

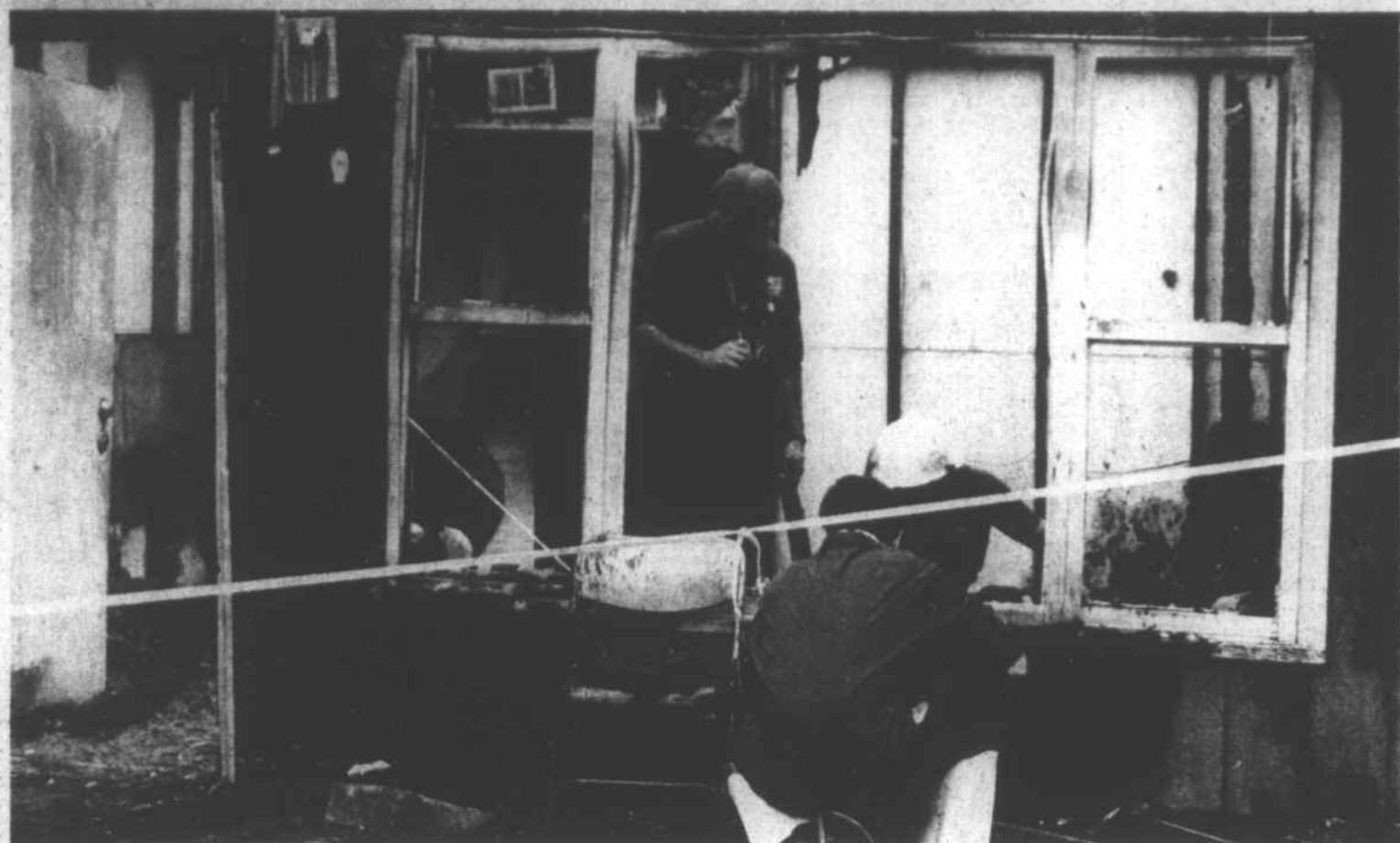
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25 CENTS



An early morning fire last Thursday was the cause of an investigation by area law

enforcement personnel who discovered that arson caused

the demolition of two apartments at Wynn Fork

Court. (Photo by Ken Castelleo)

Arson determined as cause of apartment fire by investigators

By JANE B. WILLIAMS

Local investigators have determined that a fire, which destroyed two apartments, at the Wynn Fork Court Apartment Complex in Hertford early Thursday morning was deliberately set.

The two apartments were part of a four apartment complex which is owned by the Hertford Housing Authority. W.I. (Ben) Wolverton, Jr., Executive Director of the Housing Authority, stated that the complex was valued at approximately \$126,000.00, and that while final reports of damages had not been received by the insurance adjuster, he would estimate the damages at \$63,000.00.

Hertford Police Chief Marshall Merritt stated that the fire began at approximately 12:45 a.m. last Thursday.

According to Merritt an initial investigation was conducted by his department and the Hertford Volunteer Fire Department, and that investigation revealed that the cause of fire was arson.

Upon reaching the conclusion that the fire was not of an accidental nature W.A. Hoggard, III, Special Agent with the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation, and Jerry Boyce, Elizabeth City Fire Marshall, were called in to aid in the completion of the investigation.

Further investigation by the departments determined that the fire was deliberately set.

The apartment in which the fire began was rented by Minnie Lee Brown, who was a patient in Pitt Memorial Hospital in Greenville at the time of the incident.

The investigation determined that the fire started in the vicinity of the front door, burned up through a sun-roof onto the roof of the dwelling and then back down into the apartment.

A suspect was picked-up at approximately 6:00 p.m. on Thursday and interviewed for a considerable period of time by the Hertford Police Department.

According to Merritt at the conclusion of the interview it was established that the suspect had been in the apartment when the fire started. Merritt also stated that the suspect had been burned on the leg during the fire.

The suspect was booked at the police department and taken before a local magistrate where he was released pending further investigation.

Merritt stated that the Hertford Fire Department did an "outstanding job" in saving two of the units in the complex.

Merritt also added his thanks, and that of his department and the fire department to area residents for their hospitality and for a breakfast served them during the initial investigation.

The investigation is continuing through the police department with the cooperation of the SBI and the fire department.

Above average yields predicted for farmers

By JANE B. WILLIAMS

The outlook for farmers in Perquimans County this year doesn't appear to be any better than that of last year, according to Bill Jester, Chairman of the Perquimans County Agricultural Extension Office; but Jester added that "last year was an above average crop year, with fair market prices."

Jester related that the crop outlook for 1984 was good, with many of the county farms producing slightly above average yields in corn, peanuts and cotton.

According to Jester, early corn suffered during the hot weather that was experienced in June, but the heat did not affect most of the county crop which was planted late this year and enjoyed the benefit of the

"wettest and coolest July's on record."

The record-setting weather of July did not work to enhance the peanut crop situation, causing problems with diseases, but overall peanut yields have been above average.

Cotton yields, according to Jester, depend on when the crop was planted. "If the farmer got his cotton planted early, before May 15, he's got an average or better crop," Jester said. "If it was planted after the 15th it won't be very good this year," he said.

Cotton is a relatively new crop in Perquimans County, having made its appearance in the last four years, but Jester stated that he didn't think that cotton was any kind of panacea.

"Cotton offers the opportunity

for rotation, which helps cure some diseases and improve yields in other crops and it possibly may cut financial risks for some farmers. Three crops provide a better crop mix, therefore when one crop is not doing so well the other two may be doing well, or vice-versa," Jester said.

The local extension department has conducted about 30 on farm tests in the county this season, looking at different types of herbicides, disease control, peanuts and soybeans, and different cultural practices. At this point all of the peanut, corn and soybean plots have been picked and Jester stated that they are looking forward to analyzing the data to see if there's any difference in the treatments.

Jester said, "One of the interesting tests that I had was looking at sclerotinia blight in peanuts. The idea was to look at different chemical controls we have available to us and see which one is the best to use."

"This illustrates a function of extension service in the county which aids farmers in evaluating various technologies and helping them to use that technology which will prove the most profitable," Jester said.

Percentage of registered voters in state/county significantly high

By JANE B. WILLIAMS

Voter registration in the state for the November 6 General Election ended on October 8 with a remarkable number of eligible voters registered in North Carolina and Perquimans County.

Statewide estimates indicate that 77 percent of the population that is eligible to vote is registered for the upcoming election.

The 1980 Population Census recorded a total adult (age 18 or over) population of 6,867 in Perquimans County. At the

present time there are 4,988 registered voters in the county, indicating that slight more than 72 percent of the county's adult population is registered to vote.

A break-down on these figures show that there are 3,460 white registered voters; 1,526 black registered voters; and two others.

Among the group comprising the county's voting population are 4,493 registered Democrats; 407 registered Republicans; and 88 others.

According to W.L. (Buddy) Tilley, Chairman of the

Perquimans County Board of Elections, the current number of registered voters in Perquimans County is more than double that of 1961 when he took charge of the local elections board.

In commenting on the upcoming general election, Tilley stated that he wasn't certain as to how one could gauge the expected poll turn-out. "We had a fairly good turn-out in the May 8th Primary, but you never know what to expect, especially in regards to special interest groups," Tilley said.

On the local ballot the only race for a partisan seat is the N.C. Senate Seat for the First District which is currently held by the Honorable Melvin Daniels. Daniels elected to step down after the completion of his current term and has offered his endorsement to Democratic Candidate Marc Basnight.

Basnight, a former member of the North Carolina Board of Highway Commissioners for the First District, faces opposition from Republican Barry McCarty, a professor at Roanoke Bible College.

Other seats being sought in the election are: North Carolina House of Representatives (two seats available) by incumbent Charles Evans and incumbent Vernon James; County Commissioner - District I (Hertford and Belvidere) by incumbent Lester Simpson; County Commissioners - District II (Parkville and Belvidere - two seats) by Wayne Winslow and former County Commissioner Thomas Nixon; Register of Deeds by incumbent Jeanne C. White; and the non-partisan seat of County Soil Conservation Supervisor by incumbent Elmer Lassiter.

Durants Neck firemen purchase new tanker

Firefighters in Durants Neck have recently announced the purchase and arrival of the newest tanker truck in Perquimans County.

Members of the Durants Neck Volunteer Fire Department have worked for the past four years providing that area of the county with fire protection with only one truck. The new tanker, a 1985 Chevrolet, will be the fourth such truck in service in the county.

The truck, which was officially put into service on its day of arrival, October 9; has a 1,500 gallon capacity. It is equipped with a quick dump system, which enables it to dump a full load of water in one and one-half minutes, and can be used as a pumper if needed.

Along with ladders, hoses, axes and other fire fighting equipment the truck will carry, there is also a 2,100 gallon drop tank that gives the tanker, as well as other area tankers, the ability to dump

their water and return for more if needed.

Durants Neck Fire Chief Ray Cullipher, along with other members of the department, have extended an invitation to county residents to visit the station in New Hope on Saturday, November 3, to see the new truck and to enjoy an open house and barbecue supper.

Tickets for the event can be purchased from any member of the Durants Neck Volunteer Fire Department.

In addition to the supper and open house there will be an auction of homemade baked goods and local handcrafts.

Members of the department have expressed their thanks to the members of the community for their support, and ask that you continue to support your area's volunteer fire departments to enable fire protection to continue and improve.

Halloween scenes

Ghosts and goblins will make their annual appearance next Wednesday evening as area children (and probably some grown-ups, too) dress up and go from house to house for trick or treating fun.

Folks throughout the county have put out the welcome sign for the kids with Halloween displays, providing pleasant decorations for the autumn season.

Pictured (left) is a witch adorning the front porch of Mike and Darlene White on Edenton Road Street.

Below is a seasonal scene, near Rob Turner's Store.

On page 11 of this week's edition you'll find some special tips and recipes for the Halloween holiday.

PHOTOS BY
CINDY LEICESTER

