

Local Fire Department promotes nine

By ROBIN ADAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

Three black men were among the nine city firefighters promoted recently.

Fire Chief Lester Ervin announced that Otis Cooper Jr. and John W. Gist were promoted to platoon supervisor, and C. Jack Hawkins was promoted to fire engineer.

"We were well pleased with the examination process that gave us the basis for those promoted," Ervin said. "They are all outstanding men and based on performance we are expecting great things from them. They possess the necessary skills for those roles they will be assuming."

Gist, 30, has been with the local Fire Department for eight years and has been assigned to serve as a platoon supervisor at Fire Sta-

tion No. 16 on Pope Road. "I'm very excited," Gist said concerning the promotion. "This is something I have been working towards a long time. I am happy to be here and ready to go to work."

A native of Charlotte, Gist received a bachelor's degree from Winston-Salem State University. He and his wife, Vanessa, have a 2-year-old son.

Gist's duties include responsibility for station operations during his shift and serving as the officer in charge at all fire calls unless a higher ranking officer is present.

Cooper, who is assigned to Fire Station No. 5 in Clemmonsville, has the same responsibilities as Gist. A native of Walnut Cove and a 10-year veteran of the department, Cooper graduated with a bachelor's degree from



Capt. Otis Cooper



Cornelius Hawkins



Capt. John Gist

North Carolina Central University. He served as a local public safety officer before joining the Fire Department.

He and his wife, Marilyn, have a 3-year-old daughter and live in Old Town.

Hawkins, 39 and a native of White Plains, N.Y., was promoted to fire engineer and has been assigned to

Station No. 4 on Claremont Avenue.

He has served 16 years in the Fire Department and has a bachelor's degree in business administration from WSSU. In addition to serving at Fire Station No. 12, Hawkins was assigned to the Fire Prevention Bureau.

Toby W. Badgett, Robert

Lee Foster, Larry Dwayne Holloman, Charles V.

Howell and Robert Wayne Stack were also promoted to fire engineer, and Richard W. Ferrell was promoted to platoon supervisor.

The promotions became effective Monday.

Black Business

Minority Trade Fair promotes black firms

By ROBIN ADAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

Minority-owned and operated beauty and barber shops, roofing-services, florists, funeral homes, janitorial firms, media representatives and construction companies will display their wares in the M.C. Benton Convention Center on Wednesday, March 28, from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. at the third annual Triad Minority Business Trade Fair and Luncheon.

The purpose of the fair, said organizer Rip Wilkins, "is to introduce minority-owned companies and businesses to the general public and to give the businesses that participate a chance to advertise their products and services."

The fair had 30 displays the first year and 61 last year. Wilkins said he hopes to top that number this year.

"As the years pass, the fair continues to grow," Wilkins said. One reason for the popularity is that the fair is good for business, he said.

"I'm a minority businessman myself and I got several jobs from people who said they saw me at the fair," Wilkins said. "And I have heard other people who participated say the same thing."

Shirley Gwynn, owner of Gwynn's Flower Arrangements, said the fair helped her make a decision to turn her hobby into a business.

"Most people don't get to see my work, and at the fair they saw what I could do," she said. "I think I got 75 people to call after seeing me at the fair last year."

In addition to the fair, seminars aimed at helping minority-owned businessmen will be held simultaneously. The city and county purchasing departments, R.J. Reynolds Ind., AT&T and The Stroh's Co. will set up information booths to instruct minority vendors how to do business with them.

Seminars will be conducted on "How to Prepare for a Small Business Loan," "Basics in Minority Contracting," "How to Prepare a Proposal for a Simple Bid," "Preparing Yourself for the Future," "Basics of Going Into the Beauty Business," "Business and Personal Insurance Needs," "How to Prepare a Personal or Commercial Financial Statement" and many others.

During the fair, prizes will be given away and a grand prize will be given away between 6-9 p.m.

As a bonus, minority vendors who par-

ticipate in the Trade Fair can sign up for membership in the local Minority Business League, said the group's advisor, attorney James Lassiter.

"The Minority Business League is an idea whose time has come," Lassiter said. "In 1982 we first put together the local Minority Business League, but after one year, it floundered. Now we are attempting to get back together to revive the Minority Business League."

Lassiter said that the organization is needed to provide help and support to the individual minority businesses.

"We exchange ideas, use each other's experiences, pool our capital and provide strength for each other," Lassiter said. "Just as the Chamber of Commerce pulls together the successful businesses in Winston-Salem, that's what we are attempting to do for the minority business community."

Wilkins said he hopes the businesses that participate in the fair will also take advantage of joining the Minority Business League.

"The Trade Fair is a twofold thing," Wilkins said. "It gives people a chance to display their goods and it is an attempt to rebuild the Minority Business League."



'The Amen Corner'

Winston-Salem State University student Kevin Spence portray's Luke in a recent production of James Baldwin's "The Amen Corner." The drama was presented by the WSSU Drama Guild on March 2 and 3 in the Kenneth R. Williams on the WSSU campus, and was directed by Dr. Fred Eady, a professor at the university.

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