

VOLUME NO.
2026

THE HUDSON VALLEY FIREFIGHTER
ORG. 1889
NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO.
3 – SEPTEMBER

FROM THE DESK OF PRESIDENT

Robert Fritsche

Greetings to all our members and their families. Our Annual Convention was held in June, hosted by the Lake George Fire Department in Lake George. It was a successful convention from start to finish. I would like to thank Lake George FD for the outstanding job they did. Their committee has decided, since it went so well, Lake George has asked to host the convention again in 2027, which was approved by the membership at the convention.

During the convention, our usual business was conducted along with a presentation from the Lifetime Achievement Committee. The recipient of this award was Michael O'Conner from the Ossining Fire Department. Mike is a well-deserved recipient. The Presidents Memorial Award (FFOY) was awarded to West Glens Falls and Queensbury Central fire districts. Recipients were Captain Adam Norton, Chief Jeff Dailey of West Glens Falls along with Chief Brian Rainville of Queensbury Central fire districts.

This year was an election year for the Presidents positions. Myself and John O'Brien were elected to move up to President and 1st Vice President. There was a race for the 2nd Vice Presidents position between Yale Frank and Ed Butler. Ed is our new 2nd Vice President. Other positions that were filled are the following, Secretary- Jessica Benjamin, Director 1st term Kyle Pottenburgh, Director 1st term Brenda Gausby, Financial Secretary – Joe Mellan (for his final term), Treasurer – George Hill. Kyle is taking the director's position that was held by Jim Hartwick. Jim fulfilled his full term as a director and is doing a yeomen's job chairing the Legislative committee. The County Vice Presidents has some new faces that have stepped up to work between the valley and their respective counties to keep us all informed about any ongoing in Hudson Valley. All this information is posted on our website.

It has been a busy two months since the convention with County meetings and to many wakes. I have been traveling around with the first vice president of FASNY, Donnie Farrell on his campaign trail to be elected as your next president of FASNY. Our efforts paid off in getting him elected. Donnie won overwhelmingly over his opponent. Donnie was sworn in on Saturday along with Ken Holmes 1st VP, and Andy Pelecki 2VP. Overall, the Convention was a successful one. Next year's convention will be held in Buffalo on August 25 – 28 at the Buffalo convention center. This will also be the first youth involved convention. The intention is to get the youth in the fire service involved with FASNY. There are no official details out on the youth convention, as soon as they are available, we will make sure that any information will be published on the FASNY website.

In closing, I would like to extend a sincere thank you for all of your support for me to be your President. It is an honor and a privilege to be the President of this fine organization. My tenure will be focused on the youth of the fire service along with adding to our membership. Youth are the future of our organization, we all need to get the message out there, so they understand what we are about. Currently the Membership committee is putting together a flyer that can be distributed throughout the Valley to help us with this mission. If we all work together and bring one new member to the organization, it will help us immensely.

This is what is on the horizon for upcoming events for Hudson Valley. September 27, 2026 - Our annual Day at the Home will start at 9am with our Legislative meeting in the Multi-purpose room, at the conclusion of the meeting we will have lunch with the residents, The Ghent band will play, once that is done we will line up for the parade which will be followed by the presentations. October 24, 2026 – Quarterly meeting at 1:00pm in Hunter Mountain, Hunter Villa Resort. This will also be the location for the Past Presidents dinner honoring Junior Past President Robert Schrader. Cocktail hour will start at 5:00pm. Pictures of the officers will take place during the cocktail hour. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at these 2 events.

DEMOCRACY IN ACTION – THE VOLUNTEER FIRE SERVICE

Albany County Report

Submitted by: Butch Recchia, ACVP/John Webb

Plans are all set for two of the ACVFA important Annual events. Ravena Fire Company has been hard at work planning this year's Annual Dinner and Quarterly meeting to be held on Sept 16 in Ravena. Reservation Forms for the Dinner have been mailed to all Albany County Companies. After Dinner the Association will conduct their Meeting with the Annual Memorial Service and the presentation of the Walter W. Eck Jr. Firefighter of the Year award.

The Slingerlands Fire Department will be hosting the Annual Albany County Inspection Day on Saturday Sept 19 th at their Firehouse.

The Fuller Road Fire Dept will be celebrating their 100 th Anniversary with a Parade on Oct 10 at 1 PM and West Albany Fire Dept who will soon be receiving their new Engine. They will also be having their Family Picnic on August 29.

Soon There will be Two new Fire House's in Albany County. The Selkirk Fire District's (Town of Bethlehem), New Station is almost complete and will be open soon. Meanwhile the McKnowville Fire District's (Town of Guilderland), new Station is coming along nicely and hopefully will be finished at the end of this year or early 2027.

Now that summer is almost over many of the Companies and departments are planning their Fall fund raising events. These include Dinners, fall Festivals, Bake sales and towards Halloween many Companies host trunk or treat events or set up Haunted Houses at their Stations for all to enjoy.

For more information on all the events going on please check our Facebook page, Albany County Volunteer Firemens Association. Everyone please enjoy the Fall scenery and stay safe.

Greene County Report

Submitted by: Frank Boertlein, GCVF

Frank is a new County VP and still learning the ropes so expect more from Greene County in the future.

All of Greene County companies are busy preparing for our convention witch will be on the September 11th weekend in Ashland. I serve as co chairman of the parade rules committee as well as Sgt. at Arms for the GCVFA as well as preparing to be a grandfather in October.

Welcome aboard Grandpa and Congratulations!

Rensselaer County Report

Submitted by: Brenda Gausby, Director

Summer's End: Looking Ahead to Fall

As summer draws to a close, we reflect on a busy season filled with parades, fundraising barbecues, outdoor and water-based training, and multiple mutual-aid responses to severe weather events. Before we turn our full attention to fall, we would like to recognize several accomplishments and upcoming events.

Congratulations to East Greenbush for receiving Best Overall Fire Unit in the Line of March at the 137th Annual HVVFA Convention Dress Parade. East Greenbush also deserves our appreciation for hosting the 99th Annual Hudson Mohawk Firefighters Association Convention on July 19.

At the July 20 Rensselaer County Fire Chief's Association (RCFCA) meeting, the Rensselaer County Search and Rescue Team presented an overview of the services they provide and introduced current team members—including a seasoned canine member. The next RCFCA meeting is scheduled for September 21, with the location and presentation details to be announced on the association's Facebook page.

Rensselaer and Capital District high school students will once again have the opportunity to earn school credit through a Fire Science/EMS CTE program this fall. Interested students should contact their school guidance office and can visit the City of Rensselaer Fire Department's Facebook page for images and some additional information.

Looking ahead, Saturday, October 3 is Rensselaer County Day at the Firefighters Home in Hudson, featuring a parade and luncheon. This ushers in the annual Fire Prevention Week, beginning Monday, October 4, with public education activities planned for both youth and older residents throughout the county.

Finally, Hoag's Corners in East Nassau will celebrate its 80th anniversary with a dinner on Saturday, October 17. Additional details are available on their Facebook page.

Putnam County Report

Submitted by: David Cariddo, PCVP

Well, I hope everyone is enjoying their summer time fun with family and friends. Before we know it Labor Day will be here and all the kids will be headed back to school.

During the summer a few of our departments have been busy doing some great things. The Mahopac FD held their annual Fair and Firefighters' Parade on July 23rd. The fair ran for two weekends.

On July 27th, the Putnam County VFA held its convention and Memorial service at the Lake Carmel FD. July 7th, the Carmel FD hosted their annual Don Pearlman/Jimmy Roberts golf outing at the Putnam County Golf course.

The Patterson FD held their annual water fight parade on August 9th. The Patterson FD will also be holding a Book Sale from September 26th to October 4th. See the flyer posted on the PCVFA website (pcvfa.org) for information if interested in donating. On August 10th Putnam Valley VAC had a Blood Drive.

On Sunday, September 13th there will be a memorial Mass held at St. John's Roman Catholic Church in Mahopac in remembrance of the 25th anniversary of September 11th. This is being organized by PCVFA Past President Kevin Neary. Let us never forget the ultimate sacrifice of those that gave their lives that fateful day.

Westchester County Report

Submitted by: Anthony Chu, WCVF

Rockland and Westchester Counties Day at the Firemen's Home. On July 19, 2026, members from Rockland and Westchester counties gathered at the Firemen's Home for their annual appreciation day. The event saw an excellent turnout from the community. Entertainment was anchored by Mohegan Lake's own DJ Paulie, who provided a great musical lineup. Attendees were also uniquely honored to hear from special guest Angelo D'Aleo, one of the two surviving members of the legendary musical group Dion and the Belmonts.

Ossining Fire Department Parade Adaptability. The annual Ossining Fire Department Parade, scheduled for August 7, 2026, was unfortunately canceled due to severe inclement weather. True to the resilient spirit of the

department, the Chief's refused to let the evening go to waste. Personnel quickly cleared the headquarters apparatus bays, setting up tables and chairs inside the garage. Simultaneously, the department opened its other firehouses, opening its doors to host and provide hospitality for every visiting guest.

Westchester County solemnly recognizes the loss of three dedicated lifelong public servants who passed away this past quarter.

David William Bender committed over six decades of his life to fire service traditions and local emergency response. He served as an active firefighter, EMT, and was the longtime Treasurer of the Verplanck Fire Protective Association.

He played the fife for over 60 years, beginning in 1962 with the Verplanck Fife and Drum Corps alongside his father, Bill. Over his lifetime, he marched in countless parades with multiple Fife & Drum corps supporting fire departments across New York and Connecticut.

He was also an Associate Member of Buchanan Engine Co. No. 1 Inc, a Member of the Westchester County VFA, HVVFA, the Royal Order Blue Vests and FASNY.

Henry R. "Hank" Hrdlicka passed away on July 30, 2026, leaving behind an expansive 62-year legacy dedicated to the volunteer fire service. He served as an Ex-Captain, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary of the Peekskill Fire Patrol and was the former 1st Assistant Chief of the Cortlandt Engine Co., Montrose FD.

He was a Life Member of the HVVFA, the Royal Order Blue Vests, FASNY, the Verplanck Fire Protection Assn., a Member of Buchanan Engine Co. and Board Member for both the Westchester County VFA and the Inter-County Parade Judges Assn.

Robert Reed was a highly respected leader who rose through the ranks to guide county and local fire organizations. He was a Dedicated member of both Ardsley Engine Company No. 1 and the Ardsley Fire Department, where he climbed the ranks and served as Chief of Department from 1993 to 1995.

He was a Past President of the Westchester County VFA and a member of the Westchester County Parade Judges Association, the HVVFA, the Royal Order Blue Vests, FASNY and was a Life Member of the New York State Association of Fire Chiefs.

Rest in Peace Brothers, we've got it from here.

HVVFA Ladies Auxiliary

Submitted by: Victoria Dichian
LA-HVVFA Liaison

It has been a busy last few months for your Auxiliary!

In June we held our annual Convention at the Holiday Inn Resort in Lake George. During our meeting on Thursday June 11th we elected our new Officers, conducted Auxiliary business, enjoyed a delicious lunch and when business concluded had fun seeing who the lucky winners of the various ways and means baskets and raffles would be.

Our new 2026 -2027 Officers L – R



President Gina-Marie Pacicca-Putnam Cty,
1st VP- Megan Rivenburgh-Greene Cty.
2nd VP-SuSu Scognamiglio-Westchester Cty.
Recording Sec.-Sheri King-Putnam Cty.
Financial Sec.-Tammy Nosek-Orange Cty.
Treasurer-Dianne Werner-Rockland Cty.
2 Yr. Director-Catherine Johnson-Greene Cty.
3 Yr, Director-Holly Eichler-Westchester Cty.
5 Yr, Director-Heidi Wheelock-Putnam Cty.

Our other two Directors were installed previously when they were first elected, they are:
1 Yr. Director- Dana Navan-Rockland Cty. And
4 Yr. Director-Janine Wheeler-Dutchess Cty.

A huge Thank You to the Lake George Fire Department and it's Ladies Auxiliary for all their hard work to make this event possible. Pictured are the members who worked to put things together and helped out.



Chairperson & President Patty Schuster, Leisga McKinney, Gail Corlew, Beth Brundage and Simone Ramsey.

Looking Forward!

We will be holding our December 2026 Daily Drawing. Tickets cost \$5.00 each and have two numbers on each ticket. That's right **6** chances to win with each ticket bought. The tickets will be available at our September 20th meeting at the Blauvelt Fire Department, Hudson Valley Day at the Firefighter's Home in Hudson and our November 1st meeting at the Buchanan Fire Department.

Anyone who would like a ticket and can't make one of the above, please contact Karen McDonald at kmcdonad@earthlink.net or by phone/text at 518-339-9605.

We are always looking for new members. If you have a significant other or friend who is not a member invite them to come to our September meeting, they find they like it.

NEW YORK STATE E-BIKE & E-SCOOTER LAWS

MINIMUM AGE	E-BIKE CLASSES		
16+ You must be at least 16 years old to operate an electric bike or electric scooter in New York State.	CLASS 1 • Pedal assist only • Max assisted speed: 20 MPH	CLASS 2 • Throttle allowed • Max speed: 20 MPH	CLASS 3 • Pedal assist only • Max assisted speed: 25 MPH
	WHERE CAN THEY BE RIDDEN? ✓ Roads with speed limits of 30 MPH or less ✓ Bike lanes where available ✗ Not on sidewalks (unless local law specifically allows it)		
HELMETS Required for riders age 16-17 on e-scooters. Required for certain Class 3 e-bike riders. Strongly recommended for everyone.		NO LICENSE REQUIRED ✓ No driver's license ✓ No registration ✓ No insurance required for legal e-bikes and e-scooters.	
PARENTS: If your child is under 16, they CANNOT legally operate an e-bike or e-scooter on public roads in New York State.			

Local laws may vary. Always ride safely and follow all traffic laws.

**RIDE RESPONSIBLY.
SHARE THE ROAD.**

**Be Smart.
Be Safe.
Be Legal.**

Source: New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law § 1111-c, § 1111-d, § 1231

Sullivan County Report

Submitted by: Shane LaVecchia, SCVP

A TRIBUTE TO Nelson "Nellie" Durland JUNE 19, 1938 — AUG 2, 2026



It is with a somber and heavy heart that I write this article and tell you that on August 2nd, 2026, 69 year life member and Past Chief of the Hurleyville Fire Department Nelson Durland has passed away. On Wednesday, August 5th friends, family, colleagues and firefighters from several departments gathered to say goodbye to Nelson.

So, I thought instead of writing an article about parades or the different goings on here within the different fire departments here in Sullivan County, I would like to pay homage to Nelson. I thought I would like to share with you his long list of accomplishments along with his long and dedicated career of service to his community and to the fire service. Nelson proudly served his country for five years in the Army Reserve and received an Honorable Discharge in November 1962. He was also a charter member of the AM Vets Post 50.

Nelson was a member of Hurleyville Fire Department for 69 years. He served for three years as Fire Chief. He was Past President of both the Sullivan County Volunteer Firefighter's Association, elected 1980 and the Hudson Valley Volunteer Fighter's Association elected 1998. In 2009 he was honored to receive the Lifetime Achievement Award from both associations.

Nelson is a life member of the NYS Fire Chiefs and a member of Firemen's Association State of New York where he served for 5 years on the Resolutions Committee. Nelson was also an honorary member of the Livingston Manor Fire Dept., Liberty Hose & Truck Company #2, Ontario Hose Company #3, Neversink Fire Dept, Woodbourne Fire Dept. and Pioneer Engine of Ellenville.

Nelson worked for 30 years at the Sullivan County Dept of Social Services, retiring in 1995. He served on the Sullivan County Fire Advisory

Board for ten years, where he was Chairman for five years, and provided the leadership on getting our first centralized control center for emergencies in 1989.

He was a 62-year Mason and was awarded the Heart & Hand Community Service Award from the Grand Lodge in 2007. He is also a life member of the Liberty Elks.

In 2016 Nelson was honored at West Point for 50 years of Army football and 25 years of community service to the West Point Cadets at an Army game at halftime. In 2018 Nelson was honored by the Sullivan County Legislature with Citizen of the Year Award representing the Sullivan County Fire Service.

Nelson was a long-time member of the Red Horse Hunting Camp in Claryville, Loch Sheldrake-Hurleyville Rod & Gun Club and Catskill OB's where he served as scholarship chairman for many years.

Nelson is survived by his loving wife of 58 wonderful years Joan, son Eric, Godson John Edwards and his nephews John Robbins and Jeffrey Cook.

So, as you can see Nelson has served a long and dedicated career to his community and to the fire service. As I end this article I would like to take a moment to say that Nellie was one of the biggest reasons that myself and my dad got involved with the Hudson Valley Volunteer Fire Fighters Association. For that I will be forever thankful. Nelson will be greatly and dearly missed but never ever forgotten. Rest in Peace Chief, we've got it from here.

Essex County Report

Submitted by: Thomas Keck, ECVP

Tom is a new County VP and still learning the ropes so expect more from Essex County in the future.

The Port Henry Fire Department has received grant funding to help with the building of a new station.

The Ticonderoga Fire Department also has had a vote before the town for the building of a new Fire station which was also approved. Ground breaking to start May 2027 and completion expected by 2029. More information to follow.

Welcome aboard Tom!

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THE OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF
THE ROYAL ORDER OF THE BLUE VESTS

9/26

Greetings and news from the Nut Busters!
Submitted by: LuAnn Edele, Recording Secretary.

As I write this, I'm wondering how the year is flying by so quickly that we are already entering Fall! Crazy! Since the last article, the Blue Vests accomplished a few things before the summer hiatus.

First, we held our annual meeting & Family Picnic on Saturday, May 23rd. We had a great turnout overall, with many of the Home members attending. The unopposed nominees for Officers were announced and the closing votes cast.

Past President Fred Pettingell (2010) proudly installed the Officers in attendance at the start of our Home Day festivities on Saturday, June 20th. Pres. Stockman, who was absent for the installation, happily vacationing with wife Gale, will be installed at our October 18th meeting. The now-official 2026-27 officers are: President Bruce Stockman, Ed Butler and Janine Wheeler (1st and 2nd VP respectively), George Hill with the dual positions of Financial Secretary and Treasurer, and I will continue as Recording Secretary. Also adding another term to their resumés are Frank Roberts Sr. as Sergeant-at-Arms and our Chaplains, Victoria Dichian and Jay Brennan, who were also unopposed during nominations.

Changes to this new term's County Delegates included the return of Past Director Dave Chapman who will once again represent Columbia County and, for Westchester County, Josephine Burns will fill the position left vacant by Tom Camp, partnering with Frank Gordiski.

We had our annual joint Blue Vests/Red Vests outing at Usher Park, Lake George this year and it was very well attended! Despite the heat that day, the pavilion gave plenty of shade for us to have a really enjoyable time! Thanks to Pres. Bruce Stockman and Red Vests' Pres. Dot Brown for their efforts in making this day happen and Stone Pony Caterers who fed us quite well!

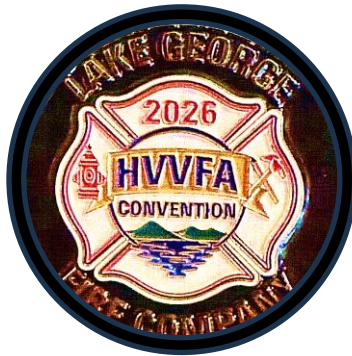
BTW, if you've an interest in challenge coins, the FF Home Residents Council has been selling challenge coins! The coins are designed by resident Carl Avery and they are done for various occasions such as the infamous Chili Cookoff in memory of member Mike Trazinsky. This year their special "belt buckle style" coin honors the 25th Anniversary of September 11 (see photo). If you collect challenge coins, or know someone who does, then look for Home Delegate Bob Gillman and Carl Avery to be selling these coins at their events, Home Days, etc., and kindly support their fundraising efforts! Patches are also available.



Sadly, we lost several Blue Vests members over the past summer, including Gerald Doyle (Putnam), Dave Bender, Hank Hrdlicka and Robert Reid (Westchester), and HVVFA Past President Nelson Durland (Sullivan). So very hard to say goodbye to great people!

Our next meeting will be held Sunday, October 18th at the Firefighter's Home.
This is the week prior to the HVVFA quarterly meeting, so we do hope that you
will consider joining us that day!
Till we chat again – stay safe and Happy Autumn!

THANK YOU!



**FOR BEING GRACIOUS AND PATRIOTIC HOSTS
FOR OUR 137TH ANNUAL HVVFA CONVENTION &
PARADES AND TO HELP US ALL CELEBRATE
250 YEARS OF THE USA!!**



LAKE GEORGE!

**THE 138TH ANNUAL HVVFA CONVENTION AND
PARADES WILL AGAIN BE HOSTED BY THE
LAKE GEORGE
VOLUNTEER
FIRE COMPANY**

**June 17–19, 2027
WITH THE ANNUAL GOLF OUTING ON JUNE 16**

**THE HUDSON VALLEY VOLUNTEER
FIREFIGHTERS' ASSOCIATION
IS LOOKING FOR FUTURE CONVENTION/PARADE HOSTS
FOR 2028 AND BEYOND**

**IF YOUR FIRE COMPANY AND/OR DEPARTMENT IS
INTERESTED IN THIS NOBLE UNDERTAKING PLEASE
CONTACT;**

PRESIDENT BOB FRITCHE - koachice@aol.com

1ST VP JOHN O'BRIEN - jvob1964@gmail.com

2ND VP ED BUTLER - depchfhuggybear@gmail.com

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9/23

Rockland County Report**Submitted by: Lisa Castaldo, RCVF**

K-9 LLOYD The Rockland County Sheriff's Department welcomed their newest addition - Canine Lloyd. Detective Sean Regan Ward will be Lloyd's handler. Lloyd is named in memory of Spring Valley Firefighter Jared Lloyd, who lost his life saving others in a nursing home fire on March 23, 2021.

On June 6, 2026, members of the New York City Fire Department (FDNY), the Tappan Fire Department, and the Rockland County fire service dedicated the intersection of Lombardi Road and Lang Terrace in Pearl River as Captain Frederick Simms Way. FDNY Captain Frederick "Freddie" Simms Jr. served 22 years with the FDNY, including as Captain of Ladder 58, and more than 27 years with the Tappan Volunteer Fire Department, including serving as Chief. He trained countless firefighters as a New York State Fire Instructor and Rockland County Deputy Fire Coordinator. He passed away at the age of 49 from 9/11-related cancer and will be remembered for his leadership, compassion, and selflessness.

The Rockland County Volunteer Firefighter's Association scholarship committee reviewed the applications received and considered not only the student's academic achievements and honors, but their involvement in extracurricular school activities, community involvement and their essay, "How Do Various Types of Volunteering Help Your Community." Brian Cronin a graduate of North Rockland High School achieved high honors inclusive of the National Honor Society and the Academy of Art and recognition for honors in English, Math and Science and the NY State Comptroller's Achievement Award He is an Eagle Scout and Firefighter with Wayne Hose Co., Stony Point. He will attend the University of New Haven to pursue a degree in Fire Science. Kylie Grompone is a graduate of Emerson High School and achieved high academic honors with a 4.1 GPA and a recipient of the National Honor Society and the National Business Honor Society awards. She received the Dwight Eisenhower Leadership Award from the Parents Club of West Point and

the University of Rochester George Eastman Young Leaders Award. She was very active in varsity sports; soccer, basketball and softball and earned all-league honors in each. Her sports experience extended to volunteering in the community with youth recreation clubs and sports camps as a counselor. Kylie will attend William Paterson University in N.J. Two awards were presented and each recipient received \$1,500. The competition was quite keen, as reported by Committee Chairman James Hartwick.

9/11 MEMORIAL SERVICE

County of Rockland, 25th Anniversary Friday, September 11, 2026, at Haverstraw Bay Park, which houses the county 9/11 Memorial. The service begins at 8:30 am. All are welcome.

SAVE THE DATE: ROCKLAND COUNTY VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER'S CONVENTION MEETING AND PARADE

The 2026 Convention Meeting and Parade will be hosted by S.W. Johnson S.F.E. #1, who are celebrating their 150th year of service this year. The SW Johnson Ladies Auxiliary is celebrating their 90th year of service, as well. The RCVFA Convention Meeting will be held on October 2, 2026, 7:30 pm, at Patriot Hills, Stony Point NY. Refreshments will follow the business meeting. The RCVFA Parade will be held on October 3, 2026, 2:00 pm start, in Garnerville NY. The Parade will proceed through the streets of Garnerville, with the Reviewing Stand at the firehouse on Bridge Street and the end of march at Peck's Pond on Bowline Rd. Refreshments will be served at the end of march, with entertainment and trophy ceremony to end the night. All are welcome to attend!



Schenectady County Report

Submitted by: LuAnn Edele, Director

The Niskayuna Fire District No. 1 on Balltown Rd. was the first to train with the "Bring on the Spectrum" continuing education course, a course targeted to handling someone who's in crisis who's on the spectrum. Spearheaded by Lt. Shannon Smith, on August 11 th , members of Niskayuna Fire and EMS were part of the R.E.A.C.H. training program (Respond, Establish, Assess, Communicate, Help). R.E.A.C.H. is an interactive workshop designed to equip first responders and community professionals with practical strategies for effectively supporting those individuals who are in crisis. R.E.A.C.H. partners with the Bring on the Spectrum program.

Rotterdam Fire District #2 held a very successful National Lights Out Night on August 4TH . Prior to that, on July 13TH , they held a Water Flow Operations Demo at the Rotterdam training tower.

So. Schenectady Fire Department - Thanks to CVP Chair Brenda Gausby, we've learned that the MACBOSTON 18 TRUCK Fall Seminar is scheduled for October 17TH at the South Schenectady Fire Department, in Rotterdam NY with registration beginning at 8:00am. Admission is a \$20 donation, seminar begins at 9:00AM. To register, reach out to mikefrance@macboston.com (**FLYER IS POSTED ON PAGE 15 OF THIS EDITION**)

Last, the Pattersonville Fire Department welcomed the Erie Canal Riders ("Cycle the Erie Canal") on July 25TH as the cyclists stopped at the PFD on their journey and supported the department, be it through purchasing food, stopping to shoot the breeze and taking shelter from the rain passed through the area. This is an annual cycling event and Pattersonville welcomes them each year!



Looking forward to writing another Schenectady recap in the next issue, too!

Legislative Report

Submitted by: James Hartwick, Legislative Chair

HVVFA Annual Legislative Conference

On September 27th, the Hudson Valley Volunteer Firefighters' Association annual legislative conference will be held at the Firefighters Home in Hudson, NY. The purpose of the conference is to review the FASNY Legislative Scorecard and the NY State legislative actions on our priority bills in 2026. We will also discuss new ideas for legislation and prepare our legislative recommendations to FASNY for 2027.

Date: September 27, 2026

Location: FASNY Firefighters Home Pavilion, Hudson, NY

Schedule:

- ☐ Sign-in begins 8:30 a.m.
 - ☐ Coffee & donuts until 9:00
 - ☐ Meeting starts 9:00
 - ☐ Lunch with Home Residents 12:00 noon.
- Any new ideas must be submitted in writing to the legislative committee no later than September 16 th . Suggestions should be brief and in the following format: Purpose of the legislation and a statement of Need/Justification. Your submissions should be forwarded to the committee for review prior to the 9/27 meeting.

Legislative Committee

Board Liaison: Director Brenda Gausby

James Hartwick, Chairman:

jhartwick47@gmail.com

Mike Karashay, Vice Chairman:

mkarashay@hvc.rr.com

Kurt Mulligan: Kurt@kurtmulligan.com

Paul O'Brien: Pobrien877@aol.com

FASNY Conference

This year's FASNY Legislative Conference will be held the weekend of November 6 - 8 at the Crowne Plaza (formerly The Desmond located at 660 Albany Shaker Road off of Wolf Road in Colonie, NY. Save the Date. Details will be forthcoming at the October 24 th Quarterly Meeting.



Columbia County Report

Submitted by: Barbara Fischer, CCVP

Now that my term has ended as the Recording Secretary of the HVVFA, I am back as the Columbia County VP! It was a pleasure serving as your secretary, but it was time to move on and let someone else learn the ropes! Jessica Benjamin will do an outstanding job for our association, and I will still be here to support her every step of the way!

The Columbia County Volunteer Firefighter's Association held their 101 st Annual Firefighter's Convention July 23-26 with the County Ladies starting everything off with their Wine & Cheese outing held at the Hudson Elks Lodge next to the Firefighter's Home in Hudson. There was a good crowd enjoying lots of good food, good music by Electric Blue DJ Robert Hawley from the Niverville Fire Department, and lots of dancing. Everyone had a good time.

The CCVFA started off their portion of the convention on Friday night with Lifetime Achievement Awards, Firefighter of the Year Award and another round of donning gear competition. At this year's competition we saw Erin Soltano from Taghkanic Fire Department, Mike Stevenson of Greenport Fire (the winner at 1 minute and 5 seconds!), Britany Brennan from West Ghent Fire and Henry Swartz from Niverville Fire compete against each other for the quickest time in donning their gear the fastest. Everyone had lots of fun watching these firefighters and they all did a great job! Defending Champion Ben Horst of the Chatham Fire Department was asked afterwards to compete against the winner of the competition and ended up with a time of 54.7 seconds without having had time to practice beforehand! (His time last year was a mere 46 seconds!)

2025-2026 Convention President Tim Trowbridge did a great job as President (third time around!) and handed over the reins to the 2026-2027 President Mark Taylor, Chief of the Greenport Fire Company District. Chief Taylor will do a great job along with Vice President Christine Grossman of the Hudson Fire Department, the host of the 2028 annual convention.

The Chatham Fire Department won Best Overall with an Auxiliary at the convention parade this year and everyone celebrated in the pavilion on the fairgrounds where the convention was

held. Great job Chatham Fire Department!

The 2027 Annual Convention will be hosted by the Greenport Fire District, and it will be held on the grounds of the Firefighters Home. Some meetings and the convention will be held in the multi-purpose building on the grounds of the Home and I'm sure the members of the Home will really enjoy having everyone come to their home.

Speaking of the Firefighter's Home, there will be another Open House on Saturday, September 26 from 11 am- 3 pm. There will be lots of music, good food, a water slide and dunking booth as well as some good ole cornhole competition! Mark the date on your calendar and we hope to see you there!! (Please check the Firefighter's Home website for other events happening throughout the year!)

The next day, the HVVFA will host Hudson Valley Day at the Home (Sept. 27) so it will be a busy weekend.

I hope everyone has a good start to the fall season and can get out and enjoy the upcoming dinners and breakfasts that will be starting soon at your local fire department. Stay well and safe everyone!

Saratoga County Report

Submitted by: LuAnn Edele, Director

Here are a few tidbits from Saratoga County!

Halfmoon-Waterford Fire District #1 once again held its popular Texas Hold'em fundraiser (also called "Bounty Hold'em") on Sunday, August 23rd. I'm sure we'll see this fundraiser again, as they've run it a few times already.

Halfmoon Fire Department is taking a trip to New York City for the Mets-Yankees game on Friday, Sept. 11th. This is their way of remembering those who died and were affected by that fateful day – by doing something memorable for all in a positive way.

Harmony Corners Fire Department celebrated its 100 th anniversary on Saturday, Aug 8th, with a community celebration held at their headquarters in Ballston Spa.

The Mechanicville Fire Department and Police Department will be having its annual Charity Golf Tournament on Saturday, October 11th at the Mechanicville Golf Club. You can check out their Facebook event page here: https://bit.ly/MFD_Golf

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Saratoga County Report Continued

Lastly, sadly the Mechanicville Fire Department said good-bye to Past Chief T. Joseph Dugan. Passing at the age of 99, Chief Dugan devoted 79 years of service to the MFD, after joining the department in 1947. Chief in 1961- 62, he was also the founding member of the John H. Ahearn Rescue Squad, which remained in operation until it was eventually acquired by the Clifton Park/Halfmoon Emergency Corps. Rest in Peace Chief, we've got it from here.

Ulster County Report Submitted by: Justus Rice, UCVF

First of all, I hope everyone has had a great summer.

On July 24 and 25 the Ulster County Volunteer Firemen's Parade was held in Napanoch. They also celebrated 100 years of service. Friday night was the annual meeting with the memorial service to honor all departed members which was held at the Napanoch Firehouse. At that meeting they also handed out certificates to Clintondale FD and Plattekill FD for each celebrating 100 years of service. Saturday was the dress parade, it was a little hot but everyone enjoyed themselves.

The firefighter one graduation was on July 27 at the Marlboro Firehouse. We wish them all good luck in their next step of firefighting. The class had over 70 firefighters graduate.

The August county meeting was held on the 18th at Modena firehouse. At the end of that meeting Santo "Chan" Rivera passed the president badge to incoming President Robert Keator from Wallkill. We would like to thank Chan for all he has done as Vice President and President for Ulster County.

CONVENTION AWARDS RECAP!

For those of you that couldn't make it this year or a trip down memory lane for those that could.

This year's Presidents Memorial Award for Firefighter of the Year was presented to the West Glens Falls & Queensbury Central Fire districts. Individual Awards were presented to Captain Adam Norton, Chief Jeff Dailey both of West Glens Falls FD along with Chief Brian Rainville of Queensbury Central FD. Congratulations!



The Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Michael O'Conner from the Ossining FD. Mike is a well-deserving recipient.



Dutchess County Report

Submitted by: Kyle Pottenburgh, Director

It's been a busy summer this year in Dutchess County.

The Dutchess County fire community mourns the passing of a leader and friend. His dedication to duty, his family's continued service, and the countless lives he influenced stand as a lasting tribute to a life well lived. Glenn Scofield Sr., a longtime leader in the Dutchess County fire service and past chief of the Village of Fishkill, has died, leaving a deep void in the local firefighting community. A dedicated volunteer, mentor, and friend, Scofield's commitment to public safety and to the people he served defined a lifetime of service. Glenn also served as a Dutchess County Deputy Sheriff and longtime Highway superintendent for the Town of Fishkill. Glenn never left Fishkill or Dutchess County.

Scofield rose through the ranks of the Village of Fishkill fire company, ultimately serving as chief where he guided volunteers through training, emergency response, and community outreach. His knowledge of firefighting tactics, equipment, and the unique challenges of volunteer service made him a trusted voice across the county. Colleagues remember him for steady leadership during difficult calls and for the patient way he taught new recruits the skills and values of the trade.

He is survived by his sons, Glenn Scofield Jr., Deputy County Emergency Response Coordinator, Dean Scofield, Dutchess County Deputy Fire Coordinator, and his grandson Wyatt Scofield who is a member of the Rombout Fire Company, all whom continue the family's long tradition of public service. Also, his son Keith Scofield who resides in Carolina. He was the brother of Ken Scofield, past chief of the Rombout Fire Company. Ken is a resident of the FASNY Firefighters' Home, where he remains connected to the firefighting community.

Joined by firefighters and other first responders, elected officials and residents from across the county, Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino and the Dutchess County Department of Emergency Response officially opened the County's new, state-of-the-art Live Fire Training Building at the County's Emergency Response campus at 392 Creek Road in Hyde Park. The modular fire training structure will provide local

firefighters with the opportunity to train in a variety of live burn scenarios.

As part of the celebration, the County dedicated the Dutchess County Fire Training Grounds in honor of Ray Nichols, who has served as Deputy Fire Coordinator for Dutchess County for nearly 40 years. Nichols, a Hyde Park resident, has served as Dutchess County Deputy Fire Coordinator since 1988 and has been foundational in the development and expansion of the County's training facilities. A longtime member of the Roosevelt Fire Department, he served as Chief in the 1980s, leading the department through many significant emergency response events. He also received a promotion to Senior Deputy Fire Coordinator by Emergency Response Commissioner William Beale.

Forty Dutchess County firefighters successfully completed the New York State Firefighter 1 or BEFO curriculum during the summer of 2026, delivering two separate offerings to prepare new and transitioning firefighters for frontline service. The program combined classroom instruction, hands-on skills training, and scenarios-based exercises to meet the state's training standards.

New Hackensack Fire District Training Center hosted one full Firefighter 1 class focused on fundamentals, equipment uses, and practical skills. East Fishkill Fire District Training Center, Summer Boot Camp, delivered an intensive boot camp version of the Firefighter 1 curriculum designed to accelerate skill development through concentrated, multiday training sessions. Both venues provided live fire props, training towers, and apparatus access to ensure students received realistic, competency-based experience. Instruction combined lectures, practical demonstrations, and supervised evolutions so students could practice skills under realistic conditions and receive immediate feedback from instructors.

By offering two formats—traditional classroom and an accelerated boot camp—Dutchess County expanded access to essential firefighter training and helped recruit and prepare new volunteers and career candidates. The summer 2026 sessions strengthened interdistrict cooperation and reinforced the county's commitment to maintaining a well-trained, ready firefighting force.

The Dutchess County VFA held its Annual Convention on Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at the

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Dutchess County Report Continued

Millbrook Fire Station on Front Street in the Village of Millbrook. The event brought together firefighters, officers, families, and supporters from across the county to celebrate service, dedication, and achievement within the volunteer fire service.

The evening program featured the issuance of County Firefighter Awards honoring outstanding service, heroism, leadership, and community commitment. Along with the issuance of three scholarships. These scholarships were awarded to three deserving Dutchess County firefighters pursuing higher education or advanced fire service training. These scholarships reflect the Association's commitment to supporting the next generation of fire service leaders. The Millbrook Fire Station provided a fitting backdrop for the ceremony, with its long history of volunteer service and community involvement.

The Annual Parade stepped off on Saturday, July 18, 2026, marching through the Village of Millbrook. Fire departments from across Dutchess County and surrounding communities participated, showcasing apparatus, marching units, color guards, junior firefighters, and community pride. Residents lined the streets to cheer on their hometown companies, making the parade one of the most well attended in recent years.

Some of the Official parade results are listed below:

- *Best Overall – Augustine Rotunno Memorial Trophy: Union Vale
- *William "Bud" Pottenburgh, Least Demerit 3 Legged: J.H. Ketcham
- *Best Appearing Firematic Color Guard: J.H. Ketcham
- *Best Appearing Engine: Stottville
- *Best Appearing Aerial: J.H. Ketcham
- *Best Appearing Rescue: Chelsea
- *Best Appearing Antique: J.H. Ketcham
- *Best Explorer Unit/Jr. Fire Unit: Stottville
- *Best Appearing Regulation in County 15 and over: JH Ketcham
- *Best Appearing Non-regulation in County: Pawling
- *Best Appearing Regulation out of County: Stottville
- *Best Appearing Non-Regulation out of County: Sharon

UPCOMING EVENTS:

*Dutchess County Volunteer Firefighters Memorial Ceremony: Oct 4th @ 11:00am at the Dutchess County 911 Center, 392 Creek Rd. Poughkeepsie, NY.

*Dutchess County Chapter of the Red Knights Motorcycle Memorial Ride: Sunday Oct 4th, Kickstands-up at 9:00 am leaving the Dutchess County 911 Center, 392 Creek Rd, Poughkeepsie, NY. This is part of the DCVFA Memorial and Benefits Perfectly Broken, a Peer2Peer, 1st Responder support group.

*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.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITY South Schenectady FD Rotterdam NY



MacBoston 18 TRUCK FALL SEMINAR 2026

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2026

REGISTRATION
8:00 AM – 8:45 AM
\$20.00 DONATION
PAYABLE IN CHECK TO
MACBOSTON TRUCK

SEMINAR
STARTS AT 9:00 AM
ENDS AT 1:30 PM

FEATURED INSTRUCTORS

WM. GREENWOOD
(PAST CHIEF)

MICHAEL SCOTTO
(RET. LT. FDNY)

VENDORS ATTENDING

NYS AFC | NYS POWER AUTHORITY | HUDSON MOHAWK SAFETY EQUIPMENT | GOLDEN FIRE/RESCUE | FIREFIGHTER TRAINING LLC | AUTO SOLUTIONS | MES

REGISTRATION & INFORMATION
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**TRAINING. KNOWLEDGE. BROTHER/SISTER.
HONORING THE PAST — PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE.**



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