

Fire: Mayor Torrey locates dummy in burning house

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the house, while it was filled with smoke, and rescue a dummy as well as be present when the house was ignited with a flare. The two exercises helped them understand a little more about the risks firefighters engage in everyday.

"The logistics were handled really well," Miesner said. "The fire lit fast. From the time the house was lit, it only took about 45 seconds to really get going."

The fire was lit about 10:30 a.m., and Mayor Torrey found the dummy in the smoke-filled house in about four minutes.

"It was a good learning experience," Taylor said. "I didn't realize the equipment was so hard to walk in."

The gear firefighters wear during a fire weighs almost 70 pounds in total. District Chief Daniel Wirth of the Hazardous Materials Unit related a story in which he lost almost fifteen pounds in less than an hour and a half from sweating because of the heat from the fire and the weight of all the gear.

Visibility was poor, and the council members and mayor had to creep along the walls of the house feeling with their hands to try to find the dummy, which weighed nearly two hundred pounds, and then carry it out, Terrett said.

"It was an excellent opportunity for us to show the mayor and the city councilors the importance of [firefighters'] work and how much we need to support them," Terrett said.

The Eugene fire department has participated in five of these burn-to-learn exercises in the last year and three months and, Terrett said, a large amount of preliminary work needs to be done before something like this can happen.

"Safety is our first priority," he said. "We have to get permission from everybody. We even had the Department of Environmental Quality come out to estimate any environmental damage that may occur from the burn."

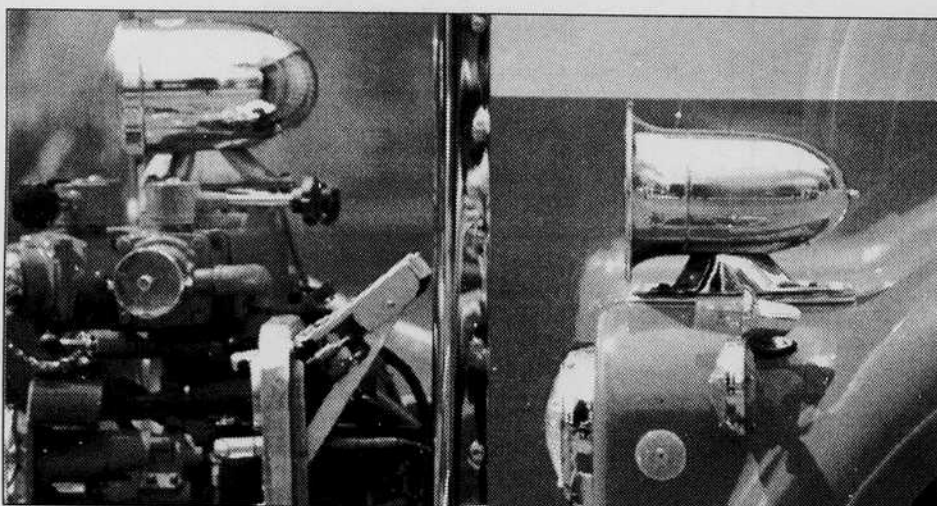
There were approximately 20 firefight-



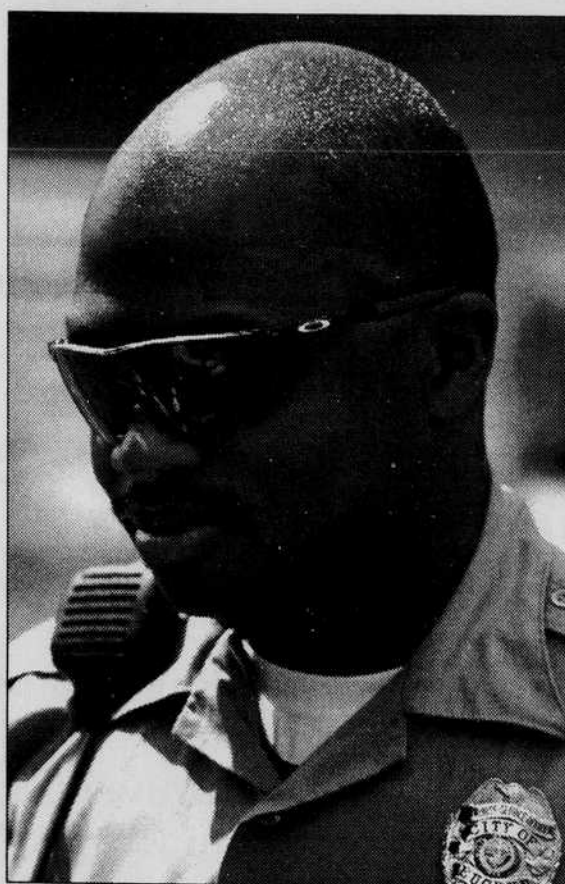
ers, two engines and a company truck present to ensure the safety of the situation. The neighboring trees were sprayed down with foam to minimize any damage to them.

Firefighters were strategically placed around the house while the mayor and city council members were inside and throughout the whole day.

"It wasn't scary," Taylor said. "There was someone beside me the whole time."



Several fire trucks and one ladder truck were present during the burn. Specialized pumping equipment and sirens adorn the front bumpers of some of the vehicles.



Members of the Eugene Fire Department survey the remains of a house on Bogart Lane. The house was burned Friday afternoon as a training exercise for area firefighters.

Clarence Woods, a community service officer, helps control onlookers during the "burn to learn" on Friday. Several members of the Eugene City Council and Mayor Jim Torrey participated in the event.

Photos by
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