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## Stanley Hose Co. Is A Family Calling

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The Stanley Hose Company Volunteer Fire Department of Sherman — it is your father's fire department . . . and your grandfather's and your great-grandfather's.

"A lot of our members are second, third, or fourth generation firefighters - I'm a fifth generation member, myself," said Joel Fisher who serves on the Board of Directors.

This tradition in the Sherman area has also helped promote camaraderie among the department members, Fisher said. "We've always had a family atmosphere," he said. "We often hang out outside of the fire department."

No only do the members of the Stanley Hose Company serve the community, but they look out for one another. "If I have an issue, there are several people in the department I can call and they will be there to help," Fisher said. "For instance, one member needed help moving his elderly mother. He called the chief and the chief sent out a text, and within ten minutes, there were eight members there to help him."

The Stanley Hose Co, which was incorporated as part of the Sherman Fire Department in 1946, enjoys strong support from the community. "There's a lot of pride in the department," said Fisher. "We're a small, rural department without a lot of funding, but the community is super supportive."

Sherman Mayor Colleen Meeder



These photos depict history and a symbol of the Stanley Hose Co.

affirmed the support of the community. "There are a few essential elements in every successful community, one of which is in providing for its health and safety, of which Stanley Hose plays a major role in our active and aging community," she said.

Visitors to the department's website will learn that the company was named in honor of Frank Stanley Jr. who was killed in World War II. It is an all-volunteer fire department with 40 active members, who respond to calls in the Village of Sherman, as well as the Towns of Sherman, Chautauqua, and Westfield, serving about 2,400 residents.

The department averages approximately 370 calls per year involving not only homes and businesses, but the Sherman School District, four churches, a senior citizens housing complex, four lumber mills, numerous farms, a cattle feed mill, a waste transfer station, a twenty-six inch

natural gas transmission pipeline, and state forest lands.

Members of the department also commit themselves to fundraising efforts in order to remain current with equipment. "I've written a ton of grants and we do a lot of fundraising to try and get the equipment that the volunteers deserve," said Fisher.

Meeder noted that the 2026 Annual Fund Drive is just kicking off. "The 2026 Donation drive has just begun," she said. "The greater Sherman community recognizes the value of Stanley Hose and generously supports the company."

Department member and building trustee Jay Irwin commends Fisher for obtaining grants for the department. "Joel has written many grant applications and that has been pivotal for us," Irwin said.

Irwin also concurs with Fisher's description of the department's family atmosphere. "Our fire department is very

strong and we work very well together," he said. "Everything works so smoothly because of the camaraderie we have."

Part of the camaraderie in the department is honoring the members who have passed away. "A few years ago I had the idea of getting the bell and ringing it at the end of every meeting," he said. "I thought it would be a nice tradition to ring the bell and take a few minutes of silence to honor them."

Like all volunteer fire departments, the Stanley Hose Co. consistently recruits new members. "We're always looking for new people. We have pretty good manpower right now," Fisher said. "There's a lot of training and time involved and people are busier than ever these days."

Meeder recognizes the work that the Stanley Hose Co. has done to maintain its membership. "Nationwide there is a crisis of declining volunteers. We are so fortunate to have such a dedicated membership of volunteers," she said. "Stanley Hose Company has done an excellent job to recruit and build the next generation of young members to keep the company strong."

The benefits of belonging to the department make volunteering worthwhile. "I wish other people would join and volunteer to see what it's like," Fisher said. "There is just such a good feeling when you help somebody in need."

Fisher and Irwin noted that it all comes down to the volunteers' dedication to caring about others. "We have that 'we've got your back' attitude," Fisher said.