

To the Greater Ithaca Community,

Most of our family members' early lives were established in Ithaca and its neighboring communities and rural areas. We went to school there, established friendships, shopped in the local stores, and most importantly, it was there that the importance of "community" was instilled in us. Typical of developing years, we accumulated memories.

As we went about our lives, even into adulthood, we enjoyed the comfort of knowing that local fire departments were there should our families experience an emergency. For us, that reality was made more significant as six members of our family, spanning three generations, were part of that service to the community.

Regardless of our place in that chain, parent, spouse, child, or department veteran, we always feel nostalgic when we pass that historical red brick building, an anchor in downtown Ithaca, known as the "Fire Hall." It stirs in us our firm belief in the significance of community service, and for small towns, it is vital to their survival.

These are challenging times for small towns and the rural areas surrounding them. Reduced populations, rising costs, and increasingly limited sources of funding place burdens on local governments in their continued provision of necessary services to citizens.

The Ithaca Fire and Rescue Department and its expanded service area are important to the health and safety of the citizens it serves, and because of our associated history, our sympathies lie with it. Life has taken some of us away from the area, but wherever our current residences, we feel a connection to the area of our roots. It is in that spirit that we have partnered with the department in establishing this fund drive, and we welcome everyone to help us support their continued efforts to maintain their standards of service.

We're proud of our family's heritage and role in the area's history, and we honor all fire department veterans of the past, including many multigenerational families. To those current IFRD department members, we thank you for your service, and we are excited to participate with you in this financial support campaign as together we celebrate the greater Ithaca community, inspired by our mutual affiliation with that red brick building.

Mike and Kelly Howes

Fred and Lois Howes

Kris and Amber Howes

Ken and Janet (Howes) Zimmerman

Amy Zimmerman