

Saying 'thank you' to local firefighters on Sept. 11



Talk of the Town

REGINA FORD

Retired Lt. Col. Frank Sartanowicz, 81, and his wife Jane spearheaded a big "thank-you" dinner for local firefighters Sept. 11 in memory of their fallen comrades and those who survived New York's World Trade Center tragedy.

"We also wanted to thank our local firefighters for all they do throughout the year in our community," Frank said.

"It's a more personal way to show our gratitude than a ceremony and a bunch of speeches."

Green Valley Fire District's three stations—151, 152 and 152—all had turkey dinners.

He and his wife prepared smoked turkeys, along with yams and Boston baked beans for all to enjoy.

Topping it off were Jane's delicious pies.

The Sartanowiczs served dinner to the firefighters, paramedics and EMTs at Fire Station 153.

Frank enlisted the help of fellow Green Valley Elk member Shirley Pavlovich, the head of Elks Lodge #2592 community activities to contact other Elks members to help out at the other Green Valley stations.

Exalted Ruler Chuck Frey helped find cooks and servers, too.



ENJOYING A SPECIAL Sept. 11th meal were (left to right) GVFD firefighter/paramedic Mike Downes, EMT Nicole Gibson, firefighter/paramedic Jason Moore, firefighter/paramedic Diane Vetter and paramedic Kelly Averett.

He also arranged for the turkeys to be prepared in the Elks' kitchen with Chef Fred Hall.

Besides the Green Valley Fire District personnel, firefighters, paramedic and EMTs at Rural/Metro Stations 79 and 82 in Sahuarita were also treated to turkey dinners in appreciation for all they do.

Frank contacted the *Green Valley News* prior to the Sept. 11th event and loads of people in turn, phoned him to help out in any way they could.

Frank wishes to thank members of the Monday Afternoon Duplicate Bridge Club at Desert Hills who made donations; the men of the Monday Afternoon Poker Club who made donations; the Green Valley Elks Lodge #2592 for

preparing the dinners (including Chef Hall) for GVFD Stations 151 and 152 and lending some financial support; Beverly Carey for preparing and serving dinners; Sue Ray and Lillian Kenelly for preparing and serving dinner to the crew at Rural/Metro Station 82; Tom and Philomena Curran for serving the dinner to GVFD Station 151; Tom and Twyla Bright for serving the dinner to GVFD Station 152; Bashas' manager Reyes Piñon for the

food donation; the *Green Valley News and Sun* for its support; and all the people who responded to the call for help in this event.

GVFD Capt. Tom Louis said, "It was an honor and a privilege to be treated to such a fine dinner and we (GVFD) are very grateful. It's one of those things that makes working in Green Valley so special."

Frank, a former P-61 Black Widow night fighter pilot in WWII and intelligence officer

in Korea, is already in the planning stages for next year's 9-11 thank you dinner.

He would like to get the Tucson Elks clubs on board and has hopes that this appreciation dinner might grow to be sponsored by Elks clubs across the United States.

By the way, Frank's birthday was Sept. 11, so that's a wonderful way to celebrate!

Many happy returns!