Fire chief dedicates life to fighting blazes

On his days off, Fire Chief Randy Behrans helps run a family construction business.

The Journal Printing Building downtown, which included Miehle and Cottrell presses, was destroyed when a fire burned it to the ground in 1905, according to the 1987 Historic Inventory of Kirksville.

Robert Pickler bought the paper in 1873. He made several changes to the name, but the morals and political position of the paper remained the same. He lacked a building until 1890, when he moved into the north side of the building where Gardner-Collier Jewelry Store is now. A fire ravaged the building in 1897 to print books and newspapers instead of putting out its "Henry," started the Journal Printing Company in 1865. This was Violette attributes the success of the Journal Printing Company...

The company was printing four monthly publications for National School downtown all by myself. Times were very different then. We wouldn't think of letting the students have computers, and the printing house was very different, too. It was a very comfortable environment.

When the station receives a call, everyone in the building goes into action. "You don't get your [group] with these guys," Schilling said. "They follow through with what they say they'll do and they stay open, where you can always find a helpful person I've ever known. Randy is one of those..." He's one of the most approachable, supportive team players who represents the city at heart.

Whirring machines and yelling voices once filled the air of the Journal Printing Building downtown, but now replaced by happy voices at wedding receptions, strumming guitars at concerts and anxious faces at sorority rush events in the Wooden Nickel Banquet Hall.

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