



COUNTRYSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

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A. LEWIS LANDRY, CHIEF

FRANCIS L. WOLOWIC, PRESIDENT

04-26-1997

1997 NAVET Awards Program Committee
29 Stilman Road, P.O. Box 97
Lynnfield, MA 01940-0097

Gentleman:

I respectfully nominate Tim Wirfs of Wirfs Industries, 4021 W. Main St. McHenry, IL 60050 for your 1997 Technicians of the Year Award.

The Countryside Fire Protection District has had a long and harmonious relationship with Tim. When I assumed the responsibilities of maintaining our departments vehicles in 1989, my predecessor already had a working relationship with Wirfs Industries. The best advice he gave me was to continue to work with Tim. Since that time I have had many opportunities to have Tim work on our vehicles. I say, with all honesty, that we have never been disappointed with any work his shop has performed for us. We travel about twenty miles to bring our apparatus to his shop, but I feel that I will get the best service possible and this is well worth the extra travel time.

Our department prides itself on our equipment and we consider our fleet of fire apparatus to be one the best in Lake County Illinois. We have invested a considerable amount to purchase and maintain these apparatus. As head of maintenance, I have been directed to keep our apparatus in like new condition. We have an aggressive in house program for routine maintenance, but when larger repairs are needed, Wirfs Industries is our first call. While we have many fine repair shops in our immediate area, we consciously choose to bring them to Tim. We know our equipment will be repaired correctly and in the fastest time possible. An example of his response to meeting our needs is when his shop replaced a 500 gallon water tank on our Pierce squad truck in 3 1/2 days. While the down time for this vehicle was extremely short, there was not one single problem found after the apparatus was returned to us. I personally inspected the vehicle and could not find one missing screw anywhere. In my estimation that is attention to detail in the first degree.

Each year I budget for apparatus upgrades. By doing this I look to improve how to make our apparatus more adaptable and improve our capabilities. Last year Tim reworked the compartment, on our Squad, that holds our Hurst Tool. He personally came out and helped me design a new layout for utilizing this compartment. I was amazed at how well it turned out. He was able to utilize every inch of available space. This worked so well we are having him do our Station Two squad this year. I continually ask him what new ideas he has come up with on jobs for other departments to help me plan for our apparatus. In doing this I feel I can keep our equipment as close to cutting edge as possible.

I feel Tim is capable of solving any type of problem. When I say this, I mean he is not proficient in one or two areas. He can handle, with expertise, all facets of repairs. From chassis, electrical, brakes, pumps, valves, drive lines and so on. He is the best I know. He is also a magician at fabrication and welding.

While I can continue to expound on his skills as a repair artist, I would like to mention his ethics. He has never once done anything more than we have agreed on. He is so good at estimating what needs to be done that we never get a call with the famous "After we got into it we found" words that seem to double the cost of the original repair estimate. I have found that he will fix items and not pass the cost on to us. I believe he feels that because he might have missed something we should not be responsible to make up for it.

What has impressed me the most is when the firefighters know we are sending a vehicle out for repairs, they ask if we are sending it to Tim. I know they feel better knowing that the department is making every effort to provide them with the highest quality equipment to do their jobs and Tim is a very important part of this equation. I can not stress enough to give Tim every consideration for your Technician Of The Year Award. You could not honor a more deserving person.

If I can help by answering any questions you might have about Tim, please call me at 847-367-5511 Black Shift.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael J. Hodges". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael J Hodges
Captain
Countryside Fire Protection District.