

Businesses, community members, nearby towns rally to assist White Hall after devastating fire

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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WHITE HALL – White Hall Fire Chief Garry Sheppard issued a message of thanks to all in and outside the community who have helped with the burned area of downtown both during and after the recent devastating fire.

He said the day of the fire that started at 9 a.m. on Jan. 31 at 119 North Main several businesses and private individuals were there bringing food, water and Gatorade for firemen, which was most appreciated.

“It was so hot and so quick the firefighters didn’t have much of a chance to save the buildings,” White Hall Mayor Tom Lakin said that fateful date.

Some of the buildings destroyed dated back to the 1800s. The origin of the fire was likely an electrical incident, Fire Chief Sheppard said. Two electrical heating devices were plugged into an outlet and the person who had done that heard a small “pop” when the second heater was plugged into the outlet.

There were three historic buildings lost that day. Only one housed a retail location – Pack Mule Antiques.

When the cleanup began, Sheppard said businesses and community members were there again, some assisting and others bringing food, water and drinks.

“It’s a pretty close-knit community,” Sheppard said. “Part of the beauty of small towns is they all stick together in situations like this one. There were towns 10-12 miles away willing to help and reach out to us the same way.”

Overall, Sheppard said the fires were “very rough” and “it takes the edge off when people are there to support what you are doing.”