

. . . volunteer firemen train for long, hard hours at fire school

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too." This is Stoner's second year at fire school. He feels that he learned most about air masks at fire school. Both Stoner and Hagey enjoyed the course in structure fire-fighting the best.

Jay Beaston, Jr., and Steve Bailey belong to the Pioneer Fire Co. Beaston has been a fire fighter for almost a year. He is presently assistant hose director with Pioneer. He feels that fire school is a lot of work but, is at the same time, fun. Bailey has been an active fireman for over 4 years and is currently Assistant Chief.

"I'm for fire school 100%," said Bailey, who is in his second year at fire school. "Equipment and techniques change daily, so it's important to keep on top of things."

When asked why he became a fireman in the first place, Bailey replied with a smile, "Somebody's got to do it." Steve has been trying to implement fire prevention programs in Marietta, particularly with school age children. The response has not been

overwhelmingly successful. "No one wants to take the time or become involved," sighed Bailey. "Lack of funds is a problem."

Lack of Funds
Lack of funds seem to be a problem for the Lancaster County Fire School itself, according to Charlie Welcomer, the director of fire school.

"The attendance at the fire school is good—around 1,300 fireman a year," Welcomer said. "The money needed to finance this program comes from the fire companies. There are no grants or tax money available for this." Charlie also pointed out that the highly qualified instructors at the fire school devote their time and energy without receiving pay.

"It takes a good five years to become an instructor," stated Welcomer, "and their teaching is all volunteer work. A lot of credit must also be given to the Ladies Auxiliary to the County Association, who prepares the meals for the firemen at fire school. All the women in the Auxiliary

are married to firefighters. They put in as much time as the men."

Courses Updated

According to Welcomer, each year time is spent at updating the courses from the previous year. At the annual banquet for the fire school participants, each class and instructor is evaluated. The program included such courses as self-contained masks, ladders, salvage, and overhaul, hose lines, high pressure fog, and many more. Each course is either 3 hours or 6 hours long. Each session is held on a Saturday and Sunday. There are 3 sessions a year—one in July, one in August, and one in October. Occasionally a special event is held at the fire school, such as aircraft fire fighting.

The fire school is open to all companies in Lancaster County, and even surrounding counties who wish to send firemen may do so. The tuition fee is minimal—\$3.00 per Lancaster County fireman and \$5.00 per out of county firemen—but the opportunity to improve fire fighting skills is great.

Charlie Welcomer point-

ed out that the fire school is always trying to improve. The next building scheduled for construction will be the "Confidence Fire Building" in which intense fires can be ignited for training purposes.

The operation of the Lancaster County Fire School is a cooperative

effort on the part of the county fire companies and the fireman's individual families. Charlie Welcomer extended a warm thank you to the Mount Joy and Marietta fire companies for their support of the fire school. The Lancaster County Fire School is in its 33rd year of operation and

it seems certain to continue as the training ground for tomorrow's fire fighters.



Charlie Welcomer



Steve Bailey (left) and Jay Beaston (right) during a break between classes at the Fire School last weekend.



Steve Hagey (left) and Steve Stoner (right) studied the problems of rural fire fighting.

Hershey Park honoring firemen

Hersheypark has set aside this week through August 15 as "PA Firemen's Week."

Throughout that week, firemen and their families will receive a \$1.00 discount off all regular full-price admissions to Hersheypark. To be eligible for the special discount, firemen are required to present their identification cards at Guest Relations, adjacent to the Hersheypark admission gate.

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