

Willow Street firehouse campaign exceeds goal

WILLOW STREET, Pa. - More than \$300,000 for the building campaign fund towards the construction of a new firehouse have been received by the Willow Street Fire Company, it was announced here Tuesday evening during a "Victory Dinner" held at the Willow Valley Restaurant.

Hosted by the John and Marlin Thomas families, owners of Willow Valley, the occasion was one of celebration and recognition. Organizers and planners for the campaign fund had set a goal of \$250,000. By 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, the official tally stood at \$300,445 and money was still coming in. According to Stanley Haverstick, president of the Willow Street Fire Company, the figure represents an average donation of \$75 to \$80 for every man, woman and child in the Willow Street area.

While praise and gratitude was expressed towards all who joined in the effort, a few received special recognition.

The Thomases were called forward several times in honor of their financial support and donations of foods and meeting facilities. Tuesday night's banquet for nearly 200 people was "on the house," - just one example of the numerous contributions made by the Thomases:

"Tiny" Neff, a volunteer fireman himself, was singled out for extraordinary sales efforts. Soliciting more than \$82,000 in building campaign funds, Neff was given a plaque, large trophy, and respectful standing ovation.

Robert Kemp, honorary chairman of the campaign, called the effort "a tremendously successful undertaking for a community of this size," adding that studies have shown that Americans donate more money to worthy causes per year than they annually pay in income taxes.

According to Dan Lake, who served as emcee for the program, construction has started. The new firehouse will be located adjacent to the Keystone appliance and electronics store, Route 272 North, in downtown Willow Street.



Mr. and Mrs. John Thomas receive a special plaque of recognition on behalf of the Thomas families. The Willow Street Fire Company, and its many supporters, had high praise for the Thomases on Tuesday evening, thanking them and acknowledging their most generous support and outstanding community service. The group of nearly 200 people, who participated in the "Victory Dinner" acknowledged their appreciation by way of a standing ovation. Making the presentation, above, is Glenn Mellott, representing the Willow Street Fire Company.



When completed, the new firehouse in Willow Street will look like this. More than \$300,000 were given by residents in the area towards its construction. "Pacesetters Founders" were: Willow Valley Farms, Wenger Implement, E.M. Herr Equipment, Willow Street Ladies Auxiliary, Paul B. Mellinger Mfg., S.S. Fisher Welding, Mellott Brothers, Andrews Excavating, Shenk's Florist, Diller Plank, Graphic Arts, Inc., Burkholder's Used Cars, Dr. John Black, Joseph Chalala, and Benjamin Kendig, charter member.



"Tiny" Neff solicited more than \$82,000 in funds for the new Willow Street firehouse. Robert Sullivan gives the award.



Nearly 200 people joined in the celebration of a successful building fund campaign. Dinner was "on the house," -- one of many contributions given by

the Thomas families, owners of the Willow Valley Restaurant.

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