VOLUME 58 Issue 9 **Thursday, November 13, 2026**

THE TRUMPET

ROCKLAND COUNTY
VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' ASSOCIATION, Inc

"COMPLIMENTARY COPY"

Editor Emeritus: **Stuart L. Gates, Dec 5, 1928-Nov 15, 2024**
Editor: **Sheryl Rose**

RCVFA CONVENTION OCT 2

The annual Convention was held at the Patriot Hills in Stony Point, hosted by SW Johnson. Pres Evan Humphrey welcomed all to the event. Troy Spong from SWJ also welcomed everyone.

The following awards were given out:



Assistant Chief Matthew Boney, Lieutenant Jeffrey Potischman, and Firefighter Anderson Cisneros the 2026 Rockland County Firefighters of the Year! On April 6, Boney, Potischman, and Cisneros rescued a woman from a structure fire on Williams Ave under heavy fire conditions while short handed. Hillcrest FD also won Unit Citation (FF).
Allen Lynch Award(Attendance): Stony Point
John C Lynch President Award: Jim Hartwick Mazzepa Fire, Nyack FD, Frank Bifulco, Hillcrest Fire Dept.
Joseph K Wright Award (Unit Citation) Non-Firefighting: Tappan FD for rescue on 9/23/25, a worker got his leg caught in machinery, Chief Steve Neuendorf and members accepted.
Meritorious Service Award: Suffern FD member Matthew Elswort stopped at an car accident scene in Tallman area, while he was helping the victims, he was hit by a passing vehicle, but continued to help victims and assist at the scene.

Special note: during the years of service awards George Cich was presented his 50 yr award by his wife Carol, and his sons Eric & Casey.

After the annual Memorial Service conducted by the RCVFA Chaplains, Allison Crowther was welcomed and spoke about Wells, the fire service, his scholarship.

New Officers for 2027

Pres	George Cich
1st VP	Lisa Castaldo
2nd VP	Ken Gordon
Fin Sec	Don Schreeck
Rec Sec	Bruce McClintock
Corr Sec	Chuck Larkin
Treas	Gil Carlevaro
Sgt at Arms	Shawn Farkas

Several local politicians attended and spoke:
Bill Weber, Senator, Pat Carrol, Assembly, Lou Falco, Sheriff and Mike Lawler, Congress.

PLEASE NOTE WE NEED FIRE DEPTS TO HOST CONVENTION & PARADES FOR 2027, 2028, 2029. If your dept is interested please contact any RCVFA Officer.

CARTOONS BY PETE CARNEY



114TH RCVFA PARADE RESULTS:

Best appearing Sr. Musical Unit:
2nd Place: Tappan Zee Bridgemen
1st Place: Long Beach Seaside #2
Best Appearing Jr. Musical Unit:
1st Place: Suffern High School
Best Non-Firematic Colorguard:
1st Place: Tarrytown VFW
Best Firematic Colorguard:
2nd Place: Orangeburg FD
1st Place: Congers FD
Best Motorized Antique:
1st Place: Nanuet FD - 1954
Best Non-Motorized Antique:
1st Place: Stony Point FD - 1849
Most Ladies in the Line of March: 8
Hillcrest FD
Most Men in the Line of March: 41
Spring Valley FD
Best Appearing Pumper 2015 & Older:
3rd Place: Nyack - Orangetown Engine
2nd Place: Rockland Lake FD
1st Place: Haverstraw FD
Best Appearing Pumper 2016-2025:
3rd Place: Nyack - Highland Hose
2nd Place: Spring Valley FD
1st Place: Hillcrest FD
Best Appearing Ladder/Aerial:
3rd Place: South Spring Valley FD
2nd Place: Tappan FD
1st Place: Piermont FD
Best Appearing Rescue/EQ:
3rd Place: Blauvelt FD
2nd Place: Thiells FD
1st Place: South Spring Valley FD
Ladies Auxiliary:
2nd Place: Sparkill FD
1st Place: Nanuet FD
Regulation Uniform - Under 20:
2nd Place: Blauvelt FD
1st Place: New City FD
Regulation Uniform - Over 20:
2nd Place: Pearl River FD
1st Place: Nyack FD
Dress Uniform - Under 20:
2nd Place: West Nyack FD
1st Place: Orangeburg FD
Dress Uniform - Over 20:
2nd Place: Stony Point FD
1st Place: Piermont FD
BEST GUEST APPARATUS: Slate Hill FD
BEST OVERALL GUEST: Slater Chemical
BEST OVERALL LADIES AUXILIARY: Hillcrest Ladies
BEST IN-COUNTY APPARATUS: Orangeburg FD 1993 Rescue
BEST IN-COUNTY OVERALL UNIT: Nanuet FD

HAZ MAT TEAM





Rockland County Hazardous Materials Team at the New City Fire Department Fire Prevention Day, Sunday, October 4, 2026

NEW YORK STATE 2026 FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL SERVICE



The annual NYS Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service was recently held on October 6, 2026, in Albany. This year Frederick Simms (Tappan FD Ex Chief, Deputy Fire Coordinator & FDNY Captain), Pieter Grosbeck (Blauvelt FD Ex Chief & FDNY Firefighter) and Thomas Pomplin (Piermont FD) were each added to the memorial.



SFI FRANK BIFULCO STEPS DOWN

The Office of Fire & Emergency Services along with all County & State Fire Instructors would like to congratulate Frank “Biff’ Bifulco on his tenure as a NYS Fire Instructor. Frank has recently stepped down from that role. He has been an SFI since 1992. His 34 years of dedication do not go unnoticed as he has educated many in our fire service through the years. Our county thanks you Frank.
Chris Kear 44-1

WORKING FIRES



Oct 6, 2026, at 13:52 West Nyack FD was toned out to a reported structure fire in the Ice Rink in the Palisades Mall. First arriving units found smoke coming from the ice rink and found a fire in the ceiling. Our crews stretched one line, knocked the fire down quickly, and checked for extension. Units were on scene for about an hour. Thank you to our mutual aid: Central Nyack, Blauvelt FD, Pearl River FD, RPS / RMC, Nyack Ambulance, Clarkstown PD, Congers-Valley Cottage Ambulance







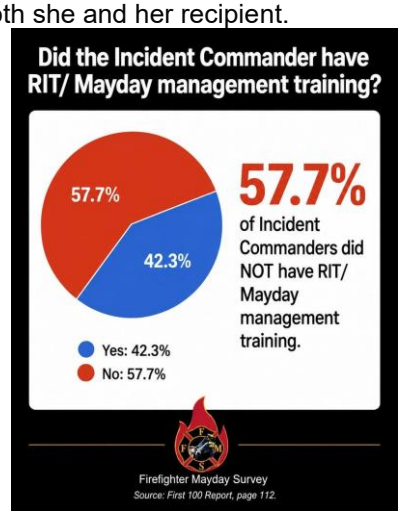
Oct 8, 2026, 5:30 AM, FD 15 18 Cranberry Rd. Firefighters from Sloatsburg, Suffern, Hillburn, and Mahwah responded to battle the flames. No injuries were reported, according to Ramapo Police. The fire left the roof and attic damaged and exposed the wooden frame, as seen in a photo released by police.



Oct 16, 2026, 06:21. New City FD, 4 River Rise Rd, Mutual aid from West Nyack & Hillcrest Fire Departments. Fire was located in an enclosed all-season porch. Fire burnt top down through the floor. No injuries. Under investigation by the Clarkstown Fire Investigation Unit

WEST HAVERSTRAW MEMBER DONATES

It is with great pride the West Haverstraw Fire Department shares the benevolence of one of our own. Above and beyond the time, effort, and courage she already extends as a volunteer firefighter protecting the residents of West Haverstraw, Volunteer Hose Co. 2 firefighter, Britney Barrera, has made an uber selfless decision to donate one of her kidneys to an individual in need. This decision to undergo an extensive, and potentially risky procedure, does not come lightly into one’s life and through Firefighter Barrera’s actions, another person has been given a new lease on life.
The members of the West Haverstraw Fire Department could not be prouder of Britney and are not surprised that she has chosen to help someone else, given her already selfless dedication to this Fire Department. We stand with Britney, we applaud her brave undertaking both on and off the fireground, and we offer our full support towards a healthy recovery for both she and her recipient.







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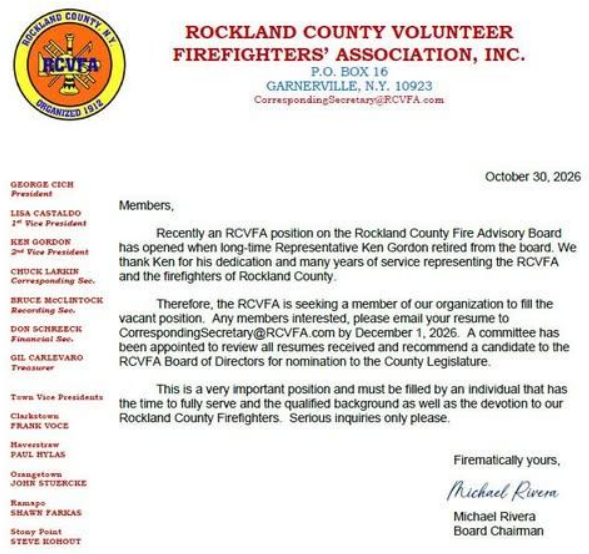

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Clarkstown FRANK VOCE
Haverstraw PAUL HYLAS
Orangetown JOHN STUERCKE
Ramapo SHAWN FARKAS
Stony Point STEVE ROHOUT

October 30, 2026

Members,

Recently an RCVFA position on the Rockland County Fire Advisory Board has opened when long-time Representative Ken Gordon retired from the board. We thank Ken for his dedication and many years of service representing the RCVFA and the firefighters of Rockland County.

Therefore, the RCVFA is seeking a member of our organization to fill the vacant position. Any members interested, please email your resume to CorrespondingSecretary@RCVFA.com by December 1, 2026. A committee has been appointed to review all resumes received and recommend a candidate to the RCVFA Board of Directors for nomination to the County Legislature.

This is a very important position and must be filled by an individual that has the time to fully serve and the qualified background as well as the devotion to our Rockland County Firefighters. Serious inquiries only please.

Firematically yours,

Michael Rivera
Board Chairman

If you want to receive your copy of "The Trumpet" in an electronic version please send us your e-mail address. Please contact Sheryl Rose at SherylERose58@gmail.com

WE SADLY REPORT THAT:

Charles T. Sweeney died Oct 27,2026. He was a Life Member of Blauvelt Volunteer Fire Company. Charlie joined the Fire Company in May of 1973, and remained an active driver until 2018. Throughout his 45 years, he served as Engineer, Treasurer, and Board Chairman.

MAJOR CHANGES IN MONSEY FIRE

MAJOR SHAKEUP: Monsey Fire District to Disengage from Brewer; Will Work with Newly Formed Fire Company and Plans 24/7 Firefighter Staffing

In a major development that marks a historic turning point for fire protection in Monsey, the Monsey Fire District announced Tuesday that it will be working with the newly formed Monsey Fire Rescue Company to provide fire protection services for the district and will shift away from its longstanding relationship with Brewer Fire Engine Company No. 1.

The announcement, outlined in an October 20 letter from the Monsey Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners, represents one of the most significant changes to Monsey's fire service structure in generations, with a new organization preparing to take on a central role in providing emergency response services to the community.

According to the commissioners, differences in perspectives and priorities between the district and Brewer Fire Engine Company's leadership have become increasingly apparent in recent months. Discussions between the two sides revealed differing views regarding their respective roles, responsibilities, and the direction of fire protection services within the district.

Following careful consideration of the ongoing disagreements, the district announced that it will move forward with Monsey Fire Rescue Company, a newly formed organization committed to firefighting, rescue operations, and overall emergency response. Monsey Fire Rescue Company will operate in accordance with district policies, procedures, and the established command structure.

Despite the organizational changes, district officials expressed confidence that fire protection services will continue uninterrupted, emphasizing that the change will be carried out as a transition rather than an abrupt shift.

The district indicated that many of the same experienced firefighters who have served Monsey for years will continue responding to emergencies as part of Monsey Fire Rescue Company, with additional members encouraged to join.

The new structure is expected to help streamline departmental leadership and related operations.

Major Public Safety Upgrade: 24/7 Firefighter Staffing Expected by December

In another major announcement, the Monsey Fire District revealed plans to implement around-the-clock firefighter staffing, expected by December and no later than January 2027, representing a substantial advancement in emergency response readiness.

The district expects to have a firefighting crew on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including overnight hours, weekends, and holidays, supported by volunteers who will staff additional fire apparatus.

District Assures Residents Emergency Services Will Continue Without Interruption

With the transition to the newly formed fire company underway, district officials sought to reassure residents that fire protection and emergency response services will continue without interruption.

According to the board, response arrangements, operational procedures, and personnel resources have already been put in place to support the transition and maintain dependable emergency coverage.

The district said its goal is to strengthen coordination, accountability, preparedness, and overall emergency services while ensuring the community continues to receive reliable fire protection.

The specific disagreements that led to the change were not publicly detailed in the letter.

(Monsey Scoop)

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CALENDAR

LISTINGS ARE FREE 845-364-8800 Deadline for Next Issue Last Wed. 11/25/2026

Fri, Nov 13	● RCVFA Next Meeting.7:30 PM at Stony Point FD, with Pres Evan Humphrey, Bring a Buddy or Future New Member
Wed, Nov 18	● RC Vol Safety Officers Assoc, BOD 6:30 PM. Mtg 7:30 PM, at So Spring Valley, with President Kim Weppler
	● RCVFA Ladies Auxiliary, 7:30 PM, at Stony Point. with Pres Eleanor DeGraw
Thur, Nov 19	● RC Fire Chiefs Assoc, 7:30 PM, at New City, with Pres Frank Jewett
Fri, Nov 20	● NJ&NY VFA, 8:00 PM, at New Milford Fire Co. 2, 680 Trenton St., New Milford, NJ 07646, with Pres Anthony Chiodo, , 1 week early due to Thanksgiving
Tue, Nov, 24	● Association of Fire Districts, 7:30PM, at Blauvelt, with Pres Vincent Pacella
Wed, Nov 25	● RCVFA Brd of Dir, 7:30 PM, at 6-100, with Chairperson Mike Rivera (a week before due to Thanksgiving each year)
Sun, Dec 6	● Orangetown Fire Co#1 Ladies Auxiliary, Pancake Breakfast, 8-11 am, 90 Depot Pl, So Nyack, $15 Adults, $12 Seniors, $8 Children 4-10, Take out available, cash/check,845-358-8286
	● Hillburn Fire Department Breakfast with Santa. 8am-noon. $20/person; $10/child; 5 & under/free. Eggs any style, sausage, ham, bacon, home fries, pancakes. 50/50. Mimosas/$2.00 each.
Tue, Dec 8	● Voting for Fire District Commissioners
Wed, Dec 9	● RC Firefighters Emerald Society, 1930, at Pearl River H&L, with Pres Matt DeGennaro
Fri, Dec 11	● RCVFA Next Meeting.7:30 PM at So Spring Valley, with Pres Evan Humphrey, Bring a Buddy or Future New Member

CHRISTMAS TREE SALES

Empire H&L, Upper Nyack
Empire Hose Co., Piermont arriving after Thanksgiving
Orangetown Fire Co. 1, South Nyack
SW Johnson SFE Co. 1, Garnerville arriving after Thanksgiving M-F 3-9 PM, Sa/Su 10-8 PM
Sloatsburg Fire Dept. Starts Nov 30, M-F 4-8 PM, Sa 11-4 PM, Su 11-8 PM

NO DEC MEETINGS

RCVFA Ladies Auxiliary
NJ&NY VFA

Future Events

Sat, Dec 12	● Orangeburg Fire Dept, Holiday Parade
Sat, Dec 12	● Orangeburg FD, Holiday Parade
Thur, Dec 17	● Fire Advisory Board, 7:30 PM, @FTC, with Chairman Kim Weppler

To view this newsletter on line, please go to the following web site:
http://www.rcvfa.com/trumpet.html

Please email Sheryl Rose with any Fire Department news, dates of events, fundraisers, etc. SherylERose58@gmail.com





RCVFA TRUMPET
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Here's What's HOT

FROM THE
FIRE COORDINATOR'S OFFICE

Leading by Learning in the Volunteer Fire Service

In the volunteer fire service, leadership isn't just defined by rank or seniority—it's built through continuous learning. The challenges we face, from evolving hazards to new equipment and standards, demand leaders who remain open, adaptable, and engaged.

Effective leaders model learning by seeking out training, asking questions, and encouraging open discussion. When members see their officers and brother and sister firefighters actively pursuing knowledge, it reinforces a culture where improvement is valued and everyone feels responsible for staying sharp. This approach strengthens teamwork, builds confidence on the fireground, and supports safer, more efficient operations.

Learning-based leadership also means listening: understanding the experiences, ideas, and concerns of others, both young and old. Volunteers come from all walks of life, each bringing unique skills that can elevate the department. Leaders who learn from their people build trust, empowerment, and stronger crews.

In the end, leading by learning isn't about knowing everything—it's about committing to growth. When leaders embrace that mindset, the entire department benefits, and the community we serve is safer because of it.