

BALIDA FIRE DEPT.

June 21 1986
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THE MOUNTAIN MAIL

SALIDA, COLORADO

TEN CENTS

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FRIDAY, APRIL 3, 1981

Runaway kills semi driver



FATAL WRECKAGE — Lorman Adair, 47, died shortly after being hauled from the wreckage of his tractor-trailer rig which crashed on U.S. 50 four miles east of

Garfield at 1:06 p.m. yesterday. His brakes caught on fire, and the truck was traveling about 90 mph, when it rolled off the road and over a steep bank.

A 47-year-old Texas truck driver died yesterday afternoon after his semi lost its brakes on the east side of Monarch Pass, and a fire later started in the wreckage.

The Colorado State Patrol identified the victim as Lorman Adair of Fort Worth.

Adair was en route from Montrose to Dallas with 60,000 pounds of sacked onions behind a 1980 International tractor when the accident occurred.

Several witnesses saw the accident, including Elmo Bevington of Salida.

"At the first railroad crossing west of the Lost Creek bridge, I met the onion truck," Bevington said. "He was obviously out of control. His brakes were blazing on fire and he squeezed me to the right side of the road."

"Two seconds after meeting me, the truck

(Continued to Page 12)



ONIONS EVERYWHERE — The truck that crashed into the South Arkansas River just west of the hydro plant yesterday was carrying a load

of onions from Montrose to Dallas. Its cab and trailer were destroyed, leaving onions all over the hillside and river bank.

Leaking fuel starts small forest fire



AN ELECTRICAL SPARK is believed to have set off diesel fuel spilled in the wreckage of the semi as a wrecker attempted to pull the tractor up to the road. Salida and Poncha Springs fire departments responded to the call with about 15 fire fighters. By the time the trucks could get to the scene the fire had spread to a nearby aspen grove. Volunteers had to contend with a

(Continued from Page 1)

turned over and disintegrated, flying into space and landing by the South Arkansas River."

Another witness, Pat L. Treadwell of Garfield, said the truck "went into the curve, the trailer leaned toward the bank and then it rolled over."

State Patrolman Steve Pearson, who investigated the accident, said the truck could have been going 90 mph when it left the road to fly over a 50-foot bank.

Pearson got a call from the dispatcher at 1:06 p.m., advising him that a passing motorist had spotted a runaway truck coming

down Monarch Pass.

The motorist, Bernie Carolan of Salida, said he was westbound just below Garfield when the truck forced him to the shoulder. "He was obviously out of control — the trailer was partly jack-knifed into my lane. His brakes were on fire and I could see him fighting the wheel. He was going extremely fast — he wasn't using his Jake brake." Carolan stopped at the Monarch Resort in Garfield and called the dispatcher to report the truck.

Pearson heard the call and "Before I could do anything — just as I picked up the mike to reply — I saw a big cloud of smoke, dust and debris in the air about a quarter-mile a way,

50-foot embankment in putting the fire out. Water was supplied by a 1,000-gallon tanker and was drafted out of the South Arkansas River as well. Body of the driver was removed by county ambulance crews before the fire started.

and by the time I got there, it had settled," Pearson said. "That truck just exploded when it landed."

At the scene, the ambulance crew went up the railroad tracks to reach the driver, since the tracks were below the road level.

Ambulance director Carl Hasselbrink said Adair had "very severe chest and head injuries when we got there. We did CPR on him all the way back into town, and he was pronounced dead at Salida Hospital."

After Adair was taken to Salida and a wrecker began to haul parts of the truck up to the highway, the spilled fuel caught on fire at about 3:10 p.m. An electrical spark is

believed to have set it off.

About 15 volunteers from the Salida and Poncha Springs fire departments were called where they spent about two hours putting out the fire, which had spread to a small aspen grove. Firemen used water from a 1500-gallon tanker and pumped water from the South Arkansas River.

Although some diesel fuel leaked into the river, and could be seen on the stream gathering on the pond at the hydro plant, Wildlife Conservation Officer Willie T. Niecek said the amount of fuel leaked into the river was quite small and did not present much of a danger to wildlife.

Thursday Jan. 8, 1981

Volunteer firemen elect officers

Tim Nelson of Salida was recently elected president of the Salida Volunteer Fire Department for 1981.

Other officers elected were: John Sell, vice-president; Bob Leivers, secretary; Jerry Henderson,

treasurer; and Kim Orr, Wes Wagner, and Gary Prosser, trustees.

In December, the Salida Fire Department responded to 10 calls, but two were false alarms. Fire Chief Jim Gray said there was an estimated value of \$120,000 exposed to fire in the city with an estimated loss of \$100 caused by fire.

The department extinguished a house fire, grass and brush fire, three chimney fires, responded to a call for a plugged flue, a smoking coal stove, and a call to pump out a basement.

South Arkansas Fire Protection District had three calls, one to extinguish a trailer fire and a small fire at the Lamplighter Motel, and they presided over a controlled burn.

There was an estimated value of \$37,500 exposed to fire in the district with an estimated loss of \$8000.

In other fire department news, one training session was held on the operation of the Poncha Springs pumper, new radiator hoses were installed on the city fire truck, and a new water pump was installed on the district pumper.

The Salida Fire Department inspected 35 businesses during December.

Fire auxiliary names officers

Newly elected officers took over at the first 1981 meeting of the Salida Fire Department Women's Auxiliary Jan. 12 at Lorretta Prosser's home.

The new officers are Barbara Chacon, president; Becky Nelson, vice-president; Wanda Paquette, secretary; and Barbara Henderson, historian.

Chacon said the club's purposes are to help fire victims and to provide drink for firemen during large fires, as well as to help the fire department raise money for needed equipment.

Wednesday Jan. 14, 1981

Bomb threat empties schools

"There's a bomb in the janitor's room." That was all the man said before hanging up the phone.

Salida High School Principal John Ophus took the call in the high school office about 1:30 p.m. yesterday. He immediately called School Superintendent C. L. Robertson and the Chaffee County Sheriff's Department.

About 1:40 p.m., school administrators called for the evacuation of all students and teachers from the high school and the adjacent Kesner Junior High School.

Students waited without coats in bleachers on both sides of White Field for almost 35 minutes before school officials and law enforcement officers determined it was safe for them to return to class.

Minutes later, Robertson called a meeting in office to review what had happened. Several of the participants in the half-hour search were present, including Ophus, School District Administrative Assistant Bill Webb, Sheriff Harold Thonhoff, Undersheriff Bob Wilcox, deputy Ken Dahl, Salida Police Chief Leonard Post and Salida firemen Tim Nelson, Fred Smith and Wes Wagner.

Robertson said the officials had carefully checked all janitor's closets in both schools, but found no bomb. He said they also checked all other rooms in the schools and found nothing.

Robertson said the school district has a written procedure to follow in case of a bomb threat, and the law enforcement officers have copies.

"We followed it pretty well," he said. "I think this turned out to be pretty good practice for all of us."

The school superintendent said it took only

about two minutes to evacuate the school after the alarm was sounded. He said some students were taking first semester final exams when the evacuation began.

"The kids and the staff did an excellent job," Robertson stated. "I want to thank the local law enforcement officers and the fire department for their prompt and efficient response and assistance."

"My reaction is one of disgust," Robertson stated, "that anyone would revert to that type of senseless prank."

"I thoroughly abhor this type of thing," he continued, "and if we catch them, we will prosecute the offenders to fullest extent of the law. The cost in terms of dollars and student and teacher hours lost is tremendous."

Ophus noted the school district has not received a bomb threat in three or four years.

"The last time we had a rash of bomb threats," he said, "we caught two males, a juvenile and an adult, and they both went to jail."

Robertson reported to the Salida School Board last night about the bomb threat and the actions taken by school officials. The board commended the administrators for their handling of the incident.

Webb told the board about the vandalism which was discovered at the high school on the Saturday after Christmas. He said damages and losses amounted to slightly more than \$500, and only the damages were covered by insurance.

At Robertson's suggestion, the board said it would consider offering a reward for information leading to the conviction of persons involved in bomb threats or vandalism.

Thursday Jan. 22, 1981

Fire hits Swissvale house



FIREMEN FROM Salida and Howard put out an attic blaze at the Swissvale home of Randy and Colleen Ashmore yesterday afternoon. A hot stovepipe started insulation afire.

Firemen from Salida and Howard were called to put out a fire at a Swissvale residence at about 2:25 p.m. yesterday.

The fire at the home of Randy and Colleen Ashmore of 3691 U.S. 50 caused moderate damage to the ranch-style structure.

Colleen Ashmore was at home when the fire started and reported it to the Chaffee County sheriff's office.

Tim Nelson of the Salida Fire Department said the fire was caused by cellulose insulation packed too close to a wood-burning stove's pipe.

The pipe got hot enough to cause the insulation to smolder and then catch fire.

When firemen arrived, flames were in the attic. Extensive water damage resulted when firemen had to extinguish hot pockets in the insulation, and attic rafters were also badly damaged by the fire.

Nelson estimated the loss from fire, water and smoke at \$4,000.

The Ashmores were in the process of completing work on a new addition to their home.

Freeman gets pension

Former Salida fire captain Bob Freeman will begin drawing a city disability pension in two weeks as a result of a district court order last week.

Freeman was fired in 1979 on grounds that he had a nervous condition that made other firemen distrust him, and that he had rifled

GOP women meet

The Salida Republican Women's Club meet Tuesday at the Country Kitchen Restaurant and the following officers were installed by Helen Kaess: Joanie Padoven, president; Ruth Warren, vice-president; Jo Mitchell, secretary; and Elinore Gjovig, treasurer.

Lela Geist gave a report on the membership drive from the precinct chairwoman.

Following an Abraham Lincoln game led by Ruth Warren, the meeting adjourned.

city files. Freeman had applied for the chief's job, and when it went to Jim Gray, Freeman sued.

In a damage settlement reached last year concerning his firing, Freeman received about \$9,000.

He then claimed that any nervous disabilities he possessed were related to his work, and therefore he was entitled to a disability pension after the court gave him damages.

Two hearings were held before the city pension board, which refused to grant the pension. However, District Judge Howard Purdy ordered the pension, which will be half Freeman's highest pay or \$500-\$600 per month, to be awarded to the fireman for the rest of his life.

Freeman now lives in Pueblo and is attending University of Southern Colorado.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1981

Fire's origin is mysterious

Something fell from the sky Thursday night which resulted in a brush fire near CR 175 and Calco Road. A 10'x40' area burned.

Several people called the Salida Fire Department to report they saw something falling. After searching the area, Firemen Jerry Henderson, Kevin Nelson, Charles

Lane and Gary Prosser could find no trace of the fire's origin.

"Someone could have set something off, possibly from the top of Tenderfoot, or it might have been a meteorite," Henderson said.

Motel fire loss is \$5000

A motel fire at 8:15 a.m. Thursday at Western Holiday, 545 W. Rainbow Blvd. caused about \$5000 in damages to the ceiling of one of the rooms, according to the Salida Fire Department.

Apparently the fire was caused by insulation in the ceiling which was installed

Wednesday.

Five firemen and six volunteers spent two hours "getting the smoldering hot spots out of the ceiling and cleaning up."

Firemen saved the furniture in the room.

The motel is owned by David and Goldie Davidoff.

Arson suspected in ranch house fire

No cause has been established for the Saturday afternoon fire that destroyed the ranch house at 9145 CR 166 several miles outside Salida, but authorities believe it could have been arson.

Salida Fire Chief Jim Gray said yesterday that samples from the gutted house were taken to Denver laboratories by investigators

from the Colorado Bureau of Investigation.

Firemen originally suspected the fire was caused by an electrical problem or a cigarette in an overstuffed chair, but Gray said there are problems with those explanations.

"This fire started low and stayed low," he said. "The wiring was about a foot off the floor, and the fire started below that level. If it had been a cigarette in the chair, the fire would have gone up from the chair, not moved along the floor."

"So at this point, we're not too sure what started it — we don't know, but we sure can't rule out that it might have been arson. We do know the fire started in the northeast corner of the house."

The blaze, which caused about \$40,000 in damage, destroyed a house owned by Legare Everett, and was once the home of George Everett Sr., founder of the Everett Land and Cattle Co. It was about 60 years old.

The house was rented to Don and Beverly Gilbertson, who were out of town when the fire started. They lost nearly all their personal possessions in the fire.

Those who want to donate clothing to the Gilbertsons, who have a one-year-old daughter, should leave articles with Florence Gilbertson at 1047 G St. or Debbie Conroe at 7725 CR 150.

Arson suspected in fire on Salida area ranch

By DICK DIXON

SALIDA (C-SJ) — Because of burn patterns found in the carpet of a home destroyed by fire Saturday afternoon, local authorities worked with Colorado Bureau of Investigation arson investigator Donald Shephard on Monday.

Salida Fire Chief Jim Gray said Shephard arrived about 1:30 p.m. and spent several hours investigating.

He said Shephard took samples for processing through the CBI laboratory in Denver to determine if arson caused the fire, which created at least \$30,000 structural damage and an undetermined amount of personal property damage at the old Everett ranch house on County Road 166.

Gray said the blaze started in the northeast corner of the home, owned by Legare Everett and leased by D.T. Gilbertson. He said there is an unused gas heater in the corner, but that the house is heated by a wood-burning stove in another section.

Firemen responded about 1 p.m. and found the house almost fully involved. Fireman Fred Smith said flames had broken through the roof and that the interior was blazing when the pumper and tanker arrived from Salida with about 11 firemen.

One truck and two volunteers from Poncha Springs assisted and water was drawn from a nearby pond.

Mrs. George Smith, a neighbor,

called in the alarm and fireman said Gilbertson wasn't home at the time. Gilbertson said he lost everything in the fire and doubted if anything could be salvaged.

He said he couldn't get insurance on contents because he was heating with a wood-burning stove.

Gray said he thinks the blaze may have burned low for a time before creating enough heat to blow out windows, which gave the fire a shot of oxygen, causing it to race through the remainder of the house.

The blaze was under control about 20 minutes, although firefighters were on the scene almost two hours.

Firemen were recalled about 4:23 p.m. to extinguish cellulose insulation which was still smoldering in the attic and spent almost another hour at the scene.

A grass and brush fire on County Road 155 at the Leslie Day Ranch at the same time firemen were answering the second call the Gilbertson fire strained equipment and manpower, leaving one man, one piece of equipment and a volunteer to answer possibility of a third call.

Firemen reported Dawes burning ditch banks when they whipped flames into a field, burning about 5,000 square yards. They were on the scene about a hour.

Sunday, firemen were called to extinguish an unattended bank fire behind the Saddle Creek U.S. 50 East.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 1981



SALIDA FIREMEN were called out to 1247 G. St. just after noon yesterday to put out a chimney fire caused by creosote build-up. No one was injured and the house suffered no damage as firemen quickly calmed the blaze by knocking the creosote down into the stove.

Fireman warns of stove hazards

by TIM NELSON
Salida Fire Department

This year will surely bring three things to Salida — continued increases in the cost of energy, more wood and coal stoves to offset those increased costs, and the fires that result from improper installation of wood and coal stoves.

From the standpoint of the firemen who must fight the resulting fires, the most important concerns are:

1. The chance of igniting the walls, floors, ceilings and other combustible material near a stove;
2. The possibility of chimney fires when wood stoves are used with improper, defective or poorly maintained chimneys, and the resulting chimney fires;
3. The chance of starting out-buildings or neighboring houses on fire with the sparks that escape from a chimney during a chimney fire.

None of these things has to happen when you install a wood- or coal-burning stove. But you've got to take precautions.

FIRST OF ALL, remember that a building permit is required by law to install a wood or coal stove. Your getting the permit will also notify the building inspector that a wood or coal stove is being installed, and he will make sure your installation conforms to the building code, so that it will be safe.

If you install the stove yourself, be absolutely sure you are doing it right. One small mistake or oversight could burn your house down and your family with it. If you have any doubts about your ability to install a stove, have a qualified contractor do it. You should make sure you have proper clearance between the stove and any combustible walls, ceilings or floors — some stoves get quite hot on bottom and you may have to place a hearth under the stove.

Once you've got that taken care of, you're ready to hook the stove to the chimney, or maybe you're going to have to install a chimney.

Be careful going through the ceiling and roof — there's a special type of pipe to use, and even then, proper clearance is important, or you'll be saying good-bye to your ceiling and roof. The building inspector will tell you all you need to know about meeting the code if you install your own chimney.

IN SOME OLDER HOMES, there are already flues, and they can save you a lot of trouble and expense if they're in good condition. (Remember that a gas and a wood- or coal-burning appliance cannot use the same chimney.)

Before you hook into an existing chimney, have it inspected. The mortar should be good and solid between the bricks all the way up, and there should be no loose bricks on top.

Loose or missing mortar means hot and poisonous gas can seep out, causing fires or carbon monoxide inhalation. Loose bricks on top can fall down the chimney and plug it up.

If your existing chimney is not in tip-top shape, it will have to be cleaned or repaired before you can use it. Have a reliable chimney sweep do this.

ONCE YOUR STOVE is safely installed, you can't just put wood in it and forget about it. All stoves, and especially modern air-tight models, will deposit creosote in the chimney. (By creosote, I don't mean the stuff that is used to treat fence posts and railroad ties; I mean the mixture of tars, resins and pitch that are present in wood smoke and settle against chimney walls as the smoke rises and cools.)

Over a period of time, the creosote will build up and two things can happen — your chimney will get plugged, which is bad enough, or the creosote will ignite and you'll have a chimney fire, which is much worse.

Temperatures in a chimney fire can reach 1300 degrees, hot enough to burn holes in stove pipe or melt the mortar in a masonry chimney. By the third chimney fire, the flue is so damaged that it will usually have to be replaced.

A lot of people ask how to tell if their chimney is on fire, since they're in the house and the fire is in the chimney, spouting flames from the top. The first sign will be that your stove will be drawing a lot of air — it will quickly sound like a jet taking off.

By this time, your stovepipe is probably red hot, and shortly, your neighbor will be calling to complain about the hot sparks and embers coming out of your chimney and landing on his roof. What do you do then?

Call the fire department and turn off all the draft controls. The firemen will come and put out the fire and check your ceiling, attic and roof to make sure the fire stayed in the chimney.

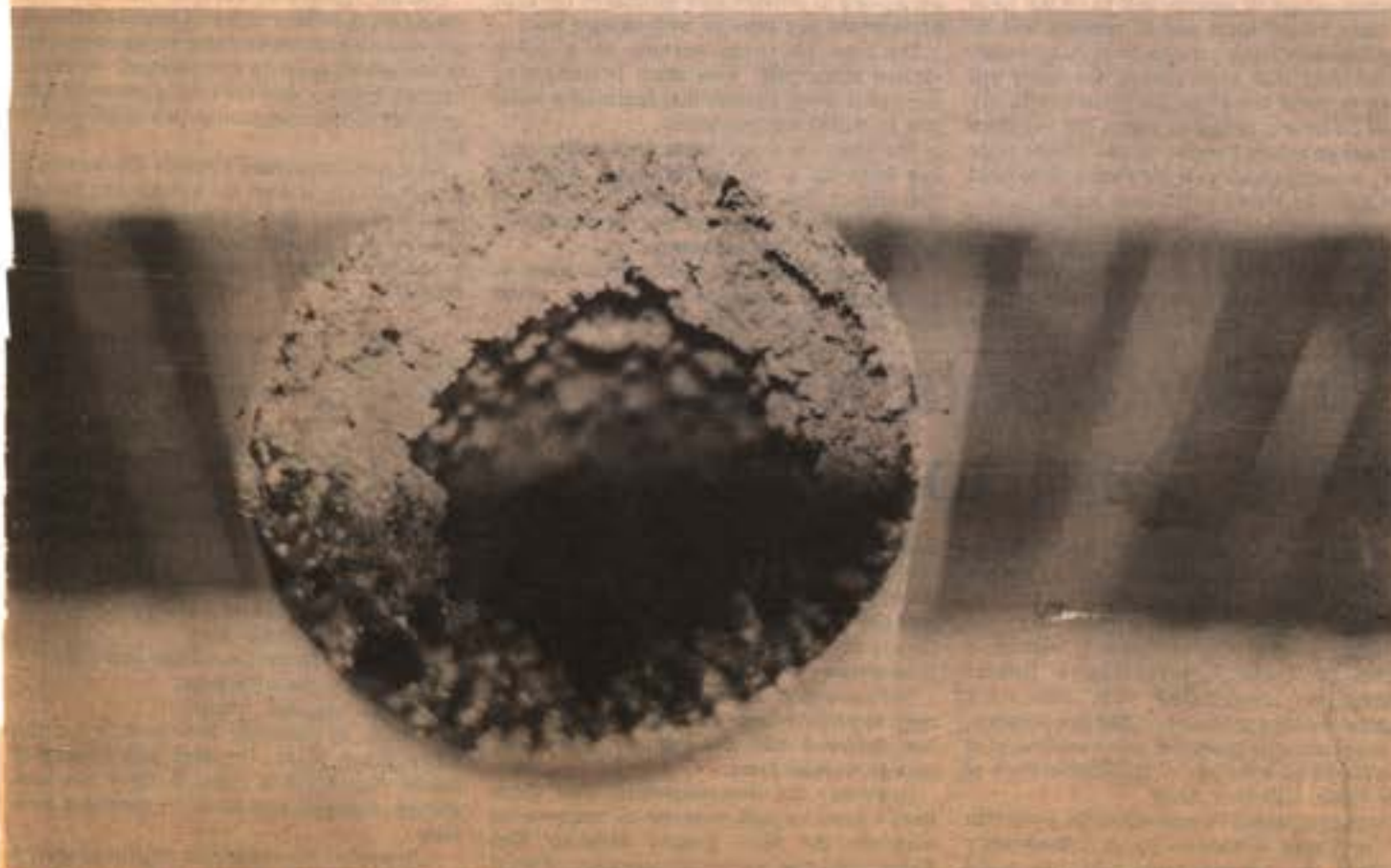
One way to guard against chimney fires is to use products in your stove that help diminish creosote deposits. These products work well, when used according to directions.

Another way is to make sure your chimney is cleaned as often as necessary. If you have a metal chimney, check the rain cap — if there's a lot of soot on the rain cap, it's time to clean the chimney. To check a masonry chimney, you'll have to go on the roof and look down the chimney.

If you are in doubt about your chimney and would like to have it checked, call the Salida Fire Department at 539-2212. Firemen will be glad to do it as a public service.



IF OUTSIDE APPEARANCES are any indication, this metal chimney is long overdue for a cleaning. You can see creosote running along the outer surface, an indication that the inside is dirty.



A DIRTY STOVEPIPE is easy to spot once you disconnect it. The creosote build-up here could eventually clog the pipe, if it doesn't ignite first and start a

dangerous chimney fire. It's a problem that a chimney sweep can cure easily.

Photos by Tim Nelson



A FIRE SATURDAY afternoon destroyed this ranch home occupied by Don and Beverly Gilbertson. When firemen arrived the house was fully involved in flames and the fire had burned its way through the roof. The fire apparently started in the northeast portion of the house visible at the right.

The cause was not determined immediately although a smoldering cigarette in living room furniture or faulty electrical wiring could have started the fire. More than a dozen firemen with three vehicles from Salida and Poncha Springs answered the alarm.

Fire destroys ranch house

A ranch house near Salida was gutted by fire Saturday afternoon.

The rented house, occupied by Don and Beverly Gilbertson, at 9145 CR 166 was declared virtually a total loss as a result of the fire.

Damage to the building and contents was estimated at more than \$40,000 by Jim Gray, Salida fire chief.

Salida volunteer and paid firemen answering the call were greeted by exploding rounds of rifle ammunition set off by the

intense heat generated by the fire. There were no injuries.

When firemen arrived at the scene, the structure was fully involved in flames which had burned through the roof, door, and window of the one-story ranch-style structure.

Firemen were able to control the blaze by using an attack pumper carrying 300 gallons of water and a tanker carrying 1,500 gallons.

Also used was a portable pump which siphoned water out of a nearby pond.

Called to the scene for backup was a

pumper from the Poncha Springs Fire Department.

Turning in the alarm was a neighbor, Emily Smith.

The fire was apparently concentrated in the northeast corner of the home.

Gray said he was not sure of the cause but it could have been from a smoldering cigarette in a couch or chair or from electrical wiring. Firemen have not ruled out arson as a cause.

The Gilbertsons were out of town at the time of the fire.

The house is owned by Legare Everett. It was once the home of George Everett Sr., who founded the Everett Land and Cattle Company, and was built about 1920.

Virtually all the Gilbertsons' personal belongings were destroyed by the fire.

Persons wishing to donate clothing to the family are asked to leave articles at the home of Florence Gilbertson at 1047 G St. in Salida or at the home of Debbie Conroe at 7725 CR 150.

Baby clothing is also needed for the couple's one-year-old daughter.

Friday March 20, 1981

Arsonist hits alleys

Several small fires in Salida in the past two days are believed to be the work of an arsonist, according to Chaffee County Sheriff Harold Thonhoff and Salida Fire Chief Jim Gray.

The first was spotted at 10:30 p.m. Tuesday when police officers on patrol saw a woodpile on fire by the home of C.C. Highsmith at 504

Wood Ave. The Salida Fire Department was called to the scene and the fire was promptly extinguished. Nearly a fourth of the pile burned.

That same evening, a woodpile fire on Ouray Avenue was put out by residents of the street who did not call the fire department.

Wednesday night, Sheriff's deputies on patrol near the fish hatchery saw a haystack on fire. The Salida Fire Department extinguished the flames about 8:45 p.m. About 50 bales of hay and some trees burned on CR 154. The property, estimated at \$110, belongs to the Colorado Division of Wildlife.

Soon after that fire, the fire department was called to extinguish a woodpile fire in the alley of the 700 block of G and H streets. The garage next to the woodpile, belonging to Frank Blankis, was damaged to the extent of \$50.

Police Chief Leonard Post asks that anyone who thinks they might have some information on the source of the fires to call authorities.

FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 1981

Salidan chases arsonist unsuccessfully

The handiwork of an arsonist can be deadly, but so far Salidans have been fortunate. An officer or citizen was in the area, and the fires were put out before a substantial property loss occurred.

That was the case at 7 a.m. yesterday when John Bearden walked into his backyard and found a man setting his shed on fire.

Bearden, 323 Palmer, chased the man who Officer Paul Ottmer said may have been 35 to 40 years old.

Bearden quit chasing him to return to extinguish the fire. Property loss was estimated at \$50.

Ottmer found a beer can full of gas at the scene.

A reward is still being offered for anyone with information leading to the arrest and conviction of the arsonist, according to Police Chief Leonard Post.

Officers found a woodpile near Caldwell and Nichols streets on fire Monday night, and it was extinguished before it caused any

substantial damage.

Last week, police officers on patrol at 10:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 17, saw a woodpile on fire by the home of C.C. Highsmith at 504 Wood Ave. The Salida Fire Department was called to the scene and it was promptly extinguished. Nearly a fourth of the pile burned.

That same evening, a woodpile fire on Ouray Avenue was put out by residents of the street who did not call the fire department. Firemen now feel this fire was set.

March 18, sheriff's deputies on patrol near

the fish hatchery saw a haystack on fire. About 50 bales of hay and some trees burned, causing about \$110 property damage.

Soon after that one, the fire department was called to extinguish a woodpile fire in the alley of the 700 block of G and H streets. The garage next to the woodpile, belonging to Frank Blankis, was damaged to the extent of \$50.

Police are investigating the incidents and searching for the arsonist.

THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 1981



A CUSTOMER at Hylton Lumber Company, David Davidoff, spotted a stack of wood on fire at 1 p.m. yesterday at the back of the business near the railroad tracks. Fire Chief Jim Gray said the fire was set, but no one saw any suspects. Here, Hylton employee Eric

Lamberg counts boards which were destroyed. In the background, Salida Policeman Darwin Hibbs examines and takes pictures of footprints. Damage was estimated at \$350.

Arson likely in Salida fire

By DICK DIXON

SALIDA (C-SJ) — Arson is suspected in a mid-day fire which broke out behind the shop at Hylton Lumber Co. here Wednesday and caused about \$350 damage to a stack of 2x12 lumber.

Salida Fire Chief James Gray said it looks as though some type of accelerant was used to start the fire. He said flames burned up one side of the bunk of lumber and had started coming up through the middle of the stack by the time firemen arrived.

He said the fire is similar to a rash of blazes, all attributed to arson, which caused damage to sheds, lots, and woodpiles last month.

He said, however, that it is the second blaze of its type at the Lumber Yard in about two months. The earlier fire was discovered in the early morning darkness while the fire Wednesday was discovered at 12:50 p.m.

Hospital receives bomb threats

by KAREN MORRISON

An extensive search found no bombs in the Salida Hospital last night after the hospital received two telephoned bomb threats.

The threats, which were from a male caller, came in at 9:30 p.m. and 9:59 p.m. Both said a bomb was supposed to go off within half an hour.

All available police personnel from the

sheriff's department and the Salida Police Department, as well as Salida firemen, joined in the search.

"We looked everywhere," Fire Chief Jim Gray said, coming out of the building, "and we didn't find anything." As Gray spoke, firemen and policemen were examining cars and trashcans in the parking lot, as well as the nearby tanks.

Searchers looked for "anything unusual," Gray said, "and there was nothing." He estimated 15 to 20 policemen and firemen, as well as hospital personnel, were involved in the search.

Had they found anything suspicious, county ambulance crews were standing by in the parking lot ready to evacuate patients to

motels or, for the more seriously ill patients, other hospitals.

Inside the hospital were 41 adult patients and one baby.

Authorities suspected the bomb threat was a graduation night prank, perhaps designed to tie up all the police in one end of town while the callers did something in the other end, and kept two cars patrolling the city area.

Friday June 19, 1981

Fire reported at U.S. Soil

The South Arkansas Fire Department was called to a fire at the U.S. Soil plant in Wellsville at about 4 p.m. yesterday.

According to a spokesman at the fire department, fire started in some bins used for storing ore. Workers had been welding in the bins earlier and sparks set wooden beams

on fire. No estimate was available, but a considerable amount of damage resulted.

A tanker truck and one other truck were taken to the scene and 1700 gallons of water were used on the fire. Six firemen remained on the scene until 6 p.m.

Monday July 20, 1981

Nurse's quick thinking prevents major fire

Prompt action by a nurse at the Salida Hospital early Friday morning prevented what could have been a serious fire.

When a bottle of collodian exploded in a refrigerator in the surgical area of the hospital, Brenda Hart, R.N., put out the fire with a fire extinguisher, keeping the fire confined to the refrigerator, the wall and the

wastebasket in the immediate area.

Collodian is a substance which contains ether and alcohol and is used to hold surgical dressings.

The Salida Fire Department was called at 2:37 a.m. to ventilate the building and remained on the scene until 3:48 a.m.

Cause of the explosion is not known.

Tuesday Sept. 8, 1981

Salida firemen offer to check town chimneys

By DICK DIXON

SALIDA (C-SJ) — Reasoning that it's easier to get up on dry roofs now than it will be when they're icy and on fire this winter, Salida firemen will check chimneys for people who want it done.

Fire Chief Jim Gray said Salida Fire Department answered a total of 28 chimney fire calls last winter. He indicated many of the fires

could have been avoided if chimneys had been checked and cleaned.

Gray said that some of the worst creosote and soot buildups are in the older brick chimneys, and added that many of these have poor mortar and cannot withstand a fire. He said, "People who want us to check can call us on the City Hall Auditorium phone, and we'll be glad to take a look at their chimneys."

Although firemen cannot clean chimneys, Gray said they can recommend a cleaning if it's necessary and may be able to help with names of chimney sweeps, although they are becoming hard to find in Salida.

In related information, Gray said weeds are growing profusely in alleys, around firewood piles, along wooden fences and sheds and in empty lots.

He said, "They're still green now, but it's a good crop this year, and when they dry out, they could be a real hazard because of sparks from wood stove chimneys and their proximity to large firewood piles."

Fire destroys car of Centerville man

SALIDA (C-SJ) — Fire destroyed a late model luxury car on Chaffee County Road 260 on Monday and the vehicle was engulfed with flames before fire equipment could arrive.

Norman Wells of Centerville told firemen he was driving when smoke began to roll out from under the hood. He stopped and said he and his son got out and away from the vehicle.

Wells said he tried to open the hood, but flames were coming out from underneath and he had to stand back and await fire equipment.

Five men responded with the county fire truck and said they had the fire under control in about 10 minutes, although it took nearly two hours to douse hot spots and burning tires.

Poncha firemen offer free chimney inspection

potentially far more dangerous problem in the winter months.

The Salida Fire Department has also offered free chimney inspections to Salida residents for the same reasons. To make arrangements, call the fire department at 539-2212.

"We would rather go out and inspect a few chimneys now when the weather is still mild than be called out in the dead of winter for a chimney problem," Lenderink said.

He also noted that it would be far better for someone to go to a little extra time and maybe expense now than face a bigger and

Bill Lenderink, town fire chief, said the inspections are designed to warn residents of creosote and soot buildups and to check to see if stoves, pipes and chimneys are properly installed and in good working order. Those wishing to have inspections done should call Lenderink at 539-6008.

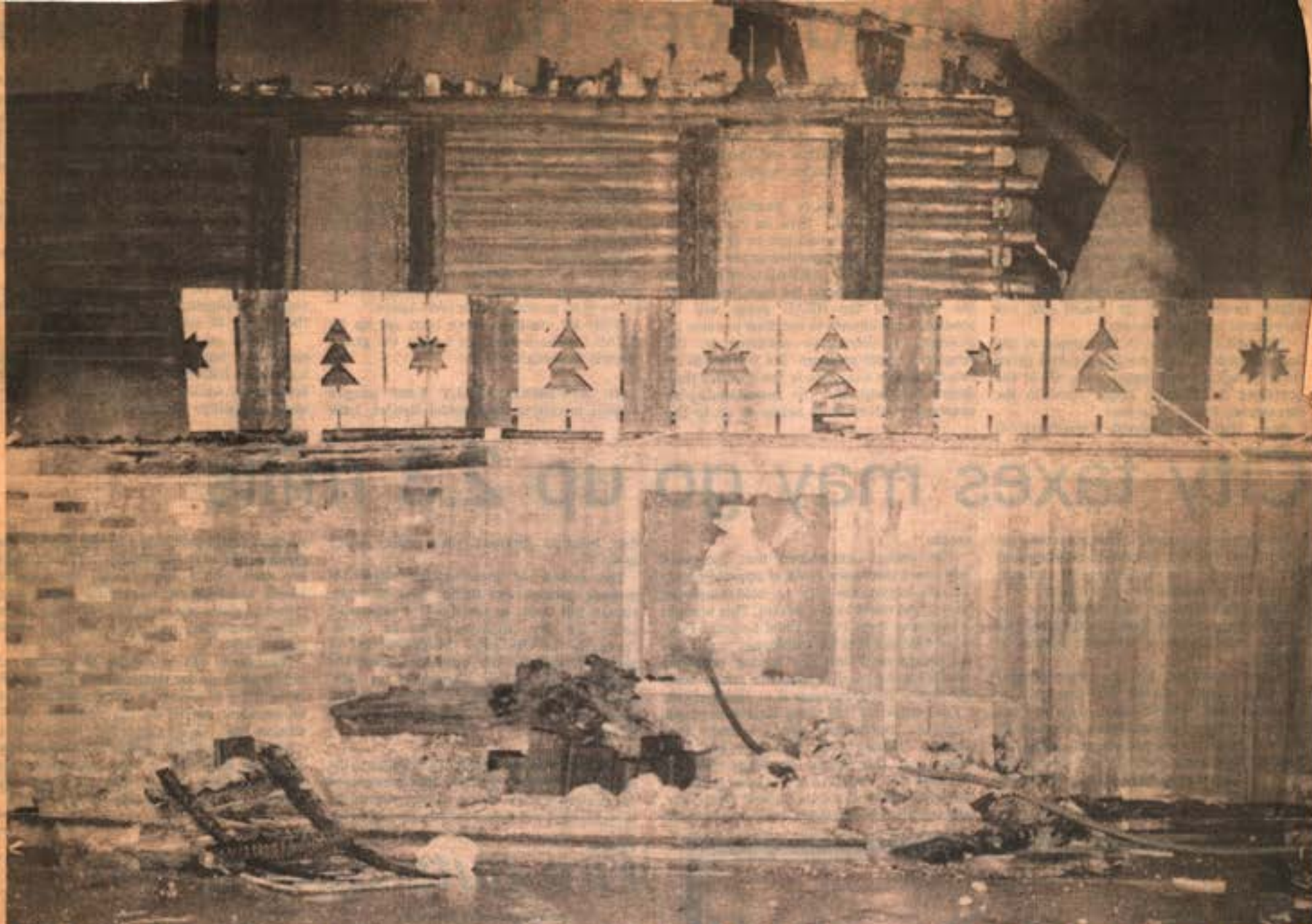
The Poncha Springs Volunteer Fire Department will be making chimney inspections free of charge for those who have wood or coal burning stoves.

Rising fuel prices have meant a growing number of homes and businesses depending on wood stoves for their main winter heat.

Wednesday Sept. 30, 1981



Photos found loose, no dates available



A TOURIST spotted the fire at about 3 a.m. yesterday. Some 22 firefighters from Poncha Springs and Salida responded. Minutes after firefighters arrived, the blaze broke through the roof, engulfing the entire main section

of the building. Firemen were left to attempt to save adjacent buildings to the south and north.

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THE CAUSE OF THE FIRE at the Sportsman Inn has not been determined. Poncha Springs Fire Chief Bill Lenderink said an arson investigator will be at the scene today. The blaze was brought under control by Poncha and Salida firemen at

about 6 a.m., three hours after the first alarm. The structure is virtually a total loss with only the pantry, cooler and basement area left unburned, although damaged by smoke and water.

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Fire guts Sportsman

(Continued from Page 1)

However, both Lenderink and Henderson said the building was a total loss, estimated at over \$300,000 by Joe Johnson of Buena Vista, the affected insurance agent.

Sam Post, who owned the restaurant, arrived at the fire shortly after firemen did, and was taken away in an ambulance for possible smoke inhalation.

Other than that, there were no major injuries, according to Carl Hasselbrink, Mt. Shavano ambulance unit director. "Some of the guys needed some oxygen now and then," he said, "but no one needed to be hauled to the hospital or anything like that."

This was the second fire at the building, which was put up in 1958, according to the assessor's office. The earlier fire was in 1973, and was basically a small kitchen fire which caused little structural damage.

No cause has been established for this fire. Lenderink said it did not appear to be electrical. "I don't suspect arson," he said, "but

you can't rule that out, either." An arson investigator from the Colorado Bureau of Investigation was expected to examine the fire site today.

The last major structural fire in Poncha Springs killed two people from smoke inhalation. On April 9, 1978, Loretta Robertson died while trying to find the source of smoke in the Double J Leather store building. Her husband Bert was taken to Salida Hospital for smoke inhalation, where he died a few days later.

Ironically, the man who investigated that fire, Chuck Dodson of the Aurora Fire Department, was passing through Poncha yesterday and firemen, eating lunch at the Poncha Truck Stop, saw him there and asked him to look at the fire scene.

Dodson said the fire appeared to start in the bar area. He planned to talk to employees at the Sportsman to learn its closing procedures.

Firemen set open house

In observance of Fire Prevention Week, the Salida Fire Department will host an open house tomorrow and Friday.

The public is invited to tour the firehouse, see the equipment used for fighting fires and have a cup of coffee and a doughnut. If you have questions, the firemen will try to answer them.

A slide program on Home Fire Prevention will be shown from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. both evenings in the city auditorium. Six programs will be shown on 1) Fire hazards in the home; 2) Improper use of electricity and electrical appliances; 3) Fixed and portable heating equipment; 4) Smoke detectors; 5) Family escape plan; 6) Fire extinguishers for common home fires.

This program will help explain what fire hazards to look for in the home and help residents make a plan on what to do in case of a fire.

"Nobody every plans on a fire," a fire department spokesman said, "and we hope you don't have one, but it is best to know what to expect and plan so if a fire does break out in the night, all members of your family will be able to escape."

The slides were purchased from donations to the firemen's ball. Any time the public or any club or organization would like to see the slides, they should call the fire department at 539-2212. The slides will be shown at your convenience.



FIREMEN POURED WATER on the interior of the Sportsman Lodge in Poncha Springs Monday night. But the 3 a.m. blaze gutted the building, leaving a loss to the restaurant and lounge, owned by Sam Post, of more than \$300,000. The fire is believed to have started near the bar before

working its way into the ceiling and upstairs rooms which had been sealed off. Fire fighters ultimately drew more than 100,000 gallons of water out of an irrigation ditch in extinguishing the fire. More pictures on page 7.

Fire guts Sportsman Inn

by ED QUILLEN

An early morning fire yesterday gutted the Sportsman Inn restaurant in Poncha Springs, leaving only the walls of the main building.

Salida firemen joined with Poncha volunteers in an effort to save the building — an effort that was hampered at first by inadequate water.

A passing motorist noticed smoke coming from the building and called the sheriff's department shortly after 3 a.m. yesterday, and the call was relayed to the Poncha Springs Volunteer Fire Department, which arrived within five minutes.

"There was smoke all over when we arrived," Poncha Fire Chief Bill Lenderink said. "It had a pretty good start on us." An investigator later said the fire, which apparently started in the bar area, had been burning for quite some time before firemen got there. No one was in the building when

firemen arrived.

Poncha called for help from Salida, and 11 Salida paid and volunteer firemen joined the 11 Poncha volunteers, adding two trucks to Poncha's tank and pumper.

The roof was intact when firemen arrived, but within minutes, it started to collapse. The firemen found the bottom floor filled with smoke when they entered, after cutting a ventilation hole in the roof.

"We had trouble getting enough water at first," Lenderink said. The two tank trucks were going to the tank at the park and dumping the water in a canvas tank at the fire, but that wasn't enough to keep the building from burning further.

Firemen found water in a nearby irrigation

ditch, which they dammed. "If that ditch hadn't had water in it, you'd just have a hole in the ground now instead of even the walls," one fireman said.

"We tried to save all we could," Salida Fire Capt. Jerry Henderson said, "but the fire just had too much of a head start. You could hardly get to it."

Firemen fought the fire through the night keeping water on the wreckage which was still smoking at noon. Clean-up operations weren't completed until late yesterday afternoon.

THE MAIN BUILDING lost its roof, while there was less damage to adjoining areas

(Continued to Page 8)

Bottom of picture loose. Can be raised to read article beneath picture.

Thursday OCT 8, 1981

Fire probe continues

Two investigators — one from the county sheriff's department and the other from the Colorado Bureau of Investigation — sifted through the ruins of the Sportsman Inn in Poncha Springs yesterday, but they haven't announced any conclusions about the fire that destroyed the restaurant early Tuesday morning.

"They're still digging through there," Poncha Fire Chief Bill Lenderink said

yesterday, "and I don't know when they're going to announce anything."

Lenderink said investigators still believe the fire started in the bar area, but don't know how it started.

The fire, which was reported at 3 a.m. Tuesday, drew 22 firemen from Poncha Springs and Salida, and took almost 12 hours to extinguish, although it was under control by 6 a.m.

Wednesday OCT 7, 1981

It must be Fire Prevention Week

By Merle Baranczyk

When the alarm went off, the sheriff's office dispatcher said smoke had been reported coming out of the Sportsman Inn.

I couldn't help but wonder if this was another false alarm, since there had been three false alarms at the restaurant in the past three years.

When we rolled up to the building, it was evident it was not a false alarm.

Smoke was billowing out from under the eaves and around the windows from the entire main building. Dozens of fire training sessions indicated that that meant there was hot fire going inside the structure but that the blaze had yet broken through any outer walls.

We did what the book said to do — cut a hole in the roof near the peak, then go in with hose lines, try to get near the fire and turn loose with full fog streams.

Two of us had air packs on and went in the main entrance on the south side. We felt the outside of the door and it was warm but not hot, so we pulled it open.

We were on our knees but even down on the floor, we could not see our hands. There was heat coming from above but the glare of the hand light showed nothing. Smoke and gas were seeping into our face masks. There was a faint glow to the right so we fought the hose into position and turned it on full bore fog.

The force of the stream was sucking fresh air in from behind, just as instructors said it would. We kept the stream on for a full two minutes. I tried to remember if we were supposed to turn the nozzle clockwise or counter clockwise to break up the pattern of

the air.

Theoretically, the fine, heavy mist was supposed to hit the heat of the fire and turn to steam, and then the steam is supposed to put out the fire.

We crawled out back the way we'd gone in. I remember looking up at the roof. The vent hole we had cut looked like it was working. Steam and smoke were blowing out of the hole.

And I remember thinking then we would be able to contain the fire. We went back in following the hose line picked it up and turned on the fog stream again.

This time, not two minutes later, there seemed to be more of a glow to the right, what would be the bar area. Glowing embers were dropping from the ceiling. The smoke didn't seem to be quite so bad.

The bell on my air pack went off and that meant there was just a couple of minutes of air left and it was time to get out of the building. We hauled the hose back.

I should have been able to stay in the building with the air supply another ten minutes. But that air supply had gone up into the sky when, through nervousness, I had failed to connect the breathing hose properly when I first put on the pack.

I pulled off the air mask and looked up at the roof. Steam was no longer coming out of the vent hole. Now it was an eerie green, blue, yellow gas shooting like a blast furnace out of the roof 40 feet into the sky, roaring like a freight train.

Instructors had never said anything about such a blast of gas. They only said steam

would be coming out of the hole.

Right then I knew we had a big problem.

We ran a hose up to the second story and poked out a window and started squirting water into the interior. But it was a sealed room and we couldn't see anything. And right then the hose went limp.

But it wouldn't have mattered anyway — the roof seemed to mushroom into flame. No explosion. No trickle of fire starting at one end then leading to the other. Just poof. Like watching a gas heating furnace come on. One second the roof was there. And the next it was fully involved in flame.

WHILE WE THREW axes, pike poles and the hose line down to the ground and scrambled down the ladder, we knew it was now hopeless. Every person there, firemen or bystanders, knew it.

I think I went into shock, wanted to cry but couldn't. Just a void. What had we done wrong?

Should we have put two 1½-inch lines on the ground floor? Yes, but that would have required four men with airpicks and we only had three.

Should we have gone in with 2½-inch lines? Maybe. But then there's only a five-minute supply of water on the truck.

Could we have done a better job of using the tanker and the fill tank and kept our fog streams on the fire? Surely.

CHUCK DODSON and his wife were on vacation picking fruit on the Western Slope and coming down Monarch Pass when he heard there had been a fire in Poncha Springs.

Dodson, an arson investigator and the chief of the Arvada Fire Department, had investigated the Robertson fire in Poncha when two people died in 1978. Then he had helped rebuild the fire department, testing the old truck, giving hours of free instruction and advice, donating equipment like hats, coats and bunker pants.

The fire was out. And Dodson was back, just passing through and he agreed to take a look at the building.

He said the fire started low, then worked its way up creating its own chimney. It started somewhere near the bar, then went up the wall and into the second floor. It was probably getting some air, he said, from the basement, through cracks in the floor.

Most structural fires that are billowing through the eaves mean the blaze had been allowed to smolder for some time. The fact that the smoke was clear to the floor also meant that intense heat was building up near the roof, baking the roof area and driving the smoke down.

If a vent hole had not been cut in the roof, when we pulled open the door there could have been a backdraft of heat, flame and gas. Dodson said cutting the hole, then watering the fire in an attempt to create steam, was fighting the fire by the book.

"But you were just too late. Ten, fifteen minutes earlier, and you might have been able to control it. If the tourist had been going down the highway a few minutes earlier and noticed the smoke, you might have been able to save it."

"About the only way you could have kept it from going through the roof was to get lines up in the roof area from all four sides and one on the bottom at the base of the fire."

BUT WHEN WE GOT THERE we didn't know where the fire really was. The building was totally shut down and locked up.

And after the roof went up, there was nothing more to be done for the interior of the main building. At that point the heat was so intense it melted the bubble top on the South Ark Fire District tanker 100 feet or so upwind from the blaze.

By then, we had hooked up the draft pipe and were pulling water out of the irrigation ditch. 2½-inch lines put out a tremendous amount of water. But there weren't enough hoses, pumps or people to man them.

At that point it was just backbreaking work hauling hoses around to pour water on the interior in an effort to save the kitchen area and the south portion of the building.

Then all that was left on the west side were the walls. The heat was gone and it was about 38 degrees. Soaked to the skin. And cold. Thanks to those who brought coffee, pop and doughnuts.

THIS IS National Fire Prevention week. At Rotary Monday, Jim Gray and Wes Wagner gave a program on firefighting. They noted the cooperation and mutual aid agreement . . . if we could only turn back the clock.

Firefighting is just dirty, ugly work. Those who have taken the job for a living will have my respect forever.

I was glad I had, for whatever reason, joined the Poncha Volunteer Fire Department three years ago. But there's no way I'd ever want to fight fires for a living.

I'll leave that for the pros.

And I doubt if any of us at the scene will stop the second guessing, the what ifs.

But that's the way it is. You don't get second chances at a fire.

As Bill Lenderink says, "We did what we were taught to do. We did the very best we could. But I guess today we just weren't as lucky. We can be thankful that no one was killed."



Wednesday Oct 7, 1981 Pueblo Chief City

Poncha Springs inn is destroyed by fire

By DICK DIXON
Correspondent

PONCHA SPRINGS (C-SJ) — A fire destroyed the two-story Sportsman Inn here Tuesday morning.

Firemen from two departments battled more than two hours to control the blaze at U.S. 285 and County Road 120 in Poncha Springs.

Salida firemen estimated damage to the log structure at \$230,000, but Poncha Springs Fire Chief Bill Lenderink said he thinks the figure is too conservative. Most firemen agreed the building is probably a total loss.

Lenderink said the only fire casualty was owner Sam Post who

arrived on the scene just as the fire broke through the roof of the west portion of the building. Post apparently hyperventilated and was taken to Salida Hospital for treatment.

Chaffee County Sheriff Harold Thonhoff requested an arson investigator from Denver. The investigator is expected to be on the scene today. Lenderink doubts that the fire was arson.

A motorist on U.S. 285 saw smoke coming from under the eaves and from windows and reported the fire to the Chaffee County Sheriff's dispatcher about 3 a.m. Lenderink said Poncha Springs firefighters at the scene called

immediately for assistance from Chaffee County equipment based in Salida.

Both departments worked until about 5:30 a.m. to get the blaze under control. Firefighters checked for spots until 8 a.m. Lenderink said fire watchers would keep an eye on the remains through the night.

"The whole thing was just too far involved for us to save it by the time we arrived," he said. Firemen found the building engulfed in smoke and quickly ventilated the roof, he added.

Crews went inside with fog nozzles, but were driven out by intense heat. Within about 15

minutes of the arrival of fire equipment, flames broke through the roof on the west wing.

Heat from the blaze melted the red plastic emergency dome light on the county fire truck 80 feet away.

Lenderink said the fire apparently started in the bar area.

Eleven men from each department answered the call, and each department supplied a pumper and a tanker. Firemen had to draft water from a nearby irrigation ditch.

Jerry Henderson, one of the county firemen from Salida, said, "What a way to go into the second day of Fire Prevention Week."

FRIDAY OCTOBER 9, 1981

Arson possible

by ED QUILLEN

Arson is a possible cause of the fire which gutted the Sportsman Inn restaurant in Poncha Springs early Tuesday morning, according to County Sheriff Harold Thonhoff.

Thonhoff said yesterday that Jim Jordan of Denver and Don Shepherd of Pueblo, two investigators from the Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI), had completed their physical investigation, sifting through the rubble, and had told him that they had found indications of arson before they took evidence back to the CBI's Denver laboratory.

"They said they found evidence that a fire accelerant was used in the bar area near some stairs," Thonhoff said, an indication the fire may have been set. An accelerant is a flammable substance which could be used to speed the spread of a fire. However, alcohol is quite flammable and liquor bottles were displayed in that area.

The sheriff cautioned that "they still have to run the stuff through the lab before they can be sure what the accelerant was or before we make any arrests."

The restaurant was owned by Sam Post, who was treated for smoke inhalation after he arrived at the restaurant shortly after firemen got there at 3 a.m. Tuesday.

The building had a device, connected to a

smoke alarm, which automatically dialed the sheriff's department and reported a fire. It had made at least three false alarms in the past three years, but was disconnected the night of the fire. However, there is no town ordinance which requires such an alarm or for it to be connected. The fire was reported by a passing motorist who saw smoke coming from the eaves.

When firemen got there, minutes after getting the alarm, smoke had filled the bottom floor, indicating the fire had been going for some time.

Nearly two dozen Poncha and Salida firemen worked until sunrise, bringing the fire under control at about 6 a.m. and working into the afternoon in clean-up operations. Their efforts were hampered at first by a lack of water as tank trucks rushed to provide a supply. Firemen eventually dammed an irrigation ditch and got enough water to save the walls.

The loss was estimated at over \$300,000 by Joe Johnson of the Collegiate Peaks Agency in Buena Vista, who handled the insurance for the Sportsman. Besides the CBI, the fire scene has been examined by the sheriff's department, insurance investigators and Chuck Dodson of Arvada, an independent investigator.

Friday Oct. 9, 1981 (Chief City)

Arson is suspected in fire that destroyed Sportsman Inn

By DICK DIXON
Correspondent

PONCHA SPRINGS (C-SJ) — Arson is suspected in the fire Tuesday which destroyed the Sportsman Inn in Poncha Springs.

Colorado Bureau of Investigation Agents Jim Jordan of Denver and Don Shepherd of Pueblo concluded a full day investigation at the site Thursday. Sheriff Harold Thonhoff, who ordered the investigation, said officers found evidence that a fast, hot burning fuel of some type was used in the area near the stairway where firemen said they believed the blaze originated.

Thonhoff said Jordan and Shepherd picked up evidence for laboratory testing, but that no definite conclusions were reached. He said, "They told me that an accelerant had been used and that

origin of the fire was arson."

Unofficial damage estimates range between \$230,000 and \$300,000, but Thonhoff said an insurance company investigator who was at the scene Wednesday didn't talk with him before leaving the county.

Firemen said that when they arrived at about 3 a.m. a few minutes after a passerby called in the alarm, the building was "too far gone to save."

Fire fighters managed to get inside the building only a few minutes before heat drove them out. They reported, however, that the blaze was centered in the area around the bar and a stairway.

The stairwell functioned as a chimney, they said, funneling flames into the second floor of the log structure. The roof began caving in about 20 minutes after the alarm was sounded.



Lab tests find no accelerant in Poncha blaze

Laboratory tests of debris taken from the Sportsman Inn by investigators from the Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) "couldn't distinguish any evidence of accelerant" in a fire which gutted the restaurant and lounge in Poncha Springs last week.

Sheriff Harold Thonhoff said the CBI lab in Pueblo "couldn't define any accelerant" from the sample material taken from the building last week. An accelerant is a flammable liquid which could be used to speed the spread of a fire.

Although the state agency couldn't "define" the accelerant, Thonhoff said the CBI "is still saying it was arson," based on the burn patterns on the carpet and floor in the dining room in front of the bar.

Called Tuesday afternoon in Pueblo, CBI investigator Don Shepherd, one of two who were at the fire scene Thursday, referred all inquiries to Thonhoff.

The sheriff said the large amount of water firemen used in extinguishing the blaze diluted the evidence.

Thonhoff said he didn't know where the investigation goes from here. "This is my first one, this is the first time I've been involved (in an arson investigation)." Asked if the investigation was complete, Thonhoff said it wasn't in that the CBI still planned "to interrogate some people."

Officers of the CBI are the experts in the case, Thonhoff said, adding that by their nature, arson cases are difficult to prove.

"I feel sorry for Sam (Post)," Thonhoff said. Post is the owner of the Sportsman and was hospitalized after the fire, but was released this week.

The CBI was called in by Thonhoff to in-

vestigate the cause of the fire. Shepherd was at the scene on Wednesday and on Thursday conducted an all-day investigation with another CBI agent, Jim Jordan of Denver.

On Thursday, Thonhoff said the agents told him they had found evidence that a fast, hot-burning fuel of some type was used in the area in front of the bar.

Thonhoff said the officers told him an accelerant was used and that the origin of the fire was arson.

Asked if it wasn't somewhat unusual for the CBI to be making a statement before lab tests were concluded, Thonhoff said he was surprised, too.

He said he was at the courthouse Thursday afternoon when Shepherd and Jordan called him to the scene of the fire to show him where samples were being taken and burn patterns indicated an accelerate was used.

"I asked them what I should tell the press," Thonhoff said, "and they told me to say arson was suspected."

The fire was reported by a passing motorist at 3:04 a.m. on Oct. 6. Poncha Springs firemen answering the call found smoke billowing out from around the roof.

Although firemen were able to enter the building and initiate an attack on the fire, flames broke through the roof shortly after fire fighters arrived and engulfed the entire structure.

The building, constructed in the late 1940s and extensively remodeled in 1978, was nearly destroyed with losses estimated at more than \$300,000.

Representatives of the the insurance company have also been investigating the fire.

Chimney fire put out

Salida firemen were called to a chimney fire at 444 E. Third St. at about 6 p.m. yesterday.

Even though flames were shooting eight feet from the chimney, there was no damage, fireman Fred Smith said.

The house was rented by Pete Cordova, and when firemen arrived, no one was home. However, the stove doors had been left open and there were logs in the stove, Smith said.

"Once the logs started going, it just got hotter and hotter, and eventually ignited the creosote that had built up inside the chimney," Smith said.

Firemen sprayed a dry chemical inside the stove and closed the doors to extinguish the fire. "That usually works, but sometimes we

Smith said chimney fires are frequent this time of year, as people start using their wood-burning stoves and don't inspect or clean their chimneys. Condensed matter in the chimney, called creosote, has built up from the past heating season, and unless it is removed, it can ignite, causing a chimney fire.

"That's why it's important to get your chimneys checked and cleaned," he said. The Salida and Poncha Springs fire departments offer free chimney inspection, and the area has several chimney sweeps who will clean chimneys that need it.

PAGE 8A

THE PUEBLO CHIEFTAIN, PUEBLO, COLORADO, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1981

Extortionist threatens Salida High

By DICK DIXON
Correspondent

SALIDA (C-SJ) — Security will be stepped up at Salida High School today as investigation continues into four bomb threat and extortion letters received Monday.

A typewritten letter was mailed to Superintendent C.L. Robertson and photo copies of the same letter were mailed to the district attorney's office, Police Chief Leonard Post and Sheriff Harold Thonhoff and the city clerk, although the city clerk letter was addressed inside to Jasper Cor-

tese, who is county clerk.

All four letters were mailed Oct. 23 and arrived in the morning mail Monday.

The letter demanded \$10,000 in small, unmarked bills be left in a ditch near Poncha Springs between Monday and Friday. The letter indicated a homemade bomb, possibly electronically triggered, has been planted in the high school in a well traveled area.

A search Monday by teacher volunteers, custodians, fire department personnel, police, sheriff's officers and a search dog team from Fort Carson had turned up

nothing by 7:45 p.m. Monday. Post said, "Our search now is 99 percent complete and we have found nothing."

Robertson told teachers earlier that, if the search turned up no evidence of a bomb, school would continue as usual today and the rest of the week. All student and teacher activities set for after school Monday were cancelled, including night classes for Colorado Mountain College.

Post said emptying the building helped with search efficiency.

Extortionist issues bomb threat to high school

by KAREN MORRISON

An extortion letter containing a threat to bomb Salida High School if a ransom was not paid by the end of this week was received by Salida School Superintendent C.L. Robertson yesterday morning, but at press time last night, no ransom had been paid and no bomb had been found.

Chaffee County law enforcement officers faced some anxious moments Monday afternoon and evening as an intensive search of the high school and junior high buildings was conducted by local police and firemen, with the assistance of a bomb-sniffing dog and personnel from Ft. Carson.

At a press conference called by law enforcement and school district officials yesterday morning, Robertson explained that "We are proceeding on the assumption that this is a bona fide threat, and will be working with local police and the sheriff's office to determine whether or not a bomb has been placed."

Robertson stressed that the district had an "obligation to the safety of our students," and that all due precautions would be taken.

The letter, which was received in the Monday morning mail, ordered Robertson to collect \$10,000 in small bills and deposit it at a rural site designated by the writer. If the money was not paid before the end of the week, then the writer said a bomb would

destroy the "replaceable" Salida High School and the "irreplaceable" students.

Copies of the same letter were also sent to Sheriff Harold Thonhoff, District Attorney Bill Alderton and County Clerk Jasper Cortese.

At a faculty meeting after school, Robertson informed staff and teachers of the extortion threat and asked their assistance in making "a thorough check of the buildings." Stressing that the teachers were not required to help in the search, Robertson once again reiterated that the district's main objective was to "be sure that no bomb is present, and to continue school," with as much normality as possible, thinking first of all of the safety of students and faculty.

All after-school activities were canceled and the buildings sealed off by 4 p.m. yesterday so the search could start.

The arrival of Sgt. James McCutcheon and Spec. 4 Carol Koenig of the Ft. Carson Military Police K-9 Corps set off a flurry of activity as each area of the school was "sniffed" by Bear, the two-year-old Rottweiler who is trained to find explosives and bombs.

Following the command "seek," Bear sniffed lockers and hallways, vents, classrooms and kitchens, as the school custodial staff and firemen checked false ceilings and areas inaccessible to the dog.

According to McCutcheon, "Bear is the only trained bomb detection dog in Colorado. The nearest other dogs would be in Wyoming or Kansas."

Koenig explained that if the dog sniffed out an explosive, "he would alert us, and then sit. That's what he is trained to do."

Police Chief Leonard Post noted, "The Army is real good about helping us with this sort of thing and with rescues. We couldn't do this as well (the bomb search) without them."

At press time last night the search had been completed, without incident.

"We have searched to the best of our ability," Robertson reported, "and will re-occupy the buildings, only with the approval of Sheriff Thonhoff and Chief Post." Additional security at the school grounds has been scheduled for the remainder of the week, with police patrols scheduled to check the grounds frequently.

Classes are supposed to resume today as scheduled, Robertson said.

As the search concluded, Post said nothing like a bomb had been found and the buildings would be safe for students today.



BEAR, THE CANINE bomb sniffer, spent yesterday afternoon and evening searching Salida High School for evidence of explosives after an extortion letter was received by the school district demanding \$10,000 to keep the school from being destroyed. Spec. 4 Carol Koenig, accompanying the dog in his search, commanded him to "seek" while covering the entire building. Yesterday was her day off — that's why she's not in uniform.



POLICE CHIEF LEONARD POST used the high school main office as a central reporting station, while searchers combed the high school and junior high for a bomb reported to be in the area. After a thorough

search, Post reported that nothing significant had been found and the schools were considered safe for the resumption of classes today. Investigation will continue.

Extortion probe continues

Investigation is continuing by Salida law enforcement officials on the extortion and bomb threat leveled at Salida High School Monday.

Police Chief Leonard Post noted that several leads were being pursued and evidence has been sent to a laboratory.

The threats came in a Monday morning letter received by school superintendent C.L. Robertson.

In the letter, Robertson was ordered to place \$10,000 in small bills in a briefcase and deposit the ransom in a rural location near Poncha Springs.

If the writer's demands were not met by the end of this week, he explained that a bomb which he earlier had caused to be placed in the high school would go off, destroying the school and students.

Copies of the letter to Robertson were also sent to three local officials.

An intensive search was conducted of the high school and junior high school buildings and grounds Monday afternoon and evening, turning up no bomb or other explosive device.

According to Post, "Three coordinated searches were conducted, overlapping each other. The first was by the school faculty and staff. They were asked to check for anything out of the ordinary in the rooms they work in. The second was by the bomb-sniffing dog from Ft. Carson, and the third was by local police and firemen checking the same areas."

Post also noted that federal agencies such as the FBI and U.S. postal inspectors will be consulted in the case, since federal laws were broken. "The charges we will be alleging include extortion, which is a felony and making a bomb threat, which is also a felony," Post said that since the mails had been used to carry out the threats, the Postal Service would be consulted as to possible charges of mail fraud.

Robertson announced yesterday that a \$500 reward was being offered by the school district "for the apprehension and conviction of the person or persons involved."

Robertson explained that the reward offer was being made in conjunction with the Chaffee County Crimestopper Program, which is also offering a reward in the case.

The bomb scare did not appreciably alter attendance at either the high school or junior high yesterday, but school officials noted that Friday might show a higher absentee rate since that day was given as the deadline for the ransom demand.

School and police officials restated their confidence in the security of the school buildings following the Monday evening search.

Post stated "We have searched the area as well as humanly possible, and I feel that it is safe for the students to attend classes."

Robertson, too, noted that the district's first concern was for the safety of students and staff. "We would not allow anyone back in the building if it were not safe to do so."

Extra security measures in and around the school will be in effect for the next several days, to assure the safety of those in the building.



HEAT FROM THE INTENSE FLAMES at yesterday's fire melted the taillights on a row of cars parked in front of the Bob's Auto Sales building on U.S. 50.

Fire rips auto showroom

by ARLENE SHOVALD

Part of a building and a bit of the past were destroyed in an early morning fire yesterday at Bob's Auto Sales in the former Boesch building on U.S. 50 in Salida.

The building housed a used car dealership belonging to Bob Reno and an antique car restoration operation owned by Elmo Bevington.

Among the vintage and classic vehicles destroyed were a 1926 Model T truck, a 1968 Shelby, a 1966 Ford Thunderbird, a 1936 Plymouth, a 1956 Chevrolet pickup truck and a replica of a 1930 Model A Roadster which belonged to Gene Coleman.

The fire apparently started at about 3 a.m. in the front of the building. Cause has not been determined but the Colorado Bureau of Investigation was on the scene yesterday afternoon.

The fire was first noticed by Virgil Weaver, distributing the Rocky Mountain News and the Pueblo Chieftain, at about 3 a.m. He thought he saw smoke in the building, but looking closer, he decided it was steam from the windows caused by the warm interior meeting the cold surface of the glass.

As Weaver finished his route, however, he saw flames in the building. He went to the home of Jim Medina where Medina called the fire department. At about the same time, several other callers reported the fire.

The building was owned by Duane Shearer and was not insured by him. However the first lien on the property was held by the First National Bank of Salida and the building may have been insured by the bank. Since all local financial institutions were closed yesterday, The Mail was unable to get that information or to get an estimate of the dollar value of the building.

Bob Reno has operated a used car business from the building since July. Reno, likewise, did not have an estimate of a loss yesterday.

The front of the building, which contained Reno's offices and a showroom, was destroyed by the fire. The heat was so intense that the tail lights on several vehicles parked in front of the building were melted.

The back portion of the building was occupied by Bevington and contained many antique and classic vehicles. Damage to those vehicles involved mostly smoke and blistered paint.

In all, seven vehicles were destroyed and about 17 or 18 were damaged.

The Salida Fire Department arrived on the scene about 4 a.m. By that time, the front of the building was engulfed in flames.

The Poncha Springs Fire Department was also called, which is usual in the case of a major fire. Eighteen firemen responded from the Salida department and 10 from Poncha. The fire was contained by 5:30 a.m., but the Salida firemen remained on the scene until about 10 a.m. Firemen were also on duty at the scene throughout the day.

Both Reno and Bevington indicated they planned to remain in business but revealed no definite plans at this point.



AN ANTIQUE ROADSTER was among the vehicles destroyed in yesterday's fire at Bob's Auto Sales in the

former Boesch building on U.S. 50 in Salida.



SMOULDERING PAPERS in a filing cabinet reveal a kind of fire loss which is often the most difficult to

replace . . . loss of important records and information.

Fire destroys mobile home

A fire Wednesday morning destroyed a mobile home owned by Jeff Pridemore on CR 256 two miles north of Poncha Springs.

The home, valued at \$5,000, was destroyed in the fire.

Pridemore said he and his father were doing chores on the ranch when he saw smoke and flames coming out of the structure. He said they had just been in the home a few minutes before the blaze started.

"I ran to get a garden hose and started squirting water on the fire but it was no use," Pridemore said.

In addition to the building loss, the loss to personal property was estimated at \$5,000. Destroyed in the fire were a saddle and a collection of rifles.

A new chain saw valued at \$450, a gift from his father for Christmas, was also burned in the fire.

Firemen were called to the scene at about 9:30 a.m. Two units from the South Arkansas Fire Protection District, a tanker and an attack truck, as well as two units of the Poncha Springs Volunteer Fire Department, a tanker and pumper, responded with a total of about 20 men.

Icy roads hampered firemen in getting to the scene of the blaze.

By the time volunteers arrived, the mobile home was engulfed in fire with flame burning through the walls and floor.

Firemen sprayed water on a propane tank 15 feet from the north end of the home. Intense heat generated by the fire caused pressure to build-up inside the tank, popping a safety valve. The tank did not explode.

A woodburning stove was in use at the time of the fire, although firemen had not determined the cause of the blaze.



ONLY BURNED RUINS were left of a mobile home owned by Jeff Pridemore after a fire went through the structure yesterday morning. Icy roads delayed

firemen, who got there in time to keep a propane tank from exploding.

1. CARDS OF THANKS

THANK YOU so very much to the Fire Department for their promptness, courtesy and hard work on Christmas Eve, between 7 and 8pm, when we had a fireplace chimney fire. They deserve the best. Also, would like to thank the young lady who stopped her car, and came in to inform us there was fire coming out of our chimney. Would like for her to call us and give us her name.

Sincerely,
Harry C. & Carol J. Witter
7450 County Road 120
3xD31

TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 1982

Arson isn't ruled out in auto shop fire

Laboratory tests of debris taken from the fire remains at Bob's Auto Sales by investigators from the Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) do not rule out the possibility of arson. The test results were given to the Salida Police Department last week.

According to Police Chief Leonard Post "The tests indicate that arson should not be ruled out, and the fire will be investigated as such."

The early morning fire Nov. 11, destroyed several vintage and classic vehicles which were on display in the showroom and damaged vehicles being restored in the back of the building.

Post noted that local police investigators will follow-up the CBI report "with numerous interviews and possible polygraph tests. The CBI will also be involved in the in-

vestigation."

The building on U.S. 50 has housed several auto dealerships in the past and was most recently leased by Bob Reno from Duane Shearer. Shearer did not carry any insurance on the building, however the first lien on the building is held by The First National Bank, which carried some insurance on the structure.

Calling in the CBI to investigate a fire "is pretty much standard procedure for us if there is a death involved or if there is a large unexplained fire," Post explained. "We don't have a lot of expertise in that area, so we call them to help us out."

Post stressed that tests of this sort are not 100 percent conclusive, but are rather an educated opinion. However, it will be the basis of the local police investigation into the circumstances surrounding the blaze.

Thursday Jan. 7 1982

Firemen will loan brushes

If you want to clean your own chimney, Salida firemen will help you.

They won't get on the roof, but they do offer free inspections to tell you if your chimney is full of soot and creosote, and if it needs to be cleaned, they'll loan you the equipment.

Bob Liewers, a volunteer fireman, said the department has six-inch and eight-inch round and square brushes, along with 18 feet

of handle, available for area residents.

Although there is no charge for using the brushes, borrowers must sign for them and are allowed only 24 hours per use.

"There have been too many chimney fires in town because people haven't cleaned their chimneys," Liewers said, "so we firemen decided to get the equipment to loan to people so they could clean their chimneys."

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1982

Caboose burns

A fire late yesterday morning gutted a vintage caboose in Garfield, destroying a ski touring business owned by Art and Mona Hutchinson.

The cause of the blaze at the Monarch Ski Touring Center is believed to be a wood-burning stove.

Hutchinson estimated the loss at \$30,000 to the inventory of cross-country skis, boots, poles and equipment. He said the caboose, built in 1903 for the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad, was valued at \$20,000. It was a total loss.

The structure and its contents were covered by fire insurance but Hutchinson said he was not sure if the loss would be fully covered.

Employees of the Monarch Lodge in Garfield, across the street from the touring center, noticed heavy smoke coming from the flue of the caboose at about 11:15 a.m.

John Engelbrecht of Monarch said it first looked as though there was a normal amount of smoke coming from the flue. "Then I realized there was just too much smoke coming out."

Lodge employees began running up the hill to the caboose carrying fire extinguishers.

Dave Curfman was the first person to get to the fire. He kicked in the door at the west end of the caboose, lay on his stomach on the floor and started squirting fire extinguishers at the foot of the fire, Engelbrecht said.

"We must have poured the contents of six to eight extinguishers on it. I thought for a minute that we had controlled it."

"Then I was walking by a window and suddenly the entire insides of the thing started glowing a bright orange."

Engelbrecht said he yelled at Curfman and just then flames shot out ten feet past the door "just above Dave's head" engulfing the insides and roof of the caboose.

(Continued to Page 8)



A GARFIELD BUSINESS was destroyed Thursday morning when a fire caused by a faulty woodburning stove gutted a caboose built in 1903. Here firemen work to complete the cold job of putting the fire out. The Monarch Ski Tour Center, a cross-country rental and

retail shop owned by Art and Mona Hutchinson, suffered a loss estimated at \$50,000. Employees of the Monarch Lodge discovered the fire and attempted to put it out with fire extinguishers until a ball of flame engulfed the structure.

Fire destroys ski shop in caboose

(Continued from Page 1)

"After that it was hopeless. We just waited for the fire department to get there. In 30 seconds fire was coming out everywhere." Hutchinson said the caboose had been moved to Garfield in October 1980 from Buena Vista where it was the home of the Stagestop Trader, a gift shop.

In fall 1980 it had been converted for use as a retail and rental shop for cross-country skiing.

He said he had put in a slightly larger woodburner in the caboose about two weeks ago and had used the stove every day since. There was insulation under and around the stove and where it went through the roof.

Thursday morning he said he stopped at the caboose to conduct some business and while he was there started a fire in the stove to warm the building.

He said his wife and children were going to be coming up to run the shop later in the morning. At about 9:30 a.m., he left the structure to go to his instructor's job at the Monarch Ski Area.

An attack truck from the county and a tanker from the South Arkansas Fire Protection District along with four Salida paid and volunteer firemen responded to the fire. The Poncha Springs Volunteer Fire Department, ten volunteers and a pumper truck also responded.

Firemen were hampered in getting to the fire by icy, snow-packed roads and poor visibility. Once at the scene they had to cope with subzero temperatures and a wind chill factor of 25 to 35 below zero.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1982

Smoke damages homes

A small fire yesterday morning caused smoke damage to the home of Bob and Connie Reno, 634 C St.

Capt. Fred Smith of the Salida Fire Department said the fire was started by six-year-old Johnny Reno, who put papers in an upstairs hot-air furnace vent, then lit the papers on fire. Firemen got the call at 10:46 a.m.

"There wasn't any structural damage or anything like that," Smith said, "and no one was hurt. We just had to clear the smoke out of the house."

Firemen were also called out Tuesday night to a mobile home in the Big Springs Trailer Court on CR 105.

There, papers had been stacked too close to a wood-burning stove, Smith said, and they caught on fire. The trailer was owned by Dorothy Sprague. No one was injured and the fire was extinguished before there was any substantial damage to the trailer.

Smith said firemen advised Sprague to move her stove, since it sat only five inches from a wall.



Tues. March 2 1982

BOB LIEVERS, representing the Salida Volunteer Firemen, told the council that a 1976 van had been purchased by the volunteer group, "to carry extra equipment that doesn't fit on the truck. We will carry an electrical generator, rescue suits and extra boots and hats and other items that are sometimes needed."

The volunteers asked the council to accept the title to the truck which was purchased by the group, in return for taking care of the licensing and insurance.



Firemen buy van for support gear

The Salida Fire Department will soon have a rescue van available, for carrying extra equipment, chemical suits, extra air bottles and a light plant.

The firemen and volunteers are renovating a 1976 Chevrolet one-ton box van which they bought recently for that purpose.

"The availability of the light plant will also be beneficial for the state patrol and the local police at night crime scenes," said Tim Nelson, fireman.

Nelson noted the van will expand the fire-fighting capabilities of the department. One instance where it would have been valuable was in the fire at Bob's Auto Sales, where the availability of a portable light system would have enabled fire fighters to see when the roof was caving in.

To help pay for the van, the volunteers will hold an auction July 9 at the fire station. Mel Keserich will be the auctioneer and any donations of items will be appreciated.

"All items donated are tax deductible," Nelson said.

Anyone having items to donate should contact one of the Salida volunteer firemen or call 539-2212.



SALIDA FIREMAN Tim Nelson works to install the light bar on the van which the fire department recently acquired to carry back-up gear to fires.

Mar. 24 1982
Wed:

No fire

14 firemen went out at 10:30 p.m. last night to Bruce Peeples' ranch, but it was a false alarm. A neighbor reported the fire, and apparently she only saw a few chimney sparks.

Monday APRIL 5, 1982

Fire guts rural house

What was reported as a chimney fire turned out to be a major blaze Saturday night at the Kenneth W. Clark residence on CR 107, causing extensive damage and killing the family dog.

According to reports, a telephone caller reported sparks coming out of the chimney at 7675 CR 107 at 10:15 p.m. The first attack truck was sent to contain the chimney fire, but discovered that more was involved than originally thought and the Salida tanker truck was sent to the scene. Later the Poncha Springs Volunteer Fire Department was called to assist.

The fire was controlled 20 minutes after the first call came in, but mop-up operations lasted until close to 1 a.m. Twelve firemen from Salida and seven from Poncha Springs worked to extinguish the fire.

The fire is thought to have started in the woodstove with a chimney fire which eventually burned through the chimney pipe and then through one wall in the house. Once blazing, the fire burned from the basement to the roof.

Sixty percent of the structure is estimated to have been burned with extreme smoke damage to the rest of the building.

No one was injured by the fire, as the Clark family was on vacation at the time. However, the family dog was found dead in the house.

One fireman was reported to have been injured while fighting the fire. Tim Nelson apparently fell off a ladder and was taken to the Salida Hospital.

Damage estimates are still undetermined at this time.

Friday March 26th 1982



LLOYD NACCARATO watched in vain as his outhouse, near U.S. 50, burned to the ground yesterday afternoon. Firemen were too late to save the 90-year-old privy. Naccarato said he has no plans to rebuild it. Mike Neilly, 13, and Brent Martin 12, reported the fire.

Chark Fine



Monday April 12th 1982 Fire destroyed 'Salida's pride'

by ARLENE SHOVALD

The early evening hours of April 12, 1899, were disturbed the sounding of the fire alarm.

It was the worst possible kind of fire. The Rio Grande Hospital, the "pride of Salida," was burning.

The alarm sounded at 8:45 p.m.

A crowd responded quickly, some to watch, others to help evacuate the patients from the building and to help put out the flames.

In minutes, 32 patients were removed from the main building and six evacuated from the annex. The patients were removed to homes surrounding the hospital, after which the work of getting out the valuable furnishings and surgical equipment began.

In the excitement of trying to get the items out of the building, some of the equipment was handled in a strange manner.

Some wooden cases with glass fronts, containing framed pictures, were thrown from the second-floor veranda and smashed into splinters, while at the same time, bedding was carefully carried down the stairs and outside.

In laying the hose, things got so badly confused that at one point, both ends of one hose were brought to the annex, ready for the nozzle.

Although none of the patients suffered any injuries, there were injuries among the fire fighters and others who assisted.

Dr. F.M. Russel hurt his knee, Dr. G.H. Hara had his leg bruised when a heavy case fell on him, and E.T. Conquest and J.T. Benson suffered bad cuts on their hands from broken glass. (Apparently people were big on initials in those days ... every person referred the story of the fire went by initials.)

The fire originated in the attic but the cause was not determined. Some speculated that a match had been thrown into the bedding that was stored in the attic and

smouldered for hours. Others felt the electric wiring may have become "disarranged." Then there was the theory of spontaneous combustion.

Whatever the cause, the fire left the hospital in ruins. The walls stood, but most of the interior was damaged. Two days after the fire one of the gables, which was capped by a tall chimney, was torn down when it was deemed unsafe.

An unknown man was seen ransacking a drawer in a case that had been placed on the lawn.

According to the newspaper, "a fist blow under the ear sent him about his business and he disappeared through the back gate."

After that guards were placed on the furnishings.

THE HOSPITAL FIRE alerted the city to the fact that it was lacking in fire fighting equipment and ability to manage it.

Water pressure was bad and Mayor Arenberg had the city patrolled, telling everyone to shut off the water so there would be more pressure for fighting the fire.

Salida was outgrowing the existing water system and something would have to be done to improve it.

Another suggestion made was for the city to obtain a chemical or steam engine.

What a "chemical engine" might have been is unclear. But a steam engine was used to increase the pressure of the water being pumped.

"The most reasonable plan," according to The Salida Mail, "would be to first improve the system by relaying pipes, organizing an effective department and then, if this force proves ineffective, adding a steam engine."

Had the force been sufficient that Wednesday night and the department thoroughly organized, the article stated, the damage to the hospital building would have been merely



THE ORIGINAL RIO GRANDE HOSPITAL was heavily damaged by fire 83 years ago today on April 12, 1899.

nominal.

Complicating matters that same night, was the fact that a second alarm was sounded, even before the hospital fire was out.

A boxcar, used for oil storage, caught fire. The only protection available was a lawn hose and that didn't have enough pressure to sprinkle a flower bed.

The fire quickly became very hot and another nearby boxcar caught fire. Both the cars were separated from other cars by hand and the fire was eventually put out, but the boxcar containing the oil was consumed with all of its contents.

Since the "fever annex" of the hospital was relatively undamaged, most of the patients were moved to that area.

(Continued to Page 8)

(Continued from Page 1)

There also was another hospital, the Red Cross Hospital, in Salida, which could accommodate the overflow of patients. That hospital was in the building now occupied by the Masonic Hall.

The Rio Grande Hospital was well insured,

however, and plans were begun at once to rebuild the facility.

The second Rio Grande Hospital was constructed sometime prior to 1902, with essentially the same architectural design as the original building. It still remains as the core of the present Salida Hospital.



SALIDA FIREMAN Tim Nelson squirts water on propane bottles just removed from a fire at Magnum Sporting Goods last night. Looking on is volunteer Bob Leivers.

When firemen opened the storeroom door, gunpowder boxes and bottles of propane were exploding from intense heat and flames. There were no injuries.

Magnum hit by fire



GETTING A FRESH TANK of air, Salida volunteer Gary Prosser gasps after helping to put out the fire. Helping to change the tank are Roy Hurley, Tim Nelson and John Sell. Firemen contained the blaze to the storeroom and prevented the fire from spreading to the attic where it could have spread to other stores in the shopping center.

A fire at the Magnum Sporting Goods Tuesday evening caused heavy smoke damage to retail goods in the store.

A quick response by Salida firemen is credited with preventing heavy damage to the building at Rainbow Square on U.S. 50.

The shop, owned and operated by Dan Curry, carried a value of \$120,000. Curry said it would be some time before he would be able to give an estimate on damages.

Fred Smith, Salida fire captain, said the cause of the fire is not known. No investigation is planned.

The fire alarm was turned in by Claude Jessey of Salida TV, one of the stores in the square. Jessey and his wife were leaving their store for the evening.

"Some customers came in late so we waited until they left. On our way out the door we smelled smoke," Jessey said.

"When I looked up (the hallway), all I could see in the Magnum was smoke. Nothing else."

When firemen arrived just after 6 p.m., they found the store filled with dense smoke.

After cutting a hole in the roof to create a vent for heat and smoke, firemen entered the building and extinguished the blaze.

The fire was centered in the rear storeroom portion of the shop where ammunition, gunpowder, propane bottles and white gas were stored.

Volunteer fireman Gary Prosser said the gunpowder and propane bottles were exploding when firemen opened the storeroom door.

The fire was just breaking through the attic when firemen got to the scene. If it had broken through the ceiling, firemen said it would have spread over the other shops in the mall.

Smoke damage to other shops and store was believed light.

Twelve firemen and three pieces of equipment responded to the fire.

Monday July 26th 1982

Fire destroys sheds Sunday

by KAREN MORRISON

A Sunday afternoon fire destroyed several sheds in an alley between West First Street and Sackett Avenue.

The buildings, on the property of Tom and Lynn Williams, had been used for storage and were destroyed by the blaze.

Salida Fire Department responded to a fire call at 2:20 p.m., however the buildings were engulfed in flame by the time firemen arrived.

Nearby resident Steffie Trujillo was alerted to the smoke by her brother Joe Martinez. "I went to call the fire department, but I was so excited I couldn't remember the number so I called the operator and she gave me the man to talk to. He told me the fire trucks were on their way."

While Trujillo was trying to contact the fire department, Martinez pushed a car near the alley to a safe location, then sprayed water from a garden hose on one end of the building.

"I didn't want anything else to catch on fire so I tried to spray the side closest to another building so the fire wouldn't spread," Martinez said.

The Williams' were not home when the fire broke out, but returned while firemen were cleaning up.

"What can I say?" said Lynn Williams. "We don't have any insurance on these sheds. Fortunately no one was hurt and there wasn't too much damage to anything else around here."

Tom Williams said the sheds were to be torn down in the future for a studio. "I hadn't planned to tear down these buildings quite so soon, but now I guess we'll just have to get it done."

The sheds have been on Williams' property since before 1903, and the wooden structures were quickly destroyed.

Williams hinted that someone may have started the fire. "Saturday we came home from the grocery store and found one of our snowmobiles on fire. Someone had opened the gas tank and the machine was burning when we got here. We put the fire out with a hose and fire extinguisher. I don't know how this fire started, but it wouldn't surprise me if a kid started it."

Phone service was interrupted in the area when heat from the fire melted phone lines over the building. A service representative from Public Service investigated the electrical wiring and found no severe damage.



SALIDA FIREMAN Tim Nelson and Salida Policeman Paul Ottmer surveyed the damage resulting from a fire Sunday afternoon. Several old sheds owned by Tom and Lynn Williams were destroyed in the blaze.



SMOKE COULD BE SEEN for miles as several old wooden sheds burned Sunday afternoon. No one was

injured and damages to the contents of the old buildings has not yet been determined.



Monday Aug. 23, 1982
Fire damages bar roof

Firemen and equipment from Salida and Poncha Springs were called to Bronco Billy's on U.S. 50 Friday night when a fire broke out in the attic above the restaurant.

Firemen were on the scene for about two

hours controlling the blaze, which was confined mostly to the attic.

The cause of the fire was unknown, but one fireman speculated that a leaky roof and heavy rains could have caused water to short electrical lines below the roof. Damage was estimated to be close to \$20,000.

Bronco Billy's bar was reopened Saturday night, but the restaurant remains closed for repairs.

Tues. Sept 14th
Salida firemen busy in August

SALIDA (C-SJ) — Although there was only one fire here last month, firemen stayed busy with a number of other duties and calls.

Fire Chief James Gray reported that firemen responded six times to remove hornet nests and once to chase a bat from a stove. They were called to flush one sewer, answered a report of a car fire, took burned food off a stove and aired the house, and checked one faulty smoke alarm.

South Arkansas Fire Protection District firemen answered one call for a hazardous materials simulation and fought one fire in a business.

Chaffee County firemen responded to one hazardous materials report and a standby call at a power pole hit by lightning. Volunteer firemen met twice with one business meeting and the other for training at the Sal-Gas plant, where men learned which valves to turn on and off in case of emergency.

City firemen inspected 26 businesses and found "most in good shape."

Tuvs

5 p.m. - 7 p.m. — Chili supper sponsored by Salida Volunteer Firemen at the Presbyterian Church. \$3 for adults. \$1.50 for children under 12. Proceeds will help pay for the rescue van.

Thursday Oct. 14th 1982



PROCEEDS from the Salida Volunteer Firemen's chili supper will help pay for this rescue van which department members have been renovating over the past several months. The van contains a Stokes litter (wire basket), ropes and salvage equipment, two acid fire suits, rescue tools, air tanks and refills and other rescue equipment. The chili supper will be held from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Friday at the Presbyterian Church. Cost will be \$3 for adults and \$1.50 for children under 12. The public is invited.

OCT 14th 1982



SALIDA FIREMEN weren't trying to put out the fires of hell yesterday, even though it may have looked that way. The firemen were spraying water into a trash pit at the Bert Martinez residence, 415 New St. Martinez said he usually dumps ashes into a barrel until they cool off, but yesterday, for the first time, he dumped them directly into the pit. Firemen were called out at 8:58 a.m. and were on the scene 20 minutes. There was no damage.

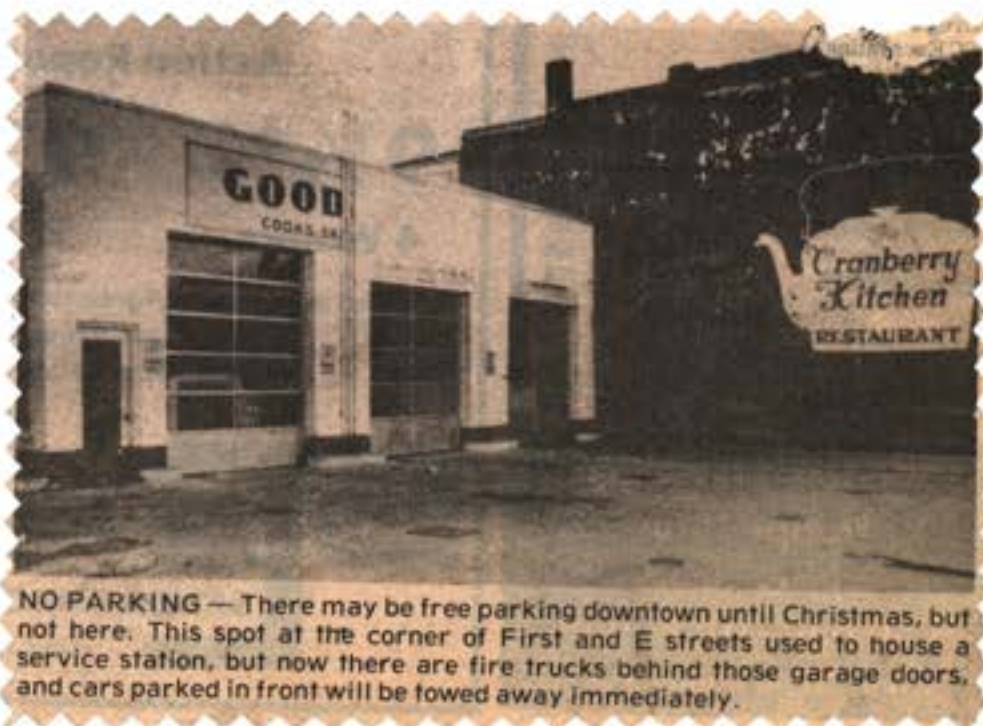
Friday Nov 12 1982

Spaghetti

If you don't want to cook tonight and would like to enjoy a tasty spaghetti supper prepared by someone else, you can do so from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. tonight at the Presbyterian Church.

The Salida Volunteer Firemen are sponsoring a spaghetti supper, and the public is invited to attend. Tickets are \$3.50 for adults and \$2 for children.

10/15/82



NO PARKING — There may be free parking downtown until Christmas, but not here. This spot at the corner of First and E streets used to house a service station, but now there are fire trucks behind those garage doors, and cars parked in front will be towed away immediately.

Friday Dec 10, 1982

Thursday Oct. 21 1982

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1983

Bomb shakes trooper's house

by ED QUILLEN

Something that may have been a home-made bomb exploded at the garage of a state trooper at about 9:30 p.m. last night, and the blast was heard all over Salida.

The bomb went off at the garage behind the home of state trooper Cliff Watson, 325 W. Sixth St., while the family was inside watching television.

"It rocked the house," Colleen Watson said. "I thought it was a sonic boom at first."

Dave Watson said he thought it was an exploding gas tank, but when he went outside to see what had happened, "the place reeked of gunpowder."

The bomb had apparently been placed between the two doors of the garage, which faces the alley behind the house. No one was injured, but pieces were blown out of the doors and some items in the garage were damaged.

Duane Heister, who lives nearby at 546 H

St., was in his front yard when the bomb went off. "I kind of felt it," he said. "I thought a gas tank had exploded." Catherine Heister, who was inside the house, said she "thought the house was going to come down when that went off."

Salida volunteer fireman Bob Lievers said he heard the explosion in Pinon Hills.

"We don't know what it was," fireman Tim Nelson said. "It smelled like gunpowder, but that's about all we know right now."

I. CARD OF THANKS

I WOULD LIKE to express my heartfelt thanks to the unidentified lady who took the time to "become involved" and let me know my house was possibly on fire. She undoubtedly saved my home for me. Also to the dedicated and untiring firemen of the Salida Fire Department and the Volunteer Fire Department a grateful thank you. Due to their expertise they managed to keep the fire damage and water damage to a minimum while saving my home. I hope this community realizes how fortunate we all are to know they are there when the need arises.

Virginia Henderson



SALIDA FIREMEN, called to the explosion at state trooper Cliff Watson's house last night, prepare to rope off the area so the investigation can continue today. The

hole made by the bomb is in the center of the garage doors.

Thursday
January 27, 1983



Motor home burns

Firemen were called at 11 a.m. yesterday to control a fire in a motor home in the Methodist Mountain Estates subdivision, south of U.S. 50.

Terry Horn, Mooreland, Okla., and a friend Mike Key, arrived in Salida yesterday for the start of a skiing vacation. "We were just sitting here in the house this morning," Horn reported, "when we heard the horn honking on the vehicle. We went outside, and I could see smoke coming out of the vent and some flames underneath. The windows were tinted, so I couldn't see inside, but when I opened the

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Professionally trained countermen,
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import, truck and 4x4 parts

Most men can shave closer than they do now without drawing a drop of blood, provided they follow newly-published tips from 15 leading doctors and several shaving industry researchers.
The tips, drawn from a survey of dermatologists and other experts, are listed in an article in the February issue of Popular Mechanics. The experts advise:
"Avoid shaving immediately after rising from bed. Because you've been reclining all night, your face is usually bloated with moisture, making it easier to nick yourself."

The bomb went off at the garage behind the home of state trooper Cliff Watson, 325 W. Sixth St., while the family was inside watching television.

"It rocked the house," Colleen Watson said. "I thought it was a sonic boom at first."

between the two doors of the garage, which faces the alley behind the house. No one was injured, but pieces were blown out of the doors and some items in the garage were damaged.

Duane Heister, who lives nearby at 546 H

the house was going to come down when that went off."

Salida volunteer fireman Bob Lievers said he heard the explosion in Pinon Hills. "We don't know what it was," fireman Tim Nelson said. "It smelled like gunpowder, but that's about all we know right now."

was possibly on fire. She undoubtedly saved my home for me. Also to the dedicated and untiring firemen of the Salida Fire Department and the Volunteer Fire Department a grateful thank you. Due to their expertise they managed to keep the fire damage and water damage to a minimum while saving my home. I hope this community realizes how fortunate we all are to know they are there when the need arises.

Virginia Henderson



SALIDA FIREMEN, called to the explosion at state trooper Cliff Watson's house last night, prepare to rope off the area so the investigation can continue today. The

hole made by the bomb is in the center of the garage doors.

Thursday
January 27, 1983



FIRE DESTROYED a \$25,000 motor home yesterday, and owner Terry Horn explained to Salida Fire Chief Jim Gray how he thought the fire started. Horn had stopped at a Chevrolet dealer in Raton, N.M. for carburetor repairs Tuesday, and he believes the fire started in the engine area.

Motor home burns

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Terry Horn, Mooreland, Okla., and a friend Mike Key, arrived in Salida yesterday for the start of a skiing vacation. "We were just sitting here in the house this morning," Horn reported, "when we heard the horn honking on the vehicle. We went outside, and I could see smoke coming out of the vent and some flames underneath. The windows were tinted, so I couldn't see inside, but when I opened the door, it just went poof and I got out of there."

Key ran to a neighboring house and asked Theresa Ashmore to call the fire department. "First I thought the dogs were going to get me," Key said. "She told me they bite, but I got in the house okay. She had trouble finding the number for the fire department, so that took a little time, but they got up here."

Salida Fire Chief Jim Gray said his department received the call at 11 a.m. and, when the firemen arrived, "The vehicle was totally in flame in the front section. We had to worry about 40 gallons of propane stored in the back, but we kept the fire from getting back there."

Horn estimated the value of the GMC Glenbrook motor home at "over \$25,000."

The fire is thought to have started in the engine area. Horn told Gray that yesterday in Raton, N.M., he had stopped at a garage and had a carburetor kit installed. "Gee, I liked that mechanic, too; he was real nice," Horn said.

"We've only used this thing three times since we got it two years ago. I guess we won't be using it anymore. My wife is going to die when she hears about this."

Chimney fire spreads to attic

A two-story house at 612 D St. suffered extensive roof damage yesterday afternoon as a chimney fire spread to the attic.

Salida firemen were called to the home of Virginia Henderson — the sister-in-law of fire Capt. Jerry Henderson — at 4:30 p.m.

yesterday, after a passerby saw smoke coming from the roof and went to the house to tell the occupants about it.

They called the fire department, which spent two hours going after the fire. Fireman Wes Wagner said the fire began

as a chimney fire, caused by creosote building up in a brick flue. One of the bricks was bad, he said, which allowed the fire to spread into the attic. Fireman ran into problems reaching the fire, "but we finally got it out," Wagner said. No one was injured.

Friday
February 4, 1983

Tuesday
February 22, 1983



RAY ZOBERSKI adds a little more water to a burned area next to the Crawford home on CR 144, after gusts spread a small weed and grass fire out of control.

Grass fires quelled

Two out-of-control weed burns had firemen busy yesterday afternoon as wind gusts carried the fires farther than anticipated.

Ray Zoberskie, 8445 CR 144, told Salida Fire Chief Jim Gray that he was "just burning a few weeds and grass and everything was fine. Then a gust of wind caught it and turned it the other way."

The fire reached a pile of wood behind the home of Dudley Crawford, 8435 CR 144, but was stopped there.

At the same time the fire was being controlled at Zoberskie's place, another broke out on CR 190.

Tank trucks and firemen were dispatched to the home of Paul and Marge Usnick, 11610 CR 190, where another weed burn had blown out of control.

According to Marge Usnick, "Paul was just burning these weeds, and all of a sudden the wind came up and the fire was spreading every which way. He was yelling at me from the field next door, but I couldn't hear him so I just called the fire department. It didn't look like he could control it anymore."

Usnick noted he'd been burning weeds for 50 years and never had one get out of control. "I guess the wind just got crazy."

Gray reminded people anticipating burning their weeds that several safety measures should be observed. "Before you start your fire, you must report the burn to the sheriff's office. You can also call the fire department, 539-2212. Have a hose or something available in case you need it, and also have a few extra people with you so they can help if things get out of control."

Burning within Salida city limits is prohibited by law, but people outside the city may legally burn grass and weeds.



MARGE USNICK looks out the door of her trailer on CR 190. An out-of-control weed burn brought flames all the way up to the sidewalk of her home before stopping.

Wednesday March 9th 1983

Chimney fire put out

A chimney fire in a mobile home was extinguished in minutes last night by Salida firemen.

The fire, in a trailer owned by Frankie Collins at 109 Eric Lane, apparently resulted from a creosote accumulation in the metal flue, according to Capt. Fred Smith.

Smith said that when firemen arrived at 7:46 p.m., the triple-wall pipe "was glowing red on the inside and the outside. It was really hot. There wasn't any flame coming out of the

top then, but I imagine there was before we got there."

Firemen used a 2½-gallon fire extinguisher on the inside and poured water down the flue from the top. "We had it out in no time," Smith said, "but then we cut away some of the roof to make sure the ceiling hadn't caught fire."

No one was injured, and Smith estimated the damage at \$100.

Monday
March 7, 1983

5 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. — The Salida Volunteer Fire Department is having a spaghetti supper at the Presbyterian Church. The public is invited.



EVEN A FRONT-END LOADER filled with snow wasn't enough to extinguish a fire in the caretaker's trailer at the Monarch Ski Resort yesterday afternoon. Monarch employees also emptied a dozen fire ex-

tinguishers to no avail — the structure was gone before fire trucks could reach it.

Photo by Allen Best

Fire guts Monarch trailer

A travel trailer, used as a caretaker's residence at the Monarch Ski Resort, was gutted by fire yesterday afternoon, being destroyed before firemen could get there from Salida and Poncha Springs. No one was injured in the blaze.

Ned Stock, ski area manager, said the 30-

foot trailer next to the maintenance garage was home to John Braun, who works as caretaker and is on the ski area's night crew.

"At about 2:05 p.m.," Stock said, "Braun opened the door to his trailer and saw a wall of flame. Apparently, the fire had been smoldering for some time, and when it got

oxygen from his opening the door, it just went up."

Ski area personnel emptied 10 fire extinguishers, "but we couldn't do much," Stock said. "It was engulfed in flames, and we couldn't stop it. It was pretty much a loss by the time the firemen got here."

Tuesday April 19, 1983

Fire hits rural home

A fire Sunday night heavily damaged a house on the Mugford ranch on CR 163 northwest of Salida.

An insurance adjuster estimated damages to the two-story wooden frame structure at \$20,000 to \$25,000.

When firemen arrived, fire was shooting out of the northwestern corner with the attic and roof fully involved in flame.

Salida fireman Tim Nelson, first on the scene, said he and sheriff's deputy Dennis Norman first used the county's small attack truck, but the 250 gallons carried on the truck were not enough to control the blaze.

Water from a tanker truck and a pumper had to be used to control the fire.

Owner Roy Mugford said the fire was discovered by his nephew, Bruce Mugford, at about 9:15 p.m., when he went upstairs. When the lights didn't come on, he looked outside and saw flames shooting out through the roof.

Mugford said the entire roof will have to be replaced as will the second-floor ceiling.

"Firemen did a good job keeping the fire from spreading from the attic," Mugford said. "It could have been a lot worse."

By spreading canvas covers, he said, most of the personal property on the first floor did

not receive extensive water damage.

Responding to the fire were 13 Salida firemen and volunteers along with eight firefighters from Poncha Springs.

Equipment used to fight the fire included the South Arkansas Fire Protection District tanker, the support van of the Salida Fire Department and a pumper from the Poncha Springs Volunteer Fire Department.

Three units from the Northern Chaffee County Fire Protection District also responded to the fire.

Salida Fire Chief Jim Gray said the blaze probably resulted from a chimney fire which deposited burning creosote on the shake shingle roof.

The fire burned through the roof and into the attic.

Before being brought under control, the fire had spread throughout the attic. Because firemen had difficulty extinguishing the fire, water damage to ceilings, walls and the contents of second floor bedrooms was extensive.

Firemen were on the scene until midnight fighting the fire and cleaning equipment and second-floor rooms.

Monday
May 23, 1983

Firemen plan ball

The Salida Volunteer Fire Department Firemen's Ball will run from 9 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. Saturday at the Salida Elks Lodge.

Music will be provided by "Gypsy Wind."

Dance proceeds will go toward the department's recently purchased fire equipment van.

Door prizes will be awarded.

Friday
April 22, 1983



FIREMEN NEEDED only 30 gallons of water to extinguish a fire in the attic of this two-story home yesterday. Nine firemen responded to the 11:15 a.m. call.

Small chinmey fire put out quickly

A chimney fire at the George Hazel residence on CR 126, caught attic insulation of fire yesterday and caused an estimated \$400 in damage.

Nine firemen responded with three trucks, but according to Salida Fire Chief Jim Gray, "He had the garden hose in there when we got here, and the fire was already out."

Gray attributed the fire to creosote buildup in the chimney and reminded local residents to check chimneys frequently and clean them when needed.

Friday May 27, 1983



SOON, the sidewalk along the 100 block of E Street will no longer be clogged with canvas after every local fire — the Salida Fire Department is getting its own hose-drying tower.

Photos by Jim Gurnsey

WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 1983



A PIT FIRE training session was held near Marvin Field by Salida and Poncha Springs firemen Monday night. About 250 gallons of waste oil and spoiled gas were burned. Flames shot up more than 75 feet, and a column of black smoke rose over the pit.

Here, two Salida firemen move in on the fire garbed in special proximity suits while firemen in "traditional bunkers" look on. Firemen tested various hose streams and water additives on the flames. More than 20 firemen participated in the exercise.

Friday 17 Aug. 5, 1983

Firemen holding yard sale

Salida firemen will be holding a yard sale from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday on the corner of First and E streets.

The yard sale is the second major activity for the firemen in recent weeks. The fourth annual firemen's picnic was held Sunday, July

31, with four firemen, eight volunteers and their families attending.

Husband and wife teams played horseshoes, and a volleyball game featured the women versus the children.

Fire

Fire department officials are investigating a garage fire that occurred in Salida on Saturday for arson. A story and picture are on page 3.

No Date
found loose

Monday
May 30, 1983



THREE GOATS died and a shed was destroyed by a fire up Bear Creek Friday. Spectators' cars hampered firemen, who arrived too late to save the building. The fire was started by children playing with matches.

Fire destroys shed, 3 goats

Children playing with matches caused a fire which killed three goats and destroyed a shed and its contents Friday evening.

The blaze was at the home of Larry Hartsell on Bear Creek Road, CR 101, in Fremont County.

When Salida firemen arrived at the scene,

the shed was completely involved in flames. The loss to the shed and its contents was estimated at \$5,000.

Firemen were delayed in getting to the fire five to ten minutes by onlookers whose cars and trucks parked along the narrow road

prevented the passage of fire equipment. The vehicles had to be backed up so that trucks could get to the lane leading to the blaze.

Besides the goats, the 30'x30' structure contained tools including welders, drill press and a utility trailer.



THE SALIDA FIRE ANGELS took first place in the trophy. commercial division with this entry. They received a

THE MOUNTAIN MAIL □ SALIDA, COLORADO □ MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1983 □ 5

Blaze damages garage

A fire of suspicious origin Saturday afternoon caused an estimated \$10,000 in damage to a garage and home in Salida.

The property at 318 E. Second St. is owned by Larry Norris of Denver. The house was vacant at the time of the fire.

When firemen arrived at the scene they found the garage totally involved in flames. The structure was used for storage. A nearby shed was also blazing when firefighters arrived.

Smoke damaged the house the garage was attached to and flames scorched a neighbor's home.

Firemen suspect arson caused the fire. Samples have been taken for further analysis.

Nine firemen, a pumper and tanker responded to the call.



DAMAGES WERE HEAVY in a fire at a garage at 318 E. Second St. in Salida Saturday afternoon. The home was not occupied at the time of the fire. Firemen found

the garage at left fully involved in fire when they arrived at the scene. The property is owned by Larry Norris of Denver.

Monday Aug. 8, 1983

Thunderstorms jar area; rain floods BV businesses

Wet weather continued over the weekend as Chaffee County continued to feel the effects of severe late afternoon thunderstorms.

Only slight damages and no injuries resulted when lightning struck Columbine Manor during a storm Friday evening in Salida.

Many of the residents were sitting down to dinner when the strike hit the western wing of the Manor at 5:30 p.m.

Rebecca Shottliff, the nurse in charge at the time, said she heard a loud crash and then the fire alarm went off. An aide came up from the west wing and said lightning had hit one of the resident's rooms.

"As soon as the fire alarm went off, I called the fire department right away," Shottliff said. "We could smell smoke but we never

saw smoke or flames."

The "very large flash" caused the lights to blink momentarily but that was all.

There were no complications, Shottliff said. Manor residents had their dinner temporarily interrupted, though, as Salida firemen thoroughly checked the attic of the building. No signs of damage were visible from the strike.

Two ambulance units also responded but none of the residents required assistance.

The lightning strike came from a storm which dumped about 1½ inches of rain on Salida and portions of the county in a 40-minute period. Another 0.2 of an inch fell at other times Friday.

Several businesses in Buena Vista had flooding problems from the heavy rains that

fell there Friday afternoon, and in some cases, the fire department was called to assist in the effort against the high water.

The Hi-Rocky Gift and Sport Store, 111 Cottonwood Ave., had 2 inches of water accumulate in the rear of the store.

"The water in the street was so deep that it was running over the sidewalk and into the store," said Susie Kelly, co-owner of the store.

She said never in the seven years in which she has had an interest in the store has it ever flooded. Kelly added that she has never heard of it flooding over the 21 years that the store has been in existence.

Dick and Sharon Couch assisted Kelly in clearing the water from the store, using

(Continued to Page 5)



FIREMEN CHECK the west wing of Columbine Manor after a bolt of lightning struck the building during a severe thunderstorm Friday evening. No injuries were reported, and only slight damage resulted. Storms rode roughshod over the county Friday but resulted in only minor flooding.

Firemen hosting open house Saturday

The Salida Fire Department will be hosting an open house Saturday at their new facilities on the corner of E and First streets.

The new building is adjacent to the present fire station and was formerly the Skelly Station.

The building was purchased by the South Arkansas Fire Protection District and remodeled with \$3,057.07 from the Jack L. Henderson Memorial. Henderson was a former Salida Fire Chief and was killed in an accident Nov. 30, 1973.

Open house will be conducted from 10 a.m.

to 2 p.m. in observance of Fire Protection Week which is next week. It was decided to have the open house this week since the Buena Vista-Salida football game is next Saturday.

The fire department will have all of their fire equipment on display, including the old ladder truck, the rescue van and equipment, and the antique pumper which is the oldest motorized fire engine in the state.

They will also be demonstrating their new dump tank, which is transported in a van and looks something like a portable pool,

providing a constant supply of water.

Those attending the open house will also have a chance to test their aim by shooting the fire hoses at targets.

In addition to their own equipment, the firemen are hoping to have vehicles and equipment from other emergency services such as the ambulance and police departments on display.

Several door prizes will be awarded with the grand prize being a flight for two over the Heart of the Rockies donated by Merle Entz of

Salida Flying Service.

There will also be a special drawing for youngsters for free games at Arcade 1. Hot dogs and soda will be available.

The public is invited to attend. Part of Street will be blocked off Saturday to allow for the demonstrations and displays.



Chief on roof looks from old ladder truck



from 1/2 way up ladder



old fire truck at open house



BOB LEIVERS, Salida fireman, showed visitors the firepole where firemen make a hasty exit from the second floor when an alarm sounds.



THE LADDER TRUCK attracted a lot of attention at Saturday's open house. It is one of 10 vehicles owned by the Salida and South Arkansas fire protection districts.

Firemen award open house prizes

Several door prizes were awarded when the Salida firemen hosted an open house at their new facilities adjacent to the fire station Saturday.

Prizes, donors and winners are as follows:
Cheri Guffy and Marion Gayle each won one-half case of motor oil from Sanders Oil Co.

Alice Crawford won a skylight from Ace Home Center.
Ed Guffy won a free dental exam and two X-rays from Dr. Greg Bixby.
Verna Culp won two dozen donuts from Daylight Donut.
Elisew Andreas won 21 pieces of chicken from the Minit Market.
Judy Naviaux won 20 gallons of gasoline from Lewis Petroleum.
Jeff Graf, Mike Bowers II, Kenny Hamner, Frankie Stevenson and Dan Berkenkotter each won 20 video games from Arcade I.
The grand prize, a flight for two around the Heart of the Rockies, donated by Merle Entz of Salida Flying Service, was won by Arlene Shovald.



ABBEY NELSON, daughter of fireman, Tim Nelson, wore a T-shirt proclaiming "My Daddy is a Fireman." Rick Hill helped Abbey shoot the fire hose, just like her daddy. More photos from the open house are on the back page.

Open house shows new fire department quarters

Salida firemen hosted an open house at their new addition in the former Skelly station Saturday.

Movies on fire prevention, displays of the fire trucks and demonstrations of equipment were included in the presentation.

Youngsters especially enjoyed taking their turns at the fire hose.

The new building was purchased by the South Arkansas Fire Protection District and remodeled with funds from the Jack L. Henderson Memorial. Henderson, a former Salida Fire Chief, was killed in an accident in 1973.

Having the new building adjacent to the present fire station will enable the department to have all of their equipment in one place. In the past some of the trucks and equipment have been stored in other areas for lack of space.

The department has six active fire trucks

and four antiques, one of which is the oldest motorized fire engine in the state.

The department is staffed by five full-time firemen and 15 volunteers.

Several door prizes were awarded at Saturday's open house. The grand prize, a flight for two over the Heart of the Rockies, from Merle Entz of Salida Flying Service, went to Arlene Shovald, Salida. A complete list of winners will be published in tomorrow's Mail.



Salida H School
Home coming Bon Fire Oct 8



Home coming bon fire
Oct 83



salida S lite with flares



Fire damages house

No one was injured when fire broke out in a Salida home early Sunday morning.

Firefighters were called to the Tom and Lori Ross residence at 924 G St. at 3:47 a.m. Salida Patrolman Mike Bowers arrived less than a minute before firefighters and he used an extinguisher to knock the fire down.

Firemen then completed the task. The fire burned a small table, chair, a small

section of carpeting and the wall up to the ceiling. A damage estimate was not immediately known.

A high-school age daughter, who had fallen asleep on the couch in the same room that the fire occurred, woke up when she smelled smoke. She alerted her parents, one of whom then called the fire department.

The house is owned by John Marshall, Arlington, Va.



council meeting Sept. 19.

Fire consumes 2 cords of wood

Fire consumed about two cords of wood at the Ray Baca residence on CR 253, approximately two miles northwest of Poncha Springs, late yesterday afternoon.

No injuries were reported and there was no other damage.

Fire officials believe a spark from a nearby trash-burning barrel ignited the wood.

The fire call came in shortly after 5 p.m. One unit from the Poncha Springs Volunteer Fire Department and two from the South Arkansas Fire Protection District responded. About 16 firefighters from Poncha Springs and Salida quickly brought the blaze under control.

The loss is estimated at \$135.



Fire doused

Salida firemen responded to a chimney fire at the George Dominick residence, 7370 CR 120, on Wednesday morning.

They were called at 7:05 a.m. and quickly put the fire out. Firefighters were back at the station within an hour.

No damage estimate was given.

Mehos said with such a low census, it was more economical to have all the patients on a members of the McGowan, Virginia Imig and Ken Elgsti — can do is reduce its personnel.



THIS SINGLE ENGINE Beechcraft Sierra 200, belonging to Don Jennings, Salida, was destroyed by fire yesterday. Jennings said the plane was worth about \$20,000.

flammable cleaning fluid was ignited by a spark from a charging battery.

Fire destroys light plane

Flammable cleaning fluid combined with a spark from a charging battery were suspected as the cause of a fire that destroyed a \$20,000 airplane Saturday afternoon at Harriet Alexander Airport.

According to the Salida Fire Department, Don Jennings, Salida, was cleaning the windows and plastic in his Beechcraft Sierra 200 with a combination of acetone and alcohol and at the same time, was charging the battery.

Mike Buse of Salida Flying Service said he walked out the door of the terminal and met Jennings who was rubbing his eyes and complaining about the strong fumes.

"At about that time, we noticed smoke coming from the plane," Buse said. "I called the sheriff and asked them to get the fire

department, then grabbed the fire extinguisher and ran out, but by that time the plane had already burst into flame.

"It was a pretty scary situation because there were two truckloads of high octane aviation fuel parked nearby and firemen told me later if the fire spread to the tanks and they exploded we could have lost every plane on the ramp."

One of the trucks held 15,000 gallons of fuel and the other 25,000 gallons.

There were about 20 planes parked on the ramp at the time of the fire.

The 100 octane aviation fuel is about twice as explosive as the fuel used in automobiles.

The two wing tanks on the plane contained a total of about 70 gallons of fuel. One of the tanks burned completely but the other did not.

ignite.

The Salida Fire Department got the call at 2:15 p.m., and was on the scene in about three minutes with eight people.

The fire was put out in about 15 minutes, using water and foam.

The Poncha Springs Fire Department also responded with 10 firefighters.

Buse commended the fire departments for their quick response and action.

"It seemed they were here almost as soon as I hung up the phone," he said, "and it was a good thing because we had a dangerous situation with the fuel tanks so close to the burning plane."

Jennings was cleaning the plane in preparation to sell it. The plane was insured.

Open House

The Salida Fire Department will be holding an open house on Saturday to show the public its new quarters at the corner of E and First streets. A number of demonstrations and activities are being planned for the occasion. For more, read the story on page 2.



Plane destroyed at Air Port.

First part of year 1984 we
had no fires of a serious nature a few
chimney fires and several small grass fires
False alarm Poncha Billys at 7:45 AM.



SALIDA FIREMAN Wes Wagner douses a fencepost during mopping-up operations following a grass fire near the west edge of the city yesterday. The fire consumed about five acres of dry weeds and grass and threatened buildings along Holman Avenue before firemen and area residents brought the fire under control.

Feb 29 84

Fire stopped at city's edge

Embers from scrap iron being cut with a welding torch ignited nearby dry grass and weeds and resulted in a five-acre grass fire that threatened buildings along Holman Avenue Wednesday afternoon.

The fire started on the Frank Butala property several hundred yards west of Holman Avenue as several workers, who were not employees of Butala Construction, were collecting pieces of scrap iron for resale. A southwesterly wind spread the flames across fields of dried grass and weeds.

"It was out here in a matter of five minutes," said Holman Avenue resident Frank Linza. "It could have been much worse." He was one of several area residents

who assisted firemen in putting out the blaze before it reach any buildings.

Another who helped was Don Smith, a resident of K Street, one block east of Holman Avenue. "It looked like a dust storm," he said. "Then I looked up and saw the flames."

Units from the South Arkansas Fire Protection District and the Salida Fire Department and volunteers from Salida and Poncha Springs responded. Flames were extinguished in about a half hour after the 1:22 p.m. call.

But what may have helped most was a bladed fire barrier near some farm buildings.

"David Long every year for five or six years has dug a fire break behind his barn. 10

or 15 yards wide," said another area resident Suzanne Guccione. "People teased him about it, but if it wasn't for his planning ahead, we could have lost the neighborhood." She noted on the other side of the barn is a propane tank that the flames did not reach.

Most of the land to which the fire spread is owned by Sonny Crone. Numerous fence posts were scorched.

FIREMEN WERE ALSO called to the Little River Dude Ranch at 2:26 p.m. Wednesday to squelch a slash fire that was sending sparks near a haystack.

Land is being cleared at the ranch for more campsites and the cottonwood branches were being burned. No damage was reported.

This was a bad one we used a lot of water

Feb 22 1984

6:18 PM

SALIDA, COLORADO

VOLUME 104

NUMBER 188

TEN CENTS



FIRE CAUSED an estimated \$500 in damage to a trailer home in the Fish Acres Trailer Court, immediately south of the Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant, on Wednesday evening. Salida firemen responded at 6:18 p.m. and found flames on the outside of the trailer — burning within 6 feet of a propane tank (far right) that could have exploded. Within minutes, the fire was

extinguished.

Donna Jones is believed to be the trailer's occupant, although the inside was empty. Fire officials are speculating that a short in some heat tape around water pipes under the trailer, located at space No. 18, caused the blaze.

First National Bank
Member FDIC
294 S. Worth St. • Ph. (303) 754-2788
Center, Colorado

7:45 to
Bronco Bell
false alarm

Facility:
400 4th Street • Ph. (303) 655-2555
Saguache, Colorado



8:15 PM lightning
strikes on house
135 E 11 Ave.
large turn out
apparently no damage
No picture

chimney fire on
County road 120

Sat May 12 84

Fire call to airport
fire in hanger entrance
spilled fuel flames up
damages minimal

1 blanket used to
smother flames

Jan 11 5¹⁰ PM

Fire call 1107 5³¹
Chamney fire good turnout
let oven self out

Jan 10 84

6⁴⁵ PM call for
volunteer to stand by at
fire house 1 truck +
van to rock trash pelt
to wet down fire

July 1984 fire call
Country Kitchen electric short
very little damage

Aug. 29 84

Fire call for house fire in
Howard house hold cleaning material
Superwall to near gas water heater
scat truck and tanker responded

4 men



Photo by Dick Dixon

Salida firemen fight billowing, acrid smoke as they break through roof of Howard Hazel home
... to reach smoldering fire which caused \$20,000 damage and blanketed the town in smoke

There's smoke - where is fire?

By DICK DIXON

Chieftain Correspondent

SALIDA — Neighbors and firemen had to hunt Tuesday night to find the source of billowing clouds of smoke before they could determine which house was burning.

The home of Howard Hazel, former Salida city councilman, received about \$20,000 fire damage to the attic, kitchen and bathroom areas as a smoldering fire finally became hot enough to burst through the roof in several places.

Fire Capt. Jerry Henderson and other members of the fire department said it was one of the smokiest fires they have ever seen. Two trucks and nine men battled the blaze for almost 2½ hours, although most of the fire was under control within about 30 minutes.

Off-duty police officer Mike Bowers was the first to notice the smoke.

The thick smoke, pushed to street level by cool night air about 10:20 p.m., made it almost impossible to tell which of three

houses was burning. Bowers went looking for the source.

Arriving firemen said it took them some time to determine which house was burning. Vision was limited to less than 50 feet as much as three blocks away, and was almost nil near the house.

Henderson said the fire apparently started in a bathroom, burned into the upstairs and into the attic and involved much of the underside of the roof.

Hazel was not home at the time of the fire.

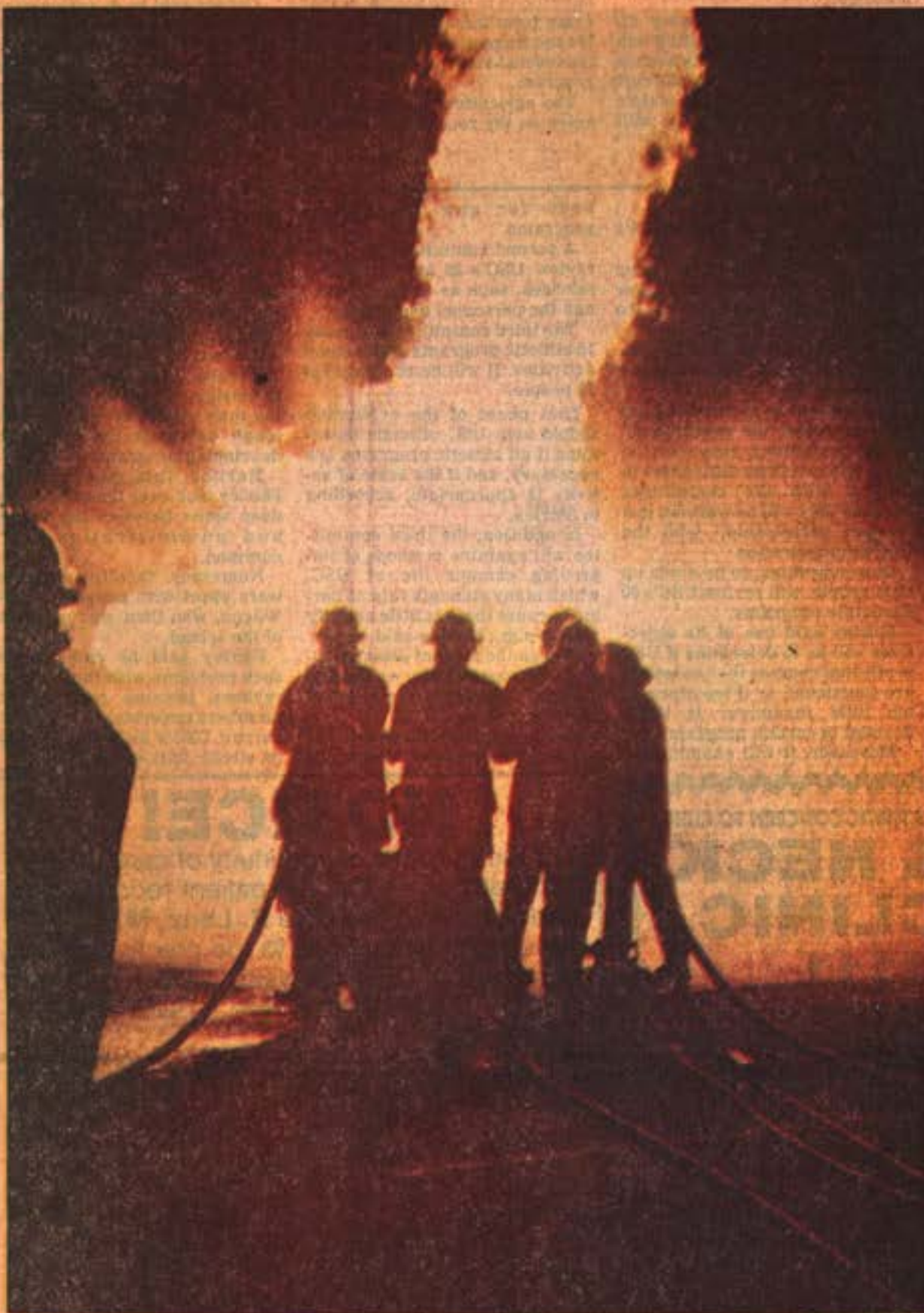


Photo by Dick Dixon

Parching battle

Sat Sept 22 84

Armed only with courage and a couple of fog nozzles, teams of five firemen Saturday night entered the thundering flames of a liquefied petroleum-gas training fire. It was part of a workshop

in Salida where area firemen learned under-controlled circumstances how to handle emergencies which might arise in their communities. Related photo and article, Page 5a.

training session



Photo by Dick Dixon

do's and don'ts of fighting the fierce blaze
as Association and Morgan Community College

84

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Walters said.



Intense heat blisters firemen in training session

By DICK DIXON
Chieftain Correspondent

SALIDA — Training to keep a liquid petroleum gas fire "incident from becoming a catastrophe" raised blisters on a few firemen participating in a two-day workshop here during the last weekend.

The injuries were minor, but pointed out the intense heat with which firefighters will have to deal if they encounter a similar situation under real emergency conditions.

Bill Walters of Morgan Community College, one of the instructors of the course, said the burns pointed out a couple of equipment deficiencies that some fire departments might want to correct.

He and Joe Lewand, manager of Fire Service Training for Colorado, said some of the firefighters approached the roaring propane blaze wearing "cheap" bunker coats which might have been part of the problem. Lewand said another problem he learned of after the fact was that fog nozzles being used are rated at 80 gallons per minute.

"To get a really good pattern, nozzles that deliver at least 125 gallons per minute are better," he said. "There's nothing wrong with the nozzles the men were using tonight. They're fine for most fire f e s

They're just not big enough to give good protection in situations such as this one.

Twenty-eight firemen representing Westcliffe, Salida, Kremmling, Poncha Springs, Northern Chaffee County Fire Protection District, South Arkansas Fire Protection District, Blanca, Saguache, Wet Mountain Fire Protection District, and Salida Volunteer Fire Departments, enrolled in the LP gas training session. The seminar was conducted by Tom Hancock of the Liquid Petroleum Gas Association. Walters with Morgan Community College and Lewand as manager of fire service training in the state.

Salida Fire Department hosted the training session and LP gas was donated by DeLuca Gas Co. and SalGas, of Salida.

Flames were produced by a specially designed "Christmas tree" of gas pipe. Once lit, the device burned 40 to 50 gallons of propane gas per minute, creating about 92,500 BTUs of heat each minute in flames which roared 75 feet or more into the air.

Working in teams of five with Lewand as instructor nearby,



Photo by Dick Dixon

Firemen advance on a liquid petroleum fire fueled to teach them the do's and don'ts of fighting the fierce blaze during workshop held in Salida conducted by the Liquid Petroleum Gas Association and Morgan Community College

Sept 22 84

men and women from the various departments used 1½-inch hoses with fog nozzles set at about 60 degrees. With a team captain standing between the two hoses, a hand on each to control angle, teams advanced, pushing the billowing flames ahead of them with water.

Their objective was to reach a shut-off valve at the base of the "tree" which would put out the fire.

Lewand said the angle of nozzles and the patterns of water is critical to keep flames from billowing over the top or around

"We had to concentrate on keeping the pattern in a V as we got closer to keep the flames from coming around the sides."

Lewand said the propane gas fire simulates that which might be encountered in an overturned truck with a broken valve or in any situation in which a propane tank ignites. The night training session was a followup to all-day classroom sessions dealing with properties of LP gas and types of valves and shutoffs which are found on tankers.

Sunday, firemen toured local LP gas bulk plants, learning

where shutoffs are located and what kinds of heat-operated fire prevention devices are built into the storage facilities. "It's a lot easier to look at them now than it is with a real fire going and three inches of snow on the ground," Lewand said.

Although trainees were "not rushing" into the fire Saturday night because fire trucks were hooked into a city water supply, they learned time could be critical in a fire away from a municipal supply.

Most trucks are equipped with about 500 gallons of water which would give firemen less than two

minutes to reach a burning truck and rescue a trapped driver or shut off a valve.

In addition to minor heat burns, some of the firemen learned the danger of moisture buildup inside their bunker coats — from sweat or from being wet by hose spray — and found super heated steam also can produce burns.

"This was an exceptional workshop. All the firefighters were interested in learning and the weather conditions were just right for the practical part," Walters said.

THE MOUNTAIN MAIL

SALIDA, COLORADO

VOLUME 105

NUMBER 8

TEN CENTS



FIREMEN BATTLE a stubborn fire at the home of Howard Hazel at 221 Wood Ave. in Salida. The fire caused heavy damage to the two-story structure. Firemen were forced to ventilate the roof before attacking the blaze from inside the house. Heavy smoke hampered

firefighting efforts. No one was in the house when the fire was reported. Hazel was believed to be in Denver Tuesday evening. The cause of the fire was not known.

Blaze damages Hazel home

A Tuesday night fire heavily damaged the home of Howard Hazel, a former Salida city councilman.

Firemen battled the stubborn blaze in the attic of the two-story home at 221 Wood Ave. for more than a half hour before bringing it under control.

No one was in the house at the time of the fire. Hazel was believed to be in Denver Tuesday night.

Thick smoke from the fire hung

over the entire northeastern portion of the city.

Mike Bowers, an off-duty city policeman, said he and Jim Hartman saw smoke pouring out of the house. It was Hartman who reported the fire to the sheriff's office at 10:18 p.m.

Smoke was so heavy, Bowers said, he wasn't sure which house was on fire.

"When I got up to the house, smoke was pouring out of the roof

and windows," Bowers said. "I could see flames flickering in the basement" in the rear portion of the house. He said he and neighbors attempted to fight the fire using garden hoses.

Fred Rollo, who lives next door, said he smelled smoke and looked out his front door. "At first I thought it was our house that was burning," he said. "The whole house was engulfed in smoke."

Firemen had difficulty battling the fire through the smoke. Self-

contained breathing units were used to get inside the house and get to the fire.

A vent hole was cut in the roof and firemen inside the house finally doused the flames in the attic and second story of the structure.

Two firemen received minor injuries and were treated at the scene by ambulance personnel.

At The Mail's press time, firemen were putting out hotspots and beginning to clean up. The cause of the fire was not known.



Poncho Springs Fire
July 84 Tanker responded

Grass Fire County
storage area off Hy 50
ice skating area July 84



Parade fib Ark 1984
From Kissel Car



Fireman got snowmobile races April 1984



Controlled Burn in April 84



State Convention Gunnison July 84

Blaze damages Burmac Saturday

A kiln with a short in its wiring is the suspected cause of a fire at Burmac Enterprises that did an estimated \$25,000 on Saturday.

The South Arkansas Fire Department responded to the call at 11:30 a.m. with two trucks and seven men. They were able to extinguish the flames in 15 minutes.

With windy conditions that day, the Poncha Springs Fire Department was called in as a backup. One truck and seven firefighters responded.

The fire occurred in the west end on the lower floor of the two-story structure, located at 5550 U.S. 50 South, Salida.

Fire officials said flames near the kiln were the hottest, leading them to believe that is where the fire started.

The fire spread to a wall and office before it was contained. The severest damage was on the first floor with smoke damage elsewhere in the building. The building was insured.

Carol Sterle reported the fire.



FIRE CAUSED an estimated \$25,000 damage to Burmac Enterprises on Saturday. No one was injured in the blaze.

Sat Nov 3 11:30 A.M. Two Trucks
7 men + Poncha Spts. on stand by



Fire damages egg ranch shed

Fire caused an estimated \$10,000 to \$15,000 damage to a chicken house at the Roley Egg Ranch, located a mile west of Salida on CR 120, on Thursday afternoon.

Firemen are attributing its cause to a controlled grass and weeds fire next to the structure on Thursday morning.

Fire apparently got underneath the building's corrugated metal siding, into the particle board insulation and smoldered until breaking out into flames several hours later.

The fire was reported at 2:48 p.m. and firemen were on the scene within minutes. Flames had spread to the attic portion which was completely engulfed when firefighters arrived.

Firemen had the blaze under control in about 10 minutes and spent the next hour extinguishing the fire's remnants in the building's insulation.

The blaze occurred in the No. 1 chicken house, just east of the office. All that was in the building were empty chicken cages.

The 25-by-150-foot building is valued at an estimated \$50,000. It is not known if the structure was insured.

Stephen Roley, 18, Denver, son of the late Eugene Roley who operated the egg ranch, has been at the ranch this week doing work in and around the buildings.

He had burned some grass and weeds on Thursday morning on the west



FIRE DAMAGED a chicken house at the Roley Egg Ranch on Thursday. The fire started on the building's west wall (where the sunlight is shining in) and spread along the wall and into the attic. In the left center of the photo is a volunteer fireman guiding a hose into the attic, where other firemen are mopping up the remnants of the blaze.

Acetylene tank catches fire at DTS

A faulty valve connection on a tank of acetylene gas caused a small fire Thursday afternoon in the basement of the Development Training Services facility at Second and E streets.

Dean Roberts of Poncha Springs, who was working under a contract to remove a boiler at the building, extinguished the fire before abandoning the gas and smoke filled room.

Salida firefighters were summoned by DTS personnel who cleared the 22 clients and eight personnel from the building.

Firefighter Tim Nelson, using special breathing gear, was the first to enter the smoke-filled basement. He said the fire was out but gas and smoke filled the area. The firemen cleared the immediate area and

placed a fan to vent the room.

After about 30 minutes Salida Fire Chief Jim Gray pronounced the emergency over and allowed workers and others to re-enter the building.

The charred tank, removed immediately by firemen, received the only apparent damage along with some slight smoke and fumes coating the basement ceiling.

Denver



Fire does \$10,000 damage to trailer

An early morning fire Tuesday resulted in the discovery of marijuana and paraphernalia in a trailer at the Fish Acres Trailer Park.

The Salida Fire Department was called at 4:57 a.m. and on looking for

signs of further fire inside the trailer, Fireman Tim Nelson found marijuana and notified Salida Police officers.

Alan D. Criswell, Salida, allegedly said the substances were his and was

advised of his rights.

No charges have been filed as yet.

Seized in the incident were one bong (pipe), one marijuana cigarette, several plants and a shoebox containing seeds and leaves.

The fire was believed to have

started in a woodpile outside the trailer which was ignited by sparks from the stove. The Salida Fire Department estimated damage to the trailer, owned by Scott Terrel, at about \$6,500 and to the contents at about \$3,500.



Suspected Marijuana



11 AM House fire in smelter town
3 Trucks Ambulances Roof destroyed

After fire, Salida family needs home

Mon Dec 16 85
A Salida couple and their four children are looking for a home to rent after fire damaged the house they were living in early Monday morning.

Tammy and Ricky Koch, 612 Dodge St., and their son, Chad, five months old, were at home when the fire occurred.

Tammy awakened about 2:45 a.m. coughing and discovered the house full of smoke. She awakened Ricky who ran outside to find about three-fourths of the roof was on fire. He called their sister-in-law, Kim Hapl, who summoned the Salida Fire Department.

The Kochs got out of the house and the fire department arrived shortly

after to extinguish the fire, which was attributed to an overheated wood stove.

Three older children, Daniel, 5, Jeffrey, 4, and Luke, 2, were spending the weekend with their father and were not at home at the time.

The one-story house is owned by Carlo Martinez.

Tammy Koch said it would take

three to four months to repair the house and in the meantime, they need a place to live. The family needs a two- or three-bedroom home. They have two small pets. They can be contacted at 539-7539 or 539-3731.

No household or personal items were lost in the fire.

Ten Salida firemen responded and were on the scene until 4:30 a.m.

Fire causes \$20,000 in damage

A fire in a one-story frame dwelling at 7500 CR 150 Friday caused about \$20,000 damage.

The home was owned by Walter Polakiewicz.

The Salida Fire Department received the report of a chimney fire

at the residence at 11:50 a.m., but when they arrived the attic also was on fire.

The report on the fire noted there was extensive water damage. The fire was attributed to improper in-

stallation of a chimney for a wood stove.

Fire fighting was hampered by high winds which made the blaze difficult to control, but firemen did manage to contain the fire to the attic.

Jan 18 1985

Emergency crews readied here for airplane in distress

Emergency response crews in the Salida area were called to Harriet Alexander Field Saturday evening to stand by to assist an aircraft in distress.

The Chaffee County Sheriff's Office received a call at about 6:30 p.m. from the Denver Flight Service of an aircraft in distress and low on fuel in the Canon City area.

The plane's pilot was instructed to try to fly to Salida for a landing there. The pilot did not want to land at the

Canon City airport due to low clouds there.

Firemen from Salida and the Chaffee County Fire Protection District were called to Alexander Field to assist.

At 7 p.m., the flight service notified Chaffee County that the plane, with two Fort Carson soldiers aboard, had dropped from radar contact. At 8 p.m., it was confirmed that the plane was missing.

The Chaffee County Sheriff's Department had planned a search

when the soldiers walked away from the crash site 14 miles southwest of Canon City to a nearby ranch home in Fremont County.

The soldiers, pilot David Howard and William Weaw, were taken to St. Thomas More Hospital in Canon City for treatment of cuts and abrasions before being transferred to Fort Carson medical facilities. One of them may have sustained a knee injury, but The Mail was unable to confirm it.

January 19, 1985

Ultralight snags power line, crashes

A Salida man escaped with a sore back after the ultralight aircraft he was flying struck a power line and crashed in a field near Harriet Alexander Field on Saturday.

Jerry Summers, 49, of Summers Aviation was taken to Salida Hospital by ambulance where he was treated and released.

The crash occurred at 3:40 p.m. while Summers was returning from a flight to Buena Vista. He said he was flying low and climbed a bit when his engine lost power.

As the ultralight descended, it hooked and tore down a power line.

"I'm the first one to agree that I'm lucky (it wasn't worse)," Summers

said.

The craft came down about a half mile from the airport, according to Summers.

Alma Beth Kaess, 8950 CR 160, reported the crash, which happened in a field near her home.

Summers has been a pilot for 20 years and has flown ultralights for

1½ years. He said this is the first time he has ever had a mishap with any aircraft. Summers is a dealer in ultralights.

Summers said he has not determined whether the craft, worth about \$8,000, can be repaired. He said one possible reason for the engine losing power was ice in the carburetor.





Feb 1985
 COULD HAVE BEEN WORSE — Salida firemen contained a grass fire behind the Sanders Oil bulk storage plant Thursday afternoon before flames reached the bulk tanks. Firemen were called at 3 p.m. by someone from Sanders Oil, 401 W. Fifth St., with a city truck and the South Arkansas Fire Protection District tanker coming to the scene. The fire

was quickly extinguished. The fire reached an old log shed, believed to be owned by Joe Tancik, but damage was minimal. Firemen were on the scene for less than 30 minutes. It is believed hot ashes dumped behind the bulk plant by an unknown party caused the fire.

8035 W highway # 50 fire damage to house inside
 brick wall cable crews sat fire in insulation by
 hot drills trying to go thru bricks





wood pile fire
on river bank off
Cr 160



Boy, 13, fatally wounded in Salida shooting

by Randy Baranczyk
Mail Managing Editor

A 13-year-old Salida boy died in an apparent accidental shooting by his 15-year-old brother on Friday evening at their home.

Raymond Earl McGowan, an eighth-grader at Kesner Junior High, died of massive bleeding from massive internal injuries to the abdomen, according to Chaffee County Coroner Grant Miller, M.D.

Miller said on Sunday some minor parts of the investigation are yet to be completed, but his preliminary opinion is the death was accidental.

Undersheriff Rich Lucero, investigating the incident for the sheriff's department, said the shooting is being investigated as an accident, but the investigation will not be completed until the district attorney releases his report.

According to the sheriff's department, the incident occurred when Raymond and his brother, Arthur, apparently thought there was a prowler near their home at 1614 Holman Ave. Arthur got a weapon, a .30-06 gun, which then discharged as he turned around.

Arthur called the sheriff's department at 7:45 p.m., but the dispatcher had difficulty hearing him apparently due to trouble with a telephone line or telephone at the McGowan home.

The report was dispatched as a reported prowler and Salida police arrived on the scene at 7:47 p.m. At that point the ambulance was called.

The ambulance arrived at Salida Hospital at 7:57 p.m. with the victim. The victim was pronounced dead.



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The ambulance arrived at Salida Hospital at 7:57 p.m. with the victim. The victim was pronounced dead around 8 p.m.

Responding to the incident were Salida police officers Jim James, Mike Bowers and Darwin Hibbs and Chief Leonard Post, and county officers Dave Bowers, Dennis Norman and Lucero. Salida fireman Tim Nelson, who also serves on the ambulance, responded with a fire truck and administered oxygen until the ambulance arrived moments later.

Also assisting were members of the Salida Police Department Auxiliary.

The boys' father and step-mother, Donald and Dorothy McGowan, were not at home at the time of the incident. The boys' mother, Charlene Bolen, lives in Denver.

state convention
Gunnison 1985



Sunday 1/12/86 30 PM
fire call

CR 155 guests fire
1/4 acre 1 truck

3 men w/less
Rickey
me

no cause





Tug o war



City employees Picnic
Centennial Park
1985

fire hall
425
125 W 5th
grass fire
2 trucks

50 PM

7



Egg Toss



Fire demonstration in park and bucket brigade



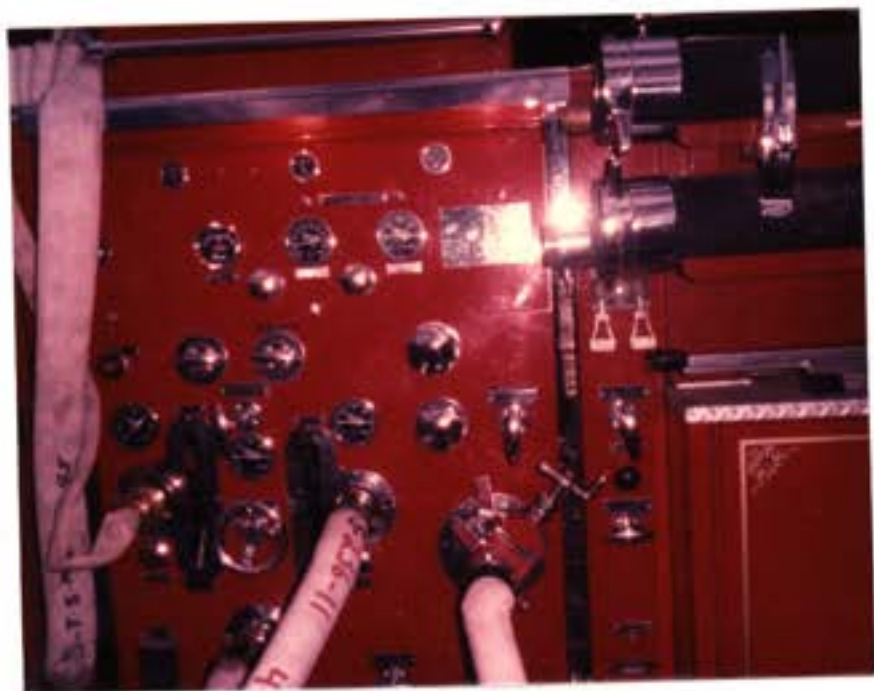
Ladder truck in parade



1911 Kissel car



City truck on pumping test



grass fire



Mail photo by Randy Baranczyk
FIRE HEAVILY damaged the William Lambert home at 1447 F St. Friday evening. No one was home at the time of the fire. Two firemen were treated at Salida Hospital for smoke inhalation and released. The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

Fr 1 Oct 11 85

Fire heavily damages home

Fire heavily damaged the home of the William Lambert family, 1447 F St., Salida, Friday night.

No one was home at the time. The only injuries reported were to two firemen, who were treated at Salida Hospital for smoke inhalation and released.

The fire started in the basement of the three-story home and apparently spread rapidly to the upper floors, but the exact cause was not determined. Fire officials will return to the home today to further investigate the fire.

Mrs. Frank Runco, who lives across the street from the Lambert home, made the initial call at 9:36 to report the fire, but other calls were received as well.

When firemen arrived, the home was totally involved. The flames were knocked down within minutes and the fire was considered under control within an hour.

Firefighters were on the scene another 3½ hours mopping up hot

spots. An estimated 70,000 gallons of water were used to fight the fire.

The fire gutted the first and second stories of the home and damaged the third story. Damage to the \$150,000 home is estimated at \$100,000, according to the Salida Fire Department.

The home is next to the DeLuca Gas Co. Inc. and the company's propane-carrying trucks were moved from the scene when the fire broke out.

Paid fireman Wes Wagner and volunteer Rick Hill were overcome by smoke and sent to Salida Hospital for checkups. Both were released that night.

The Salida Fire Department earlier in the evening had completed the cleanup of the traditional homecoming bonfire at Salida High School. Some members of the Lambert family attended the festivities.

A fund has been set up for the Lamberts at First National Bank in Salida.



Gas fire on w 1st



Saturday morning cleanup of S
by fire dept

THE MOUNTAIN MAIL □ SALIDA, COLORADO □ MONDAY, JUNE 16, 1986 □ 3



Fire's damage estimated at \$1,000

Fire caused an estimated \$1,000 damage to the Phillip Lengerick home, 524 Poncha Blvd., Salida, early Sunday morning.

The Salida Fire Department was called at 5:50 a.m. on what was thought to be a chimney fire. But when firemen arrived, they found smoke coming out from between the chimney and roof and along the rock around the fireplace inside the home.

Firemen believe that an overheated cinder block enclosure, which surrounds the tile chimney, led to the fire.

A blower inside the enclosure had been removed a few days earlier for repairs but the fireplace was still being used. Without the fan to blow out the hot air, enough heat built up to ignite a 2-by-4 inside the cinder

block enclosure.

Firemen were on the scene for over 2½ hours.

The home belongs to Dwight Braswell.

South Arkansas Fire Protection District firefighters were called out to the Fred Paquette residence, 7680 W. U.S. 50, on Friday to extinguish a chimney fire.

No damage was reported.

Sat Jan 19 85

6³⁰ approx busman respoed truck back
to air port plane in trouble from
cannon city after I had wait on
taxi ship no plane

city truck

tanber

8 men assembled

Mon Nov 19 84

car hire at
1st and F St

1¹⁵ PM.



10 AM Thur July 23 86

Uray st much
equipment lost



mon aug 4 11 30 AM

821 W 33rd

lightning strikes

house on fire smoke

damage heavy





Sat Mar 1 86
 930 PM
 Chimney fire at
 932 W 2nd
 Volunteers called
 approx 12 men
 there about 1
 hr $\frac{1}{2}$



Fire alters birthday party location, tenor

by Ray James

Mail Managing Editor

Fire changed the Saturday birthday celebration plans of Dave and Lynne Medlar.

Friends, asked to a party at the couple's home, gathered at the Victoria Tavern instead. The fire, started by a young girl's incautious play, destroyed the home prepared for the festive occasion.

Dave remembers the day beginning ordinarily enough. After a night of party preparations, he and his wife were sleeping later than usual. He heard the kids, Beau, 9, Willie, 7, Laura, 5, Cassie, 4, and an overnight guest, Hannah Bornhurst, 4, getting up. They turned on the TV to watch cartoons. Medlar closed his eyes, pulled up the covers and decided to sleep a while longer.

That happened around 6 a.m.

Less than 30 minutes later, Beau and Willie awakened their parents with insistent nudges and words. Dave said his boys spoke in calm, "business-like" voices. "There's a fire in our closet."

Dave flung the covers off and raced into the kid's bedroom. The closet, covered in flames, began putting off smoke as stuffed toys exploded from

the heat, stuffing igniting and adding to the flames. Lynne hurried into the kitchen, filled a pan with water and returned to the room at the front of house.

She said she remembers a helpless feeling throwing the water on the flames as she realized they weren't going to stop the fire.

Dave was on the phone to the fire department as the house, in the space of a few minutes, was filled almost to the floor with thick, choking smoke. He and Lynne crawled to the back door where Willie and Beau had gathered the three girls.

The went outside in the freezing cold, dressed in what they had worn to bed the night before.

"We were in shock, I think, the girls were crying and frightened," Dave said later that day. About all they remember is Willie keeping the family cat, Tommy, from going into the house.

THE SALIDA FIRE Department was on the scene in less than five minutes. They doused the flames in about 15 minutes, but it took two more hours to get the smoke out of the house.

Dave Medlar and Fire Capt. Fred Smith didn't hesitate to credit Beau and Willie with saving the family.

Medlar said the boys got excited by a fire prevention and safety program at Longfellow last October. Since then the family has practiced fire drills.

"I hide a plastic trash bag somewhere and the kids have to find it. That's the fire. They then have to get low on the floor, choose the best way out. If it hadn't been for those drills and those boys knowing what to do, I don't think we'd be here now," Medlar said.

Speaking of the experience, Lynne said: "What grabs you first is that there is no time. You can't believe how fast a fire is. We were outside, half-naked, and the fire and smoke just took hold completely. In a matter of a few minutes our things were gone."

"We lost things that can never be replaced. All our pictures and 12 years of negatives, all just melted into a blob."

She said the fire itself is not the devastating thing, it's the heat and the smoke. She said glass melted at the other end of the house from the flames.

IN QUESTIONING THE children afterwards, they discovered the fire started in the children's bedroom closet. Laura, with Cassie and Hannah, shut themselves in the closet and lit a piece of paper with a cigarette lighter. She said the burning paper frightened her and she dropped it. They ran out of the closet and huddled on a lower bunk bed.

Beau and Willie said they heard popping sounds while watching TV and went into the bedroom to discover flames enveloping the closet. The boys hustled the girls to the back of house, made them lie on the floor and then awakened their parents.

The Medlars said they don't plan on punishing Laura or even making a big deal out of her act. They took them through the ruined house Sunday. Patiently, quietly the parents explained to the kids why it all happened. "They lost their toys, their clothes, everything, and that's hard enough on them," Lynne said.

AS FRIENDS CAME into the back room at the Vic Saturday afternoon, Dave and Lynne retold the day's events for each listener. They

praised the boys first, then Wal-Mart.

Lynne, a Wal-Mart employee, received a call from Ron Ertl, the manager at the store, within hours of the fire. He told her the store wanted her to bring the kids down for new clothes as he had heard they lost everything. She spent the store's \$250 gift on coats and shoes, pants, shirts and even socks and underclothes.

"They're like our family," David said of the store, "they really helped when needed."

What was to be a birthday party for the Medlars (Lynne was 36 Sunday, Dave 39 Friday) became a fire relief party with gifts of food and money to help tide the family through until they can find a new home. They were blessed with offers of places to stay and other help throughout the day, they said, including the Victoria's offer of a place to gather.

There's was even a chorus of "Happy Birthday," despite broken notes from more than a few choked-back tears.

The Medlars have an account at Salida Building & Loan for contributions people in the community who may wish to make.

Denise Hansen: Just one of the guys

by David Lichtenstein

Mail Staff Writer

Although it's not a law, firemen in Salida have always been men. That is until April 1986 when Denise Hansen decided to change the tradition.

"I talked to Jim (Gray, fire chief) about any restrictions to women and he said 'no,'" Hansen said.

"I was a little worried because I hadn't seen any other women firemen. But I feel like helping other people around here."

Hansen and her husband, Michael, moved to Salida in the summer of 1985 and decided to submit applications to Salida's volunteer fire department the next spring. After the applications were reviewed by the department's board of trustees, members of the volunteer fire department voted them in at the next meeting.

Hansen admits some doubts about being accepted. "I was a little hesitant about it. Being a woman I felt they might not accept me because they would think I couldn't pull my own weight."

But Hansen's firefighting experience goes way back. Hansen grew up in Oskaloosa, Kan., a small town of 1000 people, where almost everyone was a volunteer firefighter.

"My dad was involved as a volunteer. All the kids were too. Everyone volunteered; it was either that or lose everything. We had different sirens for county fires and fires in town. Everyone dropped everything and pitched in."

Hansen's firefighting experience in

Kansas mainly taught her how to fight and contain grass fires. Despite this knowledge, she still said she felt like "the low-man on the totem pole" when she first joined the Salida volunteers.

"I started doubting myself," said Hansen about the period shortly after joining. "I asked Jim about this and he said no guys complained. They felt I was pulling my own weight. Since then I haven't really doubted myself. It really helped my self-confidence."

One of the best parts of being a volunteer fireman for Hansen is the constant learning that goes on. "There's is still a whole lot to know. It seems like there is always more to know. Still, I have gained some knowledge," she said.

The volunteers here plan on training every weekend if weather permits. On Monday they practiced using the ladders on the new fire truck. They have practiced how to fight different kinds of fires, how to tie knots as well as a variety of other different training exercises. Hansen has also recently completed a CPR class and has her certificate in the procedure.

Through all this, Hansen said she doesn't feel as though she has received special treatment for being a woman. "I don't get the impression they look at me any differently because I'm a woman. I'm treated like a fireman. I feel like one of the guys," she said.

Hansen's pager has called her to a few small fires, but so far nothing major. The biggest fire she helped



DENISE HANSEN of the Salida volunteer fire department takes a break during a weekend training session. The volunteers took some time last week to learn the operations of the new fire truck Hansen is shown with.

put out was the house on Sackett Street which burned down a few months ago. "I just went out and pitched in. You can't really think about being nervous."

Hansen also pitches in by being the

secretary for the volunteers. So far she has only had to take minutes for the volunteers twice-monthly meetings. Michael Hansen has also contributed to the volunteers since joining and is now their president.

For other women that might have thought about putting an application into the volunteer fire department, Hansen suggests going ahead. "There's no discrimination. We always need volunteers."

Salida boys save their family from fire

by Ray James

Mail Managing Editor

Beau and Willie Medlar saved their family and themselves from an early morning house fire here Saturday.

After helping get his sisters to safety, then awakening his parents, Willie took time to care for Tommy, the family cat, who didn't understand why he couldn't enter the house to get out of the cold.

Both Salida Fire Department Capt. Fred Smith and the boys' father, Dave Medlar, credited the skills the two boys learned during October's Fire Prevention Month classes at Longfellow School and the national home fire drill program, with the fact the family is alive, despite the fact the fire did an estimated \$15,000 damage to the home at 617 W. First St.

Just after 6:15 a.m. Saturday Beau, 9, and Willie, 7, discovered flames roaring from a closet in the bedroom they shared with sisters, Laura, 5, and Cassi, 4. The two sisters and a visitor, Hannah Bornhurst, 4, were huddled on the lower section of bunk beds, apparently too frightened to move.

The boys forced the three girls to leave the room, rushed them to the back door of the house, away from the fire, and ordered them to lie on the floor. They then awakened their parents, Dave and Lynne Medlar.

Medlar said he rushed to the bedroom, saw he could not control

the fire, then went to the telephone to call the fire department.

"From the time I dialed until I hung up, the smoke dropped from above my head to below my knees," Medlar said.

Smith said the first call came at 6:30 a.m. with the department's new pumper arriving at the scene by 6:35. Firemen found a bedroom at the home blazing. Heavy smoke filled the house. Smith said Medlar told him everyone was out of the house. Firemen called for a back up engine, then extinguished the flames, which had expanded into the house's attic, in about 15 minutes.

"We were on the scene for about 2 1/2 hours because it took a while to clear the heavy smoke out," Smith said.

"Without the boys' fast action they could have all been killed," Smith said. "The place was half filled with smoke in about 1 1/4 minutes," he added.

Smith's initial investigation showed the fire erupted after Laura Medlar, 5, dropped a piece of paper she had ignited with a cigarette lighter into a box of stuffed toys in the children's bedroom closet.

The fire captain said the house, owned by Mike Jones, was not habitable after the fire. "They (the Medlars) lost almost all their possessions from either the fire or smoke and water damage," Smith said.



Mail photo by Ray James

A SUNDAY TOUR of their burned home was a grim reminder of Saturday's fire for the Medlars and a family friend. Looking at the closet where the blaze began are (from

bottom, 1-r) Cassie Medlar, Hannah Bornhurst, Beau, Laura, Willie, David and Lynne Medlar.



Mail photo by David Lichtenstein

Firemen douse snow in practice

VOLUNTEER FIREMEN get in some weekend practice Saturday afternoon in Riverside Park. The practice session was

also an opportunity for Salida's volunteer fire department to become more familiar with the city's new fire truck.



Mail photo by Merle Baranczyk

Salida Fire Department's Wes Wagner (left) and Capt. Fred Smith put water on hot spots that smoldered through Friday at the Rocky Mountain Cabinetry shop in Swissvale. The

Salida firemen joined units from the Chaffee County Fire Protection District and South Arkansas Fire Protection District.

Fire destroys Swissvale shop

Fire of undetermined origin early Friday morning gutted a Swissvale wood-working business.

The blaze destroyed Rocky Mountain Cabinet and Countertop, owned and operated by Dale and Jackie Winkler of Salida.

The Winklers estimated the loss at between \$125,000 and \$150,000 to the building and its contents. Insurance covered only the building.

In addition to the Winklers, who both worked at the business, the shop employed three other people.

Fire fighters from Howard, the South Arkansas Fire Protection District in Salida and the Chaffee County Fire Protection District responded to the call.

When Salida firemen arrived just after 4 a.m., they found the west end of the 60-foot-wide, 100-foot-long tin and woodframe structure engulfed in flames and the roof beginning to collapse.

For a time fire fighters believed they could save a two-story portion of the building.

Wes Wagner of Salida said he thought the fire had been knocked down on the building's south side. But he said flames had eaten into the building from the north and west sides, where crews did not have the manpower, equipment or water to

fight the blaze.

By working together, crews managed to save a nearby home belonging to Winkler's father.

Tim Nelson of Salida said when the east wall of building collapsed, adjacent walls of the home next door began smoking and paint started blistering from exposure to radiant heat from the fire.

At that point, the South Arkansas tanker ran out of water. Fire fighters managed to save the house by using a high pressure attack truck and pulling 450 feet of 1½-inch line from a CCFPD four-wheel drive tanker-engine which had gotten stuck in mud in a pasture at the west end of the building.

Nelson said if the extra water had not been available, the house would have burned, too.

More than half of the estimated 7,800 gallons of water used to fight the fire came from a swimming pool at the Swissvale Manor campground, 200 yards east of the fire scene.

Officials from the Fremont County Sheriff's Department and insurance companies are investigating the fire's cause.

The blaze is believed to have started in the building's west end. Wind from the southwest fanned it.

Please see FIRE page



Mail photo by Arlene Shovald

Heroes

Beau Medlar, 9, right, and his brother Willie, 8, received lifesaving medals Friday from Salida's fire and police department. The boys were credited with successfully getting their family out of their burning home Feb. 28. Presenting the medals, in front of the Medlar's new home at 804 W. Second, were Leonard Post, Salida police chief, right, and Jim Gray, fire chief. The family, in addition to Beau and Willie, includes parents, Dave and Lynne; Laura, 5, and Cassi, 4. A friend, Hanna Bornhurst, 4, was also spending the night with the family when the house burned. The Medlars lost everything in the fire. Dave Medlar credited his sons' skills — techniques learned during Fire Prevention Month classes last October — with their safely getting out of the fire.

Salida family considers future in wake of devastating fire

— page

Winklers consider rebuilding business

by Merle Baranczyk
Mail Editor-Publisher

A Salida couple began rebuilding their life Saturday while the ashes cooled from the devastating fire that destroyed the business they had spent years assembling.

"We're trying to put things together. We've been totally wiped out," Dale Winkler said. He said he and his wife would like to put the woodworking and cabinetry business back together.

Rocky Mountain Cabinetry and Countertop in Swissvale specialized in cabinets and millwork, but did all types of woodworking jobs.

Winkler, who has a total of 12 years of experience in woodworking, said five people were employed by the firm including his wife, Jackie, Renee Miller of Salida, Dale York and Jurgen Keetz of the Howard area.

The Winklers moved to Salida five years ago when the economy in the central Illinois community of Oakland soured.

Close relatives, the Ashmores, were involved in an area wood-working business and persuaded the couple to move to the Upper Arkansas Valley.

Friends described the Winklers' shop as a growing, going business. Kathy Beaubien, a family friend, said the Winklers worked hard, had a sound business and were one of the region's strongest contractors.

"It's just not fair, is it?" said Galen Moltz of Buena Vista, another friend of the Winklers. Moltz was at the fire scene Saturday. He volunteered to clean up debris when the investigation

into the cause of the fire is complete.

"If we do decide to build here, it will go up fast," Winkler said Saturday, looking over the debris at what had been his family's livelihood. The firm is looking at equipment possibilities, buying used or buying out an existing shop.

"We're researching the thing," he said, "talking to local bankers."

"We're used to working. We're going to try. That was our life's dream we lost and we're not going to give it up."

But to rebuild, Winkler admitted the business would need financial help. "We're going to try to build the business back up," he said, but they would need help to do it. "We're not begging for it, we're just not that way, but everything's lost and we can't do anything."

He said friends in the construction trade would help get the building back up, if things can be worked out, "but everything is really up in the air right now."

If they do not rebuild, he said he and his family would probably have to move from the area.

Winkler said the support and words of encouragement he and his family received from friends and relatives has been tremendous.

"We want to thank everyone for the support they've shown. It's really meant a lot. We appreciate everything everyone's done to help."

Those wishing to help the Winklers may contribute through special accounts set up at the First National Bank, Salida Building & Loan and Chaffee County Bank.



Mail photo by Merle Baranczyk

All that's left of what had been Rocky Mountain Cabinetry is rubble and ashes following Friday morning's fire. Saturday afternoon, owner Dale Winkler (left) surveyed the rubble with a friend, Galen Moltz, of Buena Vista. Winkler said he and his wife

would like to rebuild the business, but are not sure if that's going to be possible. Friends said the firm, which had employed five people, was one of the region's strongest contracting businesses.

FIRE

Continued from page 1

flames toward the rest of the building.

Winkler said a propane furnace was located in the structure's west end. He said electrical wiring in the portion of the building where the fire is believed to have started was relatively new and in good shape.

In the building at the time of the

fire were finished cabinetry jobs awaiting delivery.

Also lost were sanders, saws, planers, sprayers, compressors, wood and other inventory and all other equipment and tools used in the business.

Winkler said Saturday he was not sure if the business would be rebuilt. He said it would take some time before investigators completed their work.

But, he added, he and his wife are considering putting up a new structure on the foundation of the old building.

Apparatus used in fighting the fire included an attack truck from Howard, a tanker and two squad vehicles from South Arkansas-Salida, and a tanker-engine from the CCFPD's Station 4 in Poncha Springs. Fifteen fire fighters fought the blaze.

Winklers back in business after fire

by David Lichtenstein
Mail Staff Writer

Three months after a fire devastated Dale and Jackie Winkler's business, they are back in operation, with a little help from friend Bill Geiger.

Rocky Mountain Cabinetry in

Swissvale is now Rocky Mountain Cabinets and Countertops Inc. located at 500 W. Seventh St. in Salida. Lou's Electric occupied the building in the past.

"We threw our resources together and we got him back in business," Geiger said. "He's the master

cabinet maker and I do the business end of things."

Geiger has known the Winklers since they first built some vanities and counter work in his home in Nathrop five years ago. Geiger, a retired engineer, had talked with Dale Winkler about joining forces even before the business burned. After fire destroyed the business, they needed Geiger's help even more. They became partners May 1.

"Because of Bill coming in, we were able to reopen," Dale Winkler said. "I guess we were lucky that he came along."

From the time the Winklers lost all their tools, equipment and building to an early morning fire, the whole community has helped the family

make it through. "The people in Salida have been super," Dale said. "The fund-raisers and charity things allowed us to meet our obligations and to stay in town."

"It was all highly appreciated," he added. "It was a good small town effort. You don't always see that kind of thing in a large town."

Picie Hylton of Hylton Lumber made provisions for the Winklers to work out of his cabinet shop until they relocated. This allowed them to complete orders.

True Value hardware store and Snell Lumber have also made tools and materials available to them at reasonable prices.

Although the new shop has 3,000 square feet less than the old one, Dale said the new one is laid out

better and other areas around town are available for storage.

It took three weeks for Geiger, the Winklers and Lou's Electric to modify the old storeroom into a shop. Lighting, a compressed air system, a dust collector and three-phase electric power were all installed.

The shop is now equipped to handle any of the work they did before. Getting the shop organized the way it was before is the biggest task at hand, Winkler said.

"The biggest hassle is logistics," Winkler said. "It was hard getting it rebuilt in such a short time. These first couple of months are going to be hectic."

Yet Winkler said he is "happy to be in town. It should work well for us and be a lot more convenient."



Rocky Mountain Cabinets and Countertops Inc. is open and ready for business at its new location at 500 W. Seventh St. The former Rocky Mountain Cabinet business in Swissvale, owned by the Winklers, was destroyed by fire. Shown are (l-r): employee Juergen Keetz, co-owners Bill Geiger, Dale and Jackie Winkler and employee Renee Miller.

SAFPD

SAFPD adds village

by David Lichtenstein
Mail Staff Writer

Loss of a Swissvale business by fire three months ago apparently provided the needed impetus to get the small community east of Salida included in the South Arkansas Fire Protection District.

May 5 the five-member board of the SAFPd unanimously adopted a resolution to include all of Swissvale and Wellsville in the district.

A legal description of the boundaries of the annexed land is

currently being drawn by land surveyor Mike Henderson. This will be submitted for publication. Thirty days after publication Swissvale will officially be a part of the district.

The legal description will also be submitted to the Fremont County commissioners. They will be responsible for collecting the .36 mill levy and passing it on to the district.

The board also agreed to include Coalvale in a mutual aid agreement. This gives the SAFPd protection and

Please see SAFPd page 8

Continued from page 1
coverage in responding to a call in Coalvale.

When Dale and Jackie Winkler's business, Rocky Mountain Cabinetry, burned three months ago, there was considerable confusion over response protocol. Because firefighters in Salida did not know if they could respond to a western Fremont County fire, they hesitated.

The extra 15 minutes to half an hour it took to respond might have

made a difference in saving the business, area residents speculated at the time.

"That kind of fire is tough," said George Koenig, president of the SAFPd. "We can't afford to lose property. Now we will be able to move right out," he said.

"They need protection," Koenig added. "Canon City can't come out and they are just sitting there without any protection."

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Please see FIRE page 3

Salida family considers future in wake of devastating fire

— page 3

Firemen end blaze

A shed on property at Kolbeck General Auto and Foreign Car Service at 124 G Street was damaged in a fire Tuesday afternoon.

Salida fire fighters Rick Hill and Jerry Henderson extinguished a small blaze, which apparently began in a cardboard carton of auto parts, within five minutes of their arrival at the auto repair business.

According to Salida Fire Chief Jim Gray, the department received a call at approximately 3:40 p.m. Tuesday, and had the flames knocked down by 3:50.

Kolbeck employee Tom Iamónico told Gray he had smelled what he took to be smoke from an electrical fire at about 3 p.m., checked several cars and could find no source for the smell.

Iamónico indicated a small, blackened pile of rubbish and said it had been a box filled with auto parts. Electrical wires in the pile were thought to be the source of the smell Iamónico had noticed earlier in the afternoon.

Damage was estimated as negligible.



Mail photo by Ron Slaughter

Salida fire fighter Rick Hill sprays a shed at 124 G St., at Kolbeck General Auto and Foreign Car Repair, to extinguish a small fire that started in a box of auto parts nearby.

Fire fighters are credited with saving a Rover sedan valued at approximately \$5,000 that is stored in the shed.

Clearance problem causes fire at residence

A residence at 347 G St. received fire damage to its attic after a fire started in a 2-by-4 next to a chimney pipe Friday.

Salida fire fighters received the call at 5:39 p.m., and were on the scene until 8:54 p.m. The house is rented to Elizabeth Olmsted, they said.

Salida fireman Jerry Henderson said the fire had smoldered in the attic for several hours before it generated enough smoke to be seen. "She said she started a fire in her fireplace Thursday, but hadn't had a fire Friday at all."

Henderson said the fire was caused by faulty installation of the chimney pipe; there was insufficient clearance between the pipe and framing lumber, and insulation was packed around it.

He estimated damage to the dwelling at \$1,500. Most of the damage, he said, was water damage to the living area. Damage to the attic and roof was minimal.



Mail photo by David Lichtenstein

Irene Head, explains to Sheriff Ken Dahl, left, and captain Dave Bowers what happened to her house on 1590 Holman Ave. Monday afternoon. Only moments earlier the

fire department had completely doused the flames coming from a bedroom closet and had cleared the house of smoke.

Fire smokes out Salidans

A fire of unknown origin engulfed the house of Irene Head, 1590 Holman Ave., Salida, with smoke Monday afternoon.

According to Head, she first noticed the fire when she was reading in the living room and saw smoke coming from the hallway.

"I saw some black smoke and I

thought something was burning in the microwave," Head said.

At the same time she saw the smoke, Head's grandson Art Frias, 10, came from his bedroom where the smoke was emanating. Head called the Sheriff's office and they advised her to leave the house immediately.

Fire trucks arrived in about three

minutes, according to Head. The fire department used about 700 gallons of water putting out the fire.

According to firefighter Rick Hill the fire started in a back bedroom closet. The closet was engulfed in flames when they arrived.

An estimate of the damage has not yet been made. The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

Flames claim Hillside bungalow

A fire Saturday night destroyed the home of Mary Cisneros, 3 Hillside, Salida. Both she and her daughter were out of town at the time.

Exactly when the fire started is unknown, but Salida fire fighter Jerry Henderson said Sunday the department heard of the fire when a boy ran up the stairs there to give the alarm.

Henderson said a phone call reporting the blaze arrived about the time the boy did, at 10:44 p.m. Saturday. As the first truck pulled out, fire fighters saw flames from the windows and doors of the residence, easily visible across the Denver and Rio Grande Western railroad yards, and called for more units to respond.

Fire equipment had to get to the fire by way of CR 153 and the Calco road, as the yards are impassable because there is no level crossing there.

Henderson said the trucks were able to make it to the blaze in approximately five minutes, notwithstanding the route.

The fire was under control within 15 minutes, and fire personnel remained on the scene for another three hours to soak hot spots and make certain the fire was doused completely.

The house was "pretty well gutted," Henderson said. However, the walls remain standing, and the fire



Mail photo by Ron Slaughter

The Mary Cisneros residence at 3 Hillside in Salida burned Saturday night. No one was home at the time of the fire. Fire fighters had the blaze under control within 15 minutes of their arrival.

did not burn out through the roof.

Captain Fred Smith estimated the property exposed to the conflagration at \$20,000. No exact figures

of property damage were available Sunday.

The Mail was unable to contact Cisneros Sunday.

Arson, theft probed in Hillside house fire

Salida fire and police officials believe the Saturday fire that destroyed the Mary Cisneros residence at 3 Hillside may have been set, following a break-in there.

Salida Police Investigator Darwin Hibbs and Chief Leonard Post contacted the Colorado Bureau of Investigation after evidence at the home suggested arson. A team of CBI investigators is expected to arrive in Salida April 22 to apply its specialized knowledge to determine if arson, indeed, caused the blaze.

Mary Cisneros said Monday she and her granddaughter, who also

lives in the home, left for Pueblo Friday for the weekend. "A friend called me at 11:15 to tell me my house had burned down," she said. "It was a terrible shock."

She said that several items appear to be missing — items that ought to leave behind at least a trace following such a fire, things such as a television set and a box of papers in a relatively untouched closet.

"Everything is gone: all my furniture, everything," she said. The property was not insured.

"We are investigating this fire as an arson, until we know for sure," Post said Monday.



Mail photo by David Lichenstein

It almost fits!

First grader Bobby Manzanares helped celebrate National Fire Prevention Week Wednesday with his Longfellow Elementary School class as it toured the Salida fire station. He poses, dressed in a Firefighter Wes Wagner's protective gear, with fireman Jerry Henderson of the department. Manzanares is in Pat Perschbacher's first grade class.

Lights suspected cause in \$1,000 residence fire

An early Sunday morning fire caused \$1,000 of damage to the residence of Will Kohler at 621 Walnut St.

The Salida Fire Department responded to the call at 3:37 a.m. When they arrived, Kohler had already extinguished most of the living room fire. Seven firefighters cleared smoke from the house and took care of a few hot spots.

The fire originated on the living

room drapes. It was ignited by either Christmas lights or a candle, then spread to the ceiling.

Both Kohler and his wife were taken to the Salida Hospital for treatment for smoke inhalation. They were treated and released.

The fire was contained within the living room, where the walls and ceiling were damaged. The rest of the house received smoke damage.



undated, loose. photos



House trailer, fish acres.



loose, undated, photo's



SALIDA FIREMAN TIM NELSON checks for signs of fire under the hood of a 1972 Buick owned by John and Mary Held of Salida. Nelson's spraying water caused the mist around the car. The vehicle was being test driven by a mechanic after some work when it caught fire. A fire extinguisher was used to put out the flames before the fire department arrived. Damage was estimated by officials at over \$500. No one was injured in the incident, which occurred about 12:50 p.m. Tuesday.

Mail photo by Ray James



Two photos of Salida fire men doing one of things they do best

EATING

No dates available.



318 2nd st
Sat Sept 23 3 PM.



318 2nd st
Sat Sept 23



Loose photos
no dates

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THE MOUNTAIN MAIL

The Voice
of the
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Salida Police foil bank robbery



Photo by Dan Renfro

Salida fire and police vehicles arrive at the Palace Hotel around noon where a fire had been set to divert the authorities attention from an attempted

bank robbery at the Chaffee County Bank. The suspect in the arson and attempted armed robbery was arrested around 1 p.m.

Palace Hotel room arson apparently set as diversion

by David Lichtenstein
Mail Staff Writer

A would-be bank robber's plans were foiled Wednesday when the fire he set at the Palace Hotel failed to divert the attention of the Salida Police.

Salida Police Chief Leonard Post arrested Michael R. Bertram, 30, Montrose, at 1 p.m. on the corner of First and G streets. He was carrying a .357 Ruger revolver.

Around noon, a fire was set in a second-floor room of the Palace Hotel to create a distraction from an attempted armed robbery of the Chaffee County Bank, according to Post.

A suspicious-looking vehicle reported by an employee of the Chaffee County Bank put the police on Bertram's trail. The pickup truck had been reported stolen from Montrose.

Although the robbery was not in progress at the time of the arrest, Post said evidence indicates an at-

tempt was imminent, but he could not discuss the evidence.

The fire at the downtown Salida hotel was clearly an arson, according to Fire Chief Jim Gray. A trail of flammable liquid could be found in the room.

A guest at the Palace, Val Cloeck, had first noticed smoke coming out of the room. Cloeck broke the fire extinguisher case in the hall and went into the apartment. All he saw was a flash of flame underneath the bed which he sprayed before closing the door, Gray said.

When the fire department arrived, only a few small hot spots were left. They proceeded to clear the smoke and investigate the area.

The Colorado Bureau of Investigation will take a closer look at the fire.

The FBI will also be involved in an investigation of the incident along with the Salida Police Department.

Bertram was detained at the Chaffee County jail on a \$16,150 bond.

Fire boards schedule elections

by Ron Slaughter
Mail Staff Writer

Special elections have been set to elect directors to the boards of the South Arkansas Fire Protection District and the Chaffee County Fire Protection District.

George Koenig, president of the board of directors of the SAFP, said Friday that he and two other incumbents have returned petitions to place their names on the ballot May 3. However, he was not aware of any other candidates in that race.

Koenig said that he, George Oyler and Dudley Crawford, three of the five SAFP board members, are up for election in 1988; the other two directors will run again in 1990 for four-year terms.

The SAFP recently extended its area of operations to Swissvale. "We work in the southern end of the valley. We have mutual aid agreements with all concerned agencies: the Salida Fire Department, Chaffee County Fire Protection District, the Forest Service and the Buena Vista Correctional Facility," Koenig said.

Also on the ballot in the May 3 special elections are board seats on the CCFPD board of directors. Kathleen Guthrie, Buena Vista, said that four directors will be elected at that time: three members at large and one from the town of Poncha Springs, all to serve four-year terms.

Please see FIRE page 5



Hot work

Firefighters from the Chaffee County Fire Protection District battle a blaze Friday at the Natrop home of Gary Hill. The fire was reported by Undersheriff Ernie Morgan around 7 p.m. Friday. No official of the CCFPD could be located Sunday, so more details were not available.

Gas fire hits Salidan's VW

Monday
April 11
1988

A leaking gas line resulted in \$300 fire damage to a 1974 Volkswagen owned by Robert J. Rogers of 1614 County Road 101.

Nancy O'Conner was in the car when the Friday afternoon fire broke out in the engine compartment.

Jim Bonga was at the scene — 7th and F streets — and used an extinguisher to put out the fire, according to a Salida Fire Department report.

The report states that the engine appeared to have a leak in the gas line, which resulted in burning wires.

Firemen who responded to the 3:50 p.m. call plugged the gas line with a stick to stop the leak.

The vehicle was insured and valued at \$1600.

Salida firemen were also called to a grass fire at 1:25 a.m. Saturday.

The fire was located two miles north on Highway 291 and burned a path 15' wide and 70' long before it was extinguished with approximately 200 gallons of water.

A call at 2:15 p.m. Sunday sent firemen to the Salida Regional Library at 405 E St.

Library personnel called to report a downed electrical line behind the building. The firemen discovered an electrical outlet box was loose and hanging down and recommended a call to an electrician.

Sunday afternoon, volunteers from Chaffee County Fire Protection District were called to extinguish a large grass fire near U.S. 24 between Buena Vista and Granite.

FIRE

Continued from page 1

Koenig said his agency is cooperating with others in the May elections to save money for the district. On the same ballot with the fire protection districts will be the Salida Hospital board of direc-

tors and seats on the Buena Vista Sanitation District board.

Nomination petitions in that race are available from Guthrie. The address to write her at is: CCFPD Station No. 1, 15326 CR 306, Buena Vista, 81211. Call her at 395-6545.

Spark from chimney burns 100-year-old home

A spark from the chimney is suspected as the cause of a fire which burned off the upper part of Gary Hill's residence at 19925 U.S. 285, about two miles south of Nathrop, Friday evening.

Undersheriff Ernie Morgan spotted the fire at 7 p.m. while driving past the home. Firemen from the Chaffee County Fire Protection District and Buena Vista responded to Morgan's call.

It took the firefighters from the Poncha Springs station, county station houses numbers one and two, as well as Buena Vista firemen, about two hours to put it out.

Seven trucks and 21 volunteers from the CCFPD, and two trucks and eight firemen from Buena Vista responded. Chuck Kay of the CCFPD said the district and Buena Vista departments have been working together on fighting structure fires, a project that paid dividends Friday.

Lost was the roof and upper portion of the old part of Hill's house. The house was well over 100 years old. The damage to the new part of the house was mostly caused by smoke and water. CCFPD officials estimated the

damage at \$8,000 to \$10,000.

Because of high winds, the fire was already extremely hot by the time firefighters arrived. Two holes had already burned through both sides of the roof when crews arrived. One firefighter said it probably took about 1,000 gallons of water to extinguish the fire.

Match play ignites shed

A shed fire on CR 120 Monday morning was caused by two children playing with matches.

The Salida Fire Department responded to the 10:08 a.m. fire with three trucks and 15 men. By the time they arrived, the roof had burned on the backyard shed belonging to Kenneth Winfield of 8125 CR 120.

It took the crew about five minutes to stop the flames and another 1-1/2 hours and about 3,000 gallons of water to completely extinguish the fire.

Damage was estimated at \$7,000.

April 12 1998

Morning fire hits Market building

The Minit Market convenience store building at Teller and U.S. 50 sustained heavy smoke damage following a fire early Monday.

Salida fire and police departments were dispatched to the scene at 3:16 a.m. When they arrived, they found the store engulfed in smoke with flames inside.

"It made a lot of smoke, and it looked like it was ready to take off," Salida fire chief Jim Gray said.

Firemen found the front window partially broken and they proceeded to break it out. A small fire was found towards the back of the store near the coolers. This was extinguished and the only thing left to do was to ventilate and check the rest of the building.

Because it is a business, the Colorado Bureau of Investigation has been called and will help with the investigation. They should investigate the scene within the next couple of days, Gray said.

Cause of the fire has not been determined. A total of two tankers, two pumpers and 16 firemen responded to the call. Although only 150 gallons of water were used, it took the crew 2 1/2 hours to complete the job.

The main damage was to the goods inside the store. The building received damage only to its ceiling tiles. Gray estimated the loss between \$10,000 and \$20,000.

The store, owned by William Mansheim, Patricia Mansheim, Lynn Funk and Gayle Funk, had been set to be sold at a public sheriff's auction May 3. A foreclosure had been entered on the building April 1.

At the time, remodeling work to the warehouse building adjacent to the Minit Market was underway. This was to be converted into a headquarters for Arkansas Valley Expeditions rafting company owned by Billy Mansheim and Pam Smith.



Mail photo by David Lichtenstein

The Minit Market building at Teller and U.S. 50 was roped off pending an investigation by the Colorado Bureau of Investigation. A fire early

Monday caused damages estimated to be between \$10,000 and \$20,000.

THE MOUNTAIN MAIL — SALIDA, COLORADO — MONDAY, MAY 30, 1988 — 3

Fire destroys pickup

While burning an irrigation ditch Friday, Jack Jones had a fire on his property at 7705 CR 111 destroy his pickup truck.

The fire spread to a field where his truck was parked at 10 a.m. The grass fire burned under the truck causing the gas lines to burn off the saddle tanks.

Burning gas was squirting from the tanks and the truck was engulfed in fire when the Salida Fire Department arrived. It took firefighters about seven minutes using foam to knock down the gas fire.

Firemen used 1,100 gallons of water to control the grass fire. Approximately a quarter of an acre was burned. A ditch bank kept the fire from spreading any further.

Five firefighters from Salida and the South Arkansas Fire

Protection District responded, and the whole operation took 51 minutes.

The Ford pickup truck, valued at \$5,000, was a total loss.



Mail photo by Ron Slaughter

This 1981 pickup truck belonging to Jack Jones of Salida was totally destroyed in a fire Friday. Jones was burning grass in a field on CR 111 near

Salida and did not see his pickup catch fire. The flames from burning gasoline engulfed the truck. The loss was estimated at \$5,000.



Mail photo by David Lichtenstein

ORADO — MONDAY, MAY 30, 1988

Auditorium ceiling falls

Two levels of ceiling collapsed in the city auditorium early Sunday.

Jerry Henderson of the Salida Fire Department heard the ceiling cave in at approximately 3 a.m. while he was sleeping in the adjacent fire house.

"There was no indication the structure was unsafe," said fireman Tim Nelson. "There was no sag."

The two false ceilings took several minutes to collapse and did not fall in all at once, Nelson said. However it could still have been dangerous if someone had been in the room at the time, he added.

The cost of the damage is unknown at this time. It is also unknown when the ceiling will be repaired.

The cause of the collapse is still under investigation.

Wednesday July 6 1988



Mount Shavano EMTs Jackie Berndt and Bill Harrison test the neck and back support provided by KED extrication equipment. Jason Booker volunteered to play victim for a demonstration.

The KED was borrowed from the Salida Fire Department to show what type of equipment is needed by the EMTs.

Afternoon fire destroys Crest

by David Lichtenstein
Mail Staff Writer

A fire called in at 5:13 p.m. Sunday destroyed the Monarch Crest building, gift shop and restaurant.

The fire is believed to have started in the back or east side of the building, and within an hour it spread throughout the structure.

Firefighters from Gunnison, the Chaffee County Fire Protection District and Salida were on the scene attempting to put the fire out.

At 6 p.m., about 45 minutes after the fire was reported, smoke was billowing from the back of the building with flames becoming visible through doors and windows. Crews had difficulty getting water

on the building immediately and the fire continued to spread throughout the structure.

Firefighters were delayed in getting equipment up Monarch Pass. Once on the scene, crews did not have enough water to control the fire. Once fire crews had used the water they carried with them, they had to head down the pass to the Madonna Mine, about four miles away, to get additional water.

When fire crews first got to the scene, they attempted to gain entry and control the blaze through the back of the structure. When it seemed they were making progress, however, they ran out of water and had to retreat from the heat, smoke and flames.

please see FIRE page 7

Continued from page 1

By 6:20 p.m. flames were shooting out all sides of the building. Firefighters sprayed water in the front and back of the building, but soon ran out.

Shortly after 7 p.m. the immediate area was evacuated in anticipation of a propane tank inside the building exploding.

Water was sprayed onto the trees and power lines behind the building at the outset to prevent it from spreading. Public Service Company of Colorado workers helped to disconnect nearby electrical lines.

The building of approximately 5,000 square feet was owned by Dick and Ann Fortune, Salida. Besides the coffee and gift shops,

the building had supply rooms and upstairs living quarters.

The cause of the fire was not known at *The Mail's* press time. Observers reported lightning had struck near the building earlier in the afternoon. However, it is not known if lightning caused the fire.

The Chaffee County dispatch office reported that the call was turned in from the Monarch Lodge in Garfield.

No figures were available on the value of the building or on its contents. Equipment and structures at the Monarch Aerial Tramway adjacent to the burning building were not damaged. Owner Elmo Bevington said he would be opening for business again just as soon as electrical power could be installed.



Firefighters were unable to work their way inside about 5 p.m. Sunday. The building and contents the Monarch Crest building which caught fire at were completely destroyed by the blaze.

Lack of water hindered firefighters at Crest

by David Lichtenstein
Mail Staff Writer

Monarch Crest Inc. burned to the ground Sunday, in part because firefighters could not respond sooner, and because of a lack of water, said Chaffee County Fire Protection District chief Ron Hassell.

The wood-framed coffee and gift shop, which has stood on top of Monarch Pass at the Continental Divide since 1952, caught on fire at about 5 p.m.

Firefighters from the Gunnison Fire Department, Salida Fire Department and the Chaffee County Fire Protection District received the dispatchers call at

5:13 p.m. The fire was not under control until about 8 or 9 p.m., at which point the building was a total loss.

Firefighting crews remained on the scene until about 3 a.m. Monday digging through rubble and putting out hot spots. This was difficult in places where the rubble was as much as five feet deep, Hassell said.

"There were a couple of things which handicapped us," said Hassell. "First was the response time. Secondly, the water was inadequate. We needed a large volume of water in a hurry. I've always dreaded a fire in that area."

"The chances were slim that we

could have controlled it completely, but if we had more water, we could have saved part of the building."

Responding to the fire were two water tankers and one fire engine from Gunnison, one fire engine and one water tanker from Salida and seven fire trucks from the Chaffee County Fire Protection District — three from the Poncha Springs firehouse, three from Nathrop and one from Buena Vista. Yet the amount of water was not enough to keep up with the fire's progress.

Firefighters needed 1,000 gallons of water per minute, but were not able to keep up such a supply. According to the Salida Fire Department report, extra water from the Monarch Ski Area could only be drawn at a rate of 100 gallons per minute.

Because of the lack of water, firefighters were more concerned with keeping the fire from spreading to the trees and power lines directly behind the building, as well as the

propane tanks outside the building. "We were able to keep enough water on the propane tanks to keep them from exploding," said Hassell. "We were also concerned about the toxic smoke from a fire like that."

Upstairs in the back of the building is where the fire is believed to have originated. A lightning strike earlier in the afternoon had caused a satellite dish to malfunction. An even closer lightning strike also knocked out fuses for the well pumps.

A few minutes after working in the well house, employees of the Monarch Crest business noticed smoke from the back of the building. An electrical panel in an upstairs electrical supply room was on fire. A futile attempt was made with hand-held fire extinguishers to put out the blaze.

The power surge from the lightning, which is suspected as the cause of the fire, also knocked out the phone lines. A manager of the business, Debbie Ogden, had to

drive down to the Monarch Resort five miles east to call the fire department.

The building of approximately 5,000 square feet has been owned by Dick and Anne Fortune, Salida, since 1976. The Fortunes, who also own Monarch Valley Manufacturing, were unavailable for comment on the extent of the loss.

Fifteen firefighters from the Chaffee County Fire Protection District, 10 from the Salida Fire Department and 10 from Gunnison were on the scene. Several firefighters were treated for heat exhaustion and smoke inhalation, which was compounded by the lack of oxygen at the high altitude. The building is at 11,312 feet above sea level.

A water tanker from the Poncha Springs fire station was sent back up the pass Monday morning to take care of any missed hot spots. Hassell estimates that 30,000 gallons of water were used on the blaze.



Salida and the South Arkansas Fire Protection District have their fire truck back from Denver, where it was given a new factory-rebuilt engine. The replacement was needed after the old Caterpillar engine broke while in service on Monarch Pass July 24.

Little engine that couldn't: Caterpillar claims mis-use

by David Lichtenstein
Mail Staff Writer

Questions concerning the purchase of a fire truck engine still exist even after it was returned to its place in the Salida Fire Department Tuesday.

The truck, owned by the South Arkansas Fire Protection District and the city of Salida, had its Caterpillar 3208 engine replaced with the same factory rebuilt engine. The engine failed July 24 while fighting a fire on the Monarch Crest.

The truck was purchased in 1986, and the engine was still under Caterpillar's 24 month warranty when it failed. However, Caterpillar contends the engine was incorrectly operated and that this led to its failure while pumping water on top of Monarch Pass.

The city has tentatively agreed to pay \$2,000 or less of the \$7,763 bill for the engine. An improved settlement is still being pursued

by the city.

"I want to emphasize the word 'tentative,'" said City Administrator Darrell Bailey. "Caterpillar has said they don't believe it is totally warrantable. We feel the full warranty should be honored."

Caterpillar has said, after inspecting the parts, that the engine was over-revved, Bailey said. "To us, they haven't proved anything." Caterpillar has not been able to show when or how the engine was over-revved, according to Bailey.

When the engine was selected, it was recommended by everyone involved from the city council to the board of the SAFP, said Salida Mayor Pat Brooks. The model 3208 is designed for mid-range trucks and buses, according to Caterpillar. "It was designed in the 1960s for over-the-highway trucks," said Bailey.

When the engine failed, it had just finished carrying 1,000 gallons of water about 25 miles to the top of Monarch Pass. The engine pumped 700 gallons before failing.

The fire truck was originally paid for by a \$55,000 grant. An additional \$45,000 was designated for the truck, as well. This cost was split 50/50 between Salida and the SAFP, said Brooks.

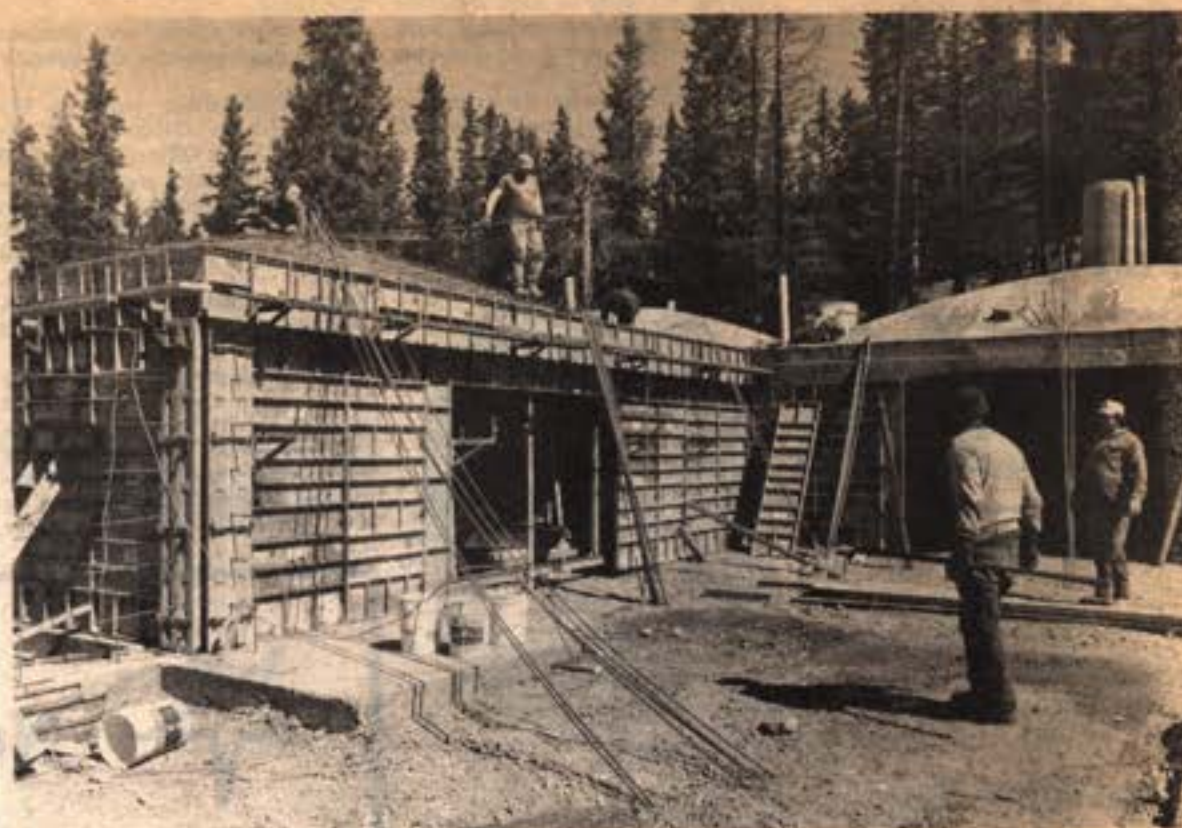
The factory-rebuilt engine will carry with it a two-year warranty as if it were new, said Bailey.

ENGINE

Continued from page 1
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Workers are in the middle of constructing 10 interconnecting domes that will form the new Monarch Crest on Monarch Pass. Much of the structure will be under some eight feet of soil. The building will get natural light from an open front and from skylights extending down through the soil.

New Crest structure unique

by David Lichtenstein
Mail Staff Writer

Construction of 10 integrated concrete domes for use as a visitor center, coffee shop, gift shop and mountain park has begun on the summit of Monarch Pass.

The unique modern structure will replace the old wooden Monarch Crest building built in 1952 and destroyed by fire July 24.

"We are racing with the weather to get this done," said Dick Fortune, owner of Monarch Crest. Fortune anticipates the wet work on the partially-submerged structure to be completed by Oct. 15 and the rest of the building to be finished by Jan. 1.

Excavation work is done and the first few domes have already started to go up. The total size

should be 8,250 square feet, slightly larger than the old building.

Because of the dome construction and the building's layout on one level instead of two, the new crest building will have the feeling of greater spaciousness, said Fortune. "The room will be much more efficient," he said.

On top of the connected domes will be eight feet of soil. This will be for a 9,000 square foot mountain park designed in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service.

The park will have an educational walk, said Fortune, with other amenities, as well. Sub-alpine fir trees, flowers and rocks will be landscaped in the park.

Each dome will be 20 feet in diameter. They will be 13 feet tall at the center with eight-foot archways between the domes.

Fortune chose this design for its efficiency and practicality, especially at high elevations. On top of the Continental Divide at 11,312 feet, the crest is prone to heavy snowfalls and high winds. The dome will allow the wind to sweep snow from its exposed sections.

The underground domes will also provide natural climate control and lighting. Appliances, sun and people will supply heat, which will be kept in by the insulation of the soil. The building will be dehumidified and kept at a constant 68 to 72 degrees. Overhead sky lights will supply light.

Perhaps best of all, the building is protected from natural catastrophes such as hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes and, especially, fires. "This should help our insurance," said Fortune.

please see CREST page 3

Tuesday Oct 4 1988



First graders Josh Jean, left, and Tony Ammons were on call Monday at the Salida Fire Department as their class took a tour of the fire house as part of Fire Prevention Week. Other school programs are scheduled for the week.

Children main focus of Fire Prevention Week

October 9 through 15 is Fire Prevention Week, and both Salida and Buena Vista will have special programs.

The Buena Vista volunteer fire department will have the theme: "Test your smoke detector, a sound you can live with." This is to emphasize the importance of regular testing and maintenance for smoke detectors.

In Salida, the fire department has planned programs for the elementary school. A puppet show will be given for kindergarten through fourth graders, and flyers printed by McDonald's will be handed out.

"We try to tell the kids what to do in a fire and not to play with fire," Fire Chief Jim Gray said. Gray said the program also asks kids to talk about fire prevention and awareness with their family. They also tell the kids what to do if their clothes catch on fire.

This show will also be given at Son Shine Inn pre-school and day care center and at St. Joseph

Catholic School.

For the fifth and sixth graders, a film will be shown called "Plan to Get Out — Alive."

The McDonald's flyer has a checklist of fire awareness for kids. If they complete the list, they get a free hamburger at McDonald's.

"We are starting to get quite a bit of fire information and material," Gray said.

On Monday, two first grade classes from Longfellow Elementary School were given a tour of the fire house. Of the half-dozen first graders surveyed, all agreed they liked sliding down the pole in the fire house best.

Fire Prevention Week was first proclaimed by President Warren G. Harding in 1922 to commemorate the great Chicago fire of 1871. This fire, in which more than 250 people were killed, 100,000 left homeless and more than 17,400 buildings destroyed, forced national attention on the need for fire prevention.

Oct 13 1988



Mall photo by Tracy Harmon

Only you ...

Tim Nelson of the Salida Fire Department talks to the kindergarten class at St. Joseph's School about features of the fire truck as part of Fire Prevention Week activities. The children received a tour of the entire truck and were allowed to climb inside, as well.

Oct 12 1988



A St. Joseph kindergarten student learns the first step of the stop, drop and roll method of putting out a fire on one's clothes from the Salida Fire Department's Tim Nelson. The firemen are working with the children at both grade schools during Fire Prevention Week, Oct. 9-15.

Firemen, puppets visit kids

by Tracy Harmon
Mail Staff Writer

St. Joseph School students received a visit from several representatives of the Salida Fire Department as part of National Fire Prevention Week, Oct. 9-15.

Kindergarten class members received information from Tim Nelson of the fire department regarding good and bad fires. The group decided good fires are campfires, while bad fires are forest or house fires.

House fires can be "scary," Nelson told the group, but smoke detectors can save lives. Smoke detectors need proper installation and testing to make sure they are in working order.

A puppet show taught the children about stop, drop and roll — an exercise which is vital if someone's clothes catch fire. Policeman and Sparky the dog puppets informed the group about the stop, drop and roll procedure and the importance of the exercise.

Following the puppet show, several children tried the stop, drop and roll method with the help of Nelson. The children covered their faces with their hands, dropped to the floor and rolled both forward and backward, so they would know how to put out a clothes fire.

The group was also given a tour of a fire truck, which allowed them to see equipment used by the fire department. Packets of information on fire prevention were distributed to the children.

Information included a fire prevention check list for the children to complete, which would entitle them to a free hamburger at McDonald's. Each packet also included a "Plan to Get Out Alive" pamphlet from McDonald's.

Nelson explained that the puppets used for the fire prevention show were purchased for \$2,000 for both fire and law enforcement agencies. The puppets are used for educational programs on crime, drug abuse and fire prevention.

The money for the puppets was raised through contributions from many clubs and organizations in Salida. The fire department has also used the puppets for programs in Gunnison.

Smoke detector ownership and maintenance are the focus of fire prevention week, as well as planning an escape route and practicing fire drills. Smoke detectors are important because most home fires occur at night when people are asleep, according to the National Fire Protection Association.

From 1980-85, there were 9.3 deaths per 1,000 fires in homes without smoke detectors. Homes with smoke detectors had 5.2 deaths per 1,000 fires.

Almost everyday, a smoke detector saves somebody's life. A smoke detector cannot save lives unless it is installed correctly and in working order.

Smoke detectors should be placed outside of each bedroom and on each additional story of the house, including the basement. Detectors should bear the mark of an organization that tests and evaluates products.

Battery-powered smoke detectors should be checked once a week. Batteries should be replaced at least once a year.

Never paint a smoke detector, and keep it free of dust and cobwebs, which could impair the detector's sensitivity. Do not disable a smoke detector because it is

triggered by a smoky oven, and do not take the batteries out.

Families should make a fire escape plan for their homes and practice the plan with all family members. The plan should map out as many escape routes as possible.

If an escape route is through a second- or third-story window, a safety ladder (purchased from a department store) can be used. Bedroom doors should be closed at night, to help slow the spread of fire, smoke and heat.

When a smoke detector goes off, each person should get down on his or her hands and knees and crawl to the nearest escape exit. Cleaner air is nearer to the ground, since smoke and heat rise to the ceiling.

If someone is trapped in a room, he should use wet towels to seal cracks around doors and vents. If a window is in the room, the person should stay low by the window and breathe fresh air.

A phone call to the fire department should include information on the exact location of someone trapped in the house or building. Once outside, family members should gather at a pre-determined meeting place outside the home, well away from the building.

Once at the meeting place, someone should take a head count to see if everyone is safe. When everyone is outside, they should stay outside.

The escape plan should be practiced with fire drills, involving the entire family. In 1986, there were 565,500 home fires which resulted in 4,655 deaths, (not including fire fighter deaths) and 18,575 injuries, according to the Sept. 1987 issue of Fire Journal.

Parents survive Monarch plane wreck:

Crash kills three children

by Tracy Harmon
Mail Staff Writer

A fiery plane crash at about 5 p.m. Tuesday on Monarch Pass, about one mile west of Garfield, killed three children and severely injured two adults.

The two adults, a male age 38 and a female 33, parents of the

children, were found by rescuers about 50 yards from the wreckage. They were thrown from the plane by the impact of the crash.

The three children, a girl, four months, a boy, 3, and a girl, 5, were trapped in the wreckage and died.

No names were released. No

information was available on where the family was from or where it was headed to.

An eyewitness, Harry Armstrong of Four Seasons in Garfield, said it was obvious the plane would crash as it dove-bombed in-between two ridges on the pass.

"All of a sudden there was a big

cloud of smoke from the dirt and then we saw smoke from the fire. It made quite a noise," Armstrong said.

Rescuers from the Chaffee County Sheriff's Department, the Chaffee County Fire Protection District and volunteers raced to the scene.

Merle Entz of Salida Flying Service directed rescuers to the crash site from a light plane circling above the crash.

Rescuers hauled the two survivors about three-fourths of a mile to a waiting Salida ambulance standing at U.S. 50 at the Boss Lake four-wheel drive trail. They were then transported to Salida Hospital, treated briefly,

stabilized, and then flown by St. Francis Flight for Life helicopter to Penrose Hospital in Colorado Springs at about 9 p.m.

The two suffered multiple second and third degree burns, bruises and abrasions.

Armstrong said when he saw the plane crash, he and two other witnesses, Lisa Powers and Ted Benson, immediately headed for the scene of the crash.

They followed the old railroad track up to within about 100 yards of the crash where Armstrong dropped off Powers and Benson so they could assist with rescue operations.

The plane had come to rest on a

Please see PLANE page 10

Mother survives:

'It threw the baby out — where's the baby?'

by David Lichtenstein
Mail Staff Writer

Garfield residents with emergency medical training were on the Monarch Pass plane crash scene within minutes Tuesday evening but could do nothing to save the three children.

Jim Backstrand and Ira Curry, both ski patrollers at Monarch Ski Area and Tracy Johnson all of Garfield, were the first people to reach the victims of the crash.

Another witness, Lisa Powers, called the Chaffee County dispatcher's office.

The dispatcher then called upon sheriffs, county ambulance service, fire departments from both the north and south end of the county, county search and rescue teams and County Coroner Willard Lewis.

Helping rescuers find the site approximately three-quarters of a mile off the Boss Lake road was Merle Entz, fixed based operator of Salida airport. Entz arrived about five minutes after the call went out.

He continued to fly circles around the site, dipping his wing towards the spot to direct rescuers.

Powers found the scene by following smoke.

"I saw something white through the trees and followed it down," she said. At the same time she saw Randy Merchant and Gall Herrington, two other Garfield residents, who arrived on the scene earlier.

"It took a while to get the guts to go look at it," Powers said.

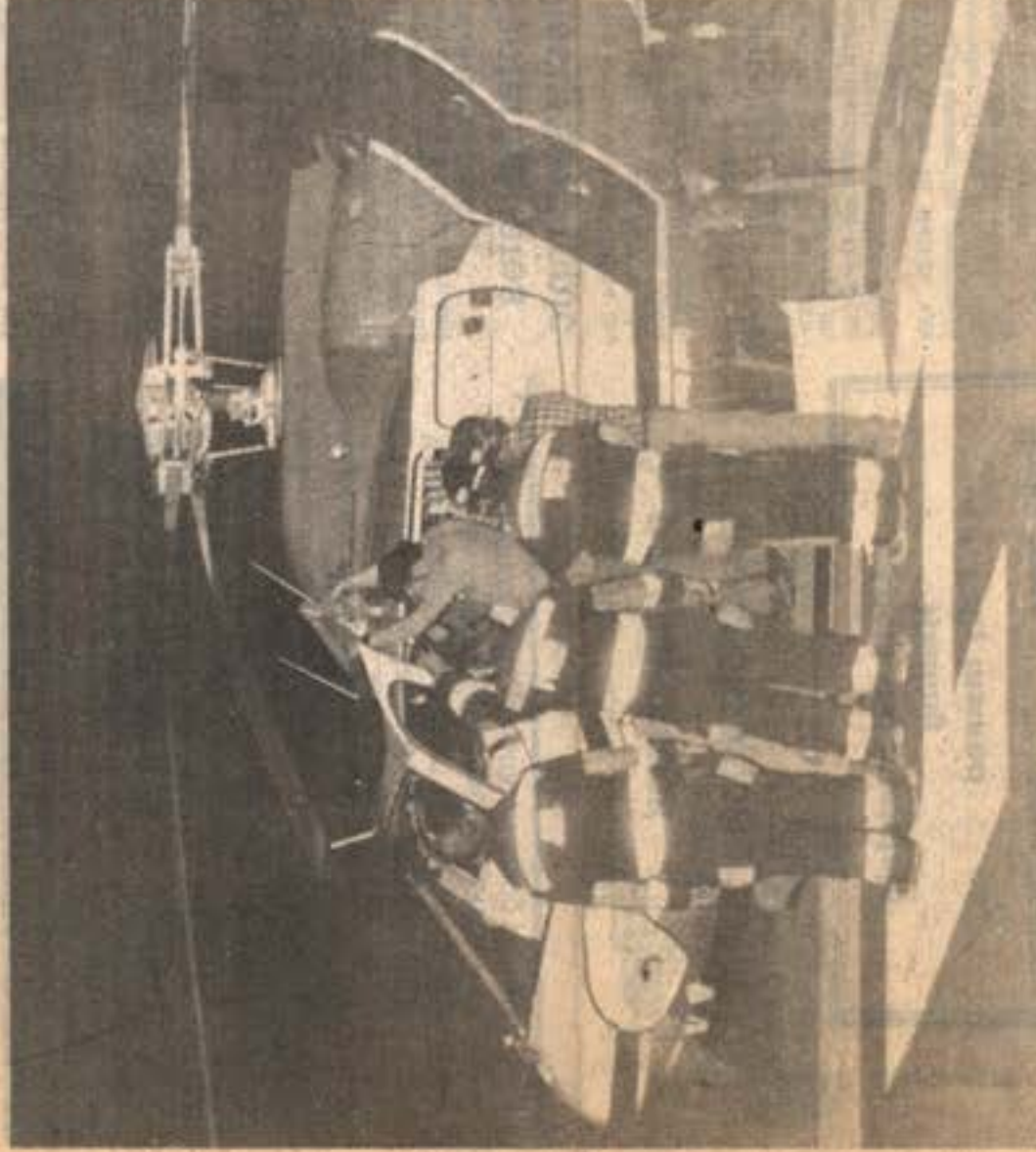
Merchant said he was driving down Monarch Pass with Bill Block when he saw flames and smoke from the wreck.

"We thought it was a hunter's campfire at first," he said.

Merchant and others hiked about a mile to the wreck from where the Boss Lake four-wheel drive trail comes out across from the Monarch Lodge.

When Herrington arrived, the woman in the plane wreck was conscious.

Please see WRECK page 10



At Salida Hospital, Salida firemen assist as one of the survivors of Tuesday evening's plane crash is loaded aboard a Flight for Life helicopter for a trip to Penrose Hospital in Colorado Springs.

Mail photo by Ron Slaughter

wed Oct 19 1988

Cause of crash

Pilot: 'I erred'

The family of five involved in the Tuesday evening plane crash on Monarch Pass just west of Garfield has been identified.

The single engine Cherokee Piper 140 model plane was being flown by the father, John Shippen, 38. He and his wife Shirley, 33, were thrown about 50 yards down a slope from the wreck.

They were flown on Flight for Life helicopter to Penrose Hospital in Colorado Springs. John is listed in stable condition with burns over 25 to 35 percent of his body. Shirley is in stable but critical condition with burns over 35 to 40 percent of her body.

The three children killed in the crash were identified as Sharity, 5, Jonathan, 3 and Serena, 4 months.

Chaffee County Undersheriff

Ernie Morgan spoke to John Shippen before he was taken by St. Francis Flight for Life helicopter to Penrose.

"The pilot told me he turned into the mountain. Instead of turning left over the valley he turned right into the mountain. He said it was a pilot error," Morgan said.

Shippen also told Morgan he had been a pilot for 20 years and was a flying instructor with mountain flying experience. Shippen also told Morgan he was encountering downdrafts at the time of the crash.

The last altitude Shippen recalls the plane flying at was 9,000 feet. The plane was found at an elevation between 10,078 and 11,000 feet.

"He just did not have enough Please see ERROR page 4

Trauma

Rescuers affected

by Tracy Harmon
Mail Staff Writer

Many rescue workers and witnesses at the site of Tuesday's tragic plane crash on Monarch Pass near Garfield Tuesday were deeply affected by what they saw, heard and felt.

Witness to the crash, Harry Armstrong of Four Seasons in Garfield said the plane flew right over Garfield at about 5 p.m.

He looked up at the plane because he could hear it and knew it was flying low. The plane was flying in a downslope, "like it was coming in for a landing," Armstrong said.

The plane hit the tops of several trees before slamming into the mountainside.

"It hit the ground and a cloud of dust flew up. Then we heard the explosion and by the time we saw the smoke, we were on the way there," Armstrong said.

Ted Bisson, also of Four Seasons in Garfield, went with Armstrong to the scene of the crash.

"I did not see the crash but I saw

the plane explode about 30 seconds after the crash. When we first got there, there was a lot of fire. The mother and father were about 50 yards in back of the plane and we heard the yelling," Bisson said.

Bisson was referring to John and Shirley Shippen who along with their children were heading home to Elko, Nev. with their three children ages 4-months, 3 years and 5 years.

"Two concrete workers and two ski patrolers were there from Monarch. We were there for about 20 minutes before rescuers arrived," Bisson said.

According to Bisson, the mother was saying that she threw her baby out of the plane. A search was organized for the baby, but it was later discovered that the baby was in the plane, with the other two children and all of them were dead.

"The 4-month-old was lying under the 3-year old and the 5-year old was about three feet

Please see TRAUMA page 4

TRAUMA

Continued from page 1

behind the other two. Jim Backstrand took care of the parents by keeping them comfortable and wrapping them in blankets," Bisson said.

Bisson said he thought the Garfield residents who were on the scene quickly because they are familiar with the area.

"I have kids that are close to the age of the ones who were killed and I thought a lot about that when I was at the crash. When I got home, I gave them a lot of hugs," Bisson said.

Tim Nelson of the Salida Fire Department also assisted in the rescue mission.

"The first thing you think about is human life. If there are survivors, they are our main thought. The fire is second.

"By the time we got there, personnel from Chaffee County Fire Protection District were on the scene. We couldn't get the fire truck to the scene," Nelson said.

The plane had broken into several pieces and was burning, according to Nelson. Fire in trees around the plane had already gone out.

"It was like a flash fire. We had packed in fire extinguishers and put out a fire in the fuselage," Nelson said.

Nelson assisted in the search for the baby which was organized by Gary Prosser, CCFPD deputy chief.

"The baby was found in the aircraft and it was a relief to know that we had located it and it was not lying in the mountains somewhere. One of the older children was lying on top of the baby," Nelson said.

Nelson has assisted in rescue operations at many accidents during his career with the fire department.

"It is a experience you don't ever want to happen again. The hardest thing is when you know children are involved and you can't do anything for them.

"Deep down inside, it makes you feel sick. It is not really shocking it is just a bad situation you don't want to deal with," Nelson said.

Thirty to forty rescue workers were assisting at the crash site, according to Nelson. All of the rescuers had to travel over the "very steep, rough-going" Boss Lake road.

"A big hand goes to all involved in getting those people off the mountain alive. It was a supreme

effort," Nelson said.

"You don't ever get used to seeing accidents like that."

CCFPD volunteer Mary Baranczyk said she arrived at the spot where the two adults were being treated at 6 p.m. She was carrying a first aid kit and oxygen tank and was running up Boss Lake road when she heard shouts from other rescuers.

"The adults were already wrapped in blankets by EMTs on the scene. The EMTs had finished stabilizing preparations and were waiting for something to carry the victims out on," Baranczyk said.

The woman was placed in a basket-type stretcher and the man was strapped to a backboard. The two victims were carried back to Boss Lake Road where they were loaded separately on two pick up trucks.

"We got stuck waiting for other vehicles to move and that was very frustrating. The lady was conscious and talking the whole time and said she could see the sky and the trees.

"She talked about her children and the baby. She said she loved her husband and wanted to sur-

vive for him. She was also worried about notifying her parents," Baranczyk said.

Rescuers on the scene were speechless and had a frightened look in their eyes, according to Baranczyk.

"When we were carrying her out she started to show signs of hypothermia and was cold and sleepy. She was also showing signs of depression.

"She told me she hurt and I told her it was important that she didn't go to sleep. She started saying prayers and singing to stay awake," Baranczyk said.

The woman was uncomfortable, but showed signs of being a very strong person, Baranczyk said.

"She asked me about her children, if I thought they had died instantly and if I thought they were in heaven," Baranczyk said.

"It was a very traumatic experience, especially for those who have not been involved in a rescue before.

"We all worked together with unity and I am very proud of that — it was our goal to get the people out," Baranczyk said.

ERROR

Continued from page 1

altitude and not enough airplane," was Morgan's assessment.

"That pass just eats up on those small planes."

First officer on the scene, Ronny Bergman from the county sheriff's office, coordinated the rescue efforts which transported the Shippens to the ambulance.

The survivors were carried to the Boss Lake trail and then taken by volunteers' pickup trucks to an ambulance waiting on U.S. 50.

The family had left Pueblo at about 4 p.m. on its way back home to Elko, Nev. The plane crashed at approximately 5:05 p.m. about five miles below the crest of Monarch Pass near the Boss Lake four-wheel drive road.

Chaffee County coroner Willard Lewis said it was unknown if the children died on impact from internal injuries or from smoke inhalation. An autopsy, he said, would be impossible.

"They probably died fairly quickly," he said.

The three children were found in the fuselage of the plane. The old-

est girl was in the rear of the passenger compartment. Her brother and sister were in the seats immediately ahead. It appeared as if the boy had his arm around his infant sister.

KUSA TV crash kills two people

The tragedy of Tuesday's plane crash has been compounded with the death of two KUSA Channel 9 employees from Denver who crashed their helicopter when returning from filming the Monarch Pass crash scene.

Leo Galanis, 43, and Brian Hostetler, 28, were flying five miles south of Cheesman Reservoir near Denver when their helicopter reportedly hit a power line at about 2 p.m. Wednesday.

Galanis was a pilot/reporter for Channel 9 and Hostetler was the television station's chief photographer.

Public utility employees were the first to discover the crash while investigating a power outage in the area.



Only small portions of the wreckage of a light plane remain after the crash on Monarch Pass. This photo taken by Lisa Powers just moments after the crash shows the plane's engine and propeller at the left.

PLANE

Continued from page 1

steep incline, according to Armstrong, and was still burning.

"I don't see how anyone could have survived," he said.

"It is a miracle that the other two people lived," Armstrong said.

Rescuers believed that one of the children had been thrown from the plane. The area was searched for the child but the child was not found.

Later, the infant's body was found under a piece of wreckage. The two other children were found dead in the main fuselage.

Originally, a rendezvous was set for Monarch Lodge where the Flight for Life helicopter was

expected to pick up the two survivors.

When rescue crews got the victims to the waiting ambulance, a decision was made to transport the two to Salida Hospital since the Flight for Life helicopter had not yet arrived.

When the victims arrived at Salida Hospital they were met by a team including two doctors, three RNs, two LPNs, two lab and two xray technicians.

Guarding the wreckage through the night and this morning were volunteers from Chaffee County Search and Rescue and the Chaffee County Fire Protection District.

WRECK

Continued from page 1

"She kept saying it threw the baby out," Herrington said.

"She kept saying, 'baby, where's the baby.'"

Rescuers then spent about the next hour searching for the baby. The hope was that the baby had been thrown from the wreckage and survived.

The two adults who survived had been thrown about 50 yards from the wreck.

The baby, however, was found dead under a piece of wreckage. The two other children were found dead in the main fuselage. All three had been burned in the fire.

"It was a devastating kind of thing," Powers said.

"I didn't feel anything for a while after that," Herrington said.

Witnesses said they thought the plane had exploded, throwing the adults from the wreck. What was left of the plane was what appeared to be five smoldering pieces of fuselage.

All the trees in the area of the wreckage had been singed by the fire.

The husband and wife were stabilized and taken from the scene by emergency rescue teams.

Groups of about seven — a total of about 14 people — carried each of the two victims out to the ambulances from where they were taken to the Salida Hospital and then by St. Francis Flight for Life to Penrose Hospital in Colorado Springs.

Their condition is described as critical.



Photo by Tracy Harmon

It was a grim scene as rescue workers stand by to assist victims of Tuesday's airplane crash on Monarch Pass. Fire trucks could not climb the

steep four-wheel drive trail up Boss Lake just outside of Garfield. Smoke from the burning plane is visible in the background.



Photo by Lisa Powers

A wheel and landing gear housing from the plane were about all that could be recognized after the craft exploded and burned on impact killing three young children and severely injuring their parents.



Photo by Lisa Powers

Trees around the wreckage burned when the light plane carrying a family of five crashed and exploded just west of Garfield on Monarch Pass Tuesday evening. Three children ages four months, three and five, died in the wreck. Their parents survived.

Thur Jan. 19 1988



Photo by Merle Baranczyk

Fire dump

Salida firemen extinguished a trash fire in an H & P Services truck Wednesday morning in front of the fire station on

E Street. Surveying the mess are Jim Gray, left, Salida fire chief and Bruce Mugford of H & P Services. See story page 2.



Photo by David Lichtenstein

Smoothing it over

Tim Nelson from the Salida Fire Department hoses down the pond at the Little River Ranch Tuesday to improve the surface for skating.

Linda Jeschofnig, owner of the ranch, had the lake plowed but weekend skaters found the surface rough.

Jan 26 1988

Thursday

Monday April 3 1988



Photo by Tracy Harmon

Freeing trapped victims was the objective Saturday as participants learn about saving lives after automobile accidents. Here, they put a

KED extrication device on the "victim" (actually a dummy) who may have sustained head or back injuries. Related photo on page 5.

Firefighters train rescue workers

by Tracy Harmon
Mail Staff Writer

Participants in a Salida Fire Department training class learned how to ax, chop, saw and pry as they destroyed two cars Saturday.

The purpose of the workshop, according to instructor Tim Nelson of Salida Fire Department, was to instruct participants in freeing victims trapped in vehicles at an accident.

"Salida Fire Department is now called on to do extrications and we have the rescue truck full of equipment needed to do it. Some of our class participants are with the volunteer fire department and they need 56 hours of training a year, per man, so we try to cover different subjects each time," Nelson said.

With two totaled cars donated by Chris Nachtrieb of Salida Auto Salvage, nine students got hands-on training. The exercise drew several spectators to the department's First and E Street parking lot where they watched volunteers hack the cars to gain entry.

They practiced freeing trapped "victims" (training dummies) by sawing through doors, prying them open or sawing through the hood. Nelson took participants through several scenarios where they learned to help victims of different accident situations, such as roll-overs or head-ons.

During the head-on collision scenario, Nelson had students chop a hole in the windshield, hook up a wench-like device to the steering wheel and pry the dashboard off the victim's lap. They then carefully strapped the dummy into a KED extrication device which immobilizes the neck and back and protects the victim from further injury.

Nelson reminded participants they should communicate with each other and formulate a plan for freeing victims by first carefully viewing the scene.

"You should know where the equipment is on the truck so you will be prepared. Lighting is important if it is a night accident.

You have to be careful with new cars, for example, the seat vinyl emits a poisonous gas when it burns," Nelson said.

Students discussed importance of watching for downed power lines at the scene and other safety measures for both rescuers and victims. Among participants at the

Saturday class were Salida Police officer Mike Bowers, Jim Gray, Fred Smith, Wes Wagner, Louie Larcom, John Kettle, Lee Mallard and Joe Foreman.

Nelson said he learned a lot of what he taught through a class on extrication which he took in Grand Junction recently.



Photo by Tracy Harmon

Training for life

Salida Fire Department's Tim Nelson chops through a windshield during the extrication training class Saturday. Participants learned how to free trapped auto accident victims — in

this situation, a head-on collision. Through the windshield hole, participants hooked a wench to the steering wheel and pried the dashboard off the trapped "victim," a training dummy.

Monday April 3 1988

Fire destroys 35 hay bales

Salida Fire Department personnel responded to a haystack fire on CR 111 at 12:30 a.m. Sunday.

A stack of 35 bales of hay belonging to Guy Post of Salida was lost, said firefighter Tim Nelson. Post leases the land to store the hay. A wire fence had been cut in five places to gain entry to the hay, Nelson said.

On Jan. 5, firefighters responded to a similar call, also at 12:30 a.m., on the Jake Heinz property at 8100 CR 111. About 100 bales of hay belonging to Frank Phelps were burned in that blaze, Nelson said.

Nelson said the fire department believes both fires were started intentionally and investigation will continue.

Monday April 1988

Grass fires keep firemen occupied

High winds and dry conditions contributed to two grass fires Friday in Chaffee County.

The biggest fire was on the George Wilson property in Nathrop. Fire crews from Buena Vista, Salida and Chaffee County spent 11 hours fighting a fire that burned approximately 200 acres including a haystack. No structures were damaged in the fire.

Two fire trucks from the South Arkansas Fire Protection District in Salida and two more from the Buena Vista Fire Department assisted seven trucks from the Chaffee County Fire Protection District.

The fire started as a controlled ditch burn on Wilson's ranch east of U.S. 285 on CR 270. When the winds picked up, the burn soon spread to the grass and into a haystack.

Salida sent four men to the fire when the call came in at noon. They used about 5,000 gallons of water and left at 4 p.m.

Another five Salida firefighters were called to a grass fire off U.S. 50 three miles west of Poncha Springs at Weldon Creek. This fire started just before 1:30 p.m. and was also spread by high winds.

By 3:30 p.m. this fire was under control. About 20 acres burned and was put out with 1,500 gallons of water.

In Nathrop, crews from the CCEPD stayed until 11 p.m. to put out the fire.

Tips given for averting grass fires

In the past two months the Salida Fire Department has handled four out-of-control grass fires.

To prevent as many dangerous situations as possible, the fire department provides the following advice to grass burners.

Warm weather has given some

local ranchers and land owners the chance to burn grass around ditches and property to get rid of overgrowth and give the undergrowth a chance to grow. The dry weather also makes grass burning a dangerous operation, according to the local fire department.

Please see FIRES page 2

FIRES

Continued from page 1

Wes Wagner of the Salida Fire Department gave some tips in order to prevent out-of-control fires.

"Grass burning should not be done when it's windy, there should be a place for the fire to stop, and there should be enough people to watch over the grass fires," said Wagner.

He said out of the four out-of-control fires, two were in Northern Chaffee County. All four could have been prevented using the tips.

Friday

April 21

1988

Monday April 24 1988

Grass fires out of control, unintentionally

Salida firemen were busy Sunday containing two fires which started as controlled burns but, fueled by the wind, blazed out of control.

About 11:30 a.m., two Salida firemen took one truck to a site on CR 190 when the Chaffee County Fire Protection District requested assistance. The grass fire had spread to a grove of cottonwood trees and came fairly close to the home of Gary Foster, 10750 CR 190, said fireman Fred Smith.

"It got pretty close by the house but we knocked it down before it spread. It was difficult because the wind was blowing and cottonwood trees are hard to put out once they start burning," Smith said.

The firemen spent about 2-1/2 hours and 4,000 gallons of water.

Salida volunteer firemen Phil and John Sterle were called out at about noon Sunday to a site along CR 110.

Smith said Ken Hilton of 7600 CR 107 called for assistance when he thought the fire was spreading too close to the house. The Sterle brothers took one tanker and used about 1,500 gallons of water to get the one-acre blaze under control.



Photo by Tracy Harmon

Volunteer Salida firefighters Phil and John Sterle respond to a call of an out-of-control, controlled burn on CR 110 Sunday. The two used 1,500 gallons of water to control the grass fire which was started by Ken Hilton in the ditch on CR 110.



Photo by David Lichtenstein

Dorian Cox shows what used to be a brush for a gas grill but was melted Tuesday night when the grill exploded on the Coxes' backyard porch at the Friendship Inn. Apparently the propane caught fire and caused approximately \$25,000 of fire and smoke damage, the Coxes said.

Blast damages Friendship Inn

An outdoor gas grill caught fire Tuesday evening at the Friendship Inn on west U.S. 50 in Salida, causing approximately \$25,000 of property damage, said owners Greg and Karen Cox.

The Coxes said they heard an explosion on their porch at about 8:30 p.m., 20 minutes after starting the grill. When they checked it out, they saw flames coming out of the grill.

They went to get a water hose and when they returned the flames had grown to approximately 30 feet in height.

"It was real scary," said Karen Cox. "It was pulsating when we came back so we called the fire department."

Karen Cox commended the local fire department for arriving on the scene in a little over four minutes after the call. Approximately 15 firefighters subdued the fire with water and cleared the house of smoke.

The heat from the fire burned part of the porch fence and knocked out several windows. A screen door and the roof of their building was damaged. In the kitchen, linoleum, wiring and the ceiling received damage.

The height of the flames

damaged overhead cable wires, National Weather Service communication wires and phone lines. The Coxes said they believe the fire was caused by a fault in the enclosed propane gas grill. "The heat built up, the hoses melted and it exploded," said Greg Cox.

The Coxes investigated the problem and found that no one makes fully enclosed gas grills anymore. They had purchased their Sunbeam model 4477 at Wal-Mart.

"I don't ever want one again," said Karen Cox. "Tonight we are going back to the old way of grilling."

Thursday April 27 1989

TUESDAY

DECEMBER 20, 1988

YEAR 109, NO. 142

SALIDA, COLORADO

25 cents

THE MOUNTAIN MAIL

The Voice
of the
Upper
Arkansas

One dead, one hurt in wreck

A New Mexico man plummeted 130 feet to his death Monday morning when the tractor-trailer he was driving skidded off U.S. 50 and stopped near the Arkansas River.

Riley Hontz, 58, of Portales, N.M., was killed and his wife seriously injured at 8:15 a.m. when the couple was driving eastbound, 2 1/2 miles east of Howard.

According to Colorado State Trooper Jon Cummings, the tractor-trailer hit a patch of ice, skidded 18 feet in the eastbound lane and continued to skid broadside 87 feet across the westbound lane. It then hit a guard rail and skidded for another 72 feet before rolling 130 feet down a steep embankment.

The tractor-trailer came to rest with the truck on its top and the semi-trailer on its side. The trailer, on its way to Denver via Pueblo, was empty at the time.

Barbara J. Hontz, 47, was extricated by members of the Salida Fire Department and the South Arkansas Fire Protection District. She was transported to the Salida Hospital by Ramrod Ambulance Service, then taken to Parkview Hospital in Pueblo. Neither she nor her husband were wearing seat belts.

The 1988 Freightliner tractor-trailer was totalled. It was leased to Southwest Canneries Inc., a company owned by Ryder Trucks.



Photo by David Lichtenstein
Rescue workers carry the body of Riley Hontz up a steep embankment off U.S. 50 east of Howard Monday after Hontz' semi-tractor trailer skidded off the road and headed toward the Arkansas River. His wife was taken to Salida Hospital with serious injuries.



Photos by Leon Archuleta

FIBArk fit

Buena Vista Correctional Facility inmates (above) help the local fire department and city crews clean up for FIBArk. The inmates were cleaning at the corner of Sackett and F streets where people will travel to go between the carnival and the booths, announcements and music at Riverside Park. Local residents and tourists once again will enjoy the Wright Brothers Carnival as part of the FIBArk celebration beginning today. The carnival came to town Tuesday and started setting up (right). From left Billy Balch assists Spot Martinez with the ride setup. Martinez said there aren't many 1947 models of this particular ride left and that the newer models are easier put together. He said the ride was overhauled to be more like a 1974 model.





Photo by David Lichtenstein

Flaming bus

A Volkswagen van caught fire on U.S. 50 Thursday between Poncha Springs and Salida. Here, Salida Fire Department fireman Tim Nelson cools off the smoking engine. Firemen suspect gasoline had leaked and caused the van to catch fire.

Thursday June 13 1989

Firemen collecting for fireworks

The fireworks display is named in honor of Dick Bondurant. Fireworks will be shot by the firemen from Tenderfoot Mountain July 4.

Salida firemen will be collecting donations for the Fourth of July Dick Bondurant Memorial Fireworks Display Friday and Saturday from 5 p.m. until dark.

According to Fireman Wes Wagner, collectors will cover the east side of town Friday and the west side Saturday. Firemen voluntarily collect donations in the fire trucks and will sound the siren so donors will know they are near.

accounted for an additional \$160.

Contributions can still be made at the Salida Fire Department office in the City Auditorium or at many local businesses which have specially marked donation cans, Prosser said. City councilwoman Bonnie Bondurant, has been in charge of the donation cans.

Fireman Wes Wagner is the fireworks display coordinator. He will be helped on Tenderfoot Mountain Tuesday night by about 10 other firemen.

The show is slated to start at dusk and will feature an extra finale this year which should make the display more spectacular than last year, Prosser said.

Monday July 3 1989

Friday June 30 1989

Pumpers out to collect

by Leon Archuleta
Mail Staff Writer

Firetrucks will hit the streets June 29-30 to collect donations for the Fourth of July fireworks display off Tenderfoot Mountain.

Paid fireman Ron Prosser said that this year the Salida Fire Department will take two days to collect donations.

"Last year we had a few complaints because we were traveling a too fast trying to cover all of Salida in one day," said Prosser. "This year we are going to split the town up into east and west sections and hit each section on separate days."

The regular fire department will be collecting donations on the east side of town on Friday, and collecting on the west side of town

Saturday, July 1. The department will canvass from fire trucks.

"This year's fireworks display will be in memory of Dick Bondurant," said Prosser. "He was a city council member that used to head the fireworks committee. He passed away last year."

The fire department collection goal is \$2,000.

"So far we have collected about \$100 from a concession stand we set up during FIBArk," said Prosser.

"We are planning to make this one of the better fireworks displays," said Prosser. "We are planning to shoot more fireworks off consecutively."

"We already got the fireworks at the station," said Prosser. "We've just got to come up with the money to pay for them."

Firemen need \$440 more

Salida firemen still need \$440 for the Dick Bondurant Memorial Fireworks Display which will light up the sky from Tenderfoot Mountain on the Fourth of July.

With sirens blaring Friday and Saturday evenings, firemen collected donations by driving throughout Salida in fire trucks. Covering the east side of town Friday, firemen received \$850 in donations, while Saturday evening donations from the west side totaled \$550.

A total of \$1,560 has been raised toward the targeted \$2,000, said Ron Prosser of Salida Fire Department. Parade contributions and proceeds from the FIBArk hamburger stand

12-year-old killed in head-on crash



Photo by Merle Baranczyk

Gregory Evans, 12, of Howard was killed when this late-model van he was driving Sunday night collided head-on with a semi-tractor on U.S. 50 in

Salida. The vehicle he was driving crossed the center turn-lane of the five-lane highway at about 10 p.m. Sunday when it hit the eastbound semi.

Howard youth, driving without lights collides with semi on Salida street

A Howard boy died Sunday following a head-on collision at 9:57 p.m. on U.S. 50 in Salida, 499 feet west of the CR 107 intersection.

Salida Police Department, Chaffee County Sheriff's Office and Colorado State Patrol all took part in the investigation.

Reports said that Gregory J. Evans, 12, Howard, was driving a 1989 Dodge Caravan westbound, without lights, in the innermost, eastbound traffic lane when it collided with a semi-tractor/trailer driven by Steve Ochs, 59, Poncha Springs.

Cause of death was listed as massive chest and internal injuries. He was pronounced dead at the scene by Deputy Coroner Carl Hasselbrink, and his body was transported by Salida ambulance to the Lewis & Glenn Funeral Home.

The driver of the 1986 Freightliner was not injured in the crash. After impact, the tractor/-

trailer pushed the Evans vehicle nearly 111 feet to the east where both vehicles came to rest on their wheels in the roadway.

Also Sunday, a Buena Vista girl was saved from drowning after the car she was driving plummeted into the Arkansas River six miles north of Salida on Colo. 291.

The Colorado State Patrol reported that Heather Alissa Benahmed, 18, incurred injury to her spine and a chin laceration and was taken by Salida ambulance to the Heart of the Rockies Regional Medical Center before she was taken by Flight for Life helicopter to St. Francis Hospital in Colorado Springs.

According to the report, Benahmed was driving south on 291 when she crossed the center line, went across the northbound traffic lane and onto the left shoulder and ditch for more than 72 feet.

The 1982 Subaru GL she was driving was not injured in the crash. Please see ACCIDENT page 2.

Dead boy loved sports, was good student

Gregory Evans "was a fantastic young man, a great young man, the greatest that ever lived."

That's how his grieving grandmother, Ruby Evans, described the 12-year-old Howard boy killed when the car he was driving collided with a semi-trailer on U.S. 50 in Salida Sunday night.

The youngster had driven his family's late-model van 12 miles west from his home in Howard. The accident happened at about 10 p.m. when the Evans vehicle crossed over the center lane of the

five-lane highway hitting the oncoming eastbound semi head-on.

He liked to play basketball and football, Mrs. Evans said of her grandson. He liked to play sports and he enjoyed sports of all kinds. He particularly enjoyed riding his four-wheel all-terrain vehicle.

She said he was a good student who liked school. "He was a good kid and a very good student."

Greg enjoyed taking care of his great-grandmother, Mrs. Evans said, and helped his parents with

yard work. He was well-mannered, did what he was told and was well-thought of by his teachers.

"He was a well-adjusted kid, he was well-loved and he loved back," she said.

The accident had nothing to do with the family or family problems. "He was just a kid who had had a very bad day. There's no more to say about it."

"The accident had nothing to do with anyone. It was just one of those freak accidents. God had a

reason ... it was just his time to go, I guess."

Funeral services have been set for 10 a.m. Wednesday at St. Joseph Catholic Church, Salida, for Evans.

Gregory J. Evans was born in Salida on April 11, 1977, and lived with his family in Howard. He attended school in Cotopaxi and was a member of the Babe Ruth Little League Baseball Association.

He is survived by his father and mother Fred R. and Debbie D.

Evans, brothers Jimmy and Bobby Evans and sister Mandy Evans, all of Howard; grandparents Dick and Julie Barstow, Albuquerque, N.M.; Jim and Ruby Evans, Howard; Ernie Abichichi, Montrose; and great-grandmother Lucy Padilla of Howard.

Interment follows funerals services at the Howard Cemetery. Friends may make memorial contributions to the Intermountain Youth Sports Association through Lewis and Glenn Funeral Home.

Below-normal precipitation spells desert for Salida area

by Tracy Harmon
Mail Staff Writer

As dust billows and dry winds blow across the sun-baked land around Salida, weather conditions tend to conjure up desert images.

These desert-like conditions are very real. Salida has received only 37 percent of normal precipitation for the first six months of the year. By the end of June, according to Colorado State Climatology Department figures, Salida should have seen a total of 5.05 inches of precipitation.

University Atmospheric Sciences Department in Fort Collins. Salida's yearly average precipitation is 11.57 inches and unless the area receives above-average rainfall and snow within the next six months, that figure will never be met.

A breakdown of monthly precipitation figures follows:

	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June
Average	.35	.64	.78	1.25	1.12	.91
1989	.52	.55	.65	.16	.34	.26

The dry conditions in the area raise the danger of fire and heighten the never-ending need to water lawns, gardens and flowerbeds before they wither in the afternoon sun. Dirt roads seem much dustier due to lack of moisture and dry throats and eyes

Please see 'DROUGHT' page 2



Photo by Tracy Harmon

There were no water pressure problems for (l-r) Salida firefighters John Kettle, a volunteer, and Jim Gray, who took time Monday to water the

bushes at U.S. 50 and F Street. The firemen used water from one of the SFD tanker trucks to save the new bushes from death by dehydration.

Related stories page 3

By the end of June this year, the area totaled only 1.88 inches of precipitation, according to figures applied by the Colorado State

Wed 12 July 1989

Tuesday 11 July 1989

Romer, Weissling ban burning

Fire worries area rangers

by Tracy Harmon
Mail Staff Writer

All open burning is prohibited on U.S. Forest Service land throughout the 2-1/2 million acres of the Pike and San Isabel National Forests. The reason: extreme fire danger.

A special restrictive fire order was issued Monday by Jack Weissling, forest supervisor for both the Pike and San Isabel National Forests. Anyone who violates the order could be fined up to \$500 or imprisoned up to six months, or both.

Bill Schuckert, fire management officer for the Salida Ranger District, said seven forest fires already have been doused in this district. The number and size of fires have been above average for this time of year, Schuckert said.

"Sixty percent of the fires in the district have been man caused — some people are being careless. We have managed to catch most of the fires before they burn more than one acre," Schuckert said.

Salida Ranger District has been monitoring fuel moisture conditions by collecting information from dead material on forest ground and testing to determine fire danger.

One-hour fuels are showing only 2 to 3 percent moisture. In April, Please see FIRE page 2

by Ron Slaughter
Mail Staff Writer

Gov. Roy Romer and Pike/San Isabel National Forest Supervisor Jack Weissling both have issued fire bans in response to severe danger of wildfire in the state.

Chaffee County Sheriff Ken Dahl said Monday he was in receipt of an executive order from Romer's office banning open burning on the Western Slope and Front Range areas of the state.

The order defined open burning as "any outdoor fire, including but not limited to campfires, warming

fires, charcoal grill fires or the prescribed burning of fence rows, fields, wildlands, trash and debris."

Romer's order would allow fires in liquid- or gas-fueled stoves, fireplaces within all buildings, charcoal grill fires at private residences and in permanent fire pits or fire grates located on developed picnic grounds and campgrounds.

His order also allows burning of irrigation ditches "located within and completely surrounded by irrigated farmlands where such

burning is necessary for crop survival" and specific approval has been granted in writing by the county sheriff.

The governor's order strongly discourages smoking outside incorporated city limits, except within enclosed vehicles or buildings, or in developed picnic and campgrounds.

Romer's restrictions will remain in effect until he amends or rescinds them by subsequent executive order.

Forest Supervisor Weissling's restrictions go further, prohibiting

"building, maintaining, attending or using a fire, campfire, charcoal broiler, coal or woodstove, or an open fire of any type."

Weissling's order allows use of mechanical stoves that permit the operator to turn the flame on or off in developed camp or picnic grounds or in areas posted by authorized forest officers.

Banned in the Pike and San Isabel National Forests, as well, are use of explosives requiring fuse blasting caps; smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building, tent, or in a developed recreation site; operation of any internal or external combustion engine (chainsaws, generators, etc.) without an approved spark-arresting device; and possession, discharge or use of any kind of fireworks.

Violation of the Forest Service prohibitions is punishable by a fine of not more than \$500, imprisonment for not more than six months, or both.

Weissling's order, too, will remain in force until he rescinds it.

Mayor asks watering cease

Salida Mayor Pat Brooks requests that Solidans and area citizens voluntarily cease all lawn and garden watering from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. beginning today.

Brooks said she made the no-watering request, which will be in effect for the next few days, due to low water pressure conditions. Low water pressure has been experienced by citizens all over town.

"People are complaining that

they are having a terrible time with water pressure. The reason water pressure is low is because we can't get it treated fast enough to keep up with the demand," Brooks said.

Brooks said there is no shortage of water. Capacity of the Salida water plant and small size of the main lines in some areas of town are the reason for low water pressure.

This voluntary no-watering

action is a trial. Brooks asks residents with automatic sprinkling systems to reset their timers immediately to comply with the request.

If the voluntary action is successful, further mandatory action will not be necessary. However, Brooks said she is prepared to issue a mandatory order if necessary.

"Please help conserve water during this extremely dry period by not wasting it. Thanks to everyone for cooperating. There are enforceable penalties for wasting water but the city would rather not have to monitor and enforce this particular code," Brooks said.

Smoking mattress source of problem

Salida Police and Fire departments were called out at approximately 4 a.m. Tuesday to investigate a report of smoke issuing from the Victoria Apartments on North F Street.

Assistant Police Chief Darwin Hibbs reported that a mattress in one of the apartments was smoldering, possibly ignited by a cigarette.

There were no injuries and "very little property damage," Hibbs said.

Wednesday 30 Aug 1989

Tuesday 12 Aug 1989

Editorials

Manpower shortages

A recent story in *The Mail* noting creation of a forest fire strike team formed from Chaffee County Fire Protection District officers and volunteers poses a difficult question.

On the one hand, when the strike team is called out of town to battle fires as they have been this summer it does have an impact on the number of people available to respond to calls in the fire district. This manpower shortage could be a factor here if a serious fire would happen and not enough volunteers responded.

But it must be remembered that the people leaving the county with the strike team are volunteers. Only the district chief, Ron Hassell, is paid and that is as a part-time employee. All other district fire fighters are volunteers.

All CCFPD fire fighters have to rely on outside jobs to sustain themselves and their families. All contribute substantial amounts of time to keep abreast of fire fighting techniques and to maintain the personal skills which are an essential ingredient to staying active in the fire fighting business.

The only pay most volunteers are ever likely receive is a small pension for those serving as volunteers for 20 years. The district pays for the pension as a small incentive to keep volunteers active and involved.

Essentially, the question of the strike team leaving town is an economic issue. The people involved join the team primarily because it is a source of income. It may be that they also happen to enjoy fighting fires but that is not the primary reason why they're committing themselves to the team. Making money is the issue.

In the past seven years, when the county has been attempting to restructure economically, getting sufficient people to serve as volunteers in the district has been a problem. When mining played a larger role in the economy, it was much easier to get people to join volunteer departments.

Criticizing or questioning those serving on the strike team serves no useful purpose. It's far better to have team members serving the district, even if they are out of town for extended periods of time, than to not have these people volunteering their time, expertise and efforts for 10 to 11 months of the year.

CCFPD taxpayers and residents should understand that they are not without fire fighting protection when strike team members are on a call elsewhere. The district still has fire fighters who remain on standby should a local emergency arise.

In addition, the district maintains mutual assistance agreements with fire fighting departments in both Salida and Buena Vista. On serious calls in the past Salida and BV units responded as they no doubt would on any future calls for help.

The best the district can do is to reconfirm those mutual aid agreements, perhaps noting when the team is out of town.

And then the district can welcome back those serving on the team, showing their appreciation to these and all other volunteers contributing their time and skills to fighting fires and responding to other emergencies in the county.

— MJB

Frayed plug causes fire at BAR'n

by Tracy Harmon
Mail Staff Writer

A water heater plug sparked a fire at the Little River Ranch BAR'n Tuesday morning, one month after Ed and Becky Callison purchased the property.

According to Becky, some missing insulation had left the plug's wires exposed. Sparks from the plug caused the fire.

"They had the conduit bent the wrong way down the wall and that caused the insulation to wear in one spot and the wires were exposed. It started sparking and that's all it took," Becky said.

Salida firefighters, Chaffee County Sheriff's officers and Dave Sadar of the Colorado Bureau of Investigation office in Pueblo conducted the investigation. They discovered the faulty plug Tuesday afternoon.

Estimated value of the BAR'n is \$50,000. Salida firefighter Wes Wagner said damage was estimated at \$15,000.

The BAR'n owners, who previously owned a Missouri motel, notified Salida firefighters of the blaze at 3:08 a.m. Tuesday. A total of 17 firefighters — 11 from Salida and six representing Poncha Springs — brought two tankers, a pumper and two fire engines in response to the call.

Using 1,000 gallons of water, firefighters stopped the blaze by 5:30 a.m. and kept flames from spreading to the second story of the BAR'n. Standard Insurance Agency insures the BAR'n and will send an adjuster to assess total damage.

The BAR'n, which features a hardwood dance floor, will remain closed until repairs can be made. The second-story floor is damaged, according to Wagner, but the majority of the overall damage is

Please see BAR'n page 2

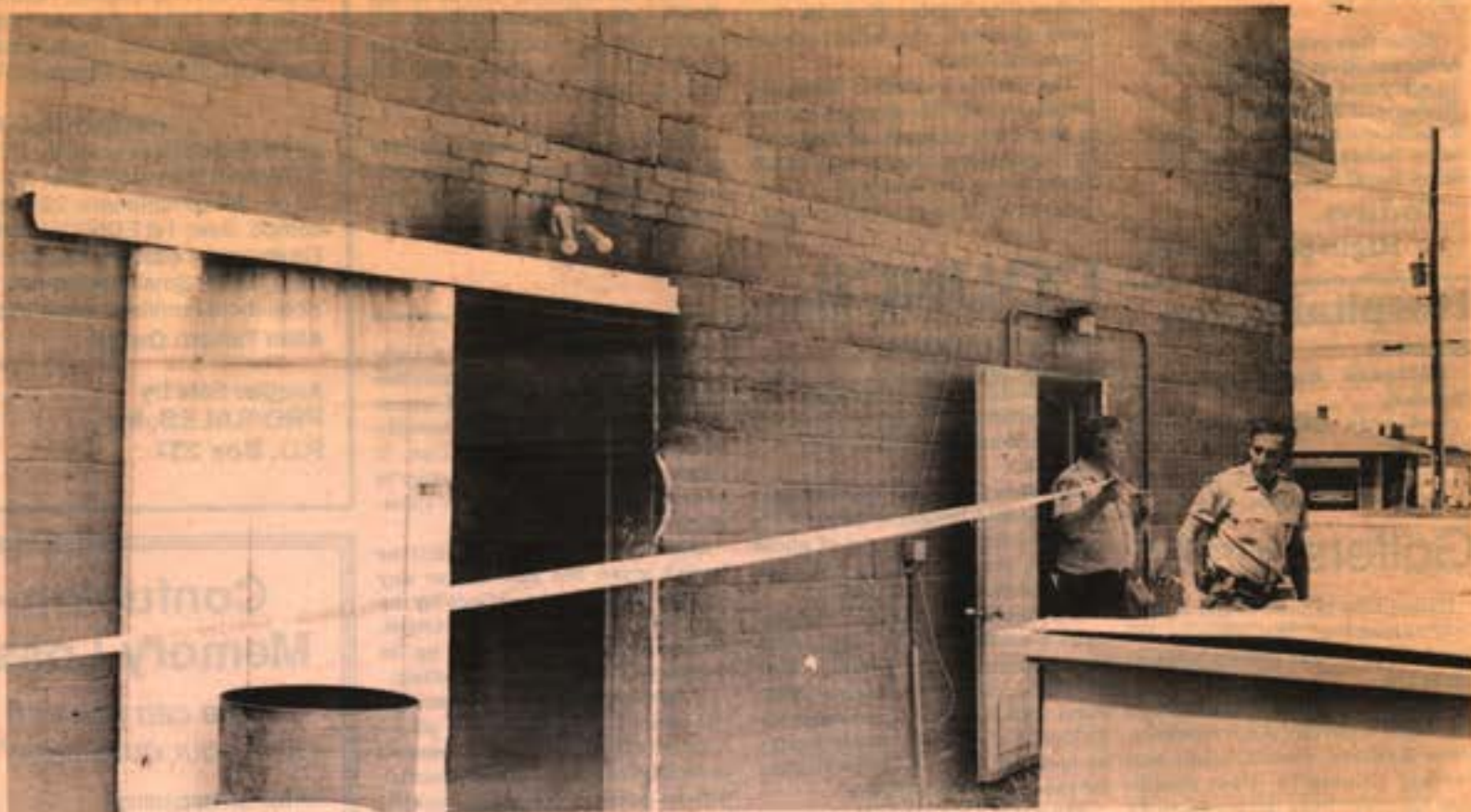


Photo by Tracy Harmon

Salida firefighters (l-r) Fred Smith and Wes Wagner helped Dave Sadar of the Colorado Bureau of Investigation and Chaffee County Sheriff Ken Dahl and Deputy Ronny Bergmann investigate the

cause of a fire Tuesday at the Little River BAR'n. The 3 a.m. fire caused an estimated \$15,000 damage to the \$50,000 structure recently bought by Ed and Becky Callison.

BAR'n

Continued from page 1
due to smoke.

A few items stored in the BAR'n basement and the restrooms were damaged. Firemen managed to save some saddles stored in the basement.

During the month the Callisons have owned the Little River Ranch BAR'n, they have made some improvements. The couple has increased the dance-floor size, added a popcorn popper and big-screen TV and decreased the size of the facility's tables.

"We don't know what we will do until the insurance adjuster looks at the damage. We may have to do some rewiring before we can reopen," Becky said.

Letters

Firefighters life-savers

Editor:

I would like to use your media to express my appreciation to the Chaffee County Fire Department and the Chaffee County Sheriff's Department for their diligent effort in saving my son's life.

On May 25, 1989, my son was found by Mr. Rex Hemmert of the State Highway Department. My son's car went off Monarch Pass and down the side of the mountain for approximately 300 feet. When Mr. Hemmert found him, he summoned help and the Gunnison Fire Department, the Gunnison Valley Ambulance, the Chaffee County Fire Department, the Colorado State Patrol and the Gunnison County Sheriff's Department responded rapidly.

Due to their quick response, my son's life was saved.

It is this quality of emergency service that makes our area one of the best in the state. We are truly lucky to be residing in this area ad surrounded by dedicated people.

Again, my thanks to all these people mentioned, and the ones that I may have inadvertently omitted, that did so much for our family in our time of distress.

Mr. & Mrs. Clifford L. Pigg Jr.



Monday 4 September 1989



Photo by Leon Archuleta

Overtaken

Loose gravel, excessive speed and washboards were causes of an accident Saturday afternoon on CR 107. Sherry Lynn Rowe, 18, of Salida told investigators she lost

control of her 1975 El Camino when she hit washboard conditions on the road. The car spun 180 degrees, skidding 132 feet, hit an embankment and rolled on its side.



Photo by Merle Baranczyk

Salida Firemen Tim Nelson and Jim Gray assess damage to a vehicle driven by Leon Archuleta of Salida following a two-car accident Monday on

U.S. 50. Archuleta was taken to the Heart of the Rockies Regional Medical Center where he was treated for scratches and bruises then released.

Tuesday 5 Sept 1989

Editorials

Chief decision

Chaffee County Fire Protection District volunteers and board members select a fire chief later this month. Volunteers vote to recommend a chief to the directors and the board makes a final decision on the appointment.

For most of its 15-year history, the district has operated quietly and efficiently behind the scenes. In the past few months, however, the district has had to contend with long-simmering problems between some volunteers and Ron Hassell, the district's chief. The problems prompted the board to dismiss Hassell as chief on Aug. 24.

CCFPD has made great strides since its incorporation in the mid-1970s. The district features excellent facilities with four separate station houses stretching some 35 miles down the length of the county along with adequate equipment.

But over the years the heart of the district has been its highly trained corps of volunteers. Crews devoted and still contribute endless hours to learning and then maintaining and upgrading fire and rescue skills in an on-going training program.

In the past five years, though, the county's economic problems sorely tested the district's ability to attract and keep volunteers. Miners once provided a base of volunteers for the district. Now, with mining virtually nonexistent in the region, the district has not enjoyed a ready source of manpower.

Economic difficulties caused other volunteers to leave as well. Those that stayed often found they've had to devote more time to making a living with less time available for volunteer duties, particularly with a time-consuming entity like a fire district.

Given the reduced manpower base, the district's most pressing problem is maintaining a viable corps of volunteers. All the stations, trucks and equipment are worthless without sufficient manpower to operate the gear.

When volunteers and the board look at selecting a chief later this month then, one of the most important skills this person should have is personnel management.

The person serving as chief must have the ability to unify and bring together volunteers behind a common goal in a time-consuming, dirty, dangerous and — often — thankless job.

Maintaining viability of the district is of utmost importance to county residents. A stable volunteer corps is the most important element in the district and should be the number one priority of the new chief.

— MJB

MONDAY
OCTOBER 9, 1989
YEAR 110, NO 91
SALIDA, COLORADO
25 CENTS

THE MOUNTAIN MAIL

The Voice
of the
Upper
Arkansas

Awendawans put county's generosity to use

by Tracy Harmon
Mail Staff Writer

Hurricane Hugo victims in Awendaw, S.C., already are using donations shipped from Chaffee County. A 24-foot Airborne Express truck, the second such shipment from here, was packed and departed for Denver Friday.

According to one relief organizer, Barbara Abel of Thatcher Bank in Salida, the truck accommodated only half the donations

from Chaffee Countians last week. Abel said she is arranging for transport of the remainder Tuesday.

"The Airborne Express truck took the donations to Denver Friday and they were flown to Charleston, S.C. Rev. and Mrs. Roberts were trying to find pickup trucks to drive to Charleston for the donations we sent out Wednesday, but the Airborne driver in Charleston was so impressed with our

efforts, he drove everything to Awendaw," Abel said.

Thatcher estimated Wednesday's shipment out of Salida totaled 2-1/2 tons.

"They are excited to have everything we've sent — they are very appreciative. All transportation of the donations has been donated to Chaffee

County free," Abel said.

The Roberts, who are in charge of a shelter for homeless Awendaw residents, sent Abel a

Please see RELIEF page 2



Photo by Ron Slaughter

Employees of Airborne Express freight service and Salida Fire Department personnel load relief supplies bound for Awendaw, S.C., Friday morning. The South Arkansas Fire Protection District station took overflow goods, beyond what

could be stored at the Salida Senior Citizens Center and Thatcher Bank. Loaders are (from left) Rudy Pfeiffer, Airborne Express, and Wes Wagner and Ron Prosser of the S.F.D. On the truck is pictured Airborne employee Wayne Lambert.

Firemen, PSCo. workers respond to Monday calls

by Tracy Harmon
Mail Staff Writer

The smell of smoke prompted workers at Real American Actionwear, 243 F. St., to contact the Salida Fire Department at 8:22 p.m. Monday night.

According to Fireman Fred Smith, eight firefighters with one truck responded to the call because volunteers were paged and asked to report. Investigation of the store revealed that smoke was coming from a broken ballast in a florescent light fixture.

The ballast is a resistance used to stabilize the current in a circuit. Firemen disconnected the light fixture to prevent further danger, Smith said.

"We recommended that they have the ballast replaced by an electrician. There was about \$50 damage to the light fixture," Smith said.

Total time the firemen spent on the call was about 33 minutes.

Later, at 12:32 a.m., firemen

were called to the home of Cleo Cox, 310 Crestone Ave., #4.

When firemen arrived, the smoke alarm was sounding, Smith said. The alarm was falsely triggered, so firemen checked and cleaned the unit.

"It was probably dust that triggered the smoke detector — they are very sensitive units. We have found that dust can often set off a smoke detector alarm," Smith said.

At about 7:30 p.m. Monday, a tree limb fell on a power line in the vicinity of the Mt. Shavano Trout Rearing Unit on CR 154, causing a power outage in town.

According to Ken Plewes of Public Service Company of Colorado, the power outage affected homes in western Salida.

"The power was out for approximately one hour in some parts of town, especially west Second, First and Sackett sts., but we got the problem corrected. Other areas experienced only an instantaneous power outage," Plewes said.

Oct 11 1989 wednesday

Firemen give students tour of station

Longfellow School first-graders paid a visit to the Salida Fire Department Tuesday morning as part of a study unit on fire prevention. The visit coincided with Fire Prevention Week.

Fireman Tim Nelson provided a tour of the firemen's living quarters upstairs of the fire station and explained the various pieces of equipment on the fire truck and on the rescue vehicle used by firemen at the scene of automobile accidents, plane wrecks and other emergency situations.

The students also learned about the operation of the dispatch center at the Chaffee County Sheriff's office and saw how firemen are summoned, via radio, in an emergency.

The students were from the classes of Dee Ann Kropp and Elaine Amicone.



Photo by Arlene Shovald

Salida Fireman Tim Nelson explains some of the equipment used to fight fires to first-graders and their teacher from Longfellow

Elementary School. The students are learning about firefighting as part of Fire Prevention Week.

Monday 16 Oct 1989

Residents thankful for safety

Columbine disaster drill 'excellent'

by Arlene Shovald
Mail Staff Writer

A disaster drill at 10:30 a.m. Friday at Columbine Manor Nursing Home was pronounced "excellent" by Sandra Emerson, staff development coordinator.

Emerson, Director of Nursing Ginger Gentry and Administrator David Stang organized the drill in cooperation with the rest of the Columbine staff.

The 94 residents, plus staff members, were evacuated from the building in nine minutes. This included four patients who were removed in their beds, and many who made their exit in wheelchairs.

"The residents enjoyed the drill and many commented afterwards that they knew they would be safe in a real fire, because they knew we (staff) knew what to do," Emerson said.

Emerson expressed her appreciation to the staff and to the Chaffee County Sheriff's

Office, Salida Fire Department, families of residents and others who helped with the drill. This was the first spontaneous drill held at the nursing home.

While residents were aware a drill would be held during Fire Prevention Week, they did not

know when it would be held. Off-duty staff were called in and many were on the scene within five minutes.

Disaster drills are required by the state to keep personnel trained for emergency situations. From this drill, Emerson said,

Columbine Manor learned a little revision could be done on the "call list," but basically the drill was smooth and successful and left residents, families and the staff feeling more secure in the knowledge they could respond appropriately should the "real thing" occur.

Friday
20 Oct. 1989

Man saves dog in fire

by Ron Slaughter
Mail Staff Writer

A man saved his dog from his burning home in Smeltertown Thursday morning. Ralph Johnson, 33, then re-entered the building to rescue most of his personal belongings.

The house, a small frame building next to the duck pond in Smeltertown, was destroyed in the blaze. Johnson reported that he lost a gun and his wallet, but saved the rest of his things.

He told firefighters that he awoke at approximately 7:05 a.m. having difficulty breathing because of heavy smoke. He untied his dog and took the animal to safety outside the house, then returned to grab a bag containing most of his belongings.

Johnson told Sheriff's Deputy Dan Martin, present to assist at the blaze, that he had awakened to see a five-foot circle of fire on his ceiling directly above a stovepipe elbow.

The house, rented by Johnson from Dr. William Mehos in return for work, had no telephone and no electricity. It was heated by a woodstove. Johnson ran to the home of a neighbor to call the fire department, but the house was already fully involved.

The South Arkansas Fire Protection District report, written by Fire Chief Jim Gray, indicated the fire started from a wood stove. The stovepipe was installed approximately two inches from the wall, firefighters reported.

According to the report, the dispatcher received Johnson's call at 7:10 a.m. Response time was four minutes. "When we arrived, the structure was already fully involved," Gray said.

Please see FIRE page 2

FIRE

Continued from page 1

"The fire was knocked down within the first 30 minutes, but firemen stayed on the scene longer, to put out hot spots."

Nine firefighters responded to the emergency in one pumper and two tanker trucks.

Martin took Johnson to the home of friends in Salida after the fire was doused.

Mehos said Thursday dollar damage is negligible on the structure. "Call it \$500," he said.

TUESDAY
DECEMBER 19, 1989
YEAR 110, NO. 142
SALIDA, COLORADO
25 CENTS



Photo by Gerry Bennett

Hood-bender

Firefighters in Salida work to open the hood of a 1980 Dodge Omni which caught fire, apparently from an electrical short, while

parked near the intersection of First and F streets Monday. Firemen pried the hood open after the electric catch failed. See story page 7.

CPA proposes extension of open me

Salida woman saved from smoldering home

THE MOUNTAIN MAIL — SALIDA, COLORADO — FRIDAY, JANUARY 5, 1990 — 3

A Salida woman was taken to the Heart of the Rockies Regional Medical Center by ambulance Thursday evening for treatment of smoke inhalation after a chair in her living room caught fire.

Salida firefighters responded to 820 F St., the home of Lily Wilson, 84, when a neighbor called to report that the house was on fire. However, when they arrived, they found Wilson and a smoldering chair outdoors in the care of Madelaine Miller of the Department of Social Services.

Miller had come to make dinner for her. When she arrived, Miller said, her elderly charge was seated on the floor in front of the front door, groggy with smoke inhalation. Wilson's chair was pushed too close to the open flame of a gas space heater and caught fire.

"She has Alzheimer's Disease, and she gets confused," Miller said of Wilson. "I come in for four hours every day, to try to keep her in her home, instead of an institution."

The hospital reported late Thursday that Wilson was being kept for observation, but appeared to be in good condition.

In other police reports:

Salida businessman Jim Bonga drove himself to the Heart of the Rockies Regional Medical Center Christmas Day, after accidentally shooting himself in the foot.



Photo by Ron Slaughter

This smoldering chair belongs to Lily Wilson, 84, of 820 F St. Thursday evening, a neighbor called to report that Wilson's house was on fire. Madelaine Miller of the Department of Social Services, rushed Lily out of her home before she

could succumb to smoke-inhalation. Heart of the Rockie Regional Medical Center reported late Thursday that Wilson was being kept for observation, but appeared to be in good condition.

Wed. 28 Feb 1990

County supports grant requests to state

by Ron Slaughter
Mail Staff Writer

Chaffee County officially supports three grant requests to the state Emergency Medical Services board — two from the county Ambulance Service and one from the Salida Fire Department.

Roger Mollenkamp of the Ambulance Service appeared before the Board of County Commissioners Tuesday during its meeting at the Buena Vista Municipal Airport building to

request support, in the form of a letter to the state, of its grant proposals.

Mollenkamp said the first funding request is for approximately \$85,500 to complete the second phase of the EMS communications upgrade project. He said the first phase of the project was funded through a \$120,000 Colorado Trust grant but, he said, no more money is available from that source to continue the upgrade.

The second EMS grant request

is for approximately \$36,000 to help purchase a new ambulance to replace the unit that was wrecked Nov. 30 on a return trip to Chaffee County from Colorado Springs.

Salida Fire Chief Jim Gray told the commissioners he is seeking \$18,700 to purchase needed heavy extraction equipment for the Fire Department's rescue operations.

Some asked to OK mill levy extension

by Mike Grosskreuz
Mail Staff Writer

Some Chaffee County residents will vote May 8 on a proposal to extend the current mill levy - which expires in December - to fund future equipment purchases.

The Chaffee County Fire Protection District announced the ballot question Thursday evening at its monthly board meeting.

The CCFPD includes rural areas of the county outside of Salida, Buena Vista and the area covered by the South Arkansas Fire Protection District.

According to CCFPD attorney Bill Alderton, the current rate of .6989 mills was levied to pay off a 15-year bond that funded purchases of firefighting and rescue equipment and Station No. 4 in Poncha Springs.

The CCFPD wants to continue the mill levy to buy equipment because it generates \$25,000 in revenue each year. If voters approve the bond extension, they

will pay no more than they do now, Alderton said.

During the May 8 election, voters also will fill six director positions on the board of the CCFPD. Four of the directors will serve four years, and two will work for two years.

In other action Thursday, the board reversed its decision to discontinue Four Corners Expeditions' access road lease through land belonging to Station No. 2 in Nathrop by renewing the company's lease for one year.

The company is a rafting outfitter and uses the road as a convenience for customers. Some of its customers had parked vehicles around the station in past years, blocking access, which prompted February's action. Owner Reed Dils attended Thursday's meeting, and said that his company has worked hard to prevent people from parking their vehicles around the station.

Please see CCFPD page 2

CCFPD

Continued from page 1

Members of the CCFPD listened to Ron Hassell's report on the "Strike Team," 11 Chaffee County firefighters who fight fires in other states, and the amount the district would be compensated by the Colorado State Forest Service for sending its men and equipment to fight fires in Colorado and other states.

Last year, seven members of the team, five men and two women, fought fires in Idaho, team member Sandy Smyth said. In 1988, five men from the

team fought the Yellowstone fire.

If a fire breaks out in Chaffee County while members of the team are in other states, there will be plenty of volunteers left to take care of the problem, CCFPD Board Chairman Clayton McClure said.

"I fully support the 'Strike Team.' If five or six guys taking off for a month puts the district in a bind, then something's wrong. The district will not be short-handed if they leave."

McClure said it also makes sense from a financial point of view, because the CCFPD

received a check for approximately \$11,000 as compensation for one of its trucks being away for 30 days.

Board members will vote on whether to accept the compensation agreement at a meeting March 22, McClure said.

The board directed Chief Charles Abel to submit a bill for the cost of the March 4 Brown

Canyon fire to Chaffee County court so that the district could get compensation for fighting the fire.

If Paul Bircham, who is accused of leaving a campfire unattended, is found guilty of starting the fire, the judge could include the CCFPD's costs in Bircham's fine, Alderton said.

Monday 14 May 1990

Overstreets' home gutted by fire Friday

by Ron Slaughter
Mail Staff Writer

The home of Robyn and Terry Overstreet and their three children was consumed by flames Friday after the couple's 5-year-old daughter, playing with a lit candle, accidentally started a fire in a closet.

The girl's mother said she and her daughter were alone in the home at 13000 County Road 190 when the fire started, at 2:09 p.m. Robyn Overstreet said her daughter, Chrystal, came and told her about the fire, but when she got to the closet she realized it was already too late for her to do anything about it.

Overstreet grabbed her daughter and left the house, calling the county dispatcher from a neighbor's home. The husband was at work in Denver at the time the fire started and two boys, Robbie and Sean, were at school. No one was hurt in the blaze.

At 2:25 p.m., apparatus from the South Arkansas Fire Department, the Salida Fire Department and Poncha Springs and

Nathrop stations of the Chaffee County Fire Protection District began arriving at the scene.

CCFPD Chief Charles Abel reported Sunday the home was gutted, though there may have been some salvageable property in the west portion of the building. Abel said he is listing the cause of the blaze as misuse of fire.

Abel estimated damage at about \$40,000; the house, outbuildings and land together have a market value of \$57,500, he said.

The address, about seven miles north of Salida off Colo. 291, is officially within the CCFPD, but the chief said, "Salida helped us out. That is kind of a dead area for us, so Salida responded and were the first ones in."

Responding were a Salida Fire Department engine, with two paid firefighters; a SAFPFD tanker and four volunteers; and a CCFPD squad vehicle, two engines and three tankers, along

Please see FIRE page 2

Chaffee County Undersheriff Ernest Morgan videotapes the efforts of Captain Dave Bowers and Deputy Ken Whiteley to douse a residence fire at 13000 CR 190 Friday. Sheriff's officers were the first to respond to the home of Terry

and Robyn Overstreet. When Salida fire equipment arrived soon after, the sheriff's men manned the hoses until firefighters could suit up and enter the building.

Photo by Ron Slaughter



Photo by Ron Slaughter

Police are seeking the vandal or vandals that attacked the curbing at the corner of First and E streets with a large hammer sometime Monday night or very early Tuesday. The city has indicated a handicapped access ramp at the corner would be impossible because of the lamppost placed in the corner.

Wed 23 May 1990

Disputed curb corner damaged by vandalism

Sometime Monday night or Tuesday morning, someone chipped off parts of the new curb at the corner of E and First streets.

The affected corner was the focus of a discussion at Monday night's City Council meeting. Mike Perschbacher appeared before the council on behalf of handicapped Salidan Guy Rains to protest the lack of a wheelchair access ramp at the corner.

Rains has insisted the corner, near his residence, should have been constructed with a wheelchair ramp.

Rains said Tuesday evening that he had not been contacted by the Salida Police, either as a witness or suspect.

"I feel that whoever went out and destroyed the curb either didn't know what went on at the city council meeting or did and decided that the city wasn't

Please see VANDALISM page 2

31 May 1990 Friday



Photo by Ron Slaughter

Water break

Salida Fire Chief Jim Gray spent part of his Wednesday watering the shrubbery of the city's entryways. The city council authorized use of Salida and South Arkansas Fire Protection

District tankers to keep the plantings alive, as it has not been possible to construct sprinkler systems at the sites to do the job.

Monday
25 June 1990

Fire danger high locally, but no ban in place yet

by Ron Slaughter
Mail Staff Writer

Danger of fire in Chaffee County's forest lands is listed as high, according to Fire Information Officer Linda Aumiller, at U.S. Forest Service District Headquarters in Pueblo.

However, she said, no fire bans are currently in place locally. "We have no fire bans in the

Pike-San Isabel National Forests right now. We'll be looking at putting one on, though, if this dry weather continues."

Aumiller said there have been several lightning-caused small fires in the forests in recent days, but all have burned themselves out or been controlled.

She said a fire ban is in effect in the San Juans near Durango.

Hook and ladder

Fire Department's 1927 American La France ladder truck a rare, valuable find

by Arlene Shovald
Mail Staff Writer

When a group of Salida volunteer firemen got together in 1968 and purchased a 1927 American La France ladder truck for \$600, they didn't know what a bargain they were getting.

Today the truck is worth about \$100,000. But the department isn't considering selling. Firemen are proud of their antique and intend to keep it.

Besides, if Salida ever puts up any 10-story buildings, it could

come in handy.

The truck has 85 feet of ladder; much more than would be needed for any fire in the area.

"We've never used the truck, but we could if it became necessary," said Fred Smith, assistant fire chief.

The truck is brought out for demonstrations, parades and other special events.

When the volunteers bought the truck in 1968, several of them were working on restoring a 1911 Kissel truck. Smith went

to Pueblo to pick up a gear for the Kissel and spotted a ladder on the other side of a fence.

"I climbed a six-foot fence and discovered the old ladder truck," Smith said. "Sixteen volunteers got together and bought it." Smith looked toward the ladder truck with obvious pride.

"It originally belonged to the Pueblo Fire Department. There are only three left now. One is in the Seattle Hall of Fame, one at Disneyland and we have this one."



Photo by Arlene Shovald

A man crawls to near the top of Salida's 1927 American La France ladder truck, a \$100,000 antique that is believed to be one of only three such vehicles in existence.

Council discusses fireworks options

by Ron Slaughter
Mail Staff Writer

Salida City Council Monday considered options to financing the city's annual Fourth of July fireworks display.

No one can know whether fireworks donations from all sources were sufficient to reimburse the city its \$3,000 outlay for the pyrotechnics until the final donations cans are returned from local businesses, said Councilmember Nancy Sanger Wednesday.

Hall said Wednesday that she ran concessions during Babe Ruth League play this year to raise money for that organization. She said the stand could be opened on a regular basis during the summer's heavy-use season and profits could be used to turn pop flies into more dazzling aerial displays.

HOWEVER, THERE was talk at Monday's council meeting that donations could fall somewhat short of covering the expense.

Sanger relayed an idea from Poncha Springs official Mabel Hall that the snack concession at Marvin Park could be used to raise dollars for the fireworks fund.

1 BID

Friday 21 Sept. 1990

Dealing with stress

Psychologists help rescuers

by Arlene Shovald
Mail Staff Writer

Critical incidents like natural disasters, major vehicular or plane accidents and explosions are not only traumatic for the victims. Rescuers are also affected.

Helping emergency workers deal with the effects of that stress was the subject of a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing seminar Monday and Tuesday at the Salida Inn. The 23 participants included personnel from Chaffee County Emergency Medical Service, Heart of the Rockies Regional Medical Center, area law enforcement agencies, fire departments, Ramrod Ambulance Service, U.S. Forest Service and Del Norte Medical Clinic.

INSTRUCTORS WERE Drs. Elinor Lottinville and Vernon Enlow, psychologists in private practice who are involved in coordinating CISD for emergency services in Oklahoma City.

The seminar originated almost by accident. The Oklahoma psychologists were visiting with Dr. Michael Barkett in Salida this summer and Barkett mentioned a particular accident and the effect it had on emergency workers.

"Since we were involved with CISD in Oklahoma, and we like an excuse to visit in Salida, we offered to do a seminar," Enlow said.

Lottinville's father has a cabin in the area and the couple vacation here frequently.

Critical incidents include, but are not limited to murder, mass slaughter, accidents, natural disasters and hostage incidents.

Emergency workers respond as trained to the situation, doing what is necessary. But often, the aftereffects are traumatic. Workers relive the incident and experience feelings of anxiety, anger, self-doubt, depression, etc. They may even experience physical symptoms of nausea, tremors, sweating, chills, increased pulse and hyperventilation.

DELAYED REACTIONS include loss of sleep, nightmares, flashbacks, etc.

The seminar provided instruction in conducting debriefing sessions for people involved in critical incidents, to help them deal with the stress that follows.

One of the primary purposes of debriefing, the psychologists said, is to be sure those involved understand their reactions are normal ones, suffered by normal



Photo by Arlene Shovald

people in abnormal situations. Rescue workers from Chaffee County and surrounding areas attended a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing seminar this week, to help

establish a CISD team in the local area. Instructors were psychologists Drs. Elinor Lottinville and Vernon Enlow.

people in abnormal situations.

The symptoms will normally subside and disappear given time and understanding of why they are occurring.

DEBRIEFING IS recommended within 24 to 72 hours of a disaster. Sessions are conducted by experienced peers, mental health professionals and clergy and are attended only by those involved. All discussion is confidential.

Emergency workers from the various departments attending the seminar met at the conclusion to develop a CISD plan for Chaffee County.

"We greatly appreciate the efforts of Drs. Lottinville and Enlow in assisting Chaffee County and surrounding areas in training and developing CISD teams to deal with this element of emergency service," said Roger Mollenkamp, EMS director.

Monday 8 Oct. 1990

Local news

This is Fire Protection Week

This is Fire Protection Week, commemorating the great Chicago Fire of 1871.

Charles Abel, chief of the Chaffee County Fire Protection District, discussed the Chicago fire and fire protection measures, when he spoke at the Oct. 3 meeting of the Salida Sertoma Club.

Five-thousand people lost their lives in 1989 in home fires.

Abel said three things should be monitored in the home to prevent fires. These include a peri-

odic check of the smoke alarm system, a check for unsafe conditions and regular fire drills with children.

Guests attending the meeting were Bruce Davidson Sr., and new member Paul Draper, owner of Four Seasons Campground.

The next meeting of the Sertoma Club is noon Wednesday at El Palacio Restaurant when a program on hearing is scheduled.

Fire stations holding open house

A Fire Prevention Week Open House is Tuesday and Wednesday.

The Chaffee County Fire Protection District is the host.

Chief Charles Abel invites the public to visit Station 4, Poncha Springs, from 7 to 9 p.m. Tues-

day; or Station 1, Highway 306, Buena Vista, Station 2, Nathrop or Station 3, US 24 north of Buena Vista 7 to 9 p.m. Wednesday.

Refreshments will be served and fire prevention materials are available.

Volunteer firemen annual dinner Saturday

Salida volunteer firemen are having their annual spaghetti dinner 5-8 p.m. Saturday in the Elks basement. Cost is \$3 for adults, \$1.50 for children. All proceeds go toward the purchase of equipment.

Friday 8 Feb 1991

Thursday
11 Oct 1990



Photo by Ron Slaughter

Engulfed

Salida Fire Department firefighters were called at 7:02 p.m. Thursday to a residence fire at 319 E. Sackett St., the home of Gale L. Gaston, also known as Gil West. According to witnesses, there was an explosion at the residence at about 7 p.m. followed immediately by a ball of flame. Gaston managed to salvage some personal articles before smoke and flames forced him from the structure. Ron Gowins, a member of the Chaveneaux

Interpretive Indian Dancers, was practicing with the group at the Scout Hut just west of West's home, ran to the fire department at First and E streets and reported the blaze. When firefighters arrived on the scene, the house was fully involved in flame. By about 7:30, the flames were smothered under hundreds of gallons of water, but the firefighters stayed on the scene until approximately 8:30 to make certain the fire was entirely subdued.

Friday
12 Oct 1990



Photo by Ron Slaughter

Strawberry Door preschool director Andy Kahan and Salida Fire Department Assistant Chief Wes Wagner encourage 4-year-old Rossi Luchetta to stop, drop and roll in case of fire. The department gave Salida preschool kids a

puppet show, talk and demonstrations of the life-saving technique. The kids all got buttons from "Sparky the Fire Dog" at the conclusion of the presentation.

Salida firemen bring message of prevention to preschoolers

by Arlene Shovald
Mail Staff Writer

Students at Sunshine Inn and Strawberry Door are learning about fire prevention in observance of Fire Prevention Week.

Salida firemen visited the pre-schools Wednesday and presented a puppet show and educational program on fire prevention.

Children learned, through the puppet show, how to "stop, drop and roll," if their clothes are on fire. Later, under the supervision of the firemen, they

tried the "stop, drop and roll" technique themselves.

Firemen presented students with coloring books offering a variety of safety tips, including fire prevention, and the children were invited to enter a coloring contest for which a "stop, drop and roll" T-shirt is the prize.

Youngsters also had an opportunity to ask questions of firemen and to share with them fire safety tips they had learned at school.



Photo by Ron Slaughter

Students, in full firefighting gear, work to extricate wreck "victims" from an upside-down auto during last weekend's Colorado Mountain College

Extrication course. Fifteen Chaffee County Fire Protection District volunteers took the demanding 15-hour class.







Photo by Arlene Shoveld

Dangerous intersection

Salida firemen, police officers and ambulance personnel assisted in removing Faith Conn from the 1986 Toyota pickup she was driving Friday when she was involved in an accident at the corner of Seventh and D streets. Residents in the neighborhood say they are con-

cerned about the corner because of the number of accidents which have occurred there. Salida Police Officer Terry Clark cited Sheila M. Prock, Salida, for failure to stop at a stop sign and for lack of insurance after the two-vehicle accident. Conn also was cited.

Barn, ostriches lost in fire Saturday

by Merle Baranczyk
Mail Editor/Publisher

An early morning fire Saturday destroyed an 1880s barn and burned four ostriches.

The blaze on the ranch of Bill Matthews, on CR 155 about three miles northwest of Salida, just past the VFW Hall off of Colo. 291, gutted the century-old 40- by 60-foot log barn.

Killed in the fire were four ostriches owned by Matthews. He said the birds were worth \$12,000.

Also lost in the blaze were a four-wheel all-terrain vehicle, painting equipment and assorted tools.

MATTHEWS estimated the loss at a total of \$50,000.

He said when he ran out of his home Saturday, the barn was fully involved in fire. He managed to get a cow and calf kept in an adjacent pen out and away from the fire but said he could not get into the barn to save the ostriches.

Matthews brought the birds
Please see FIRE page 2



Photo by Merle Baranczyk

Firemen pour water on smoldering debris at the site of an early morning fire Saturday on the ranch of Bill Matthews on CR 155 northwest of Salida. The blaze destroyed a historic barn built in

1880 and killed four ostriches. Firefighters poured some 17,000 gallons of water on the blaze, shuttling water with tankers from Marvin Park in Salida, three miles away.

Monday 3 Dec 1990

Friday 22 Feb. 1991



Photo by Ron Slaughter

The residence at 1602 Holman Ave. was a scene of controlled chaos early Thursday when Salida firefighters responded to a structure fire call just before 9 a.m. Damage, estimated at \$2,000, was for the most part confined to a back bedroom. Three people were in the house when the fire started. No one was injured.

No one injured in structural fire Thursday on Holman Ave.

— MONDAY, MARCH 11, 1991

Fire officials investigating cause of late Saturday eatery blaze

by Mike Grosskreuz
Mail Staff Writer

The cause of a fire at Michelle's Ice Cream Parlour Saturday evening is still being investigated, Salida Fire Department Capt. Fred Smith said Sunday.

The department got the call at 7:25 p.m., and 10 firefighters fought the fire, which was in the back of the restaurant, with two pumper trucks. The firemen used about 1,500 gallons of water to put out the flames within 10 minutes, Smith said.

The rest of the building suffered heavy smoke and water damage, Smith said, and he estimated the total damage at about \$10,000.

After the fire was out, the firemen stayed for about another two hours to take care of hot spots and clear out smoke, Smith said.

No one was injured during the incident.

TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 1991

WANTED
VOLUNTEER
FIREMEN
FOR
MORE INFORMATION
CALL
539-2212

Photo by Ron Slaughter

A sign in the window of the South Arkansas Fire Protection District station at First and E streets encourages anyone with the desire to call the Salida Fire Department for information on becoming a volunteer firefighter. Fire Chief Jim Gray said Monday, "We're down to about 10 volunteers at this time. We have equipment for about 20. We train volunteers, furnish their equipment and so on." He said volunteers meet the second and fourth Monday each month at 7:30 p.m. in the firemen's quarters on the second floor of the fire department. Training sessions are scheduled on Saturdays, he said.

Fire Department grateful for donations to supper

Editor:

The Salida/South Arkansas Volunteer Fire Department would like to thank the following for donations to our Spaghetti Supper:

Harrold Starbuck, Don's Food Town, Wal-Mart, Safeway, Burmac, Super Foods,

Scanga Meat, Coke of Leadville, Gibson's, the Elks Club, and all of the community that came out to support us.

Without you help it would have not been the success it was. THANK YOU.

Secretary,
Ken Berndt

Tuesday 19 March 1991

Wed 3 April 1991

Local news

Salidan Clegg dies after ditch fire

by Mike Grosskreuz
Mail Staff Writer

Walter Clegg, 52, Salida, died of a heart attack Monday afternoon after fighting a ditch fire that had burned out of control.

According to Chaffee County Fire Protection District Fire Chief Charlie Abel, the fire was on the west side of CR 190, between U.S. 285 and Salida. At 11:55 a.m., four members of the Salida Fire Department/South Arkansas Fire Protection District were paged to the fire, where they joined nine CCFPD firefighters from Station No. 4 in Poncha Springs and No. 2 in Nathrop. Chaffee County Sheriff's Sgt. Chester Price also responded to the scene.

SFD/SAFPD personnel responded in Engine 12, and the CCFPD's men brought two tankers, one brush truck and one squad truck. Because there are no hydrants in the area,

Abel said, the firefighters had to use water from their trucks.

Shortly after the Salida firefighters arrived, the Chaffee County Emergency Medical Service ambulance was paged to take Clegg to Heart of the Rockies Regional Medical Center. He was pronounced dead on arrival at the emergency room.

County Coroner Willard Lewis said that Clegg has had heart problems for the past five years, and suffered a heart attack in 1986.

The SFD/SAFPD firefighters got back to their station, which was manned in their absence by two other members of the SFD/SAFPD, at 1:10 p.m. According to Abel, the CCFPD firefighters stayed on the scene until about 1:55 to mop up hot spots.

Abel said the fire burned between 2-1/2 and three acres of land.

Tue 2 April 1991

Firemen's Dance Saturday at Elks

The Salida Volunteer Fire Department is holding its Firemen's Dance from 8 p.m. until midnight Saturday in the Elk's Lodge basement to raise money for equipment purchases.

The dance, which features music by Expedition, is open to all members of the community, Fire Chief Jim Gray said.

"Anyone can go, not just firemen."

Although the dance is free, donations are welcome Gray said. People can get tickets from the station, at First and E streets, or pick them up at the door Saturday.

Door prizes will be drawn during the dance, Gray said. People do not have to be present to win, but they must write their names and addresses on the ticket stubs.

In a letter to residents of Salida and Chaffee County, the fire department outlined the need for good equipment:

"No one wants to have a fire, or even think about it, but fires are a fact of life and we try to be prepared to handle the

emergencies as they arise. Proceeds from our dance will go toward the purchasing of additional safety equipment for the volunteer firefighters, such as protective clothing, helmets, gloves, flashlights and a Jaws of Life, which is used for extracting people out of vehicles."

Gray said Chaffee County fire/rescue agencies have basic hand extrication tools, no agency has a Jaws of Life, spreaders or cutters, which would cost between \$10,000 and \$11,000 if purchased as a package.

"Nobody in the county has this equipment. If we get these tools, it would speed up the process quite a bit."

Gray said that people can send their donations to the fire station or bring them to the door Saturday. They can even donate after the dance, he said.

"There's no deadline on it." So far, Gray said, people have donated between \$500 and \$600, which covers the \$400 to \$500 needed to put on the dance.

Friday 5 April 1991

Firemen's Ball Saturday at Elks Lodge

Salida's Volunteer Firemen are holding a dance 8 p.m.-midnight Saturday in the Elks Lodge basement to raise money for equipment. Music is by Expedition. The dance is open to the public. There is no admission charge, but donations are welcome. Tickets are available at the fire station at First and E streets or at the door Saturday.

Door prizes will be drawn. Winners need not be present.





ROY E HURLEY, RETIRED

Blaze consumes Carstens residence

Winds whipping to 35 mph signal repeat of 1976 disaster

by Arlene Shovald
Mail Staff Writer

Once in a lifetime is enough to lose your home and everything in it to fire, but Arnold and Jessie Carstens, 11180 Colorado 291, have gone through that traumatic experience twice.

In 1976, the couple returned home from Texas to find their home had burned.

Thursday afternoon, as they returned home at about 2 p.m. from visiting a neighbor, Carrie Braswell, they discovered the back of their 18-month-old home was on fire.

ARNOLD ATTEMPTED to put the fire out while waiting for firefighters to arrive. Jackie Matthews, next-door neighbor, called for help.

Arnold suffered from smoke inhalation and was treated with oxygen in a Chaffee County ambulance as firefighters from Chaffee County Fire Protection District and Salida and South Arkansas Fire Protection District battled flames that shot 30 and 40 feet into the air.

Flames were fanned by an estimated 35 mph wind.

Chaffee County Sheriff's Deputy Chester Price was first on the scene, followed closely by Chaffee County Fire Protection District Chief Charlie Abel.

Shortly after firefighters arrived, flames were shooting



Photo by Arlene Shovald

Fire of unknown origin destroyed the home of Arnold and Jessie Carstens on Colorado 291 early Thursday afternoon. At

times the flames, fanned by high winds, shot 30-40 feet into the air.

through the roof, and the windows and doors were bursting outward.

Approximately 12 firefighters responded with eight pieces of equipment from the CCFPD.

According to Captain Fred Smith of the Salida Fire Department, another 10 firefighters responded from the South Arkansas/Salida Fire Protection District with a pumper and two tankers.

ABEL SAID ONE piece of apparatus was focused on a nearby garage which the firefighters did save. Another piece of equipment was assigned to a haystack 100 yards to the rear of the house which was ignited by sparks or heat from the flames.

Workers from Sangre De Cristo Electric Assn., who arrived on the scene to turn off

the electricity, said the fire moved unbelievably fast. In about four minutes it went from being a recognizable house to what looked more like a bonfire.

Chief Abel expressed his appreciation to everyone who assisted with the fire.

"They put in a valiant effort," Abel said.

Arnold and Jessie Carstens, meanwhile, are left with only the clothes on their back.

"THE FIRST TIME we were burned out, while we were on vacation in Texas, we at least had the clothes in our suitcases," Jessie said. "This time it's all gone."

The house was covered by insurance. Damage was estimated about \$85,000 to \$90,000.

times the flames, fanned by high winds, shot 30-40 feet into the air.



Photo by Arlene Shovald

Jessie Carstens and son Jimmy sit on the back of the Chaffee County Ambulance and watch as their home is consumed by fire. Arnold Carstens was inside the ambulance, being treated for smoke inhalation.

12 April 1991 Friday



Photo by Ron Slaughter

The residence of Mark and Vickie Hendewerk and daughters was destroyed by fire after dark Friday. The family had driven into Salida on errands and returned to their CR 221

home to find it in flames. Nothing was salvaged from the home, but trees and a nearby shop building were spared.

Fire destroys county home

by Ron Slaughter
Mail Staff Writer

A two-story frame home at 7465 CR 221 west of Salida was destroyed by fire Friday. It was the residence of the Mark Hendewerk family.

Six units of the Chaffee County Fire Protection District and two trucks from the South Arkansas Fire Protection District responded to the blaze. An ambulance and two Chaffee County Sheriff's vehicles also answered the call.

CCFPD Chief Charlie Able said Sunday the residence was "fully involved" in flame when firefighting apparatus arrived on the scene.

The family was away from home when the fire began. Mark Hendewerk told Abel that he saw the fire from U.S. 50. When he turned into his driveway from CR 221, he saw it was his home burning.

When they returned home at approximately 8:30 p.m., the Hendewerks drove to a neigh-

bor's to report the fire. The first neighbor's telephone, on the same party line as theirs, was out of order; a second neighbor's phone was working, and they were able to call in.

However, in the meantime, an unidentified motorist saw the blaze and stopped at the former KOA Campground on U.S. 50 to pass the word. Campground owners called in a report, but they did not know

Please see FIRE page 3

FIRE

Continued from page 1
what was burning.

The family was taken in by friends and received an advance check from their insurance carrier for purchase of clothing and other necessities. However, on Saturday, the family had only the clothes they were wearing when they made a quick drive into town Friday evening.

Vickie Hendewerk, Mark's wife and mother of their two young daughters, said Saturday the extent of the tragedy was just getting through to her and her family.

"At first, we were just thankful that we were all safe," she said. "Now, we're starting to realize what we've lost. Everything is gone."

AS OF LATE SUNDAY afternoon, Abel did not know the cause of the blaze. "A fire investigator is coming in Monday (today) to try and come up with the cause," he said.

Also, he said, the dollar amount of damage caused by the fire is unknown. "I can say it was a total loss of house and contents," Abel noted.

He said that wind and the narrowness of the county roads and the driveway all hampered efforts to fight the blaze. All the firefighters could do was keep the fire from spreading to a nearby shed and to the forest.

Trees adjacent to the house were burning when the CCFPD arrived, Abel said; a large spruce and some cottonwoods.

The fire chief expressed gratitude to SAFFPD for bringing a

new, portable water pump to the fire. "I want to thank Salida firefighters, who brought out their new Hale XL2000 pump. I really helped us by getting water out of the South Arkansas River to supply our engines.

"That's a fantastic, unbelievable pump. It's small enough for two men to carry, but it puts out about 450 gallons per minute — just like a fire engine without wheels."

Explosion rips oil tank; city workers narrowly avoid injury

by Merle Baranczyk
Mail Staff Writer

Four city of Salida public works employees narrowly escaped injury Wednesday morning when fumes in a 7,000-gallon oil tank exploded.

The men were working at the city's hot mix plant on CR 107 south of Salida and were attempting to heat an oil line from the tank prior to making asphalt for street patching work.

Public works employee Kevin Nelson said he and three others were following procedures used in the past to heat the oil to make it flow for the mix process.

He said the crews were using a blow torch to heat a portion of a 1-1/2-inch steel pipe on the mixing machine about 8 feet away from the storage tank.

The crews had gotten to the mix plant at about 7:45, Nelson said. At the time of the explosion, about 8:15 a.m., all four men were standing on a platform on the mixer about 7 feet off the ground.

THE FORCE OF THE explosion knocked the four men to the side of the platform.

The explosion ripped open the north end of the 7-foot-diameter, cylindrical tank along a seam at the end of the tank with most of the blast venting to the west.

City crew members were east of the tank.

"If it had split on the other side of the tank," Nelson said, "we would have been gonners."

Please see **EXPLOSION** page 3



Photo by Merle Baranczyk

Salida fireman Wes Wagner extinguishes hot spots next to a 7,000-gallon oil tank at the Salida hot mix plant on CR 107 Wednesday. An explosion at about 8:15 a.m. opened up a 2-foot-wide split from top to bottom of the 7-foot diameter tank.

Just beyond the tank is the asphalt mixer. City crews were standing on a platform on the mixer adjacent to the oil tank at the time of the explosion.

EXPLOSION

Continued from page 1

Salida Fire Chief Jim Gray said oil and burn marks on bushes 50-60 feet from the tank showed the force of the blast.

When Salida firemen arrived, the tank and oil were burning. Crews used foam to extinguish the blaze.

NELSON ESTIMATED the tank contained about 1,000 gallons of fuel. He said the mix plant had been used about three weeks ago without any problems.

He and Steve Hersch, Larry Brady and Terry Fister were heating the line so the heavy oil used to make the mix would drain into the machine's mixer, a procedure crews have com-

monly used to make asphalt.

Following the explosion, Nelson said crews attempted to move a city dump truck parked under the mixer but the vehicle would not start. Crews then pulled it away from the fire using a front-end loader. The truck received light damage from the fire.

Crews then used the loader to create a dirt and gravel dike to contain the hot oil spilling out of the oil tank.

Salida fireman Wes Wagner said officials were not sure what caused the explosion and the department would investigate.

FIRE OFFICIALS will be looking at a propane heater

which heats the oil used in the asphalt process. Wagner said public works crews had done some work on the heater's burners in the last week or so.

He discounted the torch as the cause of the explosion since the city crew had used a simi-

lar procedure for years to warm the oil.

The propane heater stands to the east of the oil tank and uses fuel from a 250-gallon tank a few feet away.

NINE FIREMEN responded

to the scene using two tankers and a pumper. About 300 gallons of water and 5 gallons of foam were used.

Gray said once the oil on the ground hardens it will be scraped up and removed from the site.

Salida firefighters take fourth place in competition

by Ron Slaughter
Mail Staff Writer

Salida firefighters returned with five trophies for their performance in field day competition in Monte Vista June 2.

Firefighter Fred Smith, one of the six-member team that traveled to Monte Vista, said Salida was a powerhouse in games of technical skill during the 1970s, but had been out of competition for more than a decade prior to this year's games.

"We were in the San Luis Valley Firefighters Association (sponsor of the recent field day) for about 30 years. We won 128 trophies, including nine overall wins and four state championships. Then we dropped out of the association for 10 years.

"We rejoined the association last year, but this is the first year since we dropped out that we had a team participate in competition."

Salida teams took state

championships in 1974, '75, '76 and '78.

This year's team — Ken Berndt, Joe Boshinski, Gary Prosser, Ron Prosser, Fred Smith and Bill Smith Jr. — took fourth place in the eight-team field.

The team had only a week and a half's practice before going to Monte Vista. And for three of those days, because of a waterline break at the Salida Water Treatment Plant, it couldn't use any water.

They received trophies in five of the seven events they entered: third place in the three-man Inline event; third in the six-man Ground Wye event; third in the six-man Stationary Wye event; fourth in the three-man Rural Booster event; and fourth place in the three-man Changeover event.

"We will be hosting the association Field Day in 1992," Fred Smith noted. "Right now, we need to get ready for the Colorado Firefighters Association



Photo by Ron Slaughter

Salida's six-man team of firefighters returned from field day competition in Monte Vista with five trophies. Shown above (with "mascot" R.J. Prosser, 3) are: (back row, l-r) Joe

Boshinski, Gary Prosser and Ken Berndt; and (front row, l-r) Ron Prosser, Fred Smith and Bill Smith Jr.

tion tournament in Grand Junction the week of June 17-22."

He said he also hopes to bring the state competition to Salida.

Firefighters collecting Friday for fireworks

by Ron Slaughter
Mail Staff Writer

Sirens will be howling all over Salida Friday, beginning at 5 p.m., as firefighters canvass for donations to pay for this year's Fourth of July fireworks.

For several years, firefighters have donated their time to collect dollars for the Independence Day pyrotechnics. Fire Chief Jim Gray said Tuesday that four of his department's trucks be cruising Salida neighborhoods once again.

Gray said that two trucks will begin soliciting on F Street, then continue their north-south routes on the streets east and west of F. The other two trucks will ply east-west streets, he said.

Also, firefighters will set up a booth in the Wal-Mart parking lot Saturday, Gray said.

They will sell hot dogs and donate the proceeds to the fund.

"We have to raise about \$2,500 this year," he noted.

The city fireworks fund is committed to the memory of former City Councilmember Dick Bondurant, who contributed heavily to help pay for the aerial displays.

Bonnie Bondurant, who followed her husband onto the Salida City Council after his death, has continued his interest in the Fourth of July fireworks, as well.

She has placed several cans with local businesses, into which customers may drop contributions to the fireworks fund.

Each year the city budgets \$425 toward purchase of fireworks. This year, the order cost \$3,000.



Photo by Ron Slaughter

Pass the boot

Wed
24 June 1991

Three Salida Fire Department trucks, with several volunteers per unit, traveled city neighborhoods Friday collecting donations for the city's Fourth of July fireworks display. Here, Manuel Hewitt places his donation in the firefighter's boot proffered by Donna Prosser. Firefighters raised \$1,577

Friday; Saturday's hot dog earnings raised the total SFD contribution to \$2,038. Firefighters ask Salidans to be careful with their personal pyrotechnics; the Jumping Jacks, in particular, have started lots of grass fires, according to SFD's Ron Prosser.

Wednesday 24 June 1991



Photo by Ron Slaughter

Salida Firemen will set off the annual Fourth of July fireworks display at about 9 tonight. Donations are still being taken to pay for the fireworks and canisters can be found at several businesses places. Sales of pop and popcorn at Thatcher Bank parking lot tonight will also help pay for the display. This photo is from last year's pyrotechnics.

Merchants need money, volunteers to continue Fourth of July traditions

by Arlene Shovald
Mail Staff Writer

With a number of Fourth of July events scheduled in the community today, the Salida Merchants Association did not plan its usual schedule of activities.

"There simply aren't enough volunteers or money to do what we did in the past," said Anita Yarmark, president.

Last year was the first year several events were scheduled. They included a scarecrow dressing contest, wood splitting contest, chili and barbecue cookoffs, pet parade and a fishing derby. The chili cookoff has been an annual event.

Money earned by the Merchants Association from the FIBark auction and other

Please see MERCHANTS page 3

Parking lot dance 7-11 p.m. at Thatcher Bank

A parking lot dance is 7-11 p.m. at Thatcher Bank. Thatcher employees are selling popcorn and pop. Proceeds go toward the fireworks.

Fireworks display goes off at dusk

Salida firemen are setting off the fireworks display at dusk on Tenderfoot Mountain. Contributions from the community help make this possible. Donation canisters are at merchants and several organizations are sponsoring fund-raising events. If you would like to mail in a donation address it to City of Salida, PO Box 417, Salida, 81201.

Thursday 11 July 1991



Photo by Ron Slaughter

New floor

Salida firefighters Fred Smith and John Sterle (pictured, l-r) and other members of the city Fire and Public Works departments are chiseling the floor from the fire house on E Street. Half the concrete floor (the

missing part) was cracking under the weight of the fire engine normally stored there. The new floor will feature a runnel in the middle to carry off water.

BRADO — TUESDAY, JULY 16, 1991

Subject: Fire investigation

Firefighters attend seminar locally

by Mike Grosskreuz
Mail Staff Writer

Eight members of the Chaffee County Fire Protection District attended a fire investigation seminar Saturday and Sunday at the Monarch Mountain Lodge.

The seminar was sponsored by the Colorado Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators. Five instructors from forensic, laboratory, engineering and investigation companies taught attendees how to recognize accidental and arson fires, investigate their causes, understand the engineering aspects of electrical fires, preserve fire scenes and interpret reports.

In addition, "students" got

hands-on experience by examining three burned-out cars. They were also tested on what they learned during the seminar.

CCFPD Chief Charlie Abel said that, although not many car fires in Chaffee County are caused by arson, the seminar was useful for members of the CCFPD who attended.

"All fires have to be investigated by law. You have to come up with a cause," Abel said. "Once an investigator or firefighter knows what to look for, it becomes easier to establish whether a fire was caused by arson or by accident.

Abel said the seminar went smoothly.

"I think it went very well. I feel it was a good opportunity for the firefighters to experience training from professionals that they normally wouldn't have gotten. I thought it was very helpful. It's part of my ongoing program to get more training in the Chaffee County area, due to its central location."

Getting training from outside sources is important, Abel said.

"You've got to get expert training. You just can't do it all in house."

In addition to the CCFPD personnel, in attendance were 34 firefighters, fire investigators, insurance company investigators and police and sheriff's investigators from Aurora, Boulder, Colorado Springs, Denver, Englewood, Fort Collins, Fruita, Lakewood, Montrose, Steamboat Springs and other Colorado cities.

CCFPD personnel who attended the seminar were Abel, Ron Bergmann (firefighter and Chaffee County Sheriff's Deputy), Assistant Chief Bill Dyer, Bob Johnson (fire inspector), John Sayre (hazardous materials coordinator), Lt. Herb Smyth (training officer), Sandy Smyth (firefighter) and Jackie Whiteleather (firefighter).

Abel said the CCFPD saved \$360 by holding the seminar, because its members did not have to pay the \$45 registration fee.

Firemen seek vehicle funding

by Ron Slaughter
Mail Staff Writer

Salida Fire Department has received a \$17,000 grant from the state to purchase emergency extrication equipment to gain access to wrecked vehicles and rescue trapped occupants.

However, the equipment for which the grant was written is both heavy and bulky and the city has no vehicle adequate to store and transport it to accidents.

Squad 12, the small "attack"

vehicle South Arkansas Fire Protection District used for immediate response to grass fires and situations of a similar scale, is the unit currently used for rescue work.

That truck, though, is overloaded already; according to firefighters, it could not take the added burden of extrication equipment.

Also, George Koenig of the SAFPD Board of Directors said in a meeting Monday among city officials, SFD and SAFPD

representatives, use of Squad 12 as a rescue unit has prevented its use as a quick-response fire vehicle.

Therefore, Salida Fire Chief Jim Gray asked Mayor Pat Brooks and the Salida City Council in Monday's work session to consider budgeting for purchase of a new vehicle specifically to respond to rescue calls.

The state will withdraw its grant dollars unless the fire

Please see FIRE page 3

ADO — WEDNESDAY, JULY 31, 1991

FIRE

Continued from page 1

department can show it has the ability, or is developing the ability to transport and use the emergency equipment.

A NEW VEHICLE (one-ton, dual rear wheel, all-wheel drive with lights, siren, box and so on) will cost approximately \$45,000, Gray told the solons. Insurance and other experts all have strongly advised the city to avoid second-hand equipment, he noted.

However, neither the city nor SAFPD have the money to buy a \$45,000 truck. "This (rescue) crew is performing a necessary service, which should be continued," said Brooks. "We just don't have that kind of money in our budget."

She noted that the city has a working agreement with Chaffee County to share emergency chores. "Formerly, Salida Fire Department fought fires only. That is no longer the case. Now, about half the calls are fire related, the rest are emergency calls."

Koenig said the county now is not doing a "cotton-pickin' thing" to help SFD or SAFPD.

"From what I understand, this unit will have to respond to calls countywide; we'll be running all over. There's no reason the county should be exempt from paying its share."

COUNCILMEMBER Walt Iiams indicated his strong opposition to firefighters responding to any vehicle accident.

However, if they must do so, he said, "I don't see, by God, why South Arkansas (FPD) and the

Salida Fire Department should pay the entire cost.

"This truck would be running to northern Chaffee County, western Fremont County, even Saguache County. Why should we have to pay for everything?"

"I hate to say it, but I agree with Walt," said Councilmember Nancy Sanger. Everybody

around here wants to let Salida do it."

Salida firefighter John Sterle noted that Chaffee County ambulance service rolls to every structure fire SFD and SAFPD handle, at no charge to the city, to be on hand to render immediate assistance should a firefighter be injured.

Also, he pointed out, "There's

no reason we can't charge a nominal fee for responding to emergencies."

Other emergency agencies, such as

the ambulance service, do so as a matter of course.

Such fees would help recover the cost of the rescue vehicle, Sterle said.

"WE NEED TO FIND out if we can charge," Koenig said. "How else are we going to pay for this equipment?"

Concluding the work session,

Brooks directed the firefighters to research whether the city can charge for emergency rescue calls, whether other agencies are doing so, and how much they are charging.

With that information in hand, representatives of the city, SFD and SAFPD will approach the Board of County Commissioners, requesting financial assistance.

Brooks noted that the city is providing the crews and equipment, is paying overtime for firefighters to hold the fort while the on-duty crew answers emergency calls.

GIVEN THE CITY'S financial commitment to countywide emergency response, she indicated, the county should at least consider a request to help fund a new rescue vehicle. "We have to go to the county for help," she said.

Sterle said Tuesday that he has no specifics, as yet, but no agency he has talked to thus far has expressed disagreement to the notion of charging for emergency services.

He said he will be seeking specifics in coming days.

"I don't see, by God, why South Arkansas and the Salida Fire Department should pay the entire cost."

— Walt Iiams

County firefighters well equipped to take care

Editor:

Reference your story about the Salida Fire Department on 31 July.

Mr. Koenig is confused, there is a larger fire protection district that handles the rest of the county. This district is called the Chaffee County Fire Protection District and has handled the accidents and incidents for the rest of the county for several years.

I don't understand why all of a sudden he and others think that CCFPD is going to fold and they (SAFPD) are going to have to do these incidents.

Chaffee Fire and Salida Fire personnel have worked together on several fires and a few vehicle accidents, and have worked well together.

However Chaffee handles far more vehicle accidents than Salida, and guess what? All four of Chaffee Fire Squad trucks carry extrication equipment.

that is in the grant, but it does the job, along with the 48 trained volunteers that man the department.

I'm really afraid if Mr. Koenig and Mr. Iiams send this prospective new vehicle and crew to the north end of the county to work an incident, they might find it well over before they could arrive. It just might be a waste of gas and crew time.

I really don't wish to offend any of the Salida firefighters. They are a good crew, but the way these public comments were made, walked all over the volunteers that are the CCFPD.

I hope that the county commissioners are not as ill-informed as apparently the SAFPD board was. And I hope that what perpetuated this is not the slip of a pen on an application concerning coverage area.

Herbert R. Smyth: Tax

Response unchanged for firemen

by Arlene Shovald
Mail Staff Writer

Members of the Salida Fire Department and South Arkansas Fire Protection District told *The Mountain Mail* Friday they do not intend to respond automatically to calls in the Chaffee County Fire Protection District.

"We will respond only at the request of the CCFPD, as we have in the past," said Wes Wagner, assistant chief of the SFD.

The concern over SFD and SAFPD responding to areas covered by CCFPD arose after Salida Fire Chief Jim Gray asked Salida Mayor Pat Brooks and the City Council at a work session Monday to consider funding a vehicle to carry heavy extrication equipment to rescue calls.

THE STATE WILL withdraw grant dollars for the equipment if the fire department cannot show it has the ability or is developing the ability to transport and use it.

Neither the city nor the SAFPD have the money to buy a \$45,000 truck. George Koenig of the SAFPD said he didn't see why the SAFPD and Salida

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over

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Fire Department should pay the entire cost since the truck would be running to northern Chaffee County, western Fremont County and even Saguache County.

The SFD and SAFPD are researching whether they can charge for response to out-of-district calls and will approach the County Commissioners for financial help.

An article about the work session in the July 31 issue of *The Mountain Mail* prompted a letter to the editor from Herbert R. Smyth expressing concern about the SAFPD and SFD responding to fires in the northern part of the county.

"We don't want anyone to think the SFD and SAFPD is planning to respond to fires in the CCFPD without a request," spokesmen from the SFD said. "When we get the extrication tools (available through the grant) we will be available on a mutual-aid basis, the same as always. Nothing will be different. Our only intent is to ask the county for financial help so we can purchase the truck to carry the equipment."

Because the equipment may be used in the county, the SFD and the SAFPD feel this is a legitimate request. They did not intend to cause any hard feelings, representatives said.

WHILE IT CERTAINLY doesn't hurt to look into whether the SFD and SAFPD could or should charge for calls made with the rescue truck, it doesn't appear to be a viable solution. Although ambulances traditionally have charged for services, rescue squads generally do not.

And charging for services rendered outside the city and district would jeopardize mutual aid agreements which have worked well for years.

Asking Chaffee County Commissioners for funds does not appear to be reasonable either. All county residents already pay for fire protection service through taxes to an existing municipality or fire protection district.

It seems what Salida and SAFPD officials should be asking first is whether a need exists for the equipment and truck.

For example, on how many calls within the city and the district in the past five years would the equipment have been used and what would the equipment have meant in terms of assisting at the scene? What are the alternatives to purchasing heavy rescue equipment? Exactly how and under what circumstances would the rescue truck be used?

Officials should get these questions answered before looking for funds to pay for equipment.

— MJB

Editorials

Questions first

Salida city and fire department officials are considering obtaining, with the help of a grant, rescue equipment, and purchasing a truck to carry the gear.

In the process of discussion, questions came up on where the equipment would be used and whether charges could be asked for rescue services provided by the department.

Before any pay-for-service plan is put into effect, however, city and fire officials need to take a close look at present arrangements and needs.

First, areas served by the Salida Fire Department and South Arkansas Fire Protection District need to be clarified.

The city and SAFPD have a joint operating arrangement where the two entities share costs proportionately of manning and equipping a department which serves the city of Salida and the district. The district includes the area immediately surrounding Salida's city limits in approximately a three- to four-mile radius. Personnel include five paid staffers and a group of supporting volunteers.

SALIDA'S MEETS ITS share of fire service costs using the city's general fund tax proceeds. The district levies a property tax to generate funds.

In the town of Buena Vista, fire protection is provided by a volunteer fire department. Fire service in the rest of the county, including Poncha Springs, is provided by the Chaffee County Fire Protection District. BV pays for costs with general fund revenues and the district has a 3.75 mill levy.

Each of the departments and their personnel are responsible for emergency calls within their jurisdictions.

In addition, all of the departments have mutual aid agreements whereby equipment and crews from neighboring departments will be used to assist at calls at the request of the responsible agency.

Thus, if Salida and the SAFPD did happen to get the heavy extrication equipment now being discussed, it would primarily be used within the city and the district and would only be going out on other calls outside city and district boundaries at the request of the responsible entity.

Frankly, it's surprising that city officials and SAFPD board members were not aware of mutual aid agreements and what they mean in relation to the rescue equipment question.

SFD and SAFPD equipment would not be rolling all over the county for every accident, rescue or other emergency call. First response comes from either CCFPD or Buena Vista departments. The only time the rescue truck would roll would be either for an incident within the city or the district or on a mutual aid request.



Thursday
10 Oct 1991

Photo by Elizabeth Medina

Salida Fire Department Assistant Fire Chief Fred Smith shows Dee Ann Kropp's first-graders one of the department's pumpers Tuesday as part of Fire Prevention Week.

SFD helps Longfellow first-graders honor National Fire Prevention Week

by Elizabeth Medina

Longfellow first-graders learned about fire fighting and fire prevention at the Salida Fire Department Tuesday, as part of National Fire Prevention Week.

Fire Prevention Officer John Sterle and Assistant Fire Chief Fred Smith showed

students the fire department's pumpers and gave kids a chance to climb on the engines.

After a tour of the firefighters' living quarters, Ron Prosser, Fire Training Officer, helped kids slide down the pole that carries firefighters quickly from the second floor

to ground level of the fire department.

According to Sterle, this year's Fire Prevention Week theme is "Fire Won't Wait — Plan Your Escape."

Salida firefighters are visiting local schools this week to teach kids about fire prevention through puppet shows and movies.

We Salute Our Firefighters

Fire Prevention Week October 6-12



Salida Fire Department South Arkansas Fire Protection District

Sitting (l-r) are Fire Chief Jim Gray, Assistant Chief Fred Smith, John Sell, Tom Morgan and Joe Boshinski. Standing (l-r) are Phil Sterle, John Sterle, Glen Davis, Ron Prosser, Roy Hurley and Louie Larcom. Not present for this photo: Terry Earl, Alvin Cole, Captain Wes Wagner and Billy Smith. Jim Gray, Fred Smith, Wes Wagner, John Sterle, Ron Prosser and Glen Davis are paid members of the department.

Friday
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First graders look at the fire truck

From ladders to hoses, first graders got an up close and personal look at the department's shiny red fire truck.



Photo by Ron Slaughter

Intentional Friday 1 Nov 1991

The South Arkansas Fire Protection District received several calls Thursday concerning this fire at the Wilkins Lumber Co. on U.S. 50 east of Salida. Firefighter Ron Prewitt said the fire was intentional and was monitored carefully during the day and evening hours of Halloween. Prewitt said the owner

has wanted to get rid of huge piles of sawmill tailings for two or three years. With the recent heavy snows to prevent fire spreading out of control, the time seemed right to complete the burn. Two more piles of wood remain to be torched.

Monday 11 Nov. 1991



Photo by Elizabeth Medina

Dawn Halvorson from Troop 36 collects
canned goods during the food drive Saturday afternoon in Salida.

