Written by Steve Frank
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A Watauga family suffered severe damage to their home in a fire last night battled by four departments. Boone Fire, Deep Gap, Meat Camp, and Blowing Rock were all called to the 887 Seven Oaks Road home off Roby Greene Road just before 8:30 last night as fire and smoke were discovered as Mark and Terri Lockwood returned home. The Lockwood family had been at home preparing dinner when the power went out, but they managed to eat their meal, then decided to go to town. When they returned, sometime after 8:15, the power was back on, and when they opened the door, they were greeted by smoke and could see some fire burning in the kitchen in the center of their house. The Lockwoods called 9-1-1 as the fire worked its way through and out the roof of the structure. Fire units managed to knock down the fire, saving much of the structure, Boone fire declaring the fire as controlled at about 9:15. But much damage had been done, Boone Fire estimating some $300,000 to the house and contents, but probably $100,000 in structure and belongings were saved in the firefighting effort. Mop-up operations continued late into the night, with Watauga Medics, then Watauga Rescue standing by as the effort lasted late into the evening, but no injuries were reported in the fire or firefighting effort. Boone fire officials said that the stove had apparently been left on after the power went out, and cooking oils were ignited while the family was away, causing the fire. The Lockwoods are reportedly staying with family in the area.