



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## YOUR COMMUNITY NEEDS HEROES

PATTY RITCHIE April 11, 2011

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Your community needs heroes.

Your friends and your hometown are looking for people to join your volunteer fire department or rescue squad.

They provide critical services when your neighbors need help in communities across Oswego, Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties.

While the public at large thinks of firefighters as the people who run into burning buildings when others are running out, volunteer fire departments and rescue squads are often the ones who respond to calls for help of all kinds in their communities.

When someone is lost, when a flood, ice storm or other kind of catastrophe occurs, volunteer fire departments and rescue squads are usually the people who are among the first to lend a helping hand.

Yes, the departments need able bodied volunteers willing to devote over 100 hours to obtain the training they need to fight fires or respond to emergency medical calls.

But many local agencies also need volunteers to help with a variety of other jobs that can range from helping out at fundraising events to assisting with maintenance or book keeping.

If you are interested in lending a hand, either call the non-emergency number for your local fire department or rescue

squad or contact your county emergency services office for information on volunteer opportunities in your area.

Most departments will be happy to talk to you about volunteer opportunities in your area, minimum requirements for training, and what kind of commitments members are expected to make. Many will even provide you with an opportunity to spend time with the other volunteers to see what you can expect if you become a member.

Yes, it takes a certain kind of person who is willing to get up in the middle of the night to respond to a neighbor's call for help. That's what makes them our heroes.

In Oswego County, call 349-8800 or 1-877-675-1588.

In Jefferson County, call 315-786-2654

In St. Lawrence County, call 315-379-2240