

Fire truck bound for Argentina

BY STU SKERKER FOR THE SUN CHRONICLE

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Plainville firefighter Adam Meier on Saturday drives a 1984 pumper, which has served as Engine 2 for the town's fire department, onto a flatbed truck while Shawn Castro, left, of Cooks Towing, adjusts the bed. (Staff photo by Martin Gavin)

PLAINVILLE - A retired fire truck is being donated to a small village in Argentina that lacks modern firefighting equipment.

Working through the 911 Fund out of New York City, the Plainville Fire Department and the town voted to donate a 1984 Emergency 1 Pumper to a small village in the South American country that doesn't have any modern firefighting equipment, according to Fire Chief Ted Joubert.

The pumper that is being donated was purchased by Plainville in 1984, and was put into service as Engine 2, serving the town for 25 years.

According to Joubert, the engine's cost of repairs and reliability became a burden on the town, and was replaced in 2008. The average lifespan of a front-line pumper is 15 to 20 years, depending on its call volume, Joubert said.

The 911 Fund also collects gear and firefighters' other essential firefighting equipment that foreign nations may not have. Joubert said the village that is getting the pumper previously received 15-20 sets of the coats, pants and boots that firefighters wear while fighting fires, which Plainville had to retire. He said the town retired the equipment because it no longer met the safety requirements and specifications set in the United States.

He said a fire is just as hot in Argentina as it is here, and the firefighters in that village have been fighting fires without any equipment.

The 911 Fund finds a village or community in Central or South America that has minimal or no fire protection equipment, and then tries to get them donated equipment.

The fund takes care of all expenses including shipping and refurbishing the apparatus.

The fund was born from the experience and firsthand knowledge of the New York City firefighters and emergency personnel who worked at the World Trade Center after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, according to a news release.

Joubert thanked selectmen for donating the pumper to the fund, pointing out that the truck could have been sold for scrap. He said the firefighters in Argentina will get more use out of the pumper than the town would have realized had it been sold for scrap.