

## REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIREHOUSE

As we begin another new year, we all tend to reflect a little bit on the past year: The things that we did or did not do, places we went or wished we could/would have gone to, and the friends and family we spent time with or wish we could spend more time with. And boy, what a year it was in many ways.

From the firehouse, we're looking back a little further and wanted to share with you where we came from and what we're looking at in the future. So, to get started, we'd like to share with you our beginning (this information and more can be found in the following books, "Town of Green Valley, A Look Back", "Township of Green Valley, A Glimpse Into Our Past", and "Morgan, The Next Generation", all written by local townspeople with input from many area residents.)

The Green Valley Fire Department held its first meeting on April 22, 1929, at the Green Valley Bank. It was organized to serve the community of Green Valley and the original handwritten meeting notes read as follows:

*"On April 22, 1929, Mr. Norman Berner organized a meeting of the people of the area of Green Valley for the purpose of forming the Green Valley Fire Department. The following were present: Harry Leib, Emil Seivert, Venus Stark, John Kuehl, Louie Specht, Ed Dittman, Marvin Lemke, Rueben Stark, Rueben Schmidt, Bill Hemple, Clem Lotto, Robert Kanzenback, William Moser, Ben Dittman, E.E. Olson, Frank Meyer. They raised money by giving dances at Green Valley Dance Hall and card parties to buy equipment"*

In the 1940's, the coverage area was expanded to County Road C and State Highway 32. By the 1950's, the entire township was being protected by the Green Valley Fire Department. In 1952, the Town of Morgan joined together with the Town of Green Valley for fire protection, and the new name became the Green Valley – Morgan Fire Department. Also in 1952, the fire department purchased its first firetruck, a brand new 1952 Pierce pumper truck. (Side note: We still have this fire truck and you may have seen in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parades!) On December 12, 1996, the fire department became incorporated as a 501C3 Non-Profit Corporation in the State of Wisconsin, changing the name once again to the current name of Green Valley – Morgan Fire Company, Incorporated. In short summary, this means that the fire company is a private organization that contracts its services. It is not owned by any one or two people, nor any one or two townships. It is a company with a Board of Directors that makes decisions and oversees the operations of the business, like how a governmental township is organized. The Board of Directors meet once each month to take care of general business, like approving bills for payment, approving the purchasing of parts and equipment and any repairs or maintenance that needs to be done, discussing fund raisers and upcoming events, and making sure all of the firefighters have the equipment and training needed to complete any task they might be assigned to. The Board of Directors consists of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, 3 representatives for the Town of Green Valley (west of Hwy 32), 3 representatives for the Town of Morgan (east of Hwy 32), and one director at large. All our director positions have a requirement to be a rostered firefighter.

So, in 1929, the fire department held dances to raise money to purchase equipment. In 2022, 93 years later, we will have a dance (annual firefighters' picnic on August 13, 2022) to raise money to purchase equipment. And to think back on how much has changed, and how much really hasn't changed! With the proceeds from our 2021 picnic, we did not purchase another 1952 Pierce firetruck, but we used some of the money to purchase air cylinders for our breathing apparatus that is on our new 2020 Pierce engine/tender. The new cylinders are replacing old air cylinders that are expired. If you attended our picnic last year, you may have noticed that we had our 2020 Pierce engine/tender parked right along side of our 1952 Pierce engine, both purchased brand new at the time! In Green Valley and Morgan, we are very proud of our heritage and the 'blood, sweat, and tears' that it took to get what we have, and we

continue to work hard to improve our organization every day. With the remaining proceeds from last years picnic, we are planning to purchase more SCBAs (Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus) to replace units that will be going out of service due to the age of equipment, per NFPA Standards. We received a donation from Nextera Energies for \$7,189.00 to purchase one complete SCBA, which includes the complete harness and the air bottle. It has been placed in service already and replaced an older unit that was expired. We will be purchasing more SCBA units in the near future as our current units expire. In October, we were awarded a grant through the Wisconsin DNR to purchase wildland firefighting gear, a leaf blower/mister, and a backpack pump. All the wildland equipment has been ordered and/or received and will be placed in service before the spring fire season.

If you are interested in joining our fire company and willing to get some great training and gain a new 'fire family', contact any of our firefighters for information on what it's all about. We'd be more than happy to talk with you and answer any questions you may have. (Oh yeah – we have a lot of fun times together! Ask any experienced firefighter, and they'll share at least one hilarious story or memory!) Help protect the community you live in!

And just a few reminders for our snowy season:

- Check your chimneys and vents to make sure they are clear of any blockages
- Keep 3 feet of space between and heating units and any furnishings
- Drive with caution – be cautious of snowmobiles and snow plow trucks
- Try to keep your driveways clear of deep snow and ice, if possible.
- Check on your neighbors and the elderly and offer to help them during the colder months

Daylight Saving Time begins on March 13, 2022 – remember to check the batteries in your smoke alarms!

**We wish all of you a prosperous and healthy 2022 – STAY SAFE!**