

Smalltown

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Junior Firefighter ranks growing

If you are not related to someone at the Smalltown Volunteer Fire Department, chances are very good that you know someone that is connected to the fire department in some way or another. I suppose that is why the Junior Firefighter Program at the Smalltown Fire Department is constantly growing.

The Junior Firefighter Program was founded in 2011, and consists of youth aged 16 to 18. It was designed to teach safety and basic skills required for firefighting. The Junior Program has a mission statement of: "To maintain a safe environment for youth to gather within the community, to learn about the many aspects of the fire service, and to provide avenues for positive social interaction for youth within the program, and for youth within the community."

This group of young Smalltown firefighters in training has been busy participating in parades and helping with fire prevention activities at local events. This year the juniors won first place as the Best Appearing Youth Group at the Savage Fest Parade. They also accepted the award for Best Appearing Community Group at the Glen Burnie Memorial Day Parade, and the Third Best Youth Group at the Laurel Main Street Festival Parade.

The Junior Firefighters meet at the fire hall in Smalltown the second and fourth Sundays of the month at 2 p.m. If you would like to get more information or an application, please contact them at (204) 123-4567.

It's not all work and no play for these youngsters. To balance out the intensive training the Junior Firefighters of Smalltown complete, they plan dances at the fire station for enjoyment. The dances are held one Saturday each month. The next dance is scheduled for July 16. The dance is for children aged 9 to 15. The cost per person is \$5.

The money raised from the monthly dances is used to purchase equipment and uniforms for the Junior Firefighter Program. Mike Barnett, an organizer for the dance, told me that the tickets usually sell out quickly.

As with any youth event, chaperones are an important part of the dance. Any parents that would like to chaperone are welcome. The Junior Firefighters would like to take this opportunity to say thanks to some of the regular chaperones, who willingly volunteer their time. Thank you to Vicky Giddings, Rob Butler, Margie Butler, Mary Wise, Paul Poligardo, Mike Barnett, Beth Englehart, Angel Harnek, Terri Hines, Donna Pecoraro and Cassie Merlo-Scruggs for helping out as volunteer chaperones.