

Explorer post sets precedent as model Firefighting program

HOLDEN— Explorer Post 2012 has trained teenagers in town to fight fires for 25 years, but Holden Fire Chief John Chandler III told the Board of Selectmen last night that other towns will benefit now too.



“The Massachusetts Call Volunteer Fire Association will use Holden as statewide model and selected Lt. Mike Rosen, Explorer Post 2012 senior adviser, to serve as state coordinator of its Junior Firefighters and Explorers programs,” Chief Chandler said.

“This is by invitation only and is quite prestigious. He has also been selected to serve on the National Volunteer Fire Council in Washington, D.C.”

Explorers and Juniors Firefighters are similar in that both serve as call, or volunteer, firefighters; the difference being that Explorers come under the insurance and liability protection of the Boy Scouts of America.

Post 2012 has 22 returning members after one left this year to join the U.S. Army and three left to become full-time firefighters. The Explorers have been trained in hose evolution, first response and CPR, how to distinguish structural fires and chimney fires, and how to read maps and navigate by compass when assisting in search and rescue missions.

“Hopefully after high school, I will be a firefighter EMT,” said Mike McNulty, who is a junior at Wachusett Regional High School and accompanied his post leader to the meeting.

“This gives me a head start. For anyone who wants to work in this field, the Explorer program is a good kind of head start.”

Selectman Kimberly N. Ferguson said she could attest to the hard work and service that the Explorers provide in town.

“I never knew how much training they go through,” she said.

The first town to establish an Explorer Post 2012 model will be Clarksburg, which Lt. Rosen said should be launched in January.

Chief Chandler credited Lt. Rosen’s leadership of the Explorer Post for the past eight years with its state-model worthiness. In addition to being a 30-year veteran of the town’s Fire Department, Lt. Rosen is also a full-time nurse at St. Vincent Hospital in Worcester.

“We provide the guidance, they provide the work,” Lt. Rosen said in an attempt to deflect the praise. “Watching them, that’s what it’s all about. That’s where I get the satisfaction.”