



TARHEEL FIREFIGHTER



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Mrs. Donnie Hurley is proud to be a fulltime, paid firefighter for the KDH Fire Department. The work is hard, but the rewards are great, says the woman who used to visit her local fire station as a little girl and stare in awe at the shiny trucks. N. McWilliams photo

Woman's Work Never Done—How True For Fireman

By Nancy McWilliams
Kill Devil Hills
Current

KILL DEVIL HILLS—She doesn't mind smoke and dirt and water.

She doesn't mind wearing 60 pounds of fireman's gear.

She doesn't even mind that there's no restroom for her in the fire station.

Donnie Hurley, 29, is Kill Devil Hills' first paid woman firefighter. On the job for about a year now, Mrs. Hurley has learned to fit in with the 12-man department. "It was an adjustment for everybody when I started, but we all get along fine," she said.

Mrs. Hurley, not one to accept "traditional" women's work, has earned her living as a carpenter, window salesman, and pre-wiring worker for a cable TV company since she came to this area 12 years ago.

Sitting in the cozy day room of the fire station, Mrs. Hurley says, "To me, women's work is boring. I've done it though. I've done book keeping and waitressing, but I like this."

Raised in Elizabeth City, Mrs. Hurley recalls going to the fire station there when she was a young girl and staring in awe at the big, shiny trucks.

Today, she drives trucks like that.

"I like helping the public and I like fire work. You're

always training," Mrs. Hurley said. "You're always doing something new."

And for each thing she learns, Mrs. Hurley said there are 10,000 more things to learn.

As a firefighter II, Mrs. Hurley works 24 hours on and 48 hours off.

There are usually three firefighters on duty at all times.

The firefighters' shifts include the tasks of cleaning the day room, working on the trucks, training, and of course being on call for fires.

When her beeper goes off, Mrs. Hurley said her heart races. This year, there have been about six fires that she calls "big."

While on duty, the firefighters prepare and eat their meals together.

"She washes dishes here just like she does at home," KDH Fire Chief Bill Gard said with a laugh.

In addition to being a dedicated firefighter, Mrs. Hurley is also a wife and mother. Husband Pat, a contractor, is a big supporter, she said. And 6-year-old David thinks it's "neat" that his mom is a firefighter.

"At first, it was hard for him when I had to be gone nights, but he's used to it now," Mrs. Hurley said.

Sometimes David even joins his mom for dinner at the station.

When his class from school went to the fire station on a

field trip recently, Mrs. Hurley said he stayed right with her so everyone would know that she was his mother.

For sleeping arrangements, the men share a dormitory room with bunk beds and pictures of scantily-clad women on the walls, and Mrs. Hurley has a private room.

What is now her bedroom used to be an office. But one thing that hasn't been worked out is restrooms. Usually, Mrs. Hurley shares the women's room in the police department next door, but sometimes after a fire, when she needs a shower, the men let her use their restroom, and she hangs a "women's room" sign on the door.

Chief Gard said, "These facilities were not designed for women firefighters." The station was built about 10 years ago. "We hope to expand and have better facilities for men and women," he said.

Mrs. Hurley began her firefighting duties as a volunteer. As paid positions opened up, she applied for them. After two rejections, she said she was pretty discouraged. "But that only made me try harder," she said. On the third try, she got in.

To be a good firefighter takes "a lot of training, a lot of stamina and you have to have your heart in it," Mrs. Hurley said.

Friends Pay Tribute To Firefighter, Killed On The Job

By Bryan McKenzie
of the
Times Staff

FAYETTEVILLE—On the evening of Dec. 14, a 69-foot, fire-damaged pine tree crashed into a group of Vander volunteer firemen, killing Capt. Steve "Buddy" Russell Jr. during the mop-up of a woods fire along Sapona Road.

Recently firefighters from across the state honored Russell's dedication and commitment with plaques, testimony and tears.

About 35 of Russell's friends, family and fellow firefighters gathered at the Vander Fire Station on Clinton Road for an often emotional memorial service for Russell, who was 26 when he died.

And while Russell's fire gear hung in a glass case in the back of the department assembly room, representatives of the N.C. Forest Service, Vander Volunteer Fire Department and Fayetteville Fire Department presented his family with plaques and talked of Russell's love for his family and his job.

"He is no longer physically with us but his memory and his work are with us and they still have impact on us," said Rev. Ronald Long, pastor of the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Vander. "We still think of him and he influences us in our work."

With tears in his eyes and his voice choked with emotion, Vander Fire Chief Roddy Bullard presented a plaque to Russell's wife, Mary Kathryn, honoring Russell's service.

"We miss him so much. We loved Buddy," Bullard said. "He was such a good friend to all of us. He was our brother and we have lost this great friend and brother."

Forest Service Director Harry Lehman said Russell's name will appear on a plaque in Emmettsburg, Md., honoring firemen from the United States, Canada and South America who died in the line of duty.

"He loved his job. He was dedicated to fighting fires and helping his neighbors," Lehman said.

Russell volunteered for the Vander department in June 1978, earning his captain's

rank, training as an emergency medical technician and certification as an instructor in cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

In 1983 Russell joined his father on the Fayetteville Fire Department as a full-time firefighter.

But the younger Russell's life ended late in the evening of Dec. 14 as he and four firemen waited for a Forest Service bulldozer operator to finish clearing burning brush and dead trees called "snags" after battling a 5-acre woods fire.

"The fire had gone deep into the woods and the (bulldozer) cleared a break to stop the fire from spreading," Vander Fire Rescue Capt. Richard Bradshaw said after the ceremony.

"Well, it was real dark about this time and the driver was on his way back and we were waiting to help load him up when he came up on what he thought was an eight-foot snag," Bradshaw recalled. "The driver hit it once with his blade and it didn't move, so he hit it again. He had no way of knowing it was a 69-foot pine tree."

The fire firefighters heard the tree as it crashed through brush, vines and timber on its way down: "We could hear something falling, but it was pitch dark and all we could see were the bulldozer's lights," Bradshaw said. "We all scattered and just got out of the way. Except Buddy. Buddy was just unfortunate."

"Buddy was very dedicated to what he died for," Mrs. Russell said. "He loved what he did and died doing what he loved."



**NO IFs, ANDs,
OR BUTTS.**

Training is important part of fire fighting

By Karen Robertson-Kidd
News-Argus
Staff Writer

GOLDSBORO—In rural areas, one kind of soldier is still a volunteer and the enemy is fire.

With more fire districts than any other county in North Carolina, Wayne County has 28 volunteer fire departments and five volunteer rescue squads manned by more than 900 people.

Becoming a volunteer firefighter is not easy but the rewards go beyond material gain, according to Wayne County Fire Marshall Carl Ray Coley.

The process usually begins

with filling out an application at the local fire station, he said. "Now some of them (fire departments) are set up in different ways," Coley pointed out. "But normally you contact the chief first and you fill out an application."

Once the application is considered, the applicant's personal background is checked out thoroughly, including his driving and criminal record. "If he's going to be driving a fire vehicle, he can't have a careless and reckless charge on his record," Coley said.

The station also has a public image to maintain, he said. "A volunteer fire department can't survive with-

out good public relations." Should a department develop an image of having members who do not care, morale and donations would plummet because the public would not support such a department, Coley explained.

Once the application is accepted and the background check is completed, the person is usually added to a waiting list. Wayne County has no shortage of individuals who wish to serve on the county's fire departments and rescue units, he said.

A person can move up the list if that applicant possesses a skill the department needs. "They might have 20 men in line in front of them," Coley said, "But let's say the department needs an electrician. So they look at their list and they say, 'We have an electrician right here.' They may bypass the number one person on the list if (an applicant) can do something the department needs done."

A difficulty fire departments face is cost, Coley said. A department may need another person but, because it is the department's responsibility to provide training and to outfit each member in the proper fire fighting gear, it may have to do without the new member.

"They can only afford to carry so many people," he pointed out.

The helmet, coats, gloves, boots, pants and other gear that look to the outsider like rain gear are made to withstand the heavy duty work firefighters perform. "It costs close to \$500 a man," Coley said. "It kind of varies depending on what kind of equipment you want."

Another difficulty is training. Each firefighter is required to obtain 36 hours in fire training, both classroom and hands on, before being certified. The department is responsible for providing at least 48 hours of training to each member, Coley said.

While it can be difficult, it is not unusual for a firefighter to accumulate 200 hours or more in fire and rescue training, he pointed out. A few have had 500.

"The training is a big part of the fire service," he explained. "They spend a lot of time with that and the public has no idea how much time they spend training. I can understand why—they only see them when they're out on a fire call."

Training comes in a variety of ways including attendance at a fire and rescue school.

The second annual Wayne County Fire and Rescue School was sponsored by the Wayne Community College Division of Continuing and Adult Education in cooperation with Wayne County Fire and Rescue Associations.

Kingston Fire Department Promotions

The Kinston Fire Department has promoted three battalion chiefs and nine captains within the department.

The promotions were effective May 8, when the men began tackling new duties in their supervisory positions.

The twelve employees successfully completed a promotional process that included an assessment center and a written exercise.

Newly promoted Battalion Chief Clarence L. Eubanks, a 25 year KFD veteran, Kenneth E. Pate, a 15 year KFD veteran, and Randy H. Conklin, a 14 year KFD veteran said that they are looking forward to filling their new positions as battalion chiefs.

As battalion chiefs, they are serving as shift commanders and will be responsible for all fire suppression activities on their shifts.

Battalion Chief Allen W. Seymour, a 14 year department veteran, who has been a battalion chief for three years and was supervisor of the maintenance division, will join Eubanks, Pate, and Conklin in fire suppression.

Newly promoted fire captains are Horace C. Wiggins; Ronnie R. Holton; Carlos A. Jones; Mike Perry; Alvin Ward; Ralph F. Taylor; Ray-

mond L. Echevarria, Jr.; Billy Huggins, Jr.; and David J. Ricke.

As captains, they are filling positions as training officers, station captains, fire safety inspectors, and public education officers.

"Something monumental is taking place in this department," said Chief Tony Kelly. "For the past three years, the department has not had battalion chiefs to serve as shift commanders, and in terms of command this has caused problems." Chief Kelly is confident the increase in supervisory personnel will help to correct these problems.

The Department now boasts five battalion chiefs and eighteen fire captains. Prior to recent reorganization and promotions, there are two battalion chiefs and nine captains in the department.

"We're a progressive department", said Chief Kelly. "We're being positive and we're looking forward to providing the community with a department it can be proud of."

Submitted by:
Captain A. Ward
Kinston
Fire Department

Alleged Hotbed Of Drug Activity Demolished

By Melody Brumble
Eden Daily News

EDEN—Eden firefighters kept watch May 25, as flames toppled an abandoned building reportedly used for drug deals.

The Eden Fire Department conducted a controlled burn at a building located on the corner of Henry and Taylor streets in what Eden police have described as a hotbed of drug trafficking.

The former boarding house, a wooden structure clad with a single layer of brick, was vacant for years and had been condemned by the City of Eden.

During two undercover drug stings earlier this year, detectives made buys at the abandoned building.

Firefighters lighted the building about 7 p.m. and kept a close watch to see that flames or firey debris didn't touch neighboring occupied houses.

About 20 spectators watched as flames inside the building consumed its wooden frame, sending clouds of thick smoke through the gaping windows.

After the flames died down, fire fighters used their

powerful hoses to knock down the thin layer of bricks.

A firefighter said the fire department was on the scene until between 10 and 11 p.m.

The controlled burn was part of a police department campaign to spruce up the 500 block of Henry Street.

The city and police department also have investigated a civil lawsuit that would force closing of another reputed drug den. Nancy's Pool Room & Bar, located at 504 N. Henry St. near the abandoned building.

Swanson Dalton, co-owner of the pool room, was charged in April with two counts each of sale and delivery of cocaine, possession with intent to sell and deliver cocaine, maintaining a residence for such purposes and conspiracy to sell and deliver cocaine.

Lt. Skip Johnson of the Eden Police Department said that he does not know if any civil action is pending because "I think the poolroom closed on its own."



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Pastors double as firefighters, teachers

By Jennifer Essen
Wilmington Star
Staff Writer

WILMINGTON—The Rev. Sam Hill fights fires.

Hill, the pastor of First Advent Christian Church on South College Road since 1982, also is chief of the Wilmington Fire Department. He is one of many two-vocation ministers in the area—ministers who usually work at smaller churches unable to afford full-time ministers.

"I guess the Lord placed upon my heart that I needed to be ordained," said Hill, 53. He served as a lay minister—one who is not ordained—for 25 years before going before an ordination board. The Advent Christian denomination does not have a seminary, nor does it require pastors to have a theology degree.

Ironically, Hill's church burned down two years ago, after someone broke in and set it on fire. He was there to help fight the blaze. The damage was so extensive, the church had to be rebuilt.

Juggling both jobs is no problem, Hill said, adding that the city cooperates when he needs to attend funerals or visit the sick. "I guess the good Lord has removed all the difficult spots of it," he said, adding that once he had finished his church in mid-sermon to answer a fire call.

In addition to his regular duties, Hill counsels firefighters and conducts marriage ceremonies for them and their families. "It puts you in the position to be more than just the chief," he said.

The Rev. Charles Foss also served as pastor of First Advent Christian—from 1979 to 1982. At the same time, he worked as a drama teacher at Hoggard High School, the job he holds today.

He came to Wilmington in 1969 to teach Bible studies at Hoggard and New Hanover high schools after studying at the University of New Hampshire and Berkshire Christian College in Massachusetts. "I-t-o-tally hated it, because whatever I said was wrong," he said, explaining the difficulty of teaching teen-agers from all religious backgrounds.

Foss, 58, contemplated returning to Swansboro, where he had been a social studies teacher, but he was persuaded to stay and teach drama. He got his teaching certificate in drama from High Point College, and since then, his students—the Hoggard Thespians—repeatedly have won regional and state theater competitions. The program has grown so much that the school hired another drama teacher this year.

Foss was ordained in 1952.

host of a religious radio broadcast in town, while pastor of the old Fourth Street Advent Christian Church.

"I'm not happy unless I'm really busy and I've got too much to do," Foss said. He added, however, that as the drama program grew, he found the combination of responsibilities to be too much. "I paid the price physically for it," he said, explaining that he has developed high blood pressure and diabetes.

Foss said providing guidance for his students has proved gratifying. "I'm not doing any proselytizing . . . but morally I come down on them very hard."

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has bi-vocational pastors called tentmakers, after the Apostle Paul who learned the tentmaking trade. Sometimes recognized as the second founder of Christianity because of his contributions to the New Testament, Paul used his trade to support his missionary activities.

The Rev. Emily Fox and her husband, the Rev. Pickney Love Jr., serve Presbyterian churches in Cumberland County while holding other jobs. Ms. Fox, 40, tutors in math and science, and Love, 46, is a former high school teacher who directs Contact Ministries, a telephone crisis line.

The tentmaking ministry developed recently, Ms. Fox said during a telephone interview. "It's fairly new in the

Presbyterian system because Presbyterians require such a high standard of education for their pastors . . . More and more Presbyterian churches are becoming too small to pay a full-time pastor with all that education."

"There are very few of us," said Ms. Fox, the pastor of Vaughn Memorial Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Fayetteville. "I thought it would be much easier . . . than it's turned out to be."

She said she spends one quarter of her time tutoring and, for the most part, has given up visiting congregation members. "That's really a loss for me, because I don't get to know the people as well," Ms. Fox said, adding, "You care about people full time. And if there's a crisis you're there full time."

"There are more and more people considering tentmaking as an option," Ms. Fox said. "Sometimes the people who are bi-vocational don't fit the mainline of the church," she said, explaining that she and her husband—who met at Vanderbilt Divinity School—both had been divorced.

Like Hill, the Rev. A.C. "Red" Beall, a Southern Baptist minister, says working two jobs is no harder than one. "In my line of work it's no problem," said Beall, 57, an insurance account executive. "Being on straight commission you don't worry about the hours too much."

Karel Co. Fire Injures Seven; Damage Estimated At \$350,000

By Jeff Holland
Daily Journal

ROCKINGHAM—An explosion and fire at the Karel Co. in Hamlet injured seven persons and caused an estimated \$350,000 to the building, according to a report filed by the Hamlet Fire Department.

Firemen believe a spark shot off of a board being sanded in a sanding machine and entered the ductwork that collected sawdust and wood chips and carried them out to a storage building outside the main building. The spark ignited sawdust, causing a fire that exploded the ductwork, scattering it across the room and striking a number of workers.

The fire passed through the ductwork to the storage building, setting it on fire.

Injured in the fire were seven workers: Samuel Martin, Clinton McCall, Jerry Goins, Vonzella Hester, Cynthia Dockery, Shirley Watson and Ann Brazzelle. Martin and McCall sustained first- and second-degree burns, and Goins sustained fractured ribs, says Capt. Jim Covington of the Hamlet Fire Department. Martin and McCall were treated and admitted to Hamlet Hospital, says Sherry Rainwater, a hospital spokesman.

Goins, Watson and Brazzelle were also taken to

Hamlet Hospital, where they were treated and released, says Ms. Rainwater.

Hester and Dockery were taken to Richmond Memorial Hospital, where they were treated and released, says Karen Hinson, director of marketing and education.

Workers not injured in the fire spent several hours cleaning up the work area, using brooms to push the water out of the building. The fire and the water caused approximately \$350,000 damage. Damage to the building amounted to \$200,000, and there was approximately \$150,000 damage to the contents, says Covington.

Mutual aid was provided by East Rockingham Fire Department.

The fire began around 1:30 p.m.

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After the flames died

All factories in coopers

Equipment Fire Gives Scare At Hotel

By Marc Barnes
Fayetteville Observer
Staff Writer

FAYETTEVILLE—Fayetteville firefighters scrambled to a fire at the Prince Charles Hotel on Hay Street, but the fire turned out to be more fizzle than flame.

At 8 a.m., black smoke was seen curling above the roof of the 1920s hotel, near the Cumberland County Department of Social Services building. A snorkel fire truck with a crew of two aboard smashed a top-floor window with a fire ax and firefighters began pouring water inside.

But city spokesman Jason Brady said the problem came from a popped valve on an acetylene tank. He said some hot metal fell on rubber hoses, causing the smoke.

"The actual building is not on fire," he said. "All they are doing now is cooling the tank."

The accident came as workers continued renovating the old building.

The plan, as brought to city officials by John Nagel, Jack Barnes and Gardner Altman Jr., calls for turning the hotel building into a 120-room luxury hotel.

Former Fire Chief Tells Duplin Firefighters About His Serious Burns, Recovery

By Nelson Bland
Mt. Olive Tribune
Staff Writer

SUMMERLINS CROSSROADS—A former fire chief who was severely burned over 53 percent of his body spoke to Duplin County firefighters here on the importance of fire safety. He also told how he lost over 130 pounds during his recovery.

And a burn nurse from the N.C. Jaycee Burn Center in Chapel Hill, who treated the victim, told about the fire fighter's suffering and stressed the need for fire safety promotion. The two spoke at a meeting of the Duplin County Firemen's Association that was hosted by the Oak Wolfe Fire Department here.

Keith McCoy, 32, past fire chief at Cove City in Craven County, said he was cleaning out some pig cookers with a flammable liquid on September 25, 1987, when vapors ignited and there was an explosion. McCoy and another fire fighter standing near him caught on fire. The other fire fighter managed to beat out the fire on his trousers, but McCoy wasn't as fortunate. He suffered second- and third-degree burns over the lower half of his body.

The Cove City rescue squad transported McCoy to Lenoir Memorial Hospital in Kinston, from where he was airlifted by East Care helicopter to the Burn Center.

He was given strong medication at Lenoir Memorial, and as he was being placed on the ambulance helicopter, he waved to his parents before lapsing into unconsciousness.

"That's the last thing I remember, waving goodbye to my parents," McCoy said, "because, I tell you, I thought that was the last time I would ever lay my eyes on them."

McCoy awoke the next

morning in the Burn Center, where he underwent extensive treatment for 35 days. He has also undergone much recovery therapy.

"I was in very much pain from the start," he said. "They ran out of sterile water on the ambulance and I was burning so bad I begged them to stop beside the road and let me get in a ditch. They used to say don't put water on a burn, but it's what you should do."

Anita Maready, a native of Warsaw and the assistant head nurse at the Burn Center, praised McCoy for his heroic recovery, and for his dedication to fire prevention.

McCoy, a heavy equipment operator for the Department of Transportation, is back at work now, but he speaks to organizations and groups about fire safety and prevention. He is also a counselor for the Burn Center's Burn Camp for children.

He Loses 130 Pounds

Ms. Maready told fire fighters that McCoy weighed 354 pounds when he entered the hospital, but now weighs 223.

McCoy said that losing 131 pounds was one of "three good things that have happened to" him since his injury. The other two, he said, are his "getting closer to the Lord" and his plans to get married in August.

"My burn scars can be hidden, but a lot of people's can't," he said. "The Lord has blessed me with that. I'm scarred for the rest of my life, but you can't see them. I've had skin grafts on both legs and I have to wear supportive hose. So many people can't hide their scars."

Both McCoy and Ms. Maready stressed the importance of fire safety and fire prevention at school, home and the workplace.

"You see people of all ages, from the youngest to the old-

est, at the Burn Center," Ms. Maready said, "but I would say that most burns can be prevented."

Psychological Damage

Ms. Maready added, "A burn patient goes through more than physical pain and scars, they have to live with the fact that they are disfigured for the rest of their lives. That does a lot of psychological damage to the patients, their family and friends—and sometimes it's difficult to live with."

She said McCoy has not been able to return to active fire fighting yet, "but he has come a long way."

McCoy praised Ms. Maready and the other nurses at the Burn Center, and he eluded the Jaycees for supporting the Center and John Stackhouse of Morehead City, formerly of Goldsboro, who spearheaded the drive to build the center.

"They all are special people," he said. "The money that is spent on that Burn Center is well spent. They don't hide anything from a patient, and I've seen some badly-burned people, some burned over 95 percent of their bodies, and I've seen the treatments and encouragement that they can get at the Center."

Ms. Maready told fire fighters, "Keith McCoy is a very special person. He is special for you and your group because he is one of you. He's dedicated a good many years of his life to fire fighting. And since his injury, he's worked very hard to get where he is today. I'm not exaggerating, I can tell you I have given him a lot of morphine and a lot of other drugs so he wouldn't suffer as much."

Ms. Maready said McCoy is helping the Burn Center officials educate the public about fair safety and prevention.

"You can never do enough of that," she said. "We invite you to the Burn Center. We'd love to show you where all the money goes, and to show you where Keith McCoy changed his life."

Fire Inspector Promoted

HICKORY—Rupert H. Little was recently appointed as Catawba County Fire Marshal to replace Charles H. Doty, who became Newton's Fire Chief in April. Little has been with the county as a fire inspector since 1973.

In his new position Little will serve as the liaison between the Board of Commissioners and the fire departments of the county. He will be responsible for fire inspection, education programs and investigations of unlawful burning and arson.

The Fire Marshal's office also assists rural fire departments in equipment selection and testing, interpretation and compliance of OSHA standards and federal regulations, and assistance in lowering insurance rates for their respective fire districts.

Little, 48, has been a volunteer fireman since 1964, and has held several key positions in his career field. He was appointed by Commissioner of Insurance Jim Long to serve on the N.C. Fire Commission and by Gov. James G. Martin to represent the Fire Commission on the N.C. State Emergency Response Commission.

He has been a member of the N.C. Fire Marshal's Association since 1974 and served as its president for two consecutive terms.

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Fire guts seafood market

By Elizabeth Biro
Daily News Staff

SWANSBORO—The fifth in a series of suspicious fires in the Swansboro-Cedar Point area destroyed a seafood market and tackle shop operated by Bull's Place.

No injuries were reported in the fire at the business on N.C. 24 between the White Oak River bridges in Swansboro.

Bull's Place owners Ed and Regina Sewell said the loss cost them hundreds of dollars in profits.

Damage estimates were not available, but the Sewells reported that the market was stocked with a three-day supply of seafood and with fishing reels worth \$600.

Firefighters were called to the scene around 4 a.m. but the small, one-story building was engulfed in flames, said Shelton Kellum, chief of the Swansboro Volunteer Fire Department.

Realizing the smaller building was lost, firefighters immediately began working to keep the flames from spreading to nearby structures, Kellum said.

The fire was out within minutes, but not before heat from the flames slightly damaged two boats docked behind the building. The blaze also melted lettering on the west side of Bull's Place restaurant, which adjoins the seafood market and tackle shop.

A canvas cover was damaged on a 19-foot Grady White boat owned by Eddie Newton of Swansboro and the back of a 25-foot Chris-Craft owned by Sewell suffered heat damage.

The cause of the fire is unknown, but it appears to have ignited in the building's rear west end, Kellum said.

When the blaze was reported, firefighters thought they might have another case of simultaneous fires.

Kellum said a fire was reported at Swansboro United Methodist Church, but there was no fire there. The report apparently resulted after confusion from an alarm that accidentally sounded at a Methodist church in Beaufort around the same time the fire took place in Swansboro.

Simultaneous fires May 16 destroyed the Shrine Club of Swansboro and a boat docked at Dudley's Marina. Fires occurring at the same time May 2 damaged a fuel oil truck in Swansboro and Canvasworks, a canvas repair shop in Cedar Point.

The Sewells said that re-

cent suspicious fires in the area have many people worried that their home or business might be next. The Shrine Club fire and a December fire that destroyed Waters Hardware in Swansboro are believed to have been deliberately set. Investigators have said that fires at the canvas repair shop and Dudley's also are of suspicious nature.

"We really have not been sleeping well since the Shriners and Dudley's," Mrs. Sewell said.

Her husband concurred. "We kind of been expecting it (fire) the way things have been going."

Warren Fire Departments Will Share Over \$35,000

By Diane Davis
Warren Record
Staff Writer

WARRENTON—Eight Warren County rural volunteer fire departments will receive a total of \$35,495.50 in grant monies to fund purchases of firefighting safety equipment.

According to Ms. Angie Callahan, grant administrator for the N.C. Department of Insurance, Fire and Rescue Division, eight local departments were notified they are eligible to receive matching-funds grants.

Last year, only one local department was awarded a grant. The Inez Volunteer Fire Department received \$2,266.87 toward their purchase of safety equipment.

Ms. Callahan said many of the applications sent in last year by Warren County fire departments did not list safety equipment as high priority items in their requests, and as a result, were turned

down.

"We want to get firefighters protected first," she said. "Our main emphasis this year and last year is firefighter safety."

In addition, grants were given last year on what Ms. Callahan described as "an all or none basis." Therefore, if a department had listed a certain item which the division felt was unnecessary, their application was turned down, she said.

Grant money is generated by revenue from the state's insurance premium tax. For the past two years, the Fire and Rescue Division has received one-quarter of that revenue, averaging at \$1 and a half million annually, Ms. Callahan said.

Local departments receiving grants are Churchill-Five Forks—\$6,313.75; Drewry—\$10,788.75; Hawtree—\$4,600; Inez—\$3,288; Macon—\$3,500; Norlina—\$10,412; Ridgeway—\$2,598; and Warrenton Rural—

Association Honors Chief

By Donna Swicegood
Statesville Record
& Landmark
Staff Writer

STATESVILLE—West Iredell Fire Chief James Holler may be calling it quits as far as being chief is concerned, but if the members of the Iredell County Firemen's Association (ICFA) have anything to do with it, he will be a busy man.

Holler was honored recently at the ICFA meeting and he was presented with gifts from the various departments, as well as one gift from the ICFA—a clock with a statue of a firemen holding a hose.

Four members of the Ire-

dell County Board of Commissioners were on hand for the dinner, which was intended to be a roast for Holler, only no one could think of anything bad to say about the man who devoted 28 years to the West Iredell Fire Department.

County Commission Chairman R.B. Sloan, who also serves on the fire commission, congratulated Holler on his retirement. "I haven't had the good fortune to have worked with you for very long, but one thing I've learned is of the sacrifice volunteer firemen make and sometimes we forget about that . . . I thank you for your support and I'm sure they're going to miss you," he said.

However, Vice Chairman Alice Stewart said she is not only acquainted with Holler, but living in the West Iredell Fire District, she has been more than acquainted with the work done by Holler in the district.

"You are dedicated in a lot of areas . . . It's been nice knowing West Iredell is there . . . Thanks again, James, for being the dedicated public servant that you are," she said.

However, based on some of the suggestions that were being thrown out at the meeting, Holler may only be leaving West Iredell Fire Department. Some of the members present suggested that Holler be made the official historian for the ICFA or various other volunteer jobs within the association.

\$6,665.

Ms. Callahan said each department was sent an application in December and had until March 15 to send it in. The applications asked each department to list the safety equipment needed.

A review process is completed and each department requesting funds is given points for the high priority safety items listed on their applications. The departments with the highest amount of points will receive monies, Ms. Callahan said.

When a department is notified they are to receive grant money, they have until Sept. 30 to purchase the equipment and send copies of the invoices to the Fire and Rescue Division.

Only the equipment listed on the application can be purchased, she said.

During the month of October, the Fire and Rescue Division will write a check to cover half of the cost of each department's purchases.

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Former fire chief is dead

THOMASVILLE—Edwin Lindsay Loftin, former chief of the Thomasville Fire Department from 1948 until 1967, died recently in North Carolina Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem. He was 88 years old and a resident of 900 Lake Drive West. Born Oct. 28, 1900 in Davidson County to James Early Loftin and Lydia Morgan Loftin, he was a lifelong resident of the area. He was a member of Memorial United Methodist Church where he served as an usher. He was a member of local Masonic Lodge 214 and the North Carolina Fire Chiefs' Association and the National Fire Chiefs' Association.

He was married to Avis Fulp Loftin, who died February 1988.

Mr. Loftin joined the Thomasville Fire Department as a volunteer in 1924, just two years after the department had acquired its first real fire truck, a 1922 American LaFrance. It was also just two years after the first city fire station had been erected at the corner of E. Guilford and Commerce Streets.

In 1936 he became a full-time paid department worker. He became chief of the fire department almost since the department had a paid, full-time official. The first was Howard Sullivan who was appointed in April of 1948. He died unexpectedly the following month and in August of that year, Mr. Loftin was appointed the new fire chief. Mr. Loftin helped the department grow from a one-truck village fire-

fighting force to a modern city organization. He was with the department when the city had some of its most spectacular and memorable fires.

He was there when the Mock Hotel burned in 1939, when Erwin Lambeth showroom on National highway caught fire in 1964 and during the downtown Cranford Firestone and Shell Station disaster in early March of 1966.

Mr. Loftin also served as electrical inspector for the city, beginning his duties in 1955 when the city first designated an electrical inspector.

Upon his retirement in August of 1967, he had one of the longest lengths of service of any of the city's employees.

Surviving are daughter, Mrs. Hines (Mary Jane) Hunt of 21st Avenue, N.W., Hickory; two grandchildren; sister, Mrs. S.B. (Helen) Williams of Lakeview Circle; brothers, Dewey Loftin of Council Street, Ralph Loftin of Statesville, Rufus Loftin of Fairgrove Road, Willie Loftin of the V.A. Hospital in Salisbury, and Wade Loftin of King.

Pine Level Fireman's Day yields \$30,000

SMITHFIELD—Pine Level's 10th annual Fireman's Day celebration held recently was hailed a success by Fire Chief Andy Gudac, who said funds raised this year from the auction, barbecue, and related events topped \$30,000.

"We're real pleased with the support of the people from the community as well as the rural fire district and those who came from outside," the chief said. "We'd like to thank everybody for their support."

Fire Official Is Cleared In Tire Theft

By Ed Martin
Charlotte Observer
Staff Writer

CHARLOTTE—A "hard and painful investigation" by the Charlotte Fire Department has exonerated one of its battalion chiefs of any role in the theft of 32 fire truck tires.

"The fire department is very comfortable with the fact that there is no connection whatsoever," assistant chief Roger Weaver said.

The tires were taken during the Christmas holidays from a fenced storage area near Fire Station 11 at 620 W. 28th St.

Four were found in a storage building on Rachel Street, less than a half-mile away.

Twelve-year fire department veteran Jerome Frederick sublets space in the building to store a motorcycle and lawn and garden equipment.

Police have charged Nathaniel Gaskin, 54, of 2509 Jefferson Davis St. with five counts of possessing stolen property, based on items found in the portion of the building he uses. Among the items were four newly recapped tires bearing the Charlotte Fire Department's initials.

Weaver said there have been no new developments in the search for the rest of the tires.

But he said the department probe removed all doubt that Frederick, 41, was involved.

"We have done a hard and painful investigation, and there is nothing there," said Weaver, the fire department's public information officer. "This guy is guilty of only one thing: knowing a guy who has been charged with committing a crime."

Frederick previously told The Charlotte Observer he would not jeopardize his career by taking the tires.

Car Fire Spreads To Home

EDENTON—An electrical short in a car apparently caused a house fire in the north end of Chowan County.

The fire occurred at 10:20 a.m. at the parsonage of Ballards Bridge Baptist Church which is located directly across N.C. 32 from the church.

The church's pastor, Rev. Danny Davis, 32, said that he jump-started his 1984 Ford Escort while it was parked in the carport attached to the house. He left the car running while he answered a telephone call.

When he returned about ten minutes later, he found the car beginning to blacken, a smoked-filled interior and windows beginning to crack. Davis said he grabbed a fire extinguisher, opened a door and emptied the extinguisher on the fire.

As his wife, Sandy, was calling the fire department, he went around the side of the house to get a garden hose. He and his wife both heard what sounded like an explosion and he ran back to find the car belching flames that reached to the carport ceiling.

"I had heard that fire spreads quickly but I had never seen it," the minister commented. He said that he got Mrs. Davis out of the house and they retreated as the fire department arrived. "In just a few minutes, they were on the scene," he said. The Davis' seven-year-old son, Jordan was at school at the time.

Leon Evans, Chief of the Center Hill-Crossroads Volunteer Fire Dept., said that the second floor of the house and the roof sustained extensive fire damage while the rest of the house experienced smoke and water damage. The Escort was a total loss. No monetary estimate of damage was available at press time.

The Edenton Fire Department backed up the rural de-

partment and Evans said that the rescue squad responded as a precautionary measure. There were no injuries during the blaze. Firemen remained at the scene for approximately four hours.

Personal possessions were scattered around the front yard and some were being loaded into trucks during the afternoon. "We've had a lot of help from the community and our church members," the pastor said.

He credited firemen for saving many of those belongings. "I appreciate the fire department," he said simply.

Davis became pastor of the church in December, coming to the county from Danville, Virginia.

Woman, 94, Dies In Fire

LAURINBURG—A 94-year-old Scotland County woman lost her life recently at her home on Johns Mill Road.

The Stewartville Fire Department was notified of the fire at approximately 3:30 a.m. Firefighters arrived at the home of Mrs. Annie McIntyre where the fire was "fully involved," according to James Oxendine, assistant fire chief. Oxendine said the cause of the fire was undetermined and that the home was a total loss.

A Scotland County Sheriff's Department report indicated that the fire was accidental and that the fire originated in the kitchen.

Personnel from the Laurinburg Fire Department and tankers from the Gibson, Laurel Hill and Maxton departments assisted the crew of 15 volunteers from the Stewartville Fire Department. Oxendine said. Firemen were at the scene for approximately two hours.

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Flames 'Destroy' Room, Hall At Boarding House

By Tina Hilton
The Asheville Citizen
Staff Writer

ASHEVILLE—Flames swept through a second-story room in an Asheville boarding house recently, sending some tenants racing down the fire escape and jumping off the roof.

None of the 35 male tenants at Porsche Boarding House at 135 Merrimon Ave. were injured in the 1:45 p.m. blaze, but Asheville firefighter Joe Whiteside was taken to St. Joseph's Hospital after he "overexerted" himself, according to District Chief John Young. Whiteside was treated at the hospital and released.

The cause of the blaze remained under investigation, but some tenants speculated that a faulty window fan could have been the culprit.

Young confirmed that a window fan had been left running in room No. 6, where the fire is believed to have originated.

The blaze quickly spread through the room and into an adjoining hallway, "destroying" both, Young said.

Smoke and water damage was evident elsewhere as tenants started removing their soot-covered belongings.

"This is about all I have left," said one tenant, holding up personal papers and money charred around the edges.

He and another tenant, who share room No. 6, said they were shopping when the fire broke out.

"We caught a taxi back from Roses, and when I told the driver to take us to 135 Merrimon, he said, 'I'll take you back to what's left of it.' I knew then something awful had happened."

Another tenant, Robert Kopp, 26, said he was asleep in the attic when he heard screams downstairs.

"They were yelling about the fire, saying to get everybody out," Kopp said, his hands stained with dark soot. "I came down that fire escape with only one shoe on. Another guy jumped off the roof."

The fire escape passes closely by room No. 6, where only a blackened shell now remains. "Flames were pouring out as I ran by," Kopp said. "It was bad. I just can't believe how fast it spread. My room was already full of smoke when I left."

A few more minutes and the entire boarding house would have been engulfed, predicted Robert Janney, who purchased Porsche (pronounced por-shays) in December.

"I think we're really lucky the fire department got here as quickly as they did," Janney said. "It helped contain the damage to that one room. It could have been a lot worse."

Spirits remained high, however, as the tenants helped each other carry out clothes and other belongings and fixed food for the hungry—even though they all will be homeless for at least one night. The boarding house has been temporarily closed by the fire department, pending an investigation into the cause, Janney said.

"But we'll find places to put all of the men," he said. "They're a close-knit group. They're like family."

"...Some of the tenants have been here for 12 years. It was their home. I don't know what will happen now. It just depends on what the building inspectors say, and how much it will cost to repair it."

Porsche Boarding House was built in 1930 by Blanton's Business College as a girls' dormitory.

Allensville woman dies in house fire

ROXBORO—Roxboro fire officials were still trying to determine the cause of a fire in which a 53-year-old Allensville Community woman died.

The deceased was identified as Willa Hayes Gentry, of Rt. 2, Roxboro. Mrs. Gentry apparently died of smoke inhalation as her home was destroyed by fire.

Fire officials were on the scene of the blaze looking for clues as to the cause of the fire.

According to reports from the Roxboro Fire Department, Mrs. Gentry was apparently alone at home when the fire began. The blaze was called in at 9:48 p.m. May 21, and firefighters from Roxboro, Timberlake and Triple Springs responded to the alarm.

A report filed with the Person County Sheriff's Department said that Mrs. Gentry was found in a front bedroom of the home. That bedroom, the report stated, did not receive much physical damage from the fire, but the room had intensive smoke damage.

An investigation into the cause of the fire is being conducted by the Roxboro Fire Department and the Person County Sheriff's Department. Preliminary reports in the sheriff's department indicate that the fire is believed to have started in a room adjacent to the kitchen of the home, but the source of the blaze was not clear.

Mrs. Gentry's body was taken to Strickland's Funeral Home in Roxboro, which was in charge of funeral arrangements.

Damage to the Gentry home was estimated at \$80,000, with another \$40,000 in smoke damage.

Two Roxboro firefighters were affected by smoke inhalation while battling the blaze.

Check Of Residential Smoke Detectors Set

STATESVILLE—It's an ambitious goal, but the Statesville Fire Department wants to make sure that by the end of the year, every home within the city limits has a working smoke detector.

"The reasons are obvious," said Fire Chief Glenn O'Ferrell. "Statistics show that if you have a smoke detector in your home, your chances of dying in a house fire are cut in half."

Statesville firefighters hit the streets to determine just how many homes have a smoke detector. For the next four weeks, they will be going door to door in different neighborhoods to gather information about smoke detector use.

"We want to know if they have a smoke detector. Then we'll offer to test it to see if it works," explained O'Ferrell. National statistics show that 77 percent of all homes have a smoke detector. However, in one-third of the homes with them, the detectors are not operational.

The firemen will replace the non-working batteries in smoke detectors that use nine-volt square batteries. They will also clean the cover and determine if any more detectors are needed in the home.

If during the survey, a home is found to be without a smoke detector, information will be gathered to determine if the resident qualified for a free smoke detector. The Iredell County Board of Realtors recently donated smoke detectors to the fire department that will be used as part of this project.

"Out overall goal is for every human being in the city limits of Statesville who goes to bed at night to do so with the protection of a smoke detector," O'Ferrell said. "It doesn't matter whether they are rich or poor,

handicapped or where they live... We want a smoke detector in every home."

With national statistics showing an increase in home detectors that don't work, O'Ferrell said that it is important to see how Statesville compares. "We want to know what our figures are... whether we have a real problem on our hands, or whether the word is out and most of our citizens have a smoke detector. This information will determine how our department goes from here."

During the survey, the firemen will hand out pertinent literature about fire safety. "We realize that we must address our fire protection problems through proactive prevention oriented techniques as our personnel resources diminish and we begin to cover more area," explained O'Ferrell. The survey will involve 500 homes, representing a cross section of the community, he continued. The firemen will conduct the survey in teams of two and will be wearing blue uniforms displaying Statesville Fire Department identification. Surveys will only be conducted on Monday through Thursday nights from 7-8:30 p.m. and the local media will announce where the surveys are being conducted as the locations change.

Participation in the survey is, of course, voluntary. There is no cost for the smoke detector test or battery replacement.

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Yesterday's Image of Firefighters Far From Today's Reality

By Scott Yates
Fayetteville Observer
Staff Writer

FAYETTEVILLE—The image of firefighters sitting around the station playing checkers while waiting for the fire bell to ring is far from today's reality.

Increased training, drills with other departments, planning for fires and public relations activities keep today's firemen away from the checkerboards, said Pete Piner, new chief of the Fayetteville Fire Department.

Piner was appointed fire chief in March, and he is already making plans to increase the duties of his department, including an increased effort to enforce fire codes, more cooperation with other city departments, a strong focus on fire prevention methods and establishing user fees to help offset costs.

Piner, 51, is a lifelong Fayetteville resident, except for several years in the U.S. Navy after graduating from Massey Hill High School. He earned his state license as an electrical contractor and worked as an electrician until he joined the department at 26 years of age in 1964.

"It was in my blood," he said. "My father was a fireman with the city, and I take pride in the way being a fireman makes me feel inside—doing things that benefit the city I live in."

He started in the depart-

ment "on the back of a truck," and moved up the ladder, so to speak, as fire inspector, training officer, assistant shift chief, fire marshal and assistant chief. All the while, he noticed things he would like to do differently, but he wasn't in a position to implement changes. Now, that has changed. "I haven't lived for 50 years and not paid attention," he says.

Fire prevention is the "name of the game," Piner said. "You can have a fire truck on every corner and you are not going to prevent fires. We have got to get actively involved in fire prevention."

He said a major problem in the city is a disregard for building and fire codes at places like restaurants and bars. Some businesses fail to get the proper building permits and use building materials that burn easily. "It is the fire department's job to make sure minimum building codes are met and to work hand in hand with the building inspector."

Another part of the problem at such businesses is adherence to fire codes, such as making sure exits are accessible, not exceeding capacity and not using portable heaters or storing propane gas.

Piner said the city ordinance was recently amended to provide \$100 fines for such "life safety" violations, and work schedules were changed so inspections can

be conducted at night when many of these businesses are open.

"Public education is a large part of the effort, but we must have some teeth (in the ordinance) to make sure of compliance," he said. "You are going to see the department get more involved in code enforcement and cooperation with other departments. Life safety of the public is the main goal."

Assistant Fire Marshal Ray Lockamy added, "The citizens are owed that (protection) when they become patrons of the business."

Piner said a code enforcement team with members of the fire, police, building and inspections departments, is able to inspect every aspect of a place of business.

The department is also considering establishing user fees for such services as inspections of underground tanks and hazardous material operations. "We may also start charging for burning permits, but I would rather see a ban on the burning of trash in the city entirely," Piner said.

Things have changed since Piner joined the department 25 years ago. "The main goal of training back then was to hook a hose to a fire hydrant. That was about the extent of it." Now, more than 300 hours of training are required for recruits, and the 169-member department trains more than 50,000 hours a year.

Piner said his favorite saying is, "I can't do anything, but we can do it all." That represents his dedication to the team concept for the department. "People take more pride in what they are doing when everyone is working together because it is their organization also," he said.

Piner said he and the department are committed to providing quality service for the citizens of Fayetteville.

Woman dies in fire apparently after saving 4 children

By Jennifer Essen
Wilmington Star
Staff Writer

ROCKY POINT—Catherine Boykins told her friends she was going to start her cooking early on May 31.

She did. And whatever she was preparing in the kitchen of her humble wood-frame home may have been the cause of the fire that killed her, according to a Pender County Sheriff's Department report.

The four children for whom Mrs. Boykins, 57, was caring, however, were found unharmed in the yard.

She was baby-sitting two of her daughter's children and two other small children, said Myrtle Lewis, a friend who lives behind the house that was destroyed by flames.

Mrs. Lewis had just finished breakfast when she heard screams around 9 a.m. She looked outside and saw flames leaping from the front door of Mrs. Boykins' house.

Because the children were outside, she said, she thought that Mrs. Boykins also had escaped the flames.

Mrs. Lewis telephoned for help at 9:12 a.m. but, she said, she was so upset that she drove to the Rocky Point Fire Department and led a truck back to the flaming house.

"I just wanted somebody to come and do something," she said, explaining that she had known Mrs. Boykins most of her life. The two had shared a love of gardening, she said.

On May 31, Mrs. Boykins' garden was covered with soot. Flames had leaped across the yard and blackened her well house. Sun beat down on the spindly frame around a smoking mass of

ashes that had been her house. Yellow tape used by investigators to mark off the fire scene added to the solemnity of the scene.

A few people pulled up in cars to look, shaking their heads in disbelief. All that remained intact was the children's clothing that Mrs. Boykins had washed and hung to dry in the yard.

Mrs. Lewis said she thinks Mrs. Boykins led all of the children outside and then went back in to get something. Firefighters found her next to a door leading outside.

When help arrived, all the windows had been shattered by the heat and the roof had caved in. More than 20 firefighters and six trucks from the Rocky Point and Long Creek volunteer fire departments fought the flames, which were extinguished by about 9:45 a.m., said Forest Sidbury of the Rocky Point department.

Firefighters stayed on the scene, cleaning up the debris and hosing down smoldering furniture and wood until almost 1:30 p.m., according to a sheriff's department report.

Mrs. Boykins' daughter, Tonya Boykins, also of Rocky Point, was picking blueberries when the fire broke out, said Harvey Williams, who is related to the family.

The daughter's eldest son—who was in school—had been living with his grandmother. The boy will move back in with his mother, who has four other children, Williams said.

"She was just a beautiful lady—in all kinds of ways," Williams said of Mrs. Boykins.

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