphrey had the privilege and honor to make a presentation to the Town of Ramapo Police Chief Daniel Hyman for his courageous efforts in saving a civilian who was trapped in a residential structure fire. On January 24th, 2026. While off duty Chief Hyman came upon a structure fire where there was a resident stuck in a window on the second floor. A ladder was put up and Chief Hyman ascended the ladder to get to the civilian and was able to assist the civilian to safety where he was turned over to EMS on scene. The civilian was transported to the hospital and survived because of Chief Hyman's actions. Chief Hyman with hesitation put his own life in harm's way to help the resident in this life-or-death situation. Chief Thank You from the Rockland County Volunteer Firefighters Association for going above and beyond.

Andrew A. Fredericks was the posthumous recipient of the FDIC International 2026 Tom Brennan Lifetime Achievement Award, presented to his family at FDIC 2026 in Indianapolis, IN on 4/22/26. Andy was an FDNY Squad 19 member killed on Sept 11, 2001. He was also a Fire Instructor at the RC Fire Training Center, member of Suffern Fire Dept, a NYS Fire Instructor. He was also an adjunct lecturer at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City. He was co-author of FDNY's engine company operations manual. He was a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of Fire Engineering and FDIC International. He was president of Andrew A. Fredericks & Associates, Inc., a firm specializing in municipal fire service training and consulting. He had 2 bachelor's degrees, one in political science and one in public safety, with a specialization in fire science, and a master's degree in fire protection management from John Jay. He developed the Fire Engineering "Bread and Butter" Operations videos Advancing the Initial Attack Handline (1997), Stretching the Initial Attack Handline (1998), and Methods of Structure Fire Attack (1999). He taught H.O.T. classes at FDIC. Fredericks felt one of his greatest achievements and greatest honors was being a keynote speaker at FDIC.

Scholarship Opportunities

RC FIRE CHIEFS ASSOC SCHOLARSHIP: The applications are out for the Edwin Murdock Memorial Scholarship. There are 3 awards given each year (\$2000 and 2-\$1000) Applications were sent to all Chiefs, Commissioners & Officers. Application must be postmarked by June 1st 2026 Print & Mail to: Rockland County Chief's Association Scholarship c/o 5 Louis Donato Dr. Garnerville, NY 10923

RCVFA STUART L. GATES MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP: The applications for the 2026 RCVFA Stuart L. Gates Scholarship is available to students who will be starting college in the fall of 2026. A minimum of two scholarships in the amount of \$1,500 each will be awarded. Eligibility for the scholarship requires that you must be the child or grandchild of a current RCVFA member or if you are a member of the RCVFA as a volunteer firefighter. The deadline for filing an application is June 15, 2026. The scholarship committee will review the applications and the winners will be presented with the scholarship at the July 10th RCVFA monthly meeting at the Hillcrest Firehouse. The scholarship application is also available on line at RCVFA.org.

Legislative Report

Submitted by: James Hartwick, Legislative Chair

Increase in the Income Tax Credit

In 2006 Senator Thomas Morahan of Rockland County submitted a budget item to establish an Income Tax Credit for Volunteer Fire Fighters and Volunteer Ambulance Responders. The intent was to increase the tax credit by \$100 each year thereafter until the credit reached a maximum of \$1000. Since 2006 the credit hasn't been increased above \$200. It became an issue for discussion at the HVVFA legislative conference in 2015 and a recommendation to FASNY as a legislative priority for the 2016 Legislative Scorecard. Since that time we have been lobbying for the credit to be increased. How much was never resolved so it stayed at \$200. Legislation was submitted in the Assembly and Senate, but the bills languished in the Assembly budget committee and Senate tax & finance committee. Our lobbying efforts reached some progress when the Senate passed a one house budget funding request to increase the credit by a few hundred dollars, but it didn't have enough support in the budget negotiations or in the Assembly.

As the famous college basketball Coach Jimmy Valvano said "never give up" and his team won the NCAA championship. We've never given up on the need to increase the Income Tax Credit. It has taken a longtime, but we have finally reached a legislative consensus.

The Firefighters Association of the State of New York (FASNY) applauded the New York State Assembly for passing landmark legislation to quadruple the state's volunteer firefighter and ambulance worker income tax credit from \$200 to \$800; the first increase since the program was established in 2006. The legislation also eliminates the restrictions that currently prevent volunteers from receiving both the state income tax credit and any locally authorized property tax exemptions for volunteers who own their primary home.

The property tax reduction is based on a 10% reduction of the assessed valuation that local authorities have enacted. This includes villages, towns, county, school districts, ambulance and fire districts. The reduction is based on the jurisdiction granting the reduction by resolution. The benefit has been available the if so enacted by the local authority.

The legislation, Senate S6233-A and Assembly A6790-A, represents one of the most significant statewide investments in volunteer emergency services in decades and comes as volunteer fire and ambulance corps across New York continue facing severe recruitment and retention challenges.

For two twenty years, the statewide volunteer income tax credit has remained unchanged at \$200 despite rising costs for fuel, tolls, food, rent etc. and the increasing emergency call volumes, and declining volunteer membership statewide. According to findings cited by FASNY, 76 percent of volunteer fire departments have experienced membership declines in recent years.

"This is a transformational moment for volunteer emergency services in New York State," said FASNY First Vice President, Donald J. Farrell. "Quadrupling the volunteer firefighter and EMS tax credit from \$200 to \$800 sends a powerful message that New York recognizes the critical role volunteers play in protecting communities every day. Combined with allowing volunteers to receive both the state income tax credit and local property tax exemptions, this legislation delivers meaningful, long-overdue support for the tens of thousands of volunteers who sacrifice their time, leave their families, and answer emergency calls at all hours."

In addition to increasing the statewide income tax credit, the legislation removes what FASNY described as an outdated statutory barrier that currently forces volunteers to choose between receiving the state income tax credit and benefiting from locally authorized property tax exemptions. The legislation would allow volunteers to receive both incentives simultaneously, restoring flexibility for local governments and strengthening local recruitment and retention efforts.

FASNY noted that volunteer firefighters save New York taxpayers an estimated \$3.8 billion annually in salaries and benefits alone, while replacing the volunteer system with a fully career workforce could cost as much as \$4.7 billion annually, in addition to billions in capital expenses and substantial local property tax increases.

The legislation, S.6233-A / A.6790-A, represents one of the most significant statewide investments in volunteer emergency services in decades and comes as volunteer fire and EMS departments across New York continue facing

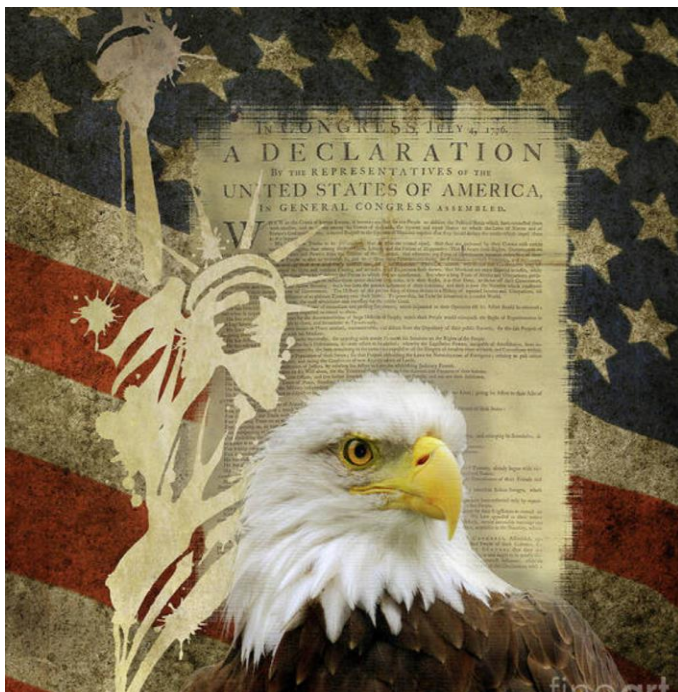
severe recruitment and retention challenges.

The vote on the bill in the Assembly passed 133 to 0. This was extraordinary. Many explanations on the bill were given from both sides of the aisle singing the praises of the volunteer fire service throughout the State and signaling a continued commitment to us. It was a wonderful display of support and you all should be commended for your work on this over the years.

FASNY's lobbyist Albany Strategic Associates (ASA) just spoke with Senator Martinez's team (the sponsor in that house) and they will definitely pass the bill (again) before they adjourn for the year, but they may wait until after budget since they put the bill in their one-house budget language (procedural). It is perfunctory; as you know it has already passed that house so it is a rubber stamp.

All of the Assembly Members would benefit from a call or email from our volunteers saying thank you for supporting the Volunteer Fire and Ambulance Service with your favorable vote to increase the Income Tax Credit from \$200 to \$800 annually starting with your with your tax filing in 2027. When you call or email your Assembly Member or Senator, let them know where you live and the fire or ambulance company/department you belong to. Legislators like hearing from their constituents.

**20 Years of Never Giving Up!!!
Congratulations!!!**



NEVER FORGET

In a few months, it will be a quarter century since the September 11, 2001 attacks, 100 million Americans are too young to remember the day that changed our lives and our nation forever. We must teach those born after 9/11 of its significance and enduring legacy.

As we commemorate this 25th Anniversary, a new generation will learn about the unimaginable loss we experienced and the inspiring stories of bravery, compassion, unity, and service that we witnessed that has rippled through the decades. As we celebrate the 25th Anniversary of this great nation, it will always be our shared promise that we made 25 years ago,

TO NEVER FORGET

All of the 2,977 men and women that perished that day at the World Trade Center, The Pentagon, and near Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

Our 343 FDNY brothers and the other First Responders who made the ultimate sacrifice that day and those that have passed from related causes since.

All of those that serve in the United States Armed Forces and protect our country and all that gave their lives in the fight against global terrorism.



ONE

by Cheryl Sawyer

As the soot and dirt and ash rained down, we became one color.

As we carried each other down the stairs of the burning building, we became one class.

As we lit candles of waiting and hope, we became one generation.

As the firefighters and police officers fought their way into the inferno, we became one gender.

As we fell to our knees in prayer for strength, we became one faith.

As we whispered or shouted words of encouragement, we spoke one language.

As we gave our blood in lines a mile long, we became one body.

As we mourned together the great loss, we became one family.

As we cried tears of grief and loss, we became one soul.

As we retell with pride of the sacrifice of heroes, we become one people.

We are

One Color, One Class, One Generation, One Gender, One Faith, One Language, One Body,
One Family, One Soul, One People

We are The Power of One.

We are United.

We are America.



THIS WEEK IN LAKE GEORGE



Travel Guidelines

- The cost of the mug and passport is **\$5.00** and may be purchased throughout the convention.
- Visit each establishment listed in the passport between **June 10–13**.
- Order food and/or a drink at each location and have your passport stamped.
- Once you have completed the crawl, passports must be turned in on **Beach Rd.** by **6:00 PM on June 13**.
- Participants will receive prize tickets based on the number of establishments visited.
- To be eligible for the **grand prize**, all **20 establishments** must be completed.
- Prize winners will be announced on **June 13 during the trophy awards ceremony**.
- Tasting events will be held at local establishments. Dates, times, and locations are **TBD** and will be announced later.
- Please drink responsibly and have fun!

COMEDY
AT THE
BLACKSMITH BAR
★ FORT WILLIAM HENRY ★

FIRE DEPT.

SHOW STARTS
7:30 PM
★
**GOOD DRINKS.
GREAT LAUGHS.**
★
AN UNFORGETTABLE NIGHT.

**THURSDAY,
JUNE 11TH, 2026**

— HOST —
CALEB WHITE

— FEATURE ACT —
GREG CREFT

— HEADLINER —
DAN GEURIN

48 CANADA STREET,
LAKE GEORGE, NY 12845

TICKETS
\$20
PER TICKET

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT
WWW.WOODTHEATER.ORG

OR BY EMAILING
boxoffice@woodtheater.org



**137TH HUDSON VALLEY CONVENTION APPAREL
FROM THE LAKE GEORGE FIRE CO.
MEN'S, WOMEN'S AND KIDS
T-SHIRTS & HOODIES
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THE HUDSON VALLEY FIREFIGHTER
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Stony Point, NY 10980

TO: