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THE CARLSLE MERCURY

Keeping You In Touch — Our Community Commitment

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Quick action makes difference; gas leak checked with bedsheet

By Josh Shepherd
The Carlisle Mercury

CARLSLE, Feb. 23 — When Carlisle Assistant Fire Chief Tommy Crawford responded to a gas leak on East Main Street, he thought it would be routine.

"At first I thought the situation would be a routine repair until I arrived at the scene," Crawford said.

The call turned out to be a much more immediate emergency.

A 101-year-old Carlisle man, Graves Stephenson, who suffered an apparent heart attack while driving, collided into two parked cars and broke off the main valve to a home gas line.

Crawford said he received the call for an apparent gas spill on East Main Street, but when he and Police Chief Allen Earlywine arrived at the scene, they found an ambulance outside and three cars wrecked in the driveway of the home of John and Blanche Yagg.

As Earlywine blocked traffic from the scene of the emergency, Crawford discovered Graves Stephenson was still present in his vehicle.

"When I saw the man

(Stephenson) in the car, the situation turned different, quick," Crawford said.

Stephenson was in danger from the ruptured gas valve that Crawford feared might ignite.

At first, Crawford tried to crawl beneath the cars. But there was not enough room to reach the valve underneath, so Crawford crawled on top of the cars and using an ambulance sheet, temporarily plugged the line while ambulance personnel whisked Stephenson out of his car and departed for the hospital.

"During this time of the season, the gas is cold coming out of the pipe if I had not used the sheet it would have frozen my hand. Luckily there was just enough room between the cars to reach the line," Crawford said.

Nicholas County Fire Chief Mark Hughes removed wrecked vehicles so that city personnel, Gayle Vanhook and Darrell Faulconer, and Crawford were able to plug the leak with a wooden stake and by pinching the line off to allow for normal repair.

Crawford said there was no danger of the line exploding.

"The leak was out doors. If the gas had ignited, it would not have caused an explosion. If it had been in a confined space, then an explosion is very possible, but not outdoors," Crawford said.

However, he said the entire valve had been knocked off in the accident, thus about 22 pounds of pressure was being pushed through the pipe.

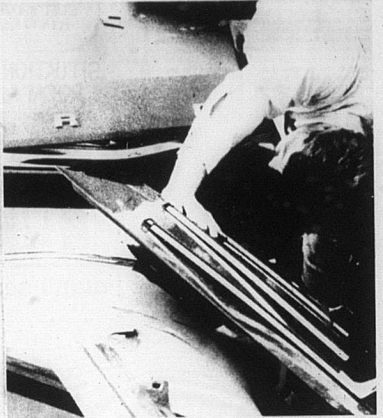
If the gas had ignited, Crawford said it would have produced a column of fire about 50-60 feet in the air.

Crawford said handling the situation was not a matter of training, it was just reacting to the emergency.

"There's no training that can prepare you for this situation. You just see the thing and you do what you have to do," Crawford said.

Stephenson died that day at Nicholas County Hospital of an apparent heart attack, according to county coroner Taylor Mathers.

At press time, funeral services were planned for Feb. 28 at 2 p.m. at the Carlisle Christian Church. Burial will be in Carlisle Cemetery.



Carlisle Assistant Fire Chief Tommy Crawford struggles to plug a gas line after a meter was knocked off by an automobile. Crawford had to work his way between three automobiles to get to the leak.

Organizers seek to bring tourism dollars to county

By Jeff Spurling
The Carlisle Mercury

CARLSLE, Feb. 27 — Gladys Shroat, who is interested in developing tourism in Nicholas County, described the Carlisle area as a package that needs to be opened.

"Right now we have a big package in Carlisle we've never opened. It's filled with charm, beauty and history. We have to find a way to open it," Shroat said.

She made her remarks to a group of representatives from various community organizations who met at the restored Carlisle Depot.

Shroat and Julie Metzger, pastor of the First Christian

Church of Carlisle, told those present that they want a person from each group represented to help form a committee to develop a tourism package for the community.

"It's just a beginning," Metzger said. "I suppose such conversations have gone on for years. It's time to formulate a strategy."

Metzger pointed to the large amount of money spent on travel in Lexington each year and to the fact that Carlisle should be able to attract a percentage of that.

Metzger's figures indicate that \$72 million was spent for travel in 1988 in Lexington. Shroat said the community

has many resources it can develop into tourist attractions such as old buildings.

"It is really impressive what we have to offer. Tourism is popular in a lot of towns. Our task is to devise a means to attract tourists," Shroat said.

At the meeting, Shroat and Metzger passed out a list of ideas that could be developed locally.

Their suggestions include a visitor's center, walking tours of historic buildings in Carlisle and downtown beautification projects.

"The beginning point is to inventory points of interest. We already have a lot of that

information," Shroat said.

Shroat said that the community should develop its tourism trade around events and things like historic attractions.

The publicity came in turn, Duke said. She said that Washington's Frontier Christmas originally started as a reception for those who donated to a restoration project.

The program was so well attended that it picked up coverage in the Cincinnati press. Since that time, Washington has received coverage in the New York Times and a publication put out by the Ford Motor Company. Washington was also featured in a

magazine called Back Home in Kentucky.

"The more friends you can make to tell about you, the better off you are," Duke said.

She advised those at the meeting that the way to get things to ask "Finances are the hard part of the whole thing. Don't hesitate to ask for what you need. If they say 'that's great,' if they say 'no,' that's all right, too," Duke said.

Duke recommended the following steps to begin developing tourism trade locally.

"Develop points of interest along Historic Highway 68. Seek funding from the Continued on Page 3

Longtime lawyer, civic leader Joe Frank Conley dies at 83

CARLSLE, Feb. 21 — Joseph Frank Conley, 83, Nicholas County Master Commissioner and father of Nicholas County Attorney Joseph (Doc) H. Conley, died Wednesday, February 21, after a short illness, at Good Samaritan Hospital in Lexington.

Mr. Conley, from a family of lawyers, was a 1924 graduate of Carlisle High School and the University of Kentucky.

After working for the Federal General Accounting Office in Washington D.C., and 18 years for several years, Mr. Conley returned

to Carlisle in 1952. He was Master Commissioner of Nicholas County for almost 40 years and a member of the Kentucky Bar Association for over 50 years.

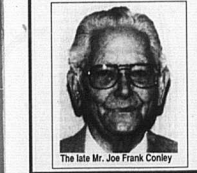
He returned to Carlisle at the death of his father, William Conley, in 1952, to take over the Conley Law Practice.

Both of his brothers, Col. William H. Conley, El Paso, TX and J. Patrick Conley, Tallahassee, FL, also practiced law in Nicholas County.

He and his son, Joseph H. Conley, practiced together in the firm of Conley and Conley attorneys from 1966 until his death.

His granddaughter Kathryn (Koy) G. Conley was admitted to the Kentucky Bar in November and is a Law Clerk with United States District Judge Eugene Siler in London, KY.

He was active in civic and church affairs throughout the years, among them president of the Carlisle Rotary Club, treasurer of Nicholas County Library Board, Fourth Degree Knight of Columbus, charter



The late Mr. Joe Frank Conley

Water line plans OK'd

SHARPSBURG — Engineering plans have been approved for a \$1.5 million waterline extension from Sharpsburg into Nicholas and Bath counties.

The project will provide water service to about 150 new customers on 24 miles of new waterlines.

A 100,000-gallon storage tank will be constructed in Nicholas County at the intersection of Route 26 and Weststone Road.

Sharpsburg has negotiated a contract with the city of Carlisle for a maximum 100,000 gallons of water per day.

Sharpsburg currently receives its water from the Bath County Water District. The water district is still working to obtain right-of-way easements from property owners for waterline installation along the proposed lines.

About 25 easements will be required in Bath County and 90 in Nicholas County.

Sharpsburg Water District officials said all easements must be signed before construction, planned for this summer, can begin.

High school gets spotlight on TV

CARLSLE, Feb. 28 — Nicholas County High School is scheduled to be featured in a multi-state educational broadcast.

The program, called "School of the Day" will be aired Feb. 28 at 1:30 p.m. on KETA's Star Channel distance learning course.

Nicholas County High is one of the schools from 18 states that receive the "INSIDE" program.

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