



20, 1984, under the chairmanship of Robert Berger and Elliott Auerbach, who nurtured the development of what has become another traditional fundraiser (photo, below, from 1993 event). *Squad* President T. J. Briggs recently commented that one of the most impressive aspects of the annual fundraiser is that 97% to 98% of all money donated actually goes into the *Squad's* bank account.

At the recent *Ellenville First Aid & Rescue Squad* dinner celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the *Squad's* founding, President Briggs talked about the beginning of Advanced Life Support Services by the *Ellenville Squad*, which will provide paramedic services day and night, every day of the year. "This is one of the benefits of the new tax support," he said. Asked about the *Squad's* financial picture, he noted that finances are "currently stable."

In researching the history of the *Ellenville First Aid & Rescue Squad*, certain phrases are repeated again and again. "The success of the *Squad* is primarily due to the unfailing support of its volunteer members, and the generosity of the people in the area that it serves." When the community says "Thank you" to the *Squad*, the *Squad* replies "Thank you for your support." Community support came, through the years, from local businesses, from *Channel Master* to owner/operator stores in the area, from factory workers to philanthropists, from teachers, and housewives, and students, from lawyers and from laborers, from hotels and from their guests who had been helped by the *Ellenville First Aid & Rescue Squad*.

As always, the local history files of the *Ellenville Public Library & Museum* provided many pages of news-

paper clippings and photocopies of documents. Historical photos, including the cover picture, were gleaned from the scrapbooks at the *Squad's* HQ.

Thanks to Ray Butler for copies of Matt Stopard's reminiscences and the "Good Samaritan" article about Harold Ray, test deskman in Ellenville, from the May 1958 Telephone Review of the New York Telephone Company.

Thanks to Matt Stopard for his memories and his years of service.

Thanks to Eli Bernzweig for his inspiration fifty years ago, a man who lived here only a few years but who created a lasting testimonial to volunteer service.

Thanks to Frank Hyatt for filling in some of the gaps with anecdotes about his 35-40 years of *Squad* service. He referred to the Ellenville group as the "mother squad" for neighboring squads in Rock Hill, Mamakating, and similar communities where they conducted training sessions and acted as teachers and mentors until those squads were fully operational.



Present and former squad members were generous with their memories, all offering similar comments about the satisfaction of being able to help people in need. Some, like T. J. Briggs, had begun as teenagers, part of a *Junior Squad* organized and led by Norman and Shirley Kaplan in 1975. Bill Martineau's name was frequently mentioned, among others, but the *Squad's* long tradition of working as a unit, without individual acclamation or publicity, has created a culture of recognizing the group's effort, always "the *Squad*." The *Squad* has carved for itself a position of high praise and recognition.

Congratulations on your 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, *Ellenville First Aid & Rescue Squad*, and a standing ovation of gratitude from those you have served so well!

