

on the MOVE

SERVICE



Matthew Scott/Staff photographer

Eric Hawkins, one of the many teens who serve their communities as volunteers, rushes through the firehouse at the South Side Volunteer Fire Company in Owego. He has been involved with the fire company since he turned 16.

Some people take several years before they finally get around to volunteering.

Then there's Eric Hawkins, whose desire to join his volunteer fire department had been there most of his life.

"My grandfather and uncle were members. I'd wanted to do it since I was 5 years old," said Eric, a parishioner at St. Margaret Mary Church in Apalachin, Tioga County.

Eric fulfilled his wish shortly after turning 16 — the minimum age required to become a member of the South Side Volunteer Fire Company in Owego. Just three years later, he's already "shot up the ladder" to the rank of assistant chief.

More importantly, his emergency medical training enabled him to help save a friend's life last April.

While on a trip to Toronto with his International Club from Owego Free

Academy, Eric was summoned to the hotel pool because a classmate, Amy Washburn, was drowning.

Eric and other friends helped pull Amy from the pool, and Eric began artificial resuscitation on Amy. She resumed breathing, and a Toronto ambulance that had arrived on the scene then took her to a local hospital.

"The nurses at the hospital told us that we probably saved her life," Eric said. He added that she has made a

full recovery. Being ply his t such a c ment, Er ally good Much influenc Zawacki paved by and fath Durin wrote c cards we ents, Sta turned rectly inv eling to facilities and Gro There, s were ser drug pos child ab Teresa one year deny. Sl her dad prison-r in the di mates. "I saw There's a to their l Holy Tri Teresa inmates teams' e "Thes and thei they're g said. "Tl ... to kno care anc

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