

The Way We See It —

Larry Shute was absolutely right

Beech Creek Township Trustee Larry Shute told members of the Eastern Volunteer Fire Department that they “forgot why they are members of this organization.”

The Way We See It, Shute - who is a lifetime member of the department - was completely right.

For the better part of a year, members have been bickering and breaking off into separate factions because of personality conflicts, inflated egos and just plain silliness.

That silliness came to a head Tuesday when the position of Interim Fire Chief was offered to Assistant Chief Rob Johnson, a move most thought would put an end to the backbiting and allow the department to get on with its daily business of heroism.

Upon receiving the offer, Johnson immediately placed stipulations on his taking the position - stipulations which would have continued the infighting.

The Way We See It, the resignation of Jeff Combs as fire chief and the naming of a new chief should have been the end to the battle at Eastern.

The Way We See It, the most qualified officer to assume control of the department would have been Johnson.

But that did not happen.

Fire department board vice president Todd Payne told members that the issues the department has are “not about you.”

He said, “it’s about where we live, where we work and where we raise our kids.”

The Way We See It, we couldn’t agree more.

The Way We See It, volunteer firefighters are America’s modern-day gladiators. They are the ones who run in when everyone else is running out.

But, *The Way We See It*, the volunteers at the Eastern Volunteer Fire Department are allowing playground-like arguments to interfere with the execution of thier sworn duties.

The Way We See It, Clint Pfaff was right not to resign from the board and Glen Miller is to be commended for stepping up to take control as interim chief.

And, *The Way We See It*, if the department can’t get its act together in the next month, Larry Shute should take the toys away and give them to a group that knows how to play well with others.