

BENDERSVILLE COMMUNITY FIRE COMPANY LADIES AUXILIARY

Shortly after the Fire Company re-organized in 1931, it became a community fire company. Women from Brysonia, Wenksville, Mt. Tabor, Peach Glen, Idaville, Gardeners, Flora Dale, Bendersville, and all areas in between gathered to organize an auxiliary to support them financially and physically. So in 1932, they officially became the Ladies Auxiliary of the Bendersville Community Fire Company. For almost 80 years, that is what they have done.

Early fund raisers included selling home made donuts for Shrove Tuesday. This ended when so many orders were received, they could not handle the said orders with limited kitchen equipment. The main function was to prepare and serve food for the carnival. Carnivals were held at the old school and the ODD Fellows Hall. North located on North Main Street. After purchasing the Fruit Growers building, facilities were better and some banquets were served. Candy was also sold.

Around 1950, the stage was removed, and a larger kitchen was opened in 1952. This was much better. For a few years, additional functions were not held. The remodeled kitchen was paid off, and leadership hard to find. After purchasing the 54 Seagrave, things picked up and have increased, with a few lulls when expenses were low. As time went by and new fire-fighting equipment was purchased, the women were always there to help.

Today, with the new kitchen and hall, we concentrate on banquets, wedding, and funeral receptions, and bingo. On average, we serve around 3,000 meals a year and still help with breakfast, suppers, shrimp feeds, and the big one: the carnival.

While accomplishing all this, we provide a canteen committee that takes food and drinks to large fire calls, the longest of which was at the Peach Glen factory for over 12 hours, and the most difficult being the Big Flat Mountain fire, where we carried food along the fire line and were drenched with water from an airplane. Freezing temperatures have not stopped us from delivering hot drinks, soup, and sandwiches. We have also gone to other Fire Companies to assist with food preparation in times of need.

Our greatest accomplishment was paying for the kitchen equipment in the new building, which we actually paid ahead of schedule and were still able to purchase a walk-in freezer.

Our future projects are to finish the cake room and the office space off the kitchen. The cake room will be fitted with a sink, microwave, and cabinets, and the office with cabinets for storage and a place for our volunteers to put their purses while working. We're also looking at a coffee cars, so we can move it to different areas, and as always, give money to the fire company to help with the cost of maintaining its facilities.

Volunteers are always needed and welcome. If anyone would like to be a part of our organization, please check with our current officers.

Co-presidents: Marie Hess
Brenda Bobo
Secretary: Ruth Bretzman
Treasurer: Candy Bretzman

Thank you! With your help, we can be there for the fire fighters, so they can be there for you!