

To: Menlo Park Firefighters Association
From: Jim Lichtenstein
Subject: Firefighter of the Year - Rex Ianson
Date: October 14, 1993

It is my pleasure to nominate Rex Ianson as Firefighter of the Year, 1993. Rex sets the standard for involvement in his job, and in care for the District, its customers, and his fellow employees.

As a firefighter Rex is outstanding as a worker, and especially as a teacher. Although he will deny it, Rex has inspired more firefighters to do their jobs well than the training division has. By that I mean that Rex challenges young firefighters to enjoy the excitement and satisfaction of a job well done.

I learned roof operations from Rex. I continue to learn from Rex every day that I work with him. I have had many conversations with young firefighters who have said similar things. He is always the last to take a break, he is always the first to find the next job.

On the roof Rex is an expert and a tireless worker. On the hoseline Rex is the one pulling the rest of his crew inside with him. As unlikely as it sounds Rex actually ENJOYS overhaul, and will not leave the firescene till it's done.

Rex is a very good medic, always making helpful suggestions at medical calls. He is first to flood a line, work up an assessment, or help in any way. I can rely completely on Rex on any medical call.

One of Rex's strongest points is rescue and extrication. Working a car crash is a very successful experience, because he knows the equipment, the systems, and he sees ahead during the call. His experience and attention to detail make working with him a very stress-free exercise.

Rex is an active member of the Urban Search and Rescue Team, and his enthusiasm is an inspiration to those around him. With the team, he travelled to Hawaii in the wake of Hurricane Iniki, has participated in training exercises statewide, and he has developed close personal ties with the NASA-Ames component of the team.

Around the station, Rex equals his tireless worker status. We have learned to rely on Rex for a wide variety of functions. He is always a good listener, and takes everything in from all sides, before rising to any conclusion. His fairness, and the wisdom of having seen more history than most of us, are always evident in his decisions. At those moments when I become most discouraged, it is always Rex who awakens my own sense of dedication, and brings me back in. I have had many conversations with other firefighters who say exactly the same thing.

As the senior statesman in his station, and as a board member of the Association, Rex has gained the respect of those around him. His recent re-election to the Board stands witness to this. His last service was as president of the Association.

Rex is a regular participant in firefighter athletic

competitions, bringing us his awards for his efforts in racquet ball.

While his personal cadence is legendary, he accepts the constant ribbing of his fellow firefighters with good humor.

As an asset to the community, Rex is constantly active. Whether participating with Christmas in April, or working at the Easter Egg Hunt, we will always find Rex present and working on community projects. Among the unsung leaders of the charge during the Measure C campaign, Rex was the inspiration for many firefighters who were not sure they cared enough to participate, before they talked to him.

Rex has taken a leadership role with the Fire Prevention Demonstrations over the past few years. He has gathered a crew and directed the activities of the tower portion, which is the premier attraction of the demonstrations.

Rex lives in this district, and enjoys contact with a wide variety of local personalities. As such, he is in a good position to promote the good of the District, which he does constantly.

I recommend Rex Ianson to you without the slightest hesitation. I hope you will find him to embody the spirit and the professional comportment of our Association, as I have.

I am certain that Rex will argue that he is nothing special, that all he does is what he should be doing. In the days when he first started here, that may have been true, but society has changed, and our group has changed with it. Fewer and fewer of our members show the same undying dedication to duty. To have spent all those years through thick and thin, still retaining the can-do drive, speaks to an outstanding spirit.

I urge you to elect Rex as Firefighter of the Year, and officially elevate him so that we may point our younger members in his direction and say: "This is what we mean you to strive for."

Sincerely,

Jim Lichtenstein,
Association Member