



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

West Deer Township Volunteer Fire Company #3

Celebrating 60 years of service to our community

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2022 Fire Company Leadership

Line Officers		Executive Officers	
Chief	Joshua Wiegand	President	Aaron Skrbín
Asst. Chief	Bryan Downs	Vice President	Edward Newman
Captain 1	Michael Talotta	Treasurer	Debbie Wiegand
Captain 2	Michael Kaplan	Secretary	Kelly Malena
Lieutenant 1	Aaron Skrbín	Asst. Treasurer	Julie Eyerman
Lieutenant 2	Dustin Lovich	Financial Secretary	Nicole Szafranski
Lieutenant 3	Edward Newman	Board of Directors	Cole Cannon
Lieutenant 4	Luke Smith		Dale Horn
Engineer	Dale Horn		Ashley Lovich
Assistant Engineer	Kevin Spath		Dustin Lovich
Assistant Engineer	Benjamin Burns		Kevin Spath
Medical Officer	Ronald Hampton III		
Medical Officer	Abby Smith		

MESSAGE TO OUR COMMUNITY

In March of 1963, the West Deer Volunteer Fire Company #3 was formed by concerned citizens who determined that the Fawn Haven area of the township needed dedicated fire protection. This group of men founded the department in an old garage with a dirt floor and a used 1947 fire engine. Sixty years later, the department they founded has evolved to a dedicated corps of volunteers who respond to over 1,000 calls for service annually in a fleet of six modern pieces of fire apparatus.

As we embark on our seventh decade of service, we reflect on the many accomplishments of our company while looking optimistically to our future. The support of our community has never been more vital to our fire company, and the volunteer fire service in general, than it is now. With the first of three phases of our building renovation project nearly complete and the need to replace fire apparatus in the near future, we must continue to find innovative and efficient ways to support our efforts to provide the highest standard of fire and emergency services to our citizens. To accomplish this goal, we will continue to rely on the support of our residents, businesses and elected officials.

To help you understand how our company operates, and in the interest of transparency, we have compiled the first annual report to our residents in our department's history. The following pages contain information about the calls to which we respond, how we train, how we are funded, how we spend our money and our new building project.

We hope that you will take a few minutes to review this report and encourage you to reach out to us at any time if you have questions or would like more information about our fire company and how you can be involved. We believe that you will be surprised and pleased with what you read.

Sincerely,

Joshua Wiegand
Fire Chief

Aaron Skrbin
President

YEAR IN REVIEW

2022 was an eventful and productive year for Station 290. The company responded to over 1,000 calls for service for the first time in the company's history.

After purchasing a new building to replace the original fire station in 2021, work began in earnest in 2022 to renovate the new building for our current and future needs. In addition, the original station was sold.

The fire company was fortunate to welcome eight new members to our ranks and several members furthered their skills by earning nationally recognized certifications.

Alex Gall achieved a significant professional and personal milestone by passing the national registry of paramedics exam after completing a rigorous yearlong training program.

Six members earned International Accreditation of Fire Service Organizations Pro Board certifications. Ronnie Hampton and Luke Smith earned Firefighter I certification, John Jarvis, Aaron Skrbín and Josh Wiegand earned the General Requirements for Technical Rescue certification and Mike Kaplan earned the Traffic Incident Management certification.

In June, a groundbreaking ceremony took place to formally begin the renovation of our new building. Representatives of local and state government were on hand celebrating our receipt of a \$250,000.00 GEDTF grant to fund a portion of the renovation.

In August, West Deer VFC#3 was one of two fire companies in Allegheny County featured in a KDKA radio special report on the challenges facing the volunteer fire service in Pennsylvania.

2022 was a busy year and we look forward to even greater things ahead in 2023 and beyond.

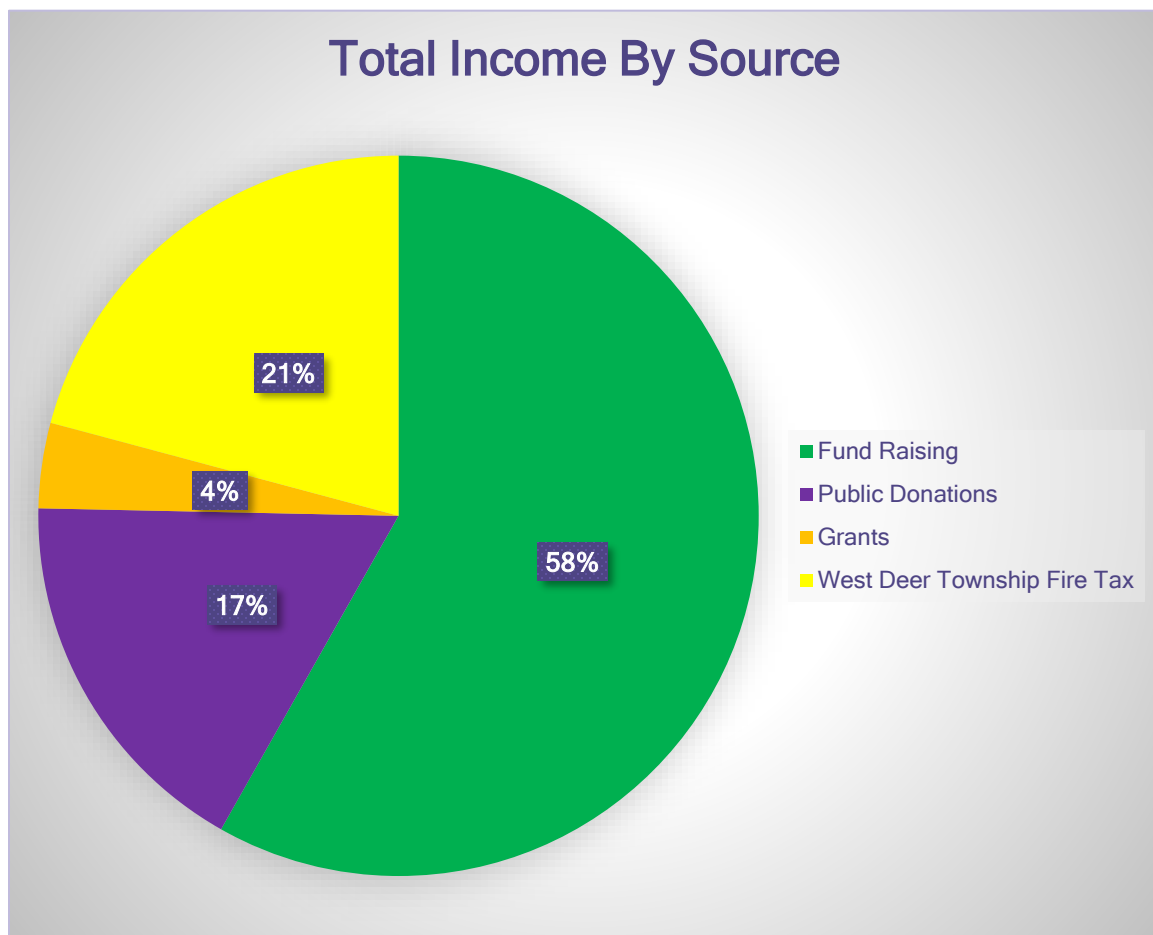


FINANCIAL SUMMARY

West Deer VFC#3 receives funding from a variety of sources. Most of our funding comes from our own fundraising efforts. This includes weekly bingo, our annual fund drive, annual purse bash, online tip board raffles and various fundraisers throughout the year. In addition, we have been fortunate to secure significant grant funding through various programs. Finally, we receive funds from West Deer Township through a fire tax charged to each residence. This tax was enacted by referendum in 2006 and has never been raised.

All of this is done while maintaining a focus on our primary responsibilities: training for and responding to emergencies. Our goal is to provide the most professional and competent service to the residents of West Deer Township.

Without your support, we cannot succeed!



EMERGENCY RESPONSE

As an “all hazards” response agency, West Deer VFC#3 responds to a wide variety of calls. We are dispatched for structures fires, car accidents, downed trees and wires, and yes, the occasional cat in a tree. Anytime a resident calls 911, the fire department will respond. In addition, we, like many volunteer fire companies, provide support to our EMS partner, West Deer EMS, as a Quick Response Service (QRS). This state accredited program supports EMS agencies with volunteer firefighters cross trained as Emergency Medical Technicians or Paramedics to arrive at emergencies faster and provide a bridge to more critical care.

You will notice that 14% of our calls last year were to neighboring communities. For many years, mutual aid has been a fundamental necessity for emergency services. While we respond into neighboring communities such as Hampton Township and Richland Township to support their response, they too respond into West Deer Township to support our efforts. This “give and take” occurs across all branches of emergency services and is necessary for the safety of both residents and responders as well as the efficiency of the response.



Summary of Responses

1,011 total calls for service

Types of Response

Fires: 42

Commercial Structure Fires: 13

Residential Structure Fires: 25

Brush Fires: 6

Alarms: 116

Commercial Fire Alarms: 63

Residential Fire Alarms: 44

Carbon Monoxide Alarms: 9

Rescues: 95

Motor Vehicle Collisions: 85

Motor Vehicle Collisions with Entrapment: 6

Physical Rescue: 4

Of the 1,011 calls we responded to, 142, or 14%, were for mutual aid or assistance into neighboring communities.

Public Service Calls: 68

Flooding/Wires Down/Trees Down: 59

Miscellaneous Calls for Service: 9

EMS Quick Response Service: 688



TRAINING

Training is the cornerstone of the service we provide to the community. Firefighters train two Tuesdays each month and participate in additional training on evenings and weekends. Our weekly training is facilitated by our line officers and additional training is provided by various partners such as the Allegheny County Fire Academy and the Community College of Allegheny County. West Deer VFC #3 also participates in Pennsylvania's voluntary certification program with 50% of our firefighters choosing to obtain the nationally recognized Firefighter I certification.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

During 2022, West Deer VFC #3 volunteers participated in many community and public outreach events. We view it as part of our mission and our commitment to the community to provide important services and safety education and to be present during public events in West Deer Township. Our members provided CPR training to residents of the Hytyre Farms and Steeplechase neighborhoods, installed and maintained smoke detectors free of charge to high-risk residents, provided fire prevention and safety programs to local preschools, participated in the Curtisville Elementary Center's Safety Day and hosted a Rabies clinic, among many other activities.



NEW BUILDING PROJECT

After acquiring the Krigger & Co building in 2021, the fire department spent significant time planning and preparing for the conversion of the building into a fire station and preparing to sell our old station. Much time was taken to consider present and future needs and to implement a fiscally sound plan that positions the company for success for many years. With the plans in place by mid-2022 this work began moving rapidly forward. The work will occur in three phases, the first of which is focused on the core needs of the company: space for operations and training and a social hall to facilitate fundraising. Phase two will enclose a “lean to” in the rear of the building to add space for decontamination, equipment repair and storage and training props. The final phase is a long-range plan to consider space for a volunteer “live in” program. Preparation and demolition were completed by members of the company and design, construction, and renovation is being completed by a variety of contractors.

Funding for phase I was obtained through the sale of our old building, the use of existing funds, an Assistance to Firefighters Grant through the Federal Emergency Management Agency and a mortgage through Mars Bank. Phase II is largely funded by a Gaming Economic Development and Tourism Fund (GEDTF) grant obtained with the support of our elected officials. Phase III is still in the long-range planning stage.

Now operating out of the new station, we anticipate renovations to be completed in the late spring/early summer of 2023. Once completed look for an announcement for a community open house for you to see the station that will serve you for the next several decades!



LOOKING FORWARD

2023 is a landmark year for the West Deer Volunteer Fire Company #3. Not only will the company complete the renovation of the new station, but this work is happening in the backdrop of our 60th anniversary of service to the community.

As a fire company, we are an “all hazards” response agency. To meet the evolving challenges of our work, our members will continue to train and grow their skills. Our company will constantly seek opportunities to engage with our community and grow our relationships with those we serve.

The coming years are not without their challenges. Increased training and responses require a greater commitment of time in addition to the need for constant fundraising. Costs of day-to-day expenses and equipment are growing at a significant rate. As an all-volunteer company, we rely on the generosity of our community to continue to provide the best services possible in a fiscally responsible manner.

We are always in need of new members and have a role for anyone that wishes to volunteer. If you are curious about becoming a firefighter, please contact us or stop down any Tuesday night to speak with one of our members about joining our ranks. All training and equipment is provided by the fire company. Time, effort, and a commitment to be involved are what we ask of you.

If you would like to help but don't wish to respond to emergencies, we accept members who simply want to help with our fund raising and community service events. We welcome your involvement if have the interest. For more information, please contact us or stop by any Tuesday night.

With your support, we can and will meet these challenges and look to a bright future for the fire company and our community.





***Thank you for you for your ongoing support of
West Deer Township Volunteer Fire Company #3***

Celebrating 60 Years of Service to Our Community!