



TARHEEL FIREFIGHTER



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Cullasaja VFD Offers 'First Responder' Aid

By Oren Coin
Franklin Press

FRANKLIN—Volunteer fire departments in Macon County can shorten the response time to medical emergencies in remote areas of the county by implementing "first responder" programs, county officials said recently.

A proposal that would allow fire departments to organize first responder programs is presently under consideration by the Macon County Board of Commissioners and Macon County Fire Commission. The program was originally proposed by and for Cullasaja Gorge Volunteer Fire Department. County commissioners considered the request from Cullasaja VFD, but postponed action on the measure until the first commission has had time to review the proposal and issue recommendations to the board.

Commissioners said they would like to see first responder programs made available to all rural fire departments in Macon County, if the program drawn up by Cullasaja Gorge VFD is viable.

Emergency services director David Dills and Cullasaja fire chief Tom Hixon explained the mechanics of the program.

Hixon said first responder volunteers would work in conjunction with Macon County Emergency Medical Services to aid emergency victims in outlying areas of the county.

"Because of the remote mountain terrain and widespread location of some of the residents in Cullasaja Gorge Fire Service District, the response time for Macon County Emergency Medical Services ambulances may, in many cases, be 10 to 15 minutes," Hixon explained. "While this response time is considerably longer than desired . . . it is a fact of life and as such must be addressed. In addition, there have been many cases where additional medically trained personnel have been needed to assist Macon County Emergency Medical Services personnel at the scene of a medical or trauma emergency."

Several members of Cullasaja Gorge VFD have already received emergency medical training, said

Hixon, who indicated that others would be willing to undergo training if the program wins the approval of the county board.

"It has been realized by medical professionals that in cases of a severe life-threatening trauma or medical emergency, the intervention of medically trained personnel at the earliest possible time can greatly enhance the chances for recovery by the victims," he added. "The Cullasaja Gorge first responder program is (designed) to ensure a quick and competent response to an accident or medical emergency."

Hixon was not critical of the efforts of Macon County EMS; however, he said the distance to Cullasaja from the EMS station in Franklin often makes it impossible for ambulances to reach the scene of an emergency in less than 15 minutes.

As commissioners pointed out, several other areas of the county experience similar problems.

Dills, who coordinates emergency medical services for the county, said the first responder program has his full support.

"I recommended that approval be given and agreement be signed with Cullasaja Fire Department," he noted. "This program can only be of benefit to the citizens of the county and to the emergency services department."

Dills and Hixon have asked commissioners to approve a non-binding contract between Cullasaja Gorge VFD and Macon County, which would allow first responders to administer emergency aid on behalf of the county.

"The first responder unit shall not respond to any call unless dispatched and shall ensure that the emergency operations center has been alerted on all calls that they may receive . . ." Dills explained. "All first responders shall be North Carolina-certified emergency medical technicians or certified advance first responders."

Dills said similar programs have proven beneficial in other rural areas of the state. The first responder program as explained to commissioners would be available only within rated service districts of fire departments that offer the program.

Morrisville Fire Department Studied

By Suzy Brett
Cary News Staff Writer

CARY—Morrisville Commissioner H.C. (Buster) Sears has a special interest in the town's volunteer fire department. In addition to serving on the town's Public Safety Committee that has made recommendations for financial support to the department over the years, he remembers when the first station was begun in an old tin building.

"I was a young fella and used to watch the men in there working on the fire truck," he said at the town's Public Safety Committee meeting in the Town Hall. "Then they got enough money to build the station across from here, and they added on and opened the station at Carpenter. Then they bought the new fire trucks."

Although the old tin building was taken down to make way for a more modern brick structure, and the first truck was sold to finance the purchase of more up-to-date equipment, one aspect of the volunteer fire department has not changed, Sears said: the pride its members have in the service they provide the residents of Morrisville.

It is his interest in protecting that pride at the root of his suggestion that the town enter into a contract with the fire department to make certain future town boards understand the relationship between the two.

"Eight years from now, there may be all new board members here, and they won't know what the relationship has been between the town and the fire department," Sears said.

He also suggested having a volunteer meet with the Public Safety Committee so the town and fire department can work together on future plans.

"It really needs to begin with the new committee members," said Sears, who did not seek re-election because he is moving out of Morrisville.

The future of the department has been discussed more often since campaigning for the three seats on the board of commissioners began and candidates consistently mentioned the need for hiring daytime firefighters. At the Oct. 26 town board meeting, Commissioner Wade Davis suggested either increasing the town's financial support or budgeting for the paid firefighters.

Sears said the town needs to learn what the fire department has planned before making any decisions. Money already has been set aside in the 1987-88 fire department budget for hiring paid personnel, and Chief Anthony V. Chiotakis said job descriptions are being written.

Morrisville's volunteer fire department was started in the mid-1950s, and for many years, its sole source of income was money raised from such fundraisers as an annual barbecue and random donations. When the North

Carolina General Assembly set up county fire districts, area residents than were assessed a fire tax that goes directly to the volunteer departments.

But, Sears said, with much of the area served by the department actually in the town limits, and other portions being annexed into surrounding towns, much of the area the fire department once serviced has been lost.

"We need to let them know we don't want to get into the firefighting business," he said.

Fire Spark Burning Ban

By Deb Gardner Coates
Monroe Enquirer-
Journal Staff Writer

MONROE—Union County firefighters hope a burning ban will prevent a repeat of the brush and woods fires that swept the county recently.

A countywide ban on all outdoor burning was imposed by Union County Commission Chairman Frank Hawfield at the recommendation of the Union County Fire Marshal Kevin Stewart.

The ban will be in effect until enough rain falls to alleviate dry conditions. Violators face a fine of up to \$50 and/or up to 30 days in jail.

Seven brush and woods fires were reported. The first fire was on Rock Hill Road. Five fire departments were dispatched when the fire spread to about five acres. The fire was brought under control, but firefighters remained on the scene to knock down hot spots.

High wind and dry conditions hampered bringing the fire under control. "There were several piles of logs that were fully involved," Fairview firefighter Dennis Rushing said. "The wind was blowing the fire toward a mobile home. That was the biggest danger. It got probably within 60 to 75 feet from the home."

Fairview VFD responded with mutual aid from Hemby Bridge VFD, Stallings VFD, Unionville VFD, and Mint Hill VFD from Mecklenburg County. Twenty to 25 firefighters fought the fire. "Everybody was greatly needed and greatly appreciated," Rushing said.

While firefighters battled that blaze, a brush fire was reported on Sikes Mill Road.

Crestview VFD station 22 reported the situation under control within minutes. No other fire departments were needed.

Waxhaw VFD station 18 and JAARS sub-station 27 were dispatched to a brush fire on Arbor Drive in Waxhaw. Firefighters brought the fire under control and left the scene.

A brush fire was reported on Deese Road. Firefighters from Crestview VFD responded and reported the fire extinguished.

Three stations were dispatched about to a woods fire on N.C. 84, about one mile from Monroe. Springs VFD responded with mutual aid from sub-station 16 and Bakers VFD. Firefighters cleared the scene.

A woods fire was reported on Lander Benton Road. Both departments of Unionville VFD were dispatched and left the scene about an hour later.

Bakers VFD investigated the report of thick smoke in Willoughby Woods, but returned to the station about 30 minutes later when no fire was located.

Union County Communications received several calls reporting smoke. "A lot of people have called in about the smoke in the county, but the fire departments have confirmed that it is coming from out of the county," said Geneva McAllister, director of Union County Communications.

"The comments are that it's drifting across the N.C. mountains from forest fires in Tennessee. We will, however, treat all calls as actual fires and have them investigated."

Editorial

To our readers:

We regret to inform you that we will not have our usual editorial from Mrs. Emily King, due to Mrs. King's illness.

All of us at Carolina Rural Fireman & Tarheel Firefighters, wish Mrs. King a speedy recovery.

This month's editorial is an excerpt from "Overcoming Barriers to Public Fire Education in the United States. Published by TriData Corp.

This entire report is available without charge to fire service professionals upon request. Contact TriData Corporation, 1500 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, Virginia 22209, (703) 841-2975.

Availability of Good Prevention Materials

Prevention education materials take many forms: posters, brochures with color graphics, comic books, flyers, worksheets for children, films, videotapes, PSAs, etc. There are hundreds available. Most departments have developed their own materials at one time or another. Some are of excellent quality, but many are not up to professional standards. Lots are done on a shoestring, with amateurish printing, writing or artwork even though they usually contain good information.

Fire departments have difficulty in finding out what is available, how good the material is, and where to get it. They often reinvent the wheel in developing public education materials and pro-

grams because means are inadequate for discovering what exists. Many departments do not publish information on their successes in the fire magazines so that others can learn about them. And some departments feel they are so unique that they cannot use the prevention programs of others.

The U.S. Fire Administration compiled bibliographies of prevention materials early in its history, but they were not updated when funds were reduced. More recently, a U.S. Fire Administration public awareness project conducted by Ogilvy & Mather and TriData researched 74 state and local fire departments and developed a summary of their programs.¹ The USFA also is planning a new public fire education resource catalog.

The State Fire Marshal's Office of California, the State Office of Fire Prevention and Control of New York, and the State of Minnesota's Fire Information Re-

search and Education Center have compiled directories of materials available from their state public education resource centers. These centers were nurtured by USFA and survive in a number of states. Some were one-time only; others, like California, still are maintained. The Dallas Fire Department did a survey of big city public fire education programs c. 1984 and has a list of the better materials found. But the existence of all these directories is not well known to the fire service, they are not comprehensive, and they are not all routinely updated. NFPA and other commercial vendors publish sales catalogs of their own materials, but no one else's.

A significant problem with much of the public education material in use is that it is too complex and wordy, with too few pictures, not enough use of color, and too many ideas. The principles of effective communication were long ago learned in advertising products. They also have been highly successful in some fire safety messages—from Smokey the Bear ads to Stop, Drop, and Roll.

Based on the surveys to date, there are not enough high quality public education materials available, and few are inexpensive enough for wide distribution. There are a few well-tested prevention programs and a myriad of programs of questionable effectiveness. Learn Not to Burn, the Hartford K-2 program, and a few others have been widely used. Learn Not to Burn has good anecdotal examples of how it has saved lives, but even it has not been evaluated as to its quantitative impact on the fire experience of a community.

The selection of materials is improving. There are excellent new-comers such as the Pan Educational Institute's Project LIFE program for pre-school and early grades; the Fire Bee program of the Institute for Fire and Burn Education, and the Burn Aware program of Clovis and Fresno, California. Still, we need more first class materials targeted to different population groups.

Arson Suspected

MOCKSVILLE—Arson is suspected in a Halloween night fire which destroyed an abandoned building at Davie Academy and Green Hill roads. Mocksville and Center volunteer firemen were called to the scene. Mocksville Fire Chief Pete Dwiggin said there was no reason for the building to burn—no electricity for many years and no heating system. It was owned by John Wesley Smith of Mocksville. "It was an old, dilapidated building. It had been falling in for years." The Davie County Sheriff's Department is investigating.

We need them in color, with good illustrations, and in clear and simple writing to have wide appeal.

The surveys also show that we need more materials for use on radio and TV, and we need to make them more available to the fire service and media. Very few materials of professional quality have been developed, and only a few of these are widely known to the fire service. Our children could sing along to a fire safety jingle just as well as they do to commercials.

The U.S. Fire Administration's smoke detector radio and TV PSAs are examples of what can be done. A few such well done, authentic, but clear and simple national messages can go a long way, said Chief William Stamm. You can reach a lot more people through TV than local fire departments can reach directly, he noted. A few hundred thousand dollars can produce a series of quality messages on the leading fire problems. This should be done at the national level. One might even argue that purchasing prime time—expensive as that may be—could be a cost-effective way to reduce losses; a concerted effort by the fire service and its allies might well get some time for free, suggested Chief Stamm.

Other countries do a better job of making materials available to their fire services. New Zealand, the size of an average U.S. state, provides every fire station with a kit of materials for teaching fire safety in schools, and also trains many fire officers in how to use it to best advantage. Great Britain sends a multi-color brochure illustrated like a comic book to every home via their postal service. The Japan Fire Protection Association subsidizes fire department purchases of prevention materials; in the United States, the flow of funds goes the other way, with the sale of prevention publications subsidizing major fire organizations.

¹Public Fire Education Today: Fire Service Programs from Across America, U.S. Fire Administration, Federal Emergency Management Agency, 500 C Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20472, 1986.

Fire Dept. Celebrates Birthday

CHADBOURN—The Chadbourn Fire Department celebrated its 49th birthday in October. Paul Avant is the only surviving charter member of the group who is still active. Avant says he remembers when the department was little more than a group of men who offered their services. There was practically no equipment, and little organization.

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Fire Chars 7 Acres Near Plantation

By Anne Ferguson-Rohrer
The Salisbury Post

POOLETOWN—Dry weather and high winds gave firefighters a tough battle in putting out and keeping out a brush fire on River Road.

The fire, which burned across almost seven acres, had firefighters working nearly four hours on the first call, firefighter Bill Wilson said.

"We had to take a lot of time mopping up because of the conditions," he said. "With this wind and dry weather, it's just real bad.

"The weather had a lot to do with extent of the fire," Wilson said, adding that the fire was made worse by the wind and dry air.

Firefighters responded at 5:37 p.m. and did not report back in until 9:13 p.m., Thursday, November 5.

No structures caught fire, but there was a plantation close by, Wilson said.

"We were concerned with that, but we kept the fire away," he said.

Wilson said the fire never got within 600 feet of the plantation.

At 1:24 a.m. the next morning, the fire sparked again several hundred feet from its original site.

"Evidently, there were some sparks and it rekindled from that," Wilson said.

Firefighters stayed until 4:28 a.m., again taking care to wet down the area. No injuries were reported.

"These fires are increasing every day the dry weather stays with us," Wilson said.

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Fighting Fires Not As Difficult In 1980s

By Kerry Carden
Monroe Enquirer-
Journal

MONROE—When the city of Monroe was incorporated in 1844, the only fire-fighting tools volunteer firemen had were a steam pumper and a whole lot of hose. In 1987, Monroe Public Safety officers are issued their own set of equipment and have a ladder truck, three pumper trucks and a brush unit at their disposal.

Fire Destroys 100-Year-Old Log Dwelling

MOORESVILLE—Fire of undetermined origin destroyed a vacant two-story, 100-year-old log house on Wiggins Road around 4 a.m. recently according to Bobby Christie an officer of the Shepherd Volunteer Fire Department.

The dwelling, owned by Joel Meadows of Mooresville, was being remodeled by meadows, who said the remodeling work was within two weeks of completion.

The loss was in excess of \$50,000, and there was very little insurance, it was learned.

Mrs. L.D. Kerr, who lives nearby, noticed the fire around 4 a.m., and alerted the Shepherd VFD.

The house was engulfed in flames when it was discovered by Mrs. Kerr.

South Iredell and Centenary VFDs also responded to the call. Firemen were unable to bring the blaze under control before the dwelling was destroyed.

Meadows, who had worked on the house about a year, said he left the dwelling around 11 p.m. Tuesday night, November 3.

"Fighting a fire was a lot harder back then," said PSO Asst. Chief Wayne House.

The city's firefighters joined the North Carolina State Fireman's Association in 1891, though they remained a volunteer group until 1934. In the early days, House said, firefighters used the pumper to get water out of cisterns in downtown Monroe. Since the pumper was drawn by a team of horses, the animals were kept harnessed in the stables, ready to go at a moment's notice.

However, it was up to volunteer firefighters to provide the manpower to pull large hose reels, which looked like oversized wagon wheels, to a fire.

House, who is 57, said as a child he remembers a whistle at the old filter plant blew the first Friday of the month, notifying firefighters it was time for training. Now, PSOs, trained in police, fire and rescue work, do "much more" than the 36 hours of fire training required every year by the state and 40 hours emergency medical training.

House said PSOs train daily in the station house, practicing with fire equipment or studying videotapes on how to fight different types of fires such as electrical or gas fires. At least once a year a condemned house is set afire, giving PSOs hands-on experience in firefighting techniques.

In addition, PSOs will be able to practice using the ladder truck after the city builds a six- to seven-story training tower on land off Quarry Road that it purchased in January 1986 from the state.

House said things have changed greatly even since he joined the department in 1952. The department's firefighting equipment included a 1921 American LaFrance ladder truck and a 1927

pumper truck.

The chief said nothing had been altered on the two vehicles except to replace the rubber tires with air tires. Since neither had power steering, it took two men to get the trucks out of the old fire station at Crowell and Hayne Streets. He said it took six men to unfold and carry the 50-foot wooden extension ladder from the ladder truck.

To rescue people from burning buildings, House said firemen had a Pompier ladder, a pole with rungs that hooked onto windowsills. Because of the precarious nature of the ladder, rescuers would lower people to the ground with a rope system.

"If you had looked at that ladder from high up you wouldn't want to go down it either," House said.

The 11 firemen also were not issued uniforms. House said he remembers wearing an old rubber coat and boots and Army pants at his first fire. PSOs, all 72 of them, now carry a firefighting kit in the trunk of their cars, complete with boots, gloves, fire pants and coat, a helmet, ax, crowbar and self-contained breathing apparatus.

Badin Firemen Express Thanks

ALBEMARLE—The Badin Volunteer Fire Department has expressed appreciation to everyone who helped make its fund-raising project so successful.

Robert Powers of Route 2, New London, was the winner of a brand new Browning 12 gauge pump shotgun.

"Your generous contributions for all our fund raiser projects bring the fire department closer to our goal of a new fire station. Thanks again for your support," an official said.

Old Vance Home Destroyed Despite Firemen's Efforts

WARRENTON—The Drewry Fire Department rushed to the scene of a house fire in Drewry Thursday evening, October 29, around 5 o'clock. When they arrived, they were faced with the task of fighting a fire that had already destroyed a greater part of the structure, so they called the Ridgeway Fire Department for assistance.

The house, owned by Charles M. White, III of Warrenton, apparently caught on fire in one of the front rooms. The family was located in the back of the house at the time and did not know that there was a fire. When smoke began filling the house, they found that the fire had already engulfed the ceiling in one of the front rooms. Randy Curtis, chief of the Drewry Fire Department, believes that an electrical shortage appears to have been the cause of the fire, which resulted in a total loss of the wooden structure.

According to White, the house was built in 1909 as the home of his uncle, George White. It was used for many years by the principals of the old Drewry School during their tenure there. Later, the structure was used as a tenant house. White inherited the building in 1977, follow-

ing the death of his uncle, and continued to rent the property.

According to fire chief Kenny Clayton, the exhaust fan above the stove in the kitchen apparently shorted out and caused the cabinet area around the stove to become engulfed in flames. After calling for help, Davis was able to put the fire out himself by dampening a rug and smothering the fire.

Damages to his kitchen have been estimated at \$1,000.

At the time of the fire, the house was being occupied by Mrs. Thelma Clarke and her family. They were only able to rescue a few items before escaping themselves.

"As kids, we started smoking because it was smart. Why don't we stop for the same reason?"

Harold Emery in The Reader's Digest



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Firefighters

Their Duties Are Many

By Helene Hinson
Sanford Herald Staff
Writer

SANFORD—There's more to a firefighter's career than speeding down a road in a shiny red truck and using a water hose to put out a fire, according to Sam Bost, Sanford Fire Chief since 1975.

Firemen have several duties, including three-hour a day training sessions on fire-fighting procedures, maintaining equipment, driver operations, safety and salvaging properties from a house or building damaged by fire.

Firefighter duties also involve testing, checking and servicing equipment, assisting the city with upkeep on its 1,400 hydrants, keeping the station and living quarters clean and of course, fighting fires.

Sanford's Central Fire Station receives an average of one call a day and approximately 400 calls a year, according to Bost. Not all calls are actual fires, he says. "They range from smoke investigations to auto accidents to gasoline spills to actual fires."

The Central Fire Station presently has three fire trucks and station No. 2 on Woodland Avenue has two fire trucks. "Most of the trucks carry 500 gallons of water," Bost says. "We are different from the rural departments. They carry more water while we depend on hydrants for our main water supply."

To help insure safety, firemen wear fire suits made of Nomex material, which does not burn as readily as other

materials. "It's suppose to resist heat. This type of material is required now."

Bost says firefighters also wear heavy helmets and rubber boots with steel toes and insoles. The boots are 1/4-inch thick to prevent nails from penetrating them. They also wear leather gloves with a Nomex lining.

A fire equipment van accompanies fire trucks to calls. The van carries a generator for lights, shovels, smoke ejectors that resemble large fans, a rescue saw that has blades for cutting various metals and wood, extra hoses and medical supplies. Most of the Sanford firemen are also emergency medical technicians (EMTs). "You need them all at one time or another," Bost says.

Of the fire trucks, Bost explains the station's two pumper trucks carry 500 gallons of water, which will last about two minutes. "In a normal house, we can knock the fire down with 500 gallons of water unless it is completely involved."

The Central Fire Station's largest truck, an aerial platform, carries an 80-foot ladder. "It will reach the top of any building we have in Sanford at the present time," Bost says. Bost, who has worked full-time for the fire department since 1967 and as a volunteer fireman since 1949, says fire trucks have three different sizes of hoses called "attack lines." It takes firemen less than 30 seconds to respond and get en route to a fire. There are 31 paid firemen and five volunteer firemen in Sanford. Firemen range in age from 19 and up, he says.

Firemen sometimes use a high expansion foam to extinguish petroleum-based fires, Bost says. The foam keeps oxygen from getting to

Continued on page 7

Star Stunned After Blaze

By Mary Seehorn
Asheboro Courier-
Tribune
Staff Writer

STAR—The townspeople here are grieving after a fire, which destroyed part of a textile mill, caused the death of an 89-year-old night watchman and left about 80 people out of work.

Igal Asura Williamson, 89, of Ether, died in the blaze at Pine Hosiery Mill, one of the largest employers in this town of about 800. Williamson had worked at the mill for about nine years.

"Williamson was well thought of," said Star Police Sgt. John Callicutt. "The community is grieving over him. The jobs are kind of a secondary grieving, right now."

Callicutt said plant owner, Andrew HacsKaylo, is one of the finest citizens of Star.

"I'm sure he will look after his employees," Callicutt added.

HacsKaylo—who owns the mill with his son, Charlie HacsKaylo and nephew, Greg Jenkins—declined to answer questions about the fire.

But plant manager Carl Martin said plans are already in the works to rebuild. He added that probably both of the company's two facilities will be affected by the blaze.

Pine Hosiery Mill was the dyeing and finished division for products made in the company's other facility in Ether.

"It's going to be tough on the town with that many people out of work," Martin added.

Authorities have not yet determined the cause of the fire because heat and smoke from continued flare-ups made entering the building difficult for firefighters and State Bureau of Investigation agents, Callicutt said. Special Agent Curtis

Douglas was heading up the investigation team with Redden Leggett, assistant supervisor of the SBI in Greensboro.

Leggett said he believes the fire originated about midway into the building.

More than 60 firefighters from about six departments throughout Montgomery County fought the blaze, which erupted at around 11:30 on Sunday night, Oct. 25, said Wesley Brown, Star's assistant fire chief.

"It was already going good when we got here," said Randy Fountain, a Star volunteer firefighter.

Police officers were first to arrive on the scene but were unable to enter the building. When firefighters arrived the building was fully involved on the south back side. The roof on the back side had fallen through, authorities said.

The fire at the mill on Main Street was near a power pole causing a short power outage to some downtown areas. Workers with Central Telephone Company were on the

scene trying to restore telephone service to some businesses located across the street from the blaze.

Telephone workers explained that heat from the blaze melted some of the cables.

But Star's residents voiced larger concerns than the loss of some phone service.

"The hosiery industry is Star's backbone," Brown said. "I hope they can continue to operate."

Plant manager Martin said although the entire facility did not burn to the ground, there is smoke and water damage throughout. All the goods in the building were destroyed. He was unable to estimate the dollar amount of the damages.

But he expressed concern for the plant's employees, adding that the company hopes to help them find work.

"It's a big impact to the community," Mayor Gary Dunn said.

"It's going to be tough especially with the Christmas holidays coming on."

Firefighters Sent West

ROBBINSVILLE—Firefighters with the N.C. Service from Graham County were once again called upon to assist with firefighting duties in the western U.S. Local firefighters were dispatched to three different western states during the first week of October as hundreds of fires were burning out of control during one of the worst western fire seasons in recent history.

Jim Buckel served as crew boss on the Spring Canyon fire on the Targee National Forest near Idaho Falls, Idaho. The fire burned 3,000 acres and was started by lightning. Local firefighters serving on this crew were Harry Thomas, Roger Smoker, Virginia Gibbs, and

Dale Holder. Billy Jack Myers of the N.C. Forest Service also was assigned to this fire with another crew.

Harold Phillips, Graham County ranger with the N.C. Forest Service, served as a crew boss on the Palomar fire in the Cleveland National Forest near Pauma Valley, California. The fire burned 17,000 acres and was thought to have started from careless debris burning.

Joe Bonnette served as a field observer with fireline scouting duties on the yellow fire in the Klamath National Forest near Yreka, California. This fire was one of a series of fires in the area which burned 76,625 acres. All started by lightning.

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Firemen Repair Franklinville Station

By Mary Seehorn
Asheboro Courier-Tribune
Staff Writer

FRANKLINVILLE—The banging of hammers echoed through the night air here most every evening for about four weeks in September.

It was the sound of firefighters at work.

But they weren't fighting fires and they weren't using water.

They were putting a new roof on the Franklinville Fire Department.

And, even rain failed to daunt their determination as they worked to preserve their building and equipment.

"Always said you'd have to be about half crazy to be a volunteer firefighter," Fire Chief James Parrish said. "It made for some long, long days for us."

Parrish, like the other volunteers, has a full-time job. But as a building contractor, he oversaw the roof construction and bought materials at less expensive prices.

Volunteer work saved the Franklinville Fire Protection Association about \$15,000, Parrish said. Construction of the roof was the first major renovation to the building in its 23 years of existence.

"The last roof got to leaking so bad," Capt. Arnold Allred said, "it was a have-to situation."

Volunteers completed their work on the roof and began repairs on water-damaged areas inside the building where sheetrock fell apart, leaving gaping holes in the ceiling, Parrish said.

"We're saving our trucks; that's the main thing," said Carl Coble, a department volunteer for about six months.

Water, leaking through the roof, dripped on trucks causing rust and peeling paint. The building previously had a flat roof, which contained a material which created some-

thing that, combined with water, rusted paint on the fire trucks.

The Franklinville Fire Protection Association's equipment includes two pumpers, a tanker, a brush truck and a combination brush truck and quick response vehicle.

Residents in the Franklinville Fire Tax District also contributed to the roof effort, Parrish said.

Without voter approval last May of a property tax levy and formation of the fire tax district, the volunteers would have had no way to pay for the necessary repairs, he said.

"Just the cost of materials was more than our budget has been for the past several years," Parrish said.

Materials for the roof cost the association about \$20,000, he said.

All the wood in the roof will be covered with vinyl, which will reduce future maintenance costs by making painting unnecessary, Parrish said. The Franklinville Fire Protection Association is contracting with a vinyl company, which guarantees the work on the roof for 50 years.

Plans also include putting a steeple and the old siren back on top of the A-shaped roof.

"Some people questioned when we took down the siren whether we would put it back up," Parrish said.

Shoffner Industries in Burlington, a roofing company, designed special roof trusses for the large building, which measures 65-feet wide by 103-feet long. At first, Parrish and others believed only a crane could put up the 70-foot long trusses. But the firefighters ended up setting the trusses by hand at a savings of about \$500.

"We had people stop and watch as we put them up," Parrish said.

Asheboro Concrete Co. pro-

vided the rest of the materials for the job.

About 15 volunteers, including the fire chief, worked almost every night from 6:30 to 11 p.m., sometimes in the rain, to get the job done, the volunteers said.

One firefighter said some spouses were none too pleased about the dedicated firefighters' workloads, which usually included a full-time job, going out in the middle of the night to fight fires and building a roof.

Last year, volunteers responded to 295 fire calls, Parrish said.

"It takes a unique perspective to be a volunteer firefighter," Parrish said. "The only thing you really achieve from it is the knowledge you helped your fellow citizens."

Coley Calls Fire School Successful

GOLDSBORO—All Wayne County fire departments were represented during the recent annual county fire school.

Fire Marshal Carl Ray Coley said 291 firefighters participated in the class including members of Goldsboro Fire and Rescue and some from Duplin and Johnston counties.

The eight classes were held in different sections of the county in the different departments. Coley said the classes are sponsored by the Department of Insurance Fire and Rescue Training Division.

"All 28 fire departments were represented," Coley said. "We are just tickled to death. It's the first time ever we had every fire department represented."

"We had some real good classes and were pleased with the participation."

Coley said another school will probably be held in February.

Fireman Loses Jacket; Hopes For Its Timely Return

GARNER—Garner volunteer fireman Ted Shaw reports that he lost an expensive leather jacket while responding to an emergency

Nashville FD Revives Woman

NASHVILLE—In September, first responder units from Nashville Fire Department revived a woman after her pulse had stopped.

According to Jay Dornseif, first assistant chief, the department received a call of a woman suffering chest pains in front of Nashville Furniture.

First responders were on the scene "in less than a minute," Dornseif said, noting that the patient, 64-year-old Mary D. Williams, of Route 4, Nashville, was in her car in front of the Main Street store.

First responder Tim Matthews and Nashville Drug Store employee Ernie Wooten were tending the woman, but soon after other fire personnel arrived they lost her pulse.

Williams was pulled from her car and onto a backboard, the first responders starting CPR immediately. After about a minute, Williams vomited and regained consciousness.

Momeyer Rescue Squad transported Williams to Nash General Hospital, where she was picked up by East Care and flown to Wake Memorial Hospital.

Dornseif noted this was the first successful attempt by the fire department first responders to revive someone with no pulse. "The first responders paid off."

Williams was listed in critical condition, waiting to be moved to a private room.

Submitted By
Nashville Fire Dept.

October 24.

"We were responding to a bridge fire on Spring Drive," Shaw related, and I didn't miss the jacket until we were almost finished at the scene."

Apparently, the sports coat slid off the fire engine when it made the turn off of Vandora Springs Road onto Spring Drive, Shaw said. Fellow firemen said they had seen the jacket laying right on the yellow line, "as you turn off of Vandora Springs and onto Spring," Shaw related.

He added, "That's the most probable place it could have flown out, since that's the sharpest turn we made en route to the fire."

Another fireman said he remembered something sliding across his feet at the turn, but did not realize what it was until Shaw noticed his jacket was missing.

When Shaw returned to the spot, the jacket was not there.

"If anyone found it, I would appreciate it if I could get it back," Shaw said. The jacket can be returned to the fire station or by calling Shaw at home, 779-5473.



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Brittain Hangs Up Fire Helmet

By Anna Wilson
Morganton News
Herald Staff Writer

MORGANTOWN—In 1955, after working four days with Valdese's lone firefighter, Sherrill Brittain was placed on a shift alone and told, "Now you're a fireman."

But he learned quickly and in 1973, he became the Valdese fire chief, only the third man to ever hold that title.

Brittain will join Lee Ribet and Aubry Anderson on the roll call of fire chiefs for a department organized in 1932 with only volunteers.

Brittain, 55, is retiring on Dec. 31, after serving 32 years and three months with the town of Valdese. Since he became chief, there have been no fire deaths in the town.

He is retiring mainly for health reasons, but he also wants to spend time with his wife, Betty, and daughter, Kimberly Ann.

"I just want to enjoy myself," Brittain said. "I've enjoyed working with the town and have no regrets at all.

"Of course, it's sort of hard to leave here," he added "All this has really become a second home to me. And I'm leaving with some reservations. I'll miss the fellowship of the firemen and policemen."

It may be hard to leave, but Brittain has some big plans in the works to fill his days.

"I want to spend more time with my wife and daughter," he said. "Maybe do some traveling in the United States."

He is looking forward to a possible trip to Alaska or

since his 13-year-old daughter is in the Girl Scouts, the family may attend the scouting jamboree in Wyoming this summer.

Brittain is also a big game hunter and has been to Montana several times hunting elk, white-tailed deer, antelope and moose. He hasn't been hunting for a few years and would like to make a trip to the Ruby River Valley in Big Sky County this fall.

Although his mind may be on his life after retirement, Brittain has been anything but retiring while on the job. He has built the Valdese Fire Department into something he can be proud of—from two paid firefighters to seven.

"When I first came here we answered fire calls from the Drum Straight area to Hildebran, but now we don't go out of the town limits except to give mutual aid," he said.

Brittain also started with a truck built in the year he was born—a 1932 Mack truck and a 1948 model ladder truck.

Today the department is the proud owner of a 1985 Pierce Arrow ladder truck with 1250 GPM pump, a 1975 Mack 1000 GPM custom pumper, a 1963 Ford 1000 GPM pumper and a 1969 International equipment van complete with custom built cabinets made by Brittain.

"I'm proud to say that all my firemen have new turnout clothes," he said, "We have self-contained breathing apparatus. In my opinion we've got the finest equipment you could have. This is really good equipment for a small town fire department, and we have modern housing for the equipment also."

Brittain pointed to a modest black plaque on one of the shiny, new-looking trucks. "When I first saw a plaque on a truck with all these names, I thought, 'Boy you really have to be somebody to get on one of these,'" he said. "Now look here."

He ran his finger over the

line reading "Sherrill Brittain, Fire Chief" placed underneath the names of the men who served on the Valdese Town Council when the truck was purchased.

A similar plaque rests on another red fire truck parked in the bay area.

In addition to his firefighting skills, the town will also be losing a mechanic and cabinet maker.

Brittain has done maintenance on the trucks for the last 25 years, and in 1972 he converted a gas burner engineer into a diesel which is still in operation.

In fact, he is such a good mechanic the town has approached him about continuing the maintenance on the trucks after his retirement.

"I love working with anything gas powered and wood," he said.

Some of Brittain's handy work in wood is in the canteen area of the fire and police complex but most is in the town hall where he has built several cabinets and made the Town of Valdese plaque which hangs in the council chambers.

"I have generally made myself useful," he said. "I feel I have been fortunate to work for the town, but at the same time I feel I've given them good service. I'm proud of our town, and the city fathers have always been good to me. I can't say that enough.

"Come Dec. 31, I want to walk out of here with my head held high and to be proud of all I have accomplished," he said.

Come Dec. 31, Brittain should have no problem doing just that.

Woods Fire Danger High

By Donna Harrelson
Strader
Reidsville Review
Staff Writer

REIDSVILLE—Hunters and those who enjoy traipsing through the woods on crisp autumn days need to exercise extreme caution as the threat of forest fires is high due to the dry weather. Rockingham County has experienced, according to a local forest ranger.

"We've had two fires in one week and people around the county need to take care because the danger of forest fires is very high," said Ranger Mike Hodges. According to Hodges, approximately three acres were burned in the Folk Hill community between Reidsville and Eden when hunters in the woods were looking for an area to hunt and one smoker threw a match on the ground. The resulting fire got out of control. Teenagers playing with fireworks caused another fire when the lit explosive set some woods on fire in the Oregon Hill community and an estimated seven acres of fields and woods burned.

Hodges praised the quick action of the firefighters who saved additional acreage from damage.

Hodges said residents around the county would be wise to save leaf burning until the late afternoon shortly before nightfall. "If there is a good time to burn leaves under the dry conditions we are experiencing now, people should wait until the late afternoon just before dark when the winds die down and humidity begins to drop. Burning leaves now is not advisable but it is permissible," Hodges said, adding that the worst time to try and burn refuse outdoors is at noonday or midnight.

"People should be careful until it rains," Hodges said. "Considering the dry conditions of the forests in the

county, practically anything can start a fire in the woods."

Reidsville Fire Administrative Chief David Sizemore said another problem that comes to the fore when the temperature begins to drop is people who clean out fireplaces or woodstoves and dispose of the ashes before they have cooled.

"A lot of people will clean out their fireplaces or woodstoves and put the ashes in a cardboard box and take it outside and then dump them. A metal container with a top should always be used to handle the ashes and they should be allowed to set for at least two days.

"You'd be surprised at the live coals that stay hot in a (box). Then people will take the box outside and put it beside their garage and the next thing you know, their garage or the pile of leaves nearby is on fire," Sizemore said.

Mill Spring VFD Host Meeting

MILLSPRING—Wednesday October 21, 1987, the Western North Carolina Fireman's Association meeting was hosted by the Mill Spring Volunteer Fire Department, Mill Spring, North Carolina.

There was a total of 85 members present. Representatives of sales were Sagles, Zimmerman & Evans and Harolds Fire & Safety Equipment.

Special members present were Bob Murray and John Horne of the North Carolina State Chief's Association, David Haynes—Emergency Management Service, Kent Brown—Coordinator for the Department of Community Colleges.

Submitted by
Robert Blackwell
Mill Spring, NC

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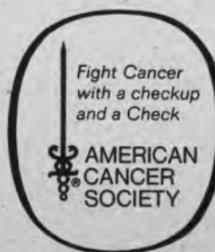
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Firefighters Their Duties Are Many

Continued from page 4

the fire and prevent further spread. On other occasions, firemen use a wet-water detergent to extinguish fires. This is a chemical that helps water penetrate into wood, cloth, cotton and paper better, he says.

What about the dangers involved in fighting a fire? Bost says, "We have more people injured off the job than we do on the job. Most of the injuries are minor cuts and bruises and most of these do not require treatment."

Despite a basically injury-free record, firefighters do take on serious and potentially dangerous tasks. They must constantly be on guard for weakening structures while fighting fires in residences and industrial buildings. They must be aware of unknown substances burning and strange odors, which could be the result of spilled acid and other hazardous substances.

"One of the main things men have to watch out for is heat exhaustion," Bost says. "They have to be careful not to get overheated." Bost points out that firemen have been in buildings where fires caused glass to melt at approximately 900 degrees. It takes between 1,000 and 1,200 degrees to weaken the strength of steel.

While extinguishing blazes, firemen, who sometimes wear a special breathing apparatus, should watch for holes in the floors, elevator shafts and open stairwells. "Usually, smoke is so heavy you can't see, so you have to feel your way around," says Bost.

Fighting fire can get hectic. Capt. Wayne Barber says Sanford firemen experienced an unusual situation several years ago. The fire department received a call about a warehouse on fire. Shortly

after, while firemen were attending to the fire, another report of a grocery store on fire came in. Two other fire calls followed: a food store and the old Sanford Hotel.

"We had four fire engines out," Barber says. "We had to call back all the off-duty city firemen and the few volunteer firemen we had. There was intense labor for nearly six hours."

Ken Cotten, 20, a paid fireman for the Central station and a volunteer fireman at Northview Fire Department, says fighting fires can get a little frightening at times. When fire destroyed the old Piggly Wiggly store, Cotten says, he stood inside the front door and tackled what resulted in an almost impossible task.

"You're standing there, and all of a sudden this ball of orange fire comes at you," Cotten says. "All you can do is just keep throwing water at it. Standing this close to a fire is hotter than the heat that comes from opening an oven door."

Fighting flames is not the only danger of fires, Cotten says. Smoke is also a problem. "If you've ever been around a smoking campfire, picture a house fire a hundred times as bad. Your eyes burn. It's about like you are shedding tears all the time. The smoke is so heavy and thick that it burns your nose and throat."

During another fire this year, Cotten says firemen were required to remove bodies from a house. "It's a bad situation when you drive up to a house and a mother screams, 'Get my kids out! Get my kids out!' I know situations like these are not as hard on me as they are on firemen who have children."

Cotten says he enjoys being able to help the public, but his job like other jobs, does not come without criticism.

Rescuers, Firefighters Thanked

By Tom Weaver
The Sampson
Independent
Staff Writer

SAMPSON—"Not everybody can be a hero, but all jobs and all people are important," Jesse Lindsay, chairman of the Sampson County Board of Commissioners, told some 250 fire and rescue workers recently.

The emergency personnel were honored at the annual Fire and Rescue Appreciation Dinner in the Clinton-

Aulander Officers Elected

AULANDER—The Aulander Volunteer Fire Department recently held its annual election of officers for the year, beginning in November.

Elected to the Fire Chief's Post was Frank Winslow, Sr. Winslow had no opposition for the Chief's position. Jerry Welch was elected as Asst. Chief, Hoyt Todd was elected as treasurer, Sid Jenkins was voted secretary.

Tim Ingram was voted in as the new elected Board Member. Ike Winslow, Welch, Todd and Jenkins were the incumbents in their respective positions.

Ingram defeated a former Fire Chief for the elected Board Member position.

Aulander is a town of approximately 1000 and is located in Bertie County. The AFD's district includes parts of Bertie, Hertford and Northampton Counties. The Department has a roster of approximately 30 Firemen. The AFD is totally voluntary.

Submitted By
Sid Jenkins, Secretary
Aulander Vol. Fire Dept.
Aulander, NC

Sampson Agri-Civic Center. "Knowing you are appreciated motivates a person to do a better job," Lindsay said. "That's what we are doing here, expressing the appreciation of Sampson County for what you are doing."

"We can't say enough to express how what you are contributing to your communities has helped make a better life for the people."

Each fire department and rescue squad had been asked to name an outstanding member, and their choices were presented with plaques by Lindsay, vice chairman Kermit Williamson and fire commissioner Fletcher Pearson.

Rescue squad members honored were: Mary Jackson, Clement; Willie Hobbs, Clinton-Sampson; Eddie Jones, Harrells, and Sam West, Newton Grove (accepted for West by squad member Mark Bryan).

The Suttontown squad elected to name an entire family, Sam and Jean Oates, their son, Dennis, and daughter, Dawn, all long-time active rescue workers.

Two squads, Roseboro and Garland, did not name outstanding members and certificates of appreciation were presented to the entire units.

Named as outstanding by fire departments were Kenneth Sessoms, Autryville; A.G. Holland, Clement; Clark Schneider Sr., Garland; Dewayne Matthews, Falcon-Goodwin; Horace Thornton, Halls, and Delbert L. Smith of Harrells.

Also Anthony Dyson, Ivanhoe; Ricky Naylor, Herring; Kenneth Warren, Newton Grove; Freddie Tew, Plain View; Keith Sessoms, Roseboro; Wayne Edwards, Spivey's Corner; Ronnie Williams, Taylor's Bridge, and Eddie C. Carr, Vann's Crossroads.

Clinton, Garland, Salemburg and Turkey departments did not name a member and these units also were

given certificates. Mike Eddinger, deputy chief of the N.C. Office of Emergency Medical Services, delivered the keynote address.

Eddinger, who was introduced by Thad Bryson, county director of Emergency Management, said he was proud of the emergency services system "for a lot of reasons."

"But what makes me the most proud are the people," he said. "I never cease to be amazed by the fact that over 70 percent of emergency coverage in our state is provided by volunteers—people who have primary jobs and families but are willing to leave those on a moment's notice to render assistance to a fellow human in need."

"You learn you can't save every life and you can't save every house, no matter how you try."

He said there are many reasons for working in the emergency services field, "But I believe there is one common denominator among us all—we care about people."

"I want to thank you for allowing me to be a part of this tonight, for having the courage to be involved, for the service you provide, but most of all, thank you for caring," he said.

George McGill of Harrells, president of the county fireman's association, and Velator Philips of Newton Grove, president of the rescue group, thanked the county for supporting them, but said there was more to be done and continued support would be vital.

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Pin Hook VFD Brings In Over \$8,000

By Rhonda Lewis
Wallace Enterprise
Staff Writer

WALLACE—Pin Hook Volunteer Fire Department held its benefit auction and dinner Saturday, October 3. "It was a great day with lots of good food, and everyone had an excellent time," said a fire department spokesperson.

Auctioneer Davy Thomas rattled off items up for bid, some used and some new. The auction brought in approximately \$3,600.00.

The benefit brought in \$8,000.00 all together, with \$4,400.00 raised from ticket sales, donations, and barbecue pork and chicken dinners.

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VFDs Struggle To Meet State Regs

By Patt Little
Murphy Cherokee Scout

MURPHY—Financial struggles, lack of manpower, meeting state accreditation criteria, and waning public interest and support are all problem areas that many of the county's VFDs are currently facing.

Firefighters Save Man In Corinth

CORINTH—In October, Nashville firefighters rushed to the rescue of Ben Greene, when alerted of a fire in a chicken house at Rose Hill Farm. Greene, a worker at the farm, suffered first and second degree burns to the face, according to Nashville Fireman Jay Dornseif.

While attempting to light an LP gas heater in the house, which is home for 21,000 hens, the heater exploded causing \$1,000 worth of damage. The house is valued at over \$114,000.

"Our first truck rolled out at 5:51 p.m.," Dornseif told *The Graphic*, "followed by three other trucks with a total force of 21 men."

Though the blaze had already been put out, said Dornseif, "we were assisted by (volunteers of) the Castalia Fire Department."

And if these troubles continue unchecked, many firefighters officials fear that it could mean the end of some community VFDs, with subsequent repercussions such as inadequate fire protection and/or an unavailability to obtain homeowners fire insurance coverage for some county residents.

Of the 12 established VFD fire districts in Cherokee County, three are not rated—Unaka, Hothouse and Hiwassee Dam. Many insurance companies across the country are currently balking at writing fire insurance policies for those residents living within a non-rated fire district. Some refuse to write policies outright, and those residents who live in a non-rated fire district and do obtain a fire insurance policy find that their premiums are exorbitant.

And with the stringent new state and insurance criteria that all VFDs must meet to either be rated or to receive reaccreditation, some of the county's currently rated VFDs could find themselves having problems meeting those criteria for future reaccreditation.

"These combination of factors, if allowed to continue as is, could possibly mean real trouble for the future of some of the county's VFDs," noted county fire chief Gary Kilpatrick. "Those non-rated fire districts must somehow, somehow, meet the criteria

and become rated.

"And somehow, somehow, those VFDs that are currently experiencing lack of manpower and financial difficulties must be helped," Kilpatrick added, "before they fall short of the criteria and therefore, possibly not receive reaccreditation."

"This is not just a VFD problem," the fire chief pointed out. "This is a problem that all residents of Cherokee County should be concerned with. It is also a problem in which a part could be solved just with more public concern, participation and support."

Lack of manpower and finances are two key problem issues within some of the VFDs, noted Kilpatrick. To meet current state reaccreditation criteria, a VFD must have 19 active firefighters on their roster, and three additional personnel to be utilized for traffic control.

While the currently rated area VFDs do have the total 22 members on roster, some are experiencing difficulties with having all those members show up when an actual fire is reported.

Meeting state criteria for individual VFD firefighting equipment is another concern, according to Kilpatrick. "Even though all the rated VFDs do have the necessary equipment mandated by the state," he explained, "some of the VFDs' equipment is very old, and just might not pass the criteria if and when it comes time for that particular VFD to become reaccredited."

Reaccreditation or re-rating, as well as mandated criteria is governed by the State Insurance Commission Office, Kilpatrick explained. "Previously, after a VFD re-

ceived its rating, that was it; the VFD never had to re-qualify. However, new regulations state that some VFDs may have to undergo reaccreditation at some point and time, and it's that point and time that concerns many of the VFD fire chiefs.

"With current expenditures as they are," Kilpatrick continues, "even some of those community VFDs that are supported through fire tax monies are having a difficult time making ends meet. And with the high cost of firefighting equipment, especially fire trucks, some of those tax-supported VFDs that might possibly need a new truck just to pass state criteria, could not afford to purchase one."

And for those VFDs that depend on fund-raising events for financial support, Kilpatrick noted, "their situation is much, much worse."

Of the three non-rated county VFDs, Unaka is the closest to state accreditation eligibility, according to Kilpatrick. "Their only holdup is the old pumper the department has—if they can purchase another one, the department would be in business."

In those areas that are not covered by a VFD, residents will also have the same problems concerning acquisition of fire insurance as those people that live in non-rated fire districts, according to Kilpatrick.

And the fire chief noted, "because (again omitting Tomotla), the areas that do not have a local VFD are so sparsely populated, it would be hard if not impossible to rally enough community involvement to create local VFDs within those areas."

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