



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Elaine Phillips

Senator Phillips Honors Local First Responders During Series Of Annual Appreciation Night

ELAINE PHILLIPS July 17, 2018



Senator Elaine Phillips recently hosted a First Responders Appreciation Night in Floral Park as part of her series of events honoring the brave men and women who risk their lives to protect residents of the 7th Senate District.

“Volunteer fire and EMS personnel are the backbone of our local Long Island communities and I truly believe we cannot thank them enough for all they do every day by risking their lives to keep our communities safe and to protect our loved ones,” Senator Phillips said.

“While no amount of thanks can express the appreciation we have for our first responders, or underscore the important role they play in our communities, events such as this provide an opportunity to recognize those that go above and beyond the call of duty. Thank you to the Floral Park Fire Department and Chief David Maickel for hosting the event and to all our first responders for your commitment and dedicated service.”

Honorees were members from the 1st Battalion fire district which include: the Bellerose Fire Department, Floral Park Fire Department, Floral Park Centre Fire Department, Mineola Fire Department, New Hyde Park Fire Department, and the Mineola Volunteer Ambulance Corp.

Bellerose Fire Department

In his 4 years of service, Joe Conley has become an indispensable asset to the department. His willingness to help with projects and his day-to-day assistance in all areas of the department has been invaluable.

Wayne Weber has served in the Bellerose Fire Department for 23 years. He is an Ex-Chief and the current Vice President of the department. Wayne recently completed his term as Chairman of the First Battalion Delegates and served on the Nassau County Fire Commission Board.

Mineola Fire Department

Michael Freitas has been a member of Engine 3 since 1997. For over 20 years, he has held numerous company and line officer positions and has been instrumental in helping to train hundreds of members. Mike also supervises the department’s annual SCBA qualification and requalification training for all members.

Thomas Capruso has been a member of Truck 2 since 2011. Tom quickly became the local electrician for the firehouse and began assisting with all functions in and around the

firehouse that required attention. Tom also became the lead training instructor for the departments bail out ropes.

Mineola Volunteer Ambulance Corp.

Chief Gregory M. Kozlowski joined the Mineola Volunteer Ambulance Corps in 2003 and was certified as an EMT in 2005. After leaving to serve in the US Army, Gregory returned to the Corps in 2013 and was elected to the position of 2nd Assistant Chief. Gregory was later elected as the 1st Assistant Chief and is currently serving his second year in that role.

Jonathon Berardi began his service with the Mineola Volunteer Ambulance Corps as a member of the Explorer Post 703 when he was 16 years old. In 2004, he joined the department as an active member and became EMT certified when he was 18. Jonathan remained an active member of the department until 2010 when he left to pursue nursing school, but he returned to active duty in 2016 and was named 2nd Assistant Chief. Jonathan also provides guidance and mentorship through his active roles on the Training and QA/QI committees and prehospital care as an EMT-CC.

Floral Park Centre Fire Department

Joe Raio began his service in 1980 and has served for 36 years. He currently serves as Vice President of the Board of Commissioners.

Tom Garland began his service in 1982 and has served for 38 years. He is now Ex-Chief and Ex Commissioner.

Floral Park Fire Department

Former Chief Ray Neufeld joined the Rescue Company in 1982 and quickly rose through the ranks, first becoming EMT CC, then becoming 2nd Lt, 1st Lt, Captain, then Chief of the Department. Ray is currently a warden for the Rescue Co. on the fire council and continues

to maintain his EMT CC, with one of the highest averages in this department.

New Hyde Park Fire Department

Kyra Casey has been a member of the New Hyde Park Fire Department and the Rescue Company since 2016. She has taken and passed the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) class and recently got a position as an Emergency Room Technician.

Shaheer Ilyas has been with the department and served as a member of the rescue company since 2015. He attained his EMT status in 2016 and carries one of the highest percentages in the department. Shaheer is currently attending school, working part time on an ambulance, attending EMT-CC classes and other courses at the Fire Service Academy. He is also the Chief Driver of the Rescue Company and on the committee planning a new ambulance for the department.

Upcoming First Responder Appreciation nights include: July 24 - Roslyn Highlands Fire Dept., July 26 -Port Washington Fire Dept., August 8 - Westbury Fire Dept.

“If you have a personal story or experience about a first responder or fire company that you would like to share at one of the upcoming events, please contact my office at 516-746-5924. We welcome your support and hope members of the community can join our efforts to thank the men and women who put their lives on the line every day,” said Senator Phillips.