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 Thermofill 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, extractions, 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.