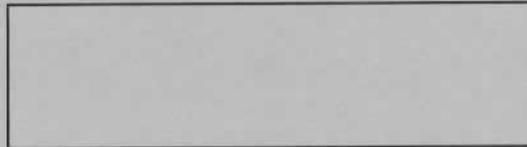


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## **Historical Perspective: Brighton's Altruistic Fire Department (Part 8)**

Brighton City Fire Chief, Larry Lane, and Brighton Township Fire Chief, Roger Young, began tentative discussion of the possible merger of the City and Township fire and rescue operations in October of 1997. On January 1, 1998, the mutual aid agreement took effect.

The Thermofil fire, in March of 1998, confirmed the advisability of area fire departments working cooperatively. The Green Oak Fire Department had the assistance of ten other area departments, which responded to the 22-hour blaze. Even with this help, the Green Oak Fire Department was severely tested.

July 1, 1998, Larry Lane was made responsible for both departments in the expanded mutual aid agreement. The merger was beneficial in many ways, not only with regard to the actual firefighting needs, but also as a cost saving measure. The merging of the departments would save on expenses by elimination of duplicate equipment, organization of training sessions in the various areas of firefighting and rescue personnel expertise, hazardous material cleanup, extrications, etc. The training of firefighters is extensive and requires over 300 hours of classroom training.

July 1, 2000, the Brighton Area Fire Authority was formed with Larry Lane appointed as Fire Chief and Charles Bidwell as Assistant Chief. The Brighton Area Fire Authority Board consists of two elected officials from each governmental entity (Brighton City, Brighton Township and Genoa Township) plus one citizen at large; making a total of seven board members. The Authority is in charge of the hiring of personnel.

July 1, 2005, Marty DeLoach was hired by the Fire Authority as Fire Chief and separated from the department on March 12, 2009. The Authority hired Larry Lane to serve as interim Chief until a permanent replacement can be hired.

June 18, 2009, saw two new fire engines put into service at the two Genoa Township fire stations; one on Dorr Rd. and the other on Chilson Road. "Push-in" ceremonies were held to mark their induction into the Brighton Area Fire Authority fleet of vehicles. This ceremony is reminiscent of earlier customs where fire carts were "pushed in" into their fire station upon their return.

Chief Adam Carroll, of the Hartland Deerfield Fire Authority, and Craig Ferris, of the Brighton Area Fire Authority, devised an automatic mutual aid system where in the event of a fire emergency, two fire departments would respond to the scene. A central dispatch center has been devised whereby reports of a fire emergency are immediately relayed to the appropriate fire agency. The central dispatch system in Livingston County is considered one of the best of its kind in the state. It often serves as a model to emulate. This kind of system can only operate with the complete cooperation of the various departments involved and with people who care about the safety of the residents. The residents of the County have long benefited from this arrangement.

*Compiled by Marieanna Bair from clippings. Additions/corrections requested. In the March issue, a list of Fire Department personnel is planned. Call 810-229-6402 with names you recall to help make the record more complete.*