

How It All Started

Established in 1960

Prior fire protection was furnished in contract by Hume Volunteer Fire Department, Cridersville Volunteer Fire Department, and the Lima Fire Department. Board of Trustees – Dale Hover, Lloyd Bowsher and Fred Zuber pursued the idea of having a fire department belonging to Shawnee Township. Hume Fire Chief – Arthur Yoakam was approached by the Board of Trustees to advise what would be needed to form a Fire Department. It was determined what equipment would be needed and type of manning necessary to adequately provide protection for heavy industrial areas. Full-Time Firefighters would be hired to supplement a volunteer corps of firefighters. Aerial ladder truck and certain pumping requirements would be needed for the department. A special levy was placed on the ballot for funding. Arthur Yoakam was hired as the first Fire Chief of the department – 1959 Salary of \$7,200 per year.



Fire House was built by Stedke Construction Co. on Ft. Amanda Rd. on land leased from Allen County. The First fire truck arrived in late 1959 before any firefighters were hired. It made its first official response out of the newly constructed station on a car fire at Buckeye and Ft Amanda roads. Chief Yoakam and a visitor the Fire Chief from St Marys was on station before anyone else had been hired. The first firefighters hired as full-timers made up 2 platoons working an average of 76 hours per work week. Ten were hired and paid \$363 per month each. Volunteers were also placed on the roster in 1960, 20 members originally joined.

Initial equipment consisted of: 1959 Ford 75-foot Pirsch Ladder Truck, 1959 Ford 1000 gallons per meter (gpm) pumper / 600 gallons of water, 1959 Ford 750 gpm pumper / 1000 gallons of water and a 1959 Chevy panel truck / 250 gallons. Radios and pagers were not available so notifying the volunteer firefighters was accomplished by a large 7 ½ hp siren mounted on top of the roof of the hose tower. (Still in service) Dispatching was done out of the fire department by firefighters at first, after that, by retirees. The department was preparing to officially answer alarms in June 1960 but after crews were formed and before all training was complete the community started calling their own department. Dispatch facilities remained in the F.D. for several years until the new administration building was completed. July 1965 First Crew Officers were appointed: Robert Deubler - Captain, Harold Rahrig – Captain, John Feison – Lieutenant and Farrel Welch – Lieutenant

1974 Emergency Ambulance service established and 9 more personnel were hired. 1977 Advanced Life Services provided by Paramedics. 1979 Fire Prevention Bureau established and headed by John Truesdale. February 1986 Hume Fire Department transferred to the STFD – Building, 2 trucks and 15 Volunteer Firefighters and all turn-out Gear. Initially identified as Shawnee District 2 station. District 2 Hume station was decommissioned in 2005 as it became obsolete to keep it open.

Chiefs in Order of Appointment

Arthur Yoakam 1959 - 1977

Dale Brown 1977 - 1984

Harold Rahrig 1984 - 1986

William Litsey 1986 - 2000

David Belton 2000 - 2002

Tim Mosher 2002 - 2009

Todd Truesdale 2009 - Current

The Ladies Auxiliary has been supporting the operations of Shawnee Township Fire Department for many years. Audrey McCune was one of the founding members of the organization in the 1970s. The Ladies remained active for nearly 25 - 30 years. In the late 1990s and early 2000s the group did not function as an organization, but Audrey McCune along with Kenny provided support to STFD when rehab was needed on fire calls. Theresa Paxson also assumed this important function. In spring of 2008 interest was initiated by STFD personnel spouses. The organization was revitalized and numerous women committed to making the organization a successful part of STFD.

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