

New group of volunteer firefighters welcomed at council



Taking part in Tuesday night's celebration were Fire Chaplain Jeff Enns, Fire Chief David Forfar, acting mayor Rob Mezzapelli and Deputy Chiefs Mark Wallace and Darryl Bailey.

By Bill Rea

Being a firefighter is an honoured calling, and that was stressed at considerable length Tuesday evening.

The Caledon council meeting concluded with ceremony recognizing promotions at various fire halls in Town, as well as the official welcome of 28 new volunteer firefighters.

Mayor Allan Thompson was unable to be at the meeting, but Councillor Rob Mezzapelli, himself a full-time firefighter in Toronto, conducted the session, stating it was a "distinct pleasure" to be able to recognize the on-going commitment these people were demonstrating to the Town. He especially acknowledged the way they have to balance that commitment with their obligations to family, full-time employment and the other demands on their time.

He also welcomed the new firefighters.

"The work that you do is very important," Mezzapelli observed, adding firefighters represent the Town and numerous events in the community.

He also recalled it was about 20 years ago that he went through a similar ceremony, commenting on "the great career that you are embarking on."

"I wish to thank you for stepping up to the plate for your community," Fire Chief David Forfar told the incoming firefighters, telling them they will be helping neighbours, friends, family and many people they've never met, in a lot of cases, assisting them on the worst days of their lives.

He also warned them they will go through the complete range of emotions while they're on the job.

"You have just joined the best profession in the world," he told them. "Welcome to the world of firefighting."

He also urged them to always try to do better at every task, read to advance their skills and learn to listen. Forfar stressed the importance of going home after every call, warning that problems tend to develop during the most routine situations.

"Take nothing for granted," he urged.

Forfar too expressed thanks for the sacrifices they will make to their family lives.

"The community will never thank you enough for your services," he said. "I am very proud of all of you. You are a very classy group of people."

Fire Chaplain Jeff Enns also offered congratulations for bringing safety to the community and their families.

"You are heroes and you will be heroes to many in need," he said.

He also reminded the new firefighters they are human and will have needs resulting from some of the things they will encounter on the job.

"Know that as a team, we are here to help you in your career," he said.

The new firefighters are Harris Belanger, Sean Borden, Christopher Quayle, Martin McCulloch, Jeff McIntyre, Amanda Arthur, Vincent Sanniti, Anthony Berne, Mark Sutton, Sabrina Caruso, Benjamin Espejo, Tyler Mulder, Parker Wilson, Daniel Gove, Eric Demelo, Blake Galle, Shawn Varrall, Dave Galler, Kyler George, Frank Sills, William Greene, Jake Goonoo, Paul Coyne, Greg

Finch, Mitchell Gourley, Scott Price, Joseph Colonna and Alex Shepherd.

The promotions announced Tuesday included Rod Coulter and Scott Miller as district station chiefs; Colin Hanna and Colin Berry as assistant district station chiefs; and Mike Kirk, Darryl Thompson, Chris Teeter, Dan Van Amelsvoort, Paul Bateman and Tyler MacLachlan as station captains.