

HISTORY OF THE WOODSTOCK FIRE/RESCUE DISTRICT

1851 - A fire originated in the office of the Woodstock Argus, which destroyed a block along Van Buren Street. Argus was located at the Southeast corner of Van Buren Street and Dean Street.

1856 - A fire engine is purchased for \$600. After testing it, it would not throw water.

September 15, 1857 - The County Board of Supervisors approves the construction of two cisterns in front of the new courthouse on Johnson Street, in part to be used for fire protection of the courthouse.

July 4, 1858 - A fire destroyed the first county court house building that was built in 1844 in the park in the square.

1871 - Wells are dug on the public square to be used in case of a fire.

October 8, 1871 - Nine buildings on Van Buren Street burned down from Dean Street to Johnson Street. This is the same day as The Great Chicago Fire and Peshtigo, WI fire.

1872 - A lot is purchased and an engine house is erected on Throop St.

August 27, 1872 - All buildings on Benton Street burned down from the Exchange Hotel on the corner of East Jackson Street to East Judd Street. Sixteen store buildings, one dwelling, and three barns are destroyed.

1873 - The Woodstock Fire Department is organized.

1880 - Thieves use dynamite to blow open two safes in a building owned by Timothy Dacy, which then was destroyed by fire, along with other buildings on the block.

August 10, 1886 - The first of two fires occurred at the Woodstock Brewery and Bottling Company.

1889 - The Woodstock City Hall is constructed. It includes a fire station along with the Opera House, library, and city offices. The Fire department moves from the engine house on Throop St. into the new station. The 300-pound bell that was used to alert firefighters is also relocated to the new facility that has a bell tower.

February 1892 - A fire broke out in the Waverly House burning it to the ground along with most of the buildings on the east side of Main Street going north. Harvard Fire Department assisted. Water was pumped from cisterns at the depot and in the park.

April 15, 1893 - The Livery Stable on Benton Street caught fire and took with it other buildings north to East Jackson Street, including the old "Rat Hole."

May 1902 - The second fire at the Woodstock Brewery and Bottling Company broke out and took the building to the ground. Harvard Fire Department was called for extra hose to reach the fire but it was too late.

HISTORY OF THE WOODSTOCK FIRE/RESCUE DISTRICT

December 9, 1904 - Flames spread from the floor under the “moving picture and stereopticon” equipment at the Opera House. Patrons panic and there was difficulty evacuating the balcony.

April 1908 - Hall and Eckert lumberyard experienced a fire that burned the building to the ground. A freight train engineer alerted the town of the fire. The city had only one operating well at the time, but Oliver Typewriter, which had its own reservoir, helped supply water.

January 3, 1911 - Fire alarm boxes are installed on street corners around town for people to activate in the event of a fire.

March 1914 - A fire which started in the basement of the city hall/opera house/fire station building spread to the first floor and was very challenging to extinguish. The fire caused considerable damage to the city electrical department, library and magistrate’s office.

December 2, 1919 - A fire destroyed the 1867 Public School.

January 28, 1936 - Subzero temperatures. Fire destroyed the last remaining wood structure on the square. The building was located at the northeast corner of Cass and Main, and housed several businesses at the time of the fire.

1939 - An addition is constructed and the fire department moves to the back (Calhoun Street) side of the Opera House.

November 18, 1944 – a referendum passed with 170 for and 6 against to form the Dorr, Seneca, Hartland, Greenwood Fire Protection District to protect the rural parts surrounding Woodstock. Trustees are Charles Wright, Walter Schuett, and Milton Stecker.

May 29, 1947 - The first engine is delivered to the Dorr, Greenwood, Seneca, Hartland FPD.

June 1947 – A contract is signed with the Woodstock City FD to house and man an engine for District calls. A siren is installed to alert the firefighters of the newly formed fire protection district.

1952 - Fire alarm boxes are removed from the street corners.

1956 - A major fire occurred at the Dacy Electric Company on Benton Street. The business was completely gutted.

June 1957 - The Dorr, Greenwood, Seneca, Hartland FPD separates from the Woodstock City Fire Department and moves to a garage on East Calhoun Street.

1960 - The Fire District forms their own department with 12 men and additional equipment. A garage is rented from Ernie Bohn (directly behind Bohn’s Hardware) on Calhoun Street and the Fire District moves in. Walter Parker is appointed as the first Fire Chief.

HISTORY OF THE WOODSTOCK FIRE/RESCUE DISTRICT

1965 - A building is purchased in the 400 block of East Judd Street from Stephys Body Shop. This provided a firehouse on the opposite side of the tracks from the City FD. Officers are Fire Chief Walter Parker; Assistant Chief Joe Burg; and Captain Richard Menzel.

October 1965 - A new firehouse at 435 East Judd Street is erected for the Dorr, Greenwood, Seneca, Hartland FPD.

1967 – The Fire District borrowed \$7,500 for a new chassis from Freund Equipment for a new tanker-pumper. Chief Walter Parker retires and the new officers are Chief Joe Burg; Assistant Chief Richard Menzel; Captain J. Baker; and Lt. Mel Hunt. Manpower is increased to 20 men.

September 1, 1968 - The Woodstock Rescue Squad is established and operates using volunteers and donations from the citizens of Woodstock. A board consisting of a President, Vice-President, and Secretary oversees the newly formed squad. The line officers are elected by the membership.

1968 - All McHenry County fire departments become Division 5 in the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS). A Woodstock Die Cast Warehouse in the 800 block of McHenry Ave. was destroyed by fire. The City Fire Department responds to 69 incidents.

1969 – Dick Menzel appointed Fire Chief replacing Joe Burg who had to step down due to change of employment.

March 1969 - The first two-way radio is purchased for the city fire engine and the City Fire Department responds to 66 incidents.

1970 - A four-wheel drive grass fire vehicle was purchased by the City FD (1744) and Fire District (441). The City Fire Department responds to 63 incidents. The McHenry County Fire Department Communication Association is formed and the Dorr, Seneca, Hartland, Greenwood FPD is assigned the 400 series call numbers and the City FD is assigned the 1700 series. The Fire District purchased Plectrons for the members replacing the telephone alert.

September 25, 1970 - Dorr, Seneca, Hartland, Greenwood Fire Protection District changed the name to the Woodstock Rural Fire Protection District.

1971 - One hundred four residents are evacuated from the Woodstock Residence Nursing Home after a fire broke out in the laundry room. There were no injuries reported. The City Fire Department responds to 62 incidents. Attorney Zanck appointed to represent the District.

1972 - Plectron radios are purchased for all members of the City FD. A committee is formed to create plans for a new firehouse on South Street. The City Fire Department responds to 70 incidents. The Fire District purchases a 1,600-gallon tanker/pumper (476). They also purchased the lot east of the fire station for expansion at \$15,000.

May 15, 1972 - A letter from Mayor Stuessy requesting the attendance at a special meeting of the City council regarding the possible annexation of the city into the District.

HISTORY OF THE WOODSTOCK FIRE/RESCUE DISTRICT

1973 - The Woodstock Moose Lodge donates \$1,975.54 to the Woodstock Rescue Squad. The City Fire Department responds to 63 incidents. A corn bin fire at Knoll's Grain on Short Street burned 300,000 bushels of corn over two weeks. A company that specializes in grain fires was brought in from South Dakota to aid in the extinguishment of the fire. Woodstock adopts the state firefighter II certification program. All new members must attend this 200-hour certification program. A squad truck (481) is purchased by the Fire District at a cost of \$5,625. Chief Menzel and Lt. Tom Parker institute a new training program and adopt a resolution to participate in the Illinois Fire Protection Training Act.

1974 - The City Fire Department moves into a new fire station at 120 W. South Street and responds to 97 incidents. A fire in the kitchen of the Elks Lodge caused enough damage in the floor that a piano fell through and burned through the roof. The Fire District borrows \$150,000 to construct an addition to the present fire station.

1975 - The Woodstock Rescue Squad answers 2,810 calls since being established. Phil Parker is named the Fire Chief of the City FD and they respond to 103 incidents. The department answered 38 calls during the month of October. An arsonist was arrested for starting many of these fires and given a seven-year prison sentence. A 75' aerial ladder truck is purchased from the Mad River, Ohio Fire Department for \$14,500.

1976 - The first diesel powered, 1500 GPM fire engine is put in service at the City FD (1736). The Tye Barn on Throop Street was destroyed by fire. Seven people were rescued from the apartments and taken to the hospital for smoke inhalation. Woodstock first state certified firefighter II's are Bob Schauer, Jack Berlin, Bob Pohlman, Bill Ueber and Phil Parker. The Fire District purchases a new mini-pumper/grass rig (422).

1977 - Chief Phil Parker recommends the adoption of the BOCA Fire Prevention Code. An agreement with McHenry County College was made to train county firefighters in the firefighter II certification program. A mock disaster drill was held near the county government center on Ware Rd. The City FD responds to 128 incidents. A 5,000-gallon underground water tank and pump are installed in the Crest View Subdivision.

1978 - The first females join the Rescue Squad. The City FD responds to 147 incidents. A major fire occurred at the Butter Nut Bread Store on Route 47. A disgruntled employee set a stack of cardboard on fire at the Elco Hillcrest Factory (Old Woodstock Typewriter Factory). The sprinkler system in the plant put out the majority of the fire. The Fire District purchases a new engine (436).

February 1st - Dick Menzel is hired as the full time administrator to the trustees and a paid on call Chief

1979 - The fire siren on top of the Opera house that was used to alert firefighters of a call is disconnected. Warren Olsen was hired as a fire inspector for the City. The City FD responds to 133 incidents.

HISTORY OF THE WOODSTOCK FIRE/RESCUE DISTRICT

1980 - The City FD responds to 176 incidents. Firefighter Paul Miotto was injured when he fell through the floor of a house fire on East Jackson Street. Captain Roger Crain passed away after a long illness. A base radio and 60' tower are installed in the station of the Fire District.

1981 - Pagers are purchased for all city firefighters and they respond to 174 incidents. A new chassis was ordered

1982 - The City FD purchases a squad that contains a generator with floodlights, cascade system, and command post capabilities. A seven-year-old boy died in a house fire on East Calhoun Street on Christmas Eve. City FD answers 155 calls. The Fire District purchases a Chevy Suburban and 28 men are members of the District.

1983 - A father saved his three children from a house fire on Seminary Ave. A cadet program was started for new members under the age of 21. Two hundred three calls answered by the city FD. The board of Trustee's expands to a 5-member board.

September 1983 - Leading officials from the Rescue Squad, Fire District, and City Fire Department meet to discuss merging all three emergency service providers into one.

January 1, 1984 - A tax is approved for the Woodstock Rescue Squad and the organization is officially designated as the city ambulance department. Safety rules are adopted not allowing firefighters to have facial hair or be allowed to ride on the tailboard or sides of the fire apparatus. The City FD answers 234 calls.

1985 - All county fire departments contribute to the purchase of a helicopter life net for rescues. The City FD hosts a Santa Reception after the Christmas parade. Firefighters contribute homemade cookies. Two hundred thirty-nine calls answered by the City FD.

1986 - A structure fire occurred at D.B. Hess on McConnell Road. The City FD is toned out for all medical helicopter transports from Memorial Hospital on South St. 275 calls answered by the City FD. A new four-wheel drive engine (437) is purchased by the Fire District.

1987 - The Cyro Custom Grinding Company on Lamb Rd. is destroyed by fire which lasted for 16 ½ hours. A 3 and 5-year-old drowned in the pond at Walden Oaks Apartment complex. 300 calls answered by City FD. Retired Fire District Chief Walter Parker passed away.

October 9th - A house fire claims the life of an elderly woman in the 300 block of S. Tryon St.

1988 - The City FD responded to 334 incidents, this is the most calls every answered by the department. An anhydrous ammonia tank leaked near the McHenry County Government Center. The neighborhood evacuated with no injuries reported. The first female firefighter joins the City FD.

August - A fire occurred in the Knuth Sporting Goods Store on Main Street. The roof and second floor were destroyed.

October 31st - A fatal house fire occurred in the 900 block of Hobe Rd.

HISTORY OF THE WOODSTOCK FIRE/RESCUE DISTRICT

1989 - A disaster drill was conducted in Emricson Park. National Can Company donated six self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). 315 calls answered by City FD. The Fire District purchases a squad truck (482). Squad 481 is converted into a dive squad.

1990 - Four hours into the year, a fire occurred in the old Saint John's Lutheran Church at the corner of Jefferson and Calhoun Street. The building was a total loss. A peat bog fire between McHenry Ave. and St. Johns Road was brought under control with the help of the Rural FPD and Wonder Lake FPD. The 1957 ladder truck was sold to Bull Shoals, Arkansas FD and a new 100' Aerial Tower (1794) was purchased for \$432,000. Two hundred sixty-three calls answered by the City FD. Fire Chiefs Parker & Menzel attend the National Fire Academy for Fire Protection Master Planning. An Emergency Services Advisory Task Force was formed to plan future fire and rescue response.

1991 - The City FD responded to 266 incidents. The new aerial tower was put to work at the McHenry County Government Center during the rescue of an injured construction worker. The first fire for the truck was a house hit by lightning at the corner of Jackson St. and Hayward St. A chlorine leak occurred at the City pool in Emricson Park, no injuries reported. The first fire safety festival was held on the square during fire prevention week, 2000 children attended. Ralph Webster is named the Chief of the Rescue Squad.

November 1991 - Three children die in a house fire on Melody Lane.

1992 – All County fire departments joined together in the construction of a training tower on the McHenry County College property. City FD responds to 231 incidents.

May 1992 - Two major fires occurred twenty minutes apart. At approximately 3:00a.m., an arsonist set fire to Pete's Antiques on Irving Street causing \$10,000 in damages. The second fire was started on the rear of Duffy's Tavern on Benton Street. Over \$5 million dollars in losses amongst four businesses that were destroyed and five additional suffering damage.

July 10, 1992 - While performing restoration work, a bricklayer is injured inside of the St. Mary's bell tower. The worker is rescued by the City Fire Department and Rescue Squad by using a stokes basket and tower ladder.

Beginning of the Woodstock Fire/Rescue District

1993

- April - A referendum passed to consolidate the Woodstock Rural Fire Protection District, Woodstock City Fire Department, and Woodstock Rescue Squad together to form the Woodstock Fire/Rescue District.
- The City FD responds to 231 calls up to October 31st.
- November 1st – WFRD District staff are: Administrator Ralph Webster, Fire Chief Dick Menzel, and Fire Prevention Chief Phil Parker. Trustees are Robert Kristensen, Veron Sarbaugh, Kenneth Marunde, and John Kunzie, one seat remains open.

HISTORY OF THE WOODSTOCK FIRE/RESCUE DISTRICT

- A 3,000-gallon tanker (472) is purchased replacing Tanker (476)
- December 1st - The Paid-On-Premise (POP) Program that staff's apparatus utilizing part time employees extends the staffed ambulance company from 6AM-6PM to 6AM-10PM.

1995

- February 1st - The POP program is extended to 24 hours a day and operates out of the South Street Fire Station
- April 1st, Remodeling has begun on the Judd St. Fire Station (Station 1) and the Service garage next door (White Garage's) is purchased.

1996

- February 10th - Dava National located at 333 E. Judd St. is destroyed by fire. A third alarm is activated that brings in surrounding fire departments to help with extinguishing the fire.
- April 30th – After 33 years of service to the District, Fire Chief Richard Menzel retires
- October 1st - A Personnel Manual is created to provide the membership with direction on business outside of responding to calls.

1997

- January 1st - Two additional personnel are added to the POP program during the day shift 6AM-6PM giving a staffing of four. This allows for a staffed engine company and ambulance company. The engine company "jumps" to an ambulance for second ambulance calls. Staffing decreases during the night shift (6PM-6AM) to two.
- May 1st - Staffing increases to 5 during the day shift to allow for a three-person engine company.

1998

- June 1st - A duty crew program is initiated which requires members to be "On-call" during the nighttime shift.

1999

- January 1st - A third person is added to the night shift. This allows for the three-person crew to jump between the engine and ambulance. A part-time fire inspection program is created.
- February 1st - A fourth person is added to the night crew.
- March 1st - A fifth person is added to the night shift. An engine and ambulance are now staffed. The duty-crew program is eliminated now that 5 people are on 24 hours a day.
- October 31st - The lease between the District and the City of Woodstock for the uses of the South St. Fire house expires.

HISTORY OF THE WOODSTOCK FIRE/RESCUE DISTRICT

2000

- April 1st - A new firehouse is built at 1325 Dean Street and the old firehouse located on South Street is closed. Six personnel are on-duty 24 hours a day, three at each station.
- September, 1st - A Pension Referendum is passed.
- Calls answered 2,417

2001

- December 1st - White's Garage that was operated by Jim White closes the doors for business. WFRD opens them back up and starts an in-house apparatus maintenance program. Routine maintenance is conducted by FF/EMT Wayne Lisenby.
- July 1st – Deputy Chief Terry Menzel is named second in command
- Calls answered 2,480

2002

- February 1st - A Fire Safety Trailer is purchased to help with educating school kids on fire safety.
- May 1st - The need for career firefighter/paramedics is discussed with a decision to hire 6 beginning January 1, 2003
- September 1st - Assistant Chief Phil Parker retires after 42 years of service to the citizens of the District.
- Calls answered 2,494

2003

- January 1st, - The District hires six full-time Firefighter/Paramedics: Debby Bailey, Brendan Parker, Danielle Reid, Karen Bush, Mike Hill, and Scott Nieman.
- The shift commander program begins and staffing is increased to 7. The part time officer core staffs the "buggy".
- July 1st – Assistant Chief Pat Burke assumes the fire prevention bureau duties left behind by Assistant Chief Phil Parker. A/C Burke works 32 hours a week in the Bureau
- November - Terry Menzel is hired full time as Deputy Chief.
- Calls answered 2,739

2004

- March 1st, A referendum requesting additional funding is unsuccessful.
- August – The District board of Trustees passes an ordinance that creates a foreign fire insurance board

HISTORY OF THE WOODSTOCK FIRE/RESCUE DISTRICT

- September, 1st - A \$279,780 federal grant is awarded to the District for the purchase of 86 sets of turnout gear, 1 clothing extractor, and vehicle exhaust systems for station 1, 2, and maintenance garage.
- September, 1st - The Lake/McHenry Counties Specialized Response Teams (LMCSRT) is established.
- November, 1st – A second attempt at a referendum is unsuccessful.
- Calls answered 2,754

2005

- January 22nd – A fire was set in an apartment at the Stone Lake Apartment complex.
- The “Minutes Matter” campaign is launched to help pass a referendum.
- March 10th - Edge town bowl is destroyed by fire
- March 21st – A fire destroyed a 156 year-old building at 3708 Franklinville Road. Firefighters attempted to enter to extinguish the fire, but the fire had already taken a hold of the building. A body was also discovered one hour into the firefight.
- July 1st – Two additional FF/EMT’s are added to staffing. Station 1 has a staffed engine, ambulance, and shift commander. Station 2 continues to operate as a “jump” company.
- September - A \$172,390 federal grant is awarded to the District for the purchase of portable radios and mobile data base computers for the front line vehicles.
- September 5th – Hurricane Katrina makes land fall on Louisiana and Mississippi. MABAS Division 5 is activated and the following WFRD members spend 14 days in the City of New Orleans providing Fire Department services; Chief Webster, Assistant Chief Harry Hunt, Captain Shawn Parker, FF/PM Andy Harding, FF/PM Pat Keefe, and FF/PM Brendan Parker all responded.
- October - Pat Keefe, Chad Williams, Ryan Mains, and Nick Weir are hired as full time Firefighter/Paramedics.
- Calls answered 2,965

2006

- January - Mike Brinkman, John Potoczky, and Matt Schultz are hired as full time Firefighters/Paramedics.
- July 1st, - Staffing is increased to 10
- July 17th - Patrick Ryan, Jeff Lesniak, Ryan Zbierski, Matthew Hedges, Nathaniel Burns, Timothy Schroeder, Scott Ritzert, Christopher Weber, and Michael Wurtz are hired as full time Firefighter/Paramedics.
- November 1st, - Staffing is increased to 12
- Calls answered 3,135

2007

HISTORY OF THE WOODSTOCK FIRE/RESCUE DISTRICT

- Lieutenant Brendan Parker receives the 2007 Firefighter of the year award. This is the first year that the District recognizes one member for outstanding work that they have completed to help the members provide the best service.
- May – An apartment fire occurred in the 700 block of St. John’s Road displacing 30 people. Significant heat, smoke, and water damage resulted in the apartment being a total loss.
- October- Brendan Parker, Danielle Reid, Karen Bush, Mike Hill, and Scott Nieman are promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. They are the first to be promoted to this rank.
- DeAngelo Cooke, Eric Vizanko, and Zach Beatty are hired as full time Firefighter/Paramedics
- August - The original fire bell from the first engine house of the Woodstock Fire Company is placed in the opera house tower
- Calls answered 3,532

2008

- Fire Chief Ralph Webster receives the 2008 Firefighter of the year award
- February - Aaron Krejci is hired as a full time Firefighter/Paramedic
- June - Doug Erb is hired full time as Division Chief of Training, and Mike Shannon is hired as full time Mechanic
- A new ambulance is purchased and housed at station 2
- December 18th – A house was set on fire on Sandpiper Lane. The home was a total loss.
- Calls answered 3,586

2009

- Division Chief Doug Erb receives the 2009 Firefighter of the year award
- Station 3 is constructed and opens at 2900 Raffle Rd
- December - Eric Lozowski, Jeff Randecker, and Scott Wessel are hired as full time Firefighter/Paramedics.
- December - A \$971,252 federal grant spanning over four years is awarded to the District for the hiring of 3 full time firefighters.
- Calls answered 3,429

2010

- Assistant Chief Pat Burke receives the 2010 Firefighter of the year award
- January 1st - A new ladder truck and engine are purchased. The truck (T81) is housed at station 1, and the engine (E33) is housed at station 3
- April - A \$306,830 federal grant is awarded to the District for the purchase of 45 self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA’s) and 1 SCBA compressor/filling station.
- Calls answered 3,496

2011

HISTORY OF THE WOODSTOCK FIRE/RESCUE DISTRICT

- Lieutenant Scott Nieman receives the 2011 Firefighter of the year award
- January 1st - Through an intergovernmental agreement, the Woodstock Fire/Rescue District provides services to the Village of Lakewood. The firehouse on Haligus road is staffed with three firefighter/paramedics
- May 1st - A new ambulance is purchased. It is housed at station 1 as Ambulance 51
- June - A record number of calls answered in one month, 412
- July 1st - A shift commander position is created and staffed 24/7. It is housed at station 1
- August 8th – Matt Gulli & Jake Biederer are hired as career Firefighter/Paramedics
- Calls answered 3,776

2012

- Lieutenant Michael Shannon receives the 2012 Firefighter of the year award
- January 19th - Eric Kristensen is hired as a career Firefighter/Paramedic
- February 16th - Matt Hedges, Patrick Ryan, and Timothy Schroeder are promoted to the career rank of Lieutenant.
- Calls answered 3,991

2013

- FF/PM Sean Baumgartner receives the 2013 Firefighter of the year award
- January 1st – The District begins the first-ever testing process for the position of Captains
- January 24th – Joseph Brunetti and Joe Flores are hired as career Firefighter/Paramedics
- March 28th – Karen Bush, Michael Hill, Brendan Parker, and Scott Nieman are promoted to the rank of Captain. They are the first to be promoted to this rank
- April 25th – The District received the Assistance to Firefighter Grant for Physical Fitness Equipment at all three stations.
- April 25th – Eric Vizanko, Zach Beatty, and John Potoczky are promoted to the career rank of Lieutenant
- June 27th – The District donates the rehab 5 vehicle to Metropolitan Emergency Support Services(MESS)
- August 22nd – Quinn Murphy and Tyler Webster are hired as career Firefighter/Paramedics
- October 31st – Ralph Webster celebrated his 20 year anniversary as the Chief of the District
- November 1st – The District celebrates its 20th anniversary
- Calls answered 3,997

2014

- Lieutenant Chad Williams receives the 2014 Firefighter of the year award
- February 7th, Firefighter/Paramedic Michael Wurtz (Badge #22) was laid to rest after a long and courageous fight with cancer. He dedicated 12 years of service to the residents and visitors of the District.
- March 6th – A fatal house fire occurred in the 500 block of E. Kimball Ave. claiming the life of one person.

HISTORY OF THE WOODSTOCK FIRE/RESCUE DISTRICT

- March 24th – Nate Burns and Jeff Lesniak are promoted to career rank of Lieutenant
- April 23rd – Brandon Teresi is hired as a career Firefighter/Paramedic
- June 26th – Paul Heideman, Adam Mass, and Jason Miller are hired as career Firefighter/Paramedics
- Calls answered 4,077

2015

- FF/PM Joe Flores receives the 2015 Firefighter of the year award
- A new shift commander vehicle is purchased
- Calls answered 4,222

2016

- FF/PM Tyler Webster receives the 2016 Firefighter of the year award
- January 1st - The District no longer provides FIRE/EMS services to the Village of Lakewood as the contract expired
- April 30th – The District decides not to fill the rank of Deputy Chief and Terry Menzel retires after 43 years of service at which 13 of those years were at the rank of Deputy Chief
- September 30th – Ralph Webster retires as Fire Chief after 33 years of service. He served as Fire Chief for 25 years
- October 1st- Michael Hill is appointed as the Fire Chief
- November – Three new thermal imaging cameras, one battery powered Hurst tool, and three cardiac defibrillators are purchased and placed into service
- December- A new staff vehicle is purchased
- Calls answered 4,189

2017

- Lt. Jeff Lesniak receives the 2017 Firefighter of the year award
- The Woodstock Police Department closes their dispatch center due to a state mandate. The Northeast Regional Communications Center (NERCOM) becomes the new dispatch center for the Woodstock Fire/Rescue District and Woodstock Police Department on May 1, 2017.
- A grant was awarded from ETSB in the amount of \$22, 754.00 for costs incurred from switching to NERCOM.
- Three cardiac monitors are purchased for the front line ambulances and three AED's are purchased for the front line fire apparatus.
- A battery powered extrication tool is purchased and stored on Engine 432. This tool is the first of its kind for WFRD as tools of this type are typically hydraulically driven by a gas motor.
- A new ambulance is purchased and housed at Station 2 as Ambulance 452.
- Calls answered 4,724

2018

- FF/PM Brandon Teresi receives the 2018 Firefighter of the year award.
- A new ambulance is purchased from Foster Coach and will replace Ambulance 451 at Station 1.

HISTORY OF THE WOODSTOCK FIRE/RESCUE DISTRICT

- A new engine is purchased from E-One and will replace Engine 432 at Station 2. Engine 432 will become reserve and Engine 435 will be sold.
- Financial struggles have driven the need to reduce minimum staffing levels from 14 to 12.
- September - A \$120,044 Assistance to Firefighters (AFG) federal grant is awarded to the District for the purchase of 3 Power lift/load cots. The cots also known as stretchers are capable of self-loading a patient into an ambulance taking away the chance of a back injury to the paramedic manually lifting and loading the cot.
- The Foreign Fire Tax Board funded the following items: Eight medication lockers, one battery powered extrication tool, thirteen sets of structural firefighting gear, and one enclosed trailer for the Specialized Response Teams.
- Calls answered 5,010

2019

- Lt. Zach Beatty receives the 2019 Firefighter of the year award.
- Ambulance 451 is put into service.
- A referendum is run to secure additional funding for paying off debt, purchasing equipment, maintaining minimum staffing of 14, hire administrative positions, and build reserves. The April 2nd election is successful!
- House Representative Steven Reick secured funding in the amount of \$87,500 for the installation of station alerting equipment at all three stations.
- Engine 442 is placed into service on April 12th at Station 2.
- Fire Commissioner John Brendel steps down from his duties after 12 years of service. Brian Lopprino is appointed.
- Brush Truck 462 is involved in an accident and becomes a total loss. A two-person all-terrain vehicle is purchased from the Wonder Lake Fire Protection District to be utilized as a fire suppression vehicle on wild land fires. A new mechanics truck is purchased for snow plowing and vehicle repairs that need to occur out on the road.
- Board of Trustee Member Richard Menzel elects to finish his term after 12 years (2007-2019) on the board. Noel Baldwin is elected to the Board of Trustees.
- Calls answered 4969

2020

- Captain Karen Bush receives the 2020 Firefighter of the year award.
- Eric Bobula is hired as a full time firefighter paramedic.
- The Emergency Telephone System Board (ETSB) awards a \$60,000 grant towards new portable radios.
- May 1st, minimum daily staffing levels return to 14.
- A \$1.4 million dollar SAFRE grant was secured for the hiring of 4 full time Firefighter/Paramedics. The grant will cover 100% of the cost of salary and benefits for three straight years. The four new full time hires are Alex Dubrock, Kyle Beres, Hayden Norris, and Daniel Jagman.

HISTORY OF THE WOODSTOCK FIRE/RESCUE DISTRICT

- Captain Karen Bush accepts a full time Deputy Chief position with the McHenry Township Fire Protection District. She leaves WFRD after 24 years of serve.
- Lieutenant Chad Williams is promoted to the rank of Captain
- Calls answered 4574

2021

- Lieutenant Nate Burns receives the 2021 Firefighter of the year award.
- Captain Brendan Parker is promoted to the rank of Deputy Chief.
- Lieutenant Matt Hedges is promoted to the rank of Captain.
- April 30th, Kenneth Marunde does not run for reelection and finishes his term after multiple years servicing the District as a Firefighter for the Woodstock Rural FPD and then Board of Trustee member for WFRD.
- May 1st, Patrick Burke is elected to the Board of Trustees.
- May 11th at 10:00, radio communications are conducted over STARCOM.
- A regional AFG grant has been award to the Woodstock Fire/Rescue District, Marengo Fire Protection District, Harvard Fire Protection District, and Union Fire Protection District in the amount of \$658, 041 for the purchase of STARCOM radios.
- An AFG grant has been award for the purchase of new SCBA's in the amount of \$208, 024.
- A new ambulance has been placed into service. Ambulance 453 has been decommissioned.
- Calls answered 5035. This is a new record for total number of calls.

2022

- Lieutenant Eric Vizanko receives the 2022 Firefighter of the year award.
- January 1st, Greg Antor, John Leu, Jeff Kurka, and Antonio Zamora are hired as full time Firefighter/Paramedics. This brings the total number of career members to 39.
- FF/PM Eric Kristensen writes a grant for public education equipment and is award \$2,200. The District is able to purchase a public address system and a stage for a puppet show.
- June 1st, A staff vehicle is utilized to respond to certain call types in place of Truck 481.
- MBI makes a \$15,000 donation that aids in purchasing extrication equipment.
- August, a new engine is placed in service at Station 3.
- The rank of Captain is changed to the rank of Battalion Chief
- Michael Klus and Jordan Stark are hired as full time Firefighter/Paramedics.
- Calls answered 5323

2023

- Firefighter/Paramedic Paul Heideman & Firefighter Tyler Webster are named Firefighters of the year.
- Michael Hill retires as Chief on January 1, 2023 after 28 years of service to the District.
- Brendan Parker is named acting Chief and promoted on May 1, 2023.
- January 1st Matt Hedges is promoted to Deputy Chief. Zac Beatty is promoted to Battalion Chief and Scott Wessel is promoted to Lieutenant.

HISTORY OF THE WOODSTOCK FIRE/RESCUE DISTRICT

- An ice storm causes power outages throughout the District. 128 calls are answered in 48 hours.
- The District creates an office assistant position that is filled by Deann Miller.
- A \$361,000 grant is awarded to the District from the McHenry County's American Rescue Plan Act. These funds will be applied toward the purchase of a new ambulance and all required equipment.
- A new ambulance is placed in service at Station 1.
- Deputy Chief Matt Hedges receives the 2023 Fire Prevention & Life Safety Award from the Illinois State Fire Marshal for his work establishing community risk reduction programs.
- 2023 marks 150 years of having an established fire department in Woodstock and 30 years as the Woodstock Fire/Rescue District.
- A gas main was struck during sewer cleanouts causing gas to enter into a home in the 300 block of Lincoln Ave. The house exploded causing significant damage to surrounding structures and breaking windows to many others. One firefighter was injured from the explosion and a second was injured from smoke inhalation.
- Battalion Chief Chad Williams starts working days as the Director of Training.
- November 1st. Lt. Jeff Lesniak is promoted to Battalion Chief, FF/PM Eric Kristensen is promoted to Lieutenant, and FF/PM Max Batton and FF/PM Sarah Papic are hired as full time members.
- December 28th. A new pickup truck (432) is placed in service at Station 2.
- 5,566 calls are answered.

2024

- Maxwell Batton is named Firefighter of the year.
- January 1st, Brian Flores, Ruben Carreno, and Andrew Townsend are hired as full-time members. All three previously served as part-time members with the District.
- April, \$15,000 is secured through the City of Woodstock Façade Improvement Program. The funds will be utilized to replace two pedestrian doors and four garage doors all facing Judd Street at Station 1.
- May 1st, the District puts 18 ballistic vests into service.
- June 1st, After 18 years serving the District as a Fire Commissioner and being one of the first Fire Commissioners for the District, Dennis Leard resigned. Bill Kulinski is appointed Fire Commissioner by the Board of Trustees.
- June 1st, Intergovernmental Agreements are signed with Nunda FPD, Cary FPD, Huntley FPD, Harvard FPD, & Marengo Fire and Rescue Districts to provide Communication Specialist services. Alex Vucha serves as the District Communication Specialist.
- August 23rd, Anthony Mowry is hired as a full time Firefighter/Paramedic. Anthony previously served as a part-time member.
- November 29th, Firefighter/Paramedic Scott Ritzert retires after 36 years of service. Scott joined the Woodstock Rural Fire Protection District on July 1, 1988.
- 5,670 calls are answered.

HISTORY OF THE WOODSTOCK FIRE/RESCUE DISTRICT

2025

- Jake Biederer is named Firefighter of the Year
- The Board of Trustees unanimously approved a five-year strategic plan.
- January 1st, Firefighter/Paramedic Danielle Reid retires after 27 years of service.
- February 10th, Nathan Sarver is hired as a Full Time Firefighter/Paramedic.
- May 29th, Scott Ritzert is sworn in as a Trustee of the District after winning the April Election over incumbent Noel Baldwin. Trustee Baldwin served a six-year term.
- June 7th, A new Pierce Enforcer 107' ladder truck is placed in service. The community was invited to a "Push-in" Ceremony to commemorate the vehicle going in service. The old ladder truck is sold to Sauget, Illinois Fire Department.
- June 30th, Trevor Nieman is hired as a full time Firefighter/EMT. Trevor previously served as a part time member.
- October 3rd, Lieutenant Patrick Keefe retires after 40 years. Pat started on the City of Woodstock FD on October 1, 1985. Jake Biederer is promoted to Lieutenant.
- October 6th, Joseph Bendewald, David Pecoraro, and Andrew Richardson are hired as Full Time Firefighter/Paramedics.
- October 23rd, the Board of Trustees hired the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association to conduct a Fire Station Feasibility Study. The study will focus on the locations of the current fire stations, and project where future fire stations may be located. The study will also determine efficiency of each fire station.
- December 3rd, The WFRD is notified of a collapsed roof at 318 Clay street (Thompson's Appliance).
- December 31st, A fire occurred at the Walmart store in Woodstock. The fire was contained by the automatic fire sprinkler system. All occupants evacuated with no reported injured. A suspect was later detained for starting the fire.
- 5865 calls are answered.

2026

- TBD is named Firefighter of the Year
- February, Lieutenant John Potoczky is the 2026 recipient of the Daniel J. Bower Commitment to Excellence Award, presented by the Associated Firefighters of Illinois Honor Guard.
- Honorary member Leo Riley handcrafted a wooden stand that will display the district's ceremonial bell. Leo served as a Captain with the Woodstock Rural Fire Protection District and Woodstock Fire/Rescue District.
- April 7th, FF/PM Alex DuBrock resigns from the organization. FF/EMT Izair Romero is hired full-time. Romero is enrolled in the paramedic program at McHenry County College.
- April, A new ambulance is placed in service.
- TBD calls are answered