

Farmington Hills firefighters honor their own

BY WILLIAM COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills firefighters had a look back at their accomplishments for the past year at the department's 12th annual recognition banquet Nov. 1 at the William Costick Center.

Fire Marshal Steve Hume was named the department's Firefighter of the Year and several other firefighters and Farm-

ington Hills police officers were also honored.

"This is a special pleasure for me because Steve took me under his wing 19 years ago when I started here," Chief Richard Marinucci said of presenting the award to Hume.

Hume has received many awards, unit citations and commendations. His leadership of an arson investigation of a house on Quail Hollow that was set in

December of 1995 helped police in solving the death of two Farmington Hills women. Two men are awaiting trial on murder charges for the arson.

"Steve knew something was wrong," Marinucci said. "He wouldn't give up even in those cold days of December."

Hume thanked the chief but gave credit to the many firefighters and police officers who took part in the investigation.

"I think the chief is being a little too generous," he said. "This investigation was really a group effort."

Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi welcomed the firefighters, friends and family to the banquet, praising the department and the response the public gave to the campaign for a public safety millage that passed, 2-1.

Four months before the election it was touch and go," Vagnozzi said.

Chief Marinucci presented a slide show with notable incidents from the past year.

Lt. Tom Shurtliff, the department's training officer, said the department has had little attrition in recent years, which has added to the experience and overall response time.

The completion of the department's fifth fire station, and the addition of more full-time firefighters, will also enhance that

response time.

There were several other honorees:

Firefighters David Moriarty, Max Anthouard, Robert Picard and Community EMS technicians Mark Burger and Bruce Plaier were honored for saving the life of a 27-year-old woman in respiratory arrest on Jan. 27.

Firefighter Charles Dexter and Hills Police Officer Mike Meister received life saving awards for responding to a report of a 14-month-old baby who was not breathing on Feb. 10, the baby made a full recovery.

Firefighters John Wells and Bruce Belsky, and Scott Hufnagel and Dan Przeworski of CEMS were honored for saving the life of a man, 77, whose heart had stopped at his residence on Nine Mile on March 26, 1996.

Fire Marshal Steve Hume was given a certificate of merit for the arson investigation of the Quail Hollow fire in December of 1995.

Lt. Mike Garr, Battalion Chief Don St. Clair and Inspector Dennis Hughes were given

certificates of merit for their school assembly program to teach youngsters about fire safety.

Lt. Shurtliff and Firefighter Stephen Biebel were honored for the "Project Fire Safety" program that used two houses, being removed from property where the new fire station is being built, in a multi-media and public education event on fire safety.

District Chief Robert Rebtoy, Capt. Lee Panoushek and Farmington Hills Police Officers John Markey and Michael Fluhart were honored for their efforts to remove a fire victim from his trailer at the Flamingo Park Trailer Park on Nine Mile on Dec. 7, 1995.

Inspector Corey Bartsch was given a certificate of merit for his work in organizing the fire department's open house on Oct. 6 this year, attended by more than 4,000 people.

Earning unit citations for their work in removing fire victims from a house on Quail Hollow on Dec. 19, 1995 were Lt. Mike Garr and Firefighters Todd Salley, Shelly Hall, Kevin Cooper, Brian Gallison and Patrick Murphy.

For their investigation of the same incident, Firefighters Larry Henderson, St. Clair, Hughes and Farmington Hills Police Detectives Patrick Comini and Ronald Shankin received unit citations.

Firefighters Richard Cray, Michael Kish, Stanley Barnes, Timothy Noseworthy, Moriarty, Picard and Kathryn Baker received unit citations for responding to a roll over accident on Jan. 26 where a victim was pinned under a vehicle.

Firefighters John Wells and James Newfield received unit citations for their work in rescuing three people from a vehicle that had been hit by a truck on March 4 on the northbound I-275 ramp to eastbound I-696.

Capt. Richard Levine, Firefighters Kenneth McLaurin and Dorin Jeszke, and Bruce Plaier of CEMS received unit citations for their response to a suicide attempt at the Clarion Hotel on March 8.

District Chief Joseph Schrack, Firefighters Norbert Leppan, Marie Schroeder, Kathryn Baker, Kish and Neufeld, and Sgt. Gregory Glowacki received unit citations for assisting the City of Farmington with a rollover accident with three critically injured patients trapped inside a vehicle on May 27.

Unit citations for the department's "Project Fire Safety" even on July 8 went to St. Clair, Levine, Panoushek, Sgt. James Cheyno, Sgt. John Zylka, Firefighters Ben Vaughan, John Kastran, Kathryn Baker, David Feichtner, Todd Hommi, Ken McLaurin, James Prieskorn, Kish, Rebtoy, Henderson, Bartsch, George Baker, Mike Mansfield, Gerard Antonioti, Sally, James Etzlin, Michael Haase, Craig Lindsay, Murphy, Gerald Raigo and Hume.

Unit citations for responding to a gas leak caused by a car crashing into a senior housing facility and causing the evacuation of 100 seniors went to Hume, Lt. Thomas Yakes, Sgt. Dave Christie, Firefighters Stanley Barnes, Dexter, Hommi, Moriarty, Peter Poertner, Charles Rollins, Jeffrey Strook, Lt. Dennis Atkins, Lt. Cray, Kathryn Baker, Michael Crawford, Gregory Fyffe, Richard Miller, Neufeld, Prieskorn, Schroeder and Gary Tubball.

Sgt. Jeszke, Firefighter Donald Alati and Hills Police Officers Thomas Shivak received unit citations for responding to a drowning victim at the Citation Club Apartments on Nov. 2.

Station 1 firefighters won an award for the first station competition at the Oct. 6 open house where firefighting teams competed in events including an obstacle course, confined space crawl and carrying a dummy.

Battalion Chief Don St. Clair was named the career firefighter of the year. St. Clair, who has been active in fire prevention efforts and the departments educational skits to school students, has been named the new Station 6 battalion chief.

Station Firefighters of the Year were James Newfield from Station 1, Gerard Antonioti from Station 2, Derick Smith from Station 3 and Stephen Biebel from Station 4.

Farmington Observer Reporter Bill Coutant was recognized for his reporting of the department.

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