



Forget the ribbon: Above, Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi handles the ceremonial fire hose disconnection with, from left, Nancy Bates, Jon Grant, Cheryl Oliverio, Jerry Ellis (all council members) City Manager Dan Hobbs, Chief Marinucci and Assistant City Manager Dave Call. At right, members of the Harrison High School Jazz band play for the dedication of Farmington Hills Fire Station No. 5.

PHOTO BY DAVID TIERNEY



Before the audience: Seven new firefighters take the oath to uphold city, state and federal laws, above left, during the dedication ceremony. Above right, Chief Marinucci addresses hundreds in the garage of the fire hall.

Station from page A1

those honors.

The fire station was built with efficiency in mind. For instance, sleeping bunks are situated next to the equipment room, which has helped trim the average response time.

Station No. 5 is also the nerve center for fire department operations. The building features meeting rooms and a bank of phones to coordinate efforts.

"It's been a long time coming,"

said Richard Marinucci, Farmington Hills fire chief. "This fire station allows us to do a lot of things we've projected. This fire station helps take us into the 21st century."

Immaculate facilities and new brick only told part of the story, though. Marinucci used the occasion to swear in new firefighters while Deputy Fire Chief Pete Baldwin recognized staff.

The project manager for the

architects helped put the station into perspective.

"When we started this project 11/2 years ago, we talked of the station being a bookend for the city complex," said Ken Ruszkowski, URS Greiner project manager. "I think it has moved beyond a bookend and into a book itself where we're well into the first chapter."

"And it's been a good first chapter."

Chief from page A1

and Japan provide invaluable information.

"We might lead the way in hardware firefighting. We see some firefighters in New York for example who know how to go out and get it because of their experience level," Marinucci said. "We learn a lot from other countries in what they're doing. Their lightweight equipment and some of their strategies also can help."

Many firefighters share universal concerns, Marinucci said. Equipment, building components and even cultural issues are

some of the noticeable differences, though.

"In Japan, it's not right to have a fire even if it's an accident. Whereas here, we're very forgiving if someone has an accidental fire," Marinucci said. "It's an embarrassment in Japan. The result is there is a tendency to be a little more careful. Because of the density of Japan, a potential fire could be disastrous."

On this side of the ocean, the organization monitors legislation and other firefighting trends.

One charge will be to emphasize the firefighting aspect of emergency medical service, Marinucci said. The association is tackling the issue of terrorist bombings, mainly secondary explosions which are intended to injure emergency personnel responding first to the scene.

On the lighter side, there is a camaraderie among fire chiefs that makes being president enjoyable. As for the language qualifications, Marinucci has already figured that one out. "Maybe I'll learn Canadian."

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