

# Broomfield Has Special Fire Rescue Unit

1978

Broomfield's station number 2 of the West Adams Fire Protection District counts a unique vehicle among its working fleet—a rescue unit designed to assist downed firefighters and offer first aid to other victims at the scene until the arrival of an ambulance or helicopter.

The concept of a compact, self contained mobile rescue unit was the outcome of a tragedy. When 57-year-old Sherman Reed died of a heart attack while fighting a fire in 1965, fellow firefighters vowed to prevent a reoccurrence of such incidents. Reed's death was particularly hardhitting. He was fire marshall of the West Adams County Fire District and was a Broomfield resident.

Reed's two sons, Ralph and Jim, felt that if their father had had immediate attention he would not have succumbed to the attack. (Reed died in the ambulance on the way to Community Hospital in Boulder.)

Following his father's death, Ralph established the Sherman Reed Memorial Fund and donated \$1000 as an initial sum to pay for a rescue truck. The West Adams County Fire Protection District Board was approached regarding the purchase of a truck. Board members said that if the volunteers could raise enough money to buy equipment for the unit, the District would purchase the truck.



From inside Rescue Unit One Burt Brewer, designer-builder, grins as he describes equipment.

During the following year volunteers and their families held bingo parties, raffles and sponsored other fund raising activities. In all, \$3100 was raised. That sum, plus the \$1000 in the memorial fund was enough to purchase the many pieces

of expensive equipment to be carried by the rescue unit. But, exactly how was the truck to be outfitted?

Lieutenant Burt Brewer, then a volunteer at station two, recalls that he spent hours drawing up plans for the unit. In fact, the plans

took three weeks to complete, he says. The designing and building took even more time.

"Rescue One carries just about any rescue equipment you can get," Brewer says. "We have all types of extrication equipment including saws, hydraulic jaws (to pry open doors), cutting torches, air chisels, rope, chains, flood lights and other pieces."

Rescue One also contains a variety of first aid paraphernalia including medical supplies, oxygen, stretchers, splints and water rescue equipment.

Brewer says that the rescue unit responds to all major fires, standing by in the event a fireman or fire victim needs prompt assistance. The unit does not transport the victims. Aid is administered while either a ground or air ambulance is called if needed.

"I'd guess that the unit has been used about two dozen times since it was put into service," Brewer says. "Now there's another rescue truck in the district, but for years ours was the only one working the entire area."

West Adams County Fire Protection District has Indiana St. as its boundary on the west, Highway 7 on the north, the Platte River on the east and 96th Ave. on the south.

"She's getting a little elderly, but she's in good shape," Brewer says of Rescue One. "When you have a big fire to put out it's good to know she's right there on the job."