



# TARHEEL FIREFIGHTER



## AND CAROLINA RURAL FIREMAN

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### Firefighters Take Plunge For Training

By Hunter Kome  
Wilmington Morning Star  
Staff Writer

WILMINGTON—The takeoff was clean, feet together at the landing — then the cards went up: 4, 4, 3.

"No style. No style whatsoever," the judges muttered. "No technique."

### Firemen Overcome By Gases

SILER CITY—Three firemen with the Moncure Fire Department were overcome by gasses released during a mobile home fire.

One of the firemen was transported via Life Flight helicopter after losing consciousness.

According to County Fire Marshal Mark Scott, the accident occurred at a mobile home fire on the Christian Chapel Church Road.

The mobile home was engulfed, he explained, so firemen were conducting exterior firefighting activities.

The incident occurred when three firemen, on a line at the rear of the trailer, were exposed to the contents of an air-conditioner that vented itself. "We theorize that the freon in the presence of the fire turned into phosgene gas," Scott said.

Two of the firemen reported weakness within 15 minutes of exposure and were taken to Central Carolina Hospital in Sanford.

The third fireman felt fine at the time so he did not go to the hospital. About 15 minutes later, he lost consciousness.

An East Chatham Rescue Squad ambulance transported the fireman, Robert Parker of Moncure, to the fire station, where a Life Flight helicopter picked him up and took him to Duke Hospital.

Parker regained consciousness and after testing, doctors determined he suffered no ill effects. The other two firemen were also pronounced to be well after the initial symptoms, Scott said.

"It was just a close call," Scott said.

All three are home and doing fine, he said.

After jumping from a 25-foot-high roof at the downtown fire station recently, the last thing Floyd Williams cared about was the score his fellow Wilmington firefighters bestowed on his plunge.

He climbed off the Fire Department's new air bag holding the left side of his chest. Thirty seconds later, the time it takes the bag to recover, down came Capt. C.D. Burton — for the second time.

"What made you do it twice?" Williams asked Burton, as their colleagues held up a 5 and two 9's. "Once is plenty."

The department spent about \$8,000 on the bag and will spend the next several months training firefighters to jump onto it, working up to 50-foot heights, said Capt. Gene Kidd.

Two electric fans keep the 18-foot-wide, 25-foot-long, 9-foot-high bag inflated. One person at a time can leap from as high as 100 feet, or about 10 stories. The bag partly deflates when the person hits,

breaking the fall.

The jumpers, about 20 men, said the bag absorbs almost all of the impact, but "it's the first step that gets you."

"I don't care how much guts you have," said Eddie Garner. "It still takes something to step off of there."

Training with the bag builds confidence and the ability to cope with heights in addition to teaching firefighters how to use the emergency escape route if necessary.

"It looks so high when you get up there," Burton said. "The first time makes you feel like that thing's about this square," he said, making a postage stamp-sized square with his fingers.

When fire is roaring around you, the bag would look much more inviting, Kidd said.

"If you have a burning building in which people panic, you may have to restrain people to keep them from jumping all at once," Kidd said. "One person at a time; that's its only drawback."

### Fire, Rescue Units Seek Funding Hike

TABOR—The chiefs of Columbus County's 19 volunteer fire and rescue departments met with county commissioners to ask for increased funding for fiscal 1987-88.

"The county is getting a lot of free labor for the money," Danny Faulk, president of the Columbus County Fire and Rescue Association told commissioners.

The associations funding request has been presented to administrator Roy Lowe, with an increase in county funding of 12 percent requested.

Individual fire and rescue departments received \$8,694 this year from the county, while departments with both fire and rescue services received \$13,765. The individual departments would receive an additional \$1,043 next year, while the combination departments would receive an additional \$1,652 in next year's budget if the request was approved.

The county's private ambulance services would not receive an increase in their \$7,000 per year subsidy under the budget request.

The 577 volunteer fire and rescue members in the county give thousands of man hours providing emergency medical care and fire protection to the county, Faulk said. But the cost of providing that care is going up, Faulk said.

For example, it costs about \$2,000 to suit a firefighter in protective clothing and breathing equipment, Faulk said. Tougher state regulations being considered could force fire departments to provide the full equipment for every firefighter, even those whose assigned tasks do not put them in direct contact with fires, Faulk said.

"I'd hate to see some of these departments in some of these areas have to close, but without funds they could not operate," Faulk said.

Commission chairman Ed Worley, who is also a volunteer fireman, told Faulk the board would consider the request.

"We're listening and we've got a tough budget to deal with," Worley said. "We'll do what we can."

### Today's Volunteer Fire Service

By Alan M. DeSimone  
Mount Vernon, N.Y.

Today's Volunteer Fire Service provides a truly unique service to more citizens than ever before. Each department needs a working philosophy in order to survive. The philosophy should get the members up and moving toward greater service to the citizens and gain their respect and admiration. Look beyond the past or present role and concentrate on the department's future value to the community. The philosophy of any volunteer department is described below.

Prevent the loss of life and property from fire. Provide rescue service in life-threatening situations. Provide confinement and suppression in the event of a fire.

The philosophy can provide a basis for recruitment, retention, training and morale of the volunteer force. Any volunteer fire department will

only be as strong as its weakest member. Each member has the responsibility to display a professional attitude. The philosophy will guide each man in his association with the department.

When developing a philosophy, remember just as the members have an obligation to the department, the department has an obligation to its members. Each member brings talents and skills as well as dedication to certain duties and responsibilities. The department must recognize its obligation to provide each member opportunities to share these talents and skills. When a department develops and uses a philosophy under these conditions, it should have little trouble recruiting members. The philosophy will mold the members into a professional firefighting team and is the reason for the fire department to exist.

### Fire/Rescue Donations

By Kim Lloyd  
Warsaw-Faison News  
Staff Writer

WARSAW—Three local churches in Faison, along with three churches in the surrounding areas, have pulled together to raise approximately \$2,876.76 for the Faison Fire/Rescue Department, Inc.

According to the Rev. Chester Aycock, a member of the Faison Fire/Rescue, the churches have been donating to the department for the past four years. "The department is a great service to our area and we would like to support them in any way that we can," asserted Aycock.

Members of Burning Bush, Hills Chapel and Moses Chapel of Faison, along with St. Pauls Church of Wilson, Running Branch of Clinton and Rouse Chapel of Kinston, and the Faison's Womens Civic Club, worked for the past year to raise the money for the department. For the past four years these churches have worked annually by taking a special collection to support Faison's volunteers of the department.

"We are very proud to be a part of these people and could not get along without them. We thank them for the time and efforts that they give to our organization and the money they have raised. It

means a great deal to our department," asserted Robbie Kennedy, Chief of Faison Fire/Rescue.

According to Sprunt Hall, Assistant Rescue Chief, the only means of raising money for the department is by fund raisers held throughout the year, including barbecue dinners, auctions and others. Duplin County does supply \$450.00 for the fire department, but contributes nothing to the rescue, Hall pointed out. The fire and rescue are presently working with two ambulances; one crash truck, one panel truck, five fire trucks and one brush truck, which, according to Hall take quite a lot of money to maintain.

Over 25 fire and rescue members came out to attend a special church service conducted by the Rev. Chester Aycock at Moses Chapel on Saturday, February 7.

### Firefighters Track Spill

HIGH POINT—Firefighters recently checked a creek near the Rockford Road bridge to determine how far an oil spill traveled. Approximately 25 gallons of diesel fuel spilled from a tank being removed

Continued on page 5

## Editorial

—EDITORIAL—

A communication from Mike Edison, Sales Developing Manager of the Field & Stream Magazine, announces that once again, the Field & Stream is teaming up with National Volunteer Fire Council for its 4th annual Turkey Shoot Sweepstakes. These Turkey Shoot Sweepstakes are designed to help Volunteer Fire Departments across the United States to raise money for their respective Departments.

This program is offered to local Volunteer Departments as a complete fundraising idea and was conceived and paid for by Field & Stream and the corporate sponsors they recruit. There is no cost

or obligation to the Fire Departments. To promote the Turkey Shoots at the local level, Field & Stream will send every participating Fire Department a free kit, with instructions on setting up and running a Turkey Shoot Sweepstakes, including posters announcing the time and place of your local Turkey Shoot, ad mats for local newspapers, publicity materials, Sweepstakes entry forms, free raffle items and much more. There will be a special advertising section in the November issue ('87) of Field & Stream also.

I wrote about the Turkey Shoots last year, but it was a little late getting in print I think, so I thought I'd give you plenty of time to plan this year. The first Turkey Shoot was held in 1984, with 1,500



EMILY H. KING

Fire Departments participating - in 1985, it's second year, it doubled to 3,000 and in 1986 jumped to 4,000. This year they expect it to reach the 4,500 mark of participating Fire Departments.

Last year, the Sweepstakes-Turkey Shoot helped

almost 4,000 Fire Departments raise an estimated \$4,000,000.00 in funds. Panasonic donated its Mr. Whisk Electric Shavers to the first 1,000 Departments who sent in the form contained in their kit. The shavers were worth \$50 each and the Fire Departments raffled them off as an additional fund-raising item.

Like last year, every winner in a Turkey Shoot put on by a participating Fire Department will be entered in a Sweepstakes funded by Field & Stream with the drawing to be held in January, 1988. Prizes for last year's Sweepstakes will be announced in the next few months and I will be sure to get in another mention about it, if I am notified. Also, I will list the prizes for this year's Sweepstakes, if

that too is sent to me.

For more information about this excellent event for fund-raising, contact: Mike Edison, Field & Stream, 1515 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10036. Telephone: (212) 719-6689.

Yours for a fun fund-raising event!

*Emily H. King*



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## Forest Ranger Watches Out For Watauga

By Jenny Schrum  
Boone Watauga  
Democrat Staff Writer  
BOONE—Although population growth in Watauga County may be good for business, the Watauga County forest ranger is concerned that the added population is continually increasing the risk to people and houses in forest fires.

Increasing population is a concern of forest rangers all across the United States, said Rudy Johnson, the state's forest ranger in Watauga County. But it is especially a concern in Watauga County because there are more people every year building houses near or in the forests.

So far there has been no loss of life due to a forest fire in the county, Johnson said. In 1981 a house was destroyed in Aho when firefighters were unable to contain the fire.

That was the worst year for forest fires, with 74 fires burning 729 acres in the county.

In addition to the volunteer firefighting crews, Johnson had to request help from the regional and state forest ranger headquarters. They helped by sending two water tankers, planes which drop up to 3,000 gallons of chemically treated water directly on the fire.

Last year was the driest year on record, Johnson said. There were 52 fires which burned more than 200 acres.

Most forest fires take place during the spring and fall of the year, Johnson said, because the leaves are not on the trees to protect the leaves and vegetation on the ground which can become dried out by the sun and wind.

Johnson is told of a fire by firewatchers in the fire towers. One of the towers is in Boone and the other is in Dugger,

which is in the southeastern part of Watauga County.

If smoke is spotted, Johnson or Edwin Greene, Watauga County's smokechaser, are called to investigate the fire.

Then, depending on the size of the fire and what area of the county it is in, one or more of the 11 volunteer fire departments are alerted.

"The fire departments, all volunteer, here in Watauga County do a super job every year," Johnson said.

The firefighters contain a fire by digging a ditch or fireline around the fire. The ditch must be 4 to 10 feet wide, depending on the fire, and most times the fire crews must dig with shovels.

Johnson said they prefer to use bulldozers to dig the ditches, but because of the hilly and rocky terrain, they cannot always depend on a bulldozer.

Other problems that firefighters in the mountains must contend with are the variable winds and the fact that fire goes uphill faster than it moves across flat ground, Greene said.

The problems of fighting fires are also the reason for 53 percent of the fires in Watauga County in the last five years.

People letting trash or brush fires get out of control is the leading cause of fire, Johnson said.

He said that most of these fires were started by people who had recently moved to the mountains and did not understand about the particular problems of burning in this area.

One weekend in March there were five fires caused by burning trash and four of those were started by people who had lived here less than two years, he said.

In addition to the fires that were started by trash burning, 15 percent were caused by arson; 12 percent by careless disposal of fireplace or wood stove ashes; 10 percent by electric fences and fireworks; 6 percent by children playing with matches; 0.5 percent by smoking; and 0.5 percent by campfires.

The other 3 percent of fires were started by lightning, Johnson said.

The purpose of the permits, Johnson said, is to remind people it is their responsibility to keep their fire under control.

There are penalties for people who do not comply with the law.

It is a felony to commit arson and offenders can be sentenced to up to seven years in prison and fined up to \$25,000.

Other fire violations are misdemeanors and can result in fines of up to \$90.

There is also a \$500 reward given to people who provide information that leads to the conviction of a person who starts a fire, he said.

Not only does the forest service fight fires, but it also has a forest management program.

Part of that program is to pay 40 percent of the cost of planting trees to landowners who will participate by planting timber.

The forest service provides the crews and seedlings and the landowner needs to only pay \$70 an acre for the seedlings, of which 40 percent of that cost will be refunded.

Greene said this is a good opportunity for people to use their land for income, especially since property taxes have increased.

For more information on the tree planting program call Johnson or Greene at 264-2863.

# Nash's First Fire Substation

By Ernest Seneca  
Rocky Mount Telegram  
Staff Writer

**GRIFFINS**—Nash County's first fire substation, the Castalia Volunteer Fire Department Griffins Township.

The \$20,000 substation will expand Castalia's fire district by about six miles to 13.

County and local officials met at the building site off State Road 1310 near Taylor's Gin and praised the undertaking.

Drake Freeman donated the seven-tenths acre site to the volunteer group. Freeman's son, Bill, is president of the fire department.

County commissioner and fire representative Billy D. Morgan told The Telegram: "It's a definite tribute to the people here. I think the firemen should have all the praise because anything accomplished is through their efforts."

Dave Cauble, county fire marshal and director of Emergency Management Services, said the substation would be a boost to the area.

Residents will have quicker response time with the added benefit of lower insurance ratings, Cauble said.

The closest unit that was serving the area is about six miles away in Castalia.

"It's just going to mean better fire protection for people at this end of the county," he said. "This really is going to help these folks with their homeowners insurance."

County commissioner Kermit Richardson, who lives about two miles from the site, said, "I'm just elated over it...I'm hoping that it will create an awareness here."

Emergency Medical Services could be extended to the area in the future, Richardson said. Momeyer has provided fire protection, but it takes the squad about 20 minutes to respond because of the travel distance, he said. "And that could make a difference" in an emergency situation, he said.

One pumper truck will be housed at the new substation. It will have the capacity to

pump 500 gallons per minute and have a 700-gallon storage tank.

Castalia Fire Chief Mike Manning said the substation was added "to help these out because we've been fighting fires in this area for a long time."

Manning said the 38-member department and community support were instrumental in making the substation a reality.

Castalia's fire tax district was expanded in the summer of 1986 to include the site area.

The added revenue allowed the department to buy a new pumper truck and equipment, and pay the building costs of the substation. Fund-raising projects have also contributed to the project.

Manning said Planters National Bank & Trust Co. of Nashville provided the department with a five-year loan for construction costs.

An open house and dedication ceremony of the substation was tentatively set for the first of May.

# Fire Department Burns Cottages For Training

**BRYSON CITY**—The Bryson City Fire Department had six cottages to burn for the purpose of Structural Fire-fighting Training.

The training session helped teach the firefighters interior fire attack and methods to use in extinguishing burning structures. All the cottages were ignited several times and firefighters made fire attacks to extinguish the fire. The firefighters were also able to receive training in exposure protection during the training session.

The Bryson City Fire Department members and Officers invited other Fire Departments to be involved in the training session. Firefighters from Qualla, Cullowhee, and Otto Fire Departments attended.

Community College Fire Training Coordinator, David Hall, coordinated the training session through Southwestern Technical Colleges. Tim Jones and Mike Ensley were the Community College Fire Training Instructors for the training session.

Bryson City Fire Department provided a fire pumper, a water tanker, air breathing

equipment and the other necessary items needed for the training session.

Qualla Fire Department provided air breathing equipment and a Cascade system to refill the air breathing equipment when needed. Also the Swain County Ambulance Service stood by at the training session in case any problems should occur.

With the dry weather present, the North Carolina Forest Service volunteered their time to make sure the wooded area did not become involved.

Submitted by:  
Bryson City Fire Dept.  
Bryson City, North Carolina



# Firemen Made Over \$5,000 On Fish Fry

By Frank Smith  
Wake Forest Wake Weekly  
Staff Writer

**WAKE FOREST**—Rain didn't hamper Wake Forest Fire Department's Fish Fry, Friday, April 24.

The firefighters sold 2,800 plates and made \$5,500, according to assistant fire chief Jimmy Keith.

He said the rain didn't keep people away, but it slowed their operation.

"Other than the two spurts of rain, everything went very smooth."

They started selling the fish plates at 11 a.m. and sold out about 7:25.

They fried 1,650 pounds of flounder filet, cooked 1,500 pounds of potatoes and sliced

1,000 pounds of slaw. During the day, firefighters delivered 575 plates to different industries and businesses in Wake Forest and North Raleigh, Keith said.

About 60 people helped with the cooking during the day and 20 members of the Junior Civitan Club from Wake Forest-Rolesville High.

Keith said he wanted to thank people connected with the fire department and everyone else who helped.

The funds raised from the fish fry will be put aside for special equipment and special needs in the next year, Keith said.

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# "The Truly Untapped Resources Of Communities"

By the "Scrounger"  
Christopher R. Nichols

Though I have been in the Fire Service for many years, it never amazes me that the most common words used are "If I had the money and resources of that community I could do wonders with this one."

I believe that each community has the resources available to it or the Fire Department would not exist in that area. It may be that one Department receives funds from a tax base and another receives it from donations and suppers, etc. But there is one untapped resource in each community that either has been overlooked, not asked about, or has not been approached in the proper way.

I am in no way an expert in fund raising, but have found through the years that I have this ability to get what I truly need, when I need it, with little or no cost to the Department.

The first objective is to define what the need is and list it with all the available resources to get the problem taken care of.

**Example:** No money in budget to start a training program but one is truly needed. You have just defined the problem.

**Sources:** Local Municipal

Fire Departments, State Fire-fighting Agencies, NFPA, IFSTA, FEMA, Equipment Sales Personnel and Companies, Large Utilities and Large Corporations. Even local companies such as the local electricians, plumbers or construction company.

**Solution:** To contact all the above listed individuals and have them send you all the newsletters, brochures, pamphlets, and even have representatives from these places come to your station and give a program along with answering any questions that you may have. Most of these services are free and some of these services are available through a loaner library service. If the Municipal Fire Department is large enough, they should have a training officer available, who you may have to buy dinner for, but can give you more information in one session than you can follow up in six months.

The real underestimated source is the Equipment Vendors or Salesmen that come to your Department because they attend all the local Training Schools held in your area to sell their goods, so they are familiar with all the individuals that do the training. If specialty equipment is needed like VCRs or Projectors, check with the local school, church, or VCR rental shop and see if they will donate the use of the equipment for your training sessions. Even a local department store may loan you the demo units they have in stock or one that is scratched or dented. If you find one of those, see if the manager will donate the use of it for a period of 60-90 days or up to one year, because the loan of their equipment is tax deductible to them.

I think you will find that most of the larger Corporations and Industries are more

than glad to do anything they can to help you if approached with the attitude that you really need their help. Do not be upset if this does not work the first time, because some of the managers of some of these Corporations are only caretakers and these decisions have to come from some higher authority. Find out who this authority is and contact them by phone and follow it up with a letter of thanks.

When it comes to needing equipment, that is where I like to get involved, because it seems so simple to get sometimes.

**Example:** Your department needs a pick-up/station wagon/or van.

**First:** write out a list of equipment that you need on this vehicle such as 4x4, power steering, etc. Minimum equipment, not that it has to have AM/FM Stereo because you like it but the bare necessities.

**Second:** make a list of all the large dealerships in your area and make it a point to find out the name of the owner and sales manager. Go talk to the sales manager and explain what you need and the purpose of the vehicle. (It helps if your Chief and a member of the governing body goes along also). The sales manager will not be able to help you but he will take you to the owner and by going through him you assure his cooperation in the procurement of this vehicle. Any big dealers take in all kinds of trades and some of them are in very good condition for what you are going to do with them. The owner of the dealership will be more than glad to donate a vehicle if he feels that you are sincere and you can make him see the need and use of this vehicle. Granted this vehicle is not new and may need some repairs but the dealer is not going to give you a lemon to use

and you may have to do some work but it is better than when you started out. Remember this dealer when you get in a place where you need to get a newer vehicle and remember to put the dealers name on the vehicle to show your appreciation for the donation. This applies even if you had to purchase one, because he will usually give you so good of a deal on the vehicle that you cannot turn it down. This is no guarantee that this will always work, but read on, there are other listings for places to get different types of equipment.

**Building Equipment and Material:** Your department is out of money and you need to put in a couple of offices, a bay, or a meeting room.

**Sources:** Lumber yards, construction companies, old abandoned buildings in your area. Sheet rock, wall board etc., contact all the lumber yards in your area and ask them to donate the broken sheet rock, wall board, etc., to your department and most of them will be happy to get rid of it if you will take it all. Do not be shy, take it even though you have to take some that you cannot use because it is too far damaged, because you will come out better in the long run. You may have to do a little more taping and painting but for the cost you cannot beat it. For nails and such, contact the construction companies in your area and they will usually donate 50 to 100 lbs. of nails each. They also will bring some of the excess rough framing material to you if you ask them because after the job is over they usually will throw it away, and for a little clean up you can have some good material. Contact the owner of the old abandoned two storey in your district or the brick home that has been abandoned (every district has them and if not go to the neighbor-

ing district and talk to the Fire Chief and find out where he is and get the one he has if he is not using it). Contact the owner of the property and see if the department can have it if they tear it down and clean the lot. (Burn the old stuff that is of no use to you). It will take time but the money you save will be well worth the investment of time.

**Solution:** After the plans are drawn up and the material collected, contact the churches and civic clubs and see if any of the personnel of these organizations will assist you for the good of the community. I have yet to know a church, fire department, or civic organization that did not have enough experience to undertake and complete this project with better results than can be built today.

The First Rule is, never refuse anything that is donated to your efforts, because if you cannot use it someone around your community can and that is what you are there for.

**Example:** The old lady down the street donates an organ or piano to your department. Now I never have had time to play the organ while the tones are going off but that could happen. Take the organ with the understanding that if you cannot use it you know someone who can. You take it to the little church down the street that can use it and donate it. Later on when you need help with a fund raiser or anything around the department you will find that you have more help than you need.

We all like to have new equipment but not all of us can afford it, so while you are small and just getting on your feet don't be afraid to write and ask other departments for some of their used equipment. We all would rather see a piece of equipment get some use

Continued on page 5

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# Trial By Fire At Wilson Tech

By Tim Finney  
Wilson Daily News  
WILSON—More than 370 volunteer firefighters from across North Carolina blazed into Wilson Saturday, April 18 and Sunday, April 19, for two days of intensive "hands-on" training.

George Howard, dean of continuing education at Wilson County Technical College, said the Wilson Fire Training School started in the early 1960s and has been an annual event ever since.

"At first, the Fire Training School was a joint effort between the technical college and the Fire Department of Wilson," Howard said.

Howard said in those days, the school used what is now

the city's training tower at the overpass on Ward Boulevard. In 1980, the college and the Fire Department split, and the Training School's training ground was built, he said.

The new training ground is located on U.S. 301 near N.C. 42.

"We're teaching proper techniques for handling flammable liquid fires," said Doug Batts, Wilson area fire coordinator, at the event. "There are six types of fires we are teaching: auto fires; air crash rescue; gasoline tanker fires; open spill fires; and Christmas tree fires (to show the proper way to use the water hose).

When these firefighters were asked why they would

risk their necks by getting inches from flames with temperatures ranging from 1,300-3,000 degrees, which is hot enough to melt metal, there was one answer. "We love it."

"This is fun," said Domingo Isasi, a firefighter from Winston-Salem.

"We're doing this the old fashioned way. We're going in there and eating the smoke. That used to be the way firemen proved they were tough. Today we use breathing apparatus when we go into fires, but they're training us (the old-fashioned way) to prepare us in case a situation arises where we don't have those items."

Jack Simmons from Youngsville said the main reason firefighters put themselves in a situation like this is to build confidence. "The instruction we get here, you can't find anyplace else in the state," he said.

According to Howard, the most dangerous fire the firefighters trained for at the training grounds was the tanker fire. "In a real-life situation, that's the most volatile. Depending on how much fuel is in the tanker, that one can blow on you at anytime," he said.

Another reason volunteer firefighters risk the training ground is because they must get a yearly certification. The Training School gives 16 hours' credit or 1.6 continuing education units used for their certification.

"The number of CEU's firefighters have to get," Howard said, "varies from place to place."

At the end of the two-day event, the firefighters were exhausted. Many of them wore the black face they earned "eating smoke." As one of the firefighters said as she collapsed into the bed of a truck, "Man, this is more fun than drowning gerbils."

# Firefighter Gives Purse Snatcher Run For The Money

By Nancy Webb  
Charlotte Observer  
Staff Writer  
CHARLOTTE—Jimmie Rushing usually fights fire, not crime.

The 23-year-old Charlotte firefighter chased a purse snatcher 1½ miles from the Harris-Teeter parking lot on Freedom Drive to a muddy lawn on Rogers Street.

Rushing was loading groceries for dinner at Station 13 into a fire department van when he heard a woman in the parking lot scream.

"I looked up and a guy had jerked her pocketbook from her," he said.

He chased him through a Bojangles' parking lot, across Freedom Drive and into the Winn Dixie parking lot.

The purse snatcher slowed, dropped the purse and kept running.

Rushing ran faster. Behind the Winn Dixie. Down a creek bank.

A Harris-Teeter manager was close behind.

The purse snatcher stumbled.

"He turned around, reached in his jacket and said, 'I'll shoot both of you,'" Rushing said.

## Firefighters Track Spill

Continued from page 1  
from a residence on W. Ray Avenue. The removal was by Arnold Jones Oil Heating & Air Conditioning Co. The oil ran into a creek near W. Ray Avenue and got as far as the portion of the creek that runs under Rockford Road. City officials blocked the creek with three dikes. State and county officials were consulted and declared the spill under control.

Rushing, a student of karate who runs 3 miles a day, grabbed the purse snatcher's wrist and wrestled him to the ground. Police said the man didn't have a gun.

Police charged the man, 29, of Charlotte with common-law robbery.

The woman whose purse was taken was crying when Rushing placed it back in her arms. He never got her name.

"All I know is she said she was going into the hospital tomorrow for open-heart surgery," he said.

## County Firemen Teach Safety

HICKORY—A youth fire safety program was conducted during April and May at 11 Catawba County Fire Departments.

Volunteer firemen conducted four sessions at community fire stations, the 4-H office provided youth manuals and the fire marshal's office helped coordinate the program.

Topics included the chemistry of fire, fire hazards, fire extinguishers and home fire escape plans. Each 90-minute session included demonstrations and a film.

# Truly Untapped Resources Of Our Communities"

Continued from page 4  
than rust away from lack of use and would be more than willing to work out with any department some arrangements because we are all charged with the same responsibility, "To protect lives and property."

I could go on for two more pages on this subject but I think I'll let you think and ponder some of the areas that I did not touch.

Listed below are some more areas that you can go for equipment for sale or donation. Please use them wisely.

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Christopher R. Nichols—Sec.  
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# It's Not All Fighting Fires

By Kimberly Horne  
Burlington Daily Times-  
News Staff Writer

**BURLINGTON** — Burlington Fire Department's firefighters believe there's more to being a firefighter than just putting out fires.

According to Assistant Fire Chief Frank Andrews, the job description of firefighters consists of saving lives and protecting property.

He noted, however, that to add flexibility to their jobs, they perform other duties during their 24-hour work day shifts.

If the firefighters are not out in the community fighting fires, they can be found performing janitorial duties or involved in a physical fitness program at the fire station.

"We are some of the highest paid janitors," said Frank Layne, a firefighter of the Burlington Fire Department. "We perform all of the maintenance duties of the station."

While they work to keep their station clean and equipment in tip-top shape, they always keep an attentive ear tuned to their radios — ready to jump for any emergency.

"Even when we're off, we're working," Layne commented. "New firefighters spend a lot of their time learning the streets of Burlington."

Drivers of the fire trucks are instructed to check all radios to be sure the radio equipment is transmitting and receiving. They also perform a complete check of the trucks.

Firefighters work 24-hour work day shifts and are off two days. The work day begins at 8 a.m. with roll call. Each firefighter is assigned to clean one particular area of the station from 8 to 12 noon.

After 1 p.m., they are engaged in special projects and classroom or outside training exercises. They involve themselves in the physical fitness program from 4 to 5 p.m. daily — playing table tennis, jogging or working out with weights.

After 5 p.m. dinner is served, and they are on their own time — unless an emergency arises. Many a fireman has left a plate of fried chicken and biscuits to scurry to someone's aid.

They are required to stay on the premises of the fire station during their 24-hour work day shifts.

"We study fire materials, watch television, eat snacks and just lounge during this free time, but we're always ready for a fire," Layne commented. "We don't have many dull days — there's something going on most of the time."

Monday is field day in the kitchen, and it is immaculately cleaned. The offices are cleaned on Tuesdays. The apparatus floor is cleaned on Wednesdays. Windows are cleaned on Thursdays. Maintenance work is done on Fridays, and all vehicles are refueled. All equipment is checked on Saturdays.

"The bulk of our work comes after we put out a fire," said Layne. "After we return from a fire, we have a lot to do — even if it means waiting on a meal."

Each time a fire is fought, the trucks must be serviced. The booster tanks must be re-

Continued on page 8

# Firefighters Wary About Fire Season

By Lee Buchanan  
Staff Writer

**LENOIR**—Forest Ranger Steve McMasters spent most of Thursday, April 2, building equipment boxes at the N.C. Forest Service district headquarters in Lenoir as clouds spread overhead, threatening yet another snowstorm.

On that day a year ago, McMasters and other forestry officials were climbing parched Bee Mountain, using tankers, bulldozers and planes to combat a furious 150-acre woods fire that threatened to burn out of control.

What a difference a year makes.

After two of the most dangerous fire seasons in recent memory, McMasters hopes that this year's snow and rain will keep Caldwell County from again becoming a spring tinderbox.

"Last year was rotten," says McMasters. "And the year before that was worse."

Caldwell, along with most of the Southeast, has suffered through two unusually dry years, capped by the record-breaking drought of 1986. The lack of rainfall coupled with high winds kept firefighters on alert 24 hours a day.

"Last season we were going to fires left and right," he says. "We weren't sitting here building tool boxes."

At this time last year, the forest service had responded to 40 fires that destroyed an estimated 500 acres of Caldwell property. By year's end, forestry firefighters had put out 108 fires.

But a dreary, wet winter has meant a quiet spring fire season in Caldwell — 18 minor fires have consumed 12-15 acres so far in 1987.

The spring fire season runs from mid-March to mid-May. Fall fire season begins in Oc-

tober and extends through December.

"We're in the best shape we've been in the last three or four years going into the fire season," McMasters says.

But McMasters and the two other forestry officials stationed in Lenoir — Rusty Delinger and Tony Whit — aren't complacent about the promising conditions.

The fire season is barely two weeks old and they know things can get bad in a hurry.

"We're a whole lot better off, but that doesn't mean it's not going to get dry," McMasters says.

The critical point of the season comes in mid-April, he says, when leaf growth takes more water from the soil.

"I'm still concerned. With all that snow and rain, we've still had 18 fires," he says.

Caldwell residents learned to share McMasters' concern in 1985, when a series of frightening wood fires raged here and in neighboring counties.

On one day during that spring, 2,700 acres burned in the Mortimer area of Caldwell, while firefighters in Wilkes County battled a 1,000-acre blaze.

At the same time, the worst fire in Burke County history destroyed 4,000 acres of timber in the South Mountains, eventually forcing the evacuation of Valdese.

"Those fires did more for public fire prevention awareness than anything else," McMasters says.

McMasters calls Caldwell, Burke and Wilkes the "three hot counties" in District 2, which also includes Ashe, Allegheny, Alexander, Watuga and Avery counties.

McMasters attributes the frequency of fires in these counties to two factors — size and population. More people means more fires, he says.

## Mt. Pleasant VFD Celebrated 50th

**CONCORD**—The Mt. Pleasant Volunteer Fire Department celebrated its 50th Anniversary Saturday and Sunday April 25 and 26, with a parade, the annual Firemen's Fun Day and a variety of festivities.

The parade lined up at 9:30 a.m. Saturday and began about 10:30. It started on N.C. 73 at Washington Street and onto North Main Street, ending at N.C. 49.

The parade entries included among others, the Central Cabarrus High School ROTC Color Guard and Drill Team, the Mt. Pleasant High School

Band, Miss Mt. Pleasant, the Mt. Pleasant Homecoming Queen, the Charlotte Motor Speedway Queen and Car, the Southern Corvette Club, the Dance Trap Float, several antique cars, a 1942 Mack Fire Truck from Kannapolis Village, St. John's Grange, American Legion Post 301, Mt. Pleasant Optimists, the K97 Stagecoach, equipment from most county Fire Departments, Dave Goff's Mule Team, the Fire Safety House, the Concord Dirt Diggers Dune Buggies, the Cabarrus County Rescue Squad and the Mt. Pleasant 1936 Engine 1.

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# Early Firefighting Equipment On Display

**NEW BERN**—They sit now in a cinder block museum on Hancock Street, the steam pumpers silent, the leather fire buckets empty, the fire fighting crews gone.

Although New Bern's first motorized fire truck, purchased in 1914 is bright red, a closer look reveals the scars from decades of fighting fires in New Bern.

Tales of a livery stable fire in 1907 and the 1922 blaze that destroyed 40 blocks—consuming 1,000 New Bern homes—are housed in the Firemen's Museum.

Today, stories of these fires are retold by a volunteer of 46 years with the New Bern Fire Department, Tim Conner.

Showing off a horse drawn steam engine that set a world speed record for making

steam, Conner said, "This was a wonderful piece of equipment."

Located behind the modern Broad Street fire station, the museum houses steam pumpers and an extensive collection of other early fire fighting equipment, along with rare photographs of the Civil War and early New Bern.

"There are very few museums like this in the country," Conner said.

Indeed. How many museums can show-off with a mounted head of an old fire horse. Probably very few, concedes Conner.

Pointing to the faithful old fire horse named Fred, he says, "Over here is a tribute to Fred. He died in the line of duty." The mounted head of

the horse is a prominent reminder of the day Fred, "died pulling this wagon to a false-alarm," Conner said.

Visitors can discover how the early steam pumpers were used to fight fires. On display is an 1879 engine, the Atlantic Steamer, which was used until 1915. At that time, the town purchased its first motor truck, which replaced the horse-drawn engine.

The furnace on the pumpers was fueled by coal. In those days, a fireman would stand on the back of the steamer to fuel the furnace. "By the time they got to the fire, the steam was ready to pump," Conner said.

The 1879 engine could pump 500-gallons of water a minute. The first motor fire truck produced about 750 gallons of water a minute, according to Conner.

The Button Company, of which Conner was a member, set a world fire fighting record

when its pumper produced steam in one minute and 46-seconds. The fire drill competition was held in Wilmington during the early 1900s.

Another record was set in Charlotte in 1911 when the New Bern fire company ran the fire hose, made the hydrant connection, and produced steam in twenty-six and two-fifths seconds, Conner said.

There are photographs of both the Atlantic and Button Fire companies and of fire fighting equipment from Bern, Switzerland, for which New Bern gets its name, on display.

Pictures of the Battle of New Bern during the Civil War and the fireman's convention of 1923 line the walls of the museum. An "unusual" picture, Conner says, depicts a horse with "all fours off the ground" during a fire drill.

Conner won't tell how old

he is. And, as he recalls the tales of early fire fighting days in New Bern, Conner only smiles and admits he was once a volunteer fireman for 46 years.

Museum hours Tuesday through Saturday are 9:30 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The museum is open Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

To find out more about this and other interesting places to visit in North Carolina, contact the Division of Travel and Tourism, 430 N. Salisbury St., Raleigh, N.C. 27611. Call toll-free in the United States, 1-800-VISIT NC; in Raleigh, N.C. call 919-733-4171.

## Fire Safety Sessions

**STATESVILLE**—The last sessions of a county-wide 4-H fire safety program was held March 23-26 at city and county fire stations.

Session IV concerned the topic "Emergency Planning and Fire Warning Devices."

The session was held March 23 at Ebenezer, Lake Norman, Union Grove, Trinity and Statesville One Fire Department; March 24 at Wayside, Cool Springs, Central, West Iredell and Statesville Two

*Continued on page 8*

## Begins 20th Year As Farmville's Fire Chief

**FARMVILLE**—Farmville Commissioners approved the slate of officers for the fire department as voted by firemen at an election late in January.

Officers are: H.P. Norman, chief; Lyman Craft, first assistant chief; Ray Mewborn, second assistant chief; W.E. (Bud) Wooten, secretary/treasurer; John Baker, Ralph Cash and Ben Cotton, captains; Beasley Everett, Milton Elks, Bill Oakley and Richard Tripp, lieutenants; Bobby Joyner, pension fund secretary.

Norman has been a member of the fire department since 1951 and has been serving as chief since October 1968. In 1983, he was selected as Farmville's Fireman of the Year and as the county's Fireman of the Year. He is a graduate of the North Carolina Fire College and School.

In the mid 1960's he headed a fund drive to buy the first

rescue equipment for the town, organized the rescue squad and served as its first captain. He resigned from the squad to devote full time to the fire service. He was honored by the squad with a lifetime honorary captain position.

He is a certified first aid instructor. He is a member of Pitt County Health and Safety Council and has served as vice president and president of the organization.

Norman joined the town staff in January, 1972, as the first full-time building inspector and code enforcement director. He is certified by the North Carolina Officials Qualifications Board as a certified administrator and inspector.

Norman is an active member of Kings Cross Road Free Will Baptist Church. He is a retired deacon and teaches the adult Sunday School class. He is a lay speaker.

## Youngsters Get Hands On Experience

**YADKINVILLE** — Yadkinville Fire Chief Gene Branon, assisted by Yadkinville fireman Doug Nance taught 4-H fire safety classes for 27 youngsters at Yadkinville fire station.

Youngsters were given hands-on experience with fire safety gear and equipment. Branon stressed the importance of understanding the firefighters' job of protecting human life first and saving property secondary. He dem-

onstrated how fire can behave differently depending on the chemistry of the flammable materials. For instance, youngsters learned that water will not put out a grease fire, but cutting off the oxygen source by safely putting a lid over will cause the fire to go out.

Youngsters were given the opportunity to design two escape routes for their families to get out of their dwelling.

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## Fire Safety

**By Karen Equils**  
Kinston Free Press  
Staff Writer

KINSTON—Fire departments must deal with all types of fires and one particular weekend found the Lenoir County fire units learning the ins and outs of extinguishing liquid propane (LP) fires and leaks.

Greg Arnett, fire instructor with Lenoir Community College, held classes stressing firefighter safety and the correct procedures to follow in an LP emergency.

As LP gas escapes, it is heavier than the atmosphere and the cloud will sink to the lowest areas in the vicinity. This creates a dangerous situation since it can be ignited by a spark, whether it is near the source of the leak or has drifted several blocks away.

Firefighters practiced the art of approaching a blazing LP tank with both a single and multiple attack lines. As they neared the burning tank they would widen the stream pattern on the hose lines to protect themselves from the flames whipping around the tank.

Working as a unit, firefighters on the lines would slowly lower themselves to the ground, while carefully containing the flames within the water pattern until a designated firefighter could reach beneath the fiery tank to the cut-off valve and extinguish the propane feeding the fire.

**By Angie Mull**  
The Hickory News  
HICKORY—"I didn't do it for the publicity or attention, I just like helping people," says Ann Preslar, the first female firefighter in the city of Hickory.

Ann's quite a new addition at the fire department's headquarters, where she spends her first year. She's surrounded by an all-male staff and the station has been dominated by men since the turn of the century. But she takes it all in stride.

"People always ask me why I got into this line of work," says Ann, 24, "and I really don't have an answer."

"I pulled up on a car that was on fire in Hickory a little while back and helped pull a lady out. I guess that really got me interested."

To satisfy her curiosity, Ann enrolled in a rookie firefighters class at Catawba Valley Technical College. After finishing up last December she joined the St. Stephens Volunteer Fire Department. Then, she decided she wanted to be full-time and

started getting ready for her agility test which each Hickory applicant must pass to become a firefighter.

"I knew it was going to be a challenge going in," Ann admits, "but I can honestly say that was the hardest test I've ever taken. We have to do things like carry a 50-foot hose up four flights of stairs, run a half-mile in four minutes, raise the ladders and pull a 100-foot hose that's full of water 50-feet."

What Ann failed to mention is the test is continuous; there's no break until the end. And she's slow to admit that she's only the second woman in Hickory ever to pass the test. She's more concerned with doing a good job than calling attention to herself.

"The women take the same test as the men," says Ann, "and I think it should be that way. I'm expected to do exactly what the rest of them do and I don't expect any special privileges because I'm a woman."

But some exceptions are going to have to be made, such as putting a lock on the showers and a partition around her bed. Ann says she's been treated "just fine."

"I think the guys have accepted me pretty well so far," she says. "As long as I pass the tests, I'm just as qualified to be here as they are. I get along with all of them, though, and they don't seem to have a problem adjusting."

I think they're just feeling me out right now."

"Ann wants to be a firefighter," says deputy chief Ted Beshears, "and I think she's going to work out just fine. She's been well accepted by the men, and she should be. There are women firefighters all over the nation. It's really nothing new."

Her co-workers agree. They

aren't concerned with Ann's being a woman, only that she can do her job.

"I thought it was great when I heard they'd hired a woman," says Eddie Bolick, 24, a seven-year veteran. "It takes a lot of guts for a woman to try. I think she should be given the same chance as anybody else."

## Vol. Fire Dept. To Get \$10,000

**By Marsha Burney**  
Elizabethtown: Bladen  
Journal Staff

ELIZABETHTOWN—The Clarkton Town Board voted to amend the town's budget in order to give \$10,000 to the Clarkton Volunteer Fire Department.

Clarkton Fire Chief Frankie Melvin met with the board and commended all the volunteers who have helped with the construction of the fire department's new station. "It surprised me the support we're getting from within and without of the department," Melvin said. "...We're getting a lot of help from without."

Melvin also told board members, "We've got about a \$10,000 shortfall...if we can get that, we can get into the firehouse...we can start with

the bathrooms and the kitchen."

Commissioner Wade Tart made the motion for the amendment to the budget, saying the \$10,000 would come out of the fund balance. Commissioner Kathy McEwen seconded Tart's motion, and it passed unanimously.

Clarkton Mayor Dan Meshaw then suggested the board consider dedicating the street the new fire station is on, "so the state can come in and do some grading and paving," the mayor said.

Commissioner Roy Butler made the motion that two-tenths of a mile and 60 feet of right-of-way (between US 701 and Peach Street) be released to the state. Butler's motion also passed unanimously.

## Fire Safety Sessions

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Departments; March 25 at Mt. Mourne and Statesville Three Units; and March 26 at Troutman, Shepherds, Harmony and Monticello Departments.

The sessions were free of charge. All children who participated received a Fire Prevention and Control manual.

Children who have attended three or more sessions received a "4-H Fire Safety Certificate of Completion" at the last session.

The program is an annual event sponsored through the Iredell 4-H Clubs and the cooperation of firefighting units in the city and county.

## It's Not All Fighting Fires

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filled with water, all water hoses must be dry, fire reports and hose records must be completed and the breathing equipment must be cleaned.

"We realize that our first priority is to save lives and the cleaning comes with it—but we love it," one firefighter said. "Some of us even come to work on days off and perform handywork."

Firefighters pay for their own meals while they're on duty, and the city of Burlington furnishes cooking utensils.

Firefighters even cook their own meals at 12 noon and 5 p.m. daily, with one firefighter designated on each shift. Every firefighter gets the chance to cook. Each shift consists of a different cook.

"If a firefighter can not cook

when he joins the department, he is a great chef if and when he leaves," Andrews noted. "Most of them are great cooks."

"We spend about \$5 for each meal and the cook orders groceries for the 21 firefighters on duty," Layne explained. "We also buy any extras in the station, including microwave ovens and televisions."

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