

9 December 2003  
113 Hawk Dr  
Glenshaw, PA 15116

Mr. William Schneider  
Vice President  
Evergreen Fire Company  
2127 Babcock Blvd  
Pittsburgh, PA 15209

Dear Bill:

Having now endured almost a full year of personal attacks to my character and repeated unwarranted questions and accusations about my loyalty to Evergreen Fire Company, it is with deep regret that I find I am left with no alternative but to resign my position as President of Evergreen Fire Company effective 11:59 p.m., December 31, 2003. Recent continued attempts to deliberately undermine the responsibility and authority of the position to which I was elected, have reinforced my position that Evergreen Fire Company is being manipulated by a few individuals for their personal gain and control.

As a very principled man with high business ethics and a strong sense of right and wrong, I am unwilling to remain as the President of Evergreen Fire Company under current circumstances. I am unwilling to continue to contribute daily while members of this organization fail to cooperate fully with a lawful police investigation into missing money from our April 2003 fundraiser. The collective failure of our members to fully and completely cooperate with the Ross Township Police Department will surely result in the denial of the claim filed with our insurance carrier. This denial will ultimately result in a significant financial loss to the Evergreen Fire Company.

Despite opinions expressed to the contrary, Evergreen Fire Company is indeed obligated by our insurance contract to *“fully and completely cooperate with all investigations conducted by law enforcement or insurance investigators”*. A quick review of our insurance policy will confirm this information. Unfortunately, this failure to cooperate also has possible future consequences for Evergreen Fire Company including increased insurance premiums based upon our loss history or potential loss of coverage altogether based upon being identified as a bad risk.

You should understand that beyond the business jeopardy that these actions place upon the Fire Company, once the information becomes public by the improper actions of free speaking members who have disregarded the Board of Directors and Fire Company requirement of confidentiality, there is significant risk of loss of donations, internal and external audits of the finances and the inescapable fact the there will remain a thief or thieves among us.

**As you are aware, there can be no dispute that a significant amount of cash was taken from the overall fund-raiser held in April 2003 and the individual(s) who boldly engaged in this action have stolen from each and every member of this Fire Company. Additionally they have betrayed the very public trust that they agreed to uphold.**

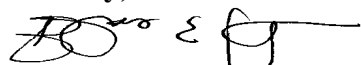
**It is incredible to me that the same members who would have me support the suspension and the calls for expulsion of another member for allegedly appearing “drunk and staggering” at a fire call (an unproven allegation) expect me to sit idly by and ignore the criminal theft of thousands of dollars. Even an irrational person would find this incredibly unacceptable.**

**I refuse to be the puppet President that some members want, one that sits by and has his strings pulled by the various factions within the Fire Company. I refuse to provide required research, guidance and direction from the chair only to allow vocal members to criticize, challenge and ultimately overturn this guidance in direct violation of Pennsylvania Non Profit law. This is not what I agreed to when I was asked to serve as President.**

**I remain proud of the efforts made by my administration in 2003 to restore some financial controls and accountability to the Evergreen Fire Company. I am very proud that as I leave office I have been able to oversee the more than doubling of the cash reserves of the Fire Company than I was confronted with one short year ago. In addition, it is extremely rewarding to have been able to bring the Horton Township apparatus purchase issue to conclusion by depositing the final, long awaited \$ 5,000.00 check that was owed to Evergreen Fire Company.**

**I would like to thank those open-minded members who were willing to consider changes for the betterment of Evergreen Fire Company.**

**Sincerely,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben Hess', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

**Ben Hess**

**Cc: Jeff Carpenter – Secretary  
Board of Directors**