

A NIGHT I'LL NEVER FORGET

By CHESTER EDWARDS

Chairman, Board of Commissioners and a Volunteer Fireman

As a member of the Eagle Volunteer Firemen there is one night I will remember all my life. It was the night of a terrible electric storm. We were called to a haystack on the Harold Perkins farm. The lightning was so heavy we didn't really need any headlights. The fire was quite a distance down in the field. It was an enormous stack of hay and it was really afire. We set the pumper on a ditch bank and drafted water from the ditch. Just over the fence was a grain stubble field and the lightning played on the top of that stubble constantly making everything as light as day. The hay fire was so hot it set a granary on fire some distance away.

While we were on this fire, another call came into my home of a barn on fire. My wife, Peggy, took the call and then tried to find a way to get the information to the firemen. All the neighbors seemed to be gone to the first fire. Finally, she caught one neighbor, just leaving, and they took her out where we were. She had quite a time getting down in the field where we were, first getting into the irrigation ditch and then into an electric fence. We pulled one truck off that fire and sent it to the barn fire.

We found out later, that at the same time all this was taking place, another party was trying to contact us as his granary was on fire. All this action took most of the night. Boy, what a night.



Current officers at the round table in the Club Room are: Marion Moore, secretary; Roy Cullen, fire chief; Fred Kunkler, treasurer; Otis Young, president of the Volunteers; Joey Cullen, assistant chief and Chester Edwards, Commissioner of the Eagle Fire District.



Eagle Fire Department

The History of Eagle's Volunteer Fire Department

EAGLE FIRE DISTRICT HISTORY

July 1946 to September 1963



1250 gallon tank truck and it looks pretty clean as though newly painted, but more than likely just washed.

It wasn't a fire but a fire scare that motivated the formation of the Eagle Fire Protection District. On Sunday afternoon the Fourth of July weekend in 1946 a cry went up, "The Eagle Merc is on fire!" Within minutes every available hose from homes in the area was in use; however, it was the strong right arm of Mrs. May Russell on the pitcher pump handle and the "never-give-up" attitude of people who just wouldn't quit on the bucket brigade that made it a fire scare rather than a disastrous fire. Yes, we lost the garage and the storehouse and a lean-to on the back of the Merc, but the results of the fire bombs furnished by W. K. Long, together with the arrival of the fire truck from Gowen field, relieved the pressure on the pitcher pump and the bucket brigade. We saved the Merc and the Odd Fellows Lodge building. As a matter of face the men on Gowen field truck asked why we even bothered to call them.

With this as a basic history, we had no trouble getting a big group of people out to attend a mass meeting in the I.O.O.F. hall to talk fire protection. The result of this meeting was that a \$300 deposit (furnished by

Ralph Wilson, Orville Jackson and W. K. Long) was made with the state purchasing agent in order that our name could be put on file so we could bid on a war surplus fire truck.

During the time the money was cooling in the office of the state purchasing agent we didn't exactly fall asleep, for during this interim we learned of statutes in the Idaho law providing for the formation of rural fire districts. With very little persuasion on the part of Norval Ostroot and Chester Edwards the I.O.O.F. lodge in Eagle was prevailed upon to finance the formation of such a district, which they agreed to do to the extent of \$100. In order to establish boundaries that would be accepted by the people it was decided to hold the boundaries down to an area where we knew the people would back the idea by voting themselves into such a taxing unit. This area included the old common school district 12 of Eagle and adjoining district 25 (Linder), a combined area of about 16 square miles.

A legal petition was drawn up by attorney T. M. Roberts who assisted us on the Sunday Eagle Merc fire scare, and a map of the area was drawn for us by the county sur-

would enable firemen to play a fog spray on grass fires, gasoline or chemical blazes.

With funds raised by area organizations, the firemen built a clubroom onto the fire station. The firemen, recognizing a community need, made the club room available to all organizations. The all-purpose building is used for everything from wedding receptions to card parties.

The department's resuscitator was financed by

proceeds from the firemen's ball in 1956. The equipment has since been added to and has been used to save at least five lives.

In taking calls on the "hot line," there is one situation that throws Chief Cullen and every other fireman for a loss. An over-excited person will call in and say, "We gotta bad fire, hurry up and get out here," then hangs up before furnishing the location.



An angle shot of our trucks showing the 1931 Howe "antique" that is still a pumping fool. Slow of foot compared to the other three, still it can show the way where a real volume of water might be necessary.

Here's four and one half of our six door Fire Station and the equipment in position, each in its regular stall. The tank trucks are in stall number one and three. The pumper is number two. The standby Howe faces you in stall number four. There are more doors, not shown, at each corner of the building.



SOME DEPARTMENTS ARE SCIENTIFIC MACHINES

SOME JUST PUT OUT THE FIRE

This article appeared in The Idaho Daily Statesman August 24, 1959 and was written by Bob Mycue.

EAGLE - Some fire departments are scientific fighting machines; others just get the fires out.

The Eagle Volunteer Fire department would fall into the second category.

“We’re all dummies when it comes to firefighting techniques, but we get the job done,” Fire Chief Roy Cullen says.

An exponent of the rough-and-ready brand of fire-fighting, Cullen has been chief of the volunteers from the beginning.

The volunteers didn’t really organize until about five years ago, he says.

The Eagle fire district came into being in 1947, with its first tax assessment the following year providing money for the district in 1949.

While fire crews functioned in the period prior to 1954, the volunteers up until that time did not have their own treasury, constitution and by-laws. Unlike the district, which is a taxing unit, the Eagle Volunteer firemen raise funds principally through the annual fire men’s ball.

First Board Appointed

Chester Edwards, Carl Marshall and Don Crawford were appointed by the governor as the first board of commissioners. After a two year period, Crawford resigned and Oscar Peterson was elected in his place. The board, composed of two of the original members, has served the district ever since with Korval Ostroot as secretary-treasurer.

Measured in modern terms, if it’s push button, it must be good, and that puts the Eagle Fire department right out in front.

The Eagle fire alarm system consists of an electrical circuit into the homes of four firemen. Notified of a fire, any of these four can press a button in their home activating the station siren. Then the man setting the alarm off rings the station telephone until the first volunteer arrives, takes the information, and transfers it to a blackboard.

The siren is not much to look at, just a big device atop the station. But, booming out in the dead of night, it can raise the hair on the back of a firefighter’s neck.

Actually an air raid siren, it was installed originally flush on the fire station roof, then boosted about 10 feet on oil drums, to get better distribution of sound. The siren rolls, peaking and sinking 10 times, turning off automatically after two and one-half minutes.

Serve Large Area

The Eagle fire district spans about 28 square miles, and Chief Cullen has heard the siren as far as three miles from the station.

The race to the station isn’t always won by the man who lives down the street, although handicappers would make him the favorite. One volunteer, who lives three-quarters of a mile out, beats men who live in town to the station. The chief and others suspect him of sleeping with his clothes on.

The Eagle firemen, like a lot of farmers, can’t get all their equipment under shed. Three trucks are housed in the station, one stands outside.

Each of the three trucks is a fire fighting unit in itself. Two of the trucks carry 1200 to 1300 gallon tanks which were built by the Cullen Machine Shop, with materials furnished at cost. The oldest piece of equipment-the 750-gallon per minute Howe pumper-has the biggest pump and can throw the most water. All of the equipment has been paid for.

“We have 3000 gallons of water on wheels to protect outlying districts,” the Eagle fire chief says, adding that this amount of waterpower can handle most fires.

For something major, firemen utilize irrigation ditches or drainage ditches, depending on the season. This involves using the portable engines on the two tanker trucks to furnish a constant supply of water.

The Eagle fire district, with its modern equipment and recent addition of wells in the center of town and behind the Junior high school, has still more plans to improve its fire-fighting capacity.

Need More Equipment

High on the needed list, besides more housing for the trucks is a pickup truck with four-wheel drive and high pressure system. This fast, mobile piece of equipment

veyor’s office. This map cost \$25, the most expensive single item of the formation of the district. Other areas that have joined the Eagle Fire District since the original formation are Pleasant View, Brookside and Green Meadow, making an area of about 28 square miles. The first legal steps of the organization was accomplished in 1947.

Chester Edwards, Carl Marshall and Don Crawford were appointed by the Governor of Idaho as the first board of commissioners. After serving a two year term, Don Crawford indicated his desire to resign and Oscar Peterson was elected in his place. The board of Edwards, Marshall and Peterson has served since that time, with Norval Ostroot as secretary-treasurer.

In July of 1948 the first tax assessment was made, which provided for the first money for the district in January of 1949. Still moving slowly and carefully, the commissioners did not spend any of their limited funds until November of 1949, when through the efforts of one of the fire equipment salesmen we located a used 400-gallon-per-minute centrifugal pumper in Granger, Washington. Armed only with a certified check and some warm clothes, Ralph Fluharty, postmaster at that time and later retired, and Norval Ostroot set out for Granger. About midnight the next day they returned with the first piece of equipment to be owned by the district. This 1931 model pumper, our first line of defense, was soon supported by a 1170 gallon tank truck.

Now we were faced with a storage problem. It was costing us a dollar a day to store the pumper in a heater garage, and with a water filled tank to consider, we needed a fire station and didn’t have nearly enough money to build one.

Our district seems to have been blessed with the right help at the right time, and so it was when we needed the new fire station. George Rizzi was the man of the hour. He furnished the finances to buy the ground and build the engine room portion of the fire station, together with the furnace, at a total cost of \$5,000. The district is turn rented the station from Mr. Rizzi for \$1,000 per year for five years, at the end of which time we paid him \$1.00 and he signed over to us the title of the property.

With community spirit exemplified in this generous manner by George Rizzi, how could a volunteer fireman’s association be anything other than successful. The pattern was set. Next, a bid to the City of Boise brought us a 750-gallon-per-minute pumper, which we still own and operate as our stand-by unit where volume and stationary pumping might be required.

Many of us vividly recall the night of the Downing fire. The loft of that big white barn had been filled with chopped hay and bedding straw, and somehow a hot spot developed so that when the loft broke into flames we had a real fire. After what seemed hours of work and pouring water on the barn the old Howe pumper had just as much power and kick as ever except we noticed that the big stream of water coming from the 2½ inch hose with the clay pipe nozzle was weaving much heavier than usual. As we suspected there was only one volunteer fireman. Warren Hicks, on the nozzle. He was hanging on and in good shape, but the pressure of the water in the hose had lifted him about seven inches off the ground. Since that time the district has replaced the old Continental motor with a Reo engine. This 1931 Howe has an open cab and falls into the category of an antique. Its large 750 gallon-per-minute pumping capacity lends much to the 10% reduction in our fire insurance enjoyed by patrons of our fire district.

With interest indeed on a district wide basis and so that the fire station could be the center of the community, a cooperative effort by all the organizations in the area set aside one day and we raised money by auction food sales, ticket sales, etc., the result being a club room or community center attached to the rear of the fire station. This combination room is used by nearly every organization in the district, in addition to many family parties, birthday celebrations, etc. It was completed in 1953 and immediately put into use. Its popularity seemed to increase for several years along with the costs of maintaining heat and power for its use. Organizations which were making regular use of it decided that it should be self-sustaining from a financial point and since 1959 it has been divorced from the Eagle Fire District and operates as the Northside Community Center.

In 1954 a general meeting was called by the commissioners of the district for the men of the community. Ted Downing acted as temporary chairman. After discussion of the needs for a volunteer fireman's organization an election was held at which time Ben Millikan was chosen as chairman and first president of what came to be our Eagle Volunteer Fireman's Association. Many of the original fellows still hold membership and others have joined so that we maintain an active association of 30 or more men. Meetings continue to be held according to the original schedule on the first and third Tuesday of each month.

It soon became apparent to the volunteer firemen that they as an association could add many necessary items to the firefighting equipment and especially to the life saving angle such as a resuscitator or Scott air packs. A decision was soon made to have a Fireman's Benefit Dance and to make the dance an annual affair if it proved to be a success. The first dance was held on Saturday, March 19, 1955 and has since that time been held on the Saturday in March that falls closest to St. Patrick's Day. Funds from this money raising event have been put to good use by the volunteers year after year. One most of us remember is the fireworks display which in the past has been shown on July 3rd of each year. Some question the value of this expense since fire works are now shown in so many areas on July 4th.

The community room of the fire station became so busy over the years that often the firemen's meetings were pushed out into the engine room. This brought about a desire on the part of the Fire District Commissioners and the Eagle Volunteer Firemen to join together to build an addition onto the fire station and also provide club room space for the Volunteers. This became a joint venture between the two units. The district purchased the materials and the volunteers provided the labor to erect a 48 x 50 foot addition to the original fire station. The front 30 x 48 feet would be used to house fire equipment as it was added to the district and the back 20 x 48 feet would be used as a permanent club room for the volunteers. After a year and a half the volunteer

firemen accumulated enough funds to finish the inside of their club room, tiling the floor, finishing the ceiling, building cabinets and completing a snack area. Then chairs and sofas were added.

Upon completion in 1962 this room was dedicated to the Memory of Ben Millikan whose untimely death in an airplane accident was keenly felt by many. A wall plaque bearing his name was unveiled at the dedication. Shingles bearing the names of other volunteer firemen who were active at the time of their death hang from this plaque.

During the year of 1955, it became our good fortune to be able to buy on a lease basis a big truck and pumper from the Franklin Whitney Fire District. Money was needed for transactions of this type, and once again we had a helper. This time Orville Jackson covered the costs beyond our ability to pay and by January of 1958 he had been reimbursed. One year later, in 1959, we had completed our purchase lease agreement with the Franklin Whitney Fire District.

This fine pumper, rated at 500 gallon-per-minute, is a centrifugal type pumper operating from independently mounted industrial motor. This truck also carries an auxiliary 500 gallon water supply, two high pressure hose reels and nearly 100 feet of 2½ inch hose. At the recommendation of the volunteer firemen the Fire District Commissioners were able to sell to the Star firemen our first pumper truck. This pumper truck had become surplus because our buildings now housed the 500 gallon pumper and two tank trucks. The second tank truck was built on a 1948 Model G.M.C. chassis and had a carrying capacity of 1250 gallons of water. To these units were later added portable pumps each capable of pumping 100 gallons of water per minute. These Hale centrifugal pumps have proved to be a real asset and have many times proved their value in the area. We are proud of the fire fighting equipment, and you who live in the district can also be justly proud, for your tax dollars have, without a question, been wisely used. Please keep in mind, especially so on some cold miserable night when the siren is sounding, that the Eagle Fire District, supported by the Eagle Volunteer Firemen, operates on less money than perhaps any other rural fire district in the State of Idaho. None of the personnel has



Here's the gang at a recent Tuesday night regular session. Starting with the front row, left to right, Dell Ray, Bucky Buchanan. Second row starts with Don King on the bumper, Clyne Hicks, Warren Hicks, Chet Edwards, Roy Cullen our Chief and Bud Gibbons. Third row has Jack Russell, Harold Chase, Roy Gilbert, Fred Kunkler, Joey Cullen, then at the wheel Odis Young our Volunteer president, Jerry Wagner, Marion Moore and Wayne Yelton.



Jack Russell and Jerry Wagner demonstrate the action of the Resuscitator on a volunteer, "Warren Hides." This type of practice is conducted often during our "skull" sessions so

that all will have the knowledge of it's operations.



Chief Roy Cullen reading a letter from the Civil Defense to members of the Eagle Volunteer Firemen's Association.

To the Citizens of the Eagle Fire District, Eagle, Idaho

For the information of the people of the Eagle Fire District, your department personnel consists of twenty-eight trained men who are endeavoring to protect your property twenty-four hours of each day, throughout the year. You need them and they in turn need your support.

In addition to fire fighting equipment we have one of the latest resuscitators which is at your disposal twenty-four hours a day by calling the designated fire number.

The firemen are not paid and spend many hours a year away from home, at fire drills, meetings, fires, etc., not to mention the many good things they do for the good of the community.

The next time you see the fire truck or firemen going to a fire please have the courtesy to pull over to the side of the street or highway and let them pass. It is important that the fire equipment and the firemen get to the fire in the least possible time, and they are surely more needed than the general public, who just go to look on. Clogging the streets and highways in front and behind fire trucks is a very good way to increase accidents, especially when visibility is poor. Remember the next fire might be your own.

If you have any criticism of the department, please come to our meetings, or drills, and state how you think the department might be improved. Any worthwhile suggestion will be appreciated. We would appreciate it very much if all of the criticism was at our meetings or at drills instead of in public.

The fire department belongs to all of us, and we as firemen, will be happy to pass along any information that we have or can secure that pertains to fires, fire hazards, extinguishers or anything else that is for the betterment of the community. **You in turn can help the firemen by calling the Eagle fire number in reporting a fire and telling them your name, be sure to give your first name and community you live in as there are several people in the district with the same names. If you are on a rented place tell them the owner's name and anything that will help the firemen to know exactly where the fire is. After you have reported the fire, see that all vehicles are out of the road and it would help if you were handy to show the firemen where the nearest water is available.**

We, the members of the Eagle Volunteer Fire Department, take this opportunity to express our thanks, and gratitude to our many friends and advertisers whose generous support have made this directory possible.

We wish to commend the people of our community, at this time, for the generous support, and donations they have given in the past, which in turn has made a better fire department.

We urge the people of our community to look over the cards of these kind and generous business and professional men, who have responded so generously to our directory and make it a point in their contacts with the business world to remember these kind friends and tell them so.

Again we thank all those who made this directory possible.

Roy Cullen, Fire Chief

ever received as much as one penny for his time, efforts and loyal service.

It might be of interest to many to know that each piece of truck equipment is tested regularly as to performance and each is kept in good working condition. This is very important to all of us. Knowing that each pump on each truck is ready to discharge water in volume under all conditions is of prime consideration. Heated engine rooms give us assurance against freezing. The rated pumping capacity of the pumps are as follows: the stationary pumper at, 700 gallons-per-minute, the mobile pump at 500 gallons-per-minute, the two portable units each at 100 gallons-per minute.

The trucks carry water as there is not one hydrant in the entire 28 square miles of our rural fire district. 3170 gallons of water is the total amount on wheels; the two tank trucks each carrying 1250 gallons. This two tank truck setup permits us to use a shuttle system of refilling a truck while the second tank is being used when the extent of the fire demands. For this purpose a special 10 inch well was drilled by the business men and residents close in. The volunteers

purchased a big electric pump that is mounted inside a heated building to provide water for the tank truck refills at all times of day and in any weather condition. When you realize that the water is out of the ditches five months of every year you can see the importance of this supply. We also have available to us a 10 inch drilled well on the school grounds for such fire protection.

Our interests in community service have not been confined to fire fighting alone. Quoting from Section 3 of the Constitution of the Eagle Volunteer Firemen's Association: "It shall be the object of this Association to sponsor adequate social activities for its members in the interests of member cooperation on general community fellowship." This might help to explain the assistance we gave to the building of the tennis courts at the Eagle Junior High School, the erection of the playground equipment at the Eagle Grade School, the fireworks display previously mentioned or the joint venture with the Eagle Lions Club for Christmas decorating.

THE FIREMAN'S CREED

Consideration for the feeling and opinions of others.

Obedience to orders and discipline. Give this obedience cheerfully, remember strict obedience to orders and duty welds together a strong and efficient fire department.

Understanding of all parts of our work is necessary, as is an understanding of the ambitions, hopes and pride of the people.

Respect for the rights of others. The big "I" attitude towards other people is extreme discourtesy.

Truthfulness is an important part of courtesy. We must respect the intelligence of others, and always be truthful. Don't forget that using a little tact with this will often earn a person's lasting gratitude.

Energy. Don't hesitate to use your energy to promote the welfare and good standing of your department. Always take the necessary time and expend the energy required to answer questions plainly, intelligently and accurately.

Service. Prepare yourself to render skillful service. Then make this service willingly, give it cheerfully. That little extra service above strict duty is the masterful touch.

Yield the floor in discussion. Yielding to others will bring rich yields of friendship and satisfaction.

EAGLE FIRE DISTRICT

1. Give NAME, DIRECTION and DISTANCE from fire station.
2. State WHAT is on fire - house, barn, shed, haystack, etc.
3. Be prepared to direct trucks to best route to fire, and to a source of water, if necessary.
4. TO REPORT A FIRE:
CALL **939-6781** 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. weekdays.
CALL **939-6682** Holidays, Saturdays, Sundays, before and after business hours.

If no answer call: **939-6362**

If no answer call: **939-6631**

If no answer call: **939-6618**

This map is for your convenience, to aid you in placing a fire call. Study it and determine your exact position.

The Fire Chief in charge will be in full command of any fire and of the use of the apparatus.

For additional information, call Fire Chief: **939-6682**

