

1973

Assistant Chief John R. Siebold

Leroy Township Fire Department

A measure of the dedication of a public servant, especially one who serves on our safety forces, is the sacrifices that they make. Some of those revolve around family, friends, missed social opportunities, etc. Assistant Chief John Siebold of the Leroy Township Fire Department exemplified that dedication when he missed his own awards ceremony because he was fighting a barn fire in the township. The ceremony went on without him at the Kirtland Country Club on November 14, 1973.

Chief Siebold became the first fireman from Lake County to win the prestigious award. He was a charter member of the Leroy Fire Department, a volunteer department. Siebold worked full-time for the Painesville Telegraph as a production manager. However, with his accomplishments in the fire service, it was evident that he held two full time positions.

Chief Siebold was the secretary of the Lake County Fire Chief's Association. He had a passion for training and was instrumental in establishing the Lake County Regional Fire School. He was a state fire instructor and held training sessions for many of the areas fire departments. He attended numerous state and regional fire schools.

Siebold would tell the News Herald that he heard about receiving the award at about midnight, while still on scene of the fire. He was exhausted at the time as he had worked all day, but expressed his surprise and pride in being the first honored fireman. He stated that his wife had provided the Blue Coats with information, and knew that he was being honored. "She kept a pretty good secret," he said.

Siebold would get his overdue personal recognition from the members of the Blue Coats when he was introduced at their awards dinner in 1974.

Chief John R. Siebold passed away on May 8, 2005, at the age of 77.