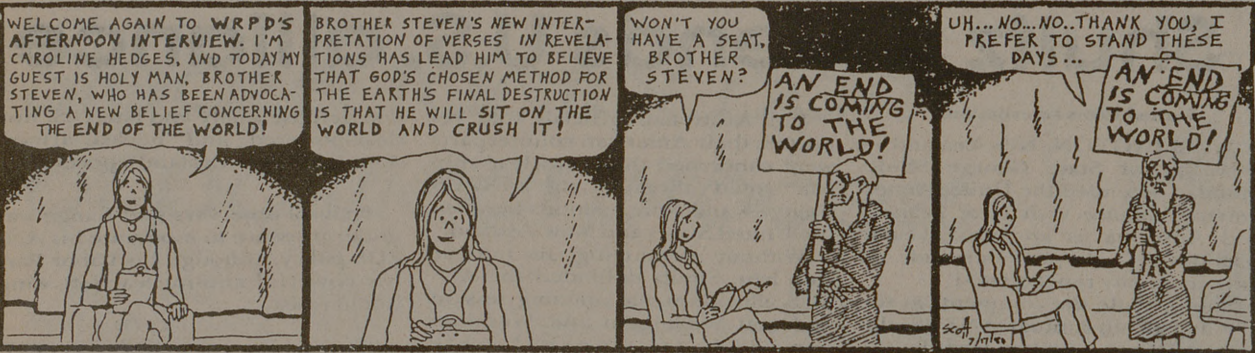


Warped

by Scott McCullar

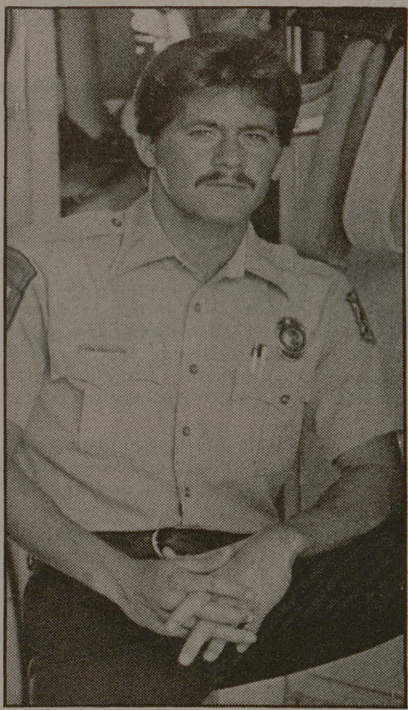
CS school trustee resigns



College Station firefighter likes being public servant

By PAM BARNES Reporter

Firemen are old scruffy men who hang around the fire station waiting for a fire. When the alarm goes off they slide down a pole and race there to chop it up with their axes and douse it with water. If that's what you think, you haven't looked lately. The College Station Fire Department is staffed with men and women of all ages who are proud of their neat appearance in their regulation uniforms. They are public servants who are trained in all methods of fire fighting. There isn't even a pole to slide down.



Firefighter Tim Kinchloe

Over five years ago a young college student at Blinn Junior College also thought that firemen were old. One day he drove past the fire station and saw young men working in the yard so he stopped to ask some questions. He spent the rest of the day there. Today Tim Kinchloe, 25, has moved up from firefighter to driver and hopes to take his lieutenant's test soon. "That's almost a promotion a year," says Kinchloe. He says his age isn't a real problem but that it's sometimes hard to ask for respect from someone who is older than you.

"Instead of telling someone to do something, I ask them," Kinchloe says. "I never ask anyone to do something that I'm not willing to help them do. If I tell someone the floors need mopping and then grab a mop to help them, it's not so bad. You have to earn a person's respect." Kinchloe says he likes being a fireman. "I like helping people," he says. "A fireman is a public servant. We have to be available to the public at all times, for any reason." Each fireman works for 24 hours then he is off for 48. "That's a third of my life," Kinchloe says, admitting that it was hard to get used to working so closely with so many different people. "You've got to work together," Kinchloe says. "I was one of those people who said, 'I did my job and that's it.' That's wrong, it takes teamwork."

patation but Kinchloe says he doesn't think of it that way. "It really makes you feel good when everything goes like the book," Kinchloe says. He says it's frustrating when time goes by and there haven't been any fires or accidents. "It's horrible to say something like that," Kinchloe says, "but it's hard when you don't get to do the job you've been trained for."

Kinchloe's blue eyes look away as he remembers the sad stories of the fire that burned a litter of puppies or the smell of a car accident. He says those experiences stay with him and it's sometimes hard to deal with the disaster and death. "We talk about it," Kinchloe says. "Maybe a firefighter that has been through bad fires before will see it bothering a new fireman. He'll go over and say something and talk it over with him. It really helps to get it out. You can't shoulder it all yourself." His pride shines through as he recalls a story from a few years ago. "We delivered a baby once," Kinchloe says. "We got a call from a woman in labor. When we got there it was too late to transport her so we delivered it there. The mother sends us pictures of the kid every once in a while."

Now that he is a driver he says he misses fighting fires. At a fire the driver takes care of the truck and the hoses and the pumps. With each fire Kinchloe has been to comes a new story. In a quiet voice he tells of the car wreck that left four family members dead or of the house that almost burned because there wasn't a water hydrant near.

He also tells stories of practical jokes or embarrassing experiences that leave other firemen laughing or adding to it.

"Like the time," Kinchloe says, "when the alarm went off in the middle of the night. I jumped out of bed and grabbed the nearest pair of cover-alls. Half-way to the truck I realized the zipper was broken and half the seat of the pants was missing. I had to go to the call like that. I was lucky it wasn't a real fire. I don't know what I'd have done."

By HOLLY ROBINSON Reporter

College Station School Board Trustee Mike Fleming resigned Monday. Board President John Reagor read a letter from Fleming Monday night announcing the resignation. Fleming is taking a job in Corpus Christi. The board will appoint someone to Fleming's position until the next elections — in April.

A group of parents spoke out about the program for gifted and talented students that began last year. Many felt the program, which provides special classes for gifted students, was not being implemented. The board agreed to add a reaffirmation of approval for the five-year plan at the next meeting.

The board approved the continuation of the drug prevention program which uses specially trained dogs to find illegal substances in students' lockers and automobiles. The dogs can find firearms and alcoholic beverages as well as drugs. Using incident reports and input from campus personnel, the administration found that the service reduced the flow of illegal drugs.

Apartment market glutted

Rents 'may not decline

By Leslie Heffner Reporter

If you're waiting until August to sign an apartment lease because you think the prices will decrease, reconsider. Prices may be as low as they will get.

Nancy Ludwig, an adviser at the Off-Campus Housing Center, says apartment complexes cannot afford to drop rates any lower. College Station was glutted with apartments so badly last spring semester that about 1,000 apartments were vacant, she says.

According to the state comptroller's office, Bryan-College Station is not the only area glutted with apartments. "From the staked Plains to the Gulf, from Big Bend to the Piney Woods, apartment occupancy rates are dropping and more complexes are on the way," says the July issue of Fiscal Notes, a publication of the comptroller's office.

Arthur Wright, a research economist at Texas A&M's Real Estate Research Center told the Bryan-College Station Eagle last week that the glut affected Bryan-College Station the worst two years ago. "The market is still pretty soft right now and vacancy rates are about 20 percent during the school year," he said, "but it's better than it was."

Wright agrees with Ludwig's opinion that rental rates are not going to drop because they have already dropped substantially. If anything, Wright told the Eagle, rental rates are expected to rise.

Drew King, leasing agent for Walden Pond Apartments (a complex

curriculum and instruction, mated the cost of the program \$29,519 to \$41,600. Owens said the proposed full-time instructor could reduce the cost to \$20,169 to \$27,675. A grant of \$5,000 for instruments from the Arts Council of Brazos Valley would reduce the cost further.

The board discussed a suggestion to begin the school days an hour earlier — 8:05 for elementary students and 8:10 for secondary students. The extra half hour would lease students earlier for extracurricular activities and prevent students from missing the last period of the day. Assistant Superintendent Donald P. Ney said schedules might be disrupted earlier time. He said some students would need to be picked up at 7 a.m. and some problems with loading might occur, but more was needed to determine the impact. Trustee Joe Templeton said the earlier bus routes would be early for kindergarten and elementary school students.

Vice President Deanna R. Wormuth added that the health education program at the Junior High School had been successful and would be more beneficial in the long run than drug detection dogs.

The board also approved a group employee insurance program that maintains current premiums and coverage for employees, dependents and retirees and increases the basic life insurance from \$5,000 to \$10,000 for each employee.

The board tabled a proposed strings program for grades 6-8 because of budget restrictions.

Dr. Michael Owens, director of

"It's going to get worse before it gets better, but we will see the rental rates stabilize."

Lisa Miinch, a senior major from Orange, says, "I was a freshman and lived in a one bedroom apartment, I paid about the same as now paying for a two bedroom present apartment is newer, better and better than my first one. It cost me \$325 a month."

Ludwig says she knows of a complex that operated at a 50 percent occupancy rate last spring. Wright told the Eagle that local apartment complexes with good management and location still able to reach a 90 to 95 percent occupancy."

According to the comptroller's report, a recent Texas Apartment Association survey of the 25 apartment associations in Texas, disclosed Victoria, Beaumont, Longview, Killeen look for higher occupancy rates. Eight towns expect no change in occupancy rates, while 13 expect a decline.

As for the Bryan-College Station occupancy rates, Ludwig says, "going to get worse before it gets better, but we will see the rental rates stabilize."

The off-campus center, Ludwig says, believes College Station is very much overbuilt.

"The town is built for an industrial setting," she says.

Town investors may know something about the growth of the town,

Ludwig says, but no one else knows what is happening. She says the area just seems to keep expanding.

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