

Auto accidents, chimney fires on increase

by MICHEAL P. JONES
Post Correspondent

The Hoodland Rural Fire Department has responded to 59 calls so far for the month of December, according to Fire Chief Don Armintrout. In addition, this past week 14 persons were treated for minor first aid.

Armintrout said that with the weather becoming colder, with snowy and icy conditions affecting the Mt. Hood area, that the dangers of both auto accidents and chimney fires are increasing.

On Sunday at 10:30 a.m., a structure fire at Hood Course Acres in Wemme

caused minor damage to the ceiling of a mobile home.

Armintrout said that a woodstove that was improperly converted from an old oil furnace was determined to be the cause of the blaze.

Later that same evening the fire department made a "special rescue" of a cross-country skier from the slopes of Government Camp.

Armintrout said that a rescue crew from his department responded to the call of an injured skier on Glade Trail at 6:30 p.m. He said because there were varied reports as to the

location of the skier. With the darkness having already settled into the area, the rescue team traversed the trail with a snowcat.

The victim was located halfway between Government Camp and Timberline Lodge a little before 8 p.m. and had suffered a "boot-top" fracture.

On Dec. 15 at 4:45 p.m. the Hoodland Fire Department responded to a chimney fire on East Terra Fern Drive in the Cherryville area. Armintrout said that the fire was extinguished prior to both the arrival of his department

and fire crews responding from Sandy.

The day before, the department responded to another flue fire that struck a house in the Alder Creek area. The fire was extinguished prior to their arrival. But, Armintrout emphasized that the fire department should be called, no matter how large or small the fire, "because you never know what a chimney fire is going to progress into."

"Call the fire department no matter what," said Armintrout. "It's always better to be safe than sorry. Take the incident that occurred on Summertime

Drive not too long ago. The flue fire started and the guy didn't want to call us since it was Saturday night. He was lucky but eventually had to call us when it really started getting out of hand."

Armintrout said that a stove, under normal operation, burns anywhere from 300 to 500 degrees. In a chimney fire it burns between 1000 and 2000 degrees which, over a short period of time, can start breaking down pipes, bricks and wood around it. He said that even the best designed units cannot withstand that kind of heat.

Armintrout said that peo-

ple should never be afraid to call the fire department, even if their stove is not installed according to code. Last Monday a house in the Brightwood area valued at an estimated \$100,000 had a chimney fire and the

department was not called because of a code violation, which could affect the insurance compensation. The fire burned intensely for an hour and a half before burning itself out.

"The law says a man's

home is his castle," said Armintrout. "If somebody has hooked up their stove wrong, we can only recommend they make the necessary corrections. We cannot force them to change it."

Welches musical attracts 450

Welches Grade School held its annual Christmas musical Dec. 17, with 450 people in attendance.

This year's musical, titled "Let It Snow," combined traditional and contemporary Christmas songs utilizing the talents of the school's students, who range from kindergarten through the eighth grade.

Also featured was the school's sixth, seventh and eighth grade band, the seventh and eighth grade chorus, and the sixth, seventh and eighth grade concert band.

Tim McCarthy, music director, accompanied the students on acoustic guitar, as well as offering some of

his own songs for the event.

McCarthy wrote the music for such songs as "Christmas Eve is Here," "What Ever Happened?," "Someone Stole the Christmas Tree," and "Old Fashion Christmas." These songs were sung by the seventh and eighth grade chorus.



Mike Boring, Sandy Union High School senior, directs the pep band during the halftime of the Sandy-Spectrum game Saturday.

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