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You get a heavy surge of carbon monoxide that can spread miles through the pit. I never get into that--what caused it. Be? cause my job is after the fact, not why or how or when. That's our approach here in the rescue corps, we don't worry about what caused it or who was at fault or any? thing like that. That's somebody else's business. Our job then is to try to con? tain that fire. (How did you find out about the fire in 1975?) Oh, I just got a call, I always do, from the underground manager, and he told me there was a fire at 11 South. (No si? rens or things like that?) No, no, it's done privately. I was home at the time, . and I just got a phone call. Well, that's all I needed. I immediately--we have our way of organizing. There's 6 teams here in Glace Bay, and there's 5 in New Waterford, and 5 in the Northside. There's a rescue station at Lingan and one at the Prince mine, too. If there's a fire here, all the corps are put on standby, on alert, immedi? ately. I just call the 5 captains. They call their teams. And in 10 minutes every? thing is rolling. That night, I'd say in 15 minutes I had 4 teams ready. They come to the station, test their apparatus. And that probably takes 15 minutes--the bench test--they know how to repair, charge, ser? vice, and maintain their machines. It's ready for use at all times. And a short time after, they went underground, (Do they wear special clothes?) No, no, just regular mine clothes. They put their pit clothes on, put their apparatus on, they get their lamp, and they go. A rescue team is only doing ordinary underground drudg? ery, but they're wearing a 30-pound pack on their back, and they're breathing pure oxygen. We possibly have three teams working under? ground, and maybe a team here standing by in the station, and the others home, on call. You may use 8 or 9 or 10 teams over the life of the fire. There's always two teams underground, one to back up the oth? er. The one team goes in to explore, the other team has to stay in fresh air to go in to get them if something happens to them. At what we call the fresh air base. That's where fresh air ends and the gas starts. The other team is working in the bad atmosphere. They do any kind of work that's necessary, that nobody else can do on account of the air. In DEVCO here, the minute there's trouble in a mine, a disaster, there's an advisory committee set up, They go to the mine where the trouble is, and they're there to assist the manager and advise him. The gov? ernment people, the Department of Labour, safety engineer, and the union are noti? fied. Those people act as an advisory com? mittee. The rescue teams go- in the mine to assess the situation. But the decision on how it's going to be handled or fought is made by this committee, They decide wheth? er to try to fight it directly or to seal it. Or possibly even flood it with water to get it out. (What happens once they retreat to the fresh air base?) They're told then from the surface what to do. There's three steps you have to follow. First of all, if there's any men in the mine, the rescue teams must locate them and get them to the surface. That's the first priority. Then the fire--see what can be done with it. Then, when the fire is sealed, they have to travel periodically and test those seals, to try and get an indication if the fire is out. Now when a fire is out, their next duty is to travel the mine and re-ven? tilate it and make it safe for men to work in. That could be months



away. It may be three months before all the oxygen is used up inside the seals and the fire goes out. We speeded it up in 11 South. Along with CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE 'awanr'it' J HAIRWORKS-Family Hair Styling Cape Breton Shopping Plaza Sydney Shopping Mall Sterling Mall North Sydney Mall WALK-IN SERVICE Country Clothing Campbell's Knit & Sew Shoppe Mabou, N. S. 21.A.Jffrf'matt IClh. Overlooking the Margaree Valley at the Junction of Route 19 and the Cabot Trail INVERNESS PHONE 258-2400 NOVA SCOTIA "Turn left at the Causeway • Route 19 • It's a lovely way to go." C'tiie coopeiMot' f' Insurance Services " For All Your Personal Coverage, Call: SYDNEY 539-6315 (toll free) NORTH SYDNEY 794-4788 GLACE BAY 849-4547 MABOU 945-2514" NEW WATERFORD 862-3350 LOUISDALE 345-2199 PORT HAWKESBURY 625-0640 CHETICAMP 224-3204 YOU CAN TALK TO US A full-accommodation Lodge featuring spacious rooms, dining room and lounge, swimming pool. Nearby are golf fairways, beaches, fresh and salt water fishing, camping, hiking. The best of Nova Scotian musicians en? tertain in our lounge every weekend. Check with us to see who's playing, and drop in for an enjoyable evening. (58) P. O. Box 550. MARGAREE FORKS, Nova Scotia BOE 2A0 Phone (902) 248-2193, William F. MacIsaac, mgr. RELAX IN THE BEAUTIFUL MARGAREE VALLEY