



TARHEEL FIREFIGHTER



AND CAROLINA RURAL FIREMAN

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Eight Stores Damaged In Dunn Fire

By Lois Weaver
Fayetteville Times
Special To The Times

DUNN—Two businesses were destroyed and a half dozen others damaged recently in an early morning fire at Floral Gardens Shopping Center on U.S. 421.

The Pizza Inn restaurant and Faircloth's Sporting Goods at the north end of the shopping center were destroyed, fire officials said.

The 50,000 square-foot shopping center is on the west side of town near the intersection of West Broad Street and U.S. 421, known locally as West Cumberland Street.

The cause of the blaze had not been determined, authorities said.

Joe Campbell, Dunn's fire chief, said the fire was discovered just after 4 a.m. by a Dunn police officer on patrol.

Flames were visible on the roof when firefighters arrived. Campbell said the fire was brought under control in about an hour by 75 firefighters from departments in Dunn, Erwin and Coats in Harnett County along with the Plain View and Spivey's Corner fire departments in Sampson County.

The roofs of both stores collapsed in the fire, and one wall of the Pizza Inn was pulled down about noon by a city Public Works Department backhoe operator to let firefighters reach a smoldering "hot spot," Campbell said.

The flames were about to spread from Faircloth's to Betsy Ross Fashions, an adjoining store, when firefigh-

It was just bug spray

MT. OLIVE—The fire alarm sounded, it looked like smoke inside, and the Mount Olive Fire Department was called to the U-Rent store at Village Shopping Center. But instead of breaking any windows, Mount Olive fire fighters called the store's manager, Bill Thompson, in white shirt, who came to unlock the store. And fire fighters learned the "smoke" was actually bug spray — the store had been sprayed right after closing for the night, Thompson said.

ters brought the blaze under control, authorities said.

The fire was extinguished by 7 a.m. There were no injuries, officials said.

The Betsy Ross store sustained water and smoke damage. The fire caused smoke damage to the Heilig-Meyers Furniture Co., Family Dollar Store, a state Alcohol Beverage Control store and Carolina Optometric Vision Center. A vacant grocery in the shopping center also received smoke damage.

Sherrill Baker, district supervisor for Diversified Foods of Wilson, which owns the Pizza Inn, said the contents of the restaurant were valued at between \$200,000 and \$250,000.

She said that many historical artifacts and antiques from the area were used as decorations in the restaurant.

H. M. Poythress, president of Diversified Foods, said the

restaurant will reopen in Dunn but that it may take as long as five months to rebuild.

The shopping center was built in the late 1970s. But the newest portion, which includes Faircloth's and the Pizza Inn, was added in 1983 and 1984, officials said.

Gary Faircloth, owner of the sporting goods store, said he had moved to the shopping center in July 1984, and the restaurant preceded him by several months.

Campbell said there are no fire walls between the stores, only wooden studs with fire-retardant wallboard.

The shopping center is owned by United Dominion Realty Trust Inc. of Richmond, Va. Kenneth Wiblitzhouser, manager of the shopping center, said that officials from the home office will be in Dunn to appraise the damage and decide the future of the fire-gutted areas.

Five firemen promoted In 'reorganization'

By Mike Truell
Durham Sun

DURHAM—Five Durham firemen were promoted in what department officials called a reorganization prompted by the 1985 dismantling of the Durham public safety program.

Chief Nathaniel Thompson said the promotions were another step in the transition to separate fire and police departments and also were needed because the city has grown.

Thompson added that the promotions bring the department "up to staff" by filling all vacant positions.

Under public safety, most officers performed both police and firefighting duties.

The recent promotions involved naming two men to battalion chief, two to captain and one to lieutenant.

They give the Durham Fire Department eight battalion chiefs, one of whom soon will be promoted to assistant chief, Thompson said.

The department has slots for seven battalion chiefs, Thompson said having eight now will enable the depart-

ment to have a battalion chief trained when the promotion is made.

Selection of the new assistant chief will be made within the next 30-60 days, the chief added.

Promoted to battalion chiefs were J. D. Partin, training division, and B. T. Herron, fire suppression division. Promoted to captains were R. L. Baker and T. L. Price, both fire suppression division. Named a lieutenant was D. C. Rigsbee of fire suppression.

1987 Fireman's Association

Submitted by:
Cynthia Bolick
Taylorsville, NC

TAYLORSVILLE—New officers of the 1987 Fireman's Association were elected at the January 6 meeting. They are as follows:

Terry Sigmon, President; Kenneth Bolick, Vice President; Phil Winters, Secretary; and Joe Deal, Treasurer.

Waco Fire Station Expanding

CHERRYVILLE—Groundbreaking ceremonies were held Sunday, December 14 at the Waco station. Robert Howard, Chief of the Waco Volunteer Fire Department, made remarks, saying that the current facility, constructed in 1963, had served well but had "simply been outgrown." Those attending the groundbreaking included Hill Carpenter, Mayor of Waco and charter member of the Waco Volunteer Fire Department.

The Waco Community Volunteer Fire Department has commenced construction of additions and renovations to

their current station located on Highway 150 in Waco. The new 2,130 square foot addition will house two vehicle bays, training room, kitchen, storage, etc. The 3,200 square foot renovation includes a new truss roof system, administrative offices, day room, new toilets/showers, etc. and new covered entrance and plaza. Construction costs total \$103,265.00 and the project is scheduled for April 1987 completion. Architectural Design Group of Shelby is architect for the project, and Dixie Lumber Company of Cherryville is the general contractor.

Fire dept. promotes four

SALISBURY—R. A. Parnell has been promoted to battalion chief with the Salisbury Fire Department and assigned to C-Shift. Parnell has earned associate degrees in fire science technology and fire protection engineering from Rowan Technical College and is a certified instructor with the N.C. Community College system.

He has been employed with the fire department since November 1984, holding training officer positions in personnel development and fire control. He lives on Faith Road with his wife and son.

Three fire control specialists have been promoted to captain, including:

—P. E. Myers is assigned to Engine 533, captain on C-Shift. He has been employed with the fire department since January 1977, is a certified emergency medical technician and lives in Granite Quarry with his wife and son.

—G. T. Overcash is assigned to Ladder 516, captain on A-Shift. He has been employed with the fire department since June 1981, is a certified emergency medical technician, and was a N.C. Jaycees Outstanding Young Firefighter in 1985. He is working on an associate degree in business administration at Rowan Technical College and lives on Route 3.

—Rick Rogers is assigned to Engine 533, captain on A-Shift. He is a resident of 1013 S. Church St. and has been employed since October 1984. He formerly served four years in the U.S. Marines. He was

awarded the Rotary Club's Rookie Firefighter of the Year award in 1985.

Three fire control specialist candidates were hired Dec. 1 after they completed pre-employment evaluations and a 40-hour recruit training program. They are B. J. Craddock of 1174 Central Drive, Concord, assigned to Engine 511, A-Shift; S. N. Long of Route 14, assigned to Engine 511, C-Shift; and G. R. Mitchell of Greenway Avenue, Winston-Salem, assigned to Engine 511, B-Shift.

State pension fund for fire, rescue workers

SILER CITY—Mark Scott, Chatham County Fire Marshall, is urging all county fire department and rescue squad personnel to apply for membership in the state pension fund.

State Auditor Edward Renfrown, chairman of the board of trustees of the North Carolina Firemen's and Rescue Squad Workers' Pension Fund, recently corresponded with fire and rescue squad coordinators throughout the state regarding the open-door enrollment of the Pension Fund.

He requested their assistance in encouraging all those eligible to make application for membership before March 31, 1987.

Editorial

I hope you won't think I am partial to the material I am receiving from the Oklahoma State University, "Speaking of Fire," Headquarters for IFSTA, (International Fire Service Training Assoc.), but there are so many items of interest to both you and I, that I feel that I must share many of them with you.

In the Winter 1986 edition, the article entitled "Battery For Life," written by Ed Plaucher, Deputy Chief, Fire Prevention Division of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department was published. This was about a program that was initiated in 1985-1986, in Fairfax County (VA). The Chief states, that one year and 200 home safety

checks later, some eyes have been opened and undoubtedly has saved some lives. Deaths in residential fires are constantly in the news, as you well know. The Chief believes that many lives could be saved if this would spread nationwide. Although many homes are now equipped with smoke detectors, they found that many of them were not operating because the batteries were either dead or not even in the detector.

The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Dept. developed a program to supply batteries to residents who requested them — in calling for the batteries the resident agrees to an appointment for a home safety check — in return for the opportunity to conduct this check, the Fire Department supplies a free battery for each detector in the home.



EMILY H. KING

This is an informal survey of the home in order to make recommendations towards fire safety and also explain how to routinely check detectors, as well as the proper places to install them.

This program was started in the town of Vienna (VA) because of a series of fatal re-

sidential fires there. The most recent, at that time, had claimed the lives of two of the three female occupants of a townhouse there. This home had two properly installed detectors but neither had batteries in them. In that year there had been six deaths in that county which could have been prevented by working smoke detectors, according to the Chief.

The funding for this project was through Public Education Fund and some batteries have been purchased by Volunteer Dept.'s in Fairfax County. The cost is kept to a minimum by purchasing them through current government bids. The Public Education Fund is funded by donations from outside groups and not from tax revenues.

The residents were assured

that this check is only made for their benefit and no notices of violations would be written or prosecution for any violations of fire codes that were found. Almost 50% of the residents took advantage of the program in that area, which was chosen for a trial run, at that time.

This sounds like an excellent plan to me, for use in each and every department, everywhere. Why don't you start the ball rolling in your area?

Emily H. King



When a problem drinker drives, it's your problem

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Foam was Foe to Fiery Threat

By Kelvin Hart
Wilmington Star
Staff Writer

WILMINGTON—The alarm said a tanker truck had exploded at East Carolina Oil Transport Inc. on River Road.

"We didn't know what was in the truck at first," said Lt. Chuck Styes of the Wilmington Fire Department. "You never know what you're running into when going to chemical fire or hazardous liquid fires. I think we did a real good job."

Styes was one of 20 firefighters dispatched to the potentially dangerous fire at the oil terminal on the banks of the Cape Fear River recently.

The tanker truck, which contained a mixture of asphalt and naphtha, exploded at 7:04 p.m. after an employee used the flame of a cigarette lighter to check the amount inside the tanker. He and another employee received minor burns.

The first team of firefighters arrived at 7:08 p.m. The second crew arrived at 7:09 p.m. The third group was close behind with a fire truck carrying foam that quickly doused the blaze.

"Our main concern was to keep the two tanks beside the fire cool," Styes said. "Then the foam was used to put the fire out."

Chemical fires and flammable liquid fires are hazards that come with the territory of being a firefighter, said Chief Bobby Horrell. The firefighters attend classes once a month and undergo training sessions to fight fires involving hazardous chemicals.

Wilmington fire officials are in the process of starting a hazardous material team and will specialize in fighting such fires.

"We're living in a hazardous material age," Horrell said. "We almost have to have a hazardous material team."

Officials will critique the response to the tanker truck fire. Most agree it was handled well, Horrell said.

Lt. Ivey Bordeaux said the fire did not require special equipment because the naphtha fumes were easily burned away by the fire. The asphalt would have caused severe burns only if it had touched one of the firefighters, said Bordeaux.

Water was used to protect the two nearby tanks containing diesel fuel and motor oil. The foam, which is used in all flammable liquid fires, smothered the fire, Bordeaux said.

The only thing that could have been handled better was containing the spillage of foam, asphalt and naphtha, Bordeaux said. The substances were contained in drainage ditches and never reached the nearby Cape Fear River.

"Fortunately there was a diking system," said Coast Guard Lt. Joel Hendrix. "If the spillage had reached the river and marsh land, it could've contaminated the water and the fish. The fish are a big part of the human food chain."

Hendrix said the Fire Department should be commended for "a job well done."

New Fire Training Center Considered

FRANKLIN — Southwestern Technical College officials and the Macon County Board of Commissioners recently agreed to study the feasibility of building a regional fire training center at the Macon County Industrial Park.

The center would consist of a four-story smoke tower complex, a staging area, fire pits, drafting ponds, hydrants and an LP gas firefighting area to be built on a 4.5-acre site on the edge of the park.

STC President Norman Myers said the center would serve the six westernmost counties and would be part of STC's expanded public safety program.

Myers said the complex will offer training in highly specialized as well as basic firefighting skills.

Grady Corbin, STC's Macon County coordinator, said if the tower is built by a contractor, the cost estimate is \$21,000. He added that school officials and members of the fire associations hope that much of the cost can be

deferred by volunteer labor using donated materials.

Commissioners and STC officials said the industrial park location is excellent for the facility due to the location of the Macon County branch of STC, also in the industrial park, which will provide classroom space.

Dog Rescued

ASHEVILLE—Broad River Fire Capt. Clint Hall comforted a dog that firefighters rescued from a burning home near Black Mountain recently. Although no one was at home when the blaze started, the dog and a cat suffered smoke inhalation, while another cat apparently died in the fire. The fire started shortly after noon at a home owned by Jerry Driscoll of N.C. 9, according to Fire Chief Ron Owenby. Owenby said the blaze, which apparently was started by a wood stove, caused mostly heat and smoke damage to the home.

Police, Firemen Save Two Women From Fire

GRIFTON, NC—The quick actions of two policemen and two firemen were instrumental in saving the lives of two elderly ladies caught in a house fire.

At 1:10 a.m. Wednesday, January 14, 1987, Capt. B. E. Benson of the Ayde Police Department was on routine patrol when he notice smoke coming from a home at 108 Mills Street, Ayden. The Ayden Fire Department was advised and Ptl. S. R. Harper responded as backup.

According to the department's report, both Benson and Harper entered the residence and crawled around on their knees to avoid the smoke. They found a woman, later identified as Maggie Burney, 83, and took her from the home and placed her in the police car. Ms. Burney told officers another person —

identified as Letha Burney, 70, was still in the house.

Both officers again entered the house, and a small explosion sent flame shooting through the house in place of wht had been primarily smoke. Police Chief Tim Phillips said the explosion was apparently a window breaking from the heat. The window was located over the gas range where firemen believe the fire started. Phillips said the flames and smoke forced Benson and Harper out of the house where they found Maggie Burney leaving the police car in an attempt to get back into the house.

Chief Phillips said Fireman Richard Keys arrived, and with Officer Harper, broke out a window where they had seen curtains being torn down by someone inside. The window, broken out with a cinder

block, was located next to the front entrance of the home. The two men found Letha Burney on the floor on a mattress by the window but were unable to reach her due to the heat. Keys, in fact, was overcome by the smoke.

A second fireman, Robert Joyner, and Capt. Benson again went back to the window where Joyner was able to get to Letha Burney. He and Benson managed to pull her out of the burning home and get her inside the patrol car until rescue personnel arrived.

Both Ayden Rescue Squad units responded and transported Letha Burney, who reportedly suffered second and third degree burns over 35% of her body, and Maggie Burney, who suffered from smoke inhalation, to Pitt County Memorial Hospital.

Keys was transported to the hospital by the Winterville Rescue Squad.

Chief Phillips said Letha Burney was later transferred by helicopter to Chapel Hill's burn center. Keys was treated and released.

Capt. Benson, who refused treatment at the scene, went to the doctor at 10 a.m. and was treated and released for smoke inhalation.

Chief Phillips termed the work of Capt. Benson and

Harper as "admirable." He added, "These two men risked their lives to go into the house." The Chief also praised the efforts of both Keys and Joyner as well. Both, he noted, responded to the scene in their own personal vehicles and were the first there before the trucks arrived.

The house was termed a total loss, according to a report by the Ayden Volunteer Fire Department.

Sid Bingham Chief for Dallas Firemen

BESSEMER CITY—Sid Bingham took office in January as Dallas Volunteer Fire Department Chief. He has been a member of the force since 1976 and had served as Assistant Chief.

Elections took place at the regular bi-monthly meeting on Tuesday night, December 8th. Firemen hold their meetings on the second and fourth

Tuesday nights at the fire station.

Chief Bingham replaced David Calahan who had served as chief for four years.

Officers who took office with Chief Bingham are Eddie Matthis, assistant Chief; Scott Miller, Captain; Hank Anderson, Lieutenant; and Gene Jones, secretary-treasurer.

Local Jaycees Honor Trio For Community Service

By Cherie Evans
Greenville Reflector
Staff Writer

GREENVILLE, NC—The Greenville Jaycees honored three local people for commitment to their jobs and service to the community.

H. John Fisher was named Fireman-Rescuer of the Year; Detective Willie Reid was named Law Enforcement Officer of the Year; and Patricia Mitchell Clark was named Young Educator of the Year.

The awards are given annually "to distinguish local people in their chosen field," said Phil Trull, a Jaycee vice president.

When people do well in their careers and work in the community, "they deserve recognition," he said. "The selection process is done

primarily by the people of the profession."

Fisher is stationed on Memorial Drive, and he serves on the External Audit and Review Committee and the EMS Training, Research and Development Committee. He has assisted in the development of the standard record-keeping form for EMT-AI drugs and in the development of specific EMT-AI equipment.

Fisher completed three years of rescue college and has taken several career-related courses.

Reid joined the police force in 1973 as a cadet and is now a detective in the Fraud and Forgery Department. His case load averages 25 per month, and his clearance ratio is 65 percent by arrest. The national average is 18 to 21 per-

cent. Reid served in the U.S. Marine Corps for three years and received the National Defense Medal and the Good Conduct Ribbon.

Mrs. Clark is employed at Pactolus Elementary School and also was named Pitt County Teacher of the Year. She graduated magna cum laude from North Carolina Central University with a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. She was a member of Delta Kappa Gamma and an honorary member of Alpha Kappa Mu.

The Jaycees also will name a Teen-ager of the Year by the end of the month, Trull said. The teen-ager selected will be a senior from a Pitt County high school who has excelled academically and in the community, he said.

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Fireman's Association receives propane tank, sets 1987 priorities

Submitted by:
Cynthia Bolick
Taylorsville, NC

TAYLORSVILLE—The Alexander County Fireman's Association received a 500 gallon propane gas tank, for use at their training ground facilities, donated by Piedmont Natural Gas Company.

Terry Sigmon, association president, said the tank will be used to train local firemen how to fight and extinguish propane gas blazes.

Previously, to offer a class on fighting propane gas fires, the association and the county's volunteer fire departments would hire an instructor with a portable tank. "It took us over a year to set up our last class," Sigmon noted. "Now we can have a class anytime."

Training in this type of firefighting is vital, according to Sigmon. "Anytime an LP

Gas tank is exposed to fire there is the potential for a large explosion," he said. "It is one of the more dangerous fires we have to fight. If the tank explodes, the rounded ends act as missiles."

Local firefighters are taught to push the flame back with water until the tank's turnoff valve is reached and the supply of gas stopped.

Sigmon said most classes are taught through local community colleges and contain 12 hours of classwork and firefighting training.

Once the tank is installed at the association's training grounds, any individual fire department will have access to it. "As long as the individual department supplies the gas, they can use it when and if they see fit," Sigmon noted.

He indicated the cost of filling the tank is approximately \$1 per gallon. "If you do three to five hours of burning it is easy to spend \$500," Sigmon said.

At the association's Jan. 6, meeting, Steve Townsend was elected as the association's training officer. Sigmon said Townsend's duties will involve setting up countywide classes with state instructors.

He indicated the association has placed improvements to the training grounds and installation of a fire marshal by the county as priorities for the upcoming year.

Recently, a committee was

formed to oversee the upgrading of training ground facilities. Committee members are: Don Fox, Bethlehem; Steve Icenhour, Wittenburg; Joe Deal, Sugar Loaf; Basil Echerd, Ellendale; Larry Branton, Vashti; Keith Mundy, Taylorsville; Frank Hammer, Stony Point; Grover Sharpe, Hiddenite; Hansel Burke, Rescue Squad; and Dale Killian, Emergency Medical Services.

Sigmon noted the association is strongly in favor of establishing the fire marshal position and a fire code for the county.

He indicated the association is currently compiling a possible budget for a fire marshal's services and a fire code for the county.

The association soon hopes to present facts and figures supporting their wishes to the county commissioners.

Sigmon said a fire marshal is desperately needed to conduct inspections and investigations in Alexander County.

"All the school must be inspected three times a year, four times if they hold summer school," he said. "Also we must inspect day cares, foster homes and nursing homes. Plus, industries need inspected too."

Sigmon said it is hard for firefighters, working on a volunteer basis, to make the necessary number of inspections or investigations.



CARROLL PATTERSON

Patterson Top Fireman

CHERRYVILLE—On December 15, 1986, at the annual Christmas banquet, the members of the Cherryville Fire Department recognized their 1986 firefighter of the year, Driver/Engineer Carroll Patterson.

This is the third year that the award has been presented. The award is sponsored by the Cherryville Chamber of Commerce and the City of Cherryville. J. Ralph Beam, Jr., Mayor, City of Cherryville presented the award to Mr. Patterson.

Mr. Patterson is a life long resident of Cherryville and he joined the department in January of 1967 as a volunteer

and then to the paid staff as Driver/Engineer in February 1971. For the past 19 years he has faithfully served the City of Cherryville and its citizens. Mr. Patterson is respected and admired by all of his fellow firefighters.

Mr. Patterson is married to the former Reabrin Wright of Cherryville. They reside at 202 West Main Street, Cherryville. They have 2 children and 4 grandchildren.

"When I joined the department in 1967 Roy Carpenter was the Fire chief.

Submitted by:
Timothy R. Jones, Cpt.
Cherryville Fire Dept.

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Fire deaths dropped by half in '86

By Brad Hamm
The Salisbury Post

SALISBURY—The fire scene was quieter in 1986 than the two previous years as fire-related deaths declined and much of the news concerned hirings and taxes rather than burning buildings.

Three people died in Rowan County fires in 1986. In 1985, eight died of fire-related injuries; seven deaths were reported in 1984.

County Fire Marshal Robert Gunn, already relieved of his job as emergency management director, moved into the building inspection department in June.

Two months later, Randall Faggart, a Rowan native, became fire marshal. Faggart was a full-time firefighter for Salisbury and volunteer firefighter for the Bostian Heights VFD. He was one of 16 applicants.

Fire taxes also stayed in the news. County commissioners approved in June fire taxes in three service districts.

Award Winners

KINSTON—Southwood Volunteer Fire Department presented awards at its annual Christmas party. Award winners were Tommy Howard, Fireman of the Year; Mildred Sumrell, Woman of the Year; and J. D. Parker, who received a special award for dedicated and valuable service to the Southwood Fire Department.

Firefighters in Scotch Irish, a volunteer department in northwest Rowan, had threatened to close their doors Sept. 1 without a fire tax. Some residents of Cool Springs Road protested, saying they live closer to the Rowan-Iredell fire station and were unwilling to support the Scotch Irish department.

Woodleaf and Gold Hill districts also got fire taxes.

Locke Township started construction of a \$190,000 fire station that will include about 6,000 square feet of floor area for four truck bays, a community meeting and training room, a kitchen, an office and storage areas. The station will be on N.C. 150 at Briggs Road.

Some of the major fires this year caused little damage but occurred in high-priority areas. A November fire downtown in the 100 block of South Main Street damaged

merchandise in Tobias and the Rack Room, but did not spread to neighboring buildings.

In January, a fire in Room 227 of Rowan Memorial Hospital forced evacuation of 85 patients from the first, second, third and fourth floors. Damage was estimated at more than \$4,000.

That same day — within 25 minutes — a fire at the VA Medical Center was reported in a mattress on the fourth floor. Forty-five patients were evacuated.

An employee at the VA was injured in an April fire at the center's employee quarters. Maggie Howard suffered minor first-degree burns.

A large fire in Enochville resulted in arrests last February. Two Kannapolis men were charged with setting a fire that destroyed Dal's Bread and Bolts on Enoch-

ville Avenue. The store was owned and operated by Dallas Campbell, chief of the fire department for 18 years. Damage was estimated at \$200,000.

Deaths from fires were recorded in March, May and November. A Salisbury man, James Edward Barber, burned to death in a November fire that destroyed his home at 302 E. Fisher St. It was one of two major structure fires that night in town. The other destroyed a vacant home at 709 S. Fulton St.

A Faith woman, Peggy Nell Beaver Jackson, died in March after a kerosene heater caused a fire that heavily damaged her on home on Jackson Road.

In May, James Ruble Payne of Castor Road in eastern Rowan died of smoke inhalation in a fire at his mobile home.

Sprinkler puts blaze on hold

By Suzy Brett
Cary News
Staff Writer

CARY—If bad luck really does run in threes, Cary area firefighters should finally get a break.

Cary's third fire in a week left a South Hills Outlet Mall video store with some smoke and water damage recently.

"It's too early to tell what caused the fire," said Cary Fire Chief Ned Perry of a 1:30 a.m. fire at Video One.

Perry said there was enough heat from the fire to set off two heads of the sprinkler system, and some smoke had moved into the mall by the time fire personnel arrived.

Although firefighters remained at the store until about 5:30 a.m. to clean up, the store opened during regular hours. "There's not that much damage," said an unidentified employee.

Perry said the last three fires — including one that destroyed eight units of a 16-unit apartment building at the Misty Woods complex of Nottingham Drive on Jan. 7, and another Jan. 12 at The Furniture Square on East Chatham Street that Cary assisted in fighting — have physically and mentally drained his personnel.

Head Grantham Firemen

GOLDSBORO—New officers of the Grantham Fire Department were installed at a Ladies Night dinner held at Wilber's Barbecue. Announced were: J. L. Rose, president; Ralph Williamson, vice president; Daryll Overton, secretary-treasurer and assistant chief; Carlton Hinson, chief; Jeff Rose, assistant chief; Harold Thornton and Charles Hix, captains; Gilbert Hare, lieutenant and recipient of the Most Helpful Officer Award; Marc Rose, lieutenant and Fireman of the Year; and Fire Marshal Carl Ray Coley, installing officer. J. L. Rose,

who is retiring as an active duty fireman this year, was honored for his 28 years of service, including 23 years as chief. He was presented a large plaque, an engraved watch and a gift certificate. Several firemen received training awards, some of them for more than 100 hours during the past year. It was reported that firemen answered 53 calls during the year, 19 less than during 1985. Estimated value of property at risk was \$1,468,100 and damage was estimated at \$122,075.

Dinner for Firemen

ROCKY MOUNT—Members of the Lewis Community, Heartsease and West Edgecombe Volunteer Fire Departments were treated to a steak dinner at West Edgecombe School.

The dinner was given to the firemen by the Edgecombe County Board of Education in appreciation of the outstanding job the departments did in responding to the fire at West Edgecombe School in September.

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Retired firefighter can still hear the siren

By Bill Goodykoontz
Winston-Salem
Journal Reporter

WINSTON-SALEM—When Capt. E. Charles Blakley Jr. of the Winston-Salem Fire Department left work Monday Dec. 29, was for the last time.

But he thinks of it a little differently.

"I guess it's just like taking a long weekend off," he said. "At that period of time I'll start to wonder whether it's time to go back to the fire station."

It won't be, but it will be the first time in 37 years that it won't.

Blakley, 59, retired Monday, December 29.

He spent the last four months of his firefighting career at Engine Company Four, the busiest in the city. That was only fitting.

"I've been through the most active companies in town," he said. "I went to Engine Three in 1949. At that time Engine Three and Engine Four were the busiest in town."

"I've been in some stations that have been less active. To come back to Number Four to climax my career is . . . like icing on the cake."

A big cake, no doubt. Blakley has been through a lot of changes with the Fire Department. "I had a Dal-

matian at (Engine) Three," he said. Jezebel, a talented dog, could climb ladders but was unable to get back down once she reached the top.

"She rode the truck for a period of time, but she was so protective of the firemen she would bite," Blakley said. "They told me I had to take her home. I couldn't even whip the children in the backyard, or she'd bite me. She could not stand violence."

Those trademark dogs were retired from the city's fire stations more than 20 years ago, he said, because the city didn't want to incur the liability of a dog bite. But before

that happened, Jezebel made at least one station a little more like a family.

"I bred here with Engine Five's male Dalmatian," Blakley said. "She had several litters of pups." \$F1 Other changes weren't so pleasant. In 1973 the city adopted the public safety officer system. Policemen became firefighters, and the number of men at each fire station was reduced. Neither department has been happy with the program since.

"I've had no difficulties with them (public safety officers), but it's difficult for them," Blakley said. "They

don't get the training.

"Knowing your personnel, knowing each individual, helps a lot at a fire. Some of the public safety people out there probably don't even know my name. They know my rank."

Strategies for fighting fires have also changed. "We had different hazards then," he said. Fire walls didn't exist, so when something caught fire, it really caught fire.

Although fire walls and other safety devices now exist, there are still dangers. Many items made of plastic, for example, emit hazardous fumes when they burn.

Of course, firefighters now have air packs to enable them to enter areas filled with hazardous fumes. That's a change, too. "We had one filtered mask, and it was so clogged up you couldn't

breathe through it."

He knows that more changes will take place in his absence, not all of them positive. Apartments being built now don't have adequate fire stops and aren't built with safety in mind, he said. "They meet the building code, and that's all that's required."

He'll miss a lot of things, he said like the challenge of trying to beat a spreading fire at every turn. But that's not what he'll miss most, not after 37 years.

"The fellows I worked with, the friendship of those fellows, I'll certainly miss that," he said.

Blakley said that he plans to play golf at least once a week. He won't have to worry about getting too far away from the excitement of firefighting though.

"I'm living in sight of Station 15," he said. "I can hear their siren."

Steve Hayes is picked B-city 1986 fireman

BESSEMER CITY—Bessemer City firemen voted Steve Hayes as their 1986 "Fireman of The Year." He has been a member of the force for three years. During the recent Christmas parade, he drove the department's 1949 Ford Fire Truck in the city parade with Roy Franklin his passenger on the front seat. Franklin, age 82, was a charter member of the BC fire department since 1926. He has been an active fireman for the past 60 years and is still serving on the force.

Hayes received a plaque from Fire chief David Ford when firemen entertained their wives at their annual Christmas social. It took place on Saturday, December 13th at the fire station. Fred Lankford and his wife Vesta

cooked the turkey and ham meal plus five vegetables. Wives of the firemen furnished desserts.

Retired firemen and their wives were invited guests. Other guests included Mrs. M. E. Woody who resides next to the fire station and as fire Chief Ford remarked, "puts up with us and the activities of operating the station."

As each person arrived, a number was presented at the door for door gift drawings. Nineteen door prizes were given.

Covers for around 50 persons were laid at tables holding Christmas arrangements. The fire station is decorated for the season in holiday arrangements and a Christmas tree.

Generations Acquired

ELIZABETH CITY—Two Pasquotank County volunteer fire departments recently acquired electric generators that will be used to maintain quick emergency service even during power outages. Here, Cliff Canipe of Carolina Telephone presents a generator to Jimmy Harris, chief of the Providence Volunteer Fire Department. Canipe presented a similar generator to Chief Tommy Harris of the Newland Fire Department. The utility periodically donates excess generators to fire departments.

Siler City fire dept.'s new officers

SILER CITY—The Siler City Fire Department held its annual banquet on Saturday, December 20.

Jerry Grimes, former Chief of the department, conducted the installation of officers for 1987 by authority of the Town Board of Commissioners.

The following officers were installed for the new year: Rod Tidy, Chief; Earl Dorsett, Assistant Chief; Eddie Dixon, Assistant Chief; Billy Scott, Captain.

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'It didn't have to be,' Chief in Winston says

By David Rice
Winston Salem
Journal Reporter

WINSTON-SALEM—Fires have killed eight people in Winston-Salem since Dec. 8 — a statistic that alarms city fire officials.

"That's an outrageous number, and it didn't have to be," Lester E. Ervin, the chief of the Winston-Salem Fire Department, said recently. During the same period a year ago, the city had no fire deaths.

The number of fires in Winston-Salem fell from 389 in 1985 to 279 in 1986. But despite the decrease, Ervin and F. E. "Pete" Harless, the department's deputy chief, said that fires usually increase during the winter months because of malfunctions in heating systems. And the fire officials said that they are especially concerned that eight residents of the city were unable to get out in time during recent fires.

A fire set by children playing with matches killed a 73-year-old invalid in her apartment on Overlook Drive Dec. 8. A 94-year-old man was killed in his home on Carlyle Avenue Dec. 14 in a fire that was blamed on a malfunctioning gas heater on a bathroom wall. Two homeless men died in a vacant apartment building on Second Street that caught fire Dec. 17. An 85-year-old woman, her 50-year-old daughter and 23-year-old grandson all died on New Year's Day during a fire in a house on Banbury Road that had a smoke detector without batteries. And a 77-year-old woman died in her

home on Gilmer Avenue in a fire apparently started by a cigarette.

Harless blamed the past

month's deaths on an attitude that "it's not going to happen to us" and a lack of preparedness. "Humans are

strange animals — some of the only animals that get complacent with their lifestyles. When we get complacent, we get careless," he said.

The fire officials urge residents to install smoke detectors or other early warning systems outside every bedroom, to test the detector regularly and to replace run down batteries. They also said that everyone should develop an escape plan — and practice it repeatedly, with all family members present, during daytime and night.

In discussing the fire on Banbury Road New Year's Day that killed the local lawyer Alice Patterson, her mother and her son, fire officials noted that deadbolt locks operated with keys can be a fatal obstacle during a fire. If a door is locked and the key can't be found, a person inside can't get out. "When you provide security for your home, you also lock yourself in," Harless said.

Harless and Ervin said the key to such a lock should be kept in the lock or nearby. Residents should practice finding the key and using it in the dark, they added.

The also offered the following tips:

—If you clothing catches fire, stop wherever you are, drop to the floor or ground, and roll over and over to smother the flames. Cover your face with your hands.

—Make special provisions in escape plans for infants, older people and the handicapped. Have two ways out of every room. Establish a meeting place outside. Don't return to a building on fire.

Practice the escape plan. And in an apartment building, use only the stairs as a fire exit.

—Crawl low in smoke. Most victims are overcome by smoke rather than flames, and cleaner air is nearer the floor.

—Make sure smokers put out cigarettes in large, deep ashtrays. Empty ashtrays in the toilet. Check under cushions for cigarette butts before going to bed.

—Keep portable heaters at least 36 inches away from papers, bedding, clothing and curtains. Keep small children away from heaters and turn the heaters off when going to bed or leaving the home.

—When cooking, pay attention and keep children out of the way. If grease catches fire, place a lid over the pan and turn off the burner. Make sure pot handles are turned inward so that they can't be tipped over accidentally.

—If an appliance gives off smoke or a burning odor, unplug it immediately and have it checked for repair. Have frayed or broken cords on appliances replaced. Don't place extension cords under rugs or anywhere that they might be stepped on. If you replace a blown fuse, make sure the new fuse is of the same amperage.

—Keep matches and lighters away from children.

Hazardous Material Team Formed

By Dennis Hill
Goldsboro News-Argus

MOUNT OLIVE—Fire and rescue personnel in Mount Olive will be able to deal with hazardous chemical spills and leaks safely and effectively upon the formation of a hazardous materials team, says Mount Olive Rescue Squad Capt. Bobby Kelly.

Kelly and his son, Anthony, have been training for over a year in handling hazardous materials.

"You never know when you'll need something like this," said Kelly, who is also director of Mount Olive Civil Preparedness.

"There is a great need for a team like this in every county in the state," said Earl Mitchell, emergency management coordinator for Wayne County.

Mitchell said a few of the larger counties in the state already have such teams in operation.

"In case of a spill they can go in and ascertain what is there and how to best deal with it," Mitchell said.

About a dozen members of the Mount Olive Fire Department have shown interest in forming a hazardous materials team and are in the process of beginning training,

according to Kelly.

The team has already purchased two hazardous material suits, at a cost of about \$5,000.

The suits are made of highly resistant material and contain hose fittings for air backpacks.

Funds were made available by the county fire office and the Town of Mount Olive.

Kelly said the team is currently seeking funds to purchase radio equipment.

He said the team would seek funds from the oil jobbers association and from chemical companies as well as from private donors and government programs.

Training for the team is done through the state by Safety System Inc. of Orlando, Fla., said Kelly.

Kelly and Mount Olive Fire Chief Joe Caveness spent a week in training in Florida last year.

He said current training programs were being offered in Fayetteville and that a once-a-year program was held in LaGrange.



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Safety tips offered

Wood Stove Blamed For Fire

By Michael D. Esposito
Louisburg Franklin
Times Staff Writer

LOUISBURG—Carolyn Perry is lucky firefighters responded quickly enough to save her home, but the fire she almost had served to underscore the importance of properly installing and maintaining woodstoves.

Franklinton firefighters were called to her home around 9:30 p.m. Wednesday, January 7, to extinguish a fire that threatened to spread from her woodstove to the rest of her house on US 1 near the Rimrock Motel.

Before the fire ignited the rest of the house, firefighters dragged the tin heater she used from the house.

"That's a typical improper installation of a woodburning

stove," Franklinton Fire Chief Norris Collins said. "That's the reason people are waking up dead... They're extremely lucky they weren't asleep."

One of the problems with the Perry woodstove is that there was no clearance between the exhaust pipe and wood members of the roof, Collins said. Heat from the stove threatened to ignite the roof.

After the fire, Collins offered several tips on the proper purchase, installation and maintenance of woodstoves.

It is important to buy a woodstove that is of a heavy enough gauge to do the job, Collins said. "Try to stay away from the economy versions."

In addition, be sure the woodstove has been tested and approved by one of the organizations that tests woodstoves.

Some people cannot afford the big woodstoves and use, instead, a smaller stove commonly called a tin heater.

The important thing to remember about tin heaters is they are not sturdy enough to last very long, Collins said. They should be replaced at least once a year and sometimes twice.

At about \$50 each, this would add only \$100 to a residential heating bill each season.

In addition, it is important to use a heavy enough gauge of exhaust pipe, Collins said, adding .26 gauge is about the lightest that can be used.

The pipe used by Carolyn Perry was a lighter gauge that is adequate only for venting

a kerosene heater or a gas heater, Collins said.

There should be a minimum of eight inches of masonry between the stove pipe and any combustible surface, Collins said. There should also be at least two feet of masonry between the stove and any combustible surface.

Collins pointed out many older houses have chimneys that were designed to be used with oil heaters. Creosote builds up in these chimneys and many burn out, generating enough heat to crack the chimney and spread fire to the house.

It is also important to have chimneys cleaned and to replace stoves and exhaust pipes when they develop holes in them, Collins said. The important thing is to remember the fire in the stove must be controlled, and a beat-up old woodstove may not do this.

In addition, Collins said, burn only seasoned wood.

The creosote from unseasoned wood builds up quickly in a stove pipe and will ignite, setting fire to the house, he said.



Firefighting takes guts, Author says

By R. K. Underwood
Winston-Salem
Journal Reporter

WINSTON-SALEM—"Big John" Williams had recently won a bottle of champagne in a limbo contest and was looking forward to sharing it with his wife on New Year's Eve. A fire call came in, and 10 minutes later, he was dead.

For children, the idea of being a firefighter is an exciting one—riding around in a shiny red truck and rescuing people from burning buildings. But sometimes they don't realize that it is a dangerous profession.

Jerry Laughlin, the author of *Last Alarm* and a consulting editor for *Fire Command* magazine, brought that point home as he talked about some of the characteristics common to the individuals who have died trying to save others and the situations that caused their deaths.

Last Alarm is a book that examines five of those cases, including Williams'.

Laughlin spoke recently at the 12th annual Piedmont Fire Seminar, sponsored by the Forsyth County Volunteer Firemen's Association and Forsyth Technical College at the Benton Convention Center.

About 1,400 fire and rescue workers from North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia attended the seminar, which ended in January. It included an exhibit of fire trucks and other items and was open to the public.

Williams was a victim of what Laughlin calls the hidden hole. He had been a fire and rescue worker in Washington, D.C., for 10 years when the accident happened in 1984.

He was responding to a fire at a theater in the red light district about two blocks from the White House that had been caused by a knocked-over kerosene heater, Laughlin said.

There was a report of five people trapped on the second floor. Williams was one of those who entered the building in a rescue effort. As they were coming back out, he stepped on an unused duct that had been covered with only a sheet of tin.

It collapsed. His friends could not rescue him.

Laughlin said that in working on his book, he learned that the people who died in fires were more aggressive than the average firefighter and that such accidents usually occur in the first 10 minutes of a fire.

He also discovered that although the danger of the profession is made real by these accidents and that the victim's colleagues often feel guilty that they did not do enough, they remain dedicated to their work.

Out of the five fire departments examined in Laughlin's book, only one of the 100 people in the departments resigned after a fatal accident.

Anyone who has about \$200,000 can buy one, Barrow said.

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