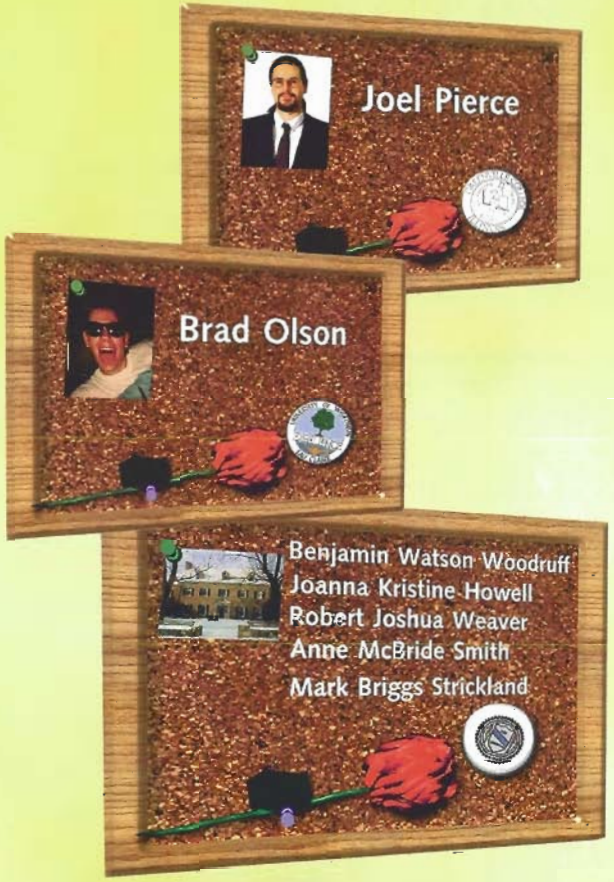
"What's so ironic is Joanna was so full of life and so energetic all the time. You never think something like this could happen."
Julie, sorority sister of Joanna Howell

"We're all like a big family here, and it feels like we lost part of our family."
The words of Sarah, a student at Greenville College, Illinois, talking about Joel Pierce, a music major who died in a dorm fire eleven days before he was to marry his college sweetheart.

"We tried to save them, but there was just no safe way to get in. No matter how good fire fighters are, we can't always save them...prevention is the key...they need to stay alert about fire hazards."
Chief Dan Jones
Chapel Hill Fire Department

"You can't replace Brad. It's hard not to see him, because I miss him."
The words of Andy, friend of Eau Claire fire victim, Brad Olson

"I miss the family we had. It just changes your entire life. I miss my life."
Mother of Ben Woodruff
Chapel Hill fire victim



Brad Olson, University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire; Anne Smith, Joanna Howell, Ben Woodruff, Mark Strickland and Robert Weaver, University of North Carolina; and Joel Pierce, Greenville College, Illinois. Their voices are stilled, but their spirits live on. Don't allow them to have died in vain. Learn from these tragedies. You may save your own life or the lives of others.

For More Information contact:

United States Fire Administration
16825 South Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, MD 21727
(301) 447-1189
Internet: http://www.usfa.fema.gov

L-234/APRIL 1999

GET OUT *and* STAY ALIVE

This is college sophomore Brad Olson's room after the fire in his apartment. Evidence indicated that Brad fought to stay alive and may have escaped the fire if the smoke alarms in his apartment had working batteries in them.

Get Out and Stay Alive is a program designed to help save your life in case you find yourself in a fire situation. This program focuses on three main topics: Getting Out, Prevention, and Protection.

GETTING OUT

If you get caught in a fire situation, survival is your top priority. You should:

FEEL THE DOOR HANDLE

- If the door handle is hot, don't open it
- Go to a window and call for help
- If the handle is not hot, open cautiously
- Check for smoke or fire before going out

GET OUT OF THE BUILDING BEFORE PHONING FOR HELP

- Don't take time to phone before leaving
- Get out and find a phone

PULL THE FIRE ALARM ON YOUR WAY OUT

DON'T LOOK FOR OTHER PEOPLE OR GATHER UP YOUR STUFF

- Knock on doors as you leave
- Yell "FIRE!" as you leave
- Don't hesitate or stray from your path as you leave

CRAWL LOW TO THE FLOOR

- Thick smoke can make it impossible to see
- Toxic chemicals from smoke can be deadly in minutes

CLOSE THE DOOR BEHIND YOU

- You may help keep the fire from spreading
- You may protect your possessions from fire and smoke damage

IF YOU CAN'T GET OUT, GET SOMEONE'S ATTENTION

- Yell and scream
- Hang a sheet from the window
- Stay low, there is less smoke and poisonous gasses close to the floor

PREVENTION

Fires can be prevented from starting if you take some simple precautions:

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PREVENTION

- Assign a non-impaired "event monitor"
- Clean up immediately after parties and take all trash outside
- Do not overload electrical outlets
- Keep space heaters and halogen lamps away from flammables
- Put out candles and incense when unattended
- Extinguish all smoking materials thoroughly
- Don't smoke while tired or impaired

PROTECTION

You can also protect yourself from becoming trapped in a fire situation by following some important suggestions:

CHECK SMOKE ALARMS

- Be sure they are in proper working condition
- Install new batteries at the beginning of each semester

PLAN ESCAPE ROUTES

Know where all exits are located in the building

Practice your escape plan

TAKE FIRE ALARMS SERIOUSLY

Do not ignore fire alarms

Do not wait to see fire or smoke

Do not worry about grabbing your stuff

Tampering with smoke alarms, pulling false alarms or misusing fire protection equipment may be a criminal offense. These are dangerous pranks and should be reported immediately.

MAKE A PLAN

You can make a plan for your own fire safety and protection as soon as you get home. Use the following check list:

- Check to make sure your smoke alarms are working - Change the batteries
- Find all possible exits from your room or residence
- Make a fire escape route plan that includes two escape routes
- Practice your fire escape route plan
- Perform a "home inspection" for fire and safety hazards
- Tell your roommates about your plan
- Call your local fire department for more information about student housing fire safety