

Judy Grindstaff Gets Big Promotion

Putting her heart in her back pocket was the first real test Judy (Mrs. Ralph) Grindstaff faced on her new job.

Move over men, another woman has taken over a domain once held primarily by men. This time it's the position of Assistant District Supervisor for the Driver's License Division in the State of North Carolina.

Judy becomes the first female employed in this important position, assuming her new duties in the Asheville headquarters of District J on May 1, a district encompassing 15 counties from Forest City west to Murphy and employing 21 license examiners in the district.

Although it's not unusual now, since World War II, to find women employed as license examiners, the role of the assistant supervisor was always held by males.

Judy Short Grindstaff, native of Kings Mountain, graduated from Kings Mountain High School in 1964 and got her first job-training at age 14 as a sales clerk at Eagles Dime Store. From Eagle's she became a cashier at Winn-Dixie at age 16 and from there went to Margrace Mill where she worked in the Personnel Department from 1964-67. She got her initiation in the driver's license bureau in Gastonia as a Typist II in 1967 and was among a handful of typists promoted in 1973 by the state to positions of driver's license examiners and Judy was transferred to the Shelby office. By April 1976 she had also advanced in rank, to that of sergeant, and in May 1 the assistant district supervisor's position came open and Judy won promotion.

Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Short of Kings Mountain, Judy is married to KM Police Department Ptl. Ralph Grindstaff and they reside on Henry Street in a beautiful home which features some of Judy's family memorabilia and handmade items. The couple has enjoyed decorating their home for the holidays and Judy loves to bake, when she has the time, and fill her cookie jars for company and family. They also enjoy music and bowling as hobbies.

Judy, who has 12 years experience as a driver's license examiner, confirms that it's a big decision and responsibility to issue driver's license. And, she has had to turn down many requests for license renewals, especially from elderly citizens whose vision and hearing are failing.

"It's hard to see a man cry when he must surrender his license to drive a car but decision-making goes along with the job," said Mrs. Grindstaff.

Since moving to Asheville, Judy hasn't given as many oral examinations as she did in the Shelby office. Does this mean that more new drivers are visiting her, or that we're better drivers in this area?

"Not necessarily", said Mrs. Grindstaff, who says she has encountered many poor drivers, both sexes, and that one of her "students" taking a road test hit a car in a parking lot but fortunately she could recall no injuries, either to driver or tester.

In addition to conducting examinations, Mrs. Grindstaff holds interviews and occasionally visits bureau



Checking His License Plate

WOMAN EXAMINER—Judy Grindstaff, the state's only district assistant supervisor in the Driver License Division, checks a license plate before administering a driver's test. The applicant (in car) is Judy's husband, Ptl. Ralph Grindstaff.



And Now It's Time To Relax

RELAXES—Judy Short Grindstaff relaxes in the living room of the comfortable home she shares with her husband, KM Police Department

Ptl. Ralph Grindstaff, on Henry Street. Mrs. Grindstaff combines the role of career woman and homemaker.



Cooking Is A Hobby

PREPARES MEAL—Cooking is a hobby for Judy Grindstaff, who likes to prepare old-fashioned biscuits and other goodies for her family.

throughout the district while also assisting the supervisor. There are six examiners on the staff of J District in Asheville and a "normal work load" is about 500 drivers. So, Judy helps out quite often in administering tests. She supervises the activities of the District Headquarters stations and advises and assists examiners in the sub-district with difficult or unusual problems. When directed, and in the absence of the District Supervisor, she assumes the responsibility of supervising personnel in the District.

Her other duties include advising examiners in District J as to re-examinations, special examinations, or investigation of cases, referring certain cases to examiners for handling and grant extensions, if necessary, as to time for handling. She forwards the information to Division headquarters. Judy also makes special and relief assignments within the District with Supervisor's approval and dispatches back-up units such as cameras, typewriters, orthotators and other essential equipment to District personnel to eliminate delays to the public.

A degree of decision making is involved in all cases wherein a driver's license or learner's permit is issued, says Judy. She must observe each applicant closely to determine if physical or mental deficiencies exist and decide whether to require

medical report completion. She also must decide whether to require a medical report after questioning applicants about health problems, alcohol or drug problems, prior admittances or commitments to institutions because of emotional or mental problems, among other factors. Judy also has to decide if a vehicle is apparently mechanically safe in which to administer driving tests from the applicant's demonstration whether he or she is capable of operating a motor vehicle in a safe manner.

Judy keeps up with all new changes in the motor vehicles laws and legislation by attending special classes conducted by the Institute of Government at Chapel Hill and took four weeks of special schooling before going to work on her present job.

Although Judy's present work takes her nearly 100 miles away from home, she finds it most rewarding and doesn't mind rising early on Monday morning and returning to her desk there. The Grindstaffs are active in Macedonia Baptist Church and Judy is a member of the KM Police Auxiliary and American Legion Auxiliary Unit 155.

Judy Grindstaff's pleasing personality is an asset in her job where she meets hundreds of people from every walk of life. "I really enjoy my work and find it most rewarding," she says.

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Photos

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Section B

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