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Carl Hausman

June 29 at 1:00 PM · 🌐



Chris DeMaise, Who Led Life-Saving Rescues to Emergency Sites Throughout the U.S., to Receive Wenonah Hometown Legend Award

Major Christopher M. DeMaise, Commanding Officer of the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management -- who among other assignments in his 23-year career with the New Jersey State Police has led disaster responses to hurricanes and building collapses throughout the nation -- is this year's recipient of the Wenonah, N.J., Hometown Legend award.

The award recognizes a current or former resident who "inspires legends, instills pride, and serves as a role model for the people of Wenonah," says Carl Hausman, who chairs the Hometown Legend selection committee.

Prior to his most recent promotion, Major DeMaise had served as Bureau Chief of the Recovery Bureau, supervised Covid relief efforts in New Jersey, and oversaw New Jersey Task Force 1, an elite urban search and rescue unit.

During his assignment as head of New Jersey Task Force 1, DeMaise led deployments to Hurricane Matthew in North Carolina, Hurricane Harvey in Texas, and Hurricane Florence in North Carolina, as well as other disaster sites in New Jersey and elsewhere. He was deployed to Puerto Rico twice to supervise earthquake and hurricane relief.

New Jersey's Task Force 1 is one of 28 elite state search and rescue units that are part of a network of such crews joining with the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency in coordinated nationwide responses.

Among other duties, Task Force 1 and its counterparts utilize advanced search and rescue techniques and equipment to locate victims trapped in toppled or structurally unsound buildings. DeMaise supervised specialists experienced in search and rescue in venues in danger of imminent collapse, physicians to treat the injured on-site and during the rescue process, structural engineers to plan entry and escape from damaged buildings, and experts in handling hazardous materials.

Throughout his career, DeMaise has also served in various tactical and training capacities for the State Police.

He is a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps, holds two master's degrees, is vice-commander of Wenonah's American Legion Post 192, and is active in various civic affairs, including coaching





public service to our states, and through my volunteer efforts in service of our community. I try my level best every day to make a difference," he says. "There are so many wonderful role models in Wenonah for someone like myself to emulate that I feel compelled to continue in that endeavor for future generations."

He has been married to his wife Chrissy for 22 years and they have raised their three children in Wenonah.

The award will be presented during ceremonies held at the bandstand in Wenonah Park following the borough's July 4th parade.



Larry Smith, Carol Ann Gemenden Wesh and 98 others

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