

St. John News
St. John, KS
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199 Combining fire stations is hot topic in St. John

A recent issue of housing the St. John City and Stafford County fire departments in one building has divided some members of the community.

A poll currently running on the sjnewsonline.com edition started with most votes in favor of combining, but late last week a surge in no votes evened the tally and surpassed it in favor of not combining.

"I don't understand it," said St. John fire chief Leonard Getty. "I think combining resources in one place would be a good thing for all of us."

Currently some county turnout gear and other items are housed at the city facility due to space constraints at the county building.

According to Stafford County EMS director Steve Moody once they have the new building constructed they will store all their gear and equipment at the new

location on East Fourth Street.

"It just makes sense to have all your equipment stored at one place," he said.

St. John is currently the only community in Stafford County paying for separate facilities for the city and county firefighters. In most cases volunteers are the same for both the city and county departments.

"My guys are your guys," Moody told St. John city council members. "I want to make sure they have the best equipment possible, and make the best of the resources we have available."

As of Monday, the online poll stood at 69 votes with 50 percent in favor of the move and 49 percent against. The online poll will run through June 25, mail in votes will be counted through June 27.

Rush Co. News
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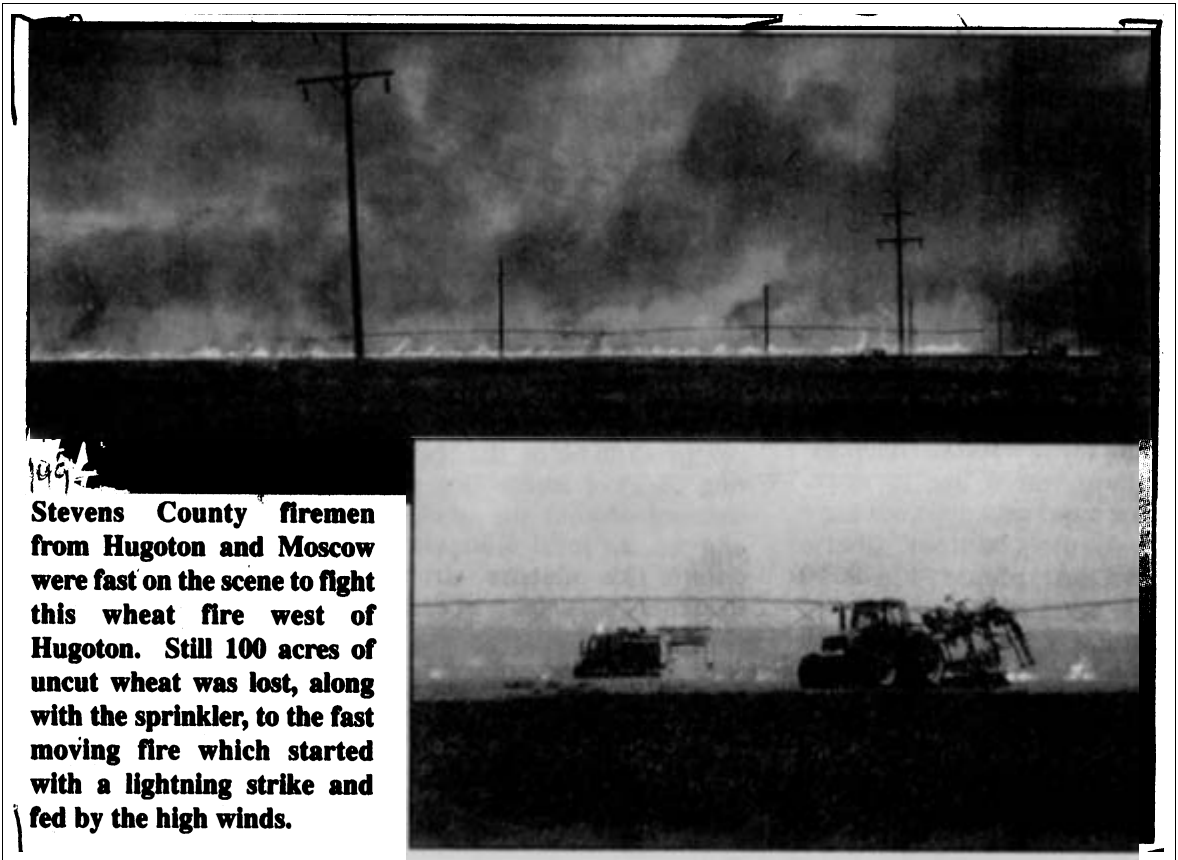
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Members of Rush County Fire District No. 4 cut the ribbon on June 13 at the open house for the new fire station in La Crosse. A hamburger meal was served for approximately 120 people during the event. (photo by Linda Kenyon)

Hugoton
Hermes
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Stevens County firemen from Hugoton and Moscow were fast on the scene to fight this wheat fire west of Hugoton. Still 100 acres of uncut wheat was lost, along with the sprinkler, to the fast moving fire which started with a lightning strike and fed by the high winds.

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199-68 01

Local connections for fatal fire

A weekend fire in Coffey County in southeast Kansas left two adults and two children dead, with a local connection for three of the deaths.

Coffey County firefighters responded at 6:30 a.m. on Saturday, June 19, 2010, to a structure fire in Lebo, KS. Upon arrival, crews found a trailer home completely engulfed in flames; and everyone inside the home was killed.

Authorities have announced that the victims were: 25-year-old

Michael O'Clair; 28-year-old former Hill City resident Heather Super; and her children, 5-year-old Tafani Merrell and 2-year-old Taylynn Super.

Taylynn Super is reportedly the estranged wife of Hill City resident Cale Super and the two-year-old is his son and he also raised the girl. Cale is the son of the late Dave Super and his wife, Treva.

Coffey County authorities reported that firefighters and emergency crews found the victims' bodies in the home after the fire was under control. They were believed to have died of smoke inhalation. The cause of the fire was not reported.

Family friends reported on Monday that a special service for Taylynn Super will be held in Hill City on Thursday evening, with the time and place to be announced throughout the community later this week.

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**Kearney's new
assistant fire
chief elected**

Jim Tacha, Kearney, has recently been elected by his peers as assistant fire chief for the Kearney Volunteer Fire Department. There are two assistant chief positions. Jim has served as captain of the fire department since 2006 and has been on the Kearney Volunteer Fire Department since 2001. There are approximately 65 active members on the department.

Tacha's main responsibilities as assistant chief, away from the fire ground, will be training and personnel issues for the department. His full-time job is as an area supervisor for Casey's General Stores. The Kearney Volunteer Fire Department responds to approximately 225 fire calls and 130 rescue calls per year, and covers an area of 272 square miles.

Tacha is a 1980 graduate of Norton Community High School and is the son of the late Claude and Barbara Tacha, Norton.

Mission Valley
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PRESS RELEASE
From the Wabaunsee County Sheriff's Office

On Wednesday, June 16, 2010, Wabaunsee County Sheriff's Dispatch received a report of a fire 6 miles south of Alma on K-99 Highway at about 4:00 pm. Alma Fire Department was dispatched and first to arrive on scene. They determined that there were six crude oil storage tanks in close proximity to each other, three of which were engulfed in flames when Alma Fire Department and the Wabaunsee County Sheriff's Office arrived. At one point, all six tanks appeared to be ablaze. The fire was completely extinguished by about 6:15 pm. The fire started during a severe thunderstorm and it is believed the blaze was started by a lightning strike.

Mutual Aid was requested from Wabaunsee Township Fire Department, Eskridge Fire Department, City of Wamego Fire Department, and Rural Fire District #7 from Pottawatomie County. Manhattan Fire Department also assisted with two Hazardous Materials Containment Technicians. KDHE and KDOT were also contracted and were on scene.

The tanks are used in the collection and initial processing of crude oil drawn from nearby oil wells owned by Glacier Petroleum. The land is owned by Harry Thowe Trust. Measures were taken to prevent the spread and saturation of any uncontained oil. The total available storage for the six tanks is about sixty thousand dollars. It is undetermined at this point how much crude the tanks actually contained. The investigation is ongoing with local and state agencies participating.