

Captain Steve Fiepke

By Sheryl Drost



Harlem-Roscoe Fire retired Capt. Steve Fiepke passed away suddenly on Dec. 18. According to the department's computer records that Steve was instrumental in setting up, Steve served from May 11, 1986 to Sept. 30, 2001. Steve was promoted to Lt. on April 9, 1994, and to Captain on Dec. 13, 1998. He was awarded the VFW Firefighter of the Year Award in 1996.

Steve started back up this very newsletter in Jan. of 1997 after a four year absence of the original run of a year in 1993. I would take over as editor in July of 1997 with his total support and help. I remember Steve being dubbed, Cap'n Crunch, after a minor accident and with his resemblance to the character with his white mustache. Administrative Assistant Colleen Bloyer remembers how the computers and the Firehouse Program were passed on to her when he retired. She says Steve set up the original Firehouse program and worked with setting up the original computers.

Former Fire Chief Oscar Presley remembers Steve worked nights so he was around for those day calls that we always seemed to be short-handed on back then. He remembers the truck fire out on I-90 where it was just he and Steve putting the fire out. Oscar says Steve was a really nice guy and since he was around during the days he was very helpful in many areas.

Dept. Chief John Presley remembers how he, Steve and Kirk Wilson took turns as the department training officer and how Steve worked on setting up more certified trainings such as trying to get more Firefighters certified as FF2. Steve was also in the first advanced certification classes such as Instructor at RVC.

Lt. Doug Wolfe remembers, "Steve got along with everyone. He was pretty low key, but you could always trust that he knew what he was doing on the fire scene."

Lt. Jerry McCormick says, "I remember that he was always smiling and having a good time. He always had your back at calls and was very calm in critical situations. To me, if you were having a bad day and then you saw him, your day immediately got better because he was so happy and fun to be around. I have fond memories of calls I was on with him. Probably the best was when Roscoe Ready mix burned. He was my officer and I was driving 705 and Tyler Kinison was riding backwards. I remember Ty pulling the 2-1/2" line and asking for more pressure. Steve thought he was nuts for asking for so much pressure. It was a lot of fun watching those two fight that fire that day. I also remember a med run with Steve and he was driving the old C-14. It had been snowing out and the roads were covered because the plows had not been out yet. We were going down Alpine and the light at Roosevelt turned and a car then turned in front of us. All I remember is Steve saying "Oh S@#T"! I sat down as fast as possible and not a second too soon. He struck the other vehicle and could not go anywhere. I called for another ambulance so I could complete the transport of my patient, who was not hurt in the crash. Kirk came down and we transported the patient to St. Anthony, leaving Steve with a broken ambulance. He had a look of despair on his face as we left the scene."

Capt. Steve Fiepke definitely made his imprint on Harlem-Roscoe Fire and the firefighters that served with him. Our deepest sympathies and condolences go out to his family and all that knew him!



New Firefighter Class in 1986.



Left, Trustees Appreciation Awards with Kirk Wilson and Jerry McCormick. Right, Oh, remember those white sweaters we all had to wear!



Steve fighting that I-90 truck fire with Chief Presley



Left, Steve helps extricate a patient in a rollover on Forest Hills and right he backs up Ken Claus at a fire at an asphalt play yard plant.



Left, Steve backs up Amber Drost at a training burn on Second St. Right, Steve uses the new Foam Pak on a truck rollover.