

Transcript of oral history interview with

Edward Joseph Leier

Parkside / Maplewood Fire Department, 1979-2001



by Oral Historian Kateleen Cavett

and Bob Jenson, President, Maplewood Area Historical Society

Interviewed April 17, 2014

at

HAND in HAND Productions' office in Saint Paul, Minnesota

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2014

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All pictures are from the 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 histories 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

KC: Kate Cavett

BJ: Bob Jenson

EL: Edward Leier

EL: My name is Ed Leier¹. I was a Parkside² firefighter from 1979, and I took a leave of absence for a couple of years in there—'97. Actually seventeen years ago today, when the dikes in East Grand Forks, Minnesota broke, I was up there working for the State. And so I took a leave from Maplewood, and I came back in '99. Did another year-and-a-half, and then retired with twenty-two years of service at Maplewood, which started out as Parkside — one of the three independent fire departments that, under contract, worked for the City of Maplewood³ [Maplewood incorporated as a city in 1957]. I have been a firefighter, captain, assistant chief, operations chief, and the chief. At Parkside, I was the chief from '91 to '97. I was the operations chief from '87 to '91, and

¹ **Edward Joseph Leier** was a Parkside/Maplewood firefighter February 6, 1979, to March 4, 2000, including chief 1991 - 1997; Public Safety Director City of East Grand Forks—first fire chief to manage both a police and fire department; Assistant Director of Response Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management: Vadnais Heights Fire Chief 2004 to present, with 35 years of service in Public Safety, and counting.

² **Parkside Fire Department**, see chronology in Appendix A

³ **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.

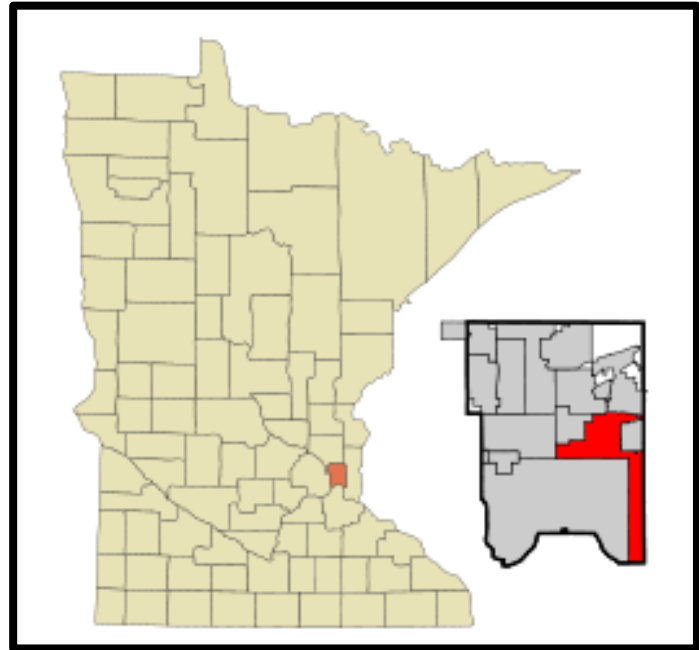
assistant chief from '83 to '87. I've done various functions at Parkside. I guess I've probably done them all.

KC: What first attracted you to fire service?

EL: Well, it was – it's funny how I got on the fire department. I was a locomotive engineer for the Milwaukee Railroad⁴. I bought a house in Maplewood next door to Leroy Hale⁵. Leroy Hale at the time was a

firefighter in Parkside, and I – working on the railroad, I worked mostly weekends and nights. So I was around during

the day, and he would keep on talking to me about how I ought to think about helping, because they need people during the day. I said, "Well, I don't know really what I could do." Well, I ran trains, so I understood pumps and boilers and those things. I was mechanical. I did have a first aid card. So I went up there and met them on a Sunday afternoon in 1979 – January of '79. And they had an



City of
Maplewood, Minnesota

⁴ The Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad (often referred to as the **Milwaukee Road**) was a Class I railroad that operated in the Midwest and Northwest of the United States from 1847 until 1980, when its Pacific Extension was embargoed through the states of Montana, Idaho, and Washington. The eastern half of the system merged into the Soo Line Railroad on January 1, 1986. The company went through several official names and faced bankruptcy several times in that period. The railroad no longer exists as a separate entity, but much of its trackage continues to be used by its successor.

⁵ **Leroy Hale** was a Parkside firefighter 1970 to 1996; serving as firefighter, captain, assistant chief and chief; with 26 years of service.

interview committee and we talked about the fire department, what I was doing for a living, what hours I'd be available. And I was the prize commodity, because I was available during the day, during the week. I was twenty-five years old.

So I got on the fire department, and they sent me to school right away in a round robin. Went to all different fire departments to learn the basic skills of firefighting, and I really took an interest. It was fun and challenging. It was a bunch of guys from the neighborhood. I am sort of a social individual, so you got to meet your neighbors and other people down the street, and we would talk about all kinds of things. We would work together, and it was not only a fire department that helped a community. It was a group of individuals that were mainly Type-A personalities, but were very giving and wanted to work not only for the community, but for their neighbors and friends. And so if someone's house needed roofing, all of a sudden there was ten guys with hammers in your front yard waiting to roof your house. Or if someone was sick, there was always one or two of them stopping by to shovel the driveway or cut the grass. And it was a lot different than where I grew up, here in Saint Paul, on how you knew your neighbors but you didn't really interact with them. There you interacted. People would bring cookies if someone moved in and welcomed you to the neighborhood and stuff. And introduced themselves and talked about things — how things worked in the community. So it was really community organization, benefit, friends. New to the community, I got to meet a whole bunch of folks really quick. And then I found myself kind of passionate about being a firefighter and helping people and the challenges that it posed. I took more education. When I was on the railroad, they knew that I was a firefighter, so some of the hazardous material stuff — they promoted me to go for the railroads, so I got more hazardous materials, and it just kept on building.

And as I said, I was kind of a social person. You start out to be a firefighter and you see that there's a chief in the department, and you kind of set your goals. For some people, you set your goals — "Someday I'll be that chief." And so that was my goal — someday to be the chief. And I took all the classes and stayed active with department — took on different roles from the dances we used to have as fundraisers, the spaghetti dinners. I took an active role in all that, because it was part of the leadership, part of belonging, and if you're going to belong, you're going to belong a hundred percent, and I'm a hundred-percenter.

KC: I know in Gladstone [Fire Department⁶], the Auxiliary was very important. Was your wife very involved in the Auxiliary as well?

EL: Yes, in fact — it's funny — I think after the third month I was on, she was elected secretary of the Ladies Auxiliary. And it was — you know, there was some that were very active, some that weren't very active. Actually, it was the Auxiliary that did the spaghetti dinners, and they would raise money and help to pay for uniforms for the fire department and buy the equipment.

At the time that the fire department started, there wasn't a city. We were actually a fire department, private nonprofit corporation — 501(c)3⁷ I guess. And we were formed in New Canada Township way before the city became a city. And we were doing fire protection in that community. I should say they were. I wasn't on then. But they were doing fire protection in 1958, because it was too far for Little Canada to go, too far for Gladstone to come over. Saint Paul would stop at its border, so that little area there didn't have any fire protection. So they

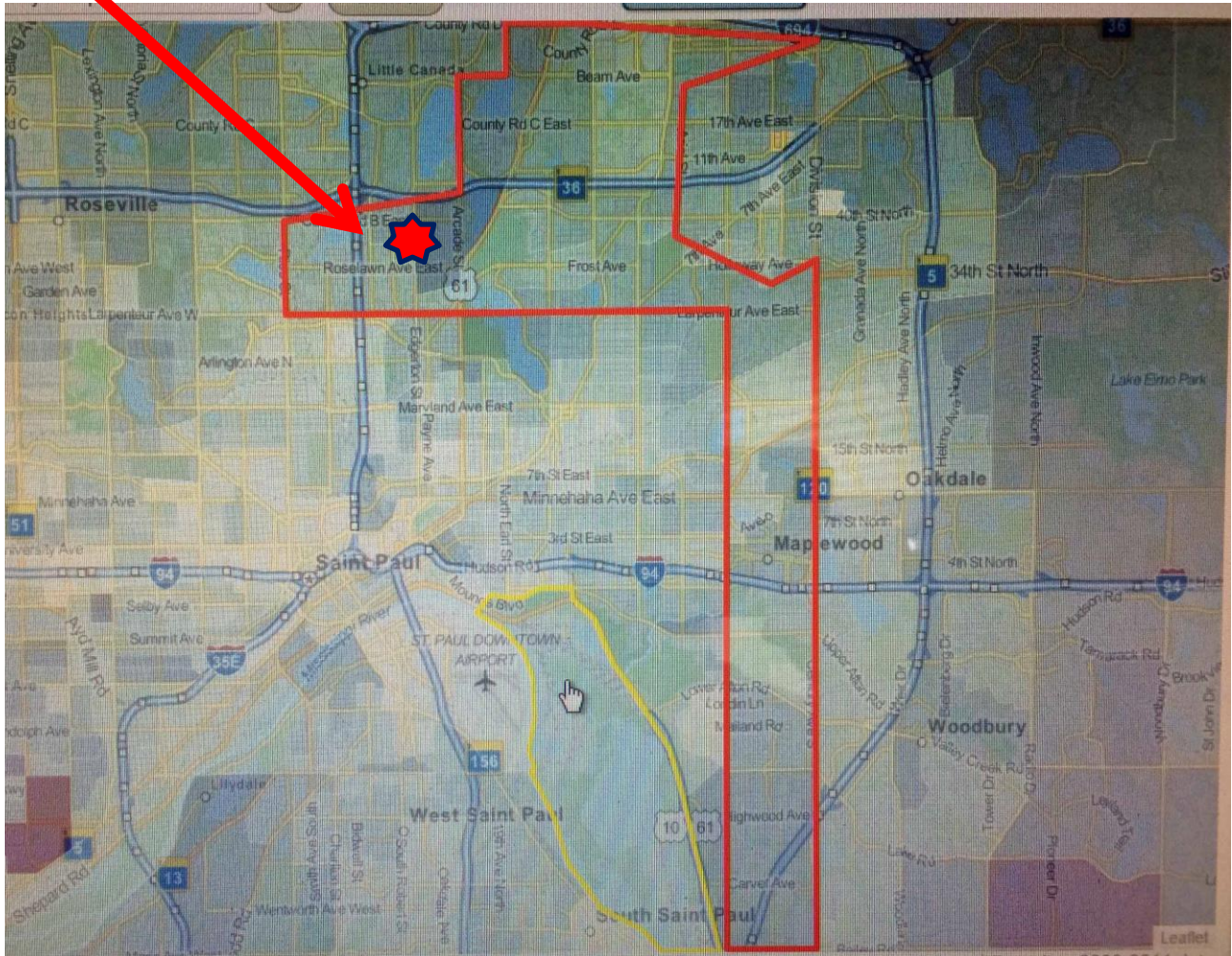
⁶ **Gladstone Fire Department**, see chronology in Appendix B.

⁷ A **501(c) organization**, is an American tax-exempt nonprofit organization. Section 501(c) of the United States Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. § 501(c)) provides that 29 types of nonprofit organizations are exempt from some federal income taxes.

started their own with the help of the folks from Little Canada and the folks from Gladstone. But the money that the cities or the form of government could pay for fire protection just wasn't there.

Capeder family had a farm on McMenamy and Roselawn, and it was the Capeder Bros Dairy Farm. They donated five or ten acres to the fire department to build a fire station.

2001 McMenemy Street



City of Maplewood
Outlined in Red

So they fundraised. They had their little community events. They had a carnival in this field where they wanted to build the station, to raise the money for it, and they eventually built a two-stall fire station. Then they put on a couple of additions from that. But the ladies would come up and paint. The firefighters themselves, they laid the block. They put the roof on, all with the trade skills that they brought out of the community. In fact, some community members that didn't want to be firefighters worked on the fire station to build it. They just didn't want to come to any of the emergencies.



When I left the interview committee that Sunday and went back home, I told my wife then that "I'm going to be this firefighter." She goes, "Well, why would you do that? You've already got a good job as an engineer." I said, "Oh,

this firefighter doesn't pay anything." She just kind of looked at me and says, "What are you going to do for nothing?" [Kate chuckles] She thought I was really making a crazy decision about being on the fire department, because she didn't understand, coming from Saint Paul, that this community, Maplewood, doesn't have a fire department.

KC: What was one of the first fires you remember?

EL: The first fire that I remember was a car fire, and it was in the wintertime, and Thor Bodsgard⁸ was the chief. He worked road construction. So he happened to be off that day, and it was just me and him. And he had to drive the truck, he had to pump the water, he had to get the fire hose, because I didn't know anything on how to help. But he just kept on saying, "You pull this over here and pull that over there," and we eventually put water on a car that was on fire next to a house. That was the first one, and I think about how simple those steps are now, based on what I've experienced in my career, and how befuddling it was that very first day.

KC: And it strikes me how critical it was to have volunteers that could show up during the day. Otherwise, there would be nobody to handle it.

EL: Yeah, they're termed "bedroom communities" — where the people get up in the morning and go to another city and work — no one around during the day. So there was plenty of people that would be around in the evenings and nights, on

⁸ **Thor Bodsgard** was a Parkside firefighter June 20, 19958 to July 3, 1985; with 27 years of service.

the weekends, but no one during the day. Very few people worked nights or weekends. That area was basically residential. There was a few business owners that allowed their personnel to come and be firefighters or that were firefighters themselves. The Duellmans had a gas station⁹ on Rice and Roselawn. They would come on fires, but they had to run the business also. So if it was a non-serious event, one would come. If it was a larger, more serious event, they would all come, and they would worry about the business later.

KC: Parkside is a small area. I know that there were four Duellmans on the department. How family oriented was Parkside? How many families were involved?

EL: Well, I think there was five or six, seven Svendsens¹⁰ at one time.

⁹ **Tom's Mobil Service** at 1935 Rice Street and Roselawn, Saint Paul, MN – 55113

¹⁰ **Chester "Dean" Svendsen** was a Parkside firefighter September 12, 1964; to January 24, 1993; with 29 years of service.

Lars Svendsen was a Parkside/Maplewood firefighter from December 1, 1962 to September 1, 1986; with 24 years of service.

Rick Svendsen was a Parkside firefighter from September 4, 1973, to January 15, 1995; with 22 years of service.

Ron Svendsen was a Parkside firefighter September 3, 1985, to November 1, 2002; with 17 years of service.

Rusty Svendsen was a Parkside/Maplewood firefighter from August 4, 1981, to November 1, 2002; April 10, 2000 to January 1, 2007; with 26 years of service.

Steve Svendsen was a Parkside firefighter in the late 1970s; with 2 years of service

Randy Svendsen was a Parkside/Maplewood firefighter from 1979, with 2 years of service.

Now Duellmans, you say there was four. Well, there was Tom¹¹, Kirk¹², and Joe¹³, Joe's wife –Amy¹⁴. There is another daughter, Brenda, whose husband¹⁵ was on the fire department, and another daughter, Linda, whose husband¹⁶ was on the fire department. So there was six of the Duellmans. So there was a lot of them. And then Leroy Hale – him and his son, Tom¹⁷ were on. Dittel – there was two Dittels¹⁸ on. So there were many families that had fathers and sons and cousins on the departments.

And I remember one time when I was the chief, one of the female spouses said, "You know, if you send in my entire family, you're going to wipe out the entire family if something went wrong." And that really was true. I didn't think of it in that light. I thought, "Well, I'm not sending anybody in to get hurt period." But you think about that when a mother is there and her husband and her three sons are all going in on this fire to help the community – that extra

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

¹² **Kirk Duellman** was a Parkside firefighter July 3, 1973 to November 1, 2002; with 29 years of service.

¹³ **Joe Duellman** was a Parkside firefighter June 9, 1982, to December 29, 2005; 23 years of service.

¹⁴ **Amy Schadt Duellman** was a Parkside firefighter from 1987 to July 2009; including being a lieutenant safety officer and a captain; with 22 years of service.

¹⁵ **Kerry Murphy** was a Parkside June 2, 1991 to June 9, 1997; with 6 years of service.

¹⁶ **Jeff Ramsey** was a Parkside firefighter.

¹⁷ **Tom Hale** was a Parkside firefighter July 10, 1981, to June 1, 2001; with 20 years of service.

¹⁸ **Mike Dittel** was a Parkside firefighter February 7, 1981, to February 28, 2011, with 30 years of service.

Larry Dittel was a charter member of the Parkside fire Department from 1958; with over 20 years of service.

stress that they were under, what they realized the potential of—that maybe we didn't necessarily look at the risk like that.

KC: We've talked with Amy Duellman, and she talks about how if she went in on a fire, her husband would not go in on the fire. They would take turns so that they were not put at risk, because they had young children. How did the rest of the department handle—

EL: Well, I don't know if that's a true statement. They may have tried to avoid doing that, and I know that they—one would watch the kids when one would come to the calls. And that was a little controversy there, because they would get two benefits, but they were doing the work of one person. And maybe at larger fires, they had something going between them, but as I was their chief, I knew that both of them would be inside working on the same fire. We didn't always have the luxury to say, "Well, you wait while your spouse is in there." You know, it comes down to life-saving—they would go in there and do that. But it's an educated and a trained risk we take. It's not going in there with total abandonment — we kind of have a clue on what's going on.

KC: Was there politics with these different families?

EL: It was all politics. In fact — I didn't have any relatives on the fire department at all, and at that time, you were elected. The captains were elected, the chiefs were elected, the assistant chiefs. So you had to run the organization — you had to be the leader, you had to be the disciplinarian, you had to be the accountant, you had to be the rule setter, and you had to get elected, too, to do the job. So if you — if a faction of people wanted something one way and you didn't go that way, you would lose that block of votes supposedly. I'd say, as we tried to make major changes, that got to be an un-issue. But I think ultimately, when it came down to doing the business, they did the right thing. In fact, I've had some people tell me

that I wasn't the most popular chief there. Yet if anything was going wrong, they wanted me to be there because I was competent in my duties. I may be too tough of a disciplinarian for them though.

KC: Can you remember some situations you had to discipline?

EL: Well, at one time, it was commonplace to have beer and drinks at the fire station all the time. I was the chief that eliminated that from being in the station, which — it's hard to get the members to vote for rules that would affect them. Because like I say, it was a social club, and sometimes in the evenings, you would go there after a meeting — you could sit around and have a beer or two with your friends and play cards and do all kinds of things. But ultimately, we had a responsibility to the community. We had some people that were on the department that didn't necessarily manage their consumption and would show up at calls. And we were all guilty of that, but we really were the professionals in the organization. When someone in that city called for a fire department, they didn't get a choice of who they were getting. They were getting us, and we had to be as good as we possibly could be — as professional, as sober, and as highly trained.

KC: Were there times you had to discipline people for going on a call after they had had too much to drink?

EL: Yeah, that and in speeding to the calls — people wanting to hurry up and get to the calls and they were running people off the roads, you know — trying to get onto the trucks and get to the emergency. They would cause an emergency on there. And there's all kinds of things that you've disciplined people for — not making the amount of calls, not acting appropriately at calls, refereeing heated discussions in meetings. There was a lot. I mean, I was there for twenty-two years, so a lot of those things happened. But yet, I will say that, at the end of the

day, when everybody was done with their discussions, we kind of agreed what was best for the department and for the community and we moved on as a group. It's not that successful in every place now. Times have changed, people are different. Different motivators for firefighters now than what there used to be. Out there, everybody just wanted to be there and help. Now people want to be there because there's the benefits. They didn't want to do anything for the benefits, so it was easy to manage a group of dedicated individuals.

KC: Talk about that issue of the beer in the station, because it sounds like the removal of the beer in the station was a significant change in the culture of the volunteer departments. And what year was that taken out?

EL: I would have – 1987? 1988? Something like that. It was there for an awful long time, and then there were still special occasions after that that they could have it. The spouses – after that was done, the spouses were probably the most vocal group saying thank you than some of the firefighters. There were some firefighters that just never understood the decision, why it was made that way, but everybody else really did.

We had the term for them “the three-two committee,” the group of guys that met there every single night — that talked about fire department, had a beer¹⁹ before they went home for supper. And there was issues that were decided there, or points of views discussed there. And it was the group that just came there after work — they didn't go to a local tavern or whatever. They came there and had their beer and made their discussions and went home. And sometimes people didn't like that, because if you weren't a member of the three-two committee, it didn't always go your way, or if you wanted to be an officer, you had to be part of that three-two committee.

¹⁹ “Three-two beer” or “3 point 2 brew”, is beer that contains 3.2% alcohol by weight.

But that change was difficult, because the fire service is probably more troubling to make changes. They're pretty staunch in how they've done things forever, or they just don't want to change — "Why do we have to? We're only volunteers. Why are they making these rules for us?" And yeah, we're only — we were called volunteers back then but, like I said, we were the professionals for the community, so we had to live up to that. And we were getting teased by the community — "They're just the guys that go up to the fire station and drink all the time. They're not going to save our lives or do this." And it really is not what we wanted it to be, but it's what we were.

KC: Was there an incident that inspired you to remove the beer? Were the other departments doing it or —

EL: Yeah, we were all doing it, some sooner than others. There was a couple of surrounding departments who got into trouble. Some of their members got into trouble driving emergency vehicles when they'd had too much to drink, and you know, the cops were telling us, "You really got to be careful. This is something that we understand you've always done, but it's not the right thing to do." The city administrators were talking to us about what is right. Our peers were telling us, "Man, you know, we really got to fix this." Almost every department had a pop machine in it that you would put a quarter in, you'd push a button, and out would come a can of beer. [Kate laughs] And there are still fire departments like that in other parts of the country, parts of the state. I believe all fire departments in the immediate Metro area are zero-tolerance now. It's a fact in Vadnais Heights that you can't even come home from work, have a beer, and then go to a call. If you had that beer, you just can't go. It's zero-tolerance.

KC: So do you still have some fee for — well, they're not really volunteers. I mean, do you still have some firefighters that are per call?

EL: Paid-on-call. Yes, in Vadnais Heights, and there are some in Maplewood, also. And it's funny how that term "paid-on-call" is. Before, we were volunteers, and we were actually getting paid, and there was a benefit program, because we couldn't afford insurance. So some of the money we had we kept in the fund for a fraternity fund that if someone got hurt – we didn't have workers comp at the time. If someone broke an arm fighting the fire, they were just out. So we had this fund that started to pay for these injuries and whatever. There was no retirement fund in the beginning, so this fund that we had – we kept on building that fund, and no one was taking off, and then we started buying insurance so we didn't need this fund anymore. And if someone got paid out of this fund, the IRS wanted to know about it. Because we were organized with a leader – with rules and bylaws and policies, a requirement to meet expectations of the organization – they were termed employees. So it may have been Parkside Volunteer Fire Department, but we were employees. So when we got paid, eventually we started getting a couple of bucks a fire call. I think in 1979, I think we got four dollars for every fire call you went to. We got paid in November, and everybody used that money for Christmas. But we had to pay taxes on that, so we had to do 1099²⁰s for everybody, and pay the taxes. We all try – this is a statewide effort. We tried fighting that. We were just volunteers, but to the tax code, we were employees. So we had to pay the taxes. And then we started looking at, well, we really are employees, so what other employee benefits do we get? And I still don't think we're there yet, but... [Kate laughs]

KC: Do your paid-on-call firefighters get any benefits in Vadnais Heights?

²⁰ **IRS Form 1099** is used to report various types of income other than wages, salaries, and tips (for which Form W-2 is used instead). Examples of reportable transactions are amounts paid to a non-corporate independent contractor for services.

EL: Well, in Maplewood they get the same. They get an hourly pay. They do that in Vadnais Heights also, and a retirement contribution in the 457 plan. We do have insurance now, workers comp, and so they're taken care of if they ever would become injured.

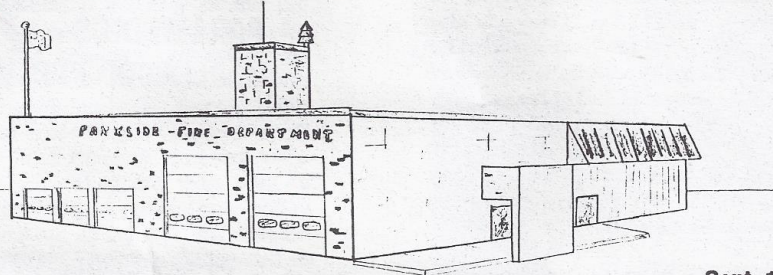
KC: So you were in a leadership position when these changes were coming in, and you had to institute them and deliver the bad news to some of your volunteers that they were going to have to pay taxes on this money.

Parkside Emblems



Parkside Volunteer Fire Dept., 2001 McMenemy Rd., Maplewood, MN 55117

PARKSIDE INSIGHT



Volume IV

Sept. 1994

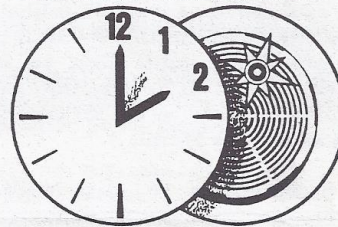
CHIEF'S CORNER

By: Ed Leier

As this article is written a contract with the city of Maplewood has not been signed. We have gotten over all the hurdles with them and thought that they would sign, but at the City Council Meeting, Councilman Carlson added another page to the contract asking us to agree to a merger or municipal fire department by January 1, 1996. We agreed to language in the contract that said we will meet with city officials to discuss options but will not agree to anything until all terms are discussed and agreed upon. This apparently is not acceptable to the City. The membership has instructed me not to sign such a contract on such broad based terms as "there will be a merger" or "there will be a municipal fire department". If we can get by this hurdle, the rest of the terms and the dollar amount are acceptable to us.

We would like to assure the public that Parkside Fire Department will provide protection and service to the area even without the contract for as long as we can afford to.

CHANGE YOUR CLOCK



CHANGE YOUR BATTERY

Parkside Fire Department would like to remind everyone to CHANGE THE BATTERIES in your smoke detectors.

If you have a problem doing this, please contact Ed Leier at 776-0174 and a firefighter will come to your home and check it or install your smoke detector for you.

Over the years Parkside area has changed from open fields to commercial or residential structures. So have the number and type of calls:

In 1991 PFD responded to 411 calls; in 1992 437 calls; in 1993 466 calls; in 1994 we're expecting about 488.

Of these 68% are medic calls - the others being fires, mutual aid, explosions or false alarms.

PARKSIDE'S FLEET

Parkside owns three fire trucks, all three are "pumpers" which can carry water as well as pump it from another source. Pumpers are referred to as #137, #139 and #136. There is also a "chief's pickup" #135, and an "ALS unit" referred to as Medic 3, which is an advanced life support vehicle.

Pumper #137 is the first unit responding to structure fires in our area, then #139, #136 and generally #135 responds as well.

#139 responds first for any mutual aid call and followed by any other vehicles the other department needs.

Serving as a rescue truck, in addition to its pumping capabilities #136 is the truck which responds first to any vehicle accidents. It houses the "Jaws of Life". #137, and/or #139 is sent if needed, as well as Medic 3.

Medic 3 responds to any medical emergency as well as most other calls that come in, in case medical treatment of any sort is needed.

#135 goes out whenever a command post needs to be set up, delivery of equipment, supplies or additional personnel. It carries medical equipment and is used as a backup to Medic 3. A communication system is housed in #135, #139 and #137.



HELP PREVENT CRIME

**POLICE
FIRE
PARAMEDICS 911
MAPLEWOOD PUBLIC SAFETY**

PFD AUXILIARY

The auxiliary is an important part of the fire department. In the beginning their main function was to raise money to purchase items that were needed for the firefighters or to stock the kitchen or squad room. Many Parkside area residents have participated in fundraisers such as style shows, bake sales, silver plate dinners, spaghetti dinners, and taste tests. With the money from these events the auxiliary has purchased items for the fire fighters such as a display board, jackets, Resusci-Annie and training tapes. The past few years the auxiliary has donated caps, mittens and Christmas bags to the schools for the students that were in need of them. The auxiliary is now a support group for the firefighters and does what is necessary when called upon.

AUXILIARY OFFICERS

President - Jan Svendsen
Vice President - Brenda Murphy
Secretary - Deb Monk
Sec/Treas - Shelly Mallory
Publicity - Colleen Spangenberg
Scrap Book - Irene Schultz
Luncheon Committee -
Audrey Duellman, Jean Schadt,
Maggie Smith, Dawn Knabe

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A FIREFIGHTER??

by: Ed Leier, Chief

Any person (male or female) that has an interest in becoming a member of the fire department can get an application for membership. The interview committee will review all the applicants, interview them and make a recommendation to the Board. If the recommendation is positive, the applicants will be sent to St. Paul Ramsey Hospital for a complete physical. They are then sent to White Bear Lake where they perform an agility test. If they pass the agility test, they will be issued gear and all the equipment needed to respond to calls. There is also a one year probation period. They will receive a book explaining bylaws, policies and the necessary information for them to get on their way in the Parkside Fire Department.

During the first year the new firefighters will have a person oversee and assist them. They must successfully complete Firefighter I, a 29 week course, and have answered a sufficient number of fire calls. The Board will review all the candidates on a six month and yearly basis. If the firefighter has done what is required and is deemed an asset to the department, the Board brings the candidate to the membership for final approval.

Further requirements are that they must pass a complete Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) course and become Hazardous Material Operations Certified. Both must be completed within three years.

Parkside Fire Department is recruiting firefighters. We have gone through some difficult times but there will be a fire department and we need volunteers. Applications can be obtained from any member of the department or by contacting the Fire Marshall at 770-4546.

1958

PARKSIDE VOLUNTEER
FIRE DEPARTMENT

36

YEARS OF SERVICE

1994

"YOUR NEIGHBOR MAY BE LEADING TWO LIVES....."



Plugger softball: where relief pitchers really are firemen.

OUR MEMBERS.....

The following is a list of the volunteer members of Parkside Fire Department and their position in the department.

Ed Leier - Chief
Rusty Svendsen - Deputy Chief
Keith Smith - Battalion Chief
Chuck Peterson - 2nd Battalion Chief
Tom Spangberg - Chief Engineer
Paul Nolan - Captain & Board (Finance)
Tom Schultz - Captain & Board (Secretary)
Dave Severson - Board (Secretary)
Tom Hale - Board (Asst. Sec/Treas)
Bill Knabe - Lieutenant & Safety Officer
John Monk - Captain
Gordy Mallory - Captain
Doug Johnson - Captain
Mike Smith - Captain
Additional Firefighters:
Tom Duellman **Kirk Duellman**
Rick Svendsen **Rocky Olson**
Ray DeVine **Mike Dittel**
Joe Duellman **Tom Schoenecker**
Mark Kolasa **Ron Twardowski**
Ron Svendsen **Amy Duellman**
Greg Lackner **John Wegleitner**
Steve Skok **Jason Schultz**
Kerry Murphy **John Kratz**
Byron Narloch **Todd Neidermayer**
Sean McVay **Jennifer Corcoran**
Bryan Linn

FIRE PREVENTION OPEN HOUSE



Safety Is For Everyone

Tues., October 11, 1994

5:30 to 9:00 PM

**Parkside Fire Station
2001 McMenemy Road**

- ☛ **Fire Truck Rides**
- ☛ **"Sparky" The Fire Dog**
- ☛ **Fire Prevention House**
- ☛ **Informative Handouts**
- ☛ **NSD Electrical Demos**
- ☛ **Free Raffles/Giveaways**
- ☛ **Free Refreshments**

FIRE PREVENTION AT SCHOOLS

In previous years the students from St. Jeromes and Edgerton Schools have come to the fire station for fire prevention week but this year the members of the department will be going directly to the schools. The schedule is below:

Monday October 10, 1994 - Edgerton School

9:30 AM Grade 2 60 kids
10:15AM Grade 3 60 kids
11:00AM Grade 4 61 kids
11:45AM Grade 5 64 kids
1:15PM Kindergarten - 20 kids
2:00PM Grade 6 60 kids

Tuesday October 11, 1994 - Edgerton School

9:30 AM Kindergarten - 50 kids
10:15AM Grade 1 60 kids

Thursday Oct. 13, 1994 - St. Jeromes School

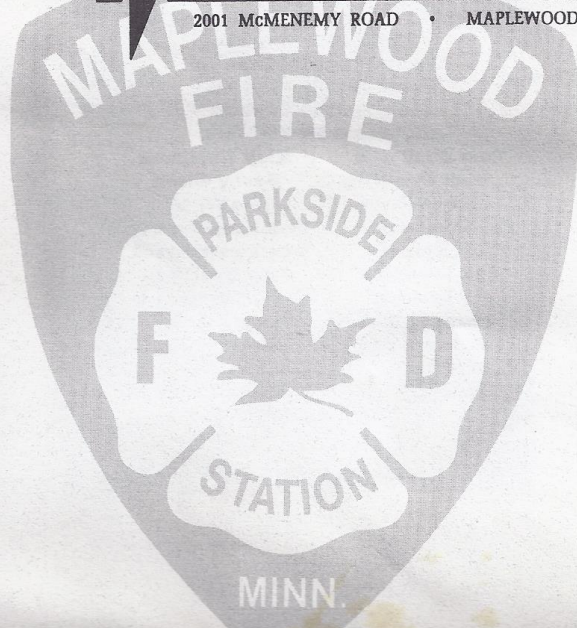
9:15 AM Kindergarten - 18 kids
Grade 1 26 kids
10:00AM Grade 2 29 kids
Grade 3 32 kids
10:45AM Grade 4 28 kids
Grade 5 23 kids
1:10 PM Grades 6-8 70 kids (1Hr)



PARKSIDE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT INC.

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EL: Well, yes, I was in a leadership position, but whatever we did, we voted on it. So I was the fire chief, chairman of the board. The membership made all the rules, so we would present an issue and it was to be introduced into our bylaws. So you would have to read the policy you wanted to make. It would stay – we'd follow Robert's Rules of Order. It would stay for thirty days layover, then the membership would meet again. They discussed it in the past thirty days and at all them three-two committees and at the birthday parties with the families that had seven or eight firefighters. It was all discussed there. Come back at the next meeting and if it would pass the membership vote, then it would become a rule. So I made probably no rules. I tried to direct and politic and give guidance on how – what we should do based on liabilities and whatever, kind of act as a leader, but I was no dictator there.

BJ: Well, going back a little bit — when we were talking about the volunteers versus the current fully paid firefighters — Do you feel that the volunteer firefighters were more dedicated because they were doing it on their own time, versus now, where I think you've hinted that they're looking for the pay and for the benefits? Now there's a big difference between the training probably that the volunteers had or that the paid per call had and the training they have now, but do you feel that the volunteer was a more dedicated group of individuals?

EL: Well, maybe my story would tell you what my opinion is. 3M²¹, the center in Maplewood, was protected by Maplewood Fire, but they also wanted Saint Paul to protect them too, because they didn't necessarily think Maplewood was big enough to do that. So we would show up at the 3M buildings, and, if there was a fire there, Saint Paul would be there. I would have a crew that would carry in a fan and bring an ax and some tarps. They would go in, set the fans, set the tarps, come back in, and Saint Paul is still trying to find their fan. And our crews would go back in there again, because they did it for passion. Saint Paul did it because that was their job. Our folks were running in and out. These folks — "Well, I'm going to get there sooner or later." Not that Saint Paul was bad, but these guys were — guys and gals — were motivated to do their job, so yeah, they were passionate about it.

When they took someone down in the ambulance and the firefighter sat there and held their neighbor's hand, they cared about them. I don't see that in the professional departments I've been in. They kind of lose that a little bit. We would show up on ambulance calls and take someone down to the hospital. The next day, that fire crew, or members of that crew, were over there shoveling that guy's driveway or cutting his grass if they knew he was in the hospital. So they cared about the people, and they just weren't a number. So I think it was a resource. It's a shame things went the way they did, but yet, the level of service

²¹ The **3M Company**, formerly known as the Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company, is an American multinational conglomerate corporation with headquarters in Maplewood, Minnesota. The company was started in 1902 in Two Harbors before moving to the east side of Saint Paul around 1910. In 1952, they bought land in New Canada Township (later Maplewood) between McKnight Road and Century Avenue to allow expansion for their research laboratories and headquarters. In 2014 the 3M Center of 475 acres has over 50 buildings and the company employs over 88,000 worldwide, produces more than 55,000 products. In 2013, Maplewood and 3M announced a joint decision to locate a Maplewood fire station in the northwest corner of the 3M Center.

could not be provided the way they did it twenty years ago or thirty years ago. There's just way too much training, way too much responsibility, way too much commitment for people that did it as a hobby or a passion. Now people are working in their job. Husbands and wives and kids don't play out in the front yard anymore. They have to be taken to the arena or to this gymnastics program on the other side of town, so you're running cars back and forth. There's no one sitting at home to watch the kids when the calls come in. So it kind of graduated beyond the volunteer, the paid on-call firefighters. But they definitely were passionate.

BJ: Do you think there would have been any alternative other than the route that was taken to go to the fully paid, professional, live-at-the-station-during-your-shift type of firefighter that we have today? Was there any alternative that you could have foreseen?

EL: [pause] You know, in 1997, I was probably one of the leaders of not going the way it went. There was nothing wrong with the level of service that we were providing back then, although twenty years later, I don't think we could have maintained it. It would have happened sooner or later, but I do believe there would have been a better outcome if they went about it in a different way. You know, they were closing up stations, and now Parkside is closed. But the people in that community built that station²². Firefighters lived in that community responded to that station. Because the City of Maplewood couldn't do it, so they did it. Now, all of a sudden, the City of Maplewood is doing it, and they decide to close the station and kind of left the people unprotected in a sense. But yet,

²² **Parkside Fire Department**, 2001 McMenemy Street, Maplewood



Parkside Fire Department
2001 McMenemy Street, Maplewood

they now have people full-time in the fire station.²³ So is the response time the same? It probably is. But I think it took a lot of the wind out of the people's sails that still live in that community, that still remember putting that brick in the fire station. Driving by it and seeing the station now closed. [If there is a fire,] waiting for the [truck to come from] the Gladstone area

You know, the railroads are gone there so they're not stopping traffic by the railroad trains anymore. Got better roads, we have auto-aid with other communities — those are some things we didn't have before. So all in all, I think that professionally I will tell you the level of fire protection is the same. The heart and soul is not there, or the community buy-in.

²³ **Maplewood Fire Station 2** is located at 1955 Clarence Street

BJ: When you say the community fire service is still there — what it appears is when they started to bring in the firefighters needing medical training, driving the ambulances, becoming first responders²⁴, EMTs,²⁵ and paramedics²⁶, that set kind of a different objective for the fire department. I think it's like eighty percent of the calls today for Maplewood are medical related, which certainly shows the need to have people more available. What if the fire department had not gone along with the use of responding to medical emergencies, going back into the 1980s, and remained just strictly as firefighting? Do you think that the volunteer fire department could have survived? A paid-per-call fire department could have survived?

²⁴ **First Responder**, which is a generic term referring to the first medically trained responder to arrive on scene. They have more skill than someone who is trained in basic first aid but they are not a substitute for advanced medical care rendered by emergency medical staff. First responder courses cover cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), automated external defibrillator usage, spinal and bone fracture immobilization, oxygen and, in some cases, emergency childbirth as well as advanced first aid and are often one or two weeks.

²⁵ **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.

²⁶ **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.

EL: Certainly the call volume would be twenty percent of what it is now. Is that a benefit? Probably to the paid-on-call staff. Instead of making that thousands of calls that Parkside did down to a hundred or two hundred — one a week or two a week instead of two a day or three a day. The workload would be better for the firefighters. However, the community would have not received the level of care without them doing the EMS²⁷. The person down the street from the fire station is having a heart attack, and the ambulance is coming from where? The fire department doesn't do it. Somewhere else that ambulance is coming, so it takes twenty minutes and there's a fire station right at the end of the block. How come they don't come? They're — they have some training. Could they come? And that's how it started — “Yeah, we could. We could come.”

BJ: So during those negotiations or those discussions about whether the fire department wanted to take on the medical, were there discussions about using private ambulances or other ambulance services instead of the fire department, which was just down the block?

EL: Yeah, back in the early Seventies, that's when Maplewood went. And Maplewood was a forefront being police paramedics. Police being full-time, firefighters being EMTs and supporting the police — that was new age, new trend in the entire country. Dick Schaller²⁸ at that time kind of brought that [police paramedics] in, and it was a great program when we had 20,000 people, 15,000 people. Then all of a sudden, we started training people to 911, and now

²⁷ **Emergency medical services**—EMS are a type of emergency service dedicated to providing out-of-hospital acute medical care, transport to definitive care, and other medical transport to patients with illnesses and injuries which prevent the patient from transporting themselves.

²⁸ **Richard Schaller** was a Gladstone firefighter May 11, 1954, to January 11, 1982; with 27 years of service. was appointed police officer July 7, 1956; promoted sergeant in 1958; captain July 1, 1960; chief October 1961; and retired April 29, 1982.

people call 911 for everything. In fact, I mentioned this earlier when we were talking, that the people – I know if we have a medical call at 7:00 o'clock in the morning, it's probably from an elderly person who's been sick all night but didn't want to wake anybody up. Don't want to disturb, bother anybody. The calls at 8:00, 9:00, 10:00, 11:00 o'clock at night, somebody's got a headache and they want service right now. So things are changing, but that's the – the EMS – I didn't mean to miss your question, but the EMS is not what caused the breakup of the fire service.

It was hazardous materials, and it was 3M wanting the City of Maplewood to form a hazmat²⁹ team and giving the city a bunch of money to form a hazmat team. And we said, the fire service, that we couldn't necessarily do hazmat, EMS, and fire, and be the way we're doing things – that we needed more staffing, full-time people. And that kind of started saying, well – the city was committed to providing 3M with hazmat. It kind of led us down this path that we were at loggerheads all the time over who's going to dictate the level of service and who's going to pay for what. I believe in 1997 the budget for all three fire departments – 140 firefighters, five stations – was under a million dollars. It's over four now, so...

But I will say – and I know the people over there [at Maplewood Fire Department] as the chief – they are a professional fire department. Times have changed, and all departments are going through the same thing with the hiring people to be there as a job, not motivating them because of the passion to be there.

²⁹ **Hazmat**—Hazardous Material.

KC: What were some of the fires that you remember?

EL: Oh, I remember the Gulden's fire. Steve Lukin³⁰, who is now the chief of Maplewood, and I were working together on a line going into the basement. [We heard a sound,] and it was the piano falling through the floor into the basement.

KC: Near you?

EL: Just on the other end from us, yeah. And how dark and smoky it was, and trying to go in there and trying to find the fire. And we just couldn't get at it — we had a limited water supply.

I remember another house on Keller Lake. It was a remodel and there was a house that they were going to add onto on all four sides, so they put the outer walls up with the house on the inside. It had no insulation or no sheet rock, and it caught on fire. And in about two hours, the entire structure was just down on the ground.

I remember grass fires. I remember what — I think, it was a Saturday evening. We had eleven grass fires in that area across Highway-35-E, from the fire station. And what we actually did is that we caught the kids. The firefighters went down there and laid in the grass and waited for the kids to come through and light it again. And they caught them.

KC: So you knew it was kids that were —

EL: Yes, yeah.

KC: Were starting it.

³⁰ **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.

EL: Yeah, many house fires. I remember one time —it was another day fire. I was a firefighter and three chiefs were there, so the four of us went. Well, I was the worker bee. Those three were in management. [Kate laughs] And I never worked so hard at a fire.



Al Schadt

KC: [laughs] Did they – had they forgotten how to –

EL: No. [laughs] The chief went in with me and we went down these basement steps, and we were underneath this table and we were fighting this fire. We come back out and I'm cleaning up the hose and I'm tired, and — Amy Duellman— Amy Schadt Duellman's father, Al Schadt came up, who was the fire marshal. He says, "Leier, where were you down there in that basement?" I said, "I remember going down the steps and I went off to the right, got around, and then I got underneath a cabinet or a table." He says, "And you sat there and fought that fire underneath that table?" "Yep." He says, "Where was —" It was Bodsgard that was there. "Where is Bodsgard?" I said, "Bodsgard is just around the corner trying to get me more hose, but I couldn't go any farther." He says, "Come on down here. I want to show you something," so we go back downstairs. And then the top of this table is where the guy reloaded all of his bullets, and there was a five-pound keg of black powder that I'm underneath this fire fighting the fire. It was above my head.

KC: Oh, my. [laughs]

EL: Cans flying, I don't know. They all run together I guess.

KC: Was there ever a time that you said, "You know, this is really dangerous. I'm not going to do this. What about my family?"

EL: No. In fact, I try to counsel people now. I didn't always make the right decisions. I may have been too involved in the three-two committee at times. I may have been too passionate about fires, and I wouldn't say that I put my family first. I put the fire department first, then my job, then my family, and it should have been a different order. And my family suffered for that. And I knew other firefighters that wouldn't go anywhere on the weekend because they knew there was no one around in town, and they were going to answer calls. And I tell our firefighters now that, you know, "That's not the way to do things. Family has to come first. Live up to those commitments." And I tried to convince the cities that we can't expect these people to be around all the time. They're employees just like you. They just — this is what they do, this is what you do. And you can just get by with the level of professionalism, a level of service you want waiting for them to come from home. It just doesn't work.

KC: So I hear you recognizing that family needs to come first, but also saying when family is put first, they don't have enough time left over to have that same dedication as a firefighter?

EL: [A person has to choose their] priority.

Do you get up from Christmas dinner at your house when you have all the relatives there, and you're sitting there carving the ham over Christmas, and you're about to unwrap presents, and your pager goes off? Do you go to the fire station and answer the call, or do you take care of your family? We, as the city and as the management of the fire department, sure hope to hell that you come to the fire station, but yet, I know in my heart maybe the little kids want you there to open up presents. So the little kids, your spouses, your relatives, they all give too. They've sat there and the spouse had entertained the kid — "Oh, we're going to wait until..." you know, the dad or the wife comes back from the fire

call before they open up presents. So the kids missed it. “Well, how come dad can’t come to my softball game?” “Well, it’s on Monday night, and you know every Monday night is fire department training night.” So they put up with that loss also, and I see a lot of people do that. And on the one hand, I’m glad they do. But on my personal side, I wish there was a better way.

BJ: But at the same time I’ve seen videos from Parkside that there were many Christmas parties, birthday parties. And I’ve heard many times it was like a separate family, that the kids were brought into it, that maybe they wouldn’t have that community today, the community for celebrating events. So, some of the loss of personal time with your family was made up for by the gaining of a new community group spirit, where the kids could see and interact with other people also? Did that become a part of your family?

EL: That was the intent of those. We used to have what we call the Court of Awards. And it was a dinner that we would invite firefighters, retired firefighters, and their spouses. It was an all-expense-paid dinner, including drinks. And it was our way to make up for some of that. We had Christmas parties that, if there was an extra kid tossed in here or there, who cared? So if your nephews or the neighbor kid was down and out and wanted to come to the Christmas party, “Yeah, come on.” And we raised money for gifts, and we had those social functions. We had dances of the fire station as part of the community. There were some of those great times, but I don’t know if they were in place of or if they justified all the other times we were gone. Because I know I hear my daughter, I hear my ex-wife, telling me about how troubling it was when I’d leave in those things. But everybody knew. The [extended] family would come over to our [home] – they would never park in the driveway, because they knew I had to get

out — if my car was out on the street — because they knew I was going to leave for these calls. And that was just the way things went.

So it was good. My daughter is still — she has a picture of herself sitting in the fire station wearing my helmet, and she is little. And she still keeps that, and she's very proud of me being a firefighter. But she's also told me, "You know, I wish you would have been at some of my ballgames." You know what? They were Monday nights. That was training night. So yeah, we didn't lose everything — we didn't make bad sacrifices all the time — but there's always the good and bad with an organization like that that runs twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

KC: What was it like when women started wanting to be on the department? Because it sounds like a *gooooood old boys club*...

EL: It really was a good old boys club, and some of them — the firefighters — didn't want females there. I was in a leadership position when that happened, and I even had firefighters' spouses raise concerns with me about having females on the fire department. Was that jealousy? Was that — well, maybe jealousy is the only word for that, but yeah, it raised lots of concerns. Could they do the job? Train them, they can do the job.

Sexual harassment issues. I mean, it was a guys' club, and there were language out there that you probably wouldn't use out there on the playground or in school with the kids, but it was commonplace there. And how is that going to be taken?

Going through first aid training and all of a sudden now you're practicing first aid techniques on your partner and she's a female, and not your girlfriend,

spouse, or anybody else. How is that going to be there? You know, and there was some old theories that stood in the way of that.

KC: Now at Parkside, the first woman was Amy Duellman who has a long family history of fire service.

EL: Mm-hmm. [yes]

KC: Her dad was the fire marshal for years. Because she came with the knowledge of fire service, did that make the transition any easier?

EL: No. She probably knew the firefighters socially more than any of the fire skills. Her fire skills isn't what got her hired. Her social skills and her passion to be a firefighter is what got her hired. She knew the guys, she hung around with the guys, they knew her family. She was married to the Duellmans when she got on.

KC: Yes, she was.

EL: I didn't know if she – yeah, I don't remember. But I know she dated a few other firefighters before she dated Joe and ended up married to Joe. But there's been a few females after that. Some have stayed for a while. Some left right away. It takes a different individual female to stay on in a good old boys club.

KC: It's an interesting dance, because you can't be one of the good old boys and yet you have to become part of the club.

EL: Yeah. It is extremely difficult. But all in all, the guys there are passionate about helping people, and they're protectors — they're caregivers— so they would never do anything to hurt. They would just forget their place. They'd always think they were in the locker, and you know, "Maybe you're not in the men's locker room when you're standing here."

KC: Did the – who had a harder time, the older men or the younger men when the women started coming on?

EL: Well, remember it was strong tradition, fathers and sons. So if the older men thought it was bad, their sons did, too.

KC: Ah. So it was pretty much by family.

EL: Mm-hmm. [yes]

KC: So the Duellmans obviously supported it. Did the – some of the other families obviously didn't support women coming on.

EL: Well, we will say that there was a group of Duellmans and there was a group of Svendsens. There wasn't always one mindset. They separated from themselves also, so there may have been one or two Duellmans that supported one thing, three or four that didn't. Same thing with the Svendsens. [Kate laughs] And I don't know this political answer, really. It was a mixed bag but, at that time, we also made a change that the membership did not vote on members anymore. There was a hiring committee and we took that decision away from them, because they voted and it may have been Amy that went through a couple of votes to get on and didn't make it. And we were advised by our attorney that, when you do these things, there's got to be a reason why you're turning them down. Because they're female or because they are a different race or color is not the reason, and, if you turn one down, you will lose in a court of law. So we kind of had to go through that policy change and said that the chiefs will do the hiring – they will do the interviewing. I think there was an interview committee who would make a recommendation to the chief, and then the chief would put them on.



Amy Duehlman

1987

KC: Do you know about what year that –

EL: About the year Amy got on. [1987]

KC: [laughs] Was your organization at Parkside just a White organization, or did you bring in people of different color tones, different cultures?

EL: We had people there of different cultures. We had some Germans, we had some Italians. [Kate laughs] We had no Black Americans, we had Native Americans, I don't think any Hispanic. But the majority were White males.

KC: [laughs] In 1997, when the departments started coming together, I believe –you were in charge of training. What were some of the things that you did to help integrate these three volunteer departments to become one Maplewood department?



Joel Hewitt

EL: Well, I applied to be the Maplewood chief, and there was a decision made there would not be an inside person. So they hired Joel Hewitt³¹, who was the chief of Roseville, who was our neighbor of Parkside to the west. And I've known Joel for many, many years. We taught school together, firefighting classes together. So when he got to be the chief, I thought, "You know, I either got to make something out of it or quit." I was still disappointed on how it all came down. But he asked me if I would be a chief, be a district chief — still run the Parkside [District], and then take over training for the entire department. I had the ability to train, maybe — I do a lot of training, I still do today — so I decided I would do that. That was in January, and then, in April, I took a leave of absence because my job forced me north.

KC: So was this full time then, if you were a district chief and doing training? Or this is still a pay per — it's an adjunct?

EL: Right, I had a salary of \$700 a year. I think something like that. So it was an easy decision. Well, no, it really wasn't an easy decision because we were there, remember, for passion. So I was passionate about Maplewood Fire, and I wanted to see it work. I wanted to be in the decision box, because I wanted to protect the guys at Parkside and what we stood for. Before that, before the consolidation,

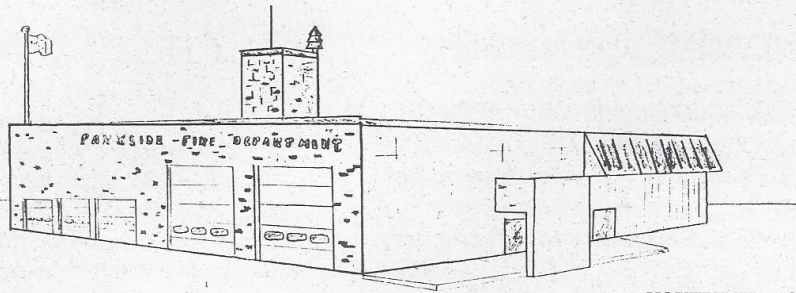
³¹ **Joel Hewitt** was a Roseville firefighter 1976 to 2004 (including 7 years as chief); Maplewood Fire Chief Department 1996 to 2000; St. Anthony Fire Chief 2000 to 2004; Moorhead Fire Chief 2004 through 2010. He was first fire chief of Maplewood Fire Department; and initially had no personnel or stations until the 3 Fire Departments agreed to consolidate that became effective January 1, 1997.

there was a Joint Chiefs' Council — which chiefs from all the departments in Maplewood formed— and I was chairman of that for about four years through this negotiations of consolidation — takeover. Whatever term you want to use. So I was kind of the leading guy that opposed it, but yet I thought, “You know, okay, it’s over with.” I lost that fight, but I still wanted to be on the fire department, and, if my job at the State wouldn’t have sent me north, I’d have probably stayed there for a long time. But it just – it was time to go, so I did. And somebody else in that area took my job. I don’t know who took over the training.

KC: What did you do when you were up in – you were in Grand Forks?

EL: Well, I retired in 1988 from the Milwaukee Railroad. I did eighteen years there and they were bought out by another railroad, and I was a protected individual so they offered me vested retirement and five years’ salary to leave. So I did. And I really hung around Parkside for a couple years, being the chief and answering calls and doing stuff, and then I went to work for the State. I worked for the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, and I managed the hazmat teams, the bomb squads, and the State’s response to disasters and emergencies. In April of 1997, the dikes in East Grand Forks broke, and the entire town was underwater and evacuated. They had 2,008 single family homes and 2,000 of them were underwater, so I stayed there and helped, representing the State. And I stayed there helping the City and the County kind of recover from that. Well, they went through a lot, as you can imagine, and the mayor asked Governor Carlson at the time if he would assign me there for a couple years to help them rebuild, including the police and the fire department, because both the police chief and the fire chief retired and moved out of town. They lost their home. They had nothing to stay. They were old enough to retire, and they left.

PARKSIDE INSIGHT



VOLUME XIV

NOVEMBER 1997

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

BRENDA BARTEL and ART SPRINGER come to Parkside from Ohio where they were both members of a fire department. Brenda, originally from Minnesota, is a paramedic and Art works in construction. They are anticipating setting a wedding date soon. **WELCOME and CONGRATULATIONS!!**



Newly Married
Mark Kolasa & Amy Feldkamp
June 14th
Doug Johnson & Laurel Anderson
June 20th



SILVER PLATE DINNER

Tension was high as the last 3 people still eligible for the big money had to make a decision, split or go for it. "Go for it" the crowd shouted, and they did! Winner of \$100.00 was J. Hillenbrand; \$300.00 went to Roger and Diane Beran and \$1000.00 was won by Steve and Judy Harms.

CHIEF'S CORNER

BY: Rusty Svendsen

The "Chief's Corner" segment has always been written by Chief Leier, but since Ed has been appointed Public Safety Director in East Grand Forks, he has resigned as 3rd District Chief. I wish him all the best in his new position.

I was appointed as District 3 Chief in October by Chief Hewitt. The Battalion Chief's position that I held will be filled in the next couple of months.

Parkside, or Station 3 as we are now referred to, is also responding to all day calls in Station 2 (Gladstone) and Station 4 (south East County Line) areas from 6:00AM to 5:00PM. The city has two new pumpers on order and we will find out shortly where they will go.

There is a strange silence in the Parkside area. No longer will the fire siren be sounded when a call comes in. It was previously silenced during the hours from 9:00PM to 7:00AM. Due to the increase of calls on the day side and many neighbor complaints and petitions, the decision was made to shut the siren off completely. Please drive carefully when responding to a call.

I would like to thank all of those that helped out at the Silver Plate Dinner. A special thanks to the L'Allier family, Jim Bodsgard, Susan Zwieg and Joel & Lila Hewitt for helping serve when a call came in just as we were beginning to serve dinner. Thank you also to those of you that helped with hot dogs on Halloween.

Keep Up The Great Work!

So I became the first public safety director in Minnesota that was fire-based. So I managed both the police department and the fire department for two years as an intergovernmental agency transfer from the State to them. They paid all my housing costs, all my transportation costs. So I took a two-year leave of absence from the City of Maplewood to do that. Then I came back —and I just



Vadnais Heights Fire Chief
Ed Leier
2014

kind of lost my passion for Maplewood and the fire service— and I was promoted at the State and I ran a bunch of other programs until 2004. Then in 2004, I went to Vadnais Heights as the full time fire chief. So my career from 1978-79 as a paid on-call volunteer firefighter, to thirty-five years later I've been public safety director, full time fire chief, assistant director for Homeland Security Emergency Management — all from that beginning that someone gave me at Parkside to be a firefighter. So I owe a lot to Parkside.

KC: Did the Parkside get real involved with hazmat, or was that something that happened after Maplewood took over? Was that one of the reasons that Maplewood wanted the departments all more tightly under their control?

EL: Well, I happened to be running the State hazmat teams when Maplewood wanted to form a hazmat team, and their emergency management folks were going to head this up. And we in the fire service were saying, you know, "We're just not capable of doing this. We can't be everything to everybody." And I think that was the downfall. And I probably had the most knowledge and training in

Maplewood on hazardous material than even the people who were forming the teams, and I knew what it was going to take, and we just couldn't do it. I mean, we couldn't do it in the State — how were they going to do it in Maplewood?

KC: But I notice that you're badge says "hazmat."

EL: Mm-hmm. In Vadnais Heights we have a hazmat team. So we do both hazmat, rescue, and EMS and firefighting. Our hazmat team—we do the North Suburban Hazmat Team, so it's a partnership of Vadnais Heights, Lake Johanna, New Brighton, Falcon Heights. We all get together for a hazmat call. We have forty



firefighters. There may be fifteen of them that want to be on the hazmat team, and there may be fifteen from Lake Johanna. So they get thirty guys. That's how it works.

KC: Does Maplewood Fire do hazmat?

EL: No. They rely on Saint Paul to come and help them.

KC: You became an EMT. At what point did you start requiring all of your firefighters at Parkside to be EMTs?

EL: At one time, there had to be an EMT on the rig, driving the ambulance, and you could just be a first responder answering medical calls in Maplewood, with Maplewood Police being the paramedics. They would show up, they would do patient care, the police would be in the back, and the firefighters would drive the ambulance to the hospital. Two firefighters would drive the police cars to the hospital, so, if there was another call, they could get their police cars and go. So

we've got six people tied up on this medical call. As we got busier and more calls, pretty soon it wasn't always two paramedics going down — it may have been one — and so that required an EMT to be in the back doing patient care. Then another state law was passed that you had to be an EMT to drive an ambulance. So now you had to be an EMT to drive, you had to be an EMT to be in the back. Well, we could never wait — survive with ten EMTs. Kind of all had to be EMTs, so there was a big push to become this EMT so you could become part of this EMS [Emergency Medical Services] program. And there was talk then about, "Oh, maybe I just want to be a fireman. I just don't want to be an EMS person. I'll just go to fires. You guys take care of the EMS." But I think the pride in the group — that if you're going to be on the team, you're going to do everything that the team is going to do. So we applied for a variance that allowed people that could drive fire trucks to drive one of these vans that were an ambulance, and we could put an EMT in the back. So a large portion of us were EMTs.

KC: About what year was that?

EL: In the Eighties — 1982, '83, '84. And then they went back and they started being — they couldn't keep up with all the police calls and they couldn't increase their staffing, so they wanted, if it was — there's two classifications of medical calls: basic life support and advanced life support. EMTs do the BLS—Basic Life Support. So if it was a call that I didn't need a paramedic, they wanted the fire department to transport. Well, now we got to transport. We got to take them down there, we got to fill out all the paperwork, and we got to drive the ambulance back, and I think the biggest thing was doing all the paperwork. And we were getting four dollars so that the police paramedic program was getting paid for this, because we never got paid for the EMS. The City billed and it went

into the police department. The police were charging \$50 an hour, and we were going down there and doing the work for \$4 per call so we started thinking, "You know what? We need more of the cut. We need more of the piece of the pie if we're expecting our firefighters to do what you're paying a police officer fifty dollars an hour to do." So that was kind of the start of the rub saying, you know, "We need to be more equal — equal pay."

KC: Did firefighters start becoming trained as paramedics then, while you were still on? Or was that pretty much just the EMTs?

EL: The EMTs. The ones that did go to be paramedics — towards the end, Maplewood went into a CSO, Community Service Officer program, because they found it was cheaper to get community service officers and pay them half the rate of what they were paying police officers, and they could be paramedics. So they were hiring them to do that, and we had a couple of firefighters. Tommy Hale, who is now a firefighter/paramedic in Burnsville, was a firefighter at Parkside. His dad was the guy who convinced me to join the fire department, who was also the godfather of my daughter. But his son was a CSO in Maplewood and a Parkside firefighter.

KC: CSO paramedic?

EL: CSO paramedic, yep. There was a few of them. There was a couple of guys from Gladstone that did that also.

KC: At that point, did some of the firefighters — the older people that just wanted to be firefighters, that didn't want to go back to school, that didn't want to learn the medical — decide that it was time to retire? Did you lose some at Parkside? I know Gladstone lost some then.

EL: No, because we always found a role for them. And it was amazing. Those that wanted to help would help, but they always wanted a few – they knew the ones that were really good at it. “Well, you guys do this and I’ll go do that” – they were happy to lift the stretcher, they were happy to show up, they were happy to drive the vehicle. Maybe when it got into more gory details of doing EMS, they didn’t want no part of that, and they always hoped that someone would be there to do that part for them.

KC: Is there an EMT call that you remember going on that has always stayed with you?

EL: I’ve delivered babies. I watched one of our firefighters, the guy that lived across the street from me, go to do CPR. And he was going to do the mouth-to-mouth, the patient who died from a heart attack vomited spaghetti in his mouth, and he just spit it out and went back and did mouth-to-mouth. So some of them – a few of them I don’t want to talk about.

BJ: Off of that gory subject. Tell me about the communications between the three volunteer fire departments prior to when you started the commission to deal with negotiations for the City. How often – or were there even any meetings? I’m aware of the Capitol City Mutual Aid Association but were there meetings with Gladstone and East County Line³² that were separate from those?

EL: Yes, there was always – since I’ve been on, that I can remember, there was always the Joined Chiefs’ Council, and we met monthly. So those three departments were one, and we had some disagreements, basically over money, and it was accounting principles. We would go in as one organization and ask for an increase, so if we wanted a three percent increase – Gladstone would get

³² **East County Line Fire Department**, see chronology in Appendix C

more of an increase, but it had two stations. Although the stations were built – one of them was built by the City, so they didn't have to pay anything for it. But a three percent increase on their budget was higher than the three percent increase for Parkside, which was the lowest. So they tried – in order to be fair, we wanted a three percent increase over the million-dollar fire budget, and we wanted our \$30,000, and you get thirty and you get thirty. But we could never agree on that and it came down to the votes, so sometimes we were in the minority of those other votes.

But when we talked about things, we did some great things. Reflectorized material – we had three different colors of reflectorized material. So you can look in the dark and see, well, that's a Parkside turnout gear, fire hose, ax, helmet – because of the reflectorized. They were the color of the hose. Gladstone had their color and East County Line had their color. Talked about – we didn't train as much as we probably should have, but we talked about practices together. I mean, we would get – some of their instructors would come up to our station and teach. We were together on some things, and pretty independent on others.



Turnout Gear

*

BJ: [laughs] Now when the City started to negotiate to do the consolidation, did they meet with the Joint Commission, or did they deal with each department separately? Because I heard that they dealt with each department separately, and there was some concern that they would trade off one department against the other



FIRE OFFICIALS coordinating the simulated emergency situation are, from left: Al Forsberg, president of the Capital City Mutual Aid Association, monitoring radio-dispatched calls; Gordy Vadnais, making radio calls to the sheriff's office to dispatch additional units, and Harold Fischer, chief of the Lake Johanna Fire Department, who logged the response times of the 28 units responding to the call.

Firemen Respond to Mock Emergency Drill

Twenty-eight fire rigs from volunteer fire departments in Ramsey, Anoka and Washington counties responded to the first simulated emergency situation to test the communications system of the Capitol City Fire Mutual Aid Association.

The drill was held at 8 a.m. on a Saturday and 105 firemen turned out from 23 departments, all members of the association.

The simulated emergency call went out to departments ranging from Blaine-Spring Lake Park to Stillwater. Units were asked to get to the White Bear Town Hall outside of White Bear Lake.

The test was to determine the efficiency of association member units in responding to a location outside of their usual service area.

Gordy Vadnais, White Bear Lake fire chief who is fire and rescue chief on the Ramsey County Civil Defense emergency staff, called the drill as a joint effort between the Mutual Aid Association and the Civil Defense.

No emergency procedures were used by units in traveling to White Bear. They traveled in normal traffic without sirens or flashing lights and within posted speed

limits. All units and men arrived at the scene within 30 minutes of the time Vadnais began making calls to the individual departments through the Ramsey County sheriff dispatcher.

The purpose of the drill was to evaluate the

response of the association and determine the communications capabilities of all the departments in a call for help in a major emergency or disaster situation.

The association member departments have agreed to aid each other on request in a major fire or disaster that

would be beyond the capability of a single department.

The Mutual Aid Association and Civil Defense plan to hold another training session in the future that would involve a real fire set for training purposes.

In these training situations, all departments keep sufficient equipment at their stations in case they would be needed for an actual emergency during the training session, according to Al Forsberg, president of the Mutual Aid Association and chief of the Little Canada Fire Department.

and maneuver the departments off of finally signing that agreement. Did they negotiate by department or through the Joint Commission?

EL: The discussions were officially through the Joint Chiefs but, underhandedly and around the back door, they made individual agreements with departments and members of the departments to separate.

BJ: And that led to some of the hard feelings that still exist today to the City about how that transition occurred?

EL: I don't know. [Kate laughs, Ed chuckles]

BJ: I have one more question, which really doesn't –

EL: What are you going to cut out of this? [all laugh]

BJ: You tell us what you want to cut out.

EL: Well, you would think, who's the chief now — who was the chief in one of them departments? You think maybe it was under the table agreement? [Bob laughs]

BJ: Could have been.

EL: Could have been.

BJ: Yep.

EL: I don't know.

BJ: Okay. The next question isn't with the fire department so much, but I have this – looking at Maplewood's history, it's going from a lot of nongovernment, volunteer, community type activities, like the volunteer fire department, the community clubs, and so on to now. You want something, you just call the City, you call some agency. The volunteer fire department is the best example. Are there other transitions that you might be aware of? In your time here in Maplewood, did you see a transition from the community clubs, which slowly

dissolved and disappeared? Other organizations that people lost interest, a lack of volunteerism? You have any other examples or stories that you could tell us about Maplewood?

EL: Well, you know how Maplewood was formed. It was a bunch of areas that no one wanted.

BJ: Yeah, left over.

EL: And so we kind of consolidated. Like the Parkside area was New Canada Township, and then we had the Gladstone area — they got together, and they were individual communities. You know, Maplewood didn't have a downtown. I don't know if Maplewood has a downtown now, really. I think they've made some efforts to have a downtown, but it's never been very successful. And I think the fire departments, from what I know — from the community groups that helped form the fire departments— that was the end of it. And now I think it's the sign of the times that people — and Maplewood has gone through some difficult times politically that they kind of fought some pretty strange fights. I mean, just simple, over garbage collection. I mean, I remember we had the garbage barrel in the backyard, and we just burned it. But—

It's hard to be in government, because we are now the entitlement generation. It's not what you're going to do for your community, it's what your community is going to do for you, so it's hard to do that and, really, cities are really a very small form of government. But deliver a very high level of service, and people don't accept things for what they are. They want things to what they think they are, so if the snowplow is not out there at six o'clock in the morning when they go to work, they want to know. All roads should be plowed at six. Well, if it stops snowing at five, how does all roads get plowed at six? And they don't have the concept of that. They don't understand what the snowplow driver

doesn't get out and shovel everybody's driveway opening after he's plowed it shut, because they'd still be plowing snow. And they don't have a concept of the cost or what it takes to deliver services. They expect it to be there and, again, have no realization about it. So I feel sorry for some of the elected officials that are trying to put their arms around the delivery of service, cut taxes, and make this the home for Pollyanna, because it's just not there. I just – too long of a life maybe in government service. [Kate chuckles]

KC: What is your legacy in fire service?

EL: Hmm. I think it's easier to say what I hope it is. I have – some people probably have a different opinion what my legacy is than what others do, or even what I do. I've always tried to be fair. I've always tried to be good at what I do, and, at the event, I was good at what I did. I may not have made everybody happy, but I was professional and I tried to do the right thing. I always tried to do the right thing, and I – there was just some amazing things that go on in the family of the fire service. I mean, you are the fire chief, you are the trainer, you are the accountant, you are the minister, the priest, the family counselor, the alcoholic counselor, the child guidance counselor. You fill all them roles because you are the leader of the community, and the fire department is just a community, and they come to you for all kinds of answers. At one time, I thought I was ready to be the fire chief. I've been a fire chief for a long time. Since 1983, I've been a fire chief. So what is that, thirty years? I do it full-time now. I don't think I'm ready for it, but I've been through a lot. I'm not going to tell you on camera, but it's amazing the things that – people come up with family problems, you solve. "This isn't my job. I just wanted to come up here, drink a few beers, wait for the sirens to go off, and squirt water on the red stuff. [Kate laughs] I didn't know I had to do all this other stuff."

KC: Why did you keep choosing to take the promotions, to keep going up the line?

EL: Competitive. You know, same thing with fighting fires. You compete. Who's going to win this battle, me or the fire? So you aggressively compete against the fire, you aggressively compete against the forty other members to be the officer — you try to prepare yourself if you're passionate about that. You go to the schools and you do those things because you really want to be chief, but there is some truth to the saying that you really don't know what you're getting into until you got it. And pretty soon I had this thing by the tail and I wasn't smart enough to let go, and maybe I should have been. Everybody wants to be the chief, but they don't know what being the chief is all about.

KC: Chief, thank you very much.

EL: You're welcome.

APPENDIX A

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 B

Chronology of Gladstone Fire Department

Gladstone Station: 1900 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 4th 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 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 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 EMT's 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 nd time for 7 years total)
1980 - 1985	Duane Williams
1986	Dave Selbitschka
1987	Bob Miller
1988	Dave Selbitschka
1989 - 1996	Larry Bush

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