

WP Firemen Cook, Drill, Study

By PAT BYRD

Staff Writer

A fireman is not an ordinary person.

Not only does he run on an unusual schedule which sometimes keeps him busy 24 hours straight, but he also serves as a jack of all trades and possesses many skills.

AT THE Winter Park Fire Department, his day begins at 7 a.m. Each fireman runs a thorough check of all station equipment including trucks, batteries, water and gas.

After this he performs routine station duty tasks which entail housekeeping in the station.

Winter Park's department has a spotless kitchen, where firemen

prepare their own meals, a locker room, a dormitory lined with fold-up beds and a garage that houses equipment. The garage contains a ladder truck, a rescue truck and two pumpers, in addition to rows of coats, hats and extinguishers along the walls.

FIREMEN continue their long day in training, whether classroom or drilling sessions.

Often in the afternoon they run inspections of business establishments to acquaint themselves with setups in case of fire. A scale plan is drawn of each building studied and kept on file in the station.

After dinner, the men are generally on their own but are expected to

study. Exams are given annually on information contained in a set of volumes called "The Fire Department Officer."

THEY ARE also tested on information pertaining to their own city, as the location of all streets and fire hydrants.

In order to advance himself, each man must continue to take competitive examinations throughout his career.

What standards must a man meet to become a beginning firefighter at the Winter Park station?

HE MUST be between the ages of 21 and 30 and have completed the equivalent of a high school education. He must be in good physical condition, have at least 20-40 uncor

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rected eyesight, and must pass an entrance aptitude exam.

He is required to hold a chauffeur's license and an advanced first aid card. In addition, he must be interviewed by the Civil Service Board of Winter Park.

After being installed in the department, he receives training in hydraulics, pump construction and operation, first aid, principles of combustion and ventilation of buildings. Other areas of instruction include ladders, rescue, forcible entry, extinguishment and salvage, and overhaul.

WINTER PARK'S 30-man department is proud of its file of appreciation letters from residents thanking the men for leaving premises in

excellent condition after extinguishing fires.

According to Lt. R. J. Etherson, Winter Park's department has several problems unique to the city.

The first of these is the arrangement of downtown buildings. Since they are all close and many connected, a fire in one could begin a rampage of flames through several buildings.

ETHERSON also said due to the small number of Winter Park firefighters, each man will answer twice as many calls as his equivalent in an office as large as Orlando's.

Since firemen work 24 hours and are off 48, they are prevented from participating in any regular weekly

activities such as bowling or civic clubs.

Ironically, one-third of the men are unable to attend the annual firemen's ball since they will be on duty.

WINTER PARK Fire Chief R. S. Bair is proud of his staff of hard-working men. Along with the volunteers who are called on any run, his firefighters have answered 532 calls since November.

Though these men often go unheralded, they are sometimes remembered by appreciative citizens. In their training area stands a 6-foot armor statue, a token of gratefulness from Winter Park Mall merchants for the department's help in the 1969 mall fire.