

WSFD wins statewide rescue competition

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Winston-Salem Fire Department heavy rescue company took first place in the Six-Man Technical Rescue Competition during the annual N.C. Association of Rescue and EMS Convention, held Aug. 27-29 in Hickory. It was the first year the Fire Department entered the competition.

The Fire Department also won the Chad M. Smith Memorial Spirit Award for the best teamwork, dedication and sportsmanship; and placed third, fourth and fifth in the two-man rescue competition, said Capt. Marcus Draughn of the rescue company.

"The six-man competition is as close to real call as you can get," Draughn said. "Five minutes before you start, they show you the equipment you have available and give you the scenario, so it's like the five minutes of travel you would have out to a call."

"We had two victims in a confined-space, structural-collapse situation. Our six-person team had to get everyone and our equipment into a 36-inch pipe and come out with our victims," Draughn said. "The pipe was 250 feet long and angled up and down. One victim was 100 feet into the pipe and the other was at the end with 1,500 pounds of concrete on his legs. We had to free the guy with the tools we had, stabilized his injuries and get everyone and all our equipment back out within 20 minutes."

"Out of the 12 teams that competed we were the only ones to complete the course in time. We did it in 12 minutes and 34 seconds."

The two-man competition involved rigging ropes to lift a Stokes (stretcher) basket in a horizontal position to the ceiling of the convention hall, and only six points separated the first three teams, Draughn said. "But the award I'm happiest about is the spirit award, which says a lot about our sportsmanship and how we worked among ourselves."

Assistant Fire Chief Tad Byrum said, "We are extremely proud of what our personnel accomplished at the rescue competition. This competition requires both technical rescue skills and physical fitness. The citizens of Winston-Salem should feel safe knowing that these highly trained and skilled personnel are on duty 24/7 to respond to



Submitted Photo
Winston-Salem firefighters Travis Franklin, right, and Christopher Kiestler, talk during the Six-Man Technical Rescue Competition.

real world events."

The six members of the team were Draughn, Engineer Justin Grubbs and Firefighters Travis Franklin, Christopher Kiestler, Mark Podlaski and James Brinkley. They are all assigned to Rescue One, located at Fire Station No. 7 on Arbor Road.

Forsyth Blind Bowlers bring home honors in national competition

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Forsyth Blind Bowlers are getting noticed on the national level.

The group had 19 members compete in the National American Blind Bowling Association Tournament in Rolling Meadows, Illinois.

More than 400 bowlers from across the United States competed with the Forsyth Blind Bowlers. Thirteen members placed in Team, Single and Double events.

In the Team event, the Heavenly Angels team of Howard Patterson, Tonya Patterson, Erica Stewart and Tami Wilson took first place; the Strike Force team of Shaun Cabell, Clayton Sanders, Whatina Sanders and Tanya Wilson took sixth place; and the Rolling Stones team of Renee Brown, Leonard Ellis and Sandy Gaddy took eighth place.

In the Singles event, four members placed in the top 15 - Shaun Cabell, fifth place; Howard Patterson, sixth place; Art Saunders, eighth place; and Calvin Linster, 13th place.

In the Doubles event, the husband-wife duo of Howard and Tonya Patterson placed seventh.

The Forsyth Blind Bowlers includes many employees from Winston-Salem Industries for the Blind, whose supporting foundation, A Brighter Path Foundation, was instrumental in helping the team apply for a grant from the Challenged Athletes Foundation to help with expenses.



Submitted Photo
Members of the Forsyth Blind Bowlers celebrate their performance at the National American Blind Bowling Tournament. Front Row: Whatina Sanders, Erica Stewart, Tanya Wilson and Tonya Patterson. Second Row: Clayton Sanders, Renee Brown and Howard Patterson. Back Row: Tami Wilson, Leonard Ellis, Shaun Cabell, Calvin Linster, and Art Saunders.

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