

about people



Volunteer firefighters Rose Wilkinson, Susan Brock, Barbara Matheson and Kate O'Mealia work for the Hoodland Fire Department, both in the fire program and in the medical-rescue field.

Photo by Terri Rader

At Hoodland Fire Department

Women volunteer for duty

by TERRI RADER
Post Correspondent

When a fire truck rushes by, most people conjure up an image of strong, courageous men who battle blazes.

But if that truck belongs to the Hoodland Fire Department, those volunteers just might be women.

There are now eight women volunteer firefighters, Kate O'Mealia, Susan Brock, Karen Ligatich, Barbara Matheson, Robin Wilkinson, Annette Thornberry, Melanie Englesby and Creta Larson. And they are every bit as dedicated to the job as the men, according to chief Don Armintrout.

Being a volunteer department has certainly opened up the opportunity for women in the Hoodland area.

"We don't want the women to miss the opportunity to participate if they want to," Armintrout said.

Many of the women joined because they were interested in the rescue and medical side of the department. But they are also asked to take part in the firefighting part of the program in case the situation ever arose and their help was needed.

After the training period, most of the women continued with the fire program on their own.

Ligatich, who is also the department's secretary in addition to her volunteer duties, was one of those who joined because of the medical aspect. However, there is a long line of volunteer firefighters in her family and after she first participated, she "wouldn't trade it for anything."

Some of the women are married. Matheson recently joined the department and claims that both her husband and seven-year-old son "think it's okay," and support her. She got started when she enrolled in a local EMT course, because she is an avid cross country skier and mountain climber and wanted to know what to do in case of an emergency.

The department's women have crossed the barrier and seem to handle the traditional men's job well. They are expected to do a job and be a part of the team. The male volunteers have adjusted and help out where they can.

"There are things they can't do because of physical strength, but there are a lot of other things they can do," Armintrout said. "They are here to learn just what their capabilities are."

Most of the women cannot lift one of the smoke ejector fans which hang on a door or window, for example.

But there are many other jobs and "a person can give 10 or 110 hours per month, it doesn't make any difference. We take whatever they can give."

Susan Brock is another volunteer, but unlike the others, she joined with her husband. Living in Government Camp, Brock said she joined for the community. Government Camp recently received fire protection from the district after a long period of waiting.

"You feel like you're doing something for the community," she explained, and with her husband, "it's something we can do together."

Robin Wilkinson worked for the U.S. Forest Service as a firefighter and was recruited into the volunteer program by Armintrout. She has been a volunteer ever since.

Kate O'Mealia joined for the same reason which has drawn many of the men. "I enjoy fighting fires," she admitted. "I like the physical work."

It's obvious from the way the women pull up and pack the fire hose alongside the men that they have been accepted as dedicated firefighters.

"We really feel that we're a part of the team," Matheson said.

FFA groups meet for competition

More than 400 Future Farmers of America will gather this Saturday, May 2, at Clackamas Community College for the annual FFA State Field Contest. Some 30 Oregon high schools will be represented,

including Sandy. Competition begins at 9 a.m. and includes meat grading and carcass evaluation, dairy products evaluation, agricultural mechanics, nursery landscape, floraculture and

crops.

An awards ceremony will be held at 2 p.m. The winning team will represent Oregon in the national FFA contest this November in Kansas City.

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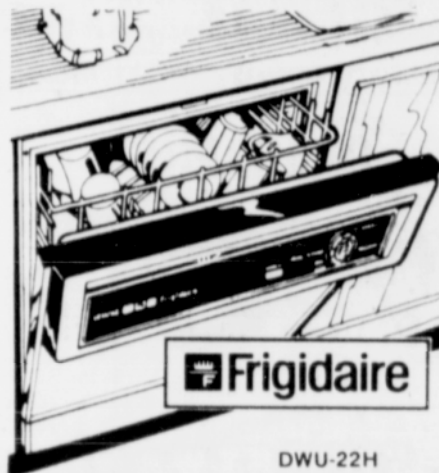
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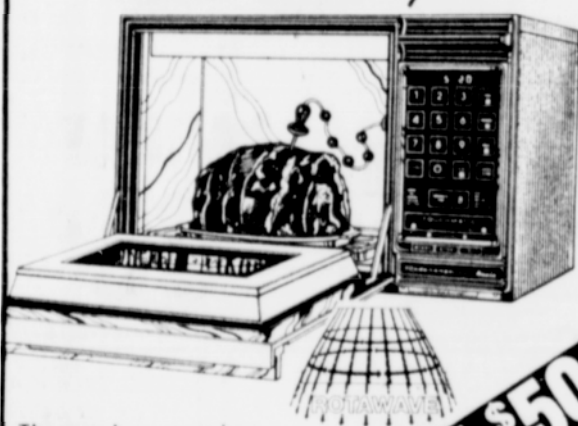
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At Hoodland Women's Club

Auction to benefit pre-school co-op

The third annual Mt. Hood Pre-School Co-Op Auction will be held this Saturday, May 2, at the Hoodland Women's Club.

Viewing of the items will begin at noon and the bidding will start at 1 p.m.

Among the items to be given away are a weekend rafting trip, a stained glass window, dinner for two at a local restaurant, a cassette recorder, lodging for two at Kah-Nee-Ta and a set of handcrafted dishes.

"Pre-school parents have been preparing for the auction for several months," said chairman Judy Donaldson. "We're very grateful to mountain, Sandy, Gresham and Portland merchants for their generous donations. Many private citizens have given the pre-school a substantial quantity

of items to be auctioned, too."

As a special feature, lunch and special snacks for children will be available during the auction.

Tom Cox will be the auctioneer at the event, donating his services to the pre-school's main fundraiser.

Profits from the auction will contribute to the support of the non-profit pre-school for the 1981-82 school year and provide money for children of low-income households.

To make a donation, or for

further information, call 622-4691 or 622-3292. Donations are tax deductible.

The Hoodland Women's Club is on Salmon River Road, just off Highway 26.

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SUHS artist honored in '81 Art Open

A Sandy High School student received an honorable mention award in the 1981 Beard's-KATU Art Open.

Senior Carrie Brewster earned a framed certificate in the competition, sponsored by Beard's Frame Shoppes and KATU television.

The juried competition was open to high school aged artists.

The public is invited to view the students' exhibition which will be presented at the U.S. Bank Plaza in downtown Portland from April 22 to May 10.

More than 500 students submitted original art pieces in the contest.