



# TARHEEL FIREFIGHTER



## AND CAROLINA RURAL FIREMAN

VOL. 12 NO. 3

"AN INDEPENDENT PUBLICATION FOR TARHEEL FIREFIGHTERS"

MARCH 1975

### Town Board OK's Truck

Nashville — The Nashville Volunteer Fire Department officially received permission from the Nashville Town Board to purchase a new "brush truck" for off-the-road firefighting.

The board had previously agreed to allow the firemen to solicit bids on the new vehicle. In February, they agreed to accept a bid of \$22,614.60 from Bone International of Rocky Mount.

The new truck, which includes four-wheel drive and special winch equipment, will be initially purchased in the town's name. The firemen, however, are in the process of raising funds to cover the entire cost of the truck. Fire department spokesman Butch Smith told the board that the firemen have already raised more than \$10,000 toward the purchase price, and expect to

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### Sizemore, Combs Receive Promotions

Reidsville — Recent promotions at the Reidsville Fire Department have been announced by Chief Hilton Monsees. David Stanley Sizemore Sr. was promoted

from fire prevention officer to the position of assistant chief, and Jerry R. Combs, formerly the fireman driver, was

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### First Ladies Night Meeting A Success

Camden — The quarterly meeting of the Albemarle Firemen's Association was held by the Camden Volunteer Fire Department on Tuesday night, February 4th. 215 firemen, including their wives, were in attendance coming from Region R's ten county area. Chief Henry Hughes and



Pictured here are (from left to right) Bobby Winborne, Secretary; Clifford Midgett, First Vice President; Ervin Hassell, President; W. A. (Billy) White, Treasurer; and Rev. Lawrence McInturff, Chaplain.



his Camden Department served a fine meal and good fellowship for the annual installation of officers. This meeting also held a special significance as it was the first Ladies Night meeting.

Mrs. Emily H. King, Editor of the TARHEEL FIREFIGHTER newspaper from New Bern was the guest speaker. Mrs. King gave a very entertaining program on firemen as she knows them from her affiliation with the

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Firemen On Call 24 Hours A Day

### Hendersonville Residents Protected By Fire Department



THE HENDERSONVILLE Fire Department employs 14 firemen and 30 volunteers who are on call 24 hours a day to fight fires in the city. The department housed in the basement of city hall, has four trucks. Pictured is the new 1,250-gallon per minute pumper which replaced one of the department's old pumpers last year.

Henderson Times-News Photo

extending the firefighting strength of the department. A 75-foot ladder truck has also been ordered, to round out the needs of the department to be able to fight any type of fire disaster in the city.

City firemen, along with their Western North Carolina Firemen's Association training school, also attend state schools, and keep in training all

the time to prepare for any fire emergencies.

Three men at the department are involved in taking an emergency medical technician course to become certified to provide emergency medical aid.

The department also participates yearly in a fire prevention program by sponsoring an essay contest for a primary grade class. They also inspect the local

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### Quesinberry Named "Fireman Of Year"



Fire Chief Bill Joe Woodruff (left) presents Fireman of Year award and offers congratulations to Roby Quesinberry.

Mount Airy Times Photo

Mount Airy — A Granite Citian who has served with the Mount Airy Fire Department for nearly 21 years was recently announced as

Fireman of the Year—1974 by Chief Bill Joe Woodruff.

He is Roby Quesinberry, who

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**THE TARHEEL FIREFIGHTER**  
and Carolina Rural Fireman  
"An Independent Voice for Tarheel Firefighters"  
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**EMILY H. KING, Editor**

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## Editorial

Most of you know that for a long time I have declined many invitations to affairs I once made it a point to attend. Some of you also know that this was due to several reasons, uppermost among them a case of hypertensive blood pressure, it was not a matter of choice. Also not having enough rest and too many problems (some of them personal) play a big part.

Last November an invitation came from the Albemarle Fireman's Association asking me to be their Guest Speaker in Camden, N.C. on February 4th. This invitation was somehow misplaced, and was only brought to my attention by another note from Charles Skinner, Secretary of the Association. With an apology for such a late reply, I accepted, I asked an associate to check to see what day of the week this was and was told Monday. This was about 3 weeks before the meeting and I should have rechecked, but simply went along thinking only that it was 3 weeks away, on Monday night!

Of course you know what happened - I was in Roanoke Rapids at that time and was not familiar with the route from there to Elizabeth City, so I planned an early start. As usual when this happens, I encountered so many delays that I am later, instead of early! It was dark when I reached the outskirts of Elizabeth City. I was a little nervous, having no idea where I was in reference to the appointed meeting in Camden. I stopped for information, and as luck was with me, found I only had to go another 2 miles, make one turn and go directly to my destination.

I was surprised on my arrival at so little light and the scarcity of cars. All I could see lit up much was the gymnasium and some students practicing basketball. Could this mean I had possible arrived early for once, or was it only a small attendance? I drove over to a store across the way and asked if I had the right school. I mentioned the meeting and they knew nothing about. Finally I found someone at the school. We looked again at my letter of Invitation, and discovered my error simultaneously - it was Feb. 3rd, not the 4th, and the meeting was for Tuesday night!

Deciding to drive into Chesapeake to the Motel, my husband being there, I asked about the nearest route. I received directions, but with a

warning about the soft shoulders that had recently been plowed for some reason. If any of you have never made a trip from Camden to Chesapeake through the Dismal Swamp road, take my advice and do not try it on a dark, rainy night, in the early hours of the evening. With the



**EMILY H. KING**

traffic and glare on that black top road it's bad enough, but the nearer you get to Great Bridge, you may decide, as I did, that you either have a tire going flat or your tie rods are loose or something. There is no place to stop for help either, which is not a comforting thought! I danced along like I was riding the waves (in the car, of course) expecting the worst at any minute. I was hardly able to tell when or where I should turn. I kept reciting the 23rd Psalm (as is my custom at times like this) and finally reached the Motel, without a bad turn, but pretty tensed up to say the least. It was quite a relief to find that the road was the cause of the dancing of the car, and there was nothing wrong with my vehicle.

I had left my two little pet dogs in Roanoke Rapids, expecting to go back there and pick them up on my way to New Bern on Tuesday. This complicated things a little, plus my husband had to leave for West Point, Va. at 5 A.M. There was nothing else to do but go back for my pets the next day and return to Chesapeake, leave them at the motel and attend the meeting that night. Again, I had the rain to make matters worse. I am ashamed to say I really hoped the meeting would be postponed because of the weather, but it wasn't.

The nearest way was back across that Dismal Swamp road, so off I went, holding my breath, and all was fine until about a mile from the Camden School. I met a car rounding a curve, who refused to dim his lights. When they say soft

Allenton — Robeson County rang up another first recently as the first female fireman was introduced to Robeson County Firemen's Association. introduced to Robeson County Firemen's Association. She is Miss Susan Carol Stephens who is now a full-fledged member of Northwoods Rural Fire Department.

shoulders around there, believe them! I hit this one, swerved back on the road and almost lost control of the car, but after trying out those shoulders a couple of times I righted the car. I made it driving much slower, again arriving a little late, and quite "shook up." Never caring for a canned talk or written speech, I had only jotted down a few reminders to keep myself from getting off the track in my talk. I don't care for the word speech, and I really do not make one, but in the shape I was in I wouldn't have been able to remember what the brief notes were about, so I didn't even refer to them. I really have no memory of what I said, for the most part, but apparently it went off well enough. Mr. Skinner, in his introduction, warmed things up for me, telling of things that I had no idea he had even noticed in my early beginnings, etc. At any rate, all's well that ends well. With the election of new officers for the year, and the Fireman Award of the Year going to Mr. Skinner, as well as this being their first Ladies Night, it was a wonderful meeting and well worth all my trials and tribulations of getting there!

This Association apparently has grown by leaps and bounds and is a most successful one. Everyone seems to be in accordance, and cooperation is quite obvious, which, of course is the key for any such group. There were at least 200 people there. For an Association of only 10 counties, this has to be a very strongly united group. Fire Chief Hughes of the Camden Fire Department, President Jackson and Charles Skinner played a great part in making the meeting a success, as well as the ladies who were helping and attending their first Ladies Night. They had made Valentine place cards with complete programs typed up within them, among other things they must have done. (One of them suggested I should have a new picture made for our publication, which was a polite way of saying the ole gray mare ain't what she used to be. The photo you have been seeing must be over 10 years old, and as soon as I can get around to it, I will try to bring you up-to-date on myself, or my appearance. One Fire Chief I did not know was kind enough to stop me on my way in and said he recognized me from my picture! This, of course, was sheer flattery but naturally I loved it. The retouchers did a great job on the old photo making me look much better

# She Makes It Fireperson?

President Bill Bryan presided and announced that radio communications for firemen are now centered in the sheriff's office, no longer at Robeson County jail. Fire Marshal Mutt McNeill added that a number of radios are now available from a South Carolina source.

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even then - maybe I hate to destroy your image of me, or something!

Anyway, if any of you would like to see a well-organized group at work, it would pay you to make a trip to one of their meetings sometime. The meetings are set up for this year as follows: May 6, June 3, August 5, September 2, November 11 and December 2. For more information as to meeting places, etc., contact the Albemarle Fireman's Association, 501 S. Broad St., P. O. Box 403, Edenton, N. C. 27932. The Association covers the Counties of Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Hyde, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell and Washington. If you are in this area and are not a member, you should be. If you are not, it would be worth your time at attend one of the meetings anyway just to see the way they operate. They are all friendly, make you feel welcome and would be happy to have visitors, I am sure.

*Emily H. King*  
Emily H. King

## Firemen Honor Summerlin

Mount Olive — Tribute was paid last April to a Mount Olive man who is responsible for much of the growth in rural fire protection in Wayne County.

The first lifetime membership in the Wayne County Firemen's Association was presented to Edgar Summerlin, retired chief of the Mount Olive Fire Department. It was presented by Dwight Rose, Association president.

Chief Summerlin was instrumental in organizing the firemen's association in 1955 and retired after almost a half century of service in fire fighting.

In accepting the award, Chief Summerlin said, "I'm proud of the Wayne County Firemen's Association — just as proud of it (now) as when it was first organized."

"Chief Summerlin gave so much of himself and received so 'ittle in return."

### Fireman Says 'Don't Remove Air Filters'

Ahoskie—Fireman Garry Terry has issued a warning to drivers who have removed air filters from the engines of their cars.

Terry said "Most of the car fires to which we are called are

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## Let Us Hear From You

Please feel free to submit any story or pictures to us for publication in this paper. We may not receive information on your department that you feel would be of interest to others, so we ask that you send items of interest to us.

We reserve the right to edit any material submitted to us. Please note that when submitting a newspaper clipping we need to know the name of the newspaper, the town it is located in and the date of the article. We also need to know who wrote it if it has a byline. If you submit original photographs, please make a note on the back of each photo if you want them returned.

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**Firemen Says Don't**  
from page 2

caused when drivers remove air filters or either change standard size filters for smaller

ones." "Removing an air filter will make a car run faster, but there is nothing to confine the flames if the car backfires. It's dangerous." Firemen answered four

alarms in the past few days, two of which were car fires. The first was at 3 p.m. February 14 when a car ignited at the corner of First and Catherine Sts. in Ahoskie. Damage was minor and the car's owner is unknown to Terry.

buretor melted." Firemen answered an alarm at 11:45 a.m. February 17 at 605 West Hayes Street when Mrs. Ruby Parker's wall thermostat short-circuited.

Damage was minor. At 4:35 p.m. February 15 firemen were called to Robert Sumner's property on the Harrellsville Road for a grass fire. Damage was minor.

**Quesinberry Named**  
from page 1

began his long tenure as a volunteer fireman when J. Ed Brannock was fire chief.

The presentation of the annual award was made at the Fire Department meeting by Chief Woodruff.

In April, Quesinberry will have served 21 years with the Mount Airy Fire Department.

Quesinberry is married to the former Miss Retha Woodruff.

and they reside at 245 Orchard Street. They have two children—Mrs. David (Mimi) Patterson of Mount Airy, and Trent, a member of the U. S. Air force stationed in Miami, Fla.

Mr. Quesinberry is employed with the Surry-Yadkin Electric Membership Corporation.

Recipient of the Fireman of the Year honor is made by a committee appointed from within the Mount Airy Fire Department.

The second car fire was near Roanoke-Chowan Technical Institute on the Modlin Road February 15 at 1:34 a.m.

Terry said the car was a total loss and ownership was undetermined. He commented "The fire was so hot, the car-

**Retire from rural fire department**

Zebulon—Two veteran members of the Zebulon Rural Fire Department retired, effective December 31, 1974.

They are H. H. (Bubber)

Eddins and Royle Bunn. Both men have been members of the Fire Department since March, 1953, just after the Rural Department was organized in Zebulon.

They will receive retirement benefits from the State Firemen's Association.

**First Ladies**  
from page 1

Secretary for the Association. He was one of the first to help organize and build the Association to the strength that it now carries. Charles can easily be called "The Stron Arm" of the Albemarle Firemen's Association.

Another big event of the night was the installation of the AFA 1975 officers. They are as follows: Ervin Hassell from Roper, President; Clifford Midgett of the Kitty Hawk FD,

First Vice President; William Forehand of the Camden FD, Second Vice President; Bobby Winborne of the Center Hill Crossroads FD, Secretary; Rev. Lawrence McInturf of the Swan Quarter Chapel; and W. A. (Billy) White of Hertford, Treasurer.

The next meeting is scheduled for Chowan County sponsored by the Center Hill Crossroads VFD in May.

promoted to captain.

A native of Augusta, Georgia, Sizemore has lived in Reidsville for the past 34 years. He has been employed by the fire department for the past 14 years, serving the last seven as fire prevention officer.

**Sizemore, Combs**  
from page 1

Sizemore resides at 709 Lawsonville Avenue with his wife, the former Judy Hooper and their two children, David Jr. and Suzanne. He is a member of the N.C. Fire Marshals Association and St. Thomas Episcopal Church.

A native of Reidsville, Combs has been employed by the Reidsville Fire Department for the past seven years. He resides at 1310 Racine Blvd. with his wife the former Carolyn Chilton and their two sons, Darrel and Michael. The Combses attend Piedmont Baptist Church.

**Hendersonville....**  
from page 1

businesses around town and help merchants in finding danger sources of fires that can be corrected.

During the past year, the department handled a total of 128 calls. They made 15 calls to residential sections and seven calls to the downtown business area. Three persons died by fire during the past year.

Emergency standby calls totaled 18 and the department also answered 44 calls for brush and trash fires, 26 calls for car and truck fires, and 15 calls for smoke scares. There were also two false alarms and one mobile home fire.

**Town Board**  
from page 1

raise the remainder at no cost to the taxpayers of Nashville.

The truck must be titled to the town of Nashville, since the fire department is not a chartered corporation or a legal entity. The department will pay off the town's investment in annual installments.

The new truck will be used primarily to fight fires in places which would be difficult to reach with the town's conventional trucks. Smith pointed out that the new truck would save considerable wear

and tear on the other fire vehicles.

"We feel like now is the time to do it," Smith told the board. "We've talked with other fire departments in the area, and we think this is the best truck for the money we can get. We're hoping that the town will go ahead and give us permission to buy the truck now, because they're not getting any cheaper."

The board then voted to approve the purchase of the new truck. Delivery of the truck is not anticipated before July 1, at which time the town board will make provisions in the new budget for the purchase price.

**She Makes It**  
from page 2

County Commissioner H. T. Taylor announced that a decoder (or incoder) has been ordered. He then called on Reggie Braxton of Fayetteville to explain the function of the new instrument. Braxton explained that the Motorola made instrument will tie in with the communications center and particularly alert fire departments.

McNeill then introduced Elwood Inscoe of the N. C. Insurance Department who gave a talk on safety, no

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## Fires are plaguing Riegelwood region

Riegelwood—Acme-Delco-Riegelwood fire and rescue volunteers answered seven alarms in a recent 48-hour period with the last alarm called in on a burning home.

An estimated \$8,000 fire damages to the \$30,000 home of Willie Cromartie of Freeman was controlled by 1,100 gallons of water brought to the fire by ADR firemen.

Two engines and 12 firemen responded to the late night blaze, according to James Gainey of the fire and rescue unit.

Gainey said the fire was first noted by one of three people in the home who wakened

smelling smoke and who aroused the others, including one invalid.

Neighbors turned in the fire alarm, Gainey said.

The kitchen and dining room area of the home, as well as the bathroom area, were destroyed in the fire.

"Doors to these rooms were closed containing the fire to a restricted area of the home. The door to the living room was completely charred on one side and not on the other side," Gainey said.

He said the fire was brought under control in 15 minutes after the arrival of the volunteer fire department.

Gainey said this was the seventh alarm the ADR fire and rescue squad answered since the previous day.

One alarm was for an automobile accident, one alarm was for mutual aid to the Leland fire department and four alarms were in answer to brush fires in the area, Gainey said.

## Littleton VFD Calls Increased

Littleton — The Littleton Volunteer Fire Department answered a total of 79 calls for the year 1974, an increase of about 15 per cent more than the previous year, according to Chief J. W. Atkins.

Rural fires were reported 50-50 in Halifax and Warren counties.

A breakdown of the year's calls in the town of Littleton include four car fires, three leaves and grass fires, five house fires, one trailer fire,

four laundry fires.

Halifax and Warren County fires include one marina with boats and shed, a sawmill fire, three trailer fires, three vehicle fires, 16 house fires, 18 grass fires 17 wood fires and three barn fires.

The department has purchased \$1,800 worth of two way radio equipment for the truck and fire house.

Work to be done on the 1960 Chevrolet fire truck will total \$3,000.

## Fire Takes New Home

Dunn — A fire of undetermined origin recently destroyed the new one story frame home of John Earl Burnette off highway 55 a half mile east of Dunn.

Burnette and his family would have moved into the newly completed home in February.

Some personal belongings of undetermined value had already been moved into the home and were lost to the fire.

## Gaston Volunteer Firemen Honored



GUEST Speaker Raz Autry, (left) Gaston Volunteer Fire Department's first fire chief, is seen recently congratulating Arthur Delbridge who received a plaque for 20 years of service to the Department. Leonard T. Conner, (right) also received a similar plaque for his 20 years of service. Autry was guest speaker for the event at which 75 members and guests attended at the fire hall.

Roanoke Rapids Daily Herald Photo

Gaston — Two Gaston Volunteer Firemen were honored recently for their 20 years of service to the fire department.

Leonard T. Conner and Arthur Delbridge were presented plaques for their faithful service.

Guest speaker at the steak supper held at the fire station was Raz Autry, the Department's first fire chief.

Other guests of honor from the 1955 fire department force were Ronald Colston, William Conner, Calvin Chandler, Carlton Moore, Donald Conner,

Moseley, Bill Allen, J. T. Knowles, Tom Willey, Andrew Jordan, J. B. Howell and Henry Moncure.

The 75 guests gathered in the upstairs of the fire station in the room which has just been completed by the local firemen.

Members of the present Volunteer Fire Department headed by Chief John Acree include Bill Ellis, Frank Manning, James Parker, David

Rufus Rose and Cirven Burnette.

Also members are Arthur Delbridge, Henry Manning, Larry Conner, Leonard Conner, Nelson (Pinky) Wright, Albert Conner, John Seuis, Edward (Peté) Balmer, Stanley Anderson, Dexter Boyd, Claude Bailey, Roy Thompson, Carl Burnette, Robert Rook, Andrew Conner, Bobby Allen and Tommy McDathe.

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GASTON—Members of the Gaston Volunteer Fire Department are seen left to right, front row—Bill Ellis, Frank Manning, James Parker, David Conner, Calvin Chandler, Carlton Moore, Donald Conner, Rufus Rose, Chief John Acree and Cirven Burnette; second row, Arthur Delbridge, Henry Manning, Larry Conner,

Leonard Conner, Nelson (Pinky) Wright, Albert Conner, John Seuis, Edward (Pete) Balmer and Stanley Anderson. Absent from picture, Dexter Boyd, Calude Bailey, Roy Thompson, Carl Burnette, Robert Rook, Andrew Conner, Bobby Allen and Tommy McDathe. Roanoke Rapids Daily Herald Photo

### Fire Dept. Wins Top Honor

High Point — For the 18th time in 21 attempts, the City of High Point Fire Department has captured first place in the North Carolina National Fire Prevention (NDPA) Contest.

In recognition of their achievement, the fire department will receive a certificate of merit from the NFPA.

The NFPA Fire Prevention Contest is an annual event open

to all municipal, industrial, government or military fire departments in the United States and Canada. Entrants submit a scrapbook of letter, photographs, newspaper clippings, etc. showing the activities of the fire department training and fire prevention activities of both within the department and within the community.

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## Four New Firemen In Shelby Department

Shelby—Four additional firemen have been employed by the Shelby Fire Department. Chief Al Miller announced recently.

New firemen are Joe Gold, Ronald Webber, Nathan Hall and William Mitchell.

Gold is a graduate of Shelby High School and was formerly employed by Royster Transport Co. He is married to the former Linda Grant and they have three sons.

Webber attended Crest High School and was recently graduated from Harris Baber School in Raleigh. He is a former employee of Winn Dixie Super Markets.

Hall is a graduate of Burns High School and was formerly

employed by Fiber Industries Inc.

Mitchell was also formerly employed by Fiber Industries Inc. and is a graduate of Cleveland High School. He and his wife, the former Carolyn London, have two daughters and a son.



GOLD HALL  
Shelby Star Photos



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# Paul Wyatt, Fireman For 33 Years, Retires

Valdese — Paul W. Wyatt hung up his hat and took off his badge for the last time recently when he retired after 33 years as a member of the Valdese Fire Department. Now his name will be added to the bronze plaque in the rear of the department building, commemorating former firemen.

Wyatt started with the department as a volunteer in 1942 and didn't become a paid fireman until 1953.

Before that, he had spent his 14 years in Valdese working for the old John Massey Hosiery Mill, and he had even tried his hand at police work for a short time.

Wyatt was born in 1910 in Greenville, S.C. His family moved to Tennessee while he was still a child, and when he was 10 the family moved again to Madison County N.C. Three years later, it was back to Tennessee, where he lived until he was 29.

He was working in a hosiery mill there when one of his friends moved to Valdese. Business was slow at the mill



where Wyatt worked, and when his friend called and offered a job in Valdese, he took him up on it.

That was in 1939, and Wyatt has lived in Valdese ever since. He now lives on Faet Street

with his wife, Ada Smith Wyatt, and his son Thomas Lee.

On the day of his retirement, Wyatt reflected over the years with the department. "You know, if I had it all to do over, I never would have gone to the fire department," he said. "The work for many years was just too much."

He explained that when he joined the department full-time, there were only two firemen, he and A. O. Anderson. One of them had to be on duty at all times, so they had to work 84 hours each week. They worked 24 hours on duty and 24 hours off.

"But that doesn't mean I'm not glad I stuck with it after I got started," Wyatt added.

Sherrill Brittain, who is now fire chief, joined the department in 1955, and that enabled the men to work eight-hour shifts. Of course, they still had to work seven days a week. The Valdese Fire Department now employs six full-time firemen and has many volunteers that can be called in an emergency.

Wyatt recalled without hesitation the worst fire he ever battled - one at the old Pons Auto Parts in the downtown

section of town many years ago.

"I was on duty by myself. There was some paint burning at the rear of the store, and knocked it (the fire) down with a hose. And then there was an explosion that about knocked me out the door," he said.

"By that time, the fire had got up into the top of the building, and we had to knock a hole in the roof to get at it."

Wyatt remembers he received assistance from Hickory, Drexel and maybe Morganton on that fire. They saved the building, though most of the contents were ruined.

During Wyatt's early years in the department, he recalls there weren't any of the community volunteer fire departments that the county is

Cont. page 7

## Richlands Ups Fire Service

Richlands—The Richlands Volunteer Fire Department is constructing an annex to their present building which will enable them to keep their three fire trucks, two tankers and three rescue vehicles under cover. The 48 x 80 foot building, which will cost about \$15,000 will include two 15 foot stalls for fire or rescue vehicles, 18 x 40 feet of living space for firemen and 18 x 20 feet of living space for men on the rescue service.

THE TOWN of Richlands contributed the first \$7,000 to the construction of the new building. The remaining \$8,000 will be raised by donations and barbecues held by the firemen.

"We are building this thing as we get the money," said Richlands fireman Marion Kile. "The firemen do all of the construction work except for laying the cement blocks."

KILE SAID that the main reason for adding to the firehouse is to make room for the new pumper which they will receive from the county.

According to Richlands Fire Chief Durwood North, the Richlands VFD got 180 fire calls last year. "Some weeks we don't leave the station, and then sometimes we answer four or five calls per day," said North.



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# Morganton Chief Lists Promotions

Morganton — Morganton Fire Chief Carroll Sullivan reported three promotions within the city fire department recently.

been promoted to the newly created position of dispatcher. His new duties will include taking all incoming calls, alerting all fire departments, and transmitting all messages.

Lt. John Lowdermilk has been promoted to captain to fill

Hennessee's former position, and Fireman Randy Whisnant has been promoted to lieutenant to fill the vacancy created by Lowdermilk's promotion.

Sullivan reported that shift changes within the department included the transfer among shifts of Firemen Tommy Taylor, Doyle Ford, Tom Grady, Keith Clark, Robert Frye, and Frederick Powell.

He said the personnel

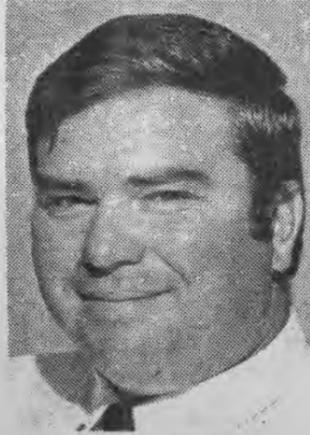
changes were made to add company strength to the city fire department.

The firemen attended a three day school recently in Greensboro, Chief Sullivan said.

Training Officer Harold Prewitt, Fire Inspector George Ross, and Pump Engineer Ken Henson attended a school in arson detection and investigation.



R. A. Hennessee



John Lowdermilk



Randy Whisnant  
Morganton News-Herald  
Photos

## Firemen Caught In Traffic Couldn't Reach Burning House

Landis — A house burned in Landis recently as volunteer firemen got caught in afternoon mill traffic and were unable to reach the fire station and equipment in time.

The home of Oscar Simmons on North Chapel Road burned at 3:51 p.m. yesterday, according to Marshall Deadmon, Landis fire chief. All contents were lost in the blaze.

The cause of the fire is unknown.

"It happened right about when mill traffic was in and around the streets," Deadmon said. "And from reports I got the alarm wasn't turned in immediately."

Twenty firemen and two pieces of equipment responded to the fire in the four-room frame house.

## Fire Destroys City Furniture Store

Charlotte — A four-alarm fire destroyed the interior of a north Mecklenburg furniture store shortly after noon recently. There were no injuries.

The blaze, at the Stiwalt Furniture Co., Inc., 5414 Wilkinson Blvd., began about 11 a.m., fire officials said.

"I saw smoke coming out of the small building in the back and then the whole thing was boiling in 10 minutes," said Lawrence Belk, a witness. Belk's father owns Holly Vending and Candy Co. across the street.

The walls were left standing in the fire, which was extinguished in about an hour.

A fireman from the Wilkinson Blvd. Fire Department said no substantial damage was reported to the upstairs portion of the two-story building, where the owner lives.

Cause of the fire was not

immediately known, and no estimate of damage was available.

No furniture was reported saved. The back part of the building received extensive water damage, firemen said.

Mr. and Mrs. Buck Stiwalt, owners of the store, and store employe, Charlie Jones, were inside the building when the fire started.

Three fire companies answered the call — Wilkinson Blvd., Steele Creek and Pinoca.

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## Police Car Catches Fire

High Point — Firefighters were called to Westchester Mall recently at 2:36 p.m. when a city patrol car caught fire in the parking lot.

The fire was out when trucks arrived. There was little or no damage to the police car.

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Wyatt...  
Cont. from page 7

accustomed to today. "There were only two fire departments in the county back then, at Morganton and Valdese," he says.

"The Morganton department handled everything in the western end of the county, and we took everything in the eastern end.

Wyatt says community volunteer fire departments have taken a burden off the municipal departments.

"Now we don't have to respond to fire calls outside the town of Valdese, unless one of the other departments request our assistance," he says.

And improved public awareness and better burning ordinances have greatly reduced the number of fires that occur today, according to Wyatt.

Wyatt says that fire departments today are doing a better job of fire prevention than they used to by conducting better inspections and by helping educate the public to the dangers of fire.

When the Valdese Fire Department increased to three men on eight hour shifts, Wyatt requested the 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. shift so that he could get his wife to work and his son to school every day. And when he logged his last day Monday, it was still on the 3-to-11 shift.

In addition to his work with the fire department, Wyatt has also been doing crosswalk work at the Valdese Primary School every morning and afternoon.

That's one activity he plans to occupy himself with now. Others include getting his garden ready, and "maybe finding time to keep my grass cut this year," he says.

"Retirement is something I'm going to have to get used to. I'm sure it'll be hard to work for 51 years, and then quit.

"We've got a good bunch of boys here," he says with a slight quiver in his voice, "I know if I need them, they'll help me, and they know if they need me, I'll help them."

And with that Deputy Chief Paul Wyatt went about his duties as usual on his last day after having worked in the Valdese Fire Department slightly over half his life.

## Jackson Residence Damaged By Fire

Jackson—Members of the Jackson Volunteer Fire Department responded at 5 a.m. recently to a fire at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas E. Newsome of Calhoun Street.

The Seaboard Volunteer Fire Department also assisted at the two story home.

Firefighters reported the fire gutted the interior of a room upstairs and a room downstairs immediately beneath it.

The fire was believed to have been caused by electrical malfunction. No estimate of damage was given.

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## Davie Firemen Had 59 Alarms In 1974

Roanoke Rapids — Davie Fire Department reports a total of 59 alarms answered during 1974.

Of the 59 calls four were mobile home fires; 15 house fires; 22 bush and grass fires; four auto fires and one mutual aid call; seven false alarms; one industrial fire; four storage shed fires and one business fire.

The total estimated damage amounted to \$56,640.00. Estimated value of property protected amounted to \$587,450.00.

One death by fire was reported for the year.

Davie Volunteer Firemen spent a total of 360 hours in fighting fires and a total of 842 man hours in training.

A new pumper-tanker is now on order and will be delivered soon. The new truck will update the department with two first line trucks for better fire protection within the community that the Davie VFD serves.



NEWEST ADDITION

It may look like a toy from the photographer's vantage point, but it is a full-sized 85-foot aerial ladder truck assigned to Fire Station No. 7 at Gatewood and Wendover Avenues. During the week, members of the four rotating crews will be practicing with the new equipment. Above, on ladder are Craig Lewis, left, and Frank Fortune. Also shown are Larry Andrews, operator, and Capt. C. B. Beal. Like all new fire vehicles purchased by the department, it is painted yellow.

Greensboro Record Photo

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## Saunook's Volunteer Firemen Reorganize

Waynesville — Saunook Volunteer Fire Department has been reorganized with Buddy Cochran the new president.

The department has announced the purchase of a 1972 Ford cab and chassis as a tank truck. It is fully equipped and in use. An outlay of \$2,040 was spent on the vehicle.

About 20 citizens of the fire district met and helped with the reorganizing, pledging an "unqualified" support of the community project.

The goal of the group is to have adequate fire protection for citizens in the fire district, according to Cochran, who owns the Saunook Community Store. Earl McCracken is vice president of the organization.

Orville Cogdill was named fire chief with Arthur Corbin, assistant.

Bennie Joe Arrington was elected captain; Ed Shelton, first lieutenant; Alan Arrington, second lieutenant; and Roy Lee Cable, secretary-treasurer.

It was decided that Shelton would have as one of his duties traffic control. Shelton named four to assist in this work - Roy Smathers, Donnie McCracken, Danny Hooper, and J. D. Drinnon.

The department will meet the first Thursday night of every month.

The department's number is listed in the telephone book - 452-5613, and Cochran said the number of any official could be called.

"We need a good fire

department, and that is our goal. We have the tank truck operating, and we need the cooperation of the community."

## Maiden Firemen Save Home

Maiden — On a recent Friday night at approximately 10:25 p.m., the Maiden Volunteer Fire Department answered a call at the mobile of Kelsie Laws in east Maiden.

Fourteen firemen responded to the call and remained on the scene until 11:39 p.m.

Maiden Fire Chief Brent Bauguess determined that the fire started in the furnace area of the home, and stated that although the fire had a "good start" by the time firemen arrived, they were able to quickly contain the fire and prevented extensive damage to the trailer.

Damage to the mobile home and its contents was estimated at \$1,500. There were no injuries in the fire.

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