

BEL COURIER 6/29/77

Editorial Comment

'Make it Safe'

It's the Fourth of July. Do you know where your children are?

You'd better, because Belmont's first ever attempt to ban won't stand a chance unless parents keep a strict eye on their children to keep them from breaking the law. Police chief William Singer estimates that only four to six patrolmen will be able to supervise the ban at any one time on the Fourth, making citizen participation critical.

There are a few things to keep in mind, however. While it's important to keep track of one's own children, both Chief Singer and Belmont Fire Chief Richard Weare urge parents not to try to directly intervene with other parents children who choose to break the law. The two fear that such intrusions will lead to confrontations between two sets of parents that would dwarf any fireworks displays put on by the youngsters in the first place

Rather, the two urge Belmont parents to immediately call either the police or Fire Depts. and let them handle all offenders.

As for your own children, there are good reasons for making sure they don't furtively light up their wares on the Fourth: It's illegal and could get them in trouble. Chief Singer notes that juveniles will generally be given a first warning, but if they are caught violating the ban more than once they'll be taken into custody. Grown-up children reliving their past won't be so lucky. They'll be hauled off the first time. So, keep your eyes peeled and have a happy Fourth of July.

—CH

Council Votes Down

Firework Prohibition

BEL COUR. 4/27/77
The city turned down a proposal to ban the sale or use of fireworks in the city for the coming year, Monday night.

The City Council, in its meeting as administrators of the City Fire District, rejected the ban by 4-1, with Mayor Frank Gonzales voting for the ban.

The ban, endorsed by Fire Chief Richard Weare,

was suggested in order to reduce fire dangers and conserve water.

Jack Parks of Belmont criticized the council for its vote. "I see a lack of leadership," he said. "California's faced with a water shortage, and you haven't taken the strong action needed," he commented.

Fireworks Ban Delayed

BEL. COUR. 4/13/77
Action on whether or not to ban the sale and use of fireworks in Belmont next year was delayed until the April 25 Fire District Board of Directors meeting.

The board of directors, actually the city council, meets before the City Council meeting.

Fire Chief Richard Weare requested a moratorium, citing extreme fire danger and the water shortage and pointing out the number of blazes caused by fireworks.

The county and state are both pushing for a moratorium, the chief reported in a letter to the board.

But, because the ban could have a serious affect on fund-raising efforts, directors decided to discuss it more

Fire Engine

Purchase OK

BEL. COUR. 10/19/77
Approval to purchase a new fire engine has been adopted by the Belmont Fire District following an unanimous affirmative roll call at last Wednesday's meeting of the district.

P.E. Van Pelt Inc. of Oakdale, Ca. won the bid for the new 1000 gallon per minute fire engine to be delivered to the district in March or April 1978.

Cost of the new engine will be \$69,528.58.

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In Surprise Reversal

Council Vote Bans Fireworks Permanently

BEL COUR. 5/25/77

The Belmont City Council, in a total turnaround from an earlier decision, voted unanimously Monday night to permanently ban the use or sale of fireworks in Belmont.

The vote was a surprise, as council members pushing for a moratorium on fireworks weren't even sure they had the votes to eliminate them for just this year.

The key turnabout came when Councilor William Hardwick, who along with Councilor Bob Jones had refused to support a one-year ban when it first came to a vote, said, when that vote was being reconsidered, that a permanent ban was more acceptable to him than a temporary one.

"We shouldn't just ban them because there's a water shortage this year. We should ban them permanently if we're going to do it," said Mr. Hardwick. The council quickly voted a fireworks ban into law.

The ban will begin 30 days from Monday night's decision, or June 22.

The vote followed a lengthy discussion, and several pointed comments from the audience. One reason the council, even though a majority favored a ban, had such difficulties passing one was that it hadn't been placed on the agenda, and thus had to be discussed and passed as an urgency ordinance.

All urgency ordinances, by law, require four affirmative votes, and thus Mr. Jones and Mr. Hardwick were able to prevent passage of a ban with their two votes.

Ironically, most of the discussion didn't start until after the initial 3-2 vote. When Walt Worthge asked for a second vote, both Mr. Jones and Mr. Hardwick sharply criticized the proposed ban.

Their main complaints were that the public hadn't been notified in advance and that the measure lacked specific enforcement provisions.

"Most people don't even know what we're discussing, and that's morally wrong," complained Mr. Hardwick. Mr. Jones echoed the criticism.

"This is not a noticed item on the agenda. If this is so serious (as to require an urgency ordinance) then it should have been on the agenda," he suggested.

Jones also sharply criticized the lack of any specific method for enforcing a ban, arguing that by making all use of fireworks illegal, it would encourage youngsters to light their fireworks in areas that are hard for policemen to detect, areas that frequently are prone to more serious fires.

"Other cities are going to be selling fireworks even if we do not," Mr. Jones warned, "and all it takes is one teenager to light his fireworks down in the San Juan Canyon to cause trouble."

ALTERNATIVE CITED

Mr. Jones proposed as an alternative to an outright ban a motion to limit all use of fireworks to one area, such as the Redwood Shores vicinity, where fireworks could be lit under city supervision. The suggestion drew immediate criticism.

"That would totally defeat the purpose," said Walt

Worthge, arguing that once fireworks were legally sold in Belmont, few would actually come down to a limited area. "The person who's going to shoot off a firecracker in the canyon just isn't going to come down to some city supervised area. They just aren't going to do it," he said.

Councilor Pam Ketcham argued that even if the ordinance didn't take into consideration how it was going to be enforced, it would still benefit the community, arguing that if individual parents tried to stop youngsters from igniting fireworks in hazardous areas, they wouldn't get far without legal support.

Turning to Mr. Jones, she said, "I remember you running around last year on the Fourth of July, trying to stop kids from lighting firecrackers. You didn't get very far, because you didn't have the clout."

LEADERSHIP SOUGHT

The deadlock ultimately seemed to be turned by numerous comments from the crowd, almost all of them calling for leadership from the council in preventing the use of fireworks.

"We're looking to you for leadership," said one woman. "For every firework, even if its 'Safe and Sane,' there's a match, and that's going to be a fire hazard. Now is this a year of drought or isn't it?"

Another member of the audience, challenged comments from Mr. Hardwick and Mr. Jones that the public wouldn't comply with the new law. "Do you remember the energy crisis? Everyone turned off their Christmas lights. It was kind of sad, but people rose to the occasion."

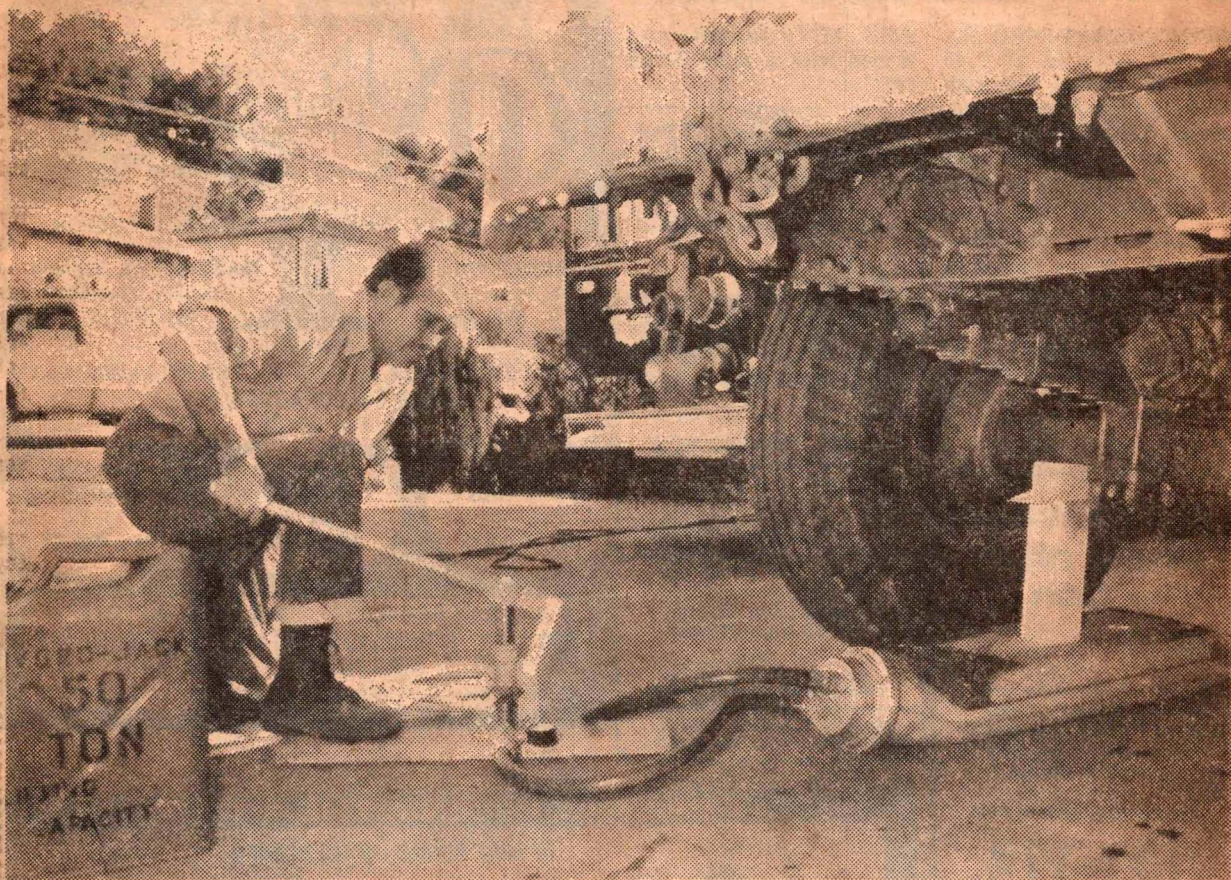
Mr. Hardwick finally seemed persuaded, by audience comments that they would help patrol Belmont, that sufficient support existed for a ban to make it feasible.

When he made his surprise comment to the council that he preferred a permanent ban to a temporary one that would cover just this year, the council quickly went along.

With the necessary four votes gathered and further opposition futile, Mr. Jones also voted in favor of the ban.

The vote was a total reversal of when the Council considered a ban earlier this month. At that time only one member had voted to eliminate fireworks this year, but the vote had drawn heavy criticism.

S.M. TIMES 10/14/77



(Times Photo by Ray Zirkel)

UP SHE GOES

Inventor Bill Holmes shows how his new Hydro-Jack, which he calls the world's most powerful lifting device, works. The six-inch diameter water-filled pillow, with baseboard and lifting block on top of it, is taking a Belmont Fire Protection District pumper truck front wheel off the pavement. The water is from an ordinary garden hose and

pressure inside the pillow is built up with the hand pump. Should the garden hose not be available, the five gallons of water from the can behind him, pumped into the Hydro-Jack, would do the job. Holmes says his invention can be very useful in many kinds of rescue operations.

(OVER)

Slim Rescue 'Pillow' *Lifts Tremendous Load*

By JOHN CURRY

Bill Holmes, a former high-rise rigger who now invents firefighting gadgetry, has come up with another new one called the Hydro-Jack, with which he claims he can raise any man-made object using only a garden hose, or without that, a five-gallon can of water.

It's called the Holmes Life Rescue Pillow. This six-inch wide "pillow" is designed to lift 25 tons, using only a few gallons of water put under pressure by a 1,000-pounds-per-square-inch hand pump.

Several pillows connected in tandem — four would lift 100 tons, for instance — will jack up most man-made objects, from airliners to bridges and highway sections, Holmes says.

He adds he sees it as a potential lifesaver for accident victims pinned under heavy wreckage which couldn't be reached or lifted by conventional jacks, or which would require much more room and a stable surface on which to be anchored.

The Hydro-Jack is an inch thick when empty. That means it could be wedged into a crack to lift a mangled vehicle, push a crushed dashboard away from a seat or move any bent metal away from victims, Holmes says.

Holmes can go on and on about instances where this device might have been useful.

One was the elevated train crash in Chicago early this year in which two cars fell 20 feet to the street below, killing 16 and injuring some 200 in the wreckage.

A Chicago fireman late last year had to have a leg amputated to free him from under a pile of debris on a rooftop. He died an hour later at a hospital.

Incidents like these gave Holmes ideas, and he went to work.

First he obtained a super-strength, man-made fiber and plastic thin-walled fire hose from Germany which has a capacity rating of 450 pounds per square inch. He fashioned his own leak-proof metal collar, with quick-connect water inlet and vent ports. He then married the two parts.

As he had with his power-operated, high-rise rescue cage, Holmes worked closely with the Belmont Fire Protection District, getting suggestions, working space and testing time. One of his tests is routinely lifting one of the district's 25-ton water pumper trucks.

The inventor also has his eye on a lifting demonstration of a BART car, where he sees the Hydro-Jack as particularly useful in a tunnel or subway wreck because of its easy portability as well as for its lifting strength.

"The world's most powerful lifting device" is Holmes' unabashed description of the Hydro-Jack. He has left a number of fire officials with the impression he may be right.

It's light, easy to use and, of special interest to rescue workers using it, safe, Holmes adds.

"Water doesn't compress, so there's no danger of explosion, such as with compressed air," he points out.

Versatility is the Hydro-Jack strong suit, Holmes feels. His advertising and technical sheet proclaims: "For the first time, any fire department pumper truck can perform rescues as far as its fire hoses can reach — Up, over or around all types of debris, blocked streets, fallen buildings and highway pileups."

As Holmes points out, these are all the attributes of a very useful piece of rescue equipment.

Burning Issues in Belmont

BEL. COUR. 6/12/77

By GARY REGO, BELMONT FIRE DEPT.

Fire Prevention is your business, as well as ours. Do not let "trash and junk" accumulate. Clean out attics, basements, closets, garages and any storage areas around the home, office or shop.

Check electrical wiring and appliances.

Replace worn or frayed cords. Do not load too many appliances of any kind on one circuit. Do not string extension cords and wires all over the place and never under rugs, through holes in the walls or through windows or doorways. Use irons and other heating appliances with caution and keep out of the reach of small children.

If you must store explosive or flammable fluids, such as paint thinner, turpentine, etc., store them carefully and always outside your home if possible. Never store gasoline, expect perhaps one gallon for lawn mower and store that in a shed or cabinet outside.

Never use gasoline, benzene, naphtha and similar fluids indoors. If their vapors mix with air in a closed space, they will ignite readily from any type of spark or flame, such as an electric spark from a switch or motor, or a flame from a water heater or furnace.

Rags soaked with oil or turpentine sometimes catch fire by themselves (this is called spontaneous combustion). Therefore, these rags should never be left lying around. They should be placed in a metal container, with a tightly closed cover, similar to an outside garbage can.

FIRE CORNER

A.B.C. These three letters stand for the three most common types of home fires. Knowing what they are and treating them with the proper extinguisher just might make the difference between an overdone steak and a big fire.

Class A fires: These are fueled by ordinary combustibles like wood, clothing and paper. You can put them out with water from a bucket or hose.

Class B fires: Flaming liquids, such as gasoline or oven grease, fall into this category. They require the smothering action provided by dry-chemical.

Class C fires: Electricity, usually short circuited wiring is the cause. Electrical fires must be handled with a non-conductor, such as carbon dioxide.

You can purchase extinguishers "all-purpose" or "A.B.C." by name, which cover all 3 types of fires. These extinguishers are available at many of our Belmont stores (hardware, home-improvement center). Look for U.L. or F.M. seal on extinguisher. Generally, 2 3/4 pound all-purpose extinguisher will serve best. It is portable, easy-to-use, and will effectively handle most home or automobile fires.

Carbon tetrachloride extinguishers are not recommended, and in fact they are outlawed. They produce

toxic gas when the chemical strikes a hot surface. If you do have one, bring it by our Central Station and we will dispose of it.

How to use an extinguisher: Read the instructions when you buy the unit and check them from time to time. Practice so you can quickly dismount it from the wall bracket.

As you approach a fire, keep low to avoid smoke and heat and always leave yourself an escape route. Aim extinguisher directly at the base of the fire; if it's a liquid in a pan, aim for the brim of the pan and work downward. Start at one side of burning liquids and sweep across to other side. If you're using water on a Class A Fire, a spray is more effective than a steady stream. In electrical fires, first try to turn off the current. NEVER USE WATER. A carbon dioxide extinguisher or an ABC type extinguisher are the best to use.

Where to keep an extinguisher? Most home fires start in the living room or kitchen, so if you have only one extinguisher, put it where it's handy to both or in a hallway that is easily accessible to the upstairs, downstairs and the basement.

Keep it out of children's reach, but not completely concealed. You want it in view so you can check it periodically and you want strangers to be able to find it quickly in an emergency.

In a car, don't store an extinguisher in the trunk. It may end up buried under luggage, or you may be unable to open the trunk fast enough. Mount it securely somewhere in the passenger compartment.

Burning Issues in Belmont

BEL. COUR. 8/10/77

By Gary Rego, Belmont Fire Dept.

Fire kills, but fire has its living victims too: those who grieve the loss of loved ones killed by fires, those who manage to get out alive (while others close to them may not have), those who are left homeless or jobless or impoverished because of fire. The victims most poignant to consider are those maimed and disfigured by burn injuries. About half of these victims are children. Their scars, psychological as well as physical, often last a lifetime.

Among the illnesses and injuries that require long hospitalization, few are as traumatic as severe burns. The frightening circumstances of the injury, the long isolation from family, the feeling of helplessness, the continuous pain during recovery, the cosmetic operations that fall far short of expectations, the stigma of disfigurement—all contribute to a deep despondency that impairs recovery.

Often the patient is not the only one to endure psychological wounds. If the victim is a child, parents are likely to feel guilty for what has happened, some parents find it impossible to accept and love a disfigured child. Nurses, who must inflict considerable pain on the patient over long periods of treatment are subject to stress. In many burn care facilities there is a large per-cent turnover in nursing staffs. The average hospital stay for a

burn victim is over three times that of medical and surgical patients. An individual stay and later treatment can add up to \$60,000. or more. (Reducing fire accidents, therefore, should be among the top priorities in the national effort to control health care costs.)

If the severely burned patient is fortunate, he or she will be treated in one of a dozen "burn centers" in the United States. In these special facilities patients receive expert medical and surgical care from the onset, and physical and emotional rehabilitation through the long weeks of recovery.

Our prescription for fire and accidents prevention is good housekeeping in home, garage, yard, shop or office.

It appears that considerably more than half the nations fires are caused by the careless actions of people. 71 per cent of deaths are attributed to man's actions. 9 per cent to products and 20 per cent to defects in buildings. So help, yourself prevent a tragedy, for you and your loved ones, think fire prevention.

You are taking a step in the right direction by installing a fire detection device in your home. It might save your family from tragedy.

Letters To The Editor

Burning Issues

342, CORR. 6/29/77

342, CORR. 6/29/77

'Two Citizens Call for Precautions'

Dear Citizens:

This summer, as you are all aware, is expected to be the worst fire season in many years. This along with the shortage of water makes it imperative that all citizens, young and old, take their part in helping us make this a safe year. We are therefore asking that you take the following precautions:

1. Do not burn in place, unless you have a spark arrester on the chimney. This is required by Section 27.111 of the Fire Code and consist of a heavy wire mesh with an opening no larger than 1/4 in.

2. Keep all combustible within 30 feet away from property lines.

3. Have a garden hose attached, at all times, that will reach all areas of your property.

4. When barbecuing, make sure that your unit is in good repair and do not use it under flammable

vegetation. Use only approved type charcoal lighter fluid and never apply after lighting fire.

If you have any questions or we can be of any help please feel free to call on us at our new business phone number 573-3510.

Sincerely,
William D. Cooper
Fire Marshal

Editor:

The director of the State Department of Forestry early in May said that grass, brush and timber are "rapidly approaching the explosive stage" in terms of fire hazard.

On April 1 of this year the moisture content of foliage in and around Belmont had already dropped to the danger level usually reached in September.

This last winter many wood roofs burst into flames due to chimney sparks. Wood roofs today are much dryer and are ready to burst into flame from the slightest spark. Fireworks this July will endanger everyone in Belmont.

Because of this extreme fire hazard coupled with a critical water shortage, the Homeowners Associations, in conjunction with others in Belmont, along with Fire Chief Weare, strongly recommend to our City Council that the sale and use of all fireworks be banned in Belmont.

The County has also banned the use of all fireworks but San Carlos and San Mateo have yet to do so. The City Council unanimously vote to ban all fireworks in Belmont but pointed out that the ban would only be effective if the city had the cooperation of all parents in Belmont. The police and fire departments cannot by themselves enforce this ban. Only you, your friends and neighbors can do this.

There are many alternatives to fireworks. Belmont is putting on a number of concerts and a Third of July picnic. Other cities in the area put on night fireworks displays. There are many parks and beaches nearby.

Let's have a really safe and sane Fourth. Ban all fireworks and protect your home.

John Stoddard

By WILLIAM COOPER,
BELMONT FIRE MARSHAL

This year most people are worried about fire, outside the home, in fields, brush, etc. However, there could be thought given to fires within the home. This year lives are lost. Some of the questions you could ask yourself are: 1. In case of fire at night, do I have adequate warning to enable the whole family to escape? If you do not have at least one smoke

detector, the answer will probably be NO. Approximately \$35.00 could be the least expensive life insurance possible.

2. Do I have at least two escape routes from each room? Windows are accessible if they are close to the ground or have access to a balcony or escape der.

3. Do we have fire drills with the whole family taking part, and who has the responsibilities?

4. Who will get the baby

from the crib? Who will see that all other children are out?

5. Do we have one place where the whole family meets outside for a head count?

6. If you have house guests have they been told of procedures?

7. Do you have a fire extinguisher? Every home should have at least one extinguisher available near the kitchen.

8. Do you have the walk around habit? Before retiring for the night, especially after a party, walk through each room and see that there are no smoldering cigarettes that have fallen into furniture, all cigarettes in ashtrays are out, no burners on the stove or appliances have been left on.

If you have any questions or need help in planning fire drills or locating smoke detectors, please call us at our new business phone number of 573-3510.

Burning Issues

By GARY REGO, BELMONT FIRE DEPT.

Where there's smoke there's fire. That's the principle behind smoke detectors, the new wave in fire-protection devices for the home. They sound the alarm on smoke, not on fire. And, as it turns out that's good because a smoke detector can warn you sooner after the outbreak of a fire than a heat-triggered alarm can.

A smoke alarm is just about the best form of fire protection you can buy for your family. But before you buy, it pays to learn a little bit about alarms.

Photoelectric alarms contain a lamp and a light sensitive electric eye. The lamp shines a beam of light past, but not on the electric eye. In clear air, the beam of light is invisible, so the electric eye can't see it. But when smoke enters the alarm, it scatters the beam and makes it visible to the electric eye which triggers the alarm.

Ionization alarms work on a different principle. They contain a bit of radio active material that ionizes the air inside the detector, making it conductive to electricity. When smoke enters the alarm, it reduces the conductivity of the air. This triggers an electronic sensing circuit and the alarm sounds off.

Which type is best? It all depends. Photoelectric devices are quicker at detecting slow-smoldering fires, but slower to blow the whistle on flaming fires. They must be plugged into an electrical outlet. This limits flexibility of installation somewhat. And it means the alarm won't work if your house loses electrical power.

Ionization detectors are pretty much the opposite. They are quicker on flaming fires, slower on smoldering fires.

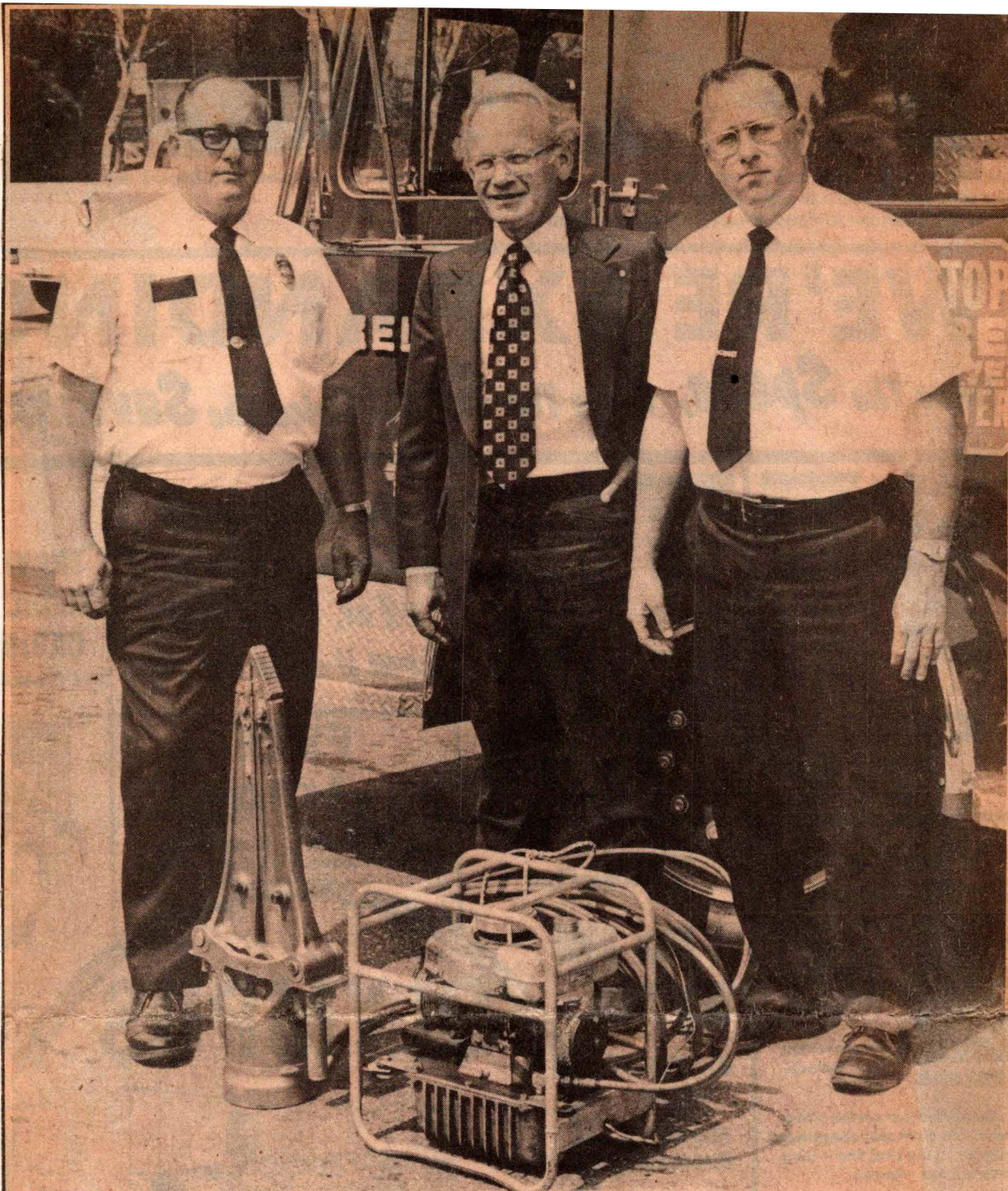
And some run on batteries. This simplifies installation and allows the alarm to work even during a power outage (as long as you keep a fresh battery in the alarm).

So, for the utmost in protection, you'd do well to install a pair of alarms - one of each type. At about \$50 each, such an installation would cost around \$100. That's not a high price to pay for the double protection two alarms will give you.

Installation: The need for a fire alarm is greatest at night, so the best place to put a single alarm is in a hallway near your bedrooms. This puts the alarm where you can hear it. If you decide to use a two alarm system, place the second alarm - a photoelectric type - downstairs if you have a two story house. If yours is all on one floor, place the second alarm near the living area of the house, some distance from the sleeping quarters.

Follow the directions that come with the alarm. Some models are for ceiling mounting, some for wall mounting and some for both. **Do Not** place alarms in corners or dead ends where smoke will take a long time to collect. If your alarm runs on house current, be sure to plug it into an outlet that is always live, not one that's controlled by a switch.

Once your smoke alarm is in place **do not** ignore it. Check it now and then, according to instructions. Some units have test buttons, others require you to test with a puff of tobacco smoke. Detectors will warn you if their batteries are low or their lamps burned out. You can make the most of this fact by keeping spare batteries or bulbs on hand at all time.



BELMONT FIRE CHIEF Richard Weare, Rotary Club President Eric Johnson, and Belmont Fire Dept. Lt. Gary Rego examine the "Jaws of Life," a device which can extricate victims trapped within crushed vehicles.

The Rotary Club is sponsoring a pancake breakfast at Twin Pines Park on Sept. 18 to help Belmont's Fire Dept. buy its own set of jaws.

— Charlie Hall photo

Rotary Club To Spearhead Campaign for 'Jaws of Life'

Bel. Co. R. 9/17/77
A car overturns, trapping a driver within.

Firemen race to the scene, and as the victim screams from within, the question of whether he will live depends entirely on how quickly they can pull him out.

For trapped accident victims hovering on the brink of death, the Belmont Rotary Club was embarked on a program to buy for Belmont the "Jaws of Life," a device which can quickly open cars that have been crushed and get to their often critically injured passengers.

At 60 pounds, the device is in fact a huge pair of metal jaws, which can expand once inserted into a narrow opening of a car, such as a crushed window, and expand quickly, creating a path to the victim. With

a pair of jaws at its disposal, firemen can often reach a victim within minutes of appearing on the scene. Without one, they are frequently too late.

BREAKFAST HELD

The cost of the machine is \$5,600, and to help raise the money for one, Belmont Rotarians have announced their first pancake breakfast in five years. The break-

last, scheduled for Sept. 18 from 8 a.m. to noon at Twin Pines Lodge Building, will serve up pancakes, juice, sausage, and milk or coffee. A \$2 donation for each guest will be asked. The club, which is currently asking food distributors for donations of food, will organize the event and provide all the free labor.

Tickets for the breakfast can be purchased at the city's three fire stations, located at 5th and O'Neill, Ralston and Cipriani, and Ralston and Granada.

It is the first pancake breakfast put on by the Rotary Club since it sponsored one during the campaign to purchase Twin Pines Park, and the breakfast's chairman, Norm Tidd, says the cause is more than worthwhile.

"We're always looking for a good cause," says Tidd, "and when we heard a talk from Gary Rego of the Fire Dept. one Monday, we all got really excited about it."

LECTURES GIVEN

Rego, the Belmont force's Training Officer has been the main instigator behind the drive for the Jaws of Life. Unable to get funds budgeted for one, he took to the lecture circuit, presenting literature and a film to various service groups explaining the need for such a device.

Rego says he expects the fund raising will take almost two years, but he has already opened an account at Bay View Federal Savings to harbor the \$300 in donations he has received thus far.

The need for a Jaws of Life isn't particularly frequent, says Rego, but when it arises it is absolutely critical. "If you don't get to somebody within six minutes (after breathing stops), then that's it. Biologically he's dead."

In the crushed wreckage following a serious accident, normal methods for extricating a victim simply aren't adequate, says Rego, who estimates that such methods as cutting open a vehicle or breaking it apart with tow trucks can take over 20 minutes. By contrast, the Jaws of Life often takes less than three.

TRAUMA MINIMIZED

In addition, the jaws allows firemen to pull out a victim with the least possible trauma to his beleaguered condition. "We can be more selective about where we open the vehicle," notes Rego.

Rego says that most of the demand for the machine has come from the department's rank and file, but he knows from personal experience how valuable it can be. He estimates that he's seen 30 cases during his career where a Jaws of Life could have been used. In several of the cases, Rego is convinced the jaws would have saved lives that were lost.

"I can't tell you how frustrating to hear somebody in there screaming and not be able to do anything. It's something you don't forget," he says.

He is also convinced that the model he hopes the department will ultimately obtain is the best available. "It's the cat's meow in this line," says Rego.

Currently San Carlos has a rescue truck equipped with a pair of jaws, but Rego says that it is no insurance for victims in Belmont. For one thing, the San Carlos truck couldn't reach a Belmont victim nearly as quickly, and for another, Rego feels that having a Jaws of Life in Belmont will provide a safety valve should the San Carlos apparatus be in use.

The Rotary breakfast represents the biggest step forward thus far in the quest for the machine, but Rego won't stop there. He says he will continue approaching service clubs and organizations until he meets his goal.

Burning Issues in Belmont

BEL. COUR. 8/24/77

By GARY REGO, BELMONT FIRE DEPT.

In case of fire, time is precious!

Immediate action is necessary to avoid being trapped or overcome by fire, gases, smoke or heat. Your family's safety can depend heavily on your plans for fire escape. Time can be precious...plan Now...rehearse escape procedures now!

Night-time fires are worst. How to plan escape from bedroom usually requires the most thought. After you read this article, go to each bedroom. Find to Escapes routes from each room. Figure that fire may block one route.

Make these fire checks each night before retiring.:

1. Check ashtrays for smoldering cigarettes or other combustibles.
2. Check portable heaters. Are they turned off or operating properly and located away from combustibles...not blocking exits?
3. Check stoves to be sure burners are off or properly set for the night.
4. Check that bedroom doors are shut.
5. Test your smoke detector.

If, during the night, fire should strike:

Use a prearranged signal to warn all those in the house. Use a police whistle, compressed gas horn or similar devices if you do not have a smoke detector.

Instruct your family to use your prearranged escape plan. Call the Fire Department from the street alarm box or neighbor's telephone.

Do not re-enter the home to save valuables or extinguish the fire.

Now suppose that it is 3 a.m., everyone's asleep, and there is a fire. It will certainly take a moment or two before you can think quickly. But force yourself to react according to plan...your plan for fire survival.

Doors may be your salvation. The natural reaction is to leap out of bed, fling open the door to see what's wrong. But—don't!

Check for smoke seepage around door cracks. Feel the inside door surface...if it is hot, do not open it. Use your alternate escape route. If the door seems cool, cautiously open it with your body braced solidly against it. While one hand is on the knob hold the other hand over the door opening to detect any heat. Keep your head to one side to avoid inhaling any blast or intruding heated air. If it's safe, proceed but remember to close all doors behind you.

If trapped...slam the door. Seal up cracks around the door. Use a sheet, clothing or whatever is handy. This door can hold back killing heat and smoke.

Windows normally offer the best alternate escape: are they low enough to get through? And can screens or storm windows be quickly opened from inside? Windows opening onto porches or garage roofs often offer the best

emergency escape route. In some cases an emergency escape ladder may have to be provided if an adult is physically able to use one.

If trapped...hang out a sheet to signal rescuers. Open window slightly from top and bottom. This lets in some fresh air and lets out bad air. If conditions become too severe, straddle the window ledge (wrap your legs in a blanket or rug for heat protection). Then hold on as long as you can stand it.

Planning your fire escape is not just a good idea...it's the duty and responsibility of every householder.

Residents, Fire Chief Pleased Fireworks Ban: A Surprising Success

Bel. Corr. 7/6/77

Contrary to the pessimistic predictions of most observers, Belmont's first ever fireworks ban was a surprising success, according to a spot check of fire officials and residents around the area.

"Fantastic," exclaimed Belmont Fire Chief Richard Weave of the ban, calling the past weekend the "quietest Fourth of July in my life."

Weave said his department had to respond only to seven fire calls on Monday, compared with 18 the year before. Six of the fires were grass fires, most of them insignificant, and of those the cause is undetermined in two cases.

The only major fire yesterday, according to Weave, came when an angry youth put a smoke bomb underneath the house of a neighbor on Ruth Ave. Unfortunately, the bomb set fire to the curtains, causing a \$1,600 to \$1,800

blaze. The youth was detained at Hillcrest Juvenile Hall.

All told, Weave said his department had to give out only three warning citations to violators of the ban, although he noted that the fire department's phone was ringing almost constantly with complaints of individual transgressions.

Around the town, residents echoed Weave's enthusiastic appraisal of the ban. Chuck Scholz, who lives on Hallmark Dr., said he saw or heard very few fireworks. "It was the least we've seen since we've lived here, and we've been here 16 years," said Scholz, who called the ban "a good idea."

Judy Nowag, who lives on San Juan Blvd., said she heard only one cherry bomb in her area, while Judy Collins from Sterling Downs said she only heard young children with cap guns.

Residents from other parts of the community were similarly pleased with the ban's success. City Clerk Jim McGloughlin, who lives in the Plateau-Skymont area called the Fourth a very quiet day. I only heard one or two pops." City Councilwoman Pam Ketcham, who lives in the Central area, called the number of firecrackers she heard "nothing like we're used to."

There were, to be sure, a few dissidents. One citizen said he saw a large number of illegal fireworks being lit up in a fire hazard area in the hills, while Judy Weinrich, who lives in the Central area, said she didn't see much improvement over previous years.

"I was still awake at 1 a.m.," she complained. She added that she and her family had to endure a lengthy and unsolicited display of M-80's. Mrs. Weinrich also complained that police surveillance in her area was scant.

"This has been going on three days. I didn't see any police the whole time," she said.

But on the whole, the predominant reaction was one of pleasure and surprise.

Several observers had different explanations for the ban's success. Ms. Ketcham felt that widespread citizen participation, especially by the city's homeowners associations, made the key difference.

"The homeowners association really put out," she said. She also praised Belmont Fire Marshall William Cooper for alerting the community about the ban.

Chief Weave credited a large-scale public information effort with holding down the number of firework related blazes.

"We put out a lot of literature, flyers in the post office and all the shopping centers; we talked to lots of people; and in the Cipriani Homeowners Association area, we went from door to door," he noted. In addition, the fire department had sent trucks through the city in the week before the Fourth to warn citizens that fireworks were now illegal.

But probably the biggest factor, suggested Judy Nowag, was that the decreased visibility of fireworks stands simply reduced the incendiary urges of Belmont's youngsters.

Admitting she was surprised by the low number of firecrackers she heard, Ms. Nowag said "Just by not having stands on the corners was a big help. It reduced the consciousness among the kids. They weren't scraping together every nickel and dime they had to buy them."