

PHILOMONT VFD UPDATE FROM CO. 8



AUTUMN 2012

www.philomontvfd.org

PVFD members learn animal rescue

On June 25, 2012, three members of the Philomont Volunteer Fire Department (PVFD), Co. 8 attended the Technical Large Animal Emergency Rescue (TLAER) course at the Virginia Tech Middleburg Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Middleburg.

TLAER, taught by Drs. Rebecca and Tomas Gomez and based out of South Carolina, travels the country teaching fire, rescue and law enforcement personnel the nuances of large-animal rescue while exploring already-existing relationships between traditional rescue service providers and animal rescuers. Part of the course was to show participants that animal emergencies are HUMAN emergencies.

Fire Chief Edward Zimmerman was joined by Co. 8 members Tom Finnin and George Kingsley for the three-day course. Morning lectures with visual material were supplemented by hands-on afternoon exercises. Topics included search and rescue, animal rescues from trailer accidents and barn fires, and pit



and deep mud extraction. One attendee, a professional horse trainer, expressed his appreciation for the material covered in the course. "Frankly, I wasn't expecting to learn so much about handling horses in different rescue scenarios. I would have never known how to extract a horse from deep mud, and if I had to wing it, I probably would have ended up injuring the animal and perhaps some people, too."

Zimmerman commented on the relevance of the course in regard to Co. 8's first due. "We certainly have a lot of large animals in our county. Now Co. 8 has more members trained in large animal rescue than any other fire company in Loudoun County." Zimmerman continued, "I have to give credit to Co. 8's Mary Marks (a PVFD emergency medical services provider who attended the TLAER course in 2011, and audited and arranged for the three training slots in 2012) for recognizing how useful this is for our region."



Photos/Edward Zimmerman

-George Kingsley, PVFD Co. 8 Member

Brush fires don't stand a chance!

Welcome to the Philomont Volunteer Fire Department's new brush truck!

A brush truck provides mobile firefighting capability for field and brush fires. Mobility is the key, and our old 1983 F250 proved itself many times over the years. That said, it's now more than 20 years old. It was time for PVFD to update its equipment to best serve the community.

Former Fire Chief Stanley Lickey oversaw the purchase of the F250, and the success of his choice put a lot of pressure on us to get the new one right. Assistant Fire Chief Pete West led a group tasked with working out the details for a vehicle customized for our community. We are proud to announce that the new truck is now in service at Company 8.

Our new F450 is fitted with a skid-mounted pump that incorporates a 250-gallon tank, a foam system and all the fittings to support wildland firefighting operations. We also included bumper-mounted sprayer nozzles, a front and rear mountable winch and plenty of storage and lighting. Again, this all must be very mobile in harsh conditions, so we specified a single rear-wheel conversion to maximize its four-wheel drive capabilities.

So far, all our drivers have noted the positive handling and turning capabilities. We've even done our best to get it stuck, but the truck has easily handled all we've thrown at it! I'll reserve final judgment for the day it gets really tested - like in the three feet of snow its predecessor handled without complaint - but so far, I think we lived up to Chief Lickey's high standards.

If you're at the station for one of our events, feel free to ask to see the new truck. We're quite happy with our newest addition, and hope you will be too.

-Edward Zimmerman, Co. 8 Fire Chief



Photos/Hollis Avakian



Did you know...?

Our annual fund drive is in full swing. If you haven't already, please consider sending a donation. The fund drive is a primary source of critically needed funds for our firehouse. Financial support is solicited on a yearly basis from homeowners, property owners and renters in our first due area.

Philomont Volunteer Fire Department Company 8 Newsletter

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Photos courtesy of:

**Hollis Avakian, Joe Hughes,
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For inquiries on content, volunteering or newsletter sponsorship,
send e-mail to: update@philomontvfd.org

ICE CREAM SOCIAL



The PVFD Auxiliary Ice Cream Social was held Aug. 12 and was a hit with the community! More than 100 people gathered at the firehouse for live music, a moon bounce, a homemade ice cream contest and old-school soda shop delights. Thank you to all who attended this event!

Photo/Hollis Avakian

From the President:

Since we last spoke, we once again had a serious emergency in the county. I am, of course, referring to the storms that passed through the area in July, leaving many without phones, power and other services. Loudoun County does not presently have a Citizen's Emergency Response Team, or CERT, but we could use one. Simply put, a CERT is an organized group of citizens under guidance of emergency providers who handle any number of tasks - such as helping with human and animal evacuations and shelters, manning phone lines and checking on neighbors - during various events.

After the July storm, a couple things did not go as well as we would have liked. First, communication from the County Event Notification System correctly indicated that the Philomont Community Center was not operating as a cooling center. What was not communicated was that the fire station WAS open as a cooling center. The message board in front of the PVFD was changed to indicate it, but word was not sent out into the community. So you know, during times of prolonged power outages, we will always make an effort to be open as a refuge for cooling or warmth.

The second item that came up involved inquiries as to whether or not fire departments could use their trucks to bring water to horses and livestock. This request was received multiple times within the Office of Emergency Management and a countywide decision was passed down to the stations.

In short, the answer was no, because of the risks of contaminants and because emergency equipment could not be depleted of water or tied up shuttling water. The communication - sent to county stations - gave the names of several water companies that could be contacted for water, but was not actively passed on to county residents. A local CERT could have helped get that information out to farmers and the equine community.

As a result of these instances of miscommunication, the topic of developing some sort of citizen task force to help the Philomont VFD aid the community during such events has come up again. We'd love to hear your input.

-Bob Fallin, Co. 8 President



From the Chief:

A frequent question from new and potential volunteers is, "so what are classes like?" For many of us, it's been a long time since we attended any sort of formal education. The most important thing is to have a clear picture of your schedule and other commitments before you sign up for classes.

Many of the prerequisite classes, like CPR, are taught in a single night or over a weekend, and require little outside class work or practice. Others require more of a time commitment.

Once you have the basic prerequisite classes out of the way, it's time to take the core classes in your specialty of choice: emergency medical technician or firefighter. Both classes typically run for three to four months and meet three days a week. The courses have a classroom/lecture section and a hands-on/practical section, both of which are designed to hone the skills you'll need in the field. Students are expected to keep up with reading and study for the classroom portions and to practice skills during the hands-on portion.

Upon completion of state and local testing, students earn certifications, which in many cases are nationally recognized, and then they're ready to join a crew and begin helping their community. It's not an easy task, but the rewards of education and volunteer service last a lifetime. Are you up to the challenge?

-Edward Zimmerman, Co. 8 Fire Chief



PVFD Event and Meeting Calendar

Karaoke Night

Saturday, Sept. 22 at 7 p.m. at the PVFD firehouse. Cost: \$10/\$15

Civil War 150th Anniversary:

Thursday, Nov. 1. Dinner at 6 p.m. at PVFD firehouse. Cost: \$10

"Engagement in Philomont" lecture at 7:30 p.m. at Roszell Chapel. No cost.

Election Day

Tuesday, Nov. 6 at the PVFD firehouse. Call for hours.

Harvest Brunch

Sunday, Nov. 11 from 8 a.m. to noon. Cost: Adults \$8, Kids \$4

Administrative Business Meetings

7:30-9:30 p.m. at the PVFD firehouse - second Monday of the month

PVFD Auxiliary Meetings

7:30-9:30 p.m. at the PVFD firehouse - first Wednesday of the month

PVFD Junior Auxiliary Meetings

7-7:30 p.m. at the PVFD firehouse - first Wednesday of the month

Board of Directors Meetings

7:30-9:30 p.m. at the PVFD firehouse - fourth Wednesday of the month

Event and meeting dates are subject to change.

Please call 540-338-6506 or visit www.philomontvfd.org/events/events.html

Respect for our veterans, and for our flag



Photo/Joe Hughes

The American flag is the symbol of our nation's power, solidarity and freedom, and of its citizens' liberty and patriotism. And being such an important symbol it deserves respect, especially as we approach Veterans Day. If we fail to show respect for our nation's colors, we fail to show respect for our country and our Service members. In the interest of giving respect to the flag, here are a few rules and tips:

*The flag should never be dipped to any person or thing.

*The flag should not be used as a drapery, or for covering a speaker's desk, or for draping a platform, or for any decoration in general.

*The flag should never be used as a receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying or delivering anything.

*When the flag is lowered, no part of it should touch the ground or any other object; it should be received by waiting hands and arms. To store the flag it should be folded neatly and ceremoniously.

There does come a time when a flag is either too old or is in extreme disrepair. In this case, when a flag is so worn it is no longer fit to serve as a symbol of our country, it should be destroyed by burning in a dignified manner. Contact an American Legion, as the organization conducts dignified flag ceremonies.

This Veterans Day, and every day, show your patriotism and gratitude to our country and our military by treating our flag - our banner of liberty and emblem of freedom - with respect.

-Clayton Millhouse, PVFD Member

The PVFD Auxiliary is seeking items to donate to our troops abroad. The Auxiliary will prepare care packages to send to our Service members in Afghanistan during the holidays.

For a list of donation items, please visit the PVFD website at <http://philomontvfd.org/pvfd/support-our-troops-donations/>

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