

To Whom It May Concern:

When defining the characteristics of a firefighter, words of courage, bravery, honor, integrity, tradition and brotherhood come to mind. The Stowe Twp VFD was created on NONE of these. When Fleming Park and West Park formed the Stowe Twp VFD in Dec 2007 they buried their brotherhood. The Presston VFD 277 was excluded from the Stowe Twp VFD by a 2 to 1 vote. In such a dishonest and non traditional way, the two removed from service the oldest fire company in Stowe Twp. Est. in Feb 1905 as Stowe Twp VFD No. 5, aka the Presston VFD was removed from providing fire service in Stowe Twp on Dec 31, 2009. The Stowe Commissioners refused to recognize the Presston VFD with of over 100 people in attendance at the Jan. 12, 2009 meeting. Voicing their objections in support for their hometown fire department, they feel this is an unjust tragedy as the majority voting block of 5 West Park commissioners act to once again treat the Presston area as a second class district. Stowe Twp VFD replaced the two Class A Pumpers the Presston residents were able to provide from their years of generous contributions with a pump on a pickup truck! Many questions were asked of the commissioners which were not answered. I also wonder how many of the Stowe VFD members support this, I've talked with many and they don't know what this is all about.

This started Dec 2007 with a vote taken by Stowe VFD removed Presston VFD from an organization. Not done by the Commissioners! Consolidation of 3 departments needed for a grant for new firehouse on Broadway, all 3 need to do. Not True, Senator Fontana confirms only 2 can merge. Is Fire Protection better today? Even though Presston VFD will be in service with McKees Rocks, Stowe Fire Chief Gallagher will not call for the Presston Area. Will insurance increase, Marty Jacobs stated they are looking to improve ISO rating. ISO looks at firefighters available and pumping capacity. Stowe Lost 2 pumpers and 25 firefighters, how is that bettering the fire service?

Is it enough reason to remove Presston VFD for not wanting to merge? Then we just recently learned we do have insurance until the end of January through Stowe. We were told we do not have insurance spitefully, so we can not support the McKees Rocks VFD while we transition insurances to the McKees Rocks Boro. Is this personal against us?

Look for our future fundraising efforts in 2010 to **KEEP the 5 Alive**,
Kevin Kochirka, President
Independent Hose Co. #5