

Dallas Fire and Ambulance begins building new facility

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER
Post Staff

DALLAS - Since moving from Mill St. to Main St. in the early 1950's, the Dallas Borough Fire and Ambulance Company has seen the town grow along with the need for a new fire station. In its 70th year, the company is breaking ground on a new building site at the corner of Center Hill Rd. and Church St.

"It's an exciting time for the fire

company, no doubt," said Brett Slocum, fire chief and building chairman. "We're trying to grow with the community."

R.N. Fitch and Sons Inc. has begun excavation for the building that is estimated to be completed in four to six months. The total project cost is approximately \$400,000 and Carroll Construction of Dallas is overseeing the job. The 7,000 sq. foot building will house a drive-through garage, meeting room, mechanical

room, work room, lounge and offices.

Slocum said the new building will give the company much needed space. The current garage for the three fire trucks, one tanker that holds 5,000 gallons of water and one ambulance totals about 1,200 sq. feet. The new garage is 5,000 sq. feet with six parking bays instead of the current two.

Also, there will be more space to train volunteers. There are 60

fire and ambulance members, though not all are active.

Slocum said he expects the company will receive \$150,000 to \$200,000 from the state as a result of applications submitted to the PA Volunteer Firemen's Loan Fund. He is also evaluating alternative fund raisers to help pay for the building. "We've enjoyed tremendous community support with fund raisers," he said.

The fire company has been planning to build the new fire house since 1977 when it purchased the lot to ensure room for inevitable expansion. "Our long term planning prepared us for the future. This positions us for the year 2000 and beyond," said Slocum, who has been an active member for 20 years.

Slocum said increased traffic on Main St., an impending intersection change at Main St. and Rt. 415 and limited space are the main reasons now is the time to build. "This opens opportunities for us to better serve the community."

Many long-time members are glad to see the company expand. Bob Besecker, active member and past fire chief grew up with the company. His father, James, was the first secretary for the com-

pany and even went to Harrisburg to see the 1927 Mack fire truck being built. The borough still has the old Mack and brings it out for parades.

"I'm obviously very pleased. It's been a long time coming," said

"The pressure of the traffic forced us to do it now."

Bob Besecker
Former fire chief

panies is \$100,000. The company does not plan to purchase any new equipment until the new building is built.

Bob Richardson, fire and ambulance president and active member for 37 years, said demands on the company have increased in recent years. "The technology is changing and requires continuous education. It goes beyond just putting water on a fire," said the life-long resident of the Dallas Borough. He also said the building will provide much needed room for equipment and training.

Last year the fire and ambulance company responded to 163 fire calls and 775 ambulance calls.

The 100 percent volunteer organization is pleased with its birthday present as it takes another step forward embracing technology and growth while holding onto the work ethic and drive of those who fought fires and saved lives before them.

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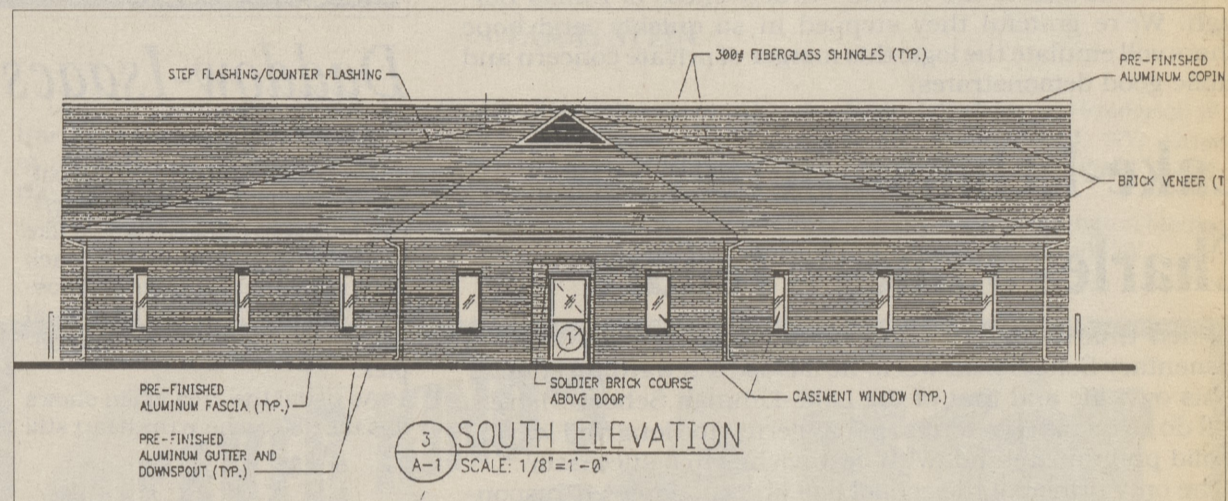
Brett Slocum
Dallas fire chief



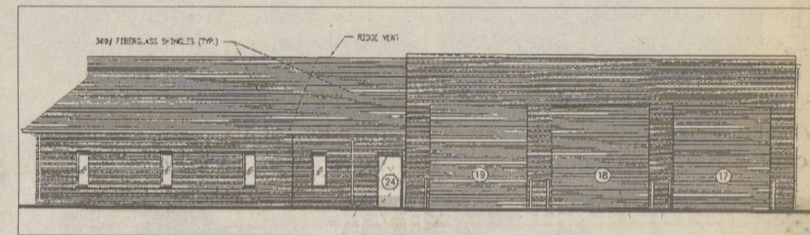
The 1927 Mack firetruck shown at the center of Dallas sometime in the 1940's. The railroad station was on land now owned by the Post Office.



Posing with the 1959 ambulance, from left; unidentified salesman, Dan Richards, Russ Honeywell, Bill Wright, Mrs. Covert, Harriet Thompson, Marie Thevenon, Ray Titus, Bob Block.



Architect's renderings show the front and side of the new building. The front is angled so as not to exceed setbacks from property lines. The side view shows the three drive-through garage bays.



Pot luck dinner at PSU June 7

The Wyoming Valley Women's Network held a pot luck dinner at Penn State University's Wilkes-Barre Campus to honor the presenters for this year's annual Women's Conference.

This year's conference will offer the greatest number of workshops to date, with a total of 67 workshops, being presented by 74 presenters. This year's keynote speaker and presenter is international known writer, lecturer and teacher, Shakti Gawain.

The Women's Network holds the dinner to thank

the presenters for donating their time and expertise, which is what makes the Conference a success as well as an annual event. This being the 13th year.

The Conference will be held June 7, starting at 7:45 a.m. at Penn State Wilkes-Barre Campus, Lehman. Registration fees are \$26, with a \$5 discount to seniors 65 or older, teens under 18 are invited free. Lunch is an option this year at an additional charge of \$6.

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