

Four years had passed by and Ned Wilson's term as Fire Chief was coming to a close. On December 1, nominations were held for chief, president, vice-president and a new board of directors. Mac Powell was nominated and voted in as fire chief starting January 1, 1994. Dale Ekins



Figure 88 Firemen inspect damage and look for hot spots

was the assistant chief. Kim Beck as president, Kevin Beck as vice-president, Rick Wilson, Stan Lewis, Bret Hutchings and Jim Smith as directors. Mac also added his name and the assistant chief name to the board of directors. Calvin Urry retained his position as secretary. Captains were Bret Hutchings, Woody Berry and Michael Southwick. Lieutenants were Kim Beck, Ken Chamberlain and Doyle Kohler. Fire Marshals were Dale Ekins, and Grant Smith.

Long time fireman Ned Wilson retired from the fire department after serving the city of Lehi for 43 years as a volunteer. Over the years Ned served in all capacities the fire department offered, from secretary-treasurer to fire chief. Ned had been instrumental in making the fire department what it is today. Ned was honored during the summer party in August.

Rod Olsen turned in a letter of resignation on February 2. Rod had a new job and would not be able to put in the time necessary to do a good job. Rob Littlefield, and Chad Smith both resigned from the department because of time restraints. At the same meeting five new firemen were voted onto the department. Clint Carter, Gary Smith, Scott Wilbur, Mike Powell, and Tim Hunt became firemen.

April 28, at four in the morning, persons unknown started the Video and Pizza Arcade on fire. The store was totally engulfed in flames when the fire department arrived. Twenty-six firemen and five pieces of equipment from Lehi and fifteen men and two trucks from the American Fork Fire Department responded and fought the fire for thirteen hours including salvage, overhaul and investigation. No one was arrested for the fire. The buildings on both sides received smoke and heat damage but no fire damage due to the efforts of the fire department.

The Louise Davis house at 260 West 100 South sustains \$25,000 in damage. A fifteen-year old son started the fire on his bed while fantasizing. Firemen contained the blaze in about 30 minutes. The family said they had a dozen cats in the house and requested that we find them. After a few minutes several cats were located and rescued. Kerry Evans found this cat in the smoke filled living room and brought it out. EMT's Rick Howard and Burdette Powell resuscitated the cat. It survived. After an hour of interviewing the boy he finally confessed to starting the fire. Figure 89.



Figure 89 Cat has eight lives left

Dale Ekins was hired as the fire departments first full time employee. Dale's duties would be that of a fire marshal. In October it was proposed in the monthly business meeting that firemen interested in becoming Firefighter One certified should contact the chief. If there was enough interest the department would send people to the classes. Bret Hutchings was the only certified firefighter on the Lehi department.

The fire department responded to another house fire at the Carl Mellor residence on December 4th. The fire caused \$110,000 damage. The cause was an electric stove that was left on and started some cardboard boxes on fire. The department spent nine hours at the scene.

Grant Smith announced his retirement from the fire department on December 31, 1994. Grant started on August 16, 1954 and served continuously for forty years. Grant served in all capacities including the board of directors several times, as assistant chief for four years and chief for twelve years, more years than any other chief. Grant served as the fire marshal for the past five years prior to retirement. Grant was honored at the annual summer party. Figure 90.



Figure 90 Grant Smith

1994 was one of the busiest years for the fire department. Members responded to 162 calls for service. Eighty-six were fires, 15 structures, eleven vehicle fires, two rescues, 33 hazardous condition calls and 16 false alarms. The dollar loss was over one half million dollars. The department volunteered over 2,600 hours. More than 4,400 students were taught fire safety at the schools and at the fire station.

Mike Southwick retired from the fire department after serving for thirty-six years. Mike was assistant chief under Grant Smith and held many other offices while he was a member.

Kim Beck remained president for 1995, Kevin Beck as vice-president, Rick Wilson, Stan Lewis, Bret Hutchings, Jim Smith, Rick Worthen, Mac Powell, and Dale Ekins were directors. Calvin Urry retained his position as secretary.

On January 22, the Lehi Fire Department responded to a trailer house fire at 1150 North 200 West and discovered a body inside the trailer when the fire was extinguished.

Witnesses were awakened by the smell of smoke as early as 2:30 a.m. but went back to bed. The fire was called in at 5:30 a.m. and the department responded to find the trailer fully involved. The owner of the trailer, Gary Ewell was located in the bedroom on the floor. After an extensive investigation the cause was found to be a cigarette that fell in the couch and started the fire. This was Lehi's second recorded death, caused by fire.

On July 5, Mac Powell stepped down as chief and retired from the fire department. Dale Ekins was hired by the city to take over as the new fire chief. Dale appointed Jim Smith as the assistant chief.

Another long time fireman Knollin Haws retired from the fire department. Knollin started on April 16, 1954. Knollin had served in almost every position and committee the fire department offered. Knollin was awarded a plaque at the summer party.

A three-year-old tried to burn down the house playing with a lighter. The Johnson family home, on Whipple Drive was damaged to the sum of \$100,000. The fire started in the basement and had vented through a window as the fire department arrived.

Richard Worthen handed in his letter of resignation on October 4<sup>th</sup>. Rick had been a member of the fire department for nineteen years. Five new firemen were voted onto the department. Arnie Hunt, Roger Peck, Steve Schoonover, Gordon Smith, and Robert Stanley joined the fire department making the total number of firemen 28.

Dale Ekins was chief for 1996 with Kim Beck as assistant chief. Kevin Beck was voted in as president for 1996. Robert Stanley was vice-president. Board of directors were Dale Ekins, Jim Smith, Kim Beck, Scott Wilbur, Calvin Urry, and Mike Powell. Calvin Urry remained the secretary.



Dale organized the department into committees. Each member was assigned to a committee and was responsible to the chairman. The committees were Hazmat, Apparatus, Training, Fire Inspection, Fire Prevention, Equipment and Fire Fighter Safety. Several members of the fire department attended the Utah Fire and Rescue Academy and became certified as Fire Fighter One and Hazmat Awareness.

Jerry Lund, and Harvey Bond were voted onto the department at the monthly business meeting.

On February 16, Duane Shock lost his barn to a fire. He had a dog house next to the barn with a heat lamp in it. The heat lamp started the fire and the barn and contents valued at \$60,000 were destroyed.

A three-year-old boy that was put down for a nap started the mattress on fire while playing with a lighter. The boy ran upstairs and hid. The alert baby sitter found the fire and called 911. The fire was contained to room and contents causing \$15,000 in damage.

There was a fire on Lake Mountain that lasted for several weeks. The fire started on June 24, and lasted to July 7. The Lehi Fire Department responded and assisted with fire crews and equipment. The fire started near Chimney Rock Pass and burned North to the Mendenhall Ranch.

In figure 91, Lehi Fire Crews extinguished the car fire on I-15 MM 272. The car was destroyed in the fire. The fire started from a plugged catalytic converter.



Figure 91

Car fire on I-15

Another fire started when a father teaching his daughter how to cook accidentally turned the burner on and left to run an errand. While he was gone, the daughter heard the smoke detector and discovered the fire; then alerted her mother. Both escaped the fire and called 911. Smoke and fire damage was more than \$50,000.

Fire department personnel respond to the Point of the Mountain to assist crews in finding a plane that went down in a storm. The plane was located on top of the Point of the Mountain. No one survived. Figure 92.

The fire department responded to 227 calls for service a 37% increase over 1995. Over 4,000 children were taught fire safety. Lehi received an ISO rating of five which is good. The last insurance rating was in 1978 which was a five. Stan Lewis announced his retirement from the fire department after serving for 24 years.



Figure 92 Airplane crash at the Point of the Mountain

Kevin Beck stayed in as president for 1997. Robert Stanley was vice-president, and the secretary was Calvin Urry. The board of directors were Dale Ekins, Kim Beck, Jim Smith, Scott Wilbur, Calvin Urry, and Mike Powell. Ricky Evans was voted in as the new fireman.

Chief Ekins reported that the department acquired a surplus air force fuel tanker at no cost to the department. Steve Houghton at Nationwide Trailers cut the truck down and shortened the frame and tank. The cost was about \$30,000. Figure #92 (before) and figure #93 (after).



Figure 93 Air Force fuel truck



Figure 94 Lehi Fire Department tender

The tank was cut down from 5,000 gallons to 3,000 gallons and the necessary lights, radio and siren were added. The truck was painted yellow to match the current department trucks.

Ernie Curwen and Rick Howard were voted onto the department.

A fire in the bedroom at 270 East 1350 North caused \$30,000 damage to the room and contents. The fire started next to an aquarium. The cause of the fire was electrical.

On August 5, the fire department was called out to an early morning fire at the Ed Arnold residence at 2977 North 600 East. Police officers arrived in time to see Ed climbing out a basement window with the fire right behind him. He was claiming that his wife was inside the house. Fire crews entered the house and extinguished the fire and located the victim. The house



Figure 95 Arnold house after the fire



Figure 96 See if you can find it



was heavily damaged by fire and the explosion. Fire investigator, Kerry Evans, talked to the former home owner (Ed) and determined that his story of how the fire started did not match the evidence at the scene. It was determined that Ed and his wife were using heroin several days prior to the fire and she died of an overdose. Ed burned the home trying to hide the evidence of how she died. After an extensive investigation by the fire department the police department and the state fire marshal's office, Ed Arnold was charged and convicted of murder, aggravated arson, and evidence tampering. Figure 95 and 96.

During the year, the fire department sponsors different training activities. In 1997, the fire department and the Utah Fire Rescue Academy trained members in putting out natural gas and propane fire. Using a tree made from pipe and having propane pumped through it the tree made a spectacular fire. Firemen, using a charged hand line, advanced on the fire pushing it back enabling them to turn the supply valve off causing the fire to go out. Everyone went through the training and learned a great deal about propane fires and how best to control the fires. Figure 97.



Figure 97 Firemen put out the propane tree

An attic fire at 34 East 100 North caused an estimated \$10,000 damage to a house belonging to a retired fireman. The fire was believed to be caused by an electrical short. The fire was quickly extinguished.



The fire department responded to 198 calls for service in 1997 a 13% decrease. The decrease is attributed to the reduced number of grass fires. The fire prevention committee taught approximately 6,000 students in the areas of fire safety and school drills. Fire department members continued to attend as much training as their schedules would allow. Each year, members attended hundreds of hours of training. Members also assisted in equipment maintenance, testing hydrants, conducting business, and church inspections as well as the Fourth of July fireworks, parades, and other civic activities.

Leading the department for 1998 was Robert Stanley as president, Mike Powell as vice-president, Tim Hunt, Gordon Smith, Bret Hutchings, and Kevin Beck were directors. Calvin Urry was the secretary.

Candles started a bedroom on fire at the Ken Webb residence West of Lehi on Main Street. The fire caused \$25,000 in damage to the home and contents. The fire was put out quickly but there was severe fire and smoke damage.

Probably the most expensive fire in the fire departments history was at the Micron plant, north of Lehi. Cooling tanks lined with special plastic filters were started on fire by a construction welder using a torch to loosen frozen bricks. The smoke was black and thick as it billowed into the sky. The fire was extinguished after pouring water on it for over thirty minutes. Damage was



Figure 98 Cooling ponds



Figure 99 Cooling ponds after the fire

estimated at \$300,000 to repair the unit. Figure 98 and 99.

On April 1, Mac Powell approached the chief and board of directors about being reinstated on the fire department. On a motion by Karl Zimmerman, and a unanimous vote Mac was reinstated.

On May 18, a two-car accident caused a fire near the gas pumps at the Premium Oil on 300 West State. The driver lost control of the blazer and ran into the truck at the pumps causing an explosion and fire. The fire was quickly extinguished but not before causing \$20,000 in damage. Figure 100.



Figure 100 Fire at Premium oil

Steve Schoonover, Roger Peck, and Gordon Smith resigned from the fire department because of changes in employment. They were replaced by Shyloh Muhlestein, Mark Powell, and Kurt Walker.

On November 9, 1998, the department responded to the Steve Bushman residence for a house fire in the basement. The fire was caused by a drop cord that was left on, near the couch. The fire caused \$35,000 damage. During the early morning, crews were called back to the residence for a second fire in the same room. Apparently a hot ember landed in another couch and started a second fire. The second fire didn't add much to the damage because the room was already gutted.

The day after Christmas the fire crews were called to the Merlin Squires residence for another house fire. The house was unoccupied at the time and was for sale. The fire was caused by a break in the gas supply line to the furnace and ignited by the pilot light. The fire caused

extensive damage to the house. Fire and smoke caused more than \$95,000 in damage.

In 1998 the Lehi Fire Department responded to 246 calls for service. An increase of 22 from 1997. Thirteen hundred and twenty-two children came to the fire station and were taught classes on fire safety. The department also held school fire drills. This affected about 4,500 students. There were 101 business inspections and 519 burn permits. The fire department worked on putting a bid together and ordered a new seventy-five-foot ladder truck.

A new board of directors was voted into office for 1999. Arnie Hunt, Calvin Urry and Kerry Evans would start in the new year. New requirements for membership were discussed in the business meeting. Also, OSHA had new requirements for donning SCBA face masks.

On January 14<sup>th</sup>, fire department crews responded to the Steve Strong residence for a house and garage fire. The fire was started when children put a heat lamp in with the family dog and puppies to keep them warm. The dog knocked the lamp into some straw and started the fire. The fire caused \$100,000 damage.

On Monday January 24, the home of Leo Johnson was rocked by an explosion that destroyed the second floor of the house and sent one man to the hospital with serious burns. Workers were installing new natural gas stoves in the house. One mistake led to another and when one worker went to light the pilot light, the



Figure 101 Gas explosion

explosion occurred. Workers were not aware that one of them left the gas valve open, filling the room with natural gas. Damage to the second floor was estimated at \$75,000. Figure 101.



A three-year-old started his sister's bedroom on fire. When she went to take a shower the brother took a candle off the dresser and lit her bedding on fire. When his sister returned to her room to get ready for school, she discovered the fire. Everyone escaped safely from the inferno. The fire caused \$85,000 in damage with no insurance to help.

This 1974 Chevrolet truck was destroyed by fire on S.R. 68 Mile Marker nine. The driver claims the rear tire blew out and when he stopped he noticed the fire. The truck was engulfed in flames when the first fire truck arrived. Figure 102.



Figure 102 Truck fire SR 68

Yet another fire started by a child burns a master bedroom. The child started his parent's bed on fire then ran upstairs and hid. His older brother discovered the fire, called 911 and then found his brother hiding under a table. They both escaped without injury. Firemen were able to contain the fire to the bedroom and outer portion of the house. Damage was more than \$50,000.

High winds blowing through Lehi caused power lines to arc and short out, causing a large brush fire at the C.T. Jones property in north Lehi. Fire crews from Lehi, American Fork, Highland, and Pleasant Grove battled the blaze for several hours. Firemen evacuated the area and were able to save several houses in the area from fire damage. Figure 103.



Figure 103 Brush fire at the C.T. Jones property