Written by Mark Jaeger
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Department accepts $1,000 gift from couple

It was a year ago on New Year's Eve that a fire broke out in the garage of Terry and Amy Coughlin, but the quick action of the Saukville Fire Department prevented the blaze from spreading into the couple's home on Highway O.

The timing of that near-disaster was not lost on the Coughlins, who showed up at the fire station before a recent department meeting to show their gratitude.

"When they introduced themselves and said they wanted to thank the department for helping them out, I thought it was pretty nice," Fire Chief Gilly Schultz told the Village Board on Tuesday.

"You often hear people complain about things, but I told them I was just glad they took the time to stop by and say, 'Thanks.'"

Then the couple handed him an envelope, saying, "This is for you."

Inside was $1,000.

"I wanted to introduce them at the meeting, but they said they didn't want a fuss," Schultz said.

The chief told the village trustees the unexpected gift will be used toward the purchase of a thermal-imaging camera that will help firefighters see victims through thick smoke.

Schultz was equally happy to report that the department's new pumper truck was officially brought into service Monday evening.

"Five minutes later, it was sent out on its first fire call," he said.

The board meeting also gave Police Chief Bill Meloy the opportunity to recognize the village's two longtime crossing guards during Adult School Crossing Guard Recognition Week.

The annual recognition has become routine for Helen Galvin, who has been helping Saukville youngsters across village streets for 38 years, and relative newcomer Cindy Douglas, who has been on duty for 21 years.

"I remember when the chief first asked if I would do it. I told him I would try it for four days," Galvin said. "I guess I stretched those four days out a little."

After both guards were presented with proclamations, Trustee Jen Schoenfeldt said the street corner veterans have affected generations of local youngsters.

"They both helped me cross," Schoenfeldt said.

Meloy said Galvin also kept a protective eye out for both of his grown children when they were heading off to school.

“You are a credit to the Village of Saukville,” he said, noting that during one particularly tight budget year Galvin did her duty for no pay.

“Not many people would be out there, in all kinds of weather, facing traffic and clearing a path in the snow at their corner, knowing they were not going to get paid,” Meloy said.