



Not Too Common

John F. Holden of Holden Beach grows Celeste figs among the many varieties of fruits and vegetables in his backyard garden. He thought it unusual to see a trio of the fall fruits split open at the same time. "You see one, but not two or three," he said.

## BCC, Fire-Rescue Association Put Together First Fire College

Brunswick County's first fire college will be held Oct. 27 and 28.

Sponsored by the Brunswick County Fire-Rescue Association and Brunswick Community College, the weekend event will give firefighters from across the state access to their choice of ten 12-hour courses. Local, state and national experts will teach the latest techniques in firefighting and fire department management.

Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. The \$15 registration fee payable to the fire-rescue association includes dinner Saturday night. While firefighters can take only one class over the weekend, students are asked to list first, second and third choices for classes. Late registrations will be accepted on site the first day of the school for classes that still have openings.

Registration forms are available from Perry Hall, Brunswick Community College, P.O. Box 30, Supply, NC 28462. Firefighters from industrial brigades or from outside the state must pay a \$15 registration fee to BCC also.

The Brunswick County Fire College will be held at BCC's main campus north of Supply on U.S. 17.

"We've been screaming for a fire college for years," said Keith Sawyer of Tri-Beach VFD, a volunteer involved in the project. "Finally a few people got up the nerve this year to try to get it off the ground."

The association would like to make the fire college an annual

event, targeted mainly at local departments though open to firefighters statewide.

"Some local departments don't have the resources to send their members off to take these classes," said Sawyer. And the limited—about a half-dozen—state-certified instructors who reside within the county are stretched in their ability to offer courses to all local departments.

Members of departments participating in the fire college are being encouraged to wear their uniforms and to display new trucks or other interesting pieces of equipment. They're also being encouraged to bring their families to enjoy the N.C. Festival By The Sea at Holden Beach.

Courses offered by the fire college will include: high level rescue, instructed by E.E. (Chris) Christenbury, Charlotte Fire Department; firefighting in multiple occupancy buildings, Lee Sudia, Whiteville Fire Department; arson detection, Wade Barracato, Fort Bragg; hazardous materials-incident analysis,

Bobby Davis, Charlotte Fire Department; firefighter safety and survival, Jim Hanline, Charlotte Fire Department; incident and fire-ground command, Bladen County Emergency Management Director Mike Lowder; aerial operations, Jimmy Reynolds, Fayetteville Fire Department; basic firefighting I, Gary McNabb, Pleasant Garden Volunteer Fire Department; basic firefighting II, Eddie Garner, Wilmington Fire Department; fire law, Robert L. Ridley, retired Georgia judge, Sloop Point Volunteer Fire Department.

Following on-site registration and opening ceremonies, classes meet from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., with a pig-picking afterward. Classes resume Sunday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Fire service vendors will be on site for visits on beraks and at lunch.

Junior firefighters ages 16 and 17 must have a written letter of authorization from his/her school superintendent or designee in order to participate in the fire college.

## Forest Service Wants Landowners To Fight Fire With Controlled Burning

Brunswick County Forest Ranger Miller Caison and his assistants probably will set a few woods fires this winter. That's right, set fires—but to protect local woodlands from wildfires next spring.

For the third consecutive year, the N.C. Division of Forest Resources is offering a winter program to help private landowners burn prescribed areas and reduce fire hazards. The program runs December through February. "The biggest part of it is hinged on burning according to the specifications in the plan we write," said Caison.

A hazard reduction burn will reduce fire damage to timber in case a wildfire should occur. Also, growth of timber is promoted by the reduction of undesirable species which are in direct competition for nutrients.

Wildlife also benefits from the new growth that comes up following the burn and is used as forage.

Services, which are provided free, consist of training, writing burning plans, plowing fire lines, notification of when suitable weather conditions exist for burning and control of escaped fires.

If the landowner chooses not to do the burning himself, the forest service will contract the job at a flat \$200 fee for up to 40 acres or \$5 per acre for more than 40 acres, Caison said.

The ranger noted that local paper companies handle their own burning. The companies own under half of the county's 415,000 acres of woodlands, according to county tax department information.

Brunswick County has the fourth largest woodland acreage in the state. Caison said the past couple of fire seasons have been light, due to wet spring weather. Last year, 90 fires burned 531 acres.

Caison said nine landowners participated in the hazard reduction burning program in the winter of 1988-89, with burning plans being written and implemented for 570 acres.

He said the response last year was "pretty good," since unusually rainy weather did not allow as much burning as might have been done under ordinary winter condi-

tions.

To participate in the program, landowners should contact the local forest service office and set up an appointment for a ranger to talk with them and look at the area to be burned, Caison said.

The forest service then writes a plan that sets out how the area should be burned. Caison said guidelines are outlined to prevent the burn from getting out of control and to keep smoke from impacting "smoke-sensitive" areas.

After the burning plan is written, the forest service will use its equipment to plow control lines on the property at no charge, Caison noted.

For more information on the landowner hazard reduction burning program, contact Caison at 253-5297.



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