



ABINGTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT PARTICIPATES IN LOCAL SCOUT DAY JUNE 7TH

ABINGTON – After learning valuable safety tips to protect themselves from fire and about what the Abington Township Fire Department (ATFD) volunteers do to serve the township, the members of Girl Scout Troop 7729 had just one important question for the firefighters: Where is the fire pole?

Abington Fire Company member Mike Solomon fielded the question without batting an eye, explaining that many firehouses did away with fire poles long ago because of the potential for injury when firefighters are rushing to respond to an emergency.

Girl Scout Troop 7729 was just one of several groups of Girl and Boy Scouts to visit the Abington Fire Company June 7th as part of Annual Scout Day, which is organized by the township each year to introduce children to the various departments and agencies that serve Abington Township. The young students had the opportunity to take a morning off from school and tour the township building, learn about Briar Bush Nature Center and the public works and waste water departments, as well as visit with police and fire officials.

The ATFD participates in such events each year as a way to promote fire safety practices and introduce young people to the firefighting service. While none of the girls in Troop 7729 said they wanted to become firefighters, they did take away some valuable fire safety lessons. The students watched a DVD produced by the National Fire Protection Agency and answered questions from Community Service Specialist Jeff Glynn about planning escape routes and the installation and maintenance of smoke alarms.

Some of the information was new to the children, like Kate McCarren, who wasn't aware of the importance of planning two different escape routes from a room in the event of a fire.

"I was surprised to learn you usually need two ways out," she said.

Sydney Beltz said she was planning to go home and tell her parents to buy an escape ladder, since her room is on the second floor of their house.

"I didn't know you can get ladders to use if you're on the second floor," she said.

In addition to being taught some new fire safety rules, the girls said they were surprised to learn that the fire company's ladder truck can extend to 10 stories, and how heavy firefighter equipment is. Mr. Solomon showed students tools like the Jaws of Life.

"You can think of this as a really, really big soup can opener," he said of the tool that allows firefighters to cut open cars in emergency situations.

Anna Joseph tried on an air tank to get a real feel for the weight. She said it is important for students like her to learn about what the fire company and other township agencies do.

“Because it’s interesting and educational and it will help you to be safe,” she said.

The ATFD is committed to fire safety education and hosts tours and also visits schools in order to teach children how to prevent or escape from fires. The ATFD headquarters is located at 1176 Old York Road in Abington. For more information, call (267) 536-1055 or visit AbingtonFD.org.

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

Pluggie: Members of Girl Scout Troop 7729 greet Pluggie, one of the educational tools the Abington Township Fire Department uses when teaching children about fire safety.

Group shot: Members of Girl Scout Troop 7729 pose with Abington Fire Company members Mike Solomon, left, and Chris Platz, right, during their visit to the Abington Fire Company on June 7th.

Group shot 2: Girl Scout and Boy Scout troop members pose with Abington Fire Company members Mike Solomon, left, and Chris Platz, right, during their visit to the Abington Fire Company on June 7th.

