

Party to honor Syracuse's new fire chief, Mike Downes

Unless a big fire breaks out in the city tomorrow, the new Syracuse fire chief, Michael Fitzgibbon Downes, will be feted at a dinner party at Weber's Restaurant for family members and relatives. The party will be hosted by his aunt, Mary McMahon Kelly of Onondaga Hill.



**JOE
GANLEY**

The new chief's wife and high school sweetheart, Joan (Morgan), will be there along with eight of their nine children, the exception being son Dan, who is enroute with the U.S. Navy in Somalia to France and so will miss the festivities.

The children and spouses are Kathy McCabe of Camillus; Mike Downes, who lives with his parents at 135 Conifer Drive, South Side; John and Karen Downes of North Syracuse; Tim and Patty Downes of Otisco; Tom and Maureen Downes of Canastota; Mary and Douglas Welker of Salt Springs Road; Maggie and Bill Washburn of East Cheltenham Road; and Patty Downes of Mountainview, Calif.

There'll be 70 or more attending the party, including Virginia Downes of 111 Harding Place, widow of the chief's brother, Ted Downes, former WFBL and WSEN radio entertainer. Also aunts, uncles and cousins from the Syracuse area and relatives from Arizona, Toronto, Rochester, Washington, Asheville and Philadelphia.

And it can be expected that somewhere along the way, Chief Downes will strum his ukulele and sing a few songs. And recalling, probably, some of the comedy skits he and his late brother, Ted, put on at a variety of functions over the years before Ted's death in 1984.

Old-timers will recall the shows Mike and Ted put on for St. Michael's Church, Onondaga Hill, including "Raise the Roof" and "For the Love of Mike," and the James Players presentations for St. James Church. (Old-time radio listeners will also recall Ted's radio shows with Bill Merchant and their "Granny Groove" character.)

gelist parish and served in the Navy as a "frogman" and worked for Kelley Bros. Hardware before becoming a fireman 37 years ago. His first post was at Engine No. 1, then located on Montgomery Street across from City Hall. For 15 years, Downes headed the school which trains all local firemen. He also trained volunteer firemen in the Syracuse area for the state.

In 1963, the new chief won the Hendrick's Medal for bravery when he rescued a resident from a burning building.

The chief's roots go deep into fire activities. His great-grandfather, for whom he is named, was a lieutenant in the city department in the 1890s and early 1900s, and a son, Tim, is a member of the department.

We join the chief's many friends in congratulating him on his advancement to the top of the Syracuse Fire Department. And hope he enjoys the get-together.

IN CAZENOVIA, Cazenovia College's 11th annual Early American Craft Show and Sale, held in late November, raised \$11,394 for the college's Scholarship Fund.

The event was sponsored by the college's Central New York Alumni Chapter and the Alumni Association.

JAZZ FANS are reminded that the Jazz Appreciation Society of Syracuse (JASS) is sponsor of Bob Livingston and the Golden Grill Jazz Band Sunday, Jan. 23, from 5 to 9 p.m. at Drumlins, 800 Nottingham Road. The tab is \$10 at the door. Call 492-9669 for more information.

FUND-RAISERS:

■ The Onondaga County American Legion will hold a jamboree from 2 to 8 p.m. Sunday at the East Syracuse Post, 135 W. Manlius St., East Syracuse. Host band ECKO will be joined by other bands and singers. The donation is \$2. Proceeds will benefit the Onondaga County Sheriff Department's K-9 Unit.

■ The Delphi Falls Volunteer Fire Department will serve a pancake breakfast, including maple syrup, sausage, eggs, home fries, orange juice and, of course, pancakes, from 8 a.m. to noon Sunday. Patrons who bring a canned-food donation will save 50 cents on the breakfast price. Call Betty Dana at 655-4297 for more information.

■ Single Friends of Central New York will hold a dance Saturday from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 135 State Fair Blvd. The tab is \$4. Music is by Unlimited DJ Service. There'll be soda, snacks and a 50-50 raffle.

If you have items for this column, call 470-2219 or write: Joe Ganley, CNY, P.O. Box 4915, Syracuse, NY 13221. Please include a daytime phone number and print proper names.