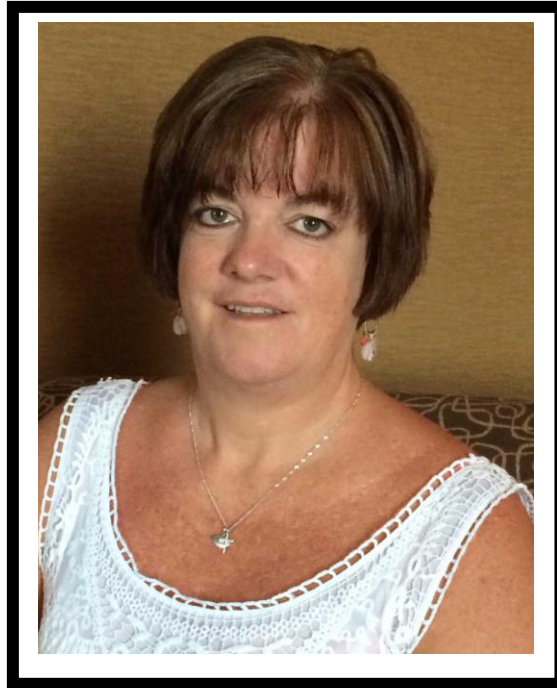


Transcript of oral history interview with

# **Amy Schadt Duellman**

**Parkside /Maplewood Fire Department, 1987- 2009**



by Oral Historian Kateleen Cavett

and Bob Jensen, President, Maplewood Area Historical Society

for the

**Maplewood Area Historical Society**

**March 26, 2014**

at

HAND in HAND Productions' office in Saint Paul, Minnesota

© Maplewood Area Historical Society  
2014

*This project has been made possible by the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the vote of  
Minnesotans on November 4, 2008. Administered by the Minnesota Historical Society.*

All pictures are from the Duellman family  
and Maplewood Area Historical Society.

# ORAL HISTORY

Oral History is the spoken word in print.

Oral histories are personal memories shared from the perspective of the narrator. By means of recorded interviews, oral history documents collect spoken memories and personal commentaries of historical significance. These interviews are transcribed verbatim and minimally edited for accessibility. Greatest appreciation is gained when one can listen to an oral history aloud.

Oral histories do not follow the standard language usage of the written word. Transcribed interviews are not edited to meet traditional writing standards; they are edited only for clarity and understanding. The hope of oral history is to capture the flavor of the narrator's speech and convey the narrator's feelings through the timbre and tempo of speech patterns.

An oral history is more than a family tree with names of ancestors and their birth and death dates. Oral history is recorded personal memory, and that is its value. What it offers complements other forms of historical text, and does not always require historical corroboration. Oral history recognizes that memories often become polished as they sift through time, taking on new meanings and potentially reshaping the events they relate.

Memories shared in an oral history create a picture of the narrator's life— the culture, food, eccentricities, opinions, thoughts, idiosyncrasies, joys, sorrows, passions—the rich substance that gives color and texture to this individual life.

Kate Cavett

Oral Historian

HAND in HAND Productions

Saint Paul, Minnesota

651-227-5987

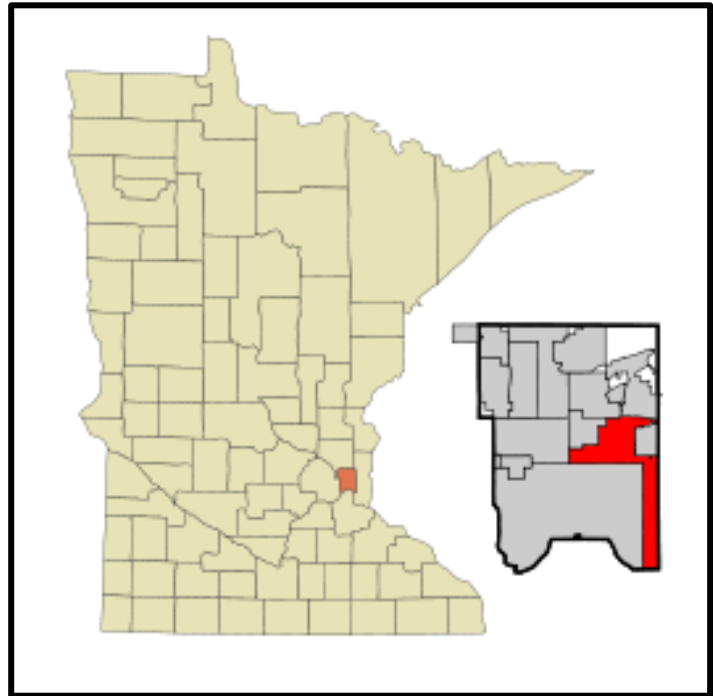
[www.oralhistorian.org](http://www.oralhistorian.org)

KC: Kate Cavett

AD: Amy Schadt Duellman

BJ: Bob Jensen

AD: I'm Amy Duellman, and my maiden name was Schadt. And I grew up in Maplewood<sup>1</sup> all my life, and my father<sup>2</sup> was a Gladstone<sup>3</sup> firefighter ever since I was born. Eventually I was able to apply and get on the fire department myself, and that's what brought me here.



City of Maplewood

KC: What was it like being a kid in the fire world, because my understanding is that families that were involved were very involved?

---

<sup>1</sup> **City of Maplewood** was incorporated in 1957 from New Canada Township in Ramsey County, Minnesota. New Canada Township was organized in 1858 and named by the earliest settlers who emigrated from Canada. It was largely dairy and truck farming until post WWII veterans built homes and sought the comforts of suburbia. Maplewood was named for the maple tree which was a favorite of the township supervisors and for the nearby Maple Wood School and Maple Street. Gladstone, the earliest commercial neighborhood was platted in 1886 and established a volunteer fire department in 1943. Parkside was a neighborhood that established a volunteer fire department in 1958. The city has a total area of 17.99 square miles.

<sup>2</sup> **Alfred Schadt** was a Gladstone firefighter June 28, 1949, to March 1, 1981, was chief 1965 to 1968; and Maplewood Fire Marshal 1968 to 1985, with 36 years of service.

<sup>3</sup> **Gladstone Fire Department** Chronology – Appendix A

AD: Yes, it was quite interesting. It was like your second family. And a lot of times, for fire calls or medicals – back in the days, it was just fire calls. In order to get the firefighters to the fire station, your phone would ring a different ring. It would just ring constant until somebody picked it up, and then when you picked it up, you could hear where the call was and what it was. And so us as kids used to use that as kind of a chat line, you could say, because you hung around. Most of the kids, you all hung around, and so when you listened to it. It was kind of like a conference call. You could hear everybody talking. So we'd be like, "Okay, let's meet here." And so during the day, if it was something close, we'd all get on our bikes and bike there and watch what the firefighters did. Of course, [we] stayed out of the way or we'd all get in trouble. But we'd all go there, and then we'd go back home after the call.

And in the middle of the night when the phone would ring, a lot of times it would wake me up, and I would actually get out of bed. And this is probably when I was quite young. I'd get out of bed and go running out there and help my dad put his socks on, and I felt like I was being a part of helping him get out the door, so that was kind of something that I always remembered.



There was a GEM. fire<sup>4</sup>, which was where Menards is now. That actually happened on my birthday, and so my dad knew I wouldn't be around. It was, oh, 1967. But they actually sent somebody to the



house and got me, and I got to sit on the hood of the car while they fought the fire, so that my dad was still a part of my birthday. So family time was huge for my dad. He always wanted to be a big part of the family, even though if he got pulled away a lot with the different fire calls.

And one other childhood memory I can remember was we actually had a stove fire. I was out playing with other friends that weren't fire-related, and I heard the siren go off, because that's when they used to use the outside sirens. So I heard that, and I wanted to go home and see what it was, and when I came

---

<sup>4</sup> **Gem Store Fire** The GEM Department Store was located at 2280 Maplewood Drive, the southeast corner of Highway 61 and Highway 36, was a discount department store for members. A fire destroyed the store on August 28, 1967, noted for large plumes of dark smoke visible for many miles and shutting down Highway 61 to pump water from nearby Keller Lake.

around the corner, I seen that it was my house. Well, and then I was upset, because all my birthday party stuff was in the house. So being that they are family, they ran in the house and they said, "Where is your birthday?" And the house was not burning. It was just the stove, but lots of smoke. And so they went in and rescued my birthday stuff so I could still put together my birthday party in two or three days. [Kate chuckles] So, that was kind of fun. That was a memory that I had.



Al Schadt

So, lots of memories. Getting ready for fire conventions, my dad was always running for president of fire chiefs – no, it would have been the firefighters association I believe, but they always had where they would make campaign signs and they were in the parades. My sister and I and my brothers would all sit down and we'd make him signs: "Vote for Al Schadt." And then he always had a slogan. Because he was bald, he always had a slogan "Bald is Beautiful." So, of course, that's traveled everywhere with him. And

so that was always fun. And then, we'd wait for the

phone call to hear "Well, did you get it? Did you get it?" And as far as I can remember, he always won in the years he ran. Once he was in, he was pretty much there until he didn't want to be there.

KC: And then he was a volunteer firefighter, and then he became fire marshal<sup>5</sup> for the city.

AD: Yes, yes. And he really had a lot of pride on that. His goal was to get all the fire departments communicating and working together, and that really became huge after he had passed away and the actual departments did merge, but we started drilling together. And then his other goal was – if I remember right, Saint Paul was full-time and we were the volunteers. And this was before I was even old enough to really understand, but of course the professional firefighters didn't really care for the volunteers. They didn't feel like they knew what they were doing, and my dad worked really hard with the chiefs, and he had a couple of real good friends on Saint Paul, and they worked really hard together to start getting the communication going. It seemed like towards the end, like now, you're one in each group, it's all the same, but back then it wasn't. It was more "We're full-time. We're professionals. You're volunteers. You're volunteers." So now it's pretty much where they're all professionals. They are all out to do the same task.

---

<sup>5</sup> **Fire Marshal's** duties vary but usually include fire code enforcement and/or investigating fires for origin and cause. Fire marshals may be sworn law-enforcement officers and are often experienced firefighters.

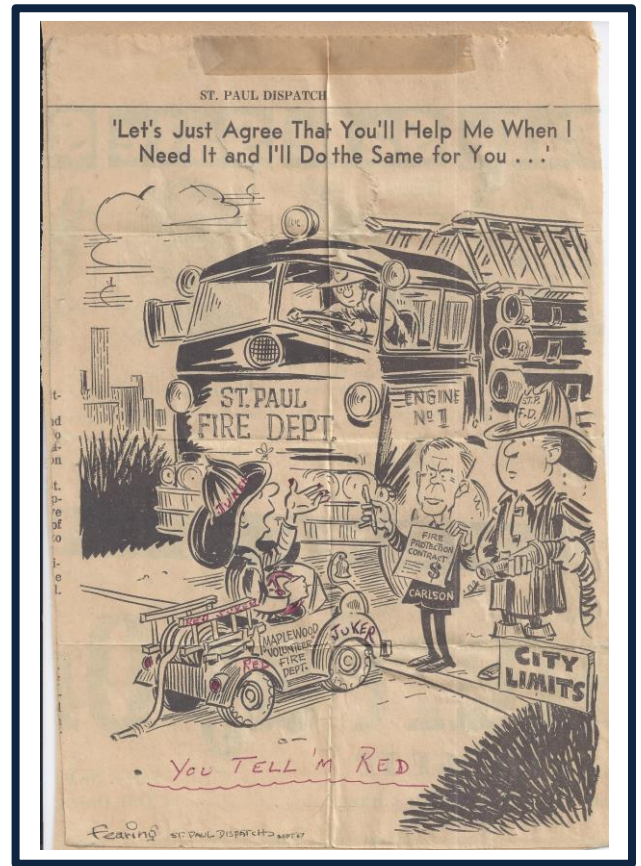


KC: I've seen a cartoon that shows– It's the big Saint Paul fire truck and little Maplewood fire truck.

AD: [laughs] Yeah.

KC: So it was common knowledge that Saint Paul wasn't as neighborly in their support.

AD: Yeah, they just had a different perspective. They trained for it probably six days a week, and we basically had drills once a week, maybe twice a week, but most people had to go to one or the other, so.



KC: Now you married into a firefighting family. Growing up in it, did you connect with your husband through fire at all?

AD: Actually yes. He was on – his parents – his dad was on a different department, [Parkside<sup>6</sup>], but with my dad being fire marshal, and even probably before he was fire marshal, the families were friends, and we'd go camping. But fire-department-wise, when Parkside would have their picnics or their Christmas parties, of course we were always invited, and so my dad was always bringing my sister [Pam] and I and maybe my brothers [Gregg and Jeff Schadt<sup>7</sup>]. I don't – my brothers are quite a bit older than me. I was the youngest, so I always

---

<sup>6</sup> Parkside Fire Department Chronology – Appendix B

<sup>7</sup> Jeff Schadt was a firefighter January 13, 1974, to March 30, 1994, and April 1, 1998, to May 1, 2008, with 30 years of service.

remember my sister, who was only two years older. She always came with. And we'd go over there and they'd have Santa show up. They'd have clowns. They'd have magicians. And then at night, they'd have the adult party. And so I can remember always family friends, but I knew Joe<sup>8</sup>'s sisters [Linda, Patty, Jill Brenda, and Sandy, who was older and not probably at these events.]. I knew him, but you know, you always hung out with the girls more.

And then at a picnic – we had the Parkside picnic, and he wanted to go home and we were going to church, which was Saint Jerome's, which was kind of by his house. So I can remember taking him and dropping him off. And it wasn't until – well, it was after I graduated from high school. I was at a fireman's dance, and that's when Joe and I connected and we started dancing, and it was like the flame, you know. I mean, we just connected and we just started doing stuff constantly, more as friends and then it just led into being engaged.

And unfortunately, my dad passed away before our wedding, but he had always – Joe was always there for me when I was taking care of my dad, because my mom would be – during the day, my mom took care of him, and then at night, I took care of him. I would send her bingo or whatever, and he'd be there, and he said to Joe, the one time, he goes, "I just want you to know, she's not going to be cheap." And so Joe still teases me about that, that you know, "Your dad said --." I said, "He warned you." [Kate chuckles]

We got married six months after my dad had passed away, which was – I mean, it was nice to know how many friends I really had, because everybody was offering to walk me down the aisle. And I had two brothers, and I'm like, "No, that's not going to work." There was a bunch of police – because the fire

---

<sup>8</sup> **Joe Duellman** was a Parkside firefighter June 9, 1982, to December 29, 2005; 24 years of service.

and the police were really close in Maplewood. They had offices next to each other. They offered, and so finally I decided. [I walked by myself.] I had a picture of my dad on the altar in his fire – in his hat and uniform, and I brought a rose to him, so that's how he was a part of our wedding.

KC: Very cool. How long was he suffering with cancer?

AD: Probably about – I'm going to guess it was about two years, and then he had surgery, and he was doing good, but then the symptoms came back. And by that point, it was on Thanksgiving, around Thanksgiving of 1984, that we found out the cancer was back, and then he passed away in January. So we had one last Christmas. He got up to California to do some fire stuff with some of his friends, and some of them came and visited him. Probably like two days before he passed, he had a bunch of friends come and they gave him a plaque, some of his firefighter friends from out of state and different departments, so.

KC: Because he was fire marshal in Maplewood until he passed?

AD: Yes, he was. Yeah, he worked up until pretty much almost – I mean, yeah, he pretty much stayed working until he couldn't. He'd go in for a while. At that time, Jim Embertson<sup>9</sup> was the assistant fire marshal, and he picked up the slack of stuff that had to get done, but I think they, just out of respect, left him in his position. Because he didn't need – I mean, he had so much sick time. He didn't need to be there, but I think out of respect, they left him in there as long as he wanted to be. Jim was constantly coming over and asking his opinion. And at that time, I'm trying to think, the police chief I want to say it was probably Ken

---

<sup>9</sup> **Jim Embertson** was hired April 13, 1977, by the City of Maplewood; her was appointed Fire Marshall February 1, 1985 and resigned March 12, 1997.

Collins<sup>10</sup> I'm thinking is that[is who] the police chief was at the time. And he was over quite a bit too, checking in on us and just a real big group of hearts. I mean, everybody was always coming and saying, "If you guys need to go anywhere, we'll come and stay."

KC: It makes a difference.

AD: It does.

KC: So when you got married, was your husband already part of Parkside Fire Department ?

AD: Yes, he was. He had gotten on when he turned eighteen, and I had also thought about doing that right out of high school and being on Gladstone, but was always afraid to ask my dad. And then I finally asked him, and I said, "Do you care if I join?" And he's like, "Well, don't ask me for an application." I'm like, "Okay." Well, and then we talked more, and he said, "Well, if that's really what you want to do, then you can apply." Well, then Joe and I started getting more serious, and then I thought, "Okay, we're going to have the battle of where we live." [Volunteer fire fighters had to live in within 5 miles of the fire station] So I just kind of put it on the back burner.

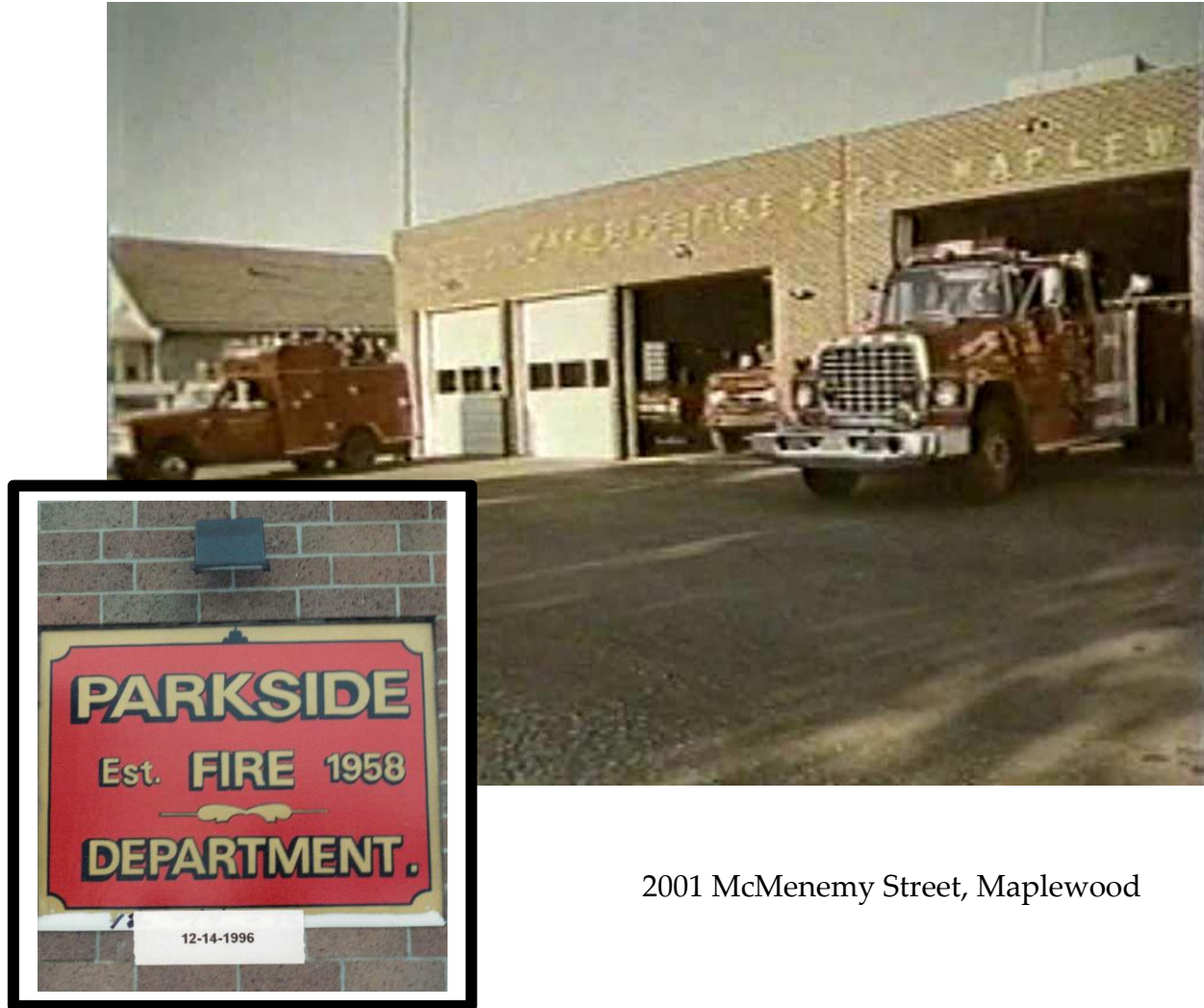
After we were married two years, I decided to apply. And so then I applied to Parkside also, which had his dad, [Tom Duellman<sup>11</sup>], his brother, [Kirk

---

<sup>10</sup> **Kenneth Collins** was appointed Maplewood police officer August 1, 1966; promoted sergeant January 1, 1971; chief and Director of Public Safety August 26, 1982; returned to sergeant August 1996; and retired January 31, 1998, with 32 years of service.

<sup>11</sup>**Tom Duellman** was a Parkside firefighter 1961 to 1994; with 33 years of service.

Duellman<sup>12</sup>] and him on there, and then of course I knew all the firefighters besides, because they were all family friends.



2001 McMenemy Street, Maplewood

It took a while—when I first got on, the volunteer fire department always had waiting lists. People wanted to join the volunteers and they only had spots for – I want to say Parkside had a spot for forty people total, and they tried to say ten of those would have to be day and then thirty could be night. And so they

---

<sup>12</sup> **Kirk Duellman** was a Parkside firefighter July 3, 1973 to January 1, 2008 with 35 years of service.

were full of the night side, and I worked days, so I couldn't technically join. So I was on the waiting list. And then one of the other firefighter's [Leroy Hale<sup>13</sup>] son, he wanted to get on. And he would have been a night firefighter too, and they were going to take him on. That's when my mother-in-law [Audrey] got involved, and she said, "Well, that's not fair. You can't take him. She's ahead of him." And so, finally, they took us both. [Kate chuckles] And yeah, so it was in July. I believe it was in July of 1987 is when I got on, and then we started fire school right away. So Tommy [Hale<sup>14</sup>] and I, which we were friends anyway, we really had fun in fire school. We just had a blast and learned a lot and were leaders and made Maplewood proud, or Parkside actually. At the time, it was still just Parkside.

And my first weekend being a firefighter, they didn't have any gear that fit me. I can remember Jack Ariola<sup>15</sup> was close to retirement, he was pretty little, so he gave me his gear and he took old stuff so that I would have gear that kind of fit until they could get me sized for gear. But it was too big. But back then, we didn't really have the funds to buy a lot of gear to fit everyone.

"Okay, you're on. Let's order you all this new



Turnout Gear

---

<sup>13</sup> **Leroy Hale** was a Parkside firefighter 1970 to 1996; serving as firefighter, captain, assistant chief and chief; with 26 years of service.

<sup>14</sup> **Tom Hale** was a Parkside firefighter July 10, 1981, to June 1, 2001; with 20 years of service.

<sup>15</sup> **Jack Ariola** was a Parkside firefighter.

gear.” Didn’t happen. You had to take what was left. They did order me gloves, because all their gloves were way too big for my hands, and a helmet. They did get me a new helmet that was smaller than the rest they had.

The first weekend that I had that gear, I got to go to a live burn<sup>16</sup>. And one of the veteran firefighters who is now not with us anymore, Tom Schultz<sup>17</sup>, he actually took me into the burning house, and we went upstairs and then went through a tank of air, came back out, and I said, “Let’s do it again.” So we put new tanks on, and I did that like three times, and we got out after the third time and he goes, “No, we’re not going back.” And I’m like, “But this is fun!” There was no risk. It was just a drill so it was really fun, and then he thought, “Oh, she’s going to do just fine,” because a lot of times when you put that mask on, people would be claustrophobic and freaked out. Nope, that’s wasn’t the problem for me at the time. So yeah, it was fun.

KC: Did you run into any discrimination? It was 1987 and it was real new for women to be in fire service, at least be on in Maplewood.

AD: Okay. Well, for the department, to get onto the department, you had to go through a physical. So you went to the hospital and you did your physical with the physician, and so I did that, and they did all your labs and everything. And then you had a physical agility. And they had Tommy go first. And it was – you had to drag a person, and then you had to go up a ladder, down a ladder, and you had to crawl between tables and you had tires and all the stuff. And of course I was pretty nervous knowing “This is it. If I don’t do it, I’m not on.” Well,

---

<sup>16</sup> **Live Burn** is fire that is intentionally created by a fire department by starting a small fire in a room and watching it grow and then putting it out to provide training and practice for firefighters.

<sup>17</sup> **Tom Schultz** was a Parkside firefighter June 3, 1982 to September 29, 2005; with 23 years of service.

they put Tom Schultz, who was six-feet-something. I mean, he was a big guy. They put him on the ground, and of course he had his gear on, so it did slide, but I had to drag him across the floor and everybody was watching. When Tommy did it, nobody was really watching, and all of a sudden I get up, and they had a stopwatch and everybody is, like, standing there watching it, like, "Oh, God, this isn't going to be good." Well, I picked him up, and my adrenaline must have just skyrocketed, and I just whipped him across the floor, dropped him, and I started going. By the time I got done with the agility, there was like three people still timing me and that was it. Everybody else had walked away and said, "Oh, she's on." [Kate chuckles] So that was probably the biggest obstacle, or the scariest one for me.

And people not accepting me, there was a few that were going to try to challenge it, but I've always been brought up that you want to be positive. So if somebody was talking negative about it, I just walked away and went to the group that I knew accepted me. It didn't take them long to realize that I wasn't trying to be the big hero, that if they had me do a task that I knew I couldn't do, I would just say, "Yeah, I'll do that, but you're coming with to help." There wasn't a lot I couldn't do, but physically, there's stuff that it just wasn't going to happen. I wasn't going to be able to do it on my own, which they shouldn't have been either. So you should always use a team.

The only other time where any discrimination might have happened, and this is old school, is when they finally found out I was pregnant and for the first time. That was quite the interesting task.

Probably would have started in 1988, because she, [Kalie], was born in September of '89. But they didn't want me to be around— I couldn't even go to classroom classes. They didn't want me to be at the station in case I fell and got



hurt and hurt the baby. I wanted to go to fire school and take a classroom class, and they didn't let me do that, but yet I was out there with my friends that night anyway, so I was out there the whole time. And so that was a little interesting.

My doctor did give me a waiver that I could finish my EMT school, because they didn't even want me to finish EMT school. And the one paramedic<sup>18</sup> said, "Well, there's no reason she can't finish her EMT. It's classroom, it's hands-on, but it's not lifting." So they did give in to that when I got a doctor note. Then after Kalie was born I went back to a meeting a week after she was born, and then within three weeks, I got the clearance to go back as a firefighter again with no restrictions.

And then when I found out I was pregnant with my second child, I just didn't tell anybody. And the first time they figured it out without me telling them, because after meetings we used to have beer, which was a normal thing. You could sit in the squad room and have a beer or two. And I always like my beer, and I wasn't drinking beer. And they were smart enough to put two and two together. [Kate chuckles] So when I found out I was pregnant with Allie, at those meetings, I would take a beer, and then I would go into the bathroom, dump it out, and filled it with water. And so I was probably six-and-half months along with Allie before I really started to show, and then I finally told them. And,

---

**Paramedics** are advanced providers of emergency medical services and are highly educated in topics such as anatomy and physiology, cardiology, medications, and medical procedures. Their skills include administering medications, starting intravenous lines, providing advanced airway management for patients, and learning to resuscitate and support patients with significant problems such as heart attacks and traumas. Paramedics complete a two year degree program (between 1,200 to 1,800 hours), and are required to hold additional certifications such as Basic Life Support, Advanced Cardiac Life Support, Pediatric Advanced Life Support from the American Heart Association, and are required to attend a minimum of 24 hours of continuing medical education annually for their state certification and 36 hours of continuing medical education annually for their national certification. Paramedic education is accredited by the Commission on Allied Health Education Accreditation. Paramedics work primarily in urban and suburban communities. About 95% of paramedics are fully compensated employees.

of course, I would have never done anything to hurt her. Like if we were at a medical call, I would grab the equipment to carry out instead of carrying the stretcher. So if they would have only understood that a mom is not going to do something to hurt [her child] – but they were in the old school that moms stay home, and so.

Joe, of course, knew and his parents knew. So there were a select few that did know, and they just looked out for me and made sure that I didn't get [assigned] something [I should not be doing]. But it wasn't going to happen. I'd go to a hydrant and hook up to a hydrant and sit there for fire or whatever, or just take my time getting to the fire station and not make the first truck. I never made the first truck out when I was pregnant, just because that's the ones that goes in [to the fire]. You're the first crew in.

So they were questioning that a little bit, and then I would just blame Kalie. "Oh, she couldn't get her stuff on fast enough to get dropped off." [both laugh]

KC: But Joe would be on the first truck.

AD: Yeah, Joe and I took turns. It was interesting, because he was a hard sleeper, so if it was a good fire in the middle of the night and he didn't wake up to it, I would go out of turn and go [laughs] and just hit the button real quick, key it so he couldn't hear it. But yeah, we tried to take turns. We had always made a pact that we would never go into a fire together. If one was in, the other one was out, which worked out most of the time, because he was engineer<sup>19</sup> and he was a

---

<sup>19</sup> The **engineer** drives the fire truck and operates the pump to ensure there is adequate water in the hose to the firefighters.

chief. So we had different roles on the department. I was considered a frontline<sup>20</sup>. I always loved to take the hose in and be the first one on the line and go in with the nozzle. Actually, Ronnie Svendsen<sup>21</sup> and I used to fight over the nozzle if we were on the same truck, but Ronnie, he was a very good trainer. That's Dean's<sup>22</sup> son, Ron. He was a very good firefighter trainer. I learned tons from him. Actually, our group, there were so many guys that were just so helpful.

We always had the best drills, so a lot of the other departments would want to come over to our drills. One instance was Joe and I were building a new garage, so we had a one-and-half stall garage, just an old- from a one-and-half story house. You know, you see the one car garage? Well, we decided that we wanted to drill on the garage. So Jerry O'Fallon<sup>23</sup> worked for a boom company, and he arranged a truck, and we back at the truck into it, and then we nailed the garage to the truck and drove it up to the fire station and plopped it in the parking lot. And so then we had drills in that, and it was - I mean, you had to be there to watch this garage going up the street. [Kate laughs] And they had already called and told the dispatch that it was happening, so in case they got calls.

---

<sup>20</sup> **Frontline** is the crew that makes the entry on a structure; being on the attack line. Or, operating the rescue equipment on an auto extrication.

<sup>21</sup> **Ron Svendsen** was a Parkside firefighter September 3, 1985, to November 1, 2002; with 17 years of service.

<sup>22</sup> **Chester "Dean" Svendsen** was a Parkside firefighter September 12, 1964; to January 24, 1993; with 29 years of service.

<sup>23</sup> **Jerry O'Fallon** was a Parkside firefighter; with over 20 years of service.

And one of the drills, the day crew – I wasn't there [for]this one, but my husband was there. One of the day drills, they had a canister in there and they had a live burn in there to the barrel. They were ventilating<sup>24</sup>, so they got on the roof, some of the newer guys from the day side, and they cut a hole in the roof and then they put a fan in. Well, then they went in the station to talk about it, and they just sort of left things go as status quo. All of a sudden we got a fire call on our pagers that there was heavy smoke in the area of McMenemy, and they come out, and there was flames coming through the fan. Here, they never put the fire out in the – it rekindled itself in the barrel. It was coming through the fan, so of course, everybody is panicking. They call the dispatch and say, "No, no, no, it's a controlled burn<sup>25</sup>." I mean, if we could have only gotten pictures, because those were the type of things that you just laugh about. It's like that could only happen with the volunteer. And it was stuff like that that just makes it memorable.

KC: Were there tensions in the marriage at times because you were both on the department and might have had different opinions or thoughts or –?

AD: No, that was one thing that we never had. We never responded to [a] call if we were fighting, we would never go to a fire call. We both would opt out, just because in case something happened. So, no, that was never an issue. He was always so supportive. By the time the girls started getting older, I started getting more involved doing extracurricular for the fire department, and he was more into our family business and getting ready to buy the business that we have from

---

<sup>24</sup> **Ventilating the building** may include cutting a hole in the highest point in the building, breaking a window, or opening a door, and turning on fans to let the smoke, gases, fire and heat out.

<sup>25</sup> **Control burn** is a fire that is intentionally created and controlled by a fire department to provide training and practice for firefighters; and may burn the building down.

his dad, so he was very busy on that end of it. He did his calls and he did his drills, and when he was chief, he'd have chief meetings. But no, we were always on the same page with the fire department. If it would have ever become that, then I probably would have backed out, just because family first, so.

KC: Which your dad taught you.

AD: Yes, very much so. Yes.

KC: Was he chief for a number of years?

AD: He was actually just an assistant chief, and I want to say it was probably four years. He was an assistant chief when we were just starting to switch over to municipal, and when we still had chiefs at the station, but we had our municipal chief, which I believe at the time was Joel Hewitt<sup>26</sup>. And so we were starting to become one [city] department, but yet we were still separate departments yet. But we were starting to drill [together], starting to get used to that idea. I want to say it was before the full-time firefighters, but I know we started to have full-time fire-medics, so was just starting to get in that era where police had CSO— [Community Service Officers]/ medics that were starting.

KC: You referred to going into fire school. Where did you go to fire school?

---

<sup>26</sup> **Joel Hewitt** was a Roseville firefighter 1976 to 2004 (including 7 years as chief); Maplewood Fire Chief Department 1996 to 2000; St. Anthony Fire Chief 2000 to 2004; Moorhead Fire Chief 2004 through 2010. He was the first fire chief of Maplewood Fire Department; and initially had no personnel or stations until the 3 fire departments agreed to consolidate. That became effective January 1, 1997.

AD: [As to training: Once on a department you have to complete a Firefighter 1<sup>27</sup> training that was done within our neighbor departments. Parkside did ventilation<sup>28</sup> and fire box / alarm system—Tom Schultz did it. Ropes were done at Oakdale. Ladders were at White Bear Lake. SCBA<sup>29</sup> search and rescue [search and rescue wearing SCBA equipment] was Lake Johanna. Pumping was Roseville. Woodbury had hose lines. Those are the only ones I remember. It lasted about 6 months. Each week you had a different topic to read up on and then you would go to the different fire stations and go over topic and practice the task. Then at the end of the six months you would have a written and physical exam you had to pass.



Fire firefighter  
with SCBA unit

Then off to EMT school for the medical end .When I got on, it was taught by our Police Paramedics and we would go to a state testing sight to test out and be certified. Fire school was done once a year. [It] was organized by the

---

<sup>27</sup> **Firefighting I and II** classes were taught at several technical colleges in the metro area. Starting in 1972, ISD 287 Vo-Tech (since 1995 called Hennepin Technical College) sent instructors to local fire departments (including Maplewood's volunteer departments) for training in basic firefighting procedures that had been established by the National Fire Protection Association. In the early 1980's, 916 Vo-Tech (in 1996 became Century College) began teaching these procedures which eventually became Firefighting I. Firefighting II was later established for more advanced firefighting skills.

<sup>28</sup> **Ventilate the building** may include cutting a hole in the highest point in the building, breaking a window, or opening a door, and turning on fans to let the smoke, gases, fire and heat out.

<sup>29</sup> A **self-contained breathing apparatus**, or **SCBA**, is a device worn by rescue workers, firefighters, and others to provide breathable air in an IDLH (immediate danger to life and health) atmosphere.

Firefighter Association, and in later years was taken over by a tech college. There was a weekend school you pre-signed up for and the Department would pay for the class you attended.]

I went to quite a few fire schools. The main one that most of us would sign up for would be [the State Fire School]. It was a weekend school, and it was usually out in Bloomington. I don't know if you remember the Thunderbird Motel<sup>30</sup> right out by the Mall of America. That was usually the hub, and then they branched you out from there to the different hotels. I went there probably five, six, seven years in a row, did fire and rescue. Joe actually did a lot of fire schools also, but, yeah, that was something. The department would send so many, so if you wanted to go -- most of us got to go if we wanted to go. That's where you meet a lot of other friends from other departments all over the state.

KC: Was this put on by the college then?

AD: At first, I think it was put on by the Minnesota Firefighters Association<sup>31</sup>, but then I do believe that the college did take over in the later years, too. But you had instructors from like Alexandria, and you had people that specialized in pumping, which was – the pumping fire school was done by Joel Hewitt and my brother-in-law Kirk, and Tom DuCharme from Little Canada. They ran pumping. I had two or three really good friends that ran the SCBA-search and rescue. They actually had a semi-trailer, and you had to crawl up into little holes and you had to figure out how to get up through it with your gear on and your

---

<sup>30</sup> The **Thunderbird Motel** was an Indian-themed motel that was built in 1962 along Interstate 494 and 24th Ave. in Bloomington, Minnesota, a suburb of Minneapolis. It is an example of post-war Americana. The hotel was a part of the Ramada franchise. The exterior featured several examples of the Thunderbird logo. Standing adjacent to the sign and just as tall was a synthetic totem pole with many characters and levels. Both signs stand facing Interstate 494. The original Thunderbird Hotel no longer exists.

<sup>31</sup> **Minnesota State Fire Department Association** was formed in 1873.

tank on. And then they'd throw you a set of keys and you had to figure out which key would open a lock. They had hazardous material. They had every class you'd ever want, [for instance] codes and violations. They had high rescue, where you're repelling off buildings. Joe did the one at the Radisson out in Bloomington. He actually repelled off the side of that big, tall building. That was part of it.

KC: How many other firefighters were female by this point?

AD: Oh, a handful. It was – you know, yeah, just very few. In Maplewood, of course I was the only one on Parkside at the time, but then we ended up having probably five or six total. Some made it, some didn't. Joette [Buche<sup>32</sup>] probably made it the longest, and she just retired probably a year or two ago. But throughout the state, there was a few. Of course there was more men than women, so yeah.

KC: Joette, did she become a professional full-time?

AD: No, she actually was a volunteer, and then when we went municipal, she did stay on. She was on probably two more years than me, and then she just resigned– it's a lot different when you go from the volunteer to the full-time. And it was just different commitments, different feelings. You lost your camaraderie. I mean, they were only letting so many go to the station.

When I was first on, everybody who got paged out would go to the station, and then you would sweep floors, clean bathrooms, just shovel snow, just sit around and visit. And then we got an air hockey that we had up there, and we had a basketball hoop up there, and so we'd all just goof around and visit. And when the truck got back, we'd all wash it. Well, once it went to

---

<sup>32</sup> **Joette Buche** was a Parkside firefighter September 8, 1995, to December 31, 2010, with 15 years of service.



municipal, that was a cost reason, because if you showed up, you got paid. And so then that's when they pretty much decided to go [to shifts].

And now they just do shifts where you sign up for your shift, so you only are with the people that you're on your shift with. I do believe they still drill together, but I'm not positive, but it's not like the camaraderie like it used to be, where at drills [we all got together.] I used to cook, and probably three, four times a year, I'd make chili or I'd go buy ice cream and we'd have root beer floats after drill. You know, so just to visit. After we'd all work, put everything away, then we'd all go in the squad room and sit. And a lot of them played cards and just hung out. It was a social time – it was a lot of work, but there was still the social part of it of they're your friends, they're your best friends, thank God, because they're the ones that covered your back, and you covered their back in a fire.

KC: Did you leave before it became municipal, or did you –

AD: I was on for part of that. I never signed up for shifts, so by the time it got to where you were signing up for shifts, I had already retired, so.

KC: Did you and Joe retire at the same time or did he continue?

AD: No, he retired actually before me. Probably two years before I retired, he retired, when the business was really taking off and he wasn't being able to commit to the training that he needed to. That's when he pulled out. After 24 years.

KC: What is your family business?

AD: It is a Mobil station<sup>33</sup>, Mobil gas station at Rice and Roselawn, right down from our house. The old-fashioned one where they pump your gas, check your tires,

---

<sup>33</sup> Tom's Mobil Service at 1935 Rice Street and Roselawn, Roseville, MN – 55113

check your oil, put fluids in for you if you need to. And then we have three garages that they actually work on cars, which he bought from his father. We took it over from his father.



1935 Rice Street, Roseville



KC: So it's been a family business for a long time.

AD: Since it opened, yeah. His dad actually started over on Dale and Arlington, but then moved to this location. Joe never –had any other job, Joe always worked at the station. Joe never had to apply for a job. He always worked at the station. His one brother [Kirk] worked for us for quite a while, and then he became a full-time firefighter with Maplewood. And then his one sister [Brenda Murphy] still works for us, and his dad actually still works for us in the morning. He goes in every morning at 7:00 A.M. and stays until about 11:00 now. And he's in his eighties. But customers still look for him.



**Parkside Emblem**



KC: Can you talk about some fires that you might have remembered, that stood out for you?

AD: Well, one big fire that I do remember was the Grand Pre fire<sup>34</sup>. That was in Little Canada actually. It's an apartment fire. And we were there probably about three days, and so that's why I remember that one, for the length of it. You didn't stay for all three days, but you kept going and coming home and sleeping and getting up and go back. And that was just a really challenged fire, because every time you thought you were to a firewall, they cut a hole in the roof, and then they'd be like, "Oh, it's past it." And then we have to go further. But it was really fun because you were working [with other departments], you weren't with your own firefighters. I was with Roseville a lot and Little Canada Fire a lot, so that was really fun. And of course, those departments are so close, you got to know them a lot. But that was probably the most challenging fire to put out. I'd never had that.

And then I can remember on a Tuesday night, we were actually at a drill or meeting, because that's when we drilled, and I happened to look out the window and looked towards Cub Foods, out of the fire station window, and I could see flames and smoke. Well, with everybody being there, I wanted to make sure I made the first truck, so I ran out and put all my gear on and then I told them. [Kate laughs] And I already was sitting in the back of the truck and I was tanking up, so of course, I was on the first truck out and it was the Hideaway Bar burning. Or actually, it was a garage next to the Hideaway <sup>35</sup>that was on fire.

---

<sup>34</sup> **Grand Pre Fire** at 215 East County Road B2 was in the fall of 1990 with 75 units destroyed. It began when a resident, who was the only person seriously injured, fell asleep with a burning cigarette in the early morning hours.

<sup>35</sup> **Hideaway Bar** was at 70 East County Road B and has been demolished. (In 2014 a Waldorf school is at that location.)

And I do believe it was arson, that somebody had lit it. Well, not a good day to light a fire when every station in Maplewood was at drill Tuesday nights, so you had all your staff right there, so within minutes we were all there. And that was a really neat experience, because I actually got to see the dogs come out, the sniffing dogs to figure out what accelerant or where the accelerant was, so that was fun to learn that.

KC: Was that Maplewood dogs or –

AD: No. Actually he was from I want to say New Brighton, I believe. So yeah, you use a lot– a lot of different specialties like that came. Or hazmat<sup>36</sup>. We had routine hazmat, but if it was something big, Saint Paul would come in and then we would just assist them.

Another big fire. Well, there was numerous house fires, and one thing that I can remember about house fires and being a female, you know, you think about if your house was burning, pictures on the wall, okay. Guys probably wouldn't think about that so much, so when you knew it was safe and everybody else was just cleaning up or getting things, I was always taking pictures off the walls and throwing tarps over beds and shoving stuff off dressers and throwing it on a bed and tarping it. I was probably a little more into the recovery, trying to save as much as I could for the people.

Had a few fires where animals had perished, and that was really hard for me, because I have dogs. So those stick with you for a while.

There is – it's hard. I mean, you went on lots of fires. I can remember one. It was kind of funny. Somebody called and they said their microwave was on fire, and we get there, and the microwave is on fire, but it's still plugged in. All

---

<sup>36</sup> **Hazmat**—Hazardous Material.

you had to do was unplug it, and so we were always joking about that, laughing about that, you know. "All you had to do was unplug it." So that was always a joke, if you heard of an appliance burning, you know.

KC: Did you unplug it?

AD: Yeah, yep. My sister-in-law and brother-in-law had a kitchen fire, and when we got there, they didn't know where their dog was, so I got permission to head in and try to find the dog. Well, when I opened the door, the dog must have come out behind me or through me, so I still didn't know he was out of there, but I knew the house, and when I got [to]my nephew's bedroom, I remembered he had a hamster. So I grabbed that cage and brought that out. Well, the hamster was laying pretty lifeless from the smoke, and I took my mask off and I revived the hamster, so that was a big huge joke for a while. And then the hamster ended up living with me for how many months until they got their house back together. That was something I remember doing.

There's just so many.

KC: Were you ever frightened?

AD: You know, yeah, I can honestly say basement fires a lot of times were a little scary, because you were going down one way and you didn't know where their windows were, and you had to get through the threshold there. Basement steps would be where the heat would escape, because it would try to go high, so you had probably about a three-foot span, three, four feet that you had to get through that was extremely hot when it was a good basement fire. So you had to get through. That would probably have been one of the scariest, but I'm trying to think.

I never really felt like I was lost, but I know that was always a concern of mine is I don't want to be lost, I don't want to get lost. So in training, though, they always said you go one way and you stay one way. You don't leave that wall. And if you stuck with that, you were pretty good. And you were never alone. You always had people with you. So that didn't – maybe once, the fire hose went limp because they ran out of water, so then you're sitting there going, "Okay, this ain't good." And you're calling it in, and as you're calling it in, of course they knew it and they just had to get to a different water source. By the time I got on, there was hydrants pretty much everywhere, so you didn't have to worry about the water supply as much.

Well, they all were scary. You never went in there thinking that [it was easy]. You always had to be on edge, or else that's what was going to get you, if you weren't scared of it. You always had to be thinking, "Where am I going? How am I going to get out? What's my second exit?"

KC: Well, in basements, is there usually second exit?

AD: We always had windows. Basement always had the – most of them still had the little windows, but most of your construction now, they have egress windows. But at least you had a window that you could go to and hammer out. But yeah, I mean, that's why basement fires were a little scarier, because you never wanted to block that entrance or exit to get back out.



Egress window



KC: Was there ever anyone that you opted not to go with, because you didn't know that they'd have your back?

AD: Actually, if there were people that I was worried about that, I would put them in front of me. And that way I knew where they were going to be, and so if they got scared, we'd back out together, and not just them backing out and leaving me. But there really wasn't a time that I felt – I mean, there were a few times where I'd give up the nozzle and say, "Nope, you go ahead of me," if they were newer and hadn't been experienced enough. Ronnie always taught me that, that's – because then you got control of them, plus what's in front of you. Yeah, no, there wasn't a time where I said, "I'm not going in with them."

KC: Now your brother was on Gladstone. How many brothers do you have?

AD: I have two brothers. One brother, Jeff, was on Gladstone, and he actually was on Gladstone<sup>37</sup>, and then he moved to Hazelwood area, so then he was on that Station 7<sup>38</sup>, and then he was down on Station 1, which is East County Line<sup>39</sup>. So he moved a little bit. He moved around a little bit.

KC: Was there rivalry between the different departments?

AD: No, not really. Of course, the Parkside, we always said we were the best interior firefighters, because it seemed like we were always ready to go in, and other departments, they were like, "You're going in?" But it – so I guess we were little more aggressive, and we were very much more aggressive than Steve Lukin<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> **Gladstone Station** at 1900 Clarence Street, Maplewood

<sup>38</sup> **Hazelwood Station** of Gladstone Fire Department was at 1530 East County Road C, Maplewood

<sup>39</sup> **East County Line Fire Department** Chronology – Appendix C

<sup>40</sup> **Steve Lukin** was a Gladstone, then Maplewood firefighter November 15, 1977 to present; chief in 1996 and 2000 to present, with over 37 years of service and counting.



liked. We'd make Steve nervous, because we were more into the go after the seat, and a lot of that was Ronnie Svendsen and Mike Dittel<sup>41</sup>. Those guys were really into "Let's go get it. Let's get it put out, be done with it." So that would be about the – once you got on the scene, you were all one. You didn't have a rivalry like, "You're doing that wrong." It was always, once you were there, you were all there together as a unit.

KC: And everybody is working together?

AD: Yep, yep, and then you'd have critiques after. If you had anything that didn't go right, you'd have a critique and talk about it, so yeah.

KC: Reflecting back, it sounds like you and your husband had a very negotiated structure, that you'd go to opposite fires, you wouldn't go in. How did you figure it all out? I mean, because you were young people. You were in your twenties when –

AD: Yeah, but once we had the kids, I knew that that was what I needed to do to make sure that they had somebody. You know, you hear about things happening where both parents get killed or – I quit riding my motorcycle the minute Kalie was born, or when I was pregnant with her, until she was old enough to take Allie if something were to happen to me. Because the only time I rode is when Joe rode, so if it happened, it was going to be both of us. So the fire, it just kind of that was just what happened. You know, you always had one usually staying home with kids until somebody else got there, so you really weren't on the same truck ever.

---

<sup>41</sup> **Mike Dittel** was a Parkside firefighter February 7, 1981, to February 28, 2011, with 30 years of service.

There was one time where, when he was a chief, we ended up – we were both in the structure at the same time, but it had already been put out. And I turned around, and I’m like, “What are you doing in here? I’m in here.” And we kind of laughed about it, but that was probably one of the few times that we ever were actually in together, into a real– Drill-wise, yeah, we were – but that was pretty controlled. We knew what we were in for.

KC: What was the reaction to other women to you being a firefighter alongside the men? I’ve learned that the women’s role in Maplewood was very traditional – to be supportive. It was very much the women were in the auxiliary. The woman handed the husband the coat as he went out the door to the fire, brought coffee in if it was a big fire, waited at home for the man to return.

AD: Yep, yep.

KC: And sometimes, women are not always supportive of the next generation doing the same thing that the men have done.

AD: Yeah, I don’t remember a lot of tension that way. I still remember being invited [to] the Auxiliary meetings if I wanted to go to them. Even though now I was a firefighter, I wasn’t just an auxiliary. I remember



the men always put on a luncheon once a year for the Auxiliary, and they did all the serving and all the cooking and that, and they wanted me to be a part of their

luncheon and not serving, but that was fine, so I still got to have the fun with that. So I don't remember a lot of— if there was, I didn't hear about it.

But like I said, when I got on, I was probably one of the best people to be one of the first women on, because they couldn't be mean to me, because they all knew me as a kid. They all knew my dad. They all knew my brother. Joe's family was on the departments, and they had no reason – you know, they couldn't say, "Well, you can't do this." You know, they couldn't be mean to me, because somebody else would be watching my back and saying, "No, that's not right. Give her a chance."

It took a while for some of them to give me the chance, but after I proved to them that I wasn't out there to be the hero and that I was just going to say I could do everything, because there was totally things that I physically was not going to be able to do, and then I just brought somebody with.

And when they realized I had a real asset in the medical calls -- I was really good, and I'm really good people person, -- so a lot of times they would put me in the back of the ambulance, because I was good with the patients and being able to – whereas some of the guys were totally uncomfortable about being back there with patients. And I just had a way, like, [with] nursing home patients. A lot of people didn't like going to the nursing home. That was depressing. It was sad. And I'd be more like, "Oh, no." So on the way to the hospital, I'd be talking to them, trying to get the family history. Like, "Oh, did you have kids?" And "How many kids? How long were you married?" And you know, just talking and trying to make their ride comfortable too, and not making awkward. I think I rubbed off on quite a few that that's what you've got to do. You've got to not be nervous or not worry about smells.

KC: What year did you become an EMT<sup>42</sup>?

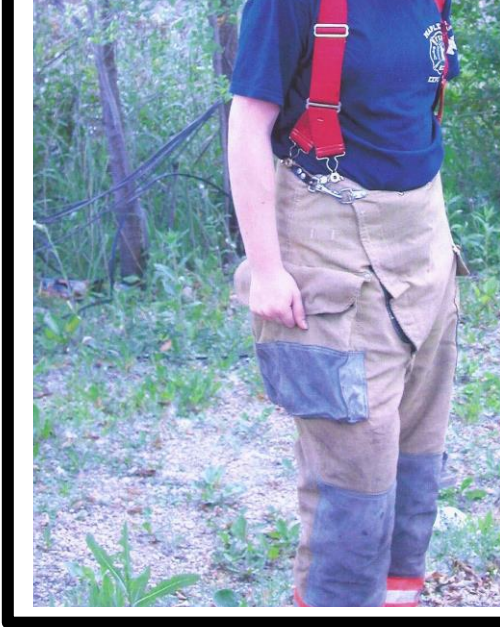
AD: Right away. So I got on in 1987. So probably by '88, I was an EMT. I had a year to get that done with my fire school. I think Tommy and I started our firefighter first, then our EMT training. Because when I was going through EMT school, I was pregnant with Kalie and they tried to stop that [and say] that I had to wait until after. That's when my doctor gave me the note, and then the medic that was teaching it said, "You can be here." So we did the firefighter school first, and then rolled into the EMT. So your first—it was probably your first two years, you were quite busy. I mean, you had drills. You had calls you had to make. You had schools you had to go to. You had to get stuff done, so now, it's tough for somebody.

My oldest daughter was a Fire Explorer<sup>43</sup>, and she always thought she'd be a firefighter, but the time commitment. Now she's a mom, and now the time commitment to work full-time and try to pick up shifts and try to train, it's just too much. It's a different type of commitment.

---

<sup>42</sup> **Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)** can serve in the patient compartment of an ambulance. EMTs use medical equipment such as automatic defibrillators, deliver trauma care and are educated in a simple way over all injuries and diseases. EMTs form the backbone of EMS—Emergency Medical Services -- delivery in the United States. Most work in a team with more advanced providers. EMTs usually complete a course that is about 150 hours in length for 9 college credits, are required to hold a Basic Life Support certification from the American Heart Association, and are required to attend a minimum of 12 hours a year of continuing medical education.

<sup>43</sup> **Fire & Emergency Services Exploring** is a hands-on program that exposes participants to many career experiences, leadership opportunities, and community service activities. The primary goals of the program are to help young adults choose a career path within fire and emergency services and to challenge them to become responsible citizens of their communities and country. It is open to young men and women ages 14 (and completed the 8th grade) and not yet 21 years old with an interest in learning more about careers in the field of Fire & Emergency Services.



KC: Were you working full-time through all these years too?

AD: Pretty much so. I probably went part-time ten years ago, so probably five of my years that I was on, I was part-time. But yeah, most of the time, I worked full-time, and yeah, Joe and I worked opposite

shifts, so our girls didn't have daycare. They would go to Joe's mom's for a couple hours a day.

KC: What was it like – my illusion is firefighting and EMT are fairly different interest and skillset. There is the excitement and the challenge of the firefighting, and yet EMT, your medical interest—it is much more personal, much more taking care of people. And knowing medical information is different than getting an adrenalin rush. And I could be wrong. I see it as a different thought processes.

AD: It is two totally different thought processes. I'm not sure where I learned it, but I was taught through the fire service, and I believe it was people on the Parkside. They always said, "Remember, when you get your call, when the call comes over the pager, think the worst." So if it said chest pain, on the way to the fire station, in your mind you're thinking full arrest, by the time we get there, the patient is in full arrest. This is what you're going to roll out. Smoke in a house – on the way to the station, you're thinking fully involved house fire by the time we get there. So that always helped, because you knew what you were going into when you left your house. You're trained for both, so you knew what was kind of going on.

Sometimes you run into a medical and it would end up being a domestic or it might be something else. But most of the time when you got dispatched, the dispatchers were good even back then to know what's going on and if you were going to be in harm's way -- of not being safe. They'd hold you back, stay back a couple of blocks until the police got on the scene. But at the time, the police were our paramedics, so the police usually did arrive before us, and then we went in and assisted them. And now it's opposite. Now firefighters are the medics and the police just go when they are needed. So it's a little different I think. But the end is you've got to get the job done, so however you get it done.



KC: You have any medical calls you particularly remember?

AD: There was one that, yeah – one really sticks in my head. I happened to be coming home from a sporting event with my daughter, one of my daughters. I don't think they both were with. And I got off at 35-E, and I got up to McMenemy, and there was a car rolled over, a person laying on the street, no squads, no nothing around yet, so I was actually the first one on the scene. So right away, you know, you got somebody laying in the street passed out, and I did have a cell phone. It was later years, so Kalie – I said, "You call 911. Tell them." And they had known about it, but they were getting there. It was a police chase, so the police car was

still chasing. Actually, it ended up in Saint Jerome<sup>44</sup>'s parking lot, but when I got to the guy, of course he was totally out of it. And he started waking up, and I was holding C-spine<sup>45</sup>, and Mike Dittel and Doug Johnson<sup>46</sup> got there shortly after me. And I was holding C-spine. I actually had his head in my knees, and I was holding him really still. And I mean, to the point of shaking. He was starting to thrash. They helped hold him, but I held the C-spine, and probably about a week later found out that [if]we wouldn't have held that C-spine, he wouldn't have been with us. And he actually came to the station and thanked us, and I got to meet him, got to meet the family. And the kids actually went to school with my daughters. So that was kind of probably the biggest.

So I was keeping the neck in line. He had broken his neck, so if we wouldn't have held his neck and he would have went like that, it would have killed him. Yeah, so yeah.

KC: You got there and knew to do that right away.

AD: Yep, yep. It wasn't even – yeah, you don't even think about it. Yeah, it's just – a lot of the stuff, when you're trained, you don't even think. You just do it. So it's not like you can pull out a book and start looking.

---

<sup>44</sup> **St. Jerome Catholic Church** is located at 380 East Roselawn Avenue and Bellwood, Maplewood, MN 55117.

<sup>45</sup> The **Cervical Spine**, or "**C-Spine**" includes the first 7 bones (called vertebrae) of the spinal column. The spinal cord is the large bundle of nerves that communicates information between the brain and the body. The vertebral column begins at the base of the brain and extends to the tail bone. The cervical vertebrae are located within the neck. Trauma or injury to the vertebrae can cause injury to the spinal cord. Damage to the section of the cord that is contained within the cervical vertebrae is particularly devastating. Paralysis from injury at this level can produce quadriplegia (paralysis in the arms and the legs).

<sup>46</sup> **Doug Johnson** was a Parkside firefighter August 6, 1989, to November 1, 2002; with 13 years of service.





And then of course, when you deliver a baby is big. I never actually had the baby. I hadn't been on a call where actually the baby was born right in the ambulance. Close. We ducked out at Regions Hospital<sup>47</sup>, and got them into Regions when we were heading towards Children's<sup>48</sup>. But there was quite a few of the guys, and I think Joette [Buche], too, that actually got to deliver a baby. But

---

<sup>47</sup> The City and County Hospital opened in 1872. In 1923, it was renamed Ancker Hospital in honor of its late superintendent Arthur B. Ancker. Over the years it encompassed twelve buildings over several acres with a mailing address at 495 Jefferson. In 1965 it moved to 640 Jackson Street and was renamed Saint Paul Ramsey Hospital, renamed again in 1977 Saint Paul-Ramsey Medical Center. In 1986, the hospital became a private, nonprofit facility and was no longer county-operated; in 1993 it merged with HealthPartners; and in 1997, was renamed **Regions Hospital**.

<sup>48</sup> **Children's Hospital**, founded in 1920, was located at 311 Pleasant as a pediatric specialty hospital. In 1972, Miller, Saint Luke's and Children's Hospitals merged to become United Hospital at 333 North Smith Street.

if I had the choice of medical versus fire, I would have went to the fire side, even though I was really good at the medical, but I liked the adrenaline rush of the fire.

KC: What's it like for your daughter sitting in the car watching Mom work?

AD: Actually, she was out of the car by that point, sitting on the hill watching. "Mom, you need anything?" But it was the one that was the Fire Explorer, so she always had an interest in becoming a firefighter and doing stuff.



And of course, Ronnie [Svendsen] was training them for that. Ronnie was our big Explorer guy that helped. That was actually all the departments got this Explorer group together, and it was for firefighters' kids, and they traveled to different stations doing different things. You know, they'd drill just like we would. And I think a couple of them actually became firefighters. The process of it did work to start training some of the kids and then they might be one of your best firefighters eventually. But I'm not sure. I don't think they do it anymore for – not sure why, whether it be legal reasons or – because there was some things that we had those kids do that probably shouldn't have been. [both laugh]

And my younger daughter had no interest in it. She said when there's a fire, you go running out of the building and not in a building, and so totally two different kids. She never wanted that.

KC: But she's the hockey player.

AD: They both were hockey players, but yeah, she's the one that played the Division I hockey.

KC: So she likes her adrenaline rushes in different ways.

AD: Yeah, yeah, that and she played three sports through junior high and high school, and then two in college. One year was ball only. But yeah, then the Division I hockey, so.

KC: You talked about why you were a good first woman to go on, because of the backup and the family connections, but obviously you're very athletic and so you would be very competent in all the tasks, too. And you had to be intelligent, which you obviously are.

AD: Yeah, I mean there was tasks that I had to train for or learn how to do. But yeah, you had to be in pretty good physical shape or you wouldn't make it.

KC: Can you talk about going through the ranks? Because you were a safety officer, you were a lieutenant and a captain.

AD: Well, I think they pretty much picked me for the safety officer because I was always the one that was looking around. I was always really good about not tunnel visioning. "Yeah, that's on fire, but what have you got going on over here?" And there was a lot of people, but it was a good step, I think, for them to put me into that lieutenant position, just to see how I would work as an officer. To be safety officer was extra meetings, and it was just a role that they had just started. I had to wear a different color helmet. The only reason why I took it is because they still said if I was on that first truck, I could still go in. If they were going to pull me out, I wouldn't even have thought about it, because I like to go in. If I was on that truck, I wanted to be going in.

And then probably four or five years later, I applied for the captain. There was a whole process that you had to go through. Now, I actually think they give you tests that you have to take in order to move up in the ranks. I'm not sure but, yeah, I was a captain for three years, maybe two or three years. And then I just

got to be where I loved putting on drills, because as a captain you had to do so many drills a year that you were responsible for and that was always fun for me to do different things. But then it just got to be too much where you had to go to meetings here, you had to go to meetings for Ramsey County, you had to – and so it was like, “Aw, you know what? I need to be more with my kids and their sports.” And they were older and so I gave it up.



Captain Amy Duellman

KC: How many captains did Parkside have?

AD: We usually had a head chief, two battalion chiefs, and then four to five captains. And then from there, you had a group of firefighters under you that you worried about making sure that they had all their certificates.

Mandatory training, it took over. Oh, it seems like every drill we were having was mandatory, and it was by the State of Minnesota with your OSHA [Occupational Safety & Health Administration] regulations. And before, somebody would give you a house, and you could just go in and drill a burn, right? Well, that ended because of the asbestos and all that kind of stuff, so then you had to have somebody come out and inspect the house, whether it was okay to drill in it, burn it. Same with cars. You used to be able to just have a car dropped off and you could cut it apart and burn it, and nobody would say anything. Well then it got to be where you had to take the gas tank off, and you had to take certain things off the engine or whatever. So it got to be a lot tougher to be able to drill and do things. And they were only looking out for our safety of course, but it kind of took the fun out of it. [all laugh]

We used to have a lot of fun in those houses. I mean, it was always so fun to go to a drill. You heard you had a house coming, and you were just like pumped. You're like, "Yeah, we get to go burn in a house." Like two people would be in charge of the drill, and they go in the house and just start fires everywhere, and then you have to crawl through and put them out. And that was – that seemed to be fun. Tell other people, and they're like, "That was fun?" It's like, "Yeah, that was a lot of fun."

So you had to be the right people. Not everybody could be a firefighter. And now I look back and I'm thinking, "Boy, I did a lot of things that I don't think I would do anymore." Going in and just the stuff you did and, yeah, but glad I did it.

KC: With age, we get different perspectives.

AD: [laughs] Yeah, yeah, that's true.

BJ: Tell me a little bit, Amy, about when you go to a fire. Who assigns different people to tasks, because you don't have the same people that are always on the first truck, do you? It might be whoever got to the station first.

AD: Yeah, it's whoever got [to]the station first usually got on the first truck, so you had your engineer. He's driving. And then you had – usually your captain was in your front seat, and then you'd have your crew in the back. On the way to a fire, if it was a working fire, you'd be tanking up ready to go. First one off the truck always automatically would start pulling the hose. Second one behind would grab the ax. Third one would grab other tools. So you knew from drilling that those were your tasks.

Now, I did drive the fire trucks. I think I drove it once to the fire scene, and on our way, I heard one of our engineers<sup>49</sup> was in the back. Nobody had gotten to the station, so I'm like, "Okay, I guess I'm driving." Well, on the way there, I hollered back and said, "Okay, this is a Chinese fire drill, because you're going to engineer the truck." So you knew who was behind you, so if you weren't in the place that you were comfortable, then you just swapped out at the scene and just rolled.

And the second truck in was always your hydrant<sup>50</sup> truck. They were the ones that would hook the hydrant. The rest of the crew would come up and get fans out or whatever



---

<sup>49</sup> The **engineer** drives the fire truck and operates the pump to ensure there is adequate water in the hose to the firefighters.

<sup>50</sup> **Fire hydrant** is an active fire protection measure, and a source of water provided in most urban, suburban and rural areas with municipal water service to enable firefighters to tap into the municipal water supply to assist in extinguishing a fire. Buildings near a hydrant may qualify for an insurance discount since firefighters should be able to more rapidly extinguish a fire on the insured property.

else you needed, but usually the officer in charge would be the one that would – if he had extra people, they would be the ones assigned.

When I first got on, we had no system of knowing who went in, who went out. You know, you really were just watching each other. When it got to be – I was probably on ten, maybe fifteen years, ten years. They got a PAR system— [Personal Accountability Report] where then we had tags. We had to take one tag and put it on one board, and one tag went on another board. And so as you went in as a crew, they knew who was actually in there, so when you came out, you grabbed your tag back off. So that if anybody ever did get lost, they knew where you were.

BJ: The engineer is usually the one that drove the truck?

AD: Yes.

BJ: And then he also operated the pump?

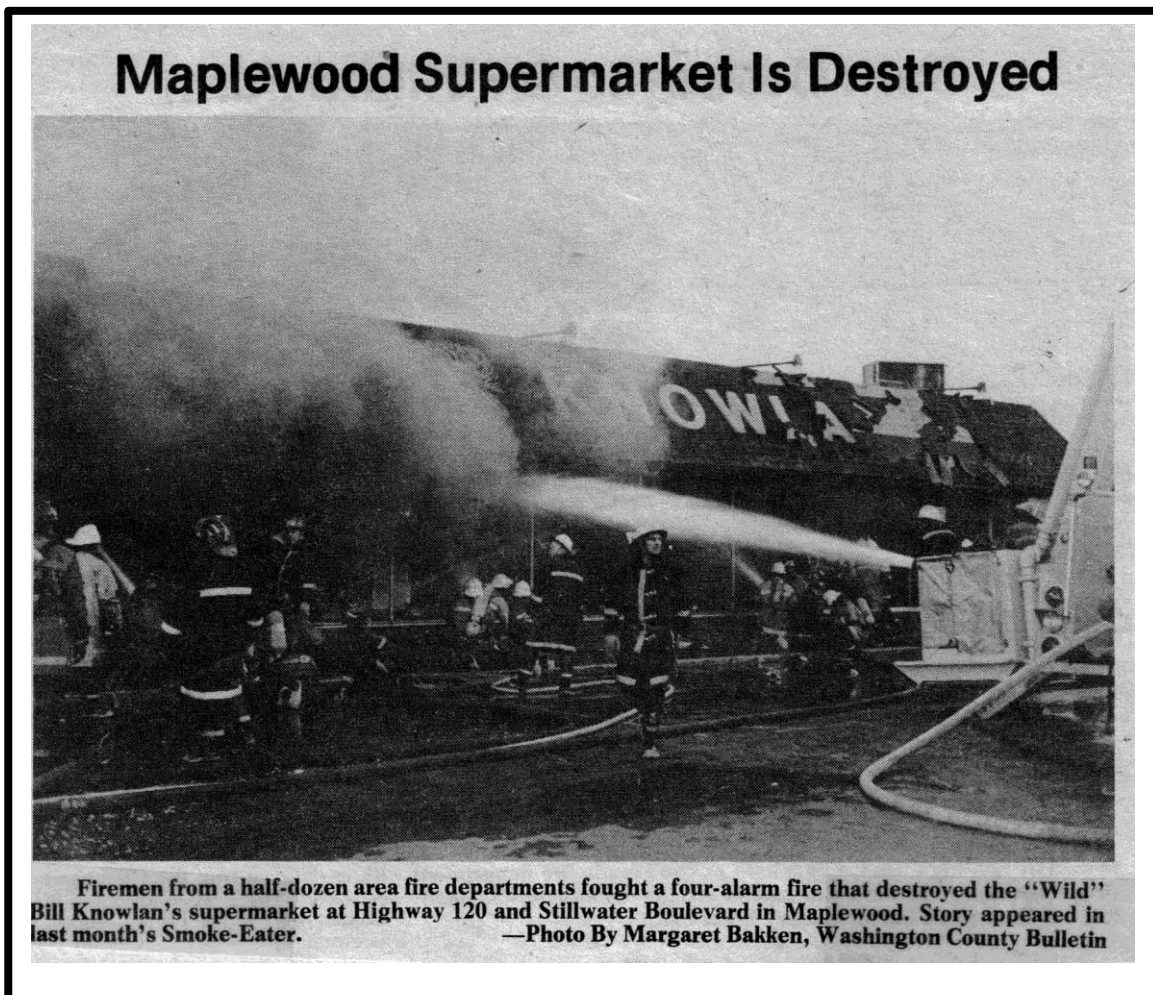
AD: Yes.

BJ: Okay, and there must have been a number of them available that were trained as engineers?

AD: Yeah, and actually I had taken some engineer's classes. I wasn't – I could handle having one line come off, but then you have your other guys, like Joe's brother Kirk, who could have four or five lines coming out of his truck and have a truck pushing water to him. And you know, you had to watch all the gauges and you know. I mean, it's an art to be able to do that, so most of us were trained in basic pumping just in case. Like I said, when I jumped into that hot seat of driving, I was thinking – my head started gearing. "Okay, I got to put it in pump. I got to do this, I got to do that." In hopes that somebody else was going to show up soon to help out, because you think you can do it, and I probably could have done it,

but it's much better when you know somebody else is coming behind you knowing they can do it and has done it. Because scariest thing would be for me, is if I had a crew in and I lost water pressure. And that would've been a panic. But yeah, we all had our kind of what we were good at, and you know, you knew who was good at engineering and who was good at going in and who was good at barking orders. [Kate chuckles]

BJ: On a different subject, injuries. I know your dad was injured in – was it the Knowlan's fire<sup>51</sup>?



<sup>51</sup> **Knowlan's Grocery Store Fire**, at Century Avenue and Stillwater Road, was September 6, 1979. Flames from an incinerator ignited boxes inside the store, and flames were carried quickly along the open ceiling to the entire store.



AD: Yeah. Yep, he got electrocuted.

BJ: Yeah. Were there other firemen that you know of that got injured other than maybe a little smoke inhalation?

AD: Yeah, you know, smoke inhalation was probably the worst, or having something fall on you. You know, nothing heavy, like Gordy Mallory<sup>52</sup>. I can remember a house fire over by Hill-Murray<sup>53</sup> area, I think it was. He actually had a wall come down on him, and he ended up coming out the window, but I think that might've scared him a little bit. Really, Kerry Murphy<sup>54</sup>, who was my brother-in-law, when he was on, he got hurt at an apartment fire. I think it was a back injury, but nothing major. I don't remember ever, in my days, remember seeing anybody rushed away, red lights and sirens. You know, nobody that had to be revived or got trapped and couldn't get out. There was a couple of close calls where people started scrambling, but it turned out to be good, where you know, you see some of that on the news or something where I know Stillwater had lost a few through a roof.

Roofs were probably one of my scariest things, because you never knew what was going to happen to the roofs. You're trained to feel them, but a roof can go bad really fast. The trusses can let go. But no, I don't think Maplewood really ever had anything [critical].

---

<sup>52</sup> **Gordy Mallory** was a Parkside firefighter October 6, 1984 to February 1, 2010; with 26 years of service.

<sup>53</sup> **Hill-Murray School** at 2625 Larpenteur Avenue East, Maplewood, MN.

<sup>54</sup> **Kerry Murphy** was a Parkside firefighter June 2, 1991 to June 6, 1997; with six years of service.

My dad was – I do remember that, because I wasn't even on yet. I remember the squad coming and picking up my mom and taking her to the hospital. And he was fine. Actually, when he woke up, he wanted to go right back to the fire scene. But yeah, that was probably one of the scariest that – you know, yeah.

BJ: In terms of the merger of the three volunteer fire departments becoming the Maplewood Fire Department, do think that was inevitable? Do you see that the volunteer fire departments could have maintained their independence and their volunteer status?

AD: Well, with all the new rules from OSHA and that, it was going to be tough, and I think with the city because the city put money in everybody's fund, I believe. And I think that was getting tougher to do, to fund the volunteer end of it. It was inevitable that it was going to happen. I think there was more guidelines that had to be kept and watched. You had to have more accountability. You had to have somebody – we actually – Susan [Zwieg]<sup>55</sup>, who is the secretary for Maplewood [Fire Department] now. She actually was hired on some of our volunteer departments to try to do some of our bookwork and make sure everybody was in compliance. I just think with the times, it would've been nice to stay volunteer and be able show up when you can, but there was starting to get to be a little – there was a lull where was hard to get people in the middle of the night. It was always the same six of us showing up for the ambulance, and you get four or five calls in the middle of the night and then you got to go to work in the morning, it wasn't easy. So this way, they had a way to staff it better with the shifts. Yeah, I

---

<sup>55</sup> Susan Zwieg provided part-time administrative support to Roseville Fire Department 1982 to 1996; Parkside Fire Department 1992 to 1996; and Vadnais Heights Fire 1992 to 1996; then full time to Maplewood Fire Department October 1996 to present; with 32 years of public service.

think it was inevitable. I had remembered my dad talking about that it was probably going to happen.

BJ: With all the training you did for medical and for the hazardous waste and OSHA and so on?

AD: Yeah, yeah. And then with the police department. You know, they just got so many more calls as society – the way the society went, and kids doing what kids do, and the gangs coming in. We couldn't use our police medics as police medics. We had to use them as officers, because, you know. So then you had – I mean, that was probably the best thing we ever did was then train the firefighters to be medics, just because times have changed so much that you had to think [of]something different to cover the area.

And our station is now closed, so they're just – which isn't a bad thing. It is for the memories, but now that they staff Station 2 [1955 Clarence Street] full-time, they can get to our area just as fast as by the time we got to the station, got in the truck, and got out.



Parkside Fire Department  
2001 McMenemy Street  
Maplewood

BJ: You mentioned some of the family involvement and particularly during drills or after drills or when the truck was out and people were there. Did you also have things like maybe on Sundays or evenings that were family events? I know Gladstone talked about every Sunday, whether the firefighters or the spouses or

the children came, it was kind of like an open house, come and have an afternoon watching TV in the fire station. Did you have events like that at Parkside also?

AD: We did. We did big events like New Year's Eve, because we didn't want to be drinking so we could be out on a call, so we had family things. And we'd have – I'd go up there and decorate the whole hall and then I'd have games for the kids. So we did that. And like football games, big games, we'd all be up at the fire station. So yeah, a lot of times – or even fire calls, the kids would show up and come. And they knew that their role was they had to go in the squad room until somebody came in and said, "Okay, the trucks are gone. You can come out here now." Very much so, family involvement.

KC: What else can you share with us?

AD: Actually, I think I pretty much covered [it]. It was – you know, being on the fire department was just an experience that I would never give back. The friends I've made, the people I've met. I still have friends all over the state of Minnesota that were firefighters. We used to go camping up with the Cross Lake fire chief. He'd get our campsite, and then we just show up and put our stuff on it. Yeah, it just – it's a family, and I was happy to be a part of the family, part of the history, being the first one [female]. It could have gone – if I was from the outside, I don't think I would've made it, because you had that – you know you were coming into eggshells for a while, but like I said, they really learned fast to respect me. It was all good. Yeah. If you had tension with somebody, you just walked away and went to somebody else, stood by somebody else. [Kate laughs] But that happened to the guys, too, where they would have spats.

KC: What's your legacy?

AD: I don't know. I guess I haven't thought about that.

KC: Laying a good foundation for future women to be firefighters in Maplewood?

AD: Well, yeah. Yeah, that would be a good way to look at it, and just know that if you have a dream, to fulfill it. I tried being a police reserve, and that was okay, but it wasn't the adrenaline rush that I was missing. That was my – I was a police cadet and then was a police reserve and that just wasn't doing it, and that's when I decided, "You know what? I think I want to do the firefighting." You know, and I was always down there. I was always at Gladstone. If my dad was there, I was there. I mean, I was his little shadow. He worked two blocks away from where I grew up, so I was always down in his office bugging him. And you know, back then, you could. He worked right in with the police department. I used to go sit in with the police dispatchers and visit with them and do a lot of police ride-alongs, and so – actually, police and fire back then were – I still think they're pretty much a family, you know, that if you're one, you're another. Pretty much they work together when they get to scenes and different calls.

KC: I would imagine they are in Maplewood, because it's a small enough community.

AD: Yeah, a lot of your police officers were firefighters, like Dick Schaller<sup>56</sup>, Joe Bergeron<sup>57</sup>. Bob Vorowek<sup>58</sup>, Denny Cusick<sup>59</sup>, which he ended up being the chief down in Cottage Grove. I don't know if his name has come up. Yeah, there was quite a few that really ring a bell, more so when I was growing up than when I was an actual firefighter. But even when I was an actual firefighter, yeah, we had Joe Bergeron. Well, Dick Lang<sup>60</sup>, he was a police officer-firefighter from our area. But yeah, so it was kind of like you had the two families. Yeah.

KC: Amy, thank you. This has been just great.

AD: Well, thank you.

---

<sup>56</sup> **Richard Schaller** was a Gladstone firefighter May 11, 1954, to January 11, 1982; with 27 years of service. He was appointed police officer July 7, 1956; promoted sergeant in 1958; captain July 1, 1960; chief October 1961; and retired April 29, 1982.

<sup>57</sup> **Joseph Bergeron** was a Gladstone firefighter December 14, 1986, to August 1, 1999; with 12 years of service. He was appointed as a Maplewood police officer September 17, 1984; promoted sergeant May 30, 1998; and killed in the line of duty May 1, 2010, after 26 years of service.

<sup>58</sup> **Robert "Bob" Vorwerk** was a firefighter; and was appointed police officer August 1, 1970, and retired October 29, 1999; with 29 years if service.

<sup>59</sup> **Dennis Cusick** was a Gladstone firefighter 1969 to 1984; was chief 1981 to 1984; with 15 years of service. He was appointed as a Maplewood police officer May 1, 1965; promoted sergeant April 1, 1968; lieutenant August 1, 1969; resigned September 30, 1982, to become Chief of Cottage Grove Police until 1998, with 33 years of public service.

<sup>60</sup> **Richard Lang** was a Parkside firefighter October 1982 till approximately 1989/90. He was appointed Maplewood police officer March 27, 1972; and retired October 23, 1996, with 24 years of service.

## APPENDIX A

### Chronology of Gladstone Fire Department

Gladstone Station: 1955 Clarence Street

and

Hazelwood Station: 1530 East County Road C

- December 11, 1942      First meeting to discuss starting a volunteer fire department held at the Gladstone school. 16 men attended.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.1424.0001
- November 23, 1943      An organizational meeting was held. Six officers were appointed so training could begin by the North Saint Paul Fire Department.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.1424.0001
- February 8 & 12, 1944      The department was incorporated with 27 volunteers and Leonard Foeller elected as the first chief.  
Source: Document, MAHS 2013.0004.0035
- May 7, 1944              Open house held in Gladstone for their first fire engine - a 1923 Pirsch fire engine that was purchased for \$1,000 from the Excelsior Fire Department.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.1424.0001
- August 12, 1944          First fire run to a grass fire at 1794 Flandrau Street. Three men extinguished the fire in 30 minutes.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.1424.0001
- September 16, 1944      Construction was started on a station with donations from local citizens.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.1424.0001
- October, 1944              The department began charging New Canada Township for fire calls at \$35 for the first hour and \$25 each additional hour.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.0006.0017

- November 10, 1944 The Women's Auxiliary was founded.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.1424.0001
- December, 1944 The 2-stall, 26' x32', concrete block fire station was completed, except there was no money for doors and windows. Windows were covered in tarpaper. Canvas that could be rolled up and down on a roller were installed over the doors. Windows and doors were installed in Spring after another fundraising effort.  
Source: History, MAHS 2013.0001.0103
- May 20, 1945 Open house for the completed 2-stall (26' x 32') fire station. Cost was less than \$2,500. A siren was located on the roof and could be activated from Pfeiffer's Grocery Store – which received all fire calls. Firemen hearing the siren would race to the Store to get the address and run across Frost Avenue to the fire station.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.1424.0001
- c. 1945 There were only 14 fire hydrants in Gladstone located along Flandrau Street and White Bear Avenue. Rent was collected from residents on the street to pay Saint Paul. These were the only locations where the fire truck could be refilled with water.  
Source: History, MAHS 2013.0001.0103
- 1948 They had 32 members.  
Source: Letter, MAHS 2013.0001.0104
- 1951 Station was enlarged to 3 stalls.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.1424.0001
- 1957 New Canada Township residents voted to incorporate as the Village of Maplewood. Village Council Meetings were held in the Gladstone Fire Station until a new city hall was constructed in 1965.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.0006.0017



- 1958 Gladstone Fire Station had 40 men and 4 pieces of equipment.  
Source: Newspaper, MAHS 2006.1430.0001
- 1970 Station was enlarged with a 4<sup>th</sup> stall to accommodate the new snorkel truck and a meeting room, small kitchen and restrooms.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.1424.0001
- July 25, 1972 An organizational meeting was held at Holy Redeemer Parish Center to consider improving fire service to the rapidly growing north end of Maplewood and the Maplewood Mall. This led to creating Hazelwood Fire Station as a substation to Gladstone.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.1424.0001
- October 3, 1972 Bill Mikiska was elected as the first district chief of Hazelwood Fire Station.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.1424.0001
- September 15, 1974 Hazelwood Fire Station's 2-stall building was completed for \$192,000. Fire truck #124 was transferred to Hazelwood from the Gladstone Fire Station and a second truck was rented from Parkside Fire Department.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.1424.0001 and 2006.0006.0017
- 1974 Firefighters were asked to drive ambulances to assist policemen who were trained as paramedics.  
Source: Oral interview of Dick Juker and Joe Waters
- 1975 Maplewood police officers were trained as paramedics by Regions Hospital with Dennis Cusick, both a Maplewood police officer and a Gladstone firefighter, as champion. Later, training was done through 916 Vo-Tech.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.0006.0017 and verbal from Chief Steve Lukin
- 1977 Pagers were given to members to alert them to fire calls.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.1424.0001

- 1978 New Advanced Life Support vans were purchased by Maplewood and housed at the fire stations and driven by the firefighters to assist the police paramedics. Gladstone firefighters were required to become EMT's and Parkside and East County Line firefighters could become either an EMT or a First Responder.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.0006.0017 and verbal from Chief Steve Lukin, Dick Peterson and Dick Juker.
- 1979 Gladstone and Hazelwood stations had a combined membership of 58 men. Hazelwood had two pumpers, a rescue squad and a boat with motor.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.1424.0001
- ca. 1981 – 1982 Firefighting classes were started at 916 Vo-Tech. Previously, ISD 287 Vo-Tech instructors from Hennepin County would conduct classes at local fire stations, including Gladstone, Parkside and East County Line, as early as 1976 on basic firefighting. These classes became Firefighting I. Firefighting II was added later.  
Source: Oral interview with Chief Steve Lukin and Dave Klocek.
- 1993 Gladstone Fire station had 29 members.  
Hazelwood Fire Station had 24 members.
- January 1, 1997 Gladstone, Parkside and East County Line Volunteer Fire Departments merged to create the Maplewood Fire Department and all firefighters were required to become EMT's.  
Source: Oral interview with Steve Lukin
- 2001 A new fire station is constructed at 1955 Clarence Street and the department is relocated.  
Source: Report, MAHS 2012.0009.0391

July, 2005

The Gladstone Volunteer Fire station is demolished.

Source: Maple Leaves, MAHS 2011.0010.0021

**Gladstone Fire Chiefs:**

1944 – 1947    -4 years    Leonard Foeller

1948 – 1951    -4 years    John Cottrell

1952 – 1964    -13 years    Alwin (Al) Schilla

1965 – 1968    -4 years    Al Schadt, became City Fire Marshal 1968 to 1985.

1969 – 1975    -7 years    Robert Finberg

1976 – 1979    -3 years    Tom Kansier

1979 – 1980    -2 years    Jerry Kasmirski

1982            -1 year    William Mikiska

1983 – 1984    -4 years    Dennis Cusick

1985 – 1991    -7 years    Jim Franzen

1992 – 1993    -2 years    Howard (Howie) Weber

1994 – 1995    -2 years    Richard “Dick” Peterson

1996 – 1997    -1 year    Steve Lukin

January 1, 1997            Gladstone joined the Maplewood Fire Department with Joel

Hewitt as their first Chief

## APPENDIX B

### Chronology of Parkside Fire Department 2001 McMenemy Street

- June 1958            First meeting with 14 men. Bob Westbrook elected first chief and their first engine was a 1947 pumper purchased from Gladstone Fire Department.  
Source: History, MAHS 2013.0001.0117
- January, 1959        They went under contract with Village of Maplewood for fire service.  
Source: History, MAHS 2013.0001.0117
- May, 1959            Completed construction of 3-stall building on a 9 ½ acre site.  
Source: Newspaper, MAHS 2013.0001.0117
- 1962                  There were 40 members.  
Source: Newspaper, MAHS 2013.0001.0117
- 1988                  There were 42 firefighters and 3 multi-purpose fire response vehicles.  
Source: History, MAHS 2013.0001.0116
- 1995                  Negotiations to consolidate all three volunteer fire departments into Maplewood Department.  
Source: Letter, MAHS 2013.0003.0093

## APPENDIX C

### Chronology of East County Line Volunteer Fire Department

East County Line Station - 1177 Century Avenue

Londin Lane substation - 2501 Londin Lane

Noted for their annual Halloween parties for children and families of the community.

- October, 1942      First meeting at the home of Frank Kass to discuss creating a volunteer fire department.  
Source: Newsletter, MAHS 2012.0009.0564
- November, 1942      At a second meeting, Ruggles Sanders was elected fire chief with 14 charter members. The first homemade equipment was a 1929 Dodge truck chassis with a soda acid water tank purchased for \$250 from Lindstrom, MN. Later, a portable fire pump was added.  
Source: Newsletter, MAHS 2012.0009.0564  
and History, MAHS 2013.0001.0115  
and Newspaper of June 30, 1982
- 1946      Chief Sanders went to Merchants State Bank to get the department's first loan of \$3,500 to purchase the first pumper truck.  
Source: Newspaper of June 30, 1982
- 1946      They purchased a 1946 Ford pumper with a 500 gallon tank built by Flour City Fire Equipment Company.  
Source, MAHS 2013.0001.0115
- April 12, 1947      The department was incorporated.  
Source: Newsletter, MAHS 2012.0009.0564
- December, 1947      A 2-bay station was constructed on land purchased from John Geisinger.  
Source: Newsletter, MAHS 2012.0009.0564

- c. 1952 Building enlarged to 4-bays.  
Source, MAHS 2013.0001.0115
- Early to mid- 1950's They began contracting with townships for fire protection, including today's southern Maplewood, Oakdale and Woodbury. These areas included the 3M Center and Landfall Village.  
Source, MAHS 2013.0001.0115
- 1954 Fire station was expanded with another 40' x 60' addition.  
Source: Newspaper of June 30, 1982
- 1957 The fire district included Landfall, Woodbury, Oakdale and the southern leg of Maplewood that was south of North Saint Paul and east of McKnight Road. Oakdale and Woodbury eventually started their own departments. He's not certain what happened to Landfall.  
Source: Verbal from Bob Bade, former fire chief of East County Line.
- Late-1960's –  
Early-1970's Building enlarged to add offices and meeting spaces, a hose drying tower and additional bays with higher doors.  
Source, MAHS 2013.0001.0115
- 1975 Maplewood police officers were trained as paramedics by Saint Paul-Ramsey Medical Center (later known as Regions Hospital) with Dennis Cusick (both a Maplewood police officer and a Gladstone firefighter) as champion. Later, training was done through 916 Vo-Tech.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.0006.0017 and verbal from Chief Steve Lukin
- October, 1977 Firefighters were asked to drive ambulances (station wagons converted to hold a stretcher) to assist the police paramedics.  
Source: Strategic Plan for Maplewood Fire Department

- October 1977                    A substation of East County Line was planned and built on Londin Lane and Lower Afton Road. 5 ½ acres were purchased by Maplewood to provide faster response in southern Maplewood and keep insurance premiums low. It's estimated that \$260,000 is needed to construct a building.  
Source: Letter, MAHS 2011.0010.0172
- 1978                                Four new Advanced Life Support vans were purchased by Maplewood and housed at Parkside, Gladstone, Hazelwood and East County Line fire stations. They were driven by firefighters to assist the police paramedics. All new firefighters were required to become EMTs but a few old-timers were allowed to remain with their First Responder training.  
Source: History, MAHS 2006.0006.0017 and verbal from Chief Steve Lukin, Dick Peterson, Bob Bade and Dick Juker.
- November 6, 1979            Maplewood voters pass a bond issue to construct a new station on Londin Lane.  
Source: Newspaper, MAHS 2014.0001.0311
- ca. 1981 – 1982                Firefighting classes were started at 916 Vo-Tech. Previously, ISD 287 Vo-Tech instructors from Hennepin County conducted some classes at local fire stations as early as 1976. Also, John Rukavina of Roseville fire was instrumental in starting classes at local stations by local firefighters. These all evolved into Firefighting I class at 916. Firefighting II was added later.  
Source: Oral interview with Chief Steve Lukin, Dave Klocek and Bob Bade.
- June 30, 1982                    The equipment used by the department includes: three pumpers, one rescue squad, a city owned Snorkel truck, a tank truck, a grass fire unit, a utility van with cascade air and salvage equipment, one basic life support ambulance and two advanced life support ambulances.  
Source: Newspaper of June 30, 1982

- 1986-1988 Additional remodeling of the station.  
Source, MAHS 2013.0001.0115
- 1995 Most firefighters were required to be EMTs-- Emergency Medical Technician.  
Source: Oral interview with Steve Lukin
- June 1996 Tentative agreement to consolidate with Gladstone and Parkside volunteer fire Departments Into Maplewood Fire Department.  
Source: Letter, MAHS 2013.0001.0109
- January 1, 1997 Gladstone, Parkside and East County Line Volunteer Fire Departments merged to create the Maplewood Fire Department and all firefighters were required to become EMT's.  
Source: Oral interview with Steve Lukin

### CHIEFS

- 1942 - 1964 Ruggles Sanders
- 1964 - 1965 Harvey Brockman
- 1965 - 1972 Herb Johnson
- 1972 - 1972 Don Hove
- 1972 - 1976 Bob Bade
- 1976 - 1978 Bob Murray
- 1978 - 1979 Bob Bade (2<sup>nd</sup> time for 7 years total)
- 1980 - 1985 Duane Williams
- 1986 Dave Selbitschka
- 1987 Bob Miller
- 1988 Dave Selbitschka
- 1989 - 1996 Larry Bush



# INDEX

## **B**

Beer in Fire Station .....17  
Bergeron  
    Joseph .....54, 55  
Boche  
    Joette .....24, 41

## **C**

Collins  
    Ken .....12  
Cusick  
    Dennis .....54

## **D**

Dittel  
    Mike .....33, 40  
Duellman  
    Audrey.....14  
    Joe .....9, 10, 12, 18, 21, 23, 25, 26, 33, 35, 37, 38  
    Kirk .....13, 23, 26  
    Tom .....9, 13, 26

## **E**

Embertson  
    Jim .....12  
Equipment  
    Air Tank .....15, 22, 23  
    Hoses.....19, 31, 48  
    Mask.....15  
    Turnout Gear.....14, 15, 23  
Eriola  
    Jack.....14

## **F**

Family ..6, 9, 10, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 25–27, 33, 36, 39,  
    42  
Family--Firefighter's Family ..... 5, 25, 53, 54, 55  
Female Integration .....15–18, 24, 34–35  
Fire Calls, Dispatch , Telephone, Pagers, Siren5, 6, 20,  
    38  
Fire Explorer .....36, 42  
Fire Stations  
    East County Line Station at 1177 Century Avenue  
        .....32  
    Gladstone Station at 1900 Clarence Street .....32  
    Hazelwood Station at 1530 East County Road C.32  
    Parkside Fire Station at 2001 McMenemy Street  
        .....13, 52  
Fire Trucks..... 24, 46, 47  
Fires  
    Gem Store Fire .....6  
    Grand Pre Fire .....28  
    Hideaway Bar Fire .....28  
    Home Fires ..... 29, 30, 31, 50  
    Knowlan's Fire.....49

## **H**

Hale  
    Leroy .....14  
    Tom ..... 14, 15, 16, 36  
Hewitt  
    Joel ..... 21, 23, 60

## **I**

Injuries .....50

**J**

Johnson	
Doug.....	40

**L**

Lang	
Dick .....	55
Lukin	
Steve .....	32, 58, 59, 60, 63, 64, 65

**M**

Mallory	
Gordy .....	50
Medical	
EMT, First Responder, Paramedic... 17, 22, 36, 38–	
42, 52	
Merger of three departments .....	51
Murphy	
Kerry.....	50

**O**

O'Fallon	
Jerry .....	19

**P**

Patches, Emblems.....	27
-----------------------	----

**R**

Ranks within Fire Department.....	43–45
-----------------------------------	-------

**S**

Schadt	
Alfred .....	4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 50, 54, 60
Jeff.....	9, 32
Schaller	
Dick .....	54
Schultz	
Tom .....	15, 22
Social Events .....	10, 25, 52, 53
Svendsen	
Dean.....	19
Ron.....	19, 32, 33, 42

**T**

Training.....	9, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 30, 36, 44, 45, 51, 52
---------------	---

**V**

Vorowek	
Bob.....	54

**W**

Wages .....	24
Women's Auxiliary .....	34

**Z**

Zwieg	
Susan.....	51