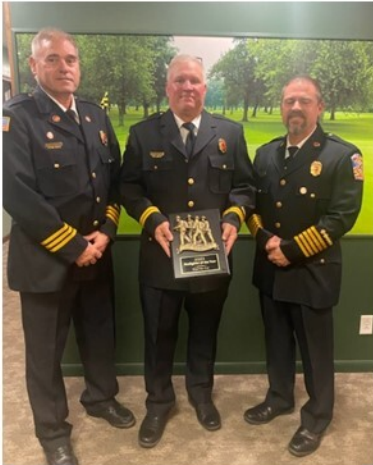


Connection

November 9, 2023

Editor Pam Lottinville



Darrin Lee Named Fireman Of the Year 2023

For approximately 25 years the membership has chosen a Fireman of the Year, based on the following characteristics, but not exclusively: one who takes an active part in the membership, commitment, dedication, in short, going above and be-

yond in service of the department and the community.

Captain Darrin Lee serves as treasurer and has worked with the department for more than 32 years. Lee's fellow officers talked about the leadership and respect that earned him the title. Lee is committed to our community and is the "chief chef" of the gravy for the annual pancake breakfast. Lee humbly admits to having help from one of our favorite local cooks, Tammy.

The officers, Chief Tim Douglas, Rick Schoon, and Mark Meiers discussed the regular practices of the fire department. They meet each Wednesday evening for the purpose of training, business, Cadet instruction, and equipment maintenance. Attendance is vital to integrity of the fire department.

The pride they have in their volunteer, part-time job is amazing. Lee pointed out that their "work is always the result of a group effort and the enjoyment of helping others."

Cadets are able to join at the age of 14, train for four years, then become firemen at 18. At the time of this interview, three new firemen that trained as cadets were patiently awaiting the meeting to begin. Schoon said, "Our cadet numbers are down a little right now." He sees this as lack of commitment among today's youth. Douglas stated, "It seems to be a roller-coaster, up and down. Good years and years not so good. We welcome the cadets as they make good firemen later."

Chief Douglas said, "We are very grateful for the support we receive from the community and from our trustees. We could not progress without them."

Ironically, as a group, the firemen had to overcome the loss of part of their building in a fire. They lost stored memorabilia that cannot be replaced. Records. Photos. And so much more. Together they conquered the destruction and rebuilt the physical structure.

The community of St. Anne is proud to honor our fire department.

In the photo to the left, provided by Sue Bonvallet, Assistant Chief Rick Schoon, Darrin Lee, and Chief Tim Douglas.

Joseph Owens, WWII Veteran Dies at 99 and a Half

Story by Pam Lottinville

I was notified on Monday, November 6, 2023 that my friend of the last ten years breathed his last breath. A few years ago, his desire was to live to be 100 years old. He lived his life full of fun, stories, singing, and being the source of entertainment for all. Joe and June were our backdoor neighbors at Lake Henry Estates where we spent a few months of each year.

Joe was interested in Rich's farm work and June and I loved birds and flowers. They were so easy to visit with, we became great trusted friends.

Joe allowed me to write his biography in 2019. He is the first to tell you that his military career was not filled with valor, but with a story that applauds the French Resistance who saved him, shielded him and fed him. His story was about the plane being shot down over France by the Germans and about a young man who put his life back together after the war, married, worked at an education, and made a successful business and career.

Thanks to authors who used my books as a basis for background information, Joe's story was published in the Orlando Sentinel, written by Stephen Hudak. Again, in 2023, career author of 42 years, Ken Cerino published a story about Joe and was instrumental in getting Joe into the Historical Society of Wappingers Falls. They honored Joe's life for which I am grateful. Your friends love you and will miss you, Joe.

If you have any news or information that you could share about the history of our local **Ecumenical Service** to be held at the Presbyterian Church, Nov. 19, at 6 pm please contact Pam: lottmom1@gmail.com