

Thursday, August 4, 1983 **SUN HERALD**

The Avenue People

By Joan

Thirteen dependable Firefighters are at the station daily on a twenty-four hour shift--then off for forty-eight hours and replaced by thirteen others. This goes on every day in the Winter Park Fire Department.

Last week, of five calls, one was for fire, four represented a suspicion of smoke, a cat too high in a tree, an odd sound in a refrigerator, an unlocated bad smell, also power lines down. They receive approximately 30 to 100 calls per year.

An engineer of the fire department, Jim Duba tells me all members are seriously motivated, many working towards college credits and degrees. There has never been a time in the Fire Department when higher development of education has been more prominent.

In order to join the fire fighters one must pass rigid tests, have Florida minimum requirement standards, studied 280 hours and have a high school diploma or G.E.D.

Upon being hired, 500 hours follows on a 24 hour schedule starting at 7:00 a.m.

Thirteen people serve each shift: a Chief, an Assistant Chief, three personals and one secretary. Also, the department of E.M.S., the Emergency medical technician-two paramedics.

The Winter Park firefighters serve all Winter Park and receive emergency service calls from a central agency as well. Fire alarms come in from hospitals, apartments, colleges directly or in monitoring agent dispatches. There are reserve firefighters from other departments and people who are in other walks of life who are trained voluntary firefighters.

The age of the Winter Park fire fighters averages 18 to late 20's--volunteer right to the early 40's.

A day at the firefighters department begins at 7 a.m. and ends at 5:00 p.m. and would commence with truck checks, training period and in-house training on specialized training; pre fire building familiarization of actual building, and visiting actual buildings, also fire suppression systems are included in the training. Each normal shift is 8 hours.

The white trucks were adopted for visibility and are kept at all times on go.

The firefighters personal equipment is kept in tip-top shape daily, workshoes, double knit pants, and tee-shirt- on the tee shirt insignia reads: Winter Park Fire Department, next line picture of hook and ladder then, a fire hydrant, ladder, axe and bugle. In by-gone times, it was the sound of the bugle that alarmed the neighborhood and rallied the firefighters.

When the men are on a call they also wear patches and badges and look very smart and earnest.

They offer public service programs. Telephone to schedule a time for your group to tour the fire Department and listen to information.

The Department does visit the schools and colleges when they arrive back from summer- but- you too may schedule your group for a very interesting program and visit at no cost. Call 644-9860, ext. 241. You will be welcomed heartily!

A degree in fire science is gained by taking a 2 year curriculum, also some colleges offer a 4 year engineering degree.