



ATFD Responding

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ATFD Staff

Abington Township Fire Department Chiefs

Abington Fire Co.

Chief John Bothwell

McKinley Fire Co.

Chief Chris Bors

Weldon Fire Co.

Chief Bud Gerhard

Edge Hill Fire Co.

Chief Frank Schuck

Roslyn Fire Co.

Chief Dale Jonas

Fire Marshal:

Kenneth Clark

Asst. Fire Marshal:

John Rohrer

Fire Services Administrator:

Dave Schramm

Community Service Specialist:

Jeff Glynn

Fire Department Secretary:

Lisa Scholly

Administrative Support Team

Computer Network Administrator:

John Bothwell
Mike Ratka (Assistant)

Fire Training Coordinator:

Larry Stiefken
Michael Jones (Assistant)

Operations Support:

Joe Dougherty
Tom McAneny
Chris Mc Loone
Ed Wurster

Veteran Edge Hill Chief Succeeded by Deputy

After 15 years as the Chief of Edge Hill Fire Company, Charlie Rohrer has decided to retire and was succeeded by his deputy chief, Frank Schuck.

The change in leadership became effective Nov. 5th, and both men agree that the transition has been smooth, given the fact that they have literally worked side-by-side as chief and deputy chief for the last 12 years. The two volunteer firefighters also live two houses apart in Abington Township and often ride in together when the alarm sounds.

Mr. Rohrer has been a member of the Edge Hill Fire Company for 37 years – a tradition that was started in his family three generations ago. Being a firefighter was “in the blood,” and Mr. Rohrer said he loved the excitement of the job. Over the years, he has spent countless hours fulfilling the role of chief.



Seen here are outgoing Edge Hill Fire Company Chief Charlie Rohrer, left, and new Chief Frank Schuck.

During his tenure, Mr. Rohrer helped ensure that Edge Hill and the other four companies that make up the Abington Township Fire Department (ATFD) came together as a result of the accreditation process designed to enhance delivery of service to the community. He enjoyed bringing together a diverse group of individuals so that everyone could be “on the same page.” Mr. Rohrer was also

responsible for bolstering the image of Edge Hill by helping the station to acquire three new trucks and he also oversaw an addition to the station.

“He was an exemplary chief,” said his successor, Mr. Schuck. “He exhibited very good leadership just in the way he handled day-to-day activities and he kept morale up.”

Mr. Schuck has been an Edge Hill Fire Company member for 24 years and is the second generation of his family to be a volunteer firefighter. He said he has always aspired to one day be chief, and that it was a natural step to take after serving as Charlie’s right-hand man for so long. Mr. Schuck said he hopes to maintain what Mr. Rohrer has accomplished and will focus on recruiting young members.

“For the whole township, recruitment is an ongoing goal,” said Mr. Schuck. “We always need new blood.”

Statistics for the Year 2009

Total Incidents	1,735	TOTAL Volunteer Hours
Total Firefighter Incident Hours	13,830	For 2009: 30,818
Fire Training Hours	7,807	
Administrative Activity Hours	9,181	



“We will strive to invigorate and fortify the spirit of volunteerism in the Abington Township Fire Department by allowing each of our five fire companies to maintain its individual identity that complements our organizational goal of continuous self improvement.”

ATFD Reaches Out to High School Students Dec. 4th

Being able to chat with an Abington Township Fire Department (ATFD) volunteer during lunch was the “perfect” opportunity for Abington Senior High School senior Andrew Crockett to learn more about becoming a firefighter.

Andrew said he became interested in firefighting after volunteering for the local ambulance squad, since the two responders often overlap at emergency scenes.

“I was thinking it would be so cool if I could do both – I could be a lot more useful,” he said, after filling out an application to become a volunteer firefighter.

When it comes to recruiting new volunteers, local high schools are one of the best places to go, said Roslyn Fire Company firefighter Matthew Orzechowski, who was one of the ATFD volunteers who visited Abington Senior High School on Dec. 4th to introduce more young people to the fire department. Mr. Orzechowski, who was available at an



Seen here from left to right are Vincent McGurl, Matthew Orzechowski, Dale Jonas Sr., and Elantra Bell.

information table to answer questions, noted that young people typically make good recruits.

“All the kids are young and we want them to move up the chain,” he said. “As our firefighters become older, we need younger ones to take over some of the

more physically demanding tasks.”

Monica Hobgood, also a Roslyn volunteer and a high school student who belongs to the school’s Firefighters Club, said it’s important for her peers to realize they can join at a young age.

“This lets everyone else know we’re out there and that kids our own age are the ones who are doing it,” she said. “People come up all day and say, ‘Wow, I didn’t know I could do that!’”

The volunteers are there to answer questions – everything from whether or not they enjoy fighting fires to how the equipment works to how many hours of training are involved. In addition to introducing students to firefighting, the Dec. 4th visit also provided a lesson in fire safety. ATFD members outside the cafeteria showed high school students how to operate a fire extinguisher. A number of students had a chance to douse the flames using the department’s fire extinguisher training prop.

ATFD Steps Up Communication Efforts

As part of its efforts to recruit new members and heighten community awareness about the department, the Abington Township Fire Department (ATFD) has made significant improvements to its Web site and has begun airing a series of public service announcements on the township cable channel.

The newly designed Web site went live in November, with information reorganized and the addition of several new sections for press releases, photos, and fire safety. In addition to enhancing the Web site, the ATFD began filming and producing a series of public service announcements, or PSAs, that are designed to educate residents about fire safety. The first PSA aired in December on Comcast Channel 43 and Verizon Channel 24 and taught viewers about candle safety as well as smoke and carbon monoxide detector use. The second PSA, which addresses safe use of space heaters, fireplaces, and wood burning stoves, will air in February.

ATFD Aims for 2010 Goals

- ▶ Broaden recruitment/retention programs in order to maintain and expand the current membership.
- ▶ Improve the existing department-wide safety officer program to protect the safety of all personnel.
- ▶ Continue direct dialogue with surrounding mutual and automatic aid resources to ensure that the department is capable of providing high quality services.
- ▶ Continue our high quality marketing, public information, and educational programs to improve our community’s understanding, awareness, and perception of the Abington Township Fire Department and its services.
- ▶ Establish central facilities for the efficient location and access to necessary specialized tools and equipment.
- ▶ Complete our Community Risk Hazard Assessment.

ATFD Featured “In the News” for its Youth Programs and Training Facility

Abington Township Fire Department (ATFD) was recognized for its partnership with Abington Senior High School in the December issue of the *Pennsylvania Fireman* magazine. Based on press releases the ATFD sent to the magazine about its Service Learning Day and Student Involvement Day activities, the magazine requested that the department write about how these programs evolved.

The magazine’s intent was to educate other fire departments on how they, too, can strengthen their partnerships with local school districts. The ATFD extends a special thank you to the Abington Senior High School faculty and staff, especially Gary Wiley and Mary Rodgers, who have always supported the department’s efforts and helped facilitate relationships with Abington’s youth.

The ATFD is also looking forward to an upcoming feature in *Fire Engineering*. The national trade publication accepted an article by Larry Siefken, Fire Training Coordinator, and Jeffrey Glynn, Community Service Specialist, about the training facility’s role in recruitment and retention. The article will be used in the magazine’s Volunteer Corner section.

Abington Township Fire Department: AbingtonFD.org