



# HUNTINGTON

## FIRE DISTRICT NEWS

Serving the Huntington Community Since 1843

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### COMMISSIONERS' CORNER

## Meeting COVID-19 Head On



for providing emergency services to the community. No volunteer firefighter, fire department officer, fire district employee or fire commissioner could have imagined the magnitude of the challenge nor how any of us would be able to deal with it. I am extremely proud to report that the members of the Department and employees of the District have met the challenge head on. The work done by these men and women is a tribute to both groups.

The Department Chiefs have dedicated many hours to developing response plans and disseminating information about dealing with the coronavirus and how to protect themselves and their families. The volunteer firefighters have responded to numerous calls for help during this period of time. The firehouse has been off limits to everyone including all members, except to respond to calls for service. After each call, responders have to clean up and immediately leave the facility. District employees clean and disinfect the trucks, equipment and each firefighter's gear.

I hope that by the time you read this article progress has been made to end the pandemic. On behalf of the Board of Commissioners, please be safe and follow the rules established so that we can combat the spread of this virus.

Sincerely,  
**Edmund M. Erickson**, Fire Commissioner

**W**hen I sat down to prepare this article, I wanted a topic that highlighted a role or responsibility of the District's commissioners not addressed in prior newsletters. However, the next thing I knew we were in the middle of a pandemic of unprecedented challenges, especially for those responsible



## Innovation Helps All!

**F**ew vehicles are tested like fire and emergency response vehicles. They have to be in a constant state of mechanical readiness, fully geared up and ready to perform on demand under unpredictable emergency conditions. Failure to do so could mean significant losses of response time and lives. Consequently, they need regularly scheduled preventive maintenance, and that involves money, a commodity always in short supply. Recognizing the situation, Huntington Fire District Manager Bruce Smith developed an extremely effective program to provide expert maintenance services to other fire departments with similar needs.

The Huntington Fire Department has two mechanics on regular duty, and by leveraging their expertise and hands on understanding of the apparatus, all Departments receive cost-effective, one-on-one service. Aptly named the Shared Maintenance Plan (SMP), burdensome overhead is eliminated and overall labor fees are significantly lower. Vehicle turnaround is excellent, ensuring they are fully prepared to meet whatever challenges the day may bring.

"All told, Lead Mechanic John Latuso and Trevor Smith maintain 65 - 70 pieces of apparatus, from chief cars and ambulances to Class A pumper and ladder trucks, not to mention all the small power equipment like saws, pumps and generators," Bruce explained. "The program is more efficient and cost-effective for everyone. Maintenance costs are reduced by about 30% - 40%. We do the evaluation and unless it's a warranty situation, we perform the work. It's a true partnership."

Today, the SMP has grown to include the Halesite, Cold Spring Harbor, Centerport and Eatons Neck Fire Departments.

**INNOVATIVE THINKING HELPS ALL!**



## Thank You Huntington!

Thank you to the Huntington community for supporting our firefighters. By approving the Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) you recognized all eligible firefighters for their years of service to our community and also aided in the recruitment of new men and women to serve the community in the future. We are grateful for your support.



## To Help Others, You Must Be Healthy

### DEALING WITH COVID-19

Improvisation is a word often associated with jazz or standup comedy. But firefighting requires improvisation at the most dangerous of times, and there's nothing humorous about that. Acting with an abundance of caution, Bruce Smith closed the Leverich Place firehouse to visitors beginning March 12 and enforced a new set of regulations to help stem the potential spread of the COVID-19 virus.



Trucks and gear are normally sanitized after fires, but when the pandemic struck, they were subjected to a new intense level of disinfection with a fogging machine. Protective Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) which firefighters use to go into fires were adapted to spray disinfectant.



Personnel rule adaptations included maintaining social distancing, frequent hand washing and boosting the accountability of all members by using a sign-in system. Masks, thanks to proactive planning, had been stockpiled and were issued to all responders. As a result of these measures, 100% of all alarms have been answered.



Training also received positive improvisation. "Firefighters have to keep up training at all times because they have to be on top of their game. You can't go into a situation cold, it's far too dangerous," Bruce explained. "So, we opened with a lot more online training which has worked very effectively."



Further, a new protocol for non-emergency events to limit exposure was implemented. Only one officer leaves the rig and speaks with callers from a doorway or a safe distance.

The onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the world, and the men and women who compose our firefighting and EMT teams will continue to adapt and meet the challenge for whatever it takes, for as long as it takes.

★ To our brothers Henry, Jimmy and Charlie...the Department, the District and the Huntington community are grateful for all you have contributed through your long and dedicated service.  
Thank you one and all.



## HENRY GERDES: 80 YEARS

The World War II US Army vet joined the Department on December 18, 1939. A Captain and Honorary Chief, Henry was also honored as the Grand Marshall at the Huntington Fire Department's 175th anniversary celebration in 2018. Henry recently turned 100.



## CHARLIE RANFT: 50 YEARS

Charlie was recognized for his 50 years of service to the Department and to the Huntington community. Charlie was formerly the recipient the 3rd annual Clifford "Pop" Schwier Award.



## JIMMY SCUDIERI: 60 YEARS

Vincent "Jimmy" Scudieri joined the Department on December 14, 1959. The lifelong Huntington resident served as Second Lieutenant in the Hook and Ladder Company and First Lieutenant of the Fire Police. Jimmy often manned the firehouse kitchen, applying skills learned from operating Jim's Dairyland Deli.



★ To our brothers Mario, Billy and Buddy...we are grateful for your dedication, effort, camaraderie and courage. Thank you for an amazing 198 years of combined service to our organization and to our great community. Rest in peace.



### William "Billy" Archer

William Herbert "Billy" Archer was a member of the Huntington Fire Department for 66 years. He served as 2nd Lieutenant, 1st Lieutenant and Captain, as well as Engine Company Secretary from 1975-2016 and Department Secretary from 1983-2016. Billy was 85.



### Mario Vaccaro

Mario served with the Huntington Fire Department for 67 years as a member of the Engine Company and Fire Police. Beginning in 1952, he served as 2nd Lieutenant, 1st Lieutenant and Captain. Mario was 91 years old.



### Bernard "Buddy" LaMay

A Huntington native, Buddy served for 65 years beginning in 1954. A member of the Hose Company and Fire Police, he was a familiar face at many fundraisers and served on numerous committees. Buddy was 96.

# HUNTINGTON FIRE DISTRICT NEWS

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## Board of Fire Commissioners

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Vice Chairman: Thomas Collins  
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Michael F. Plant  
Andre Sorrentino

**District Manager:** Bruce Smith

**Treasurer:** Fred J. Buckholtz, Jr.

**Fire District Secretary/Deputy Treasurer:** Karla Wright

**Account Clerk:** Marie Caputo

**District Counsel:** Joseph Frank

Questions or Comments? Email us at [hfd230@gmail.com](mailto:hfd230@gmail.com)



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## Election Results



### Andre Sorrentino Re-elected.

Commissioner Andre Sorrentino was re-elected to the Huntington Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners in the December 2019 election. Andre's new five-year term as Commissioner became effective January 1, 2020 and will run through December 31, 2024. Congratulations, Commissioner Sorrentino!

177 YEARS OF OUR HISTORY... AND YOURS!



The COVID-19 pandemic has delayed the premiere of our Huntington Fire Department Museum, but we will announce the opening as soon as we are able to do so.