

Grand marshal



Ed Ward will be grand marshal of the Fourth of July Parade during the 2011 Mohawk Valley Independence Day Celebration. Chief of Graeagle Fire Department, EMT and restaurateur of Graeagle Restaurant, Chief Ward has served the community in an exemplary way, and for a long time. Since his childhood here, the firehouse has drawn him as the place to be, as if it were home. Responding to calls for help from the local community means being there for people whom Ward has known perhaps his whole life. The extended community of visitors and regional residents get the same personal response, in addition to whatever emergency help they are in need of. Responding to people is just what Ward does. Throughout Ward's life of building the emergency and medical response capabilities of the Graeagle Fire Department, he has mentored the volunteers and residents in a way that is totally natural to him: genuine and pragmatic. He is a people person. That's what motivates him. Ward also has some advice to give. To youth, Grand Marshal Ward says: Have a plan and follow it, but have a plan B, too. It's OK to deviate from the plan some, but have a plan and a backup plan. The backup plan is critical. To the retired, Grand Marshal Ward recommends: Stay involved. The experience of our elders holds families and communities together. Elders can lead the way in keeping families strong.

Photo by Trish Welsh Taylor