

City, Suburban Fire Protection On The Upgrade

By NORM CARDOZA
Fire protection in the city and county has been getting better all the time and more improvements are forthcoming. The Suburban Fire Station will soon have most of the radio monitoring units it needs to alert its volunteers instantly in their homes, says Chief Buster Gordon. And Chief Geno Gheller of the city's fire department is working on studies necessary before he presents a plan to the city council for construction of a fire sub-station.

Elsewhere within the past few years fire protection in the county has been improved considerably by addition of new fire departments. The latest is Rocky Point Community Fire Department Incorporated. Residents and property owners there pooled donations last fall and bought a fire truck.

Late in January, volunteer firemen saved a home that surely would have been destroyed had not a truck been on the spot. And when the Air Force constructed Kingsley Field, it built in a fire department designed especially to combat aircraft fires, but very capable of fighting all sorts of fires. Air Force equipment and

crewmembers are right on the spot when other local departments need assistance. As this was written a fire district was in the embryo state in the Chemult area.

Near the city, Stewart-Lenox and Oregon Technical Institute fire departments protect the suburbs. Fire departments exist in Dorris, Tulelake, Merrill, Malin, Bonanza, Bly and Chiloquin. Most cover rural areas, too. Bureau of Land Management provides protection in Langell Valley during summer.

The county fire department, with headquarters in Klamath Falls, roams an immense portion of the county, fighting fires in property not protected otherwise, or assisting outlying departments. Beatty in the past has been covered by Klamath Agency Fire Department that was dissolved



"OLD NO. 1," fire truck purchased recently by the newly-formed Rocky Point Community Fire Department Incorporated, cuts a heroic figure since it rolled on its first fire here recently and was credited with saving a home.



SUBURBAN FIRE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYS six men. These are, from left, Raymond LeMarche, assistant chief; Cliff Gable and Leo Kamarad, drivers; Joe Sullivan, engineer, and Buster Gordon, chief. Roger Wilkinson, a driver, was not present. The force has 50 volunteer firemen.

Volunteers Spend Funds To Better Their Service

In a continuing effort to better their service the 50 volunteers of the Suburban Fire Department are spending several thousand dollars of their own funds to speed up the turnout when their help is needed.

They are purchasing, over a period of time, monitor radio receivers. In time, one will be placed in the home of each volunteer so that firemen may be called instantaneously and simultaneously when they are needed.

About 30 firemen already have been outfitted with the radios. The latest shipment was received this month.

Each year the volunteers sponsor a New Year's Eve firemen's ball, and those proceeds alone pay for the sets. Each costs \$90.

The radios are activated by the press of a button at department headquarters on Gottle Street.

Suburban firemen also were credited with a coup of considerable proportion when nearly 10 years ago they bought and equipped a highway-going "hospital" and disaster car.

Volunteers bought a passenger bus with money from their fund and furnished it with a variety of heavy equipment, a surgical kit, sterilizers and other medical supplies. It is fitted with an electrical generating plant.

The Suburban department covers its 11 square miles of territory with a 1,600-gallon tank truck, two 750-gallon pumpers, a 500-gallon truck and a 160-gallon pickup for grass fires and controlled burns. Buster Gordon is the chief.



SUBURBAN FIRE DEPARTMENT is equipped with a "hospital," a disaster car, at right.

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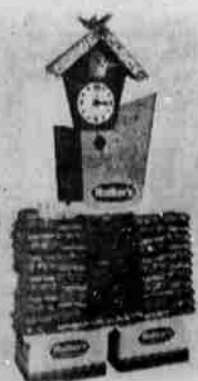
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