

A Message to South Marysburgh Community Members

It is my pleasure to introduce myself as the Principal of Athol-South Marysburgh Public School. I have worked for the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board for the past 10 years, most recently as the Vice-Principal at Prince Charles Public School in Belleville. Prior to working in administration, I spent time as a Classroom Teacher, In School Resource Teacher and as a Special Education Coordinator at the Education Centre.

A thank you to those community members I have had the good fortune to meet. You have welcomed me warmly into your community. I look forward to working together with students, parents/guardians and community members to provide a rich, challenging learning environment where the interests and needs of all students are met.

Alison McDonnell

Principal,
Athol-South Marysburgh Public School

Smoke - Cont'd from page 1

Fearing your house is about to burn down is bad enough, but we had even more on our minds. It was our turn to provide and prepare the elements for communion at church that morning and we were already late. We quickly decided that I would stay in the house and wait for the firefighters while Frank rushed the needed supplies to South Bay United.

I didn't have long to wait. Within what could only have been a couple of minutes, Greg was at the door. He had just started assessing the situation when Richard appeared, followed closely by Glendon, then Randy, and before we knew it, a whole host of firefighters was on the scene as well as a fire truck and an emergency van.

I won't leave you in suspense. There was no fire. There wasn't even a smell by the time the firefighters arrived. Even so, they examined the area carefully and ruled out various possible causes before they left.

My point in writing this article, though, isn't to talk about the fire that never was, but to laud our volunteer fire service. Its members are fast, they're skilled, and they're very reassuring. None of them even hinted that there might be more enjoyable ways of spending a Sunday morning than investigating a smell that came and went before they got there. They emphasized that we did exactly the right thing in phoning 911, and stressed that we shouldn't hesitate to phone 911 again if the smell came back.



Local Fire Hall

Frank and I were extremely impressed with the speed and expertise of the South Marysburgh volunteers who came to our aid, and deeply grateful that our community has such a fine service. It's one more reason, and a crucially important one, the County is a good place to be.

Glendon Walker, district chief of the South Marysburgh Fire Department, one of seven fire departments in the County, later gave us some details about how the service operates. At the County level it is supported by the chief, the deputy chief, a fire prevention officer, full-time firefighters, and administrative personnel. Closer to home, the all-volunteer South Marysburgh district service has ten firefighters, a training officer, two captains, and a district chief. They train regularly two nights a month, and also take part in special training activities from time to time. Seven of the members are qualified medical first responders who are called out by ambulance dispatch for cases of uncontrollable bleeding, breathing difficulty, absent vital signs, and situations where the ambulance will take more than 15 minutes to reach a South Marysburgh location. The service's equipment includes a pumper, a tanker, and an emergency response van

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Continued on page 8