

Wilson Named Shallotte Point Fireman Of Year

It came as no surprise to fellow firefighters when Assistant Chief Johnny Wilson was named the first "fireman of the year" for the Shallotte Point Volunteer Fire Department by Chief Mike Potts.

"There's not a fireman here who doesn't think he doesn't deserve it 100 times over," said Vernon Ward, the department's secretary-treasurer.

Wilson, who is partially disabled, spends a minimum of 50 hours a month on fire department business, estimated Potts. Along with fighting fires, said Potts, Wilson is "chairman of the turkey shoot, which runs every Friday and Saturday night October

through December, he maintains all of our equipment and the building and he's my all-around go-fer."

"He puts in a lot of time, effort and training," concluded Potts.

Wilson, who joined the department several months after moving to the Point community in November 1985, is certified as a Firefighter I. He completed more than 140 hours of training in the process of earning that designation.

While he willingly takes on administrative and maintenance duties, "I joined to be fireman," said Wilson.

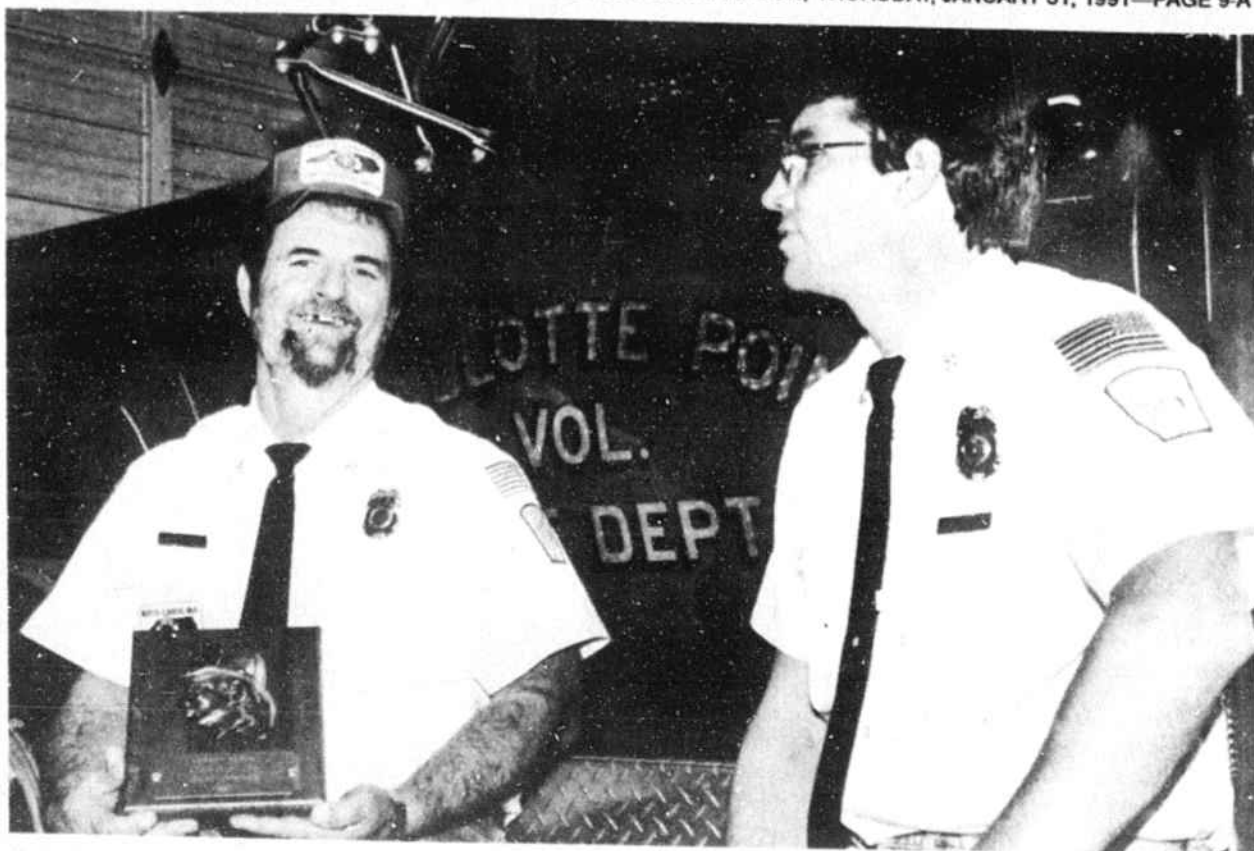
However, his five years of ser-

vice will soon be interrupted for an indefinite period of time.

Wilson and Potts were both injured while helping fight an Aug. 11 boat fire. Potts has already undergone surgery for a ruptured disk.

Wilson, who is 42, hurt both shoulders and his neck. Next Tuesday, he is scheduled to undergo surgery on one shoulder. Doctors have told him to expect recovery to take a minimum of three months, followed by additional surgery to address his other injuries.

That's a price he never expected to pay as a volunteer fireman. But, he said, "It came with the job."



STAFF PHOTO BY SUSAN USHER

ASSISTANT CHIEF JOHNNY WILSON (left) of the Shallotte Point Volunteer Department shows the Fireman of the Year award recently presented by Chief Mike Potts (right).

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