

IMAGES

... then and now

From The Indian Hill Historical Society



Buckingham Lodge
1861

The Semple Award, Part II

Established in 1953, the Semple Award honors firemen and Rangers who have demonstrated outstanding service to Indian Hill. An earlier *Images* gave an overview of the award and some of the recipients. Two additional incidents in the 1970's resulted in the Semple Award for four firemen.

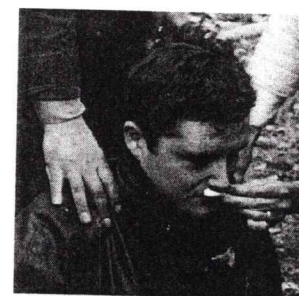
One March day in 1971, a passing motorist noticed smoke on Kugler Mill Road. When the Madeira and Indian Hill station received the fire call, all available firemen went to the address immediately, where they worked all day and into the night, assisted by Montgomery & Silverton Fire Departments. Chief Clifford Behrman's overall plan was to ventilate the house, followed by search and rescue, extinguishment, and salvage. Firemen entered from the roof, since at that time the department had no aerial ladder. Water came from the closest hydrant, at Loveland-Madeira and Camargo Roads.

Goebel Williams, Jr. and Ray Daniels began search and rescue. Through a first floor window, they could see a baby bed so decided to go in. Wearing rubber coats, long boots, and aluminum helmets, the duo punched through the door, and searched the bedrooms, sweeping the perimeter of each room. Since neither man had an air mask, they had to get out soon but still completed their search of the house to be sure no one was inside. Then, while working to extinguish the fire, they were overcome with fumes and taken to Bethesda North Hospital. After their recovery their selfless bravery under adverse circumstances was commended.

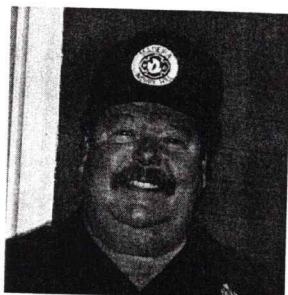
In 1978 a drowning child at Camp Stepping Stones was saved by two firemen. When the call came in, Mario Fucito, in Madeira, rushed to the Indian Hill Station to pick up Jack Phifer. As they arrived at the indoor pool, the lifeguard was giving the five-year-old mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. The firemen loaded the semi-conscious boy onto a cot and rushed him toward the hospital. Phifer affixed the airbag to the limp child, and he recalls thinking, "Little buddy, you've got to breathe!" The boy was in critical condition, due to lack of oxygen and trauma..

Fucito drove the squad car, and Phifer squeezed a bag valve to force air into the child's lungs and talked to him during the whole trip, first to Mercy Hospital and then on to Children's. For most of the trip the youth was lethargic; but before reaching Children's Hospital, he started crying very loudly—a good sign to the rescuers since he was moving air through his lungs. Later, as the boy recovered at Children's Hospital, Fucito and Phifer were praised for their role in his recovery.

For these two outstanding efforts Williams, Daniels, Fucito and Phifer received the Semple Award for heroic actions. All four exemplify the spirit expressed in the sign in Goebel Williams, Jr.'s office: "Teamwork, Sacrifice, Another Day on the Job..."



G. Williams, Jr. - 1971



J. Phifer-1997

Additional Semple Award Winners (not included in previous article)

Raymond Daniels

Sylvan Helfrich

Ed Koch

Jack Phifer

Mario Fucito

Mike Keeley

William Miller

Goebel Williams, Jr.