

2015 ANNUAL FIRE DEPARTMENT AWARDS

FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR (2015)

The Fire Fighter of the year award is presented to a member of the fire department that has been selected from nominations received from their peers and coworkers.

The recipient of this award is selected based on their overall, outstanding performance as a fire fighter, performance above and beyond that normally expected of a fire fighter, community service and an overall commitment to improving the fire service.

Todd Martin has been a member of the department for over twenty-two years. During this time, Todd has worked his way thru the ranks from a paid on-call firefighter to the rank of Captain.

During Todd's career with the Township, he has fostered many friendships and has earned the trust of his peers and coworkers. In addition to the professional and personal friendships, Todd has created and maintains a vast network of contacts, connections, people, places and things. On a professional basis, Todd uses these networks and connections to further the Township of Kalamazoo. On a personal basis, Todd is often seen using these connections to assist anyone in need. Weather it is a car repair consultation by phone, assisting with emergency home repairs of a department member or just passing his connections on to help someone in need; usually done with no expectation of payment.

Although it is not always evident when talking with Todd, he holds a passion for hands-on and live fire training. Behind the scenes, Todd often coordinates a large portion of our live-fire training and vehicle extrication training. His training, experience and efforts are instrumental in providing up to date information in a real-life training environment.

The nominations received for this award summarized and substantiated in great detail the selection of Captain Todd Martin as the 2015 Firefighter of the Year.

Congratulations!

CITATION FOR BRAVERY

The Citation for Bravery is awarded when a fire fighter performs an act in the line of duty which may arise thru an emergency or other situation where because of the nature of their action, a life may have been saved.

The following members were nominated by their officers and awarded a Citation for Bravery.

Fire Fighter Shawn Gallagher
Fire Fighter Anthony Tazelaar

On October 24, 2015, The Township of Kalamazoo responded to 2008 Sunnyside to a working apartment fire. On arrival, heavy fire conditions were visible at the rear of the structure and were spreading rapidly.

It was quickly noticed that there was an occupant trapped by the heavy fire and smoke conditions on a second floor balcony and unable to exit the building.

With minimal fire personnel on scene, Firefighters Shawn Gallagher and Anthony Tazelaar quickly placed a ground ladder and assisted the resident to safety.

Working swiftly and with skill, they accomplished the task before the rapidly worsening smoke and fire conditions overcame the resident. For their actions while displaying a true sense of urgency and teamwork under pressure, they are awarded a Citation for Bravery.

CITATION FOR BRAVERY – Kendall - Inside

Assistant Chief Dave Hoekstra
Captain Todd Kowalski
Firefighter Chris Weidemann
Firefighter Nathan Carley
Firefighter Brian Toepper
Firefighter Michael Parker

On June 1, 2015, Kalamazoo Township, the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety and Oshtemo Township Fire Department, responded to a report of a possible apartment fire at 123 South Kendall.

Upon arrival of the first fire department unit, light smoke was present in the area and building residents reported that the fire was on the second floor. As a hose line was being advanced to the fire, a second crew initiated a primary search of the apartments adjoining the apartment of origin. Meeting at the second floor, the two crews forced entry into the apartment of origin. As one crew began extinguishing the fire, a second crew began ventilation of the apartment while conducting a primary search for victims.

Crews located an unresponsive subject in the apartment and quickly worked as a team to remove the victim from the building. When the victim was removed from the building and assessed by fire department personnel, it was determined that the victim was not breathing and did not have a pulse. Resuscitative efforts were initiated by fire department and EMS personnel which led to the return of a pulse prior to the patient being transported to the hospital.

For their teamwork, diligent efforts and actions, they are awarded a Citation for Bravery.

CITATION FOR BRAVERY – Kendall - Outside

Captain Todd Martin
Firefighter Jim Varda

On June 1, 2015, the Township of Kalamazoo responded to a report of a possible apartment fire at 123 South Kendall. On arrival there was light smoke conditions in the area with residents reporting that the fire was on the second floor.

As Ladder 844 arrived and started to set up for operations, a second floor window broke out and flames became visible on the North side of the building. At this point, the crew noticed a subject in the Northwest window of the apartment that was on fire.

Captain Martin and Firefighter Varda quickly placed a ground ladder on the North side of the building and assisted the victim out of the window and down the ladder to safety.

Displaying a true sense of teamwork, the quick actions of Captain Martin and Firefighter Varda were instrumental in the rescue and survival of the victim. For this action, they are awarded a Citation for Bravery.

2015 Citation for Lifesaving

The Citation for Lifesaving is awarded to department members for the saving of a life through various actions such as the direct application of first aid.

The Citation for Live Saving was presented for the following emergency responses in 2015:

2726 N. Riverview – February 1, 2015, 828 Beth – February 17, 2015, 1106 Clearview – April 15, 2015, 123 S. Kendall – June 1, 2015 and 2422 Cumberland – June 20, 2015

The 2015 Citation for Lifesaving was presented to the following members:

THOMAS BAAS	JOE LANDREVILLE	BRIAN TENBRINK
JAIRUS BAIRD	JAMES LOEDEMAN	RANDY THOMPSON
CHAD BAKER	TODD MARTIN	RICK TROTT
PHIL CURLEY	MATT MULAC	JOE VANORDER
TODD DUNFIELD	DAVE OBREITER	JIM VARDA
GARRET FULLER	GABRIEL PODOLSKY	TYLER VAUGHN
SHAWN GALLAGHER	JESSE RODER	MARK WARNICKE
AL GARNAAT	MIKE ROTGERS	DAVE WEAL
MARK GARRETT	LORI STIRN	CHRIS WEIDEMANN
DAVE HOEKSTRA	JASON SWITZER	MICHAEL WEIDEMANN
MIKE HUBARTT	ANTHONY TAZELAAR	TERESA WEIDEMANN
TODD KOWALSKI	GEORGE TAZELAAR	

Years of Service Awards were given to the following:

Five Years of Service – Tom Baas

Ten Years of Service – Troy Cox and Al Garnaat

Twenty-Five Years of Service – Todd Kowalski

Thirty Years of Service – Dave Hoekstra

The following retirees were recognized for their service:

Bruce Wheatley – 14 Years and Tim Vanderberg - 15 Years