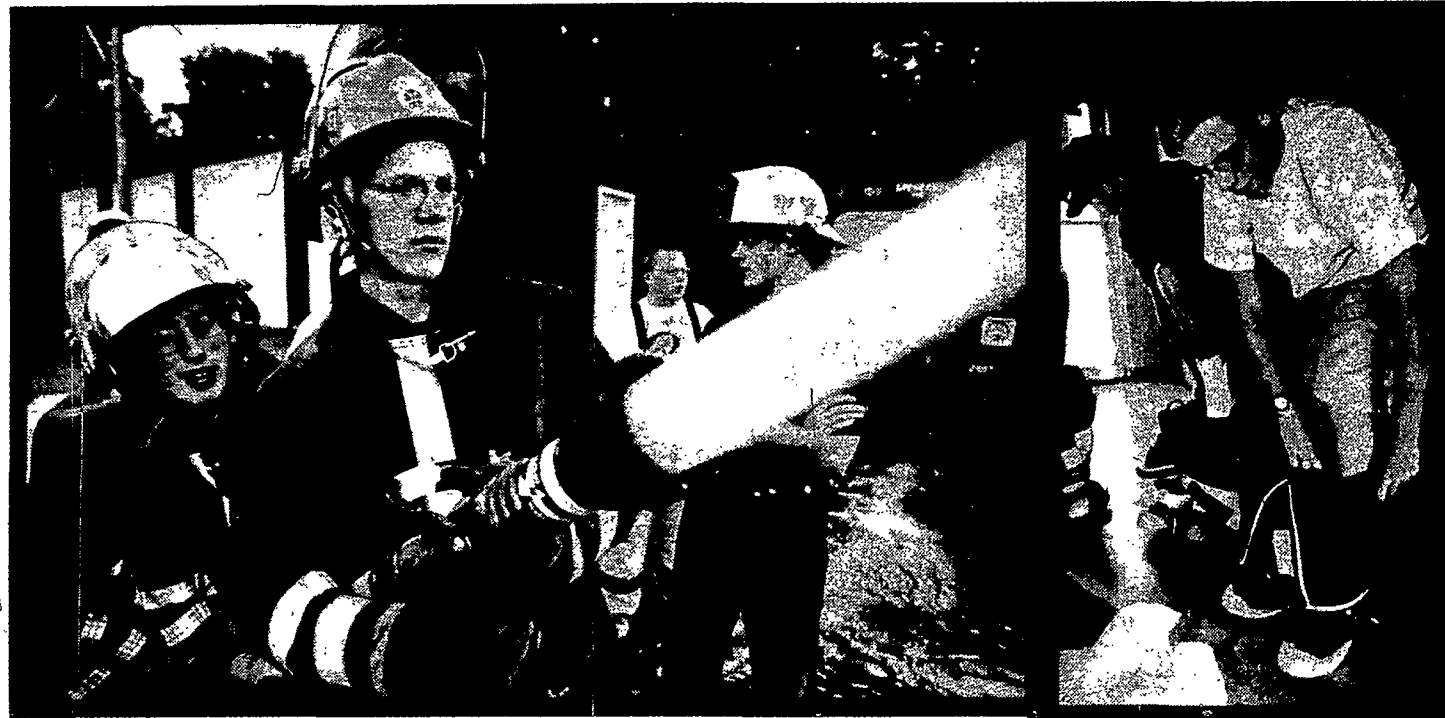


MOVE on the



EXPLORING



STORY
BY
MIKE
LATONA

PHOTOS
BY
GREG
FRANCIS

WAYS TO SERVE

Volunteers in emergency service are committed to work that might end up saving someone's life.

But they aren't looking for glory, they say. All they want is to serve their community.

"You want to make a difference, to be able to say 'See that person, I was able to help them out — save their life, save their front porch,'" said Tim Fowler, 17, who volunteers with the Spencerport Fire Department.

"I just like helping people, basically. If you're in trouble, you turn to a police officer," said Tom Stubbings, 16, who is active with the Monroe County Sheriff's Department.

"People who I've helped in accidents, they come and thank me. I love it. It's

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Top left: Spencerport Fire Department Explorers Post 533 Chief Tim Fowler, right, and President Ken Fools handle a firehose in an exercise at the firehouse July 7. Top right: Fowler, 17, right, and Fools, 18, step into their firefighting boots and pants. Bottom left: Fools, left, and Fowler respond to a quiz by Spencerport past Chief Dave Spencer during a planning meeting at the firehouse. Bottom right: Spencer, left, attaches a foam fitting to a firehose prior to an exercise.

incredible, really," said Tim Matthews, 18, a member of Greece Volunteer Ambulance.

All three young men are involved in emergency service through the Boy Scouts of America's Exploring program. Exploring, open to boys and girls ages 14 to 20, offers young people a hands-on look at career opportunities.

According to information provided by the Boy Scouts' Otetiana Council in Rochester, emergency duty is among a wide range of Exploring options. Others include auto mechanics, dentistry, computer science, engineering, nursing, broadcasting, tool-and-die, photography and zoology.

Tom said that Exploring has helped him solidify his decision to pursue law enforcement as a career.

"I'm having no second thoughts. I love it," said Tom, 16, a parishioner at St. Ambrose Church in Rochester. "It gave me a chance to get out there and see what it was really like."

Tim Fowler pointed out that Exploring doesn't require an absolute commitment to a particular career.

"It's a trial, basically. You don't have to be 100 percent into it when you join," said Tim, a parishioner at Spencerport's

St. John the Evangelist Church.

Tim is chief of Explorers Post 533, overseeing 23 other Explorers. He noted that prior involvement in Scouting is not required by the Exploring program.

"All you have to do is come down to the fire house any time and, basically, fill out a form," Tim said.

Emergency-service Explorers receive training in such areas as CPR and first aid. And, by working alongside professionals, they get a close-up view of the work and also perform some hands-on duty.

Tom, who belongs to Explorers Post 604, said he enjoys going on eight-hour patrol shifts with sheriffs.

"It's just like being a deputy. We're partners for a day," Tom said.

Meanwhile, Tim Matthews goes on a number of ambulance calls as a member of Explorers Post 713. Because he is certified in CPR and first aid, Tim is permitted to take blood pressure, apply bandages to control bleeding, and check for vital signs.

Having been at the scene of some grim accidents — including fatalities — Tim Matthews noted that emergency work can be challenging.

"People who haven't been wearing their seat belts, they'll have cracked their heads against the windshield or get thrown from the car and they'll be bleeding all over. But you can't let it get to you. Otherwise you're not going to be able to do your job," said Tim, a member of Our Mother Of Sorrows Church in Greece. He is also president of the Monroe County Fire and Emergency Response Explorers Association.

Explorers can play a valuable role in averting disaster, as was the case with Tim Fowler last Labor Day. While clearing debris off a road after a bad overnight storm, Tim and some other Explorers realized that live wires were lying in the path of oncoming vehicles.

"We were stopping traffic, trying to figure out what was going on," Tim said.

Tom and both Tims plan to stay involved in emergency work as adults. In fact, Tom — who just finished his sophomore year at Bishop Kearney High School — said he'd like to major in law enforcement at college.

Tim Fowler and Tim Matthews begin college this fall. Though they won't pursue emergency duty as careers, they plan to continue volunteering at home and, possibly, at school.

Tim Fowler said he hopes to become a certified firefighter by the age of 20. One of his inspirations is deeply personal: His late father, Robert, was a longtime volunteer firefighter in Spencerport.

In early 1997, Tim and his dad were involved in a freak accident while responding to a call during a major windstorm. A big tree collapsed on their car, and Tim's father was killed.

"When I get tired and feel I can't do this anymore, I think, 'Do it for your dad,'" Tim said. "I say that I have to go to this call, because that's what my father would have wanted me to do."

Coming next week:
Teen tutor

Kids' Answers
from page 7

"They shall not hunger
or thirst." (Isaiah 49:10)