

Aptos/LSB fire chief Mornard leaves to take job in Folsom

By LANE WALLACE
STAFF WRITER

Aptos-La Selva Fire Chief Chuck Mornard resigned yesterday and was replaced by Assistant Chief Phil Scofield.

At a special meeting yesterday, Mornard told district directors he accepted the fire chief's job in Folsom and will start there March 16. Directors interviewed Scofield later in the meeting and named him chief. (See adjacent story.)

Mornard, 43, said he is "leaving on a good note" after five years as chief and 17 years with the fire district.

Mornard, who has been in less public controversy than any Aptos chief in more than 25 years, said he took the job because he is "ready for a change."

Folsom is a little bigger than Aptos-La Selva — 50 employees and five stations to 40 employees and three stations.

Mornard said he was contacted by a "headhunter" executive recruitment company about the Folsom job several months ago. He appeared for several interviews and was offered the job.

The annual salary in Folsom is about the same as the \$77,521 he is making in Aptos, Mornard said, but the benefits are better in Folsom.

Mornard listed these as his proudest accomplishments as chief in Aptos:

- Establishment of a fire prevention bureau, which helped reduce the district's fire protection rating from 6 to 3. The rating is used by insurance companies to determine rates.

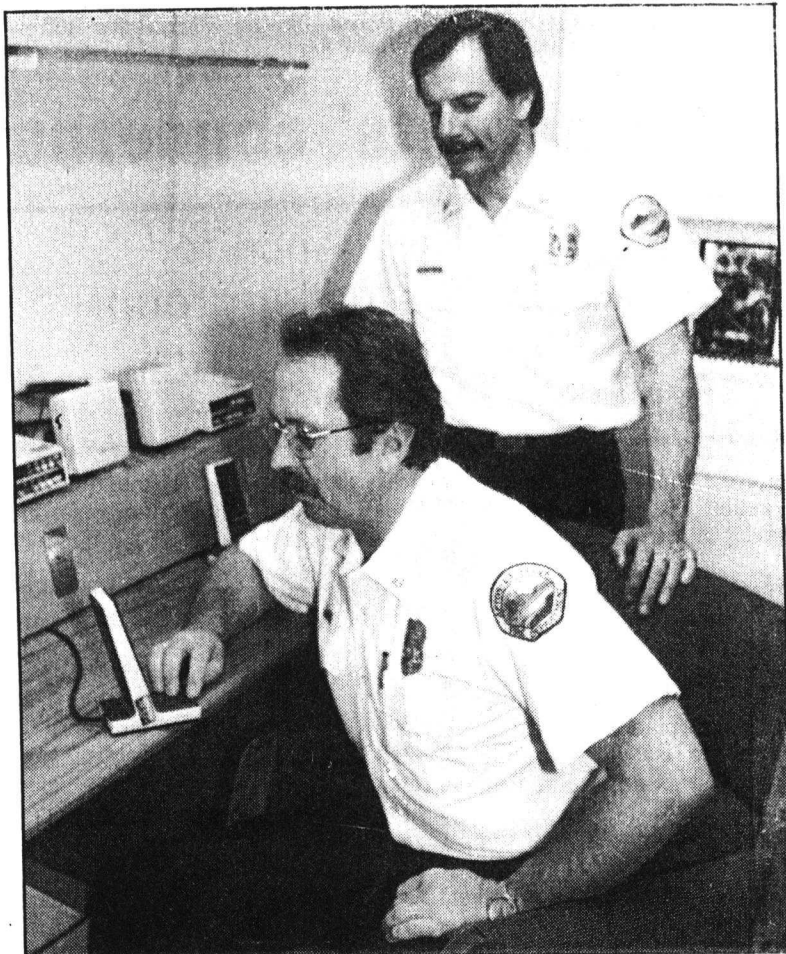
The lower ratings meant rate decreases of as much as 20 percent by some insurance companies, Mornard said, but little or none by others.

- Construction of a 4,500 square-foot addition to the main station on Soquel Drive. The addition allowed the district to move its offices out of rented space and into the main station.

- Remodeling of the stations in Rio Del Mar and La Selva Beach.

- Overseeing the addition of computers to a number of fire district functions.

Mornard is not a stranger to the Sacramento area. He did his undergraduate work at Sacramento State University, where he played on the football and rugby teams.



Lane Wallace

Outgoing Aptos/La Selva Beach fire chief Chuck Mornard, standing, and new chief Phil Scofield monitor fire calls.

New chief worked his way up through ranks

After 24 years of working his way up through the Aptos-La Selva Fire District, Phil Scofield was wondering if he'd reach his goal of becoming chief.

"I thought Chuck (Mornard) would be here forever," said Scofield, who at 46 is three years older than Mornard.

But Mornard resigned yesterday to become chief in Folsom, and district directors quickly promoted Scofield from assistant chief to chief.

"I really wanted to go from top to bottom right here in River City. This is the spot, this is the one," said Scofield, who proudly mentions that he's a Santa Cruz County native. "I was born in the old Dominican Hospital" on Soquel Drive, said Scofield, who grew up in Pasa-tiempo and graduated from Soquel High School in 1967.

Scofield said he had "just

begun" to think about looking elsewhere for a chief's job before getting the appointment.

Scofield became a volunteer firefighter in 1969 and went full time two years later. He was already on the staff when Richard Chinn became chief in the early '70s and oversaw modernization of the district's equipment and services.

When Chinn convinced district directors to start paramedic service, Scofield was the first to be trained. The service began in 1978. Chinn is now one of the Scofield's bosses — he was elected to the fire board last year.

Scofield, who lives just across the district boundary in Soquel, spent six years as a Soquel Elementary School District trustee.

"It gave me excellent experi-

See CHIEF / page 4 ►

APTOS BRANCH LIBRARY

7695 Soquel Drive
Aptos, CA 95003

WATSONVILLE

CHIEF

► From Page 1

ence in local government,” said Scofield. “It allowed me to see things from both sides.”

All government agencies have been facing tight budgets in recent years, but Aptos-La Selva is in reasonably good shape now, Scofield said. “We have a significant carry-over. It’s not a big budget crunch,” he said.

Scofield and his wife, Kristin, have three daughters,, aged 25, 19, and 16, and two grandchildren.

— *Lane Wallace*