



MR. MIKE SALERNO AN 'UNSUNG' DEDICATED CIVIL SERVANT

Dan Tousley | Circuit Rider III

The *Bible* instructs us to give credit where credit is due and that is what I am going to attempt with this *Aquafacts* article. In our travels as circuit riders we encounter a full gamut of public employees, some of which cause us to really appreciate the ones we meet who are exemplary in the performance of their duties. Please don't misunderstand me; by far the majority of public employees are responsible individuals serving us well. On occasion though, we meet someone who is exceptionally well qualified and dedicated to their position of responsibility and leadership.

Mike Salerno is just such an individual and I'm proud to consider him a friend. He is a working foreman for the Village of Lyons in Wayne County. He supervises and works with a crew of five or six employees. His responsibilities include the village water system, the streets department, and the maintenance of several village trucks and construction equipment. He has saved the village considerable money by rebuilding Mack trucks in house, replacing frame rails, and adapting vehicles to meet new or different requirements. For example, the village needed a snow blower for snow removal, so Mike converted a heavy duty, four wheel drive pickup truck by mounting a diesel engine in the rear under cover to power a two stage snow blower mounted to the front of the truck. The clutch is lever operated from the cab of the truck. I have experienced this in operation and it will handle whatever is put in front of it.

Rather than purchase new snow plows he has taken older one way plows, rebuilt the moldboards, changed the arc of the chute to better control snow discharge, re-bushed where necessary, and painted them resulting in units as good as new.

Mike made sure the water system did not suffer at the expense of other departments. Repairs were made when they were needed and due care and diligence was exercised. He was at the helm when new metering was installed system wide. He knew the value of having his water people receive training credits to keep their certifications current.

He is truly a mechanical genius taking projects from inception, to design, to completion. Following are some pictures of just such a project. Lyons Village needed a hydraulic, side mounted,

mowing machine. A Ford tractor was used to meet the need. The wheels were widened by cutting them in two and welding spacers between the halves. These larger wheels allowed for wider tires which on the road side were filled with calcium for counter weight and stability. Note the oil reservoir behind the seat.



An old rotary mower was beefed up to be used but how to join the tractor and mower? With the exception of the hydraulic cylinders, Mike designed and fabricated each piece of material between the mower deck and the tractor. Some angle adjustment was made to lock the deck in a raised-stowed position. The attention to detail matches any commercially manufactured units I have seen.



Other projects include a hydraulic jack hammer for the backhoe. A priceless tool in the winter or concrete roadway situations. A large capacity water truck (Mack, naturally) >>>

with pressurized water for flushing or other uses. The truck and tank were powder coated and look like new equipment. This unit has assisted at fire locations, sewer requirements, anyplace water is needed. The front bumper has a provision for securing a fire hose for flushing hydrants. An older Mack truck had a vacuum unit that was worn out so he rebuilt the truck and chassis to accept a new vacuum unit to make excavation work far easier, faster, and more condensed. An old trailer frame was reconditioned to serve as a pipe hauler or other needs. The list goes on and on and Mike's talents are made obvious over and over again.

As circuit riders we are appreciative of folks with a strong work ethic who surpass what is normally expected of them and take personal pride in their finished workmanship. As just such a person Mr. Mike, we tip the New York Rural Water Association 'hat' to you and wish to congratulate and thank you for your years of faithful service to the Village and residents of Lyons, New York!

Till next time, Dan Tousley Circuit Rider
New York Rural Water Association

P.S. Very recently Mike Salerno has taken his retirement from the village but it is never too late to recognize and show our appreciation to deserving individuals we are made aware of. Our NYRWA Best to you Mr. Mike. 💧💧
