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Former Utah fire chief fills spot in Eugene

Thomas Tallon was hired last month and comes with a good record of service from Salt Lake City

By Brian Goodell

City Manager Jim Johnson appointed Thomas Tallon as Eugene's next Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Chief late last month. Tallon is set to begin his new job Jan. 18, relocating from Salt Lake City where he served as fire chief for the last five years.

Lauren Chouinard, director of human resources and risk services for Eugene, traveled to Salt Lake City with Eugene Fire Department Sgt. Frank Bone to conduct an extensive background check of Tallon prior to his hiring.

"I felt he had very strong credentials as a leader," Chouinard said. "He's a change agent — very innovative and very creative. I saw that he was a very compassionate person with the people he worked with."

with the people he worked with." While Eugene might seem like a step down from a larger service area like Salt Lake City, Chouinard said Tallon, who is still in Salt Lake City and was unavailable for comment, was excited to take over the fire department in Eugene. "He likes the Northwest and

"He likes the Northwest and wants to live here, and he wanted more of a direct impact on the community that he serves," Chouinard said. "He was very positive about our organization. He felt like Eugene was an ideal place to make things happen and actually see the fruits of his labor." Tallon's appointment comes after the resignation of Chief Leonard Cooke in 1998, and the termination of Chief Bill Bass in 1999.

Phil Weiler, spokesman for the City Manager's office, said Tallon was recently removed as chief in Salt Lake City although his termination, Weiler said, had nothing to do with his performance as chief.

Tallon has been with the Salt Lake City Fire Department since he began his career as a firefighter and Emergency Medical Technician in 1974 and has been chief since 1995.

Tallon has a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Phoenix in Salt Lake City and also holds an associate's degree in Applied Fire Science. He is a graduate of the Executive Officer Program from the National Fire Academy and attended the Senior Executives in State and Local Government program at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

As chief in Salt Lake City, Tallon was responsible for leading a full-service fire and emergency medical service operation consisting of 354 employees with an annual budget of \$25 million. The Eugene Fire and EMS Department has 200 employees and a budget of \$18 million.

"In doing our background checks, Chief Tallon has been described as a bright, capable individual with excellent fire command skills," Johnson said. "He is passionate about fire service, has a participative management style, and is a strong believer in an educated, well-trained labor force. I am pleased to have him join the City's department director team."

Retired Oregon geology professor dies at age 79

■ William Holser's public memorial service will be Jan. 9 at Knight Library

By Darren Freeman Oregon Daily Emerald

Professor emeritus William T. "Bill" Holser, a prominent geochemist, died in his Eugene home Dec. 25 of complications from Parkinson's disease at age 79.

The public memorial service, to be held Jan. 9 at 2 p.m. in the Browsing Room of the Knight Library, "isn't going to be a black mourning but a positive celebration of his life," Holser's son, Thomas, said. "He said he wanted it to be a party."

Holser, who taught geology, had a distinguished career as a research geochemist. His most wellknown work involved studying the Earth's prehistoric atmospheric changes. He published more than 100 scientific papers, and his work is often cited.

While earning his bachelor's and master's degrees from the California Institute of Technology, Holser served in World War II with the Navy as a lieutenant commander. After receiving his Ph.D. from Columbia University, Holser worked for Chevron Oil Field Research from 1958 to 1970, when he joined the University faculty. Though he retired in 1986, he continued his research and kept his office at the University.

"He was well known in many fields," retired geology professor Alexander McBirney said. "He was a scientist of the old style, a person with broad interests who wasn't so specialized that he lost sight of the world around him."

In addition to reading scientific articles in English, French, Spanish, German and Russian, Holser enjoyed backpacking and taking photographs, some of which he sold at Eugene's Saturday Market, Thomas said.

"He was interested in everything from music to art to really advanced science, and he liked people," geology professor Dana Johnston said. "He was a real Renaissance man."

Memorial contributions can be made to the University Department of Geological Sciences speakers fund.

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