



Up and running New Saxon Station on Thompson Road setting new path in county

By John Clayton
Editor

Laurens County's newest fire station is open for business.

The "Saxon Station" on Thompson Road in the Fountain Inn countryside officially opened on July 1, staffed around the clock with two professional firefighters cross-trained as emergency-medical technicians (EMTs).

"This is the first step of a proactive outlook for the county," said Laurens County Fire Services Deputy Director Kurt Thackston.

The Saxon Station, which is named after a member of the family that sold the county the land where the station now sits, has been described as a "pilot program" that could be implemented in stations across the county if it is successful. The program calls for six full-time firefighter-EMTs to staff the department along with volunteers.

Laurens County Fire Services Director Greg Lindley outlined the program to county council at a November meeting, saying the cost of staffing the new facility would be about \$220,000 annually. That expense is covered with savings from a now-canceled fire-services contract with the Fountain Inn Fire Department.

"This is the first time we've ever required our firemen to be EMT certified," Thackston said. "That's a big step for us. We've got seven or eight people in EMT school right now."

Piedmont Technical School's EMT program is helping to train EMTs vital to the county's emergency system, Thackston said.

Firefighter William Rice, who was working his 24-hour shift at the new station Wednesday afternoon, is among those seeking EMT certification. EMT trainees undergo 220 hours of training in order to be certified.

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Photo by John Clayton

ON DUTY — From left, Capt. Deborah Waldrop, Northern Division Chief Richie Nordstrom, Laurens County Deputy Fire Services Director Kurt Thackston and firefighter William Rice in front of the fire engine at the new Saxton Fire Station on Thompson Road.

Russian resigns county post for Greenwood job

By John Clayton
Editor

Laurens County Director of Public Works Rob Russian officially announced his resignation Tuesday night at the regular meeting of the Laurens County Council.

Russian has accepted a job as an engineer with Greenwood County. He is a resident of Ninety Six.

"It's going to be a little odd not to come over (Lake

Greenwood) for work," Russian said. "I'm going to miss the people here. Everyone I've worked with has gone above and beyond."

Russian has worked as director of public works in Laurens County for the past three years. Prior to that, he worked in the county for five years with the S.C. Department of Transportation.

Laurens County Council Chairman Joe Wood praised Russian for his work ethic and contributions to the county


during his tenure with the county.

"Rob has done a great job," Wood said. "It doesn't matter what it is; he has had his ducks in a row."

Russian's last day on the job in Laurens County will be Wednesday, but he said he expects to be checking in from time to time to "tie up some loose ends."

"I feel like I'm leaving some things unfinished," he said.

A roofing project for the county's offices at the Hillcrest (Continued on page 2)



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