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VOLUME 33

JULY 1984

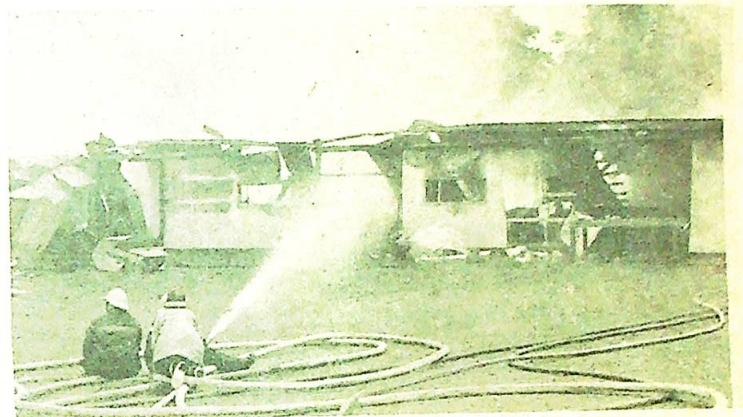
NO. 3

## LP gas truck rams freight train

### Explosion Leaves \$800,000 Loss



Smoke rises from the debris of a truck carrying liquefied petroleum involved in a collision with the Grand Trunk freight train north of Wanatah on U.S. 421. The driver of the truck was killed in the accident. The tank carrying the gas was knocked 600 feet east of the road in the collision.



FIREWORKS EXPLOSION — Firefighters from the Kankakee Volunteer Fire Department at Rolling Prairie pour water onto the Lakeland Fireworks Co., near LaPorte. Lightning was believed to have struck the building, resulting in a fire estimated to have caused hundreds of thousands of dollars in damage. Two people were treated for smoke inhalation. Several injuries were reported. Firefighters returned to

Photo Courtesy LaPorte Herald Argus (Photo by Ed Jane)

WANATAH — A tractor-trailer truck loaded with liquefied petroleum gas smashed into a freight train, killing one person and exploding into a fireball that burned seven other motorists waiting at a railroad crossing. The tanker showered flames over at least five other vehicles when it rammed a Grand Trunk Railroad freight train at a crossing on U.S. 421 at Haskell Heights midway between Wanatah and Westville. The trucker, from Elkhart, was killed outright when he drove around a line of vehicles waiting for the train and rammed into the train's side. Occupants of another truck and three other vehicles stopped near the tracks were injured and in some cases blown out of their autos when the gas tank exploded.

Five of the injured were brought to Porter Memorial Hospital. Marian Dick, a spokeswoman there, said two were treated and released but three others were critically burned and were airlifted to burn wards at hospitals in Fort Wayne and Chicago. The other two injured were taken to St. Anthony Hospital in Michigan City. They also were burned by the massive explosion. Major Melvin Shinn of LaPorte County police said it appears that in a thick early morning fog, the trucker did not see the passing freight train or flashing railroad signals and barricades. Dennis Zila, a Michigan City truck driver who stopped for the train, said the truck passed him as it drove into the side of the train.

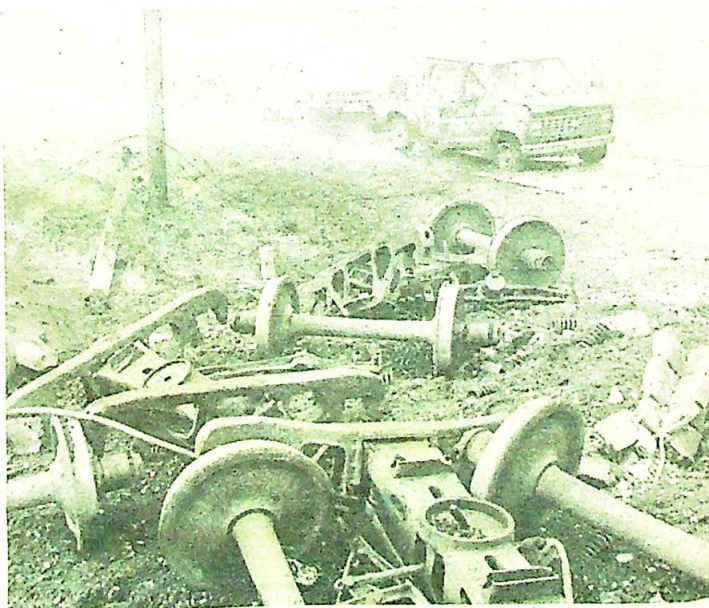


Photo By Wm. T. Swedenberg

Photo by Wm. T. Swedenberg

Zila said a man and his son, waiting in a truck in front of him, jumped from their truck with their bodies aflame. Zila and others beat out the fire.

On the south side of the tracks, a van, pickup truck and car carrying a total of five passengers all caught fire.

Haskell Heights resident Richard Drwecki said he ran from his home nearby to find two occupants of a van burned and lying in a ditch south of the tracks. "They looked bad," said Drwecki of the two whose clothes were burned away.

Another resident, Ray Biggs, drove two other injured people to Porter Memorial.

LAPORTE — Walter Buss, chief of the Kankakee Twp. Volunteer Fire Department, said Saturday, June 24, that damage from an explosion and fire Friday at the Lakeland Fireworks Co. in northern LaPorte County has been estimated at \$800,000.

Buss said investigators from the state fire marshal's office have determined that lightning struck a "riser" from an electrical box on the building, causing the box to explode, which in turn ignited fireworks inside the building.

Two persons suffered from smoke inhalation, but no serious injuries were reported.

Employees escaped the building safely and nearby residents were evacuated during the height of the blaze.

The building, valued at \$50,000, was destroyed along with fireworks valued at \$750,000, according to Buss.



Photo Courtesy LaPorte Herald Argus (Photo by Rich Cheever)

Buss said a ground wire from the electrical box was too small to carry the charge produced by the lightning bolt, and that caused the box to explode.

The fire started about 11:30 a.m. Friday, June 24, and firemen from four LaPorte County departments fought the blaze for several hours. They returned to the scene late Friday, when the blaze rekindled, and remained there until the early-morning hours Saturday.

Buss said six LaPorte area businessmen owned the firm, while the building was owned by William Loucks. The business was managed by Mark Sobecki, one of the two persons treated for smoke inhalation.

**"Make MONROE ALIVE in 85"**  
**June 13, 14, 15**

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Subscription Price - \$3.50 Per Year

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**ROBERT E. LANEY, Publisher and Editor 219-663-0722**

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**Exposition  
October 11-14**

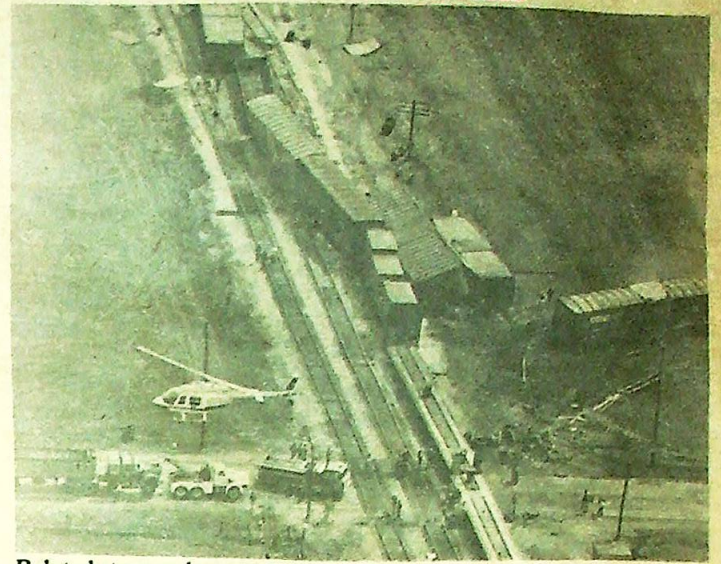
The first, annual *Great American Firehouse Exposition & Muster*, sponsored by Firehouse Magazine, comes to Baltimore, Maryland October 11-14, 1984. The exhibits, featuring more than 150 leading manufacturers and suppliers in the fire service, will be held at the Baltimore Civic Center from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 3-8 p.m. on Thursday, October 11; from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Friday, and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday. The Professional Information Programs, held at the Baltimore Convention Center, will be from 1-5 p.m. both Thursday and Friday. The Sunday, October 14 Muster, will take place at Pier 6 in the Inner Harbor.

A ticket good for all events is available in advance for \$25.00 - a 45% savings. Daily tickets for the exhibits will be available at the door. Tickets for the Professional Information Programs will be sold daily on a space available basis.

To pre-register, send \$25.00 per person with title, name, address and telephone number to Firehouse Expo, 515 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022 or, to pre-register with Mastercard or VISA, call (212) 935-4550. For information about group discounts or other questions, call Susan Brandt, Show Director, at the above number.

There's no time like a good time with America's Bravest!

**Truck hits train**



Related story and more pictures on front page.

**INDIANA CELEBRATES!!**

March 18 was not a typical day for Center Township Arbor. Arbor members, their guests and neighbors, and members from the local church all gathered together to bestow well-deserved recognition to Harriet and David Mikel, who jointly gave 60 years of volunteer work to the Center Township Fire Department. (Harriet has given 25 years on the telephone and radio; David has given 35 years as a volunteer fireman.)

The awarding of the Gleaner's recognition plaque was accompanied by a tribute from

the State Fire Marshall, William Goodwin. Other speakers included the IVFA President Carl Bruns, the secretary Douglas Bechtel and district 4 Chairman Harold L. Price.

Many other officers and fire chiefs were in attendance, also. Charles Schafer, chief of the Center Township Gleaners, served as master of ceremonies.

Delicious refreshments of punch and cake were served. "It was a day to remember," reports Elnora Stickley. "Its fun and fellowship surpassed that of all meetings in the past 60 years!!"



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Pages 3-22 are unavailable.

# District 12

Continued from page 22

there being no other name, Secretary Bogden cast one unanimous vote for James R. Bruner.

Chairman Johnson stated that we need host departments for the new year. After several volunteers, they are as follows:

- Sept. 17, 1984 - Wayne Twp. Vol. Fire Dept. #2
- Nov. 19, 1984 - Danville Vol. Fire Dept.
- Jan. 21, 1985 - Decatur Twp. Dept. #4
- Mar. 18, 1985 - Mooresville Vol. Fire Dept.
- May 20, 1985 - Hazelwood Vol. Fire Dept.
- July 15, 1985 - Brown Twp. (Mooresville)

Chairman Johnson gave a few remarks regarding the Farm Bureau Insurance Award of Excellence. This will be presented annually at the Indiana Volunteer Firemen Convention. All departments are eligible to enter. He also read the rules and gave out applications.

Chairman Johnson gave a few special remarks regarding the Midwest Award that we should come up with several names for this award. A committee of James R. Bruner, Robert Sutton and James A. Bruner will review the applicants.

**Miss Flame Committee** - It was decided we should take another look at this program after a few pros and cons. A motion was made by Rosie Johnson and seconded by James A. Bruner, that we let the 12th District Ladies Auxiliary take this project over and the men will help with the expenses. Motion carried.

It was stated that the State Police can use their Post at 9600 East 21st Street for training on Defensive Driving By Law. This will be a one day class from 9 to 2 p.m. No date has been set. Chairman Johnson stated, as soon as he can make final arrangements everyone will be notified.

Toddy Michl, P.R.W.C. gave a few remarks regarding dues for membership. They will accept \$5.00 membership until September 30. After that dues will be \$7.50. He also stated that there is a bill in legislature where paid firemen will be training volunteers if this academy goes through and wants all of us to help kill this measure.

**2nd Roll Call**

Chief James R. Bruner introduced his host.

Our 50/50 drawing was held. The winner was Helen Michl, who in turn gave her winning back to the district.

**Good Of The Order - None**

There being no further business, motion to adjourn, with refreshments being served by the Host Department at 9:00 p.m.

Charles Bogden  
12th District Secretary

**I.V.F.A. 12th District Meeting Hazelwood Vol. Fire Dept. (Henricks Co.) May 21, 1984**

Meeting called to order by Chairman Don Johnson at 7:35 p.m. with 45 members representing 12 departments. Our pledge to the flag was led by our Sgt.-At-Arms Art Kinney and opening prayer was given by our Chaplain James Bruner.

Introduction of guests as follows: Toddy Michl, P.R.W.C., Miss Amy Robinson, our 12th District Miss Flame.

**Correspondence - None**

**Minutes** of previous meeting were read and accepted.

**Treasurer Report** - Given and accepted.

**Unfinished Business** - Chairman Johnson stated that he was having problems with the State Police regarding the training school to be held June 7th. They are to put on this program and just as soon as things can be worked out he will notify the district.

The father of our Miss Flame was presented with the \$125.00 expense money for Amy Robinson.

**New Business** - Chairman Johnson stated that the State of Indiana wants to build a Fire Academy in Plainfield and wanted the members present to send letters to the I.V.F.A. in ruling against the program. He asked members present if they were getting their paper. Still having problems in mailing. Please give him your correct address.

Chairman Johnson also gave a few remarks regarding our up and coming State Convention, what to expect in many resolutions regarding annual dues, etc.

Toddy Michl gave a report regarding your dues money, what your \$5.00 went for, many classifications. He also gave some good remarks about Jack Ford during the recent General Assembly.

A question was asked about

I.V.F.A. funds and why we are in the red. After a few pros and cons, I believe the members present were given an honest answer.

**2nd Roll Call Good Of The Order -**

Hazelwood will be having a Fish Fry, June 28, 29 and 30.

Next 12th District Meeting will be at Mooresville Vol. Fire Dept. July 16th. This will also be our annual election for district officers.

Clayton Vol. Fire Dept. will be having a Summerfest, June 9th.

Chief Ed Nelson introduced the Host Department firemen and ladies auxiliary.

A training film was presented with refreshment served by the host department. Motion to adjourn at 9:10 p.m.

Charles Bogden  
12th District Secretary

## Rigorous training offered firemen in Decatur County

Reprinted from the Greensburg Daily News, 4-12-84

Firemen are not born, they are made. And a great many of the area's firemen are made in Greensburg at the Decatur County Fire Academy. The Academy, which started this year's session in early December, ends tonight with the certification examinations required under the State Fire Marshal's system of certification.

The Academy has trained approximately 75 percent of Greensburg's firemen, and a large proportion of the county's firefighters. The high level of training offered by the Decatur County Fire Academy, and other training programs in the area have resulted in firefighting capabilities that have improved "three or four hundred percent," according to Greensburg Fireman John Tumilty, one of the Academy's chief instructors.

Tumilty, a captain on the Greensburg Fire Department, Sheridan Bentley, the other Chief

Instructor and Chief of the Letts Volunteer Fire Department, and about a dozen other instructors are responsible for the majority of the firefighting knowledge imparted to their less experienced students.

Hundreds of firemen from neighboring communities such as Shelbyville, Columbus, Conersville, North Vernon, Batesville, Morris, Hartsville, and Oldenburg have attended the academy at one time or another in its six-year history.

Approximately 75 student firefighters of all ages and experience levels from about ten different departments attended this year's session.

Four types of firefighter certification are available from the Academy: Second Class, First Class, and two types of Master Firefighter. A beginning firefighter earns his Second Class certification by attending 100 hours of classes, covering most of the basics of firefighting. More advanced techniques are taught to a firefighter for his or her Second Class certification in 60 hours of class. To become eligible to certify as a First Class Firefighter, a year of fire service and a Second Class rating is required.

Seven types of Master Firefighters are recognized by the State Fire Marshal's office. The areas a Master Firefighter can specialize in are: fire prevention, fire and arson investigation, fire protection engineering technology, fire tactics, aircraft

crash and rescue, instructor, and fire service management. A firefighter must have his second class certification and five years fire service to become eligible to certify for any Master Firefighter category.

The Academy usually consists of classes once or twice a week for approximately four months. A fireman attending the Academy to be Second Class firefighter will have class twice a week, those in First Class or Master's training will attend class once a week. In addition to classroom time, there are all manner of drills and large exercises termed "practice burns."

The class time and drills are designed in accordance with requirements outlined by the State Fire Marshal's office for the certification of each level of firefighter. Each student must pass a test approved by the Fire Marshal's office in order to become certified.

Although state certification is not mandatory by law in Indiana, in many departments, certification is required to become an officer in the department, said Tumilty. According to Tumilty, a long-time veteran of the Greensburg Fire Department, all of Greensburg's full-time firefighters are state certified, most through the Decatur County Fire Academy. In addition to having an extremely well-trained force of firefighters, Tumilty believes that one of the main advantages of the Academy is that many of the

Continued on Page 24


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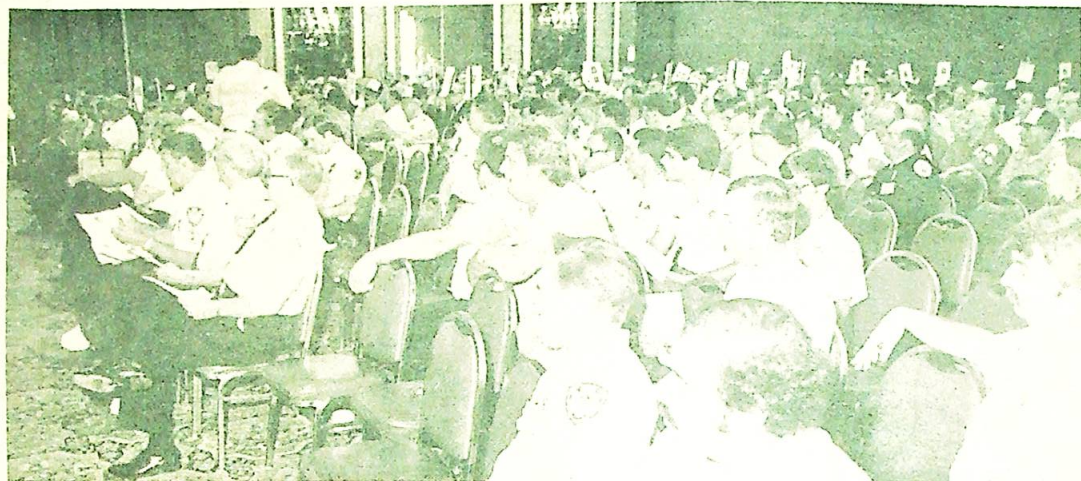
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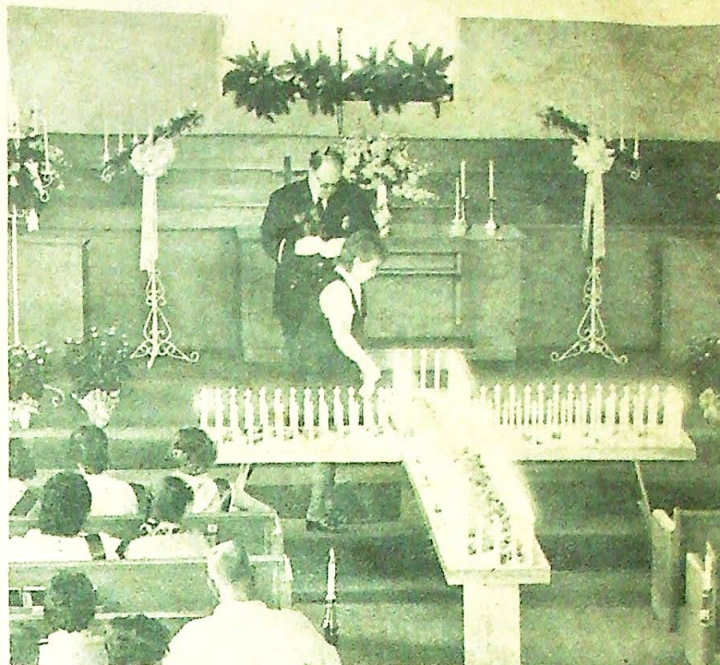
IVFA Officers Friday nite banquet.

### IVFA OFFICERS MEETING



Business meeting

### MEMORIAL SERVICE



Placing of roses. Photo by Lee Missell

## Training Academy

Continued from page 23

area's firemen are trained similarly and are familiar with the same firefighting techniques. This is a great advantage in a rural area like Decatur County where mutual aid between fire departments is a frequent occurrence. The common training received by firefighters from the Decatur County Fire Academy means that firemen from different departments in the area can work together faster and more effectively when the situation demands it.

This co-operation among firemen from different departments is demonstrated and fostered at what is called a practice burn. An abandoned building is set ablaze by firemen. Students from different classes and departments are combined into a single unit to practice various aspects of firefighting on the burning structure. This year the academy burned two buildings whose owners wanted the structures destroyed. An abandoned church in Waynesburg was burned in February, and a farmhouse near Enochsburg was set ablaze in early March. In both instances, students in their respective classes were assigned duties by a fire commander and captains who were picked from the Master class by the Academy instructors.

Students practiced using air masks, hoses, ladders, forcible entry, rescue, techniques and other firefighting procedures during these practice burns. Different tasks were assigned students during the exercise.

For instance, at each burn a team of student firefighters was assigned to protect a structure quite close to the burning building and prevent the nearby structure from catching fire. At Waynesburg, an outhouse was salvaged from the church's flames with nary a scorch. In another type of drill, a small, smoky fire was set inside the

closed up farmhouse in Enochsburg, and students donned air masks to retrieve from inside the smoke filled building a taped-up bundle of old fire hose weighing about 150 pounds, which represented a smoke inhalation victim.

Though the students get wet, tired, and dirty at these drills, they don't seem to mind the time and effort. The result is better fire

protection for Decatur County and its surrounding areas, and safer lives for everyone.

If anyone needs information on starting a school of this type, contact Captain John Tumilty of the Greensburg Fire Department or myself.

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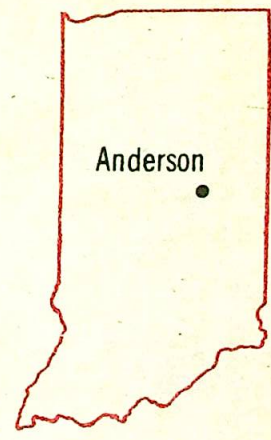
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