

Raleigh Emergency Rescue Squad Incorporation, 1953

01/22/12 658 W, 4 I - + 8 - 7

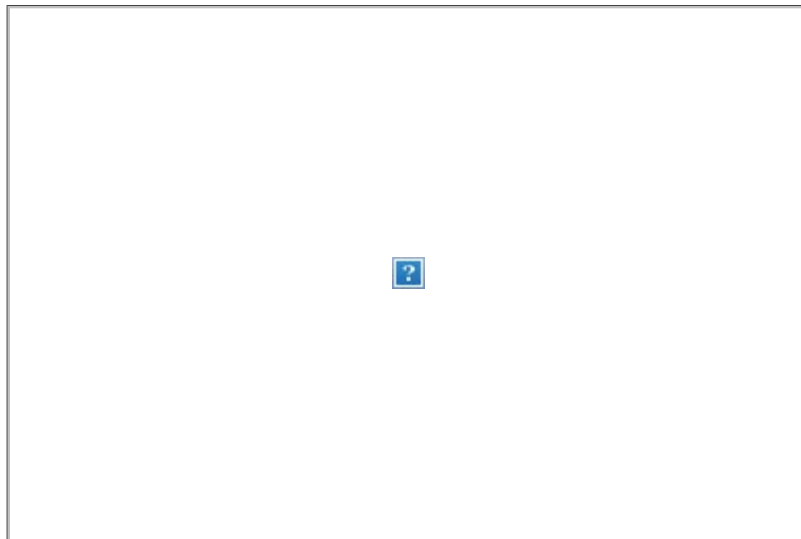
From the archives of the [Raleigh Fire Department Historical Society](#), here's the incorporation certificate of the Raleigh Emergency Rescue Squad. The document is dated August 27, 1953, and signed by Secretary of State Thad Eure. Click **once or twice** to enlarge:



Here's a bit of their history, as contained on this page about [modern volunteers of the Raleigh Fire Department](#):

"[They were organized] after both the police and fire departments were criticized for the delay in extricating a driver pinned under a truck on Hillsboro Street. Criticism also came after a drowning in the Neuse River several miles from Raleigh. The body was not recovered for a week until City Manager W. H. Harper asked [Raleigh Fire Department] Captain Jack Keeter to help however he could. Along with Assistant Chief Lee Matthews, civilian Bob Biggs, and future police officer Andy Povlosky, the four borrowed a fishing boat from one man, a boat motor from another, and transported the items to the river in Keeter's pick-up truck. The four launched the boat, and Povlosky and Matthews rode around until finding and recovering the body. Later, a Red Cross course was conducted with about 25 firefighters and civilians attending.

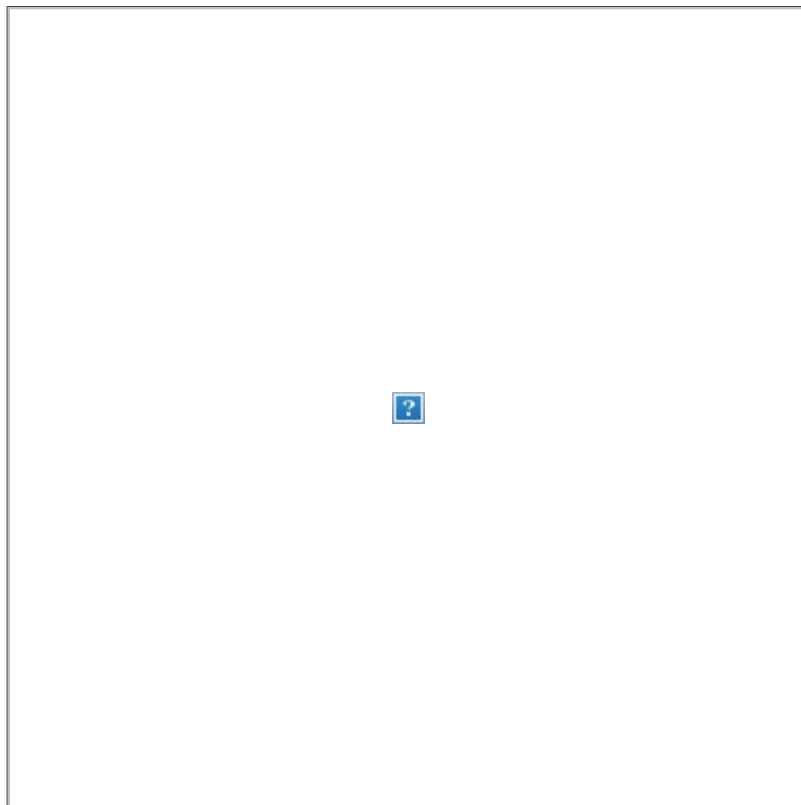
"The Raleigh Emergency Rescue Squad was formally chartered on August 27, 1953. The Wake County Office of Civil Defense allocated \$2,500 for a rescue truck and a 1954 GMC panel van was purchased. Local businesses donated money and materials to outfit the van. Squad members also designed and built a boat trailer and the city provided the funding for two boats and two motors. The rescue squad responded both in the city and in the county, though only provided patient transport when an ambulance was not available. They were particularly helpful during the period between when area funeral homes stopped providing patient transport and when private ambulance services started operating.



News & Observer photograph

"Though the Raleigh Emergency Rescue Squad was organized as a volunteer agency, Captain Keeter persuaded the city to designate two firefighters as rescue officers. Harold Jones and Roma Wilder were appointed as such and sent to a rescue school in Maryland for further training. They worked opposite shifts and operated the rescue vehicles, pulling a second man off one of the companies at Station 1 when they needed assistance. The volunteer members were subject to call, though they mostly participated in body recovery efforts in local lakes and rivers.

"In addition to the panel van, a second piece of apparatus was obtained with the aid of the federal government. A 1954 Reo Civil Defense rescue truck was placed in service, though with a requirement that the truck be considered a piece of 'stand-by equipment' that could be called to Norfolk, Virginia in the event of an "attack by enemy forces." Equipment carried on the 2.5-ton truck included torches, power saws, gas masks, helmets, and first-aid equipment. The heavier rescue truck was rarely utilized, however.



News & Observer photograph

"Wake County also provided \$100 a month for the rescue squad and the funds were used for the rescue officer's insurance and any needed materials. Both vehicles and the boat trailer were stored at Fire Station 1 on South Dawson Street. By 1972, the number of

dedicated personnel had expanded to four firefighters. In 1974, a second Raleigh rescue squad was placed in service. The units were still funded by both the city and the county at that time, though they rarely performed patient transport. Funeral homes and later private ambulance services transported patients, though the rescue squad helped fill the gap in the early 1970s between when funeral homes stopped transporting patients and the private ambulance services started. The squads were also utilized to transport firefighters and firefighter family members as needed. After the formation of Wake County EMS in 1976, the squads served as back-up units when no Wake EMS ambulances were available. The squads served as back-up units through the late 1980s



Name: (real name preferred)
E-mail: (optional)
Web Site: (optional)

Remember personal info?
Yes
No

Comment:

[/ Textile](#)

Comment moderation is enabled on this site. This means that your comment will not be visible on this site until it has been approved by an editor.

To prevent spam we require you to answer this silly question

What are the FIRST TWO LETTERS of the word 'fire'?

[\(Register your username / Log in\)](#)

Notify: Yes, send me email when someone replies.

Hide email: Yes, hide my email address.