



TARHEEL FIREFIGHTER



AND CAROLINA RURAL FIREMAN

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Blaze Destroys Rocky Mount Stockyard

By Veronica Cogdell
The Evening Telegram
Staff Writer

ROCKY MOUNT—Fire destroyed the Gus Z. Lancaster Stockyard building on South Church Street.

"We don't know the cause of the fire," said Nash County Fire Marshal Dave Cauble. "It is a suspicious fire, but we won't say it was arson at this time."

The Nash County Sheriff's Department and the State Bureau of Investigation have begun an investigation into the cause of the fire.

Sheriff's Detective Capt. Milton Reams said his department and the SBI began a search for the origin.

According to records filed by the Nash County Tax Office, the value of the building was listed at \$131,200.

Officials said the Gus Lancaster family owned the building and had recently leased it to businessman Will Hargett.

Firefighters from Sharpsburg, West Edgecombe, West Mount, Stony Creek and Rocky Mount responded to the fire at about 9:30 p.m. and remained at the scene until about 2:30 a.m.

"It was well involved by the time they (firefighters) got there," Cauble said.

He said the best thing firefighters could do was protect other exposed buildings.

"It was a large structure," Cauble said. "We didn't want it (fire) to get out and involve other buildings."

Officials said there was no livestock in the building at the time of the fire. The stockyard has operated in Rocky Mount since 1937.

"There were no animals," Cauble said. "They usually have a sale twice a week, and they bring the animals in the day before."

Jack Resico, an employee of the stockyard, said a passer-by saw the fire and called the fire department.

"We usually have a feeder pig sale on Mondays," Resico said. "We didn't have it this time because of the Fourth of July. But it was like the Fourth of July fireworks around here."

Firemen said the blaze was one of the largest in Rocky Mount in recent years.

"It was a major fire," one firefighter said. "The glow could be seen when we left the station (Stony Creek)."

Tanker-Van Collision Provided Scenario For Training Drill

By Marty Hohmann
Of the Eagle Staff

CHERRYVILLE—When a gasoline tanker collided with a van full of Boy Scouts, fire, police and rescue personnel turned out in full force to handle the situation quickly and safely. Nearby homes were evacuated and foam was sprayed on the roadway to prevent gas fumes from igniting. An explosion and a massive cloud of black billowing smoke sent crews scrambling to stop the spread of gasoline to a nearby creek and rescue the injured boys from the van.

Although the scene looked and sounded like a real hazardous substance accident, it was all a test. The training drill was coordinated by Captain Matthew Greenway of the Cherryville Fire Department and Captain Randy Neill of the Cherryville Rescue Squad.

According to Greenway, "The objective was to train the fire, rescue, and police in inter-agency incident command. The second objective was to improve our knowledge of handling hazardous materials and promote a better working relationship between the agencies involved.

The alarm sounded around 9 a.m. announcing that a tractor trailer had collided with a van on West Academy Street. "This is a drill," announced the dispatcher. And with that call, the city's personnel and volunteers rushed to the scene as if the accident had really happened.

When Chief Jeff Cash of the Fire Department, Chief Mike Dellinger of the Police Department and First Lieutenant Diane Brown of the Rescue Squad arrived on the scene, a command post was set up just above the accident site. From there, the three in charge could call the shots necessary to resolve the situation.

"The police were the first on the scene," said Greenway.

Fire personnel arrived moments later and were sent down to the crash site to assess the severity of the situation and determine the type of hazardous chemical involved.

"We had to make a scene assessment. After that, the ball started rolling," said Greenway.

With Boy Scouts from Troop 323 serving as victims, the members of the rescue squad began making crucial

decisions. The real work began as victims were bandaged and moved out of the accident area. All the while, the police department simulated an evacuation of nearby homes and blocked off the street to oncoming traffic. The firemen, decked out in oxygen masks and heavy gear worked to prevent the gasoline from igniting or spreading to the creek.

According to Greenway, he and Neill began planning the drill eight months ago. It has taken that long to arrange all the details such as borrowing a tractor trailer from Ball's Oil Company. The van was provided courtesy of Beam's Construction Company. The Gaston County Police, Gaston County Emergency Management, the county fire marshal, Hugh's Pond Volunteer Fire Department and the Tri-County Fire Department all chipped in to assist with the drill. Bob Johnson, Gaston County's ID technician (bomb specialist) even helped out by staging an explosion on the site. The city's public works department joined in by hauling sand to the accident and simulating a power turn-off to the lines above the truck.

From start to finish, the drill took about two hours and according to its organizers, it served its purpose well.

"It was better than what I expected," said Greenway. "I

think the people involved learned a very valuable lesson."

Greenway, the fire department's training officer, discovered that fire personnel need a little more training in diking and controlling a spill and there needs to be better coordination between the departments.

Video tapes were made of the drill for training officers to study and help improve those areas which were lacking.

Neill also noticed some specific areas for improvement, but he was pleased with the overall performance of his six volunteers.

"For what we had, everything went off well," he said.

Neill has approximately 20 volunteers who work with him in emergency situations, but only six were available to participate in the drill. As

far as he was concerned, the objectives were met.

"It let 'em see what really was involved," he said.

Greenway noted that personnel who responded handled themselves very well in the first drill of this magnitude.

"All the guys that were in it said it was very well planned and they enjoyed it," he said. "Everybody was very well equipped and ready to handle it."

With problem areas noted by six evaluators at the scene, Greenway and Neill plan to begin working immediately to alleviate those weak areas. Although they hope they won't need it, they expect to someday use the lessons learned in the drill.

"It's gonna happen sooner or later," noted Neill. "We've been real lucky but it ain't gonna hold forever."

Fire Department Membership Increases

COOLEEMEE—Members of the fire department here appreciate free family passes to the swimming pool.

The town board of commissioners voted to give the passes to all members of the Cooleemee Fire Department as an incentive to boost mem-

bership.

It worked.

Fire Department board president Mark Phelps told town board members membership is up to 24—from 18 six months ago.

Membership has been a problem for the department in its efforts to lower the state ISO fire rating for the department in the city limits—which would lower insurance rates for homeowners.

The department has formed committees to work on various steps which need to be taken to lower the rating, Phelps said.

"We're in the early stages. It's working fairly well but it's still young," he said.

"Our auxiliary is doing well... a lot of support from the whole community has really picked up."

"It appears they are making progress and things are looking good," said Mayor Bill Gales.

Phelps presented the board with a contract to provide fire service inside the town limits.

Town Attorney Will Martin said more specific details on how funds for the fire service are determined should be decided before the contract would mean anything.

"The VFW auxiliary might want passes. It would open a Pandora's Box," he said.

Hickory Fire Department Working In Fire Safety

The Hickory Fire Department in cooperation with local Video Stores and the local McDonald's Restaurant Chain have been working together in fire safety by using the *Plan To Get Out Alive* Video produced by McDonalds and the Pitway Corporation. The local McDonalds franchise purchased ten (10) additional video tapes for this use after learning of the program implemented by the Fire Department. The local McDonalds purchased and additional video for the use of their employees to make them aware of firesafety and to make them aware of efforts in fire education by their employer.

The public can rent these tapes free of charge and view them in their own homes. Twelve Video Stores have two or more tapes in their

stores at this time free of charge. The Hickory residents seem very receptive of the *Plan To Get Out Alive* video. One resident stated, "My son was one to play with matches and at one time he scorched the couch but after watching this video he now makes sure his father and I put our cigarettes out."

The Hickory Fire Department has purchased an additional ten video's to add to the program. This will give a total of thirty-five videos to the program which will now be extended beyond the City of Hickory to cover other video stores in the area.

For further information please contact the Hickory Fire Department at (704) 323-7420.

Submitted by:
Hickory Fire
Department

Veteran firefighting captain dies of heart attack

By Tom Moore
The Chapel Hill Herald

CHAPEL HILL—Veteran Chapel Hill firefighter Grover C. Brinkley had a heart attack and died suddenly at work recently.

Brinkley, 51, a captain who had worked for the department for 30 years, was found on the floor of the Elliott Road station by co-workers at about 9:30 a.m.

"The rescue squad was at the station already when he was found and they tried to revive [him], but couldn't," said Deputy Fire Chief Robert B. Williams. "It was

a real shock."

The funeral for Brinkley was held at Walker's Funeral Home in Chapel Hill. Burial followed in Chapel Hill Memorial Cemetery.

Survivors include three sons, Norman Brinkley, Claibourne Brinkley and Tom Brinkley, all of Chapel Hill; his mother, Lucile Brinkley of Durham; four brothers, Marvin Brinkley Jr. of Orange Park, Fla., and Harold Brinkley, Ray Brinkley and Albert Brinkley, all of Durham; and one sister, Peggy Goodwin of Panama City, Fla.

Firefighter Recognized At Annual Banquet

By Eric Millsaps
McDowell News
Managing Editor

MARION—More than 250 local firefighters, representing the 10 volunteer departments, their spouses, and guests attended the McDowell County Firemen's Association Banquet recently at the Hook and Anchor Seafood Restaurant in Marion.

The keynote speaker for the event was Joseph F. Myers, director of the N.C. Division of Emergency Management.

Myers began by telling the firefighters how he had enjoyed watching the depart-

ments in McDowell County grow.

"You do a wonderful job—with your preparedness and your response," he said. "I know you've come a long way. We've kept an eye on your 10 departments and some 300 firemen, and we've watched you grow."

Myers said firefighters, like any emergency personnel, know that an emergency can occur at almost any time.

"The technological, social, and political developments we have experienced have compounded the natural hazards that our state and local agencies must respond to," he stated.

"Our emergencies are not only natural, but many are technical."

Having served as the state director for the past four years, Myers said the department has received approximately 8,000 reports of emergencies from local governments during that time.

"Two-thirds of those calls had to do with hazardous chemicals," he said. Myers said chemical spills are part of the technological hazards that are beginning to face local emergency response organizations.

Myers detailed several well-known national disasters and how they affected

emergency planning procedures.

He noted state and local emergency response organizations are always increasing their plans and procedures. Being prepared for any situation is the key to the successful handling of an emergency, according to Myers.

"Our basic tenet is the first 24 hours are crucial," he said. "That time is critical. That's when the response is determined at the local level. That measures the local level of preparedness and response."

Myers highlighted a number of changes the state is implementing to improve emergency management throughout North Carolina, including an upgraded radio system, a new computer system, and more support personnel.

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Victim of fire is lucky to survive, official says

ROCKY MOUNT—A woman is lucky to be alive after suffering from burns received in a fire that started while she was cleaning with gasoline, a city fire official reports.

Margaret Williams, 75, of 618 Sunset Avenue was cleaning her bathroom floor with the flammable liquid when a gas-fueled water heater came on. The pilot light was enough to ignite the gasoline vapors, the fire department spokesman said.

Williams suffered first- and second-degree burns on her face, arms and chest. She was taken to Nash General hospital and was to have stayed overnight for observation, the spokesman said.

"She was a very, very lucky lady. There have been a lot of people who have been burned to death in similar situations," the spokesman said.

Williams' husband, Henry, was in the home at the time of the fire, which occurred about 5 p.m. Mr. Williams was rescued from the home by fire and Stony Creek Rescue Squad personnel. He was shaken but not injured, the spokesman said.

Damage to the home was minimal because the city was able to respond quickly, sending out two pumpers and a squad car, the spokesman said.

Damage to the home, which is valued at \$45,000, is estimated at \$1,850, he said.

"The practice of cleaning with gasoline is very dangerous. There are commercial cleaners that can be purchased that are not flammable," the spokesman said.

Fire Spotted Home Saved, Thanks to 8-year-old Boy

By Tex O'Neill
Charlotte Observer
Staff Writer

CHARLOTTE—Nathan Burns had thought he would be a pediatrician.

But since June 12, he's considering being a firefighter.

At 8, Nathan has experience.

Recently, he helped save a neighbor's home in Coventry Woods off Independence Boulevard.

About 3 p.m., he went next door to 6726 Farmingdale Dr., where friend Corey Little, 7, lives.

Nathan rang the doorbell. Nothing. Then he noticed a high pitched sound. The smoke detector. He tried the door. Locked.

"I thought one of the kids might have been trapped," said Nathan.

He dashed around back. Peering through a window, he saw the stove was afire.

Nathan told his mother, Lotie, who called the 911 emergency number.

Firefighters quickly controlled the blaze, and damage was estimated at \$600.

"If Nathan hadn't come over and acted as he had, we could have lost everything," owner Casey Little said.

He plans a special day for Nathan.

"I was thinking about taking him to an ice-cream parlor and Putt-Putt," said Little. "Nathan deserves recognition."

Let Us Hear From You

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

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

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NVFC Resource Catalog Available

A catalog listing a variety of print and audiovisual products for use by volunteer fire departments is available from the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) Resource Center.

Featured in the catalog are reasonably priced, ready-to-use public fire safety education materials, resources to assist fire chiefs and other officials with the day-to-day administration of their departments and reports on volunteer fire service-related research. In addition, the catalog includes a complete line of apparel, patches and pins bearing the NVFC logo.

Copies of the new catalog already have been mailed to the NVFC Board of Directors and the organization's 1,100 members. Single copies may be obtained, free of charge, by non-members. Write to NVFC Resource Center, Dept. "F," P.O. Box 25215, Alexandria, VA 22313-5215. Submitted by: National Volunteer Fire Council

Green keeping family tradition alive after growing up in a fire department

By Penny Barkley
The Concord Tribune
Staff Writer

HARRISBURG—Father's Day is a time when many people think of their father and how much he meant to them and wanted to be like him when they were growing up.

And in many instances, following in dad's footsteps means keeping family traditions alive.

Such is the case for Charles Greene and his son, Jimmy. Both are active members of the Harrisburg Volunteer Fire Department.

Charles Greene is a 20-year veteran in the fire business. He spent 16 of those 20 years in New York and the last four have been in Harrisburg. He moved to Harrisburg when IBM relocated to Charlotte.

"The biggest shock was when I first moved here it was 30 degrees and people were fighting a fire and saying how cold it was. I was in a short-sleeved shirt, telling everyone you haven't seen cold until it's 30 below," Greene said.

Growing up in a fire department is something that got into the elder Greene's blood. "I knew what a fire truck was before I knew anything else," he said.

But Charles Greene and his father weren't the only ones in the family at the fire station. His mother was a member of the fire auxiliary so if there was a bad fire she was there helping out in any way she could.

Greene joined an Explorer's Club in New York when he was 16. A similar club was started two years ago at the Harrisburg fire de-

partment in conjunction with the Boy Scouts because there was an interest for a club of this type in Cabarrus County.

The fire department in Harrisburg is unique because it sponsors the only Explorer's Club in the county.

According to the club's leader, there are 11 boys and two girls. The club is open to interested boys and girls from 14 to 20 years old. There are members from as far away as Mt. Pleasant.

The purpose of the club is to help members find out if working for a fire department is something they may be interested in as a career.

Presently the organization is holding car washes and other fund raising projects to raise money for a trip they are planning for next year to a major fire department.

Greene has already told the members they are responsible for paying their own way on the trip.

"They've done really well and I'm very proud of them," Greene said.

On Saturdays, Explorer Club members help clean up the firehouse and equipment and often go on fire runs with the firemen, although they are not allowed to enter a burning building.

Fire fighting crosses all ages and professions. Members range from professional men to local residents.

"It's hard to run a department when most of the department has to go to work everyday. We depend so much on the local residents, especially if there is a fire in the middle of the day," Greene said.

Trying to find people who

are interested in firefighting is getting harder, he said.

"Not just everyone can be a fireman. There is a job for everyone here, but sometimes people just can't find the extra time it takes," Greene said.

"In the last 10 years the volunteer fire department has gotten to be a full time job. It often takes up as much time as work because of new laws, training regulations and paperwork."

Harrisburg's recent growth has caused changes for the fire department.

Greene said during the past year the department has bought two new trucks that were designed by the department and built specifically for them. The department has also installed a computerized system to help with paperwork and a video training system. Also installed was a communications system with Mecklenburg County and Newell since the department responds to fires at UNCC and University Place.

"Our goal is to provide professional services at volunteer prices," Greene said.

Smokey Says:



King Fire Department Promotes Accident-Free Program for Town

KING—King's fire engines haven't been involved in any traffic accidents since the department began and the volunteers want to keep it that way.

The King Volunteer Fire Department has adopted the "Safe Passage" program, which attempts to ensure a safe trip to and from the scene of a fire for the town's firefighters and residents, said Wesley H. Greene of the department.

Each year in the U.S., nearly 50 firefighters are killed and another 5,000 injured in accidents involving fire trucks and other emergency vehicles, according to a letter by the national Volunteer Fire Council.

Poor roads conditions, adverse weather and the public's failure to yield to emergency vehicles contribute to the accidents, according to the letter.

Problems within the fire department, including inadequate driver training, poor vehicle maintenance, reckless driving and driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, take credit for most of the accidents, according to the letter.

Craig Moser, chief of the King Volunteer Fire Department, said, "We've been very fortunate. We haven't had an accident in King in 35

years."

Moser said the volunteers are not to indulge in alcohol or drugs while they are on call, which is 24 hours a day.

"If they happen to be drinking, they're not supposed to answer the call," he said. "While they're representing the King Fire Department, they are to set a good example for the citizens and be free of any such substance."

Moser said the department screens any applicant as if he were being hired for a full-time, salaried position.

"We're very careful about who we let join the department," he said.

The council suggests that the public can help in the "Safe Passage" program by:

- Being alert for emergency vehicles when you are on the road.
- Driving defensively. Be prepared to stop at an intersection, even if it's not required.
- Signaling and pulling off the road, when you hear a siren or see emergency lights.
- Staying put until you are sure no other emergency vehicles are coming.

The National Volunteer Fire Council has declared 1989 as the "Year of Safe Passage" in order to promote safety within their departments.

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Electronic system gives fire trucks green light

By Geitner Simmons
The Salisbury Post

SALISBURY—Intersections in Salisbury should be safer due to new equipment the city's Fire Department is using to control traffic lights.

"It's been everything we'd hoped for," Fire Chief Sam Brady says of the new electronic system. "I've heard a lot of comments from our drivers about what a relief it is."

Before the department began using the new system this spring, Salisbury's fire trucks on their way to a blaze entered intersections at their peril.

Firefighters had to rely on the noise from their trucks and responsible driving by motorists to avoid accidents. But small electronic devices mounted on each fire vehicle now change the traffic signals to avoid accidents.

The traffic signal turns green for the fire vehicle to pass through, holding other traffic with a red light, then automatically returns to its regular pattern.

"Our response times are a little better," Brady says, "and our drivers don't have to start and stop in the downtown anymore, which has helped on the wear and tear on our brakes."

Electronic devices have been installed on traffic lights at 16 intersections on

the downtown area, says Al Linker, the city's telecommunications director. The equipment, known as an opticom system, is now in place on Main Street from Monroe to Kerr and on Innes Street from Boundary to Ellis. The devices can be added to more intersections as funds become available, Brady says.

The opticom system cost \$116,000. More than 350 U.S. cities are using such a system.

Response time has been reduced, Linker says, and vehicles are moving through the downtown area more safely. "The concept has worked, and we're very pleased with it," he says.

Under the new arrangement, each Salisbury fire truck is now equipped with a signal generator, a high-intensity light source that looks like a strobe light.

As a fire vehicle approaches a traffic light, the signal generator sends out a pulsating light received by a device mounted near the traffic light.

The signal can be detected within about 1,800 feet of the traffic light. Once the signal is received, the light turns green so that the fire vehicle can pass.

In the past, whenever Salisbury fire vehicles headed through the downtown in an emergency situation, the traffic lights throughout the downtown area would be changed to flashing yellow in one direction and flashing red in another.

But such a system slowed traffic throughout downtown and it took time to return the traffic lights to their regular cycle, Brady says.

The system became more cumbersome and was discontinued after the county Emergency Operations Center became responsible for changing the lights to a flashing pattern. The Fire Department had to radio in when each truck was heading to

the downtown then call back after the vehicle had passed, Brady says.

After that system was discontinued, Salisbury fire trucks had to approach each intersection on their own and let their sirens alert motorists to let them pass.

Nearly 15 percent of the on-duty deaths suffered by firefighters across the United States occur in traffic accidents, according to the National Fire Protection Association.

The new opticom system is also expected to reduce Salis-

bury's exposure to lawsuits stemming from traffic accidents involving fire vehicles.

Police vehicles aren't allowed to use opticom equipment under regulations from the N.C. Department of Transportation.

"That's because most times fire and emergency vehicles aren't as agile in getting through traffic as the smaller police vehicles," Linker says.

Other county fire or ambulance vehicles are not using opticom equipment at present.

Hope Mills Names Full-Time Fire Chief

By Nancy H. McLaughlin
Fayetteville Observer
Staff Writer

HOPE MILLS—Mark Melvin, a six-year veteran of the Hope Mills Fire Department, has been named the department's first full-time fire chief in nearly a year.

Melvin, 24, of 3660 Metric Drive, replaces Ronald West, who for the last year served as temporary part-time volunteer fire chief. His was a temporary position.

West works full-time for Fayetteville Public Works Commission and will remain a fire department volunteer.

Melvin's salary will be \$21,000.

Prior to his new position, Melvin served as deputy fire chief, the highest-ranking paid position for the past year.

"Under Chief West we started some new projects such as fire prevention and inspection programs that I would like to see fully implemented," Melvin said. "I hope to get the support of the community and to try to do a good job of fire protection."

Melvin said his immediate

goals include the recruitment of daytime volunteers.

"I feel that we are adequately staffed, but we could use some additional daytime volunteers," he said.

Melvin served as a volunteer fireman for three years until being hired as a full-time paid firefighter in 1986. He then served as a firefighter and a firefighter/driver until 1988 when he was named deputy fire chief.

Town Manager John Beasley had recommended the return of a full-time paid fire chief to town commissioners during this year's budget workshops because of a need for "full-time leadership and supervision . . . for competent fire protection services."

"He has done a marvelous job taking care of the day-to-day details for the part-time fire chief," said Beasley, who added that the decision had the support of the paid and volunteer fire staff. "He has gained some valuable knowledge under Chief Burns and Chief West, and I think with his energies and abilities that he will do well for the department."

Firemen Obtain Needed Practice

By Neil Furr
Statesville
Record & Landmark
Staff Writer

STATESVILLE—The fire that welled up and died down time and again in a little frame house on Carney Lane recently, was not really out of control or actually that stubborn. Statesville firefighters were actually willing the structure to burn so that they could save it time after time.

In the process, fire department officials were able to assess the strength and weaknesses "under fire" of their new part-time recruits and some of their personnel of longest standing. That latter group, which is being pressed into a more active firefighting role because of a shortage of personnel, was re-acquainted to some extent with the sooty, dirty and sometimes dangerous job of fighting a fire up close.

Chief Glenn O'Ferrell, who himself donned airpicks and practiced interior attacks on fires in the little frame house, called the day's session a "mixed bag" but positive overall.

Although a "mixed bag," firefighters were able to identify "some rough spots." And because the training began so early in the day, he said, the department "was able to address" a lot of those rough spots. The session, he said, "formed the basis for future training sessions" to be conducted at the fire training grounds.

Some of that training paid off the very next day, as a matter of fact, when firemen, including O'Ferrell, answered a structural fire at a frame house on Fourth St.

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Dunbar fire leaves two homeless

By Marc Chandler
The Daily Southerner
Staff Writer

DUNBAR—Two people were left homeless but no one injured recently, when an intense blaze destroyed a wood-frame home on Dunbar Road between U.S. 64 and N.C. 97.

Firefighters from Hearts-ease and Leggett volunteer fire departments responded to the home of Robert and Odell Davis about 2:20 p.m. and found the structure fully involved. Flames shot more than 40 feet into the air, according to Heartsease Fire Chief Joe Edmondson, and smoke could be seen several miles away.

Edmondson said the firefighters faced the danger of fighting the fire with live power lines overhead for more than 30 minutes until a power crew reached the scene.

"The main fire was burning where the lines were connected to the house," he said. "That was a real worry before the power got cut off because there was a constant danger of the lines falling."

Liquid petroleum tanks on the opposite side of the house also concerned firemen, though no explosions occurred.

Several crew members were overcome by heat and smoke and were treated at the scene by the Edgecombe County Rescue Squad.

"Heat was a real problem," Edmondson said. "Fighting a fire in 90-degree heat sapped energy so quick. One or two of the firemen really got hot. This was one of the hottest fires we've had."

About 15 firemen assisted in fighting the blaze. Edmondson said he was fortunate to have that many people respond for the time of day, when most volunteers

Fayetteville Names Piner, Fire Chief

FAYETTEVILLE—Duke J. "Pete" Piner has been named chief of the Fayetteville Fire Department.

Piner, 51, has served as interim chief since fire chief Wilbur Johnson retired in December.

Fayetteville City Manager John Smith appointed Piner to the position after interviewing a number of applicants for the position.

"I chose Pete Piner because of his years of experience with the Fayetteville Fire Department and because of his knowledge of the city," Smith said.

Piner said "it's a good feeling" to be appointed chief.

Piner said he plans to create several civilian adminis-

trative positions within the department and increase the staff of the department's Code and Standards Division to help increase public awareness of fire prevention.

The department includes seven fire stations manned by 169 firefighters and operates on a \$5.5-million annual budget.

Piner joined the department in 1964 and is the fifth fire chief since the department became an all-paid department in 1947.

Piner said the department has gone through many changes during his 25 years as a firefighter.

In 1964 "they just put you on the back of a truck and you learned the job the hard way. You learned from expe-

rience," Piner said.

"There's a lot more to firefighting now, from knowing your hazardous materials to environmental inspections," he said. Emergency medical technicians are also better trained now than they were in the 1960s when they administered only simple first aid.

During his tenure with the department Piner served as a training officer, fire inspector and was one of the first to teach an emergency medical technician class to city and county firefighters and rescue personnel.

Last year the department responded to more than 8,000 calls, and that number increases by about 10 percent a year, Piner said.

They Gathered To Say Goodbye To Limerick

By Dwight Frady
Belmont Banner
Editor

BELMONT—They gathered at the Belmont Fire Department recently to honor retiring fire chief John Al Limerick. His wife, Monenda, was with him. Many people, including good friend Elwood Inscow, threw him roses. Limerick caught every one of them.

Limerick served with the fire department from 1947 until December of '88. Jimmy Austin is the new chief, having taken over that position Jan. 1.

Inscow, retired from the North Carolina Department of Insurance, said that he and Limerick were around before refrigeration, penicillin, pantyhose, and about 70 more items, some of which drew laughter from the big crowd in attendance.

Inscow said to Limerick, "savor this moment in time. Look at your many friends

who are here to honor you. I know you will be as good a friend to them as they are to you. We wish you Godspeed and good luck on your retirement."

Inscow's 20-minute talk drew a standing ovation from the crowd.

Limerick had the last word after he was toasted and roasted. "I've said this before, and I'll say it again. I feel like a mosquito in a nudist colony. I know what I want to do. I just don't know where to begin."

Then he gave a heart-felt "thank you" to all of those in attendance. He particularly praised the firemen. "They are a great group of men. You can't find any better. I want to say that City Manager Ken York has been most cooperative with me since he came to Belmont.

"I want to thank everyone who had a part in this day. I hope the next 77 years will be as good as the first 77."

Veteran Firefighter Dies at 86

WINSTON-SALEM—A former Mount Airy fire chief, whose family has been a part of that fire department for four generations, died recently.

Joseph Edward Brannock of 116 W. Poplar St. in Mount Airy was in the department for 48 years and was the fire chief from 1951 to 1969.

He began spending nights in the fire house with his father, William "Bud" Brannock, Mount Airy's first paid firefighter, when he was 11 or 12 years old.

He became a volunteer firefighter at about 18 and a paid employee at about 31.

He was the assistant fire chief for about 10 to 12 years before he became the chief.

Brannock's son Ben began going to fires with him at about 2 or 3 years of age, and later aspired to be a part of the department.

A disabling accident prevented him from becoming a paid firefighter, but he is a volunteer firefighter and an employee of Pike Electric Co.

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VFW honors firefighters from area

SANFORD—Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Stanley McLeod Post 5631 met recently at the Post home. Commander Allen M. Sloan presided over the assembly. In lieu of the regular business session, area firefighters were treated to an appreciation dinner. The annual recognition of the men and women firefighters is also dedicated to the memory of Billy Ray Faircloth. While serving in the Sanford Fire Department in March of 1980, Faircloth became the first fireman in the history of the Sanford department to die in the line of duty.

The food committee, led by Elwell "Bill" Turner, prepared a barbecued chicken dinner and trimmings for those present. He was assisted by Bryan Reilly, Alvis Crisco, David Starr, Don Urey, Henry Kennedy, Harold Harrington, George Collins and Allen Sloan.

County Firefighters Praised By Gallyon

STATESVILLE—A fire at the Godfrey Lumber Co., 1715 Amity Hill Road, kept firefighters from three departments busy for several hours and resulted in one of those departments making a return trip a few hours later to cool down some "hot spots."

Units from Troutman Fire Department were called to the business about 5:15 p.m. and upon arrival found wood shavings inside a building on fire. The wood shavings, by-products of the lumber business, were housed in a large building that is actually owned by a group of poultry producers in the county, according to Iredell County Fire Marshal Chuck Gallyon.

The two-story building, Gallyon said, is about 30 feet high and about 300 feet long and was owned jointly by the Iredell Poultry Litter Association and Godfrey Lumber Co. It is used to house wood shavings for various chicken houses throughout the county.

The rounded, Quonset hut-type building was not heavily damaged by the fire, Gallyon said, but a center portion was burned.

The building, Gallyon said, was about half-filled with wood shavings and the shavings were toward the back of the building, which made the job more difficult for firefighters. Also complicating the firefighting efforts, Gallyon added, was the fact that the building had apparently been recently added onto and the new section and older section fell, blocking the path of firefighters to the blaze.

A front-end loader, he said, was brought in after a hole was cut in the building and the front-end loader brought the wood shavings out of the building so that firefighters

could wet them down and put out the fire.

The building itself, Gallyon noted, is still standing, but the fire did "burn out a section in the middle."

Gallyon said he is unsure of what caused the fire to start. "There is no electricity to the building," ruling out an electrical problem as a cause, he said.

The fire marshal noted it is a possibility the fire was started by children playing with matches in or around the building or a carelessly discarded cigarette.

Gallyon said it would be difficult to estimate a damage figure for the fire because of the fact that the damaged materials were a byproduct.

Troutman Fire Department was called back to the building about 12:21 a.m. to cool down some "hot spots," and units remained on the scene for over two hours.

In addition to Troutman on the first call, units from Wayside and Monticello also responded to the scene and assisted Troutman. The call came in at 5:15 p.m. and units were on the scene until about 11:35 p.m.

The Statesville Police Department, troopers from the North Carolina Highway Patrol and deputies with the Iredell County Sheriff's Department assisted with traffic control at the scene.

Shepherd's Fire Department stood by for Troutman and Trinity Fire Department provided standby assistance for Monticello.

Gallyon commended the efforts of all of the firefighters involved. "It was a difficult fire and everybody did a good job," he said.

Troutman and Monticello fireman were also called out a short time later to assist West Iredell with a barn fire near the Statesville Municipal Airport.

Fire destroys Radio Hill Belue building; wiring suspected

By Doris Burrell
The Mountaineer
Staff Reporter

FAIRFOREST—Owners of Belue Trucking Co. in Fairforest, S.C., plan to rebuild a building burned recently on Radio Hill in Canton.

"We will rebuild on the same site," said Charles P. Belue from his headquarters in Fairforest, a Spartanburg suburb.

The fire gutted the building used for storing lime and oil, causing more than \$145,000 in damages.

Belue and his son, Ronnie, had the building under contract to buy from Bill Carter of Robbinsville. They had had the building for two years with one year to go on the contract.

The company supplies Champion International Corp.'s Canton plant with oil and lime as well as maintaining Belue's company vehicles. Service to the plant has not been interrupted and supplies will continue to be trucked from the firm in Fairforest until the facility is rebuilt.

Belue said he carried insurance on the building but will turn the money over to the owner.

"We will start from scratch and probably rebuild a much smaller building," said the elder Belue.

Canton firefighters responded within two minutes to the alarm at 8:15 p.m. and 72 firefighters and rescue squad personnel were involved while the blaze was being brought under control.

Capt. Russell Teague of the Canton Fire Department said assistance at the site was given by North Canton and Clyde volunteer fire departments and Cruso and Junaluska volunteer fire departments sent people. Junaluska and Maggie volunteer

fire departments covered for those involved at the fire.

"When we arrived fire and smoke was coming out of the end of the building," said Teague. The four-bay doors were locked. "We had to pull the doors down, which left the walls at an angle. It was too dangerous to send anyone inside the building to fight the fire."

Two explosions from inside the building are believed to have been from mounted truck tires exploding from the heat. Oxygen and acetylene tanks used in welding and a 300-gallon oil barrel in the building could have proven dangerous if they had exploded, Teague said.

"Carolina Power & Light Co. sent personnel to cut off power to the area around the building and traffic was rerouted," Teague said.

After the blaze was brought under control, some of the firefighters were turned loose about midnight while others stayed until 2:30 a.m. A police officer stayed the rest of the night.

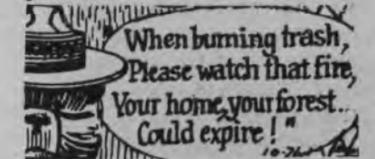
Teague said the Family Dollar Store adjacent to the building and a small garage were watched to make sure no fire started there.

Teague said foul play has been ruled out and electrical wiring may be the cause.

"We've narrowed it down to a very small area where the fire started," he said.

A pick-up truck valued at \$4,000 and belonging to Belue was destroyed but a \$4,000 pressure washer was undamaged.

"We've ruled out foul play and at this time we feel the cause was probably electrical," said Detective Scott Ashe of the Canton police department.



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Cottage gutted in fire

By Lisa Taylor
News-Times
Staff Writer

MOREHEAD CITY—Embers from a burning cigarette may have sparked a blaze that gutted an expensive, three-story cottage overlooking Bogue Sound in Atlantic Beach.

The third floor of the modern home on Fort Macon Road was nearly burned away. The second floor was gutted, and the ground floor sustained some fire, smoke and water damage.

The only occupant, Will Pittman, of Wilson, told Fire Chief Jimmy Leonard that he had been out that night and returned early the next morning.

He said he was smoking a cigarette on a couch in the upper story, and some embers fell to the floor. He doused the area with a couple of glasses of water and checked it before going to bed.

"He said the next thing he knew, he woke up choking," Chief Leonard said. Mr. Pittman ran down to the second floor and out the door.

Firefighters were called at 3:26. Fire and rescue crews from Atlantic Beach were joined by crews from Morehead City Fire Department.

"Coming across the bridge it looked like all three floors were burning," one city fireman said.

When the firefighters arrived, flames and smoke were billowing from the roof. "We had a lot of fire," Chief Leonard said. "The whole third floor was involved when we arrived, and fire was extending to the second floor and impinging on the house next door."

A security guard at nearby Sea Spray condominiums saw the fire and woke up the occupants of the house next door, which is about 20 feet away, to get them out.

Firefighters attacked first with deluge guns mounted on

two fire trucks, one aimed at the third floor of the burning structure, where the roof had burned away, the other at the adjacent home.

"That held it until we could get the lines laid," Chief Leonard said.

Firefighters attached lines to fire hydrants and hit the blaze quickly from the outside, then moved inside with airpacks to finish off the job.

Firefighters also had to pull a small boat with outboard engine and one gas tank from the carport on the ground floor.

Chief Leonard said the blaze was brought under control in about 15 minutes, and was extinguished in about an hour.

"The water system in Atlantic Beach saved this house and the next house," he said, explaining that tanker trucks alone would not have provided enough water quickly enough to quell the blaze.

No one was injured in the fire or the firefighting effort.

Police Sgt. A.K. Miller and Patrolman John Millan directed traffic around trucks and personnel at the fire. Two fire trucks and an ambulance from Atlantic Beach were joined by one fire truck and one ambulance from Morehead City. An estimated 25 fire and rescue members from both departments answered the call.

Fire officials waited until the house cooled, and until daylight, to take a closer look at the damage and the cause of the fire.

The home, built less than three years ago, was owned by Jim Forrest, whose address wasn't known at presstime.



When a
problem drinker
drives, it's your
problem

Firemen view burning issue: red suspenders

By Michael D. Esposito
Herald Staff Writer

CARTHAGE—Why do firefighters wear red suspenders?

You could stop reading, if you think you've heard this, but Carthage Fire Chief J.D. Monroe was asked that question during a recent interview about the department's July Fourth parade and celebration.

Chief Monroe laughed a long laugh.

"It's a simple answer, I guess," Monroe finally said, "To keep their pants up."

"Now some of them don't need 'em," he continued, adding several firefighters, including himself, have enough girth to keep their pants up without suspenders.

However, he confirmed, most firefighters do wear suspenders, and they are mostly red ones.

In order to protect themselves from flames, heat, soot and chemicals, firefighters wear heavy protective clothing made from special fabrics. The clothes are called turnout gear.

In many cases, the bulky turnout pants are made big enough to fit over a regular pair of pants. They are ample enough in the waist that they won't stay up on their own; hence, the suspenders.

But why red? The essence of good investigative reporting is following a story back to the source. In this case, that led to the Globe Firefighter Suits company in Pittsfield, N.H.

Globe sells a lot of the turnout gear firefighters in this area wear. And that includes the red suspenders.

"Really, it's tradition," said Robert Freese of Globe. "About 95 percent of our suspender market is red."

The company also offers suspenders in black and black with multi-colored trim, Freese said. But, "Nothing sells as well as the tradi-

tional red."

The original idea was to have fire equipment, including suspenders, made a special color for high visibility, Freese said. "For visibility reasons, as I understand it, it was the reason originally for having red."

"Now, we don't have red fire trucks," Chief Monroe said. "We have yellow fire trucks."

The chief explained his department decided on yellow trucks because they felt yellow is more visible than red. "We were one of the first departments in the state to get yellow trucks."

The Carthage Fire Department is an old department, Monroe said, adding he has seen pictures of Carthage firefighters dating back to 1913, when the town water system was first installed.

As an old department, it has many traditions, including the annual July Fourth parade and celebration.

The Union Pines High School Marching Band led the parade through town. They were followed by antique cars, beauty queens, church groups, civic clubs, politicians, town and county officials, service groups, a wagon train with horses and riders, farm equipment and Girl and Boy Scouts. The parade also featured fire and rescue vehicles from all over Moore County.

Various activities were planned, including a watermelon scramble.

"We've kind of grown out of the greasy pole up, which we used to have," Monroe said. Now that the courthouse lawn is so well kept, there's no place to put a greasy pole for people to take turns climbing.

They also had a pie-eating contest.

"They made their own pies right on stage," Monroe said, adding molasses is a featured ingredient. Another contest gave children the chance to eat crackers and

see who was the first to be able to whistle afterwards.

The Dixie Belle Cloggers also performed.

"We just do it because we like to have something to do on the Fourth of July," Monroe said, adding the event is not a fundraiser. "We end up going in the red, you might say, like the suspenders."

The celebration ended early enough for folks to go down to the Aberdeen July Fourth parade and fireworks display in the evening, he said.

Although it has many traditions from the past, the Carthage Fire Department also looks for innovations in the future, like the yellow fire trucks.

"Maybe we could be one of the first to get yellow suspenders," Chief Monroe said.



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Richmond Yarns Damaged By Fire; Fireman Dies

By Jeff Holland
Daily Journal

ELLERBE—Fire severely damaged the Richmond Yarns plant in Ellerbe recently and took the life of an Ellerbe fireman.

Tim Bennett, assistant fire chief of the Ellerbe Fire Department, died after he apparently ran out of oxygen and got lost attempting to find his way out of the plant, says Capt. Steve Lampley of the Ellerbe Fire Department.

Bennett had been outdoors one time to have his air bottle changed and told another Ellerbe fireman, Archie Robinson, he was going outside a second time to get air when he disappeared, says Lampley.

Plant manager Roy Gibson said damage was still being estimated, but most of the damage was to the card room. Gibson said that work will begin immediately to repair the plant and get it back in operation. He said he hoped to have the facility back in full production within 60 days.

Gibson said the plant's 210 employees would be eligible to draw unemployment benefits until they were called back to work. He said that call back would be on an individual basis, and he hoped to begin calling back workers within a week or 10 days.

Bennett, Lampley and Bill Cipriani were the first firemen from the department to report to the scene when the call came in, says Lampley. The call came in around 210 p.m., and Lampley asked the central dispatcher at the sheriff's department to call for mutual aid from Northside Fire Department, sensing that manpower would be short, he says.

Lampley, Bennett and Cipriani investigated the fire upon arrival and began setting up, with the aid of a fourth fireman, Donald Murdock, who arrived shortly after they did. Lampley and

Bennett went in through the front entrance and followed maintenance men working at the plant to the location of the fire in the corner of the card room.

Visibility was difficult, and Bennett told Lampley to get a fire extinguisher. Lampley said he would go out to try to get a fire hose into the building, Lampley says.

The volume of fire was low at the time, with fire running up one corner of the card room and with flames approximately three feet in diameter, says Lampley. A maintenance man showed Lampley a short-cut to get a fire hose in to the source of the fire, and Lampley went outside and had the dispatcher call for mutual aid from Rockingham Fire Department.

Northside Fire Department arrived at the scene and set up on the south side of the plant, and Bennett was working on the same side of the plant. Lampley set up the Ellerbe truck on the north side of the building.

Lampley says he looked around and saw black smoke coming out of the other side of the plant and saw roof and walls of the inside rooms of the plant to get to the source of the fire.

Additional firemen from every department in Richmond County responded to the fire, and firemen were called in from Hoke County, Moore County and Montgomery County to help, when county firemen grew exhausted, says Frank McKay, emergency management coordinator for Richmond County.

McKay set up a command post at the front entrance of the plant, directing firemen to different areas as they arrived. Volunteers brought in food and drinks for the firemen during the late afternoon.

The fire was finally extinguished when teams of firemen working on both sides, began alternating the attack on the fire, says McKay. By 2:30 a.m., the fire had been extinguished and the bulk of the firemen left the scene to go home, leaving a few firemen behind to watch the building through the night, says McKay.

Firemen have been unable to determine what caused the fire, says McKay. The plant is not open on Sunday after-

noon, when the fire began, and only two maintenance men were at the building, watching it, he says.

Fire departments represented at the scene included Ellerbe Fire Department, Northside Fire Department, Mountain Creek Fire Department, Derby Fire Department, Rockingham Fire Department, East Rockingham Fire Department, Hoffman Fire Department, Cordova Fire Department, Hamlet Fire Department and Dobbins Heights Fire Depart-

ment, all of Richmond County. Fire departments from Hoke, Moore and Montgomery counties included: Candor Fire Department, Aberdeen Fire Department, Pinehurst Fire Department, Eastwood Fire Department, Seven Lakes Fire Department and North Raeford Fire Department.

Rescue squad workers from Ellerbe Rescue Squad, Cordova Rescue Squad and Rockingham Rescue Squad were at the scene. The Richmond County Sheriff's

Department and the Ellerbe Police Department directed traffic.

Firemen at the scene, including Lampley, expressed their regrets at the loss of a fellow fireman, adding that Bennett had served well and was "aggressive" and "knowledgeable."

"I can say without reservation that Tim was the most dedicated fireman Ellerbe Fire Department had," says Lampley. "If he wasn't around, Ellerbe wouldn't have a fire department."

Tire Fire Cleanup Costs Hit \$100,000

By Nicole Hatch
Mount Airy News
Staff Writer

COPELAND—Cleanup costs related to a tire dump fire that began off N.C. 268 in the Copeland community had reached the \$100,000 mark as of June 21.

The costs are evident at the tire dump that has taken on a new look since the fire broke out 10 days ago. A two-acre area of the dump, on which an estimated seven million tires burned and were covered with dirt, now only shows a few signs of smoke after the blaze was brought under control.

Arthur B. Smith, the on-scene coordinator for the EPA, said that most of the cleanup work at the dump owned by Billy Gray Johnston is finished except for deciding what to do about a small amount of runoff flowing into Little Beaver Creek, which runs adjacent to the tire dump.

"Our mission is primarily to stabilize a site like this," Smith explained, adding that the EPA's duties include making an engineering study and covering the area with dirt. "And we still need to resolve the issue of how to deal with the uncontrolled discharge of oil into the creek."

On a short-term basis, the EPA has set up containment booms along the creek which use a truck vacuum to pump the oily substance off the water after it is absorbed and contained by the booms located along the stream. The process has been taking place 24 hours a day since June 24.

Smith said the contain-

ment booms have been at least 95 percent effective in preventing petroleum from the tires to flow down the creek into the Fisher and Yadkin rivers. "Some is going to mix into the water, but that collection rate is high as long as the creek remains at a low rate," he stated.

The health risk of the runoff is undetermined at this time, according to Smith, who said water samples have been taken of the substance. "It is probable that it is a negligible health threat, but we want to have the analysis done before we further confirm that."

According to Smith, the state has notified anyone who might come in contact with the water intake at points downstream.

"Everything is pretty low concentration and it is unlikely that it will have a negative effect. But the state will continue monitoring the water quality over a long-term period to determine the impacts of the oil as it gets into the creek."

However, officials have yet to decide what to do about the runoff on a long-term basis. Smith said they are working with the state to determine how to contain the material and intercept its flow before it enters the creek, while keeping in mind the terrain of the dump that is rocky and prone to a landslide.

Some of the ideas that Smith said have been discussed include building a trench to keep the petroleum from flowing into the river. "But would material ultimately collect up and pass through anyway?" is what Smith said is being ques-

tioned about the trench idea.

The EPA official said cleanup personnel probably will agree on a long-term plan that is most appropriate to monitor and control the leakage being generated from the tires. He added that what is decided also will determine whether federal or state authorities will be in charge of the project. "Basically, it is who decides on what will be done."

The scope of the runoff problem would have been much larger had the South Surry Volunteer Fire Department and other fire and rescue officials tried to put out the tire blaze with water, according to Smith. He said to begin with, tire fires can only be extinguished by being covered with dirt or over time.

"They (South Surry and other fire officials) showed a lot of foresight and understanding of the problem in dealing with a problem of this nature. If they had used water, the runoff in scope would have been very difficult to deal with in the aftermath."

With cleanup costs about to exceed the \$100,000 mark, Smith said the agency is presently supplying the money. "After talking with Mr. Johnston, he told me he is not financially able to recover the costs," Smith said, adding that "we will pursue methods to recover the cost from Mr. Johnston at a later date."

The tire dump fire occurred in the wake of a new ordinance pertaining to tire dumps and junkyards being considered by the county commissioners.

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