



# Vol. Fire Police

All the news that impacts your community and your world.

**SPRING 2026**

*News*

## *Honoring* **Clarence Sphor and Past President Bob Beamish**



Clarence Spohr  
passed away on December 9, 2025.  
He was born in 1943.



Robert D. "Bob" Beamish  
passed away on February 2, 2026.  
He was born in 1937.



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## From the Desk of the Editor:

Well, it is that time of year that we can put together another issue of the VFPASNY newsletter to keep you all advised of what the Association is trying to accomplish. There are the forms for the Tom With Seminar and the information you need for rooms, speakers, and the schedule. Remember that date: March 21st, 2026. It'll be in the Albany area so let's plan ahead. We are working on all the extras that need to get done.

April plans for the Spring Quarterly meeting are being addressed for the Albany area as well so watch out for all that information. Forms are available in this issue for the May Convention in Niagara Falls as well as the schedule of events that the Committee has planned. Looks to be another well informed event for all. Please remember that this is the time we conduct our Memorial Service so need to get that information to the Chief Chaplain. Check the listing

of Officers for contact information. There is a new Director for Region 8 so he would love to hear from you and get some help moving along on this Region.

A lot is being worked on to improve our levels of training, especially with the Zoom Training Bruno has announced. See what he offers and the ease that he has formed to attend. Great reviews over the last few years on these.

On behalf on myself and the Officers of the VFPASNY we extend our hopes you all had a safe and enjoyable holiday season.

Be safe out there!

**Dick Duerr**  
*Editor*





# Spring Newsletter

Next issue: Summer 2026 - all articles are to be submitted  
to the Editor by **June 15th, 2026**

All articles are to be sent to **duerr.richard@yahoo.com** or  
mailed to **21 Second Street, Camden, NY 13316-1307**

**No ads or articles are to go to the printer.  
They will NOT accept them.**

## Newsletter Ad *Rates*

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*Make all checks payable to VFPA NY*

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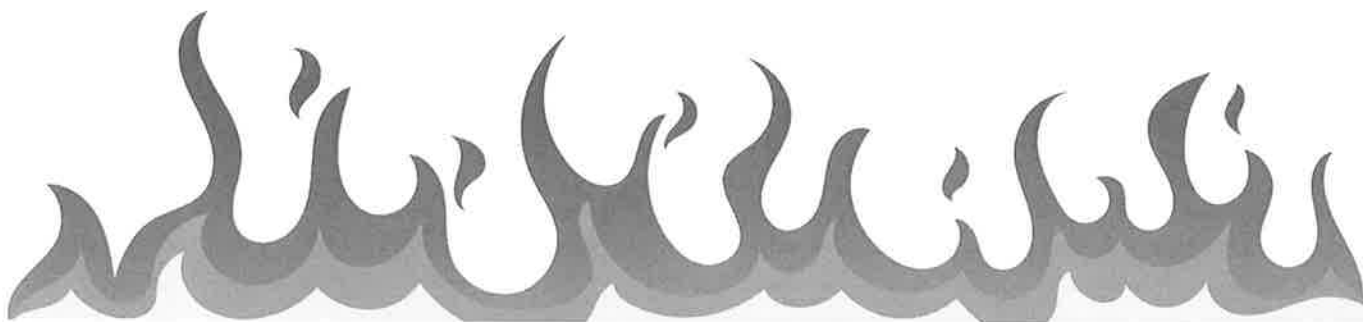
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# Benefits of Membership in the Volunteer Fire Police Association of New York (VFPASNY)

There are many valuable benefits included with becoming a member of the VFPASNY. The ultimate values are best practices for safety of fire police officers and firefighters on the fire ground, incidents we are called to and at vehicle accidents. There are training certificates of attendance issued to all attendees of our training programs which includes topic, hours, etc. for your department's personal file. These benefits are delivered to our members as follows:

- **Periodic Newsletters** - delivered to you with latest news around New York State (NYS), upcoming events and Regional Reports.
- **Website and/or Facebook pages** - with training opportunities, information on new laws/requirements, and information about our Association and membership.
- **Networking** - meet fire police officers and instructors throughout NYS and build relationships for knowledge, support and friendships.
- **Regional Support of our Officers and Directors** - for meetings and best practices for your region.
- **Face to Face Fall and Spring meetings** - Business, training and networking at all meetings.
- **Face to Face training** - annual Tom With Seminar (TWS) offers a full day of fire police training and regional classes when available.
- **Virtual online self improvement fire police training** - available via Zoom.
- **Annual Convention** - 3 day event with business, training, networking and Annual Installation of Officers Banquet and Awards ceremony.
- Guidance for NYS DCJS registration and updates of fire police for Peace officer status on their web portal.
- Representation in Albany on issues of united concerns in the fire service, as well as Legislative updates.
- **Vendors at meetings** - for your review and sale of safety equipment and PPE offered to make your job easier and safer to ensure you can do your job efficiently, while protecting yourself and others.
- Association membership cards for all members.
- **Awards to Members** - 50 years certificate, Fire Police of the Year, George F. Woodman Award, Presidential Awards and more.

All of the above and more are available to you for the annual membership fee of \$15. There are additional "at cost" expenses to attend face to face meetings and training, as well as the annual convention. These are negotiated and offered at a discount to our members.



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## From the President:

I hope everyone had a nice summer and had quality time with family and friends.

Since our last newsletter, we kicked off our events on August 29th with our virtual Training. The topics were informative – NYS Sheriff's Yellow Dot & Blue envelope programs and Lithium Ion Battery incident handling. For those not able to attend, you might want to go to the "NYS Sheriff's Association" website for information on their two programs. This training was led by Bruno Semon and we thank him for his time and talents.

We also had a successful Fall meeting at the Hilton Garden Inn, Troy, NY on October 25th - All went well with the event and the accommodations were excellent for those in attendance. We had two excellent speakers that presented "National Grid – First Responder Beware Electrical Safety" and "Dealing with Public Relations & Media for Fire Police." Both training sessions were geared toward our role as Fire Police Officers to identify and handle these situations. We thank instructors Tom With and Arthur Hunsinger for their time and talents as well. The following items and future events were approved by the membership during this meeting:

- Virtual Zoom Training - topic Fire Police Refresher Course Wednesday, January 28, 2026 given by Suffolk County Fire Service Academy state certified instructors
- Tom With Training Seminar – March 21, 2026 at the Fuller Road FD in Albany. Details elsewhere in this newsletter.
- Spring Membership meeting – April 11, 2026 to be located in the Albany area. Details elsewhere in this newsletter with form on page 13.
- Annual Convention- May 14-17, 2026 to be located in Niagara Falls. Details elsewhere in this newsletter.
- Summer Virtual Training – Time and Topic(s) to be determined.
- Fall Membership Meeting – October 24, 2026 voted to be in the Utica area. Please save the date.
- New Region 8 Director has been appointed. We welcome Kendall Stanley to our Board of Directors. His contact information is now listed under Region 8 in this Newsletter.
- Created a new Meeting/Convention Committee led by FVP Dot Brown and will have a minimum of 1 representative from each region to locate and setup meeting sites for Spring & Fall Meetings and Annual Convention as well as working with Training Committee to secure topics and instructors for these events. If you would like to be involved on this committee, please contact Dot or your

regional director to be added to this committee.

- We had our second reading of the bylaw changes submitted by the Bylaw Committee at the Kingston convention without questions and will be voted on at the Spring Membership Meeting.

To offset the increasing operational costs to our organization and keep our annual dues at the current levels, we are continuing the annual 50/50 program which was approved at the convention in Kingston. This program has been successful to our treasury the last 2 years, and will once again be our major fundraiser to assist in achieving our goals for 2026. The program is in two parts as follows:

1. For members that pay their own dues - Included in the mailing of your 2026 annual dues invoice there were two (2) 50/50 tickets. We ask that you sell them and return the stubs and money, along with your annual dues money to our Membership Secretary, Juan Guzman (contact information for Juan is on your invoice). If you would like to help us further and sell additional tickets, please contact me at cell/text (516) 754-2058 or e-mail [jwwicks13@aol.com](mailto:jwwicks13@aol.com). Your Regional Director (contact information is in this newsletter) will also have a supply of tickets if that would be more convenient for you.

2. For members that your Company/Department pays your dues - Please see your Regional Director or contact me (both as stated above) to be a part of this program and for tickets to buy or sell. The stubs and money for these tickets will be returned to me at 13 Ninth Street, Carle Place, NY 11514.

We need everyone's participation in this program to make it a success!

In closing, we need You, our members, to fill open positions or help on a committee and strengthen our organization. Many hands make light work and it is important for the future of the VFPASNY. If you are interested in assisting with your time and talents, please reach out to your Director or an Officer! Remember, the weather is changing and we must dress accordingly to the conditions you are going into for your safety.

I hope everyone and your families had a Happy and Healthy Thanksgiving, Holiday Season and New Year!!

Enjoy and be safe!!

**Jon Wicks**  
*President, VFPASNY*



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## Region 1 Report

As the year 2025 came to a close there were many events that benefited the New York State Fire Police Association in many ways. The development of Zoom, classes for training, Tom With Seminar, State Convention, and Quarterly Meetings with great participation throughout the state. Communications were excellent and the entire Board worked well together.

Let us not forget the members who have passed on; always remember them and their families in our prayers.

One major accomplishment which occurred in Region 1 is that we have open communications with our Fire Academy

and look forward to working with them in the future.

In 2026, we are looking forward to establish more Zoom classes and more participation in Quarterly Meetings and the State Convention.

In closing, I would like to wish everyone and their Families a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season.

**Daniel Franchise**  
*Region 1 Director*

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## Region 2 Report

On Monday, October 08, 2025, as Delegate-at-Large of Region 2, I Proudly fulfilled my First Official Duty and presented Livingston Manor Fire Department's 'past' Chief Rob Trottie Jr, a well-deserved 'President's Award for Excellence' for his going far beyond the call of duty in Support of The Sullivan County and New York States Volunteer Fire Police Officers.

For his years of Service to our Fire Police to provide yearly training sessions vital to saving our lives, my hat goes off to

you sir, along with my 'Hearty Thank you.' Rob received a great Standing Ovation from his Chiefs and attending department members. He truly inspires his men & women. Rob continues on as Company Lieutenant having fulfilled his Chief's ranks commitments.

**Donald S. Dittmer**  
*Region 2 - Delegate-at-Large*

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## Region 4 Report

Region 4 had its very first meeting since I took over in March this year. We had our elections, and the list of officers is as follows: John Henninger (myself) retained Director, Martin Kopcho is Treasurer, Christina Dravis is Secretary. Irving Soden gave training on how to be seen and how to handle driver confrontation. David Dennison gave an update on the new OSHA Regulations that are being considered. Norm Davis and the three of us recently met with the bank where the region bank account is and have the officers put into the account. The officers and advisors of Region 4 are working on setting up for another meeting that should be in the next couple of months. At the 71st

VFPASNY Conference, Region 4 was awarded third place for new membership. The Director Region 4 (myself) received the association President's award from Norm Davis for communication and activities with the State and Region. Things are looking up for the region. Special thanks go out to Norm Davis and Richard Duerr for their support. Also, a thank you for Christina Dravis and Martin Kopcho for stepping up as Region 4 officers.

**John Henninger,**  
*Region 4 Director*



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## Region 5 Report

Greetings from Area 5 (Western New York)

There are many things going on in the state and in Region 5. I am in the process of developing a FaceBook page for Region 5. I hope to have it up and running soon. This way I'm in hopes of being able to provide information from the state and counties in a more expedient way to members and county associations in Region 5.

I'd like to start off with training. This may be redundant but here is what's coming up: in 2026, Suffolk County Fire Men's Association Fire Police, Fire Police Zoom Refresher Training on January 28th at 7PM. If this is anything like the other Zoom classes that were provided by Suffolk County it should be good. We had approximately 27 individuals from this area participate. I would hope more would make themselves available to this opportunity.

On May 14 through May 16, 2026, the annual VFPASNY convention will be held in Niagara Falls (Western edge of Region 5). The Niagara County Fire Police have been working hard to put on a great program.

**County Activities:** The following counties have recently held election of officers: on November 6th, Monroe County elected and sworn in and new slate of officers.

In closing, I intend to get to all the Fire Police Associations in the 13 Counties of Region 5 to the best of my ability. If you have any further information please forward it to me. Please also forward your county information and photos.

Respectfully,

**M. David Fairley**

*Region 5 Director*



*On November 9th, Niagara County held their elections.  
Congratulations to all the new officers.*

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## Region 6 Report

The Central Northern Volunteer Fire Police Association continues to meet bi-monthly with limited membership attendance. Much information is shared with those present and we have much discussion about the state of fire police.

Members not in attendance still receive much of the information through regular email communication throughout the year. We have also had consistent VFPASNY representation at funeral and memorial services for our fallen brothers and sisters of the fire police.

Several of the counties in Region 6 have healthy county associations addressing local concerns. Although we have several members consistently attending VFPASNY meetings and training sessions, the region lacks members with the available time or interest to aggressively promote the association and improve our standing.

From those of us working to better the stance of fire police in New York State, we ask that you share this newsletter with others that have not joined VFPASNY. The VFPASNY.com website includes a membership application, along with forms and information on many aspects of fire police. If you have the time, please consider attending meetings, becoming an officer at the various levels of VFPASNY, and helping to improve the strength of our cause.

Wishing everyone a safe and joyous holiday season and a safe winter.

Respectfully,

**Bob Lighthall**

*Region 6 Director*

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# The Chaplain's Corner...

## Something to Ponder this Winter

By Chief Chaplain Gene Preston

It was good seeing everyone at our Fall meeting at Troy, NY. As another busy year winds down, and for this issue of Chaplain's Corner, I want to toss out to you readers something to ponder this winter. We look back at 2025 and wonder if we are any farther ahead, any better off, any smarter than a year ago. We are living in a world of countless experiences, and we have conflicting approaches to our spirituality and beliefs. This brings us to one of my most admired individuals, renowned professor, character and ethics champion, Michael Josephson who has written the following.

### The Paradox of Our Time

*The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings, but shorter tempers; wider freeways, but narrower viewpoints; we spend more, but have less; we buy more, but enjoy it less. We have bigger houses and smaller families; more conveniences, but less time; we have more degrees, but less sense; more knowledge, but less judgment; more experts, but more problems; more medicine, but less wellness.*

*We drink too much, smoke too much, spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get angry too quickly, stay up too late, get up too tired, read too seldom, watch TV too much, and pray too seldom. We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often. We've learned how to make a living, but not a life; we've added years to life, not life to years.*

*We've been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet the new neighbor. We've conquered outer space, but not inner space; we've done larger things, but not better things. We've learned to rush, but not to wait; we have higher incomes, but lower morals; we have more food, but less appeasement; we build more computers to hold more information to produce more copies than ever, but have less communication.*

And so, as we hunker down for another New York State winter, let us ponder all this and something which we call life. Trust life, and it will teach you, in joy and in sorrow, all you need to know. Our Heavenly Father encourages us to place our cares and worries in His hands, that we may experience more fully the peace He came to give.

Blessings and peace to all as this issue of News takes us into the holiday season. We have much to be thankful for. Blessed holidays and be kind to everyone.

Gene



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## VFPASNY Region 7 Report

FASNY, in conjunction with the Suffolk County Fire Academy, hosted a Hands-on Training at the Suffolk County Fire Academy on August 8th that simulated a Mass Casualty Incident involving a Train Extrication. The training included a Fire Police portion that provided the participants with an understanding of command and management for a mass casualty incident. The Fire Police portion included a number of Fire Police groups from Departments around Region 7.

VFPASNY, in conjunction with the Suffolk County Fire Academy hosted a Fire Police Training Class via Zoom on Wednesday, August 27, 2025. The training was a success with 463 participants across NYS. At peak times 311 signed individually into the virtual training, so all others were participating in group form at various locations throughout NYS. Region 7 (Suffolk County) had 213 participants which consisted of 108 VFPASNY members and 105 non-members. Huge thanks to the SCFA for putting the program together and we look forward to continuing to work with the Academy on future endeavors.

Fire Police Field Day was held at the Suffolk County Fire Academy on September 13, consisting of hands-on sessions including a situational awareness session that had a number of hazards spread out in a Single Family Dwelling Fire scenario and another session that amounted to a "Show-and-Tell" where 4 Fire Police Units were lined up and the

members of that Department displayed various equipment that they felt helped them in the performance of their duties.

Region 7 held our Fall Meeting at the Blue Point Fire Department on September 27 where we had the honor of welcoming our Association President Jon Wicks. I introduced 3 new Regional Delegates to the membership:

- Babylon Town - Mark Stone - Deer Park Fire Department Fire Police
- Brookhaven Town - George Staudt - Blue Point Fire Department Fire Police
- North Fork - Robert Corwin - Greenport Fire Department Fire Police

We discussed a new law that was recently signed by the Suffolk County Executive that regulated the activities of "Board-up Companies" and the way that Fire Police Members can assist in enforcing the law. Specifically, the establishment of Fire Lines at major incidents where there is a need to restrict access.

We also discussed the benefits of Membership in the Association and the effort to get non-members of our Region to join the Association in the coming year.

Respectfully submitted by

**Chris Mele,**  
*Region 7 Director*

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## Region 8 Report

My goals for Region 8 are twofold: first, I would like to see the membership grow. To do that, I believe the training aspect of each meeting is key. If each member walks away from a Region 8 meeting having learned something, they will be motivated to come back and bring a friend. Second, inclusion. There are currently seven counties in Region 8. I'd like to see membership grow in every county, and to do that, I think we need a reliable cadence of meetings that move from county to county.

Finally, my goal is to make as many county fire police association meetings as possible. I'm intimately familiar with Greene and Columbia Counties, but I'm going to need membership support in the other five. When you invite me to your meeting, my hope is that I can add value and represent the VFPASNY honorably.

**Kendall Stanley,**

*Region 8 Director*

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- Kiskatom Fire Department. Life member. Board member. Chaplain. Fire Police.
- Greene County Volunteer Fireman's Association. Member.
- Greene County Volunteer Fire Police Association. Member. Vice President. Current President.
- Volunteer Fire Police Association of the State of New York. Region 8 Director.

