

Greetings from Hanify

Brothers and Sisters,

In our last newsletter we announced the departure of Vice President Jim Ridley from the PFFUI in order to take a position at the IAFF as the Director of the HazMat/WMD Training Department. Brother Ridley worked hard for the PFFUI and I am sure that the IAFF and General President Schaitberger know how lucky they are to have him as a part of their team in Washington.



Although Brother Ridley left large shoes to fill, I am happy to announce that Mike Whited, the 2nd District VP, has been selected to take his place with the unanimous approval of the executive board of the PFFUI. Mike has already been working with me and Brother Ridley on issues at the General Assembly. With his experience as the President of Muncie Local 1348 (which he shall continue to serve as) and as 2nd District Vice President, he will be invaluable providing assistance to our Locals around the state. With the appointment of Mike Whited, Ron Meikle from Fort Wayne Local 124 has been appointed the new 2nd District Vice President. Ron has served on the Local 124 Executive Board for nine years and currently serves as their Vice President. Congratulations to Mike Whited and Ron Meikle. I look forward to working with both of them as we serve the firefighters of Indiana.

The International Association of Firefighters is also undergoing changes to their Executive Board. Most of you have already heard about the retirement of General Secretary Treasurer Vincent J. Bollon. For over fifty years, Brother Bollon dedicated his life to the fire service and his Brother and Sister firefighters. Brother Bollon was elected in 1988 as the IAFF General Secretary Treasurer. During his twenty-one years as our General Secretary Treasurer, he partnered with our General President and the IAFF Executive board to make our union's finances and administration more effective and efficient. He implemented new programs, updated processes and provided tools to the affiliates to assist with membership and accounting issues. He worked to grow our membership in both numbers and influence. He has used our union dues money wisely and our membership is getting a tremendous amount for our per capita dollar, particularly in this difficult economic time. We wish Brother Bollon the best for his retirement.

Since our last newsletter, the difficult times for many of our Brothers and Sisters across the state have continued. Muncie still has 32 laid off. Mayor Greg Goodnight of Kokomo brought back three of the laid off firefighters and has worked with Local 396 and President Rick Daily to submit an application for a SAFER Grant to bring back the remaining thirteen. In Huntington, the department laid off six firefighters and closed one of its three firehouses. Mayor Updike, Fire Chief Matthew Armstrong, Local 680 and the FOP Local banded together to try to pass a local trash collection fee through the city council, but the fee failed in council and as of this writing the six are laid off and the station remains closed.

In addition to the above layoffs, Gary Local 359 is facing up to fifty-four layoffs and the Brothers and Sisters of East Chicago Local 365 and East Chicago EMS Local 4351 were forced to take a 5% pay cut without a commitment of when that lost income will be restored.

Finally, in Indianapolis, Local 416 has two departments facing layoffs, Franklin Township Fire Department and Lawrence Township Fire Department. Franklin Township has closed a fire house and is working on consolidation with Indianapolis Fire Department by July 2010 in order to avoid layoffs. In Lawrence Township the Brothers and Sisters worked with the Trustee for a reduction in pay along with agreeing to other reductions in benefits totaling nearly 17% in order to avoid layoffs. The leadership of Local 416 is working with newly elected Lawrence Township Trustee Russell Brown, IFD Chief Brian Sanford, and the City of Indianapolis to merge Lawrence into IFD, but I do not think it will get done before January 2011.

All these issues bring me to the tax caps. On top of general economic woes, we are facing the unknown effects of the property tax caps which will go into full effect this year. The property tax caps place the following limits:

- Cap homeowner property taxes at 1% of assessed value
- Cap residential rental property taxes at 2% of assessed value
- Cap business property taxes at 3% of assessed value
- Assess agricultural land according to current formula

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6th District Vice-President: Robert Loviscek

Region Trustees:

1st Region Trustee: Mike Vittetoe
2nd Region Trustee: Todd Jordan
3rd Region Trustee: Larry Zuber
4th Region Trustee: Bonnie Webb

Emeritus Officers

President Emeritus:
Thomas H. Miller
Secretary-Treasurer Emeritus:
Richard O. Kissel

...Hanify's article continued from cover

What we are currently facing is a push to have these tax caps placed into the Indiana State Constitution. On December 7, 2009, the House Ways and Means Committee deliberated SJR1, which would place these caps in the Constitution. Despite icy weather, we had a great number of firefighters show up from across the state to show our opposition to this resolution. Please read our explanation below and consider calling your Indiana State Representative and Senator to let them know that we respectfully oppose making these tax caps permanent before we fully know their impact.

1. The firefighters and EMS workers of Indiana understand the intentions of the General Assembly's implementation of the property tax caps. Creating an atmosphere for economic development is important to every Hoosier. As homeowners and working Hoosiers, we appreciate every effort to make our state economically viable.
2. The caps are in statute now, but they will not go into full effect until 2010, which means we do not know the extent to which they will affect local units of government.
3. Putting the caps in the Constitution without knowing the full effect and without providing local units of government with alternative revenue sources such as PILOT, LOITS and user fees have the potential to devastate cities and towns across the state of Indiana.
4. The inability of cities and towns to fund basic services could have a severely adverse affect on the ability of these cities and towns to attract business and development and have a negative impact on the quality of life for their citizens, undermining the intentions of the tax caps:

According to Dr. Larry DeBoer (Who will be speaking at the Thomas H. Miller Legislative Conference on February 16th), "The tax caps were not a significant factor in homeowner tax bills in 2009. Homesteads received a mere 2.5% of all circuit breaker credits... rental properties accounted for...82.2% of all credits." This means that homeowners and the business community, **those who the legislature intended to help**, received only 17.8% of all credits.

As firefighters and EMS workers we pledge to continue to work with our local government officials to best serve our communities in a safe and efficient manner. We care deeply about our communities; therefore we are asking the General Assembly to:

1. Work with Indiana's cities and towns and other local units of government to give them the authority to raise the resources necessary to deliver essential services and;

2. Allow the tax caps to be fully implemented and studied before any constitutional decisions are made.

As always, I invite any of you who would like to learn more about the work the PFFUI does at the Indiana General Assembly to call the office and set up a day to join me and Vice President Mike Whited in the halls of the statehouse. We will be working hard this short session to accomplish the goals laid out in his letter. We will also keep you updated on the website and through communications with your Local leadership.

Stay Safe,
Tom Hanify

Vice-President Report

MIKE WHITED

Brothers and Sisters,

It's an honor to serve as your vice president in this great organization. Jim Ridley worked very hard and dedicated many hours serving the PFFUI. I plan on being in lock step with Jim's beliefs and will continue on where Jim left off in order to make this the best organization possible. I am dedicated to this union and to the betterment of our member's lives. I would also like to wish Jim the best of luck with his new role with the IAFF. Jim will be missed but he will also be a great asset to all of us in his new position.



President Hanify and I have been attending meetings the past month in order to prepare for the upcoming 2010 General Assembly. One of the issues that we will be tracking is putting property tax caps into the constitution. The PFFUI believes we need to see the full ramifications of the tax caps on local units of government before this is done and this will not happen until 2011. Being from a county that is one of the hardest hit from the tax caps and the department with the most laid off firefighters in the state I speak from firsthand experience on the devastating impact this can have on a local unit of government.

Some other legislative issues that President Hanify and I will be tracking in the 2010 General Assembly are:

- Job rights for EMS workers
- The return of 1977 fund members contributions upon death
- Partial Lump Sum Option (PLSO)
- Health care coverage for line of duty disability same as LOD death
- Reemployment rights to laid off police and firefighters extended from three years to five years
- Defend the rights of police and firefighters to hold office in communities where they live

- Remove “decrease” from the cost of living adjustment
- Revenue for cities and towns

This is just a partial list of bills that we will be tracking during this short session: We will be following between forty and sixty bills that could have a direct effect on us in the fire service. As usual, we will be posting a full list of the bills on the PFFUI’s web site for all of you to follow. I encourage you to visit this site often because we will be updating the status of each bill as they move around the Statehouse.

Again I would like to say it is an honor to serve as your Vice President and I hope to carry on the tradition of those who served before me.

Secretary-Treasurer Report

MICHAEL PINKHAM

Brothers and Sisters,

The new year is already progressing rapidly and our challenges in the legislature continue as controversy and misunderstanding surrounding the property tax cap issue overshadows recognition of the rapidly diminishing abilities of cities and towns to fund essential services. The tax cap issue needs a detailed review and alternative sources of revenues needs deliberate debate. Our members are increasingly facing not simply discussions, but actions, involving staffing reductions, station closures, cost shifting measures, and outright benefit concessions.

Our representatives are busy following the issues, engaging in the debates, and lobbying to protect our interests as too many elected politicians continue to worry more about their next election than they do about the future economic impact of their decisions today.

You can make a difference. As I said in my last article, this year will be a very busy election campaign cycle as one-half of our State Senators and all of our State Representatives are on the ballot in addition to a U.S. Senate race, 9 U.S. Congressional District contests, a number of statewide offices and countless county, township, and school board positions. Like it or not, you are involved in politics as too many politicians control the future of your career and your benefits. Get involved locally, and get involved supporting our Indiana Firefighters PAC and supporting those candidates who support us.

What can \$1.00 do for you?!

That’s going to be the campaign slogan for our PAC Developmental Committee. Just one dollar out of your pocket per paycheck – Can you afford that?! How can you not afford that!

I’d say not too much to ask to contribute your share to our efforts protecting and enhancing your firefighter benefits. These committee representatives are developing a program to assist your Local, joining many other Locals, supporting our cause through some means of regular payroll deductions. Tell your Local Officers you want to do your share, that you want to give your dollar!

Our annual Educational Seminar and Legislative Conference have been scheduled for February 15th and 16th in Indianapolis. Details have been distributed to Local Affiliates and are also available on the web site. Participation in the classes will greatly assist your representatives’ knowledge and abilities as Local Union Officers. Our Legislative Conference will detail the many legislative issues we are tracking and provide an opportunity for your representatives to meet with legislators from your area and articulate your concerns in person to them.

I have included the information detailing our annual convention separately in this newsletter. It is very important that your Local be represented there. We will deliberate the significant issues facing our organization in the year and years ahead and provide a number of educational opportunities for your representatives to participate in and hopefully better prepare them to lead your Local in the future. This is also an election year at the convention and all state positions will be up for nomination and election (or re-election as applicable).

We are also experiencing a number of changes in faces both at the State Union and the International. Our membership continues to be very well represented at all levels. James Ridley has accepted an appointment as Division Director of HazMat & WMD Training at the IAFF. Mike Whited has succeeded James as our State Vice-President and has hit the ground liter-

ally running through the halls of the General Assembly. Ron Meikle has stepped up to fill Mike’s shoes as 2nd District Vice-President and he also has hit the pavement in stride. Many Locals have or will also elect some new representatives as the year begins and by now I am certain everyone is aware of the retirement of IAFF General-Secretary Treasurer Vinnie Bollon after over two decades of service to our membership. It will be interesting and exciting to experience the changes these new faces will bring to their arenas as they meet the demands of their new positions.

Although the general economic climate remains cloudy, our financial strength as an organization remains solid and our per capita dues remain unchanged at \$3.94 per active member per month and \$1.97 per active-retired member per month. I am proud of what our organization has been able to accomplish while remaining very frugal. Our per capita dues continue to be a remarkable bargain by comparison to other state associations across the United States and Canada and are by far the lowest among our neighboring IAFF 8th District states of Kentucky, Ohio, Michigan, and Illinois.

Our Indiana Career Professional Firefighter Special Recognition License Plates remain available for both for vehicles and motorcycles. This is a renewal year if you already have plates and you may renew on-line and avoid the lines at your local BMV branch. Authorization forms are not required and we encourage you and members of your family to obtain these plates demonstrating your pride in your career and in support of our organization. Please visit our website at www.pffui.com for updated information, including a calendar of scheduled Local, State, and IAFF activities, and most importantly at this time of year, a listing of the legislation we are tracking in the General Assembly.



Terre Haute Firefighters local 758 raised over 6,000.00 dollars for the Hoosier Burn Camp by hosting a bowling tournament on Oct.17th. This event was organized by Local 758 members Dave McCarty, Glen Hall, Fred Hamblen, Barry Nicoson, Terry Coker and their families. Local 758 member Scott Dalton and his wife were DJ’s for the event. This was held at Vigo Bowl in Terre Haute, IN. They raised money by lane sponsors, entry fees, donations, and raffles.

First District

ED LOMELI - VICE PRESIDENT

Hello brothers and sisters of the PFFUI,

The PFFUI executive board had a meeting in November. As always, one of the topics for discussion was how to better serve our Locals. One of the ways I feel we serve you well is the IAFF Partnership in Education Seminar that we are holding February 15. The IAFF sends instructors to teach Local officers and give them the tools they need to deal effectively with subjects such as contract negotiations and grievance arbitration. All the seminars are at very little cost and past feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. The IAFF runs an excellent program. Please encourage your Local union leaders to take this opportunity to further their labor education.

As you are all aware, local governments around the state are cutting back. Many Locals are already facing great hardship and making huge sacrifices. On December 7th, I joined President Hanify, firefighters and mayors from throughout the state in attending the House Ways and Means Committee meeting. SJR1 would place the property tax caps into our constitution. As President Hanify explains in his article, it is too soon to know all the effects the tax caps will have, so it is simply too soon to consider putting it in the constitution. Our local units of government must have the ability to provide at least basic services. I know that President Hanify and Executive Board will be following this closely, but please consider sending you representative and senator a respectful letter as well.

I am sure that most of our members know that Vice President James Ridley has taken a job with the IAFF. He will be greatly missed. Having worked with Jim for many years, I can tell you that his commitment to the PFFUI was second to none. Mike Whited from Muncie will be taking over for James in the Vice President position. Also having worked with Mike for many years, I know that Mike will give his all for our members.

In 2010 the 1st District faces some big issues that will need attention and support from all of us. Layoffs, cuts in salary and not having a LOIT for Lake County are just a few. I will work hard with President Hanify and Vice President Whited to come up with ideas to aggressively take on these issues for our Brothers and Sisters.

I hope everyone had a good holiday season and I wish you a happy and healthy New Year. Stay safe.

Second District

RON MEIKLE - VICE PRESIDENT

Greetings from the 2nd District

As you know, there have been a few personnel changes in the PFFUI during the last few months. With the departure of Jim Ridley to Washington DC and the appointment of Mike Whited as PFFUI Vice President, the Second District was in need of a new VP. I am proud to have been selected by your Executive Board to fulfill the remainder of the term as District VP and pledge to do my best to service the needs of northeast Indiana's IAFF affiliates. I have begun making contact with Local officers to introduce myself and gain perspective to the needs of each Local. As I am making my way through the list of officers, I know that each call or visit brings a warm greeting or friendly handshake. I ask only as for your patience and understanding as I work to learn about each Local.

I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank Jim Ridley for the leadership that has been demonstrated over the past decade in my home Local of Ft. Wayne along with his diligent work at the state level. I have learned much from him and value his friendship. The IAFF office in Washington DC is seeing firsthand what firefighters in Indiana have known for years. Good luck, Jim!

As cities and towns across the state feel the pinch of HB1001, the pain is being passed down to fire departments and Locals of all sizes. A few of them in the Second District have felt the full force of this legislation. Thirty-two firefighters in Muncie have been laid off and the Mayor has demonstrated an unwillingness to listen to reason and logic. Options have been presented to her from firefighters that utilize SAFER funds and concessions from L1348 with an end result that cost the city of Muncie \$0.00. The Mayor, in her infinite wisdom, has denied this financial assistance and refused well over \$1,000,000 in aid. This appears to be a vendetta that is being played out against L1348 and the safety of the citizens of Muncie are caught in the middle of this. They are not the only community with problems. Kokomo is another city that has felt the squeeze of short sighted politicians. Sixteen firefighters have been laid off in this fine city that has been devastated by factories that have closed or moved away. Three have been called back and I hope that we can work to bring the rest back as well. Recently, Huntington Fire Department laid off 6 firefighters. This has resulted in the closing of a fire station and leaves only two stations left to protect the community. The Mayor has been granted the authority to lay

off four more firefighters if necessary. Currently the total staffing level hovers at 35 with more firefighters holding their breath. On a positive note, the PFFUI will host the Partnership in Education Seminar on February 15 at the Downtown Hilton in Indianapolis with the Thomas H. Miller Legislative Conference on the following day. This is a fantastic opportunity for every Local to gain information and training that delivers a big payoff without much cost to your union. For information and class listings, check the PFFUI web site.

In closing, I hope that each of you had a joyous holiday season with your family. They are the reason that you work so hard. Enjoy them every day.

Third District

MARK A. MASTISON - VICE PRESIDENT

Brothers & Sisters of the PFFUI:

Greetings once again from the 3rd District! I hope everyone in the great State of Indiana had a Merry Christmas and a Happy & Safe New Year. Now it is time to get back to work protecting our salaries and benefits, as cities and towns cut from us to try and balance their budgets. Unfortunately, we always seem to come out on the wrong end of the balancing budget act. Wouldn't it be nice if Mayors and Councils across the State would realize that public safety is not the enemy, but the best public relations tool that they have. It is up to us to remind them of this simple fact.

With the New Year come more learning experiences brought to you by the PFFUI. In February, we will be hosting the IAFF PEP seminar and the Thomas H. Miller Legislative conference. This two-day event is a great learning tool for our Local leadership to come together and learn from IAFF certified instructors and assist with the PFFUI legislative effort. In May, we will be hosting the State Convention in downtown Indianapolis. The IAFF Convention will be in San Diego, CA in August. Our Local leadership should make every effort to attend as many of these events that they are financially able to do. These events are the union's way to pass on information from one source to another. Remember, your PFFUI Executive Board works for you, the union member. We are here to do whatever we can to help the local leadership do their job. Contact us whenever you feel you need help. I look forward to seeing you this year.

Fourth District

MIKE REEVES - VICE PRESIDENT

Greetings from the 4th District to all our Brothers, Sisters and friends,

With the Holidays and 2009 behind us, we should look forward to perhaps a better year for many of our fellow firefighters and EMS members. With the tax caps taking full effect, I am hopeful we can all get our houses in order. Perhaps we can make something good come of this hardship by teaching municipalities to work closer with our local firefighters and EMS unions to help solve our dilemmas jointly.

Local 416 has begun to work with the City of Indianapolis and both Franklin and Lawrence Townships towards merging the township departments into Indianapolis Fire Department. Local 416 has stated for many years that we can provide an effective citywide fire department more efficiently and now is the true test. Both departments will have extra firefighters when it is all said and done and

IFD Chief Sanford is working with Local 416 to keep them instead of hiring to replace those firefighters retiring. IFD has had successful mergers in the past couple of years with Perry, Warren and Washington Townships. I am hopeful that these mergers will ultimately prove successful as well.

We have begun our preparation for the 2010 PFFUI State Convention. Local 416 will host both the Brian Reed Memorial PAC Golf Outing and an open house at our union hall one evening. The Golf Outing will be held at Winding River Golf Club on Tuesday, May 11th. If you are interested in golfing, please speak with your Local officers. I can speak for the entire Local 416 Executive Board in saying we look forward to the 2010 PFFUI Convention in May.

President Hanify and the legislative team have a full agenda for the 2010 Indiana State Legislature. With the property tax caps before us it will be an interesting session. He, along with other executive board members, has already

begun working on our behalf. Both the Senate and House Ways and Means Committees met in December and many of our members attended the hearings. I would like to thank those from the 4th District who took time to attend the hearings. PFFUI Trustee Bonnie Webb, Wayne Township L416 Trustee Scott Williams and Franklin Township Trustee L416 Jason Hansman were part of a great group of 4th District members attending the House Committee meeting. Thank you to all who helped us out.

Finally I would like to close by congratulating my friend and mentor, past PFFUI Vice President James Ridley in his appointment as the Director of the HazMat/WMD Training Department with the IAFF. He is very deserving and will do a fabulous job in Washington DC. President Hanify, with the PFFUI Executive Board approval, appointed 2nd District Vice President Mike Whited to replace Jim. Mike has a lot of experience and will do a great job for us. Congratulations to both of our friends.



The Indianapolis Fire Department presented the flag before the Indianapolis Colts game on November 15th against the New England Patriots.

Photo courtesy of Rodger Birchfield

Fifth District

TONY MURRAY - VICE PRESIDENT

Greetings and Happy New Year to all of our members and readers,

I would like to congratulate Jim Ridley on his new position with the IAFF in Washington, D.C. Jim knows he will be missed here in the PFFUI. I wish him well and all the best as he leads the department of HazMat and WMD Education. In his work, he has served us all well both as a trade unionist, leader, and mentor.

2010 is upon us and with it comes change for Locals in the 5th District. The end of the year saw many local union leaders take a breather as they did not run for re-election. I wish all of those past officers well and encourage them to remain engaged members in their Locals as they take a step back and allow others to lead and build upon their efforts and hard work. I also welcome the new leadership in the following Locals and look forward to working with all of the new officers: Changes have taken place in Crawfordsville, Carmel, Franklin, Greenfield, Martinsville, Hamilton County districts of Noblesville and Fishers, and Rushville.

I would also like to welcome Hancock County Professional Firefighters Local 4787 to the 5th District. This new local affiliate is made up of Buck Creek Township Fire Department and Sugar Creek Fire Department. Although they are a new Local, these departments have been affiliated for several years with Indianapolis Local 416 in the 4th District. I look forward to working with the officers and members in this Local.

At the fall E-Board meeting, the board showed unanimous support for Mike Whited to fill the remaining Vice-President term. My sincere best wishes to Mike as he works for the members in this new role.

The New Year also brings a new session of the Indiana General Assembly. President Hanify, Vice-President Whited, IAFF 8th District Vice-President Miller, and members of the board have been working hard to prepare for the session. The PFFUI has a hefty and tangible legislative agenda that is member-focused. There are already signals from members of the GA that this session is going to be fast and furious. Be prepared to respond to the call when your support is needed on our issues. This support may come in a variety of forms such as responding to show a physical presence or making contact with your local representatives and senators. Stay tuned to the PFFUI website for GA news.

Local officers should be aware of upcoming events and educational sessions provided by the IAFF. Every Local is encouraged to send two members of their board to the

PFFUI sponsored IAFF Partnership Education Program February 15th in Indianapolis. This is a cost effective way for local leaders to learn skills that will help their membership. Information on the course selection should be in mailboxes at your local. Don't delay, get registered. In addition to this training, February 16th is the Thomas H. Miller Legislative Conference. This conference is a great opportunity to get up to speed on what the PFFUI is working on at the General Assembly and learn the status of bills the PFFUI is tracking in the session. In addition, leaders who attend have a great opportunity to engage and speak with their members of the General Assembly at the meet and greet hosted by the PFFUI. There is no better way of discussing issues important to you and your membership then personal interaction with your local representatives and senators.

All the best for a prosperous and healthy 2010.

Sixth District

ROBERT LOVISCEK - VICE PRESIDENT

Greetings from the 6th District.

By the time you read this article, Christmas and New Years will have come and gone. I hope you and your families have gotten through the holidays safely. The New Year will present many challenges to all of our brothers and sisters throughout the state. From budget cuts to the threat of layoffs, many things will affect the employment and safety of our membership. This is the time to stand united and show our local governments that we are united under a common bond of brotherhood. We are not being unreasonable in asking to ensure that the safety of our members will be a major consideration when the thought of layoffs creep into the minds of the politicians which want to cut our personnel. The citizens that want tax relief need to understand and be educated that cutting too deep without thoughtful consideration affects their safety.

How do we go about doing this? By being leaders within our communities we can accomplish this goal of educating. Get into the general public and do things that put us out there. Show up to city council meetings to talk to your local government body. As a Local, start a read with a child program at your local school. As a Local, volunteer at a homeless shelter. As a Local, start a food drive. For most, these are not novel ideas: They are done all the time. But, if your Local is not doing that, consider some ideas that fit your community and implement them. Some may call it pandering, but I believe that it means something else. Consider this: Every life that we touch, either on the job in uniform or during our off duty time, those citizens may not remember our names but they do remember we are firefighters. Let us all remember, and sometimes it may not be fair, we are held to a higher standard within the spotlight of the community. And frankly, I believe that we should. Years ago when in the military, an officer that I admired very much told me, "You can never go wrong if you always try to do the right thing." Not Aristotle or Plato, but a simple statement by which to live your professional and private lives.

In February, the Partnership Education Program and Thomas H. Miller Legislative Conference will give us the opportunity to attend classes which will enhance your Local's leadership. This is a do not miss seminar and I hope that all Locals send at least one representative. In closing, I want to again thank the members of the 6th District for this opportunity to help lead them. The members of my home Local have also given me the opportunity, by electing me their President. Even though I will hold two positions, I will continue to strive to give you the best support. It is truly a humbling honor, which I hope I can live up to. Until next time...

Semper Fi



The new Crawfordsville Local 4143 (L to R) Ed Ward, Treasurer; Adam Skelton, VP; Jake Lowe, President with 5th District VP Tony Murray

City firefighters go pink in support of women's health

LISA TRIGG

Reprinted with permission from *The Tribune-Star*

TERRE HAUTE — Terre Haute firefighters have gone pink in support of women's health, throwing out their standard blue shirts for seven days in October.

The pink T-shirt campaign began Thursday to coincide with Breast Cancer Awareness Month in Vigo County. But campaign organizer Glen Hall said the firefighters are not just supporting breast cancer awareness. "It's about women's health in general," Hall said. "We care about all women. We care about everybody as a group."

Hall and fellow firefighter Rick Gallagher have taken on the project through union Local 758, the International Association of Firefighters. They decided to sell the pink T-shirts as a fundraiser, and will split the proceeds between the Clara Fairbanks Association at Union Hospital and the Susan G. Komen Foundation.

Firefighters first donned pink on Thursday when they attended the Race for the Cure ribbon lighting ceremony at the Vigo County Courthouse. They also will wear the pink shirts Oct. 2 and 3, and Oct. 25-27, during their regular work shifts. Friends and supporters of the effort also are encouraged to purchase the shirts (priced at \$11 each).

Hall said he first got the idea for the project after attending a conference in Las Vegas last year where other firefighters were selling shirts to support women who could not afford mammograms. Since then, Hall has been in contact with an organization called Pink Heals in Phoenix. Firefighters there have painted three fire trucks pink, and travel the country in September and October to spread awareness of breast cancer issues.

The Terre Haute firefighters have been asked to participate in the ISU homecoming parade Oct. 24 walking in their pink T-shirts with cancer survivors. It is a goal for next year to have pink turnout gear for firefighters to wear in the parade.

Hall said he is fortunate that his own family has not been touched by cancer, but just a couple weeks ago, another firefighter's wife was diagnosed with breast cancer. That battalion's crew will wear their shirts on Oct. 21, one extra day in honor of her, Hall said. The

issue of women's health should be important for everyone, Hall said, because everyone has a mother. He said he thinks about his two daughters, his wife and his own mother as he has taken on this project.

"I've talked to a lot of people who have family members with cancer," he said. "It affects everyone in the whole family."

Firefighters Giving Back

SUBMITTED BY ANDERSON LOCAL 1262
PRESIDENT MATT COLE

Madison County (Indiana) firefighter Martin "Skip" Ockomon is the embodiment of community service. Governed by his bottomless well of compassion, Skip has organized several projects to help others in need.

In 2008, Anderson Fire Captain Greg Vannatta had just moved his family of five into a fixer upper—one that needed a lot of work. Shortly after, he learned that he was getting shipped to Iraq for his second tour. Skip Ockomon knew Vannatta's wife was left in the lurch, and offered to come to her aid. His generosity was contagious, and Skip ended up coordinating what had become an enormous event—Anderson, Indiana's version of an Extreme Home Makeover! Over 150 sponsors and hundreds of volunteers helped with renovations by donating time, money or materials. Skip even went so far as to orchestrate a temporary leave with the National Guard so that Greg could come home and join his wife and sons for the big unveiling. Skip drew an entire community together in an effort all were proud of.

On New Years Eve, 2009 an Anderson family lost two little girls in a house fire, not to mention all of their belongings. They had no insurance, no money for funeral expenses, and three other children to take care of. Skip again went above and beyond. He orchestrated multiple fund raisers throughout the community and brought several organizations together (i.e. Red Cross & Hoosier Burn Foundation) to take care of the family's every need. He not only raised enough money to cover the funeral expenses, he raised enough to get them into a new home and pay about six months rent. Skip's efforts also netted donations of furniture, clothing and toys.

He then coordinated a community event with volunteers to move everything into their new house. He also saw to it that the family

received some much needed grief counseling. Skip's current project is probably the best yet. Helping the Bouslog family rebuild their lives, local firefighters realize the need that existed for a permanent solution to help fire victims in the future. Thus, the concept the Madison County Fire Rescue House was born. The plan was to acquire an old fire station, turn it into a museum and build a house on the adjoining lot to give victims someplace to go immediately after a devastating house fire.

Madison County fire chiefs from Anderson, Pendleton, Alexandria, Frankton, Chesterfield and Adams Township showed up at the site of the proposed fire rescue house to show their support for the project in April. In addition to several fund raisers, Skip acquired many corporate sponsors. Hoosier Park Racing & Casino, hosted a benefit night with a live band and auction on July 24. Plus, Indianapolis Colts Center Jeff Saturday, spokesman for the People's Burn foundation, also volunteered to help Skip's project come to fruition.

Skip also found two companies, Bolta-Blok and the Ready Corporation, which produces green materials for home construction. Both companies generously agreed to donate all the materials necessary for the construction of the entire house. Fire survivors will now have immediate shelter for two weeks within the Fire Rescue House, with meals furnished by the Texas Roadhouse. They will be assigned a voluntary case worker to help them get back on their feet, plus any necessary counseling will be provided by The People's Burn Foundation. After the initial two weeks, Hart & Hart Properties (owned by a retired firefighter) will work with the fire victims to move to a long-term residence in one of their rental units.

Fund raising is still undergoing to finish the fire museum next door to the MCFRH. If you would like to support one of the first fire rescue houses of this kind in the nation, contact Skip Ockomon at 765-425-1936 or mail a donation to:

Madison County Community Foundation
33 W 10th Street, Ste. 600
Anderson, IN 46016-1056
(please put MCFRH on the memo line).

If you have a Facebook account, you can also keep tabs on fund raising events on the 'Madison County Fire Rescue House' page. We hope Skip has great success finalizing the museum, and continues to keep giving back to his community for many more years to come.

House Passes Legislation Improving FIRE Act/SAFER Grant Programs

Reprinted with permission from the IAFF
November 18, 2009 – By a bipartisan vote of 395-31, on November 18, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 3791, the FIRE Grants Reauthorization Act of 2009. The bill makes improvements to both the Assistance to Firefighters (FIRE Act) and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant programs that will significantly benefit professional fire departments in the United States.

The House also adopted the Firefighter Fatality Reduction Act as an amendment to H.R. 3791. The amendment, offered by Representative Ed Permuter (D-CO) promotes fire department compliance with industry consensus standards -- a top IAFF priority. The amendment passed by a vote of 358-75.

“Reauthorizing the FIRE Act and SAFER and enacting the Permuter amendment are of critical importance to protecting the health and safety of IAFF members,” says IAFF General President Harold Schaitberger. “Passing both through the House brings us one step closer to ensuring our nation’s professional fire departments have the tools and support they need to protect public safety.”

H.R. 3791 would make important changes to the way FIRE Act grants are awarded to the benefit of professional fire departments. Specifically, the bill would significantly increase the amount of funding for which larger departments may apply, and reduce the local match from 20 percent to 10 percent. The proposal also allows the match to be waived for communities facing financial hardship, and eliminates the local match entirely for departments applying for a fire prevention grant.

Perhaps most importantly, the bill also guarantees professional and combination fire departments a minimum percentage of funding under the FIRE Act. To date, professional departments have enjoyed no such guarantee and have been significantly shortchanged in FIRE Act grants awards.

The bill also simplifies the rules governing SAFER, making it significantly easier for municipalities to commit to a SAFER grant. Amendments include shortening the grant period from five to three years, implementing an across-the-board 20 percent local match, and

eliminating the current funding cap. It also makes permanent the temporary authorities to waive the SAFER local match and other restrictions.

The U.S. Senate is currently working to craft companion legislation, which it is expected to consider before the new year.

From IAFF General President Schaitberger

December 10, 2009
To: All IAFF Members

I am writing to inform you that I have accepted the decision of General Secretary-Treasurer Vincent J. Bollon to retire from his position, effective January 15, 2010, as indicated in his December 8, 2009 attached correspondence to me. Having served since 1988, he has the distinction of being the second-longest serving principal officer in the 92-year history of the IAFF, surpassed only by George Richardson’s service from 1920-1956.

Vinnie has stated in his letter of retirement that his current personal circumstances are such that it is really no longer possible for him to continue in the position as our General Secretary-Treasurer. I read his letter with bittersweet emotions—sadness that he is leaving us and pride in his example of union leadership that will remain with us.

I cherish the strong friendship that Vinnie and I have had for over 30 years. It was a great honor to have worked as the Chief of Staff for our union when Vinnie was first elected to become our General Secretary-Treasurer, and I have been very fortunate to have him as my full partner for the last nine and one-half years since we ran together as a team in 2000, when I became General President.

This International has been well served by his able stewardship throughout the more than 21 years that he has worked so hard as our Chief Financial Officer. His sound judgment, integrity and strong fiscal and fiduciary skills were the guiding qualities that put this great union on the strong financial footing that we enjoy today.

Since the day he joined the FDNY in 1959, Vinnie said that his life’s ambition was to be the best fire fighter he could be. It is clear from his record of fire department service, as a member decorated several times for bravery, that he certainly accomplished that goal during his career with FDNY. As a young fire fighter,

it didn’t take long for Vinnie to figure out that our union, the IAFF, was primarily responsible for just about every positive aspect of the job, including staffing, pay, health benefits, and pensions. As it is in many places, the Uniformed Firefighters Association (UFA), Local 94, and the Uniformed Fire Officers Association (UFOA), Local 854, were the center of progressive change and improvement, and Vinnie wanted to be a part of that.

Vincent J. Bollon is nothing less than an extraordinary union leader going back to his first election in 1975 as the Financial Recording Secretary for Local 94 (UFA) in New York. After his promotion to Lieutenant in 1977, he continued his union service to Local 854 (UFOA) and was first elected to Local 854’s Executive Board in 1978 and served as the President of the Uniformed Fire Officer’s Association for eight years.

His experience on the job taught him the importance of facing even the toughest challenges head-on. It also taught him the power of teamwork and all that we can achieve when we work together. We have all greatly benefited from his principles and experiences. On a personal note, I am especially proud of his work and efforts that helped re-create virtually every aspect of the IAFF’s financial operation, setting us on the course for prosperity in the new millennium.

We will properly recognize Vinnie’s distinguished service to this union at a Gala to be held in his honor during our upcoming Legislative Conference in March, so that we all, including our affiliate leadership, can gratefully celebrate his outstanding career. Further, in accordance with the requirements of Article V, Section 5 (Vacancies) of the International’s Constitution and By-Laws, I am calling a meeting of the IAFF Executive Board on January 20, 2010 at IAFF headquarters, for the purpose of meeting and electing, by secret ballot, one of the members of the IAFF Executive Board to fill the unexpired term of the General Secretary-Treasurer.

Understanding that we will be going through an important interim Principal Officer transition for the first time in our Union’s history, I have asked Vinnie, and he has graciously agreed to be available to assist with the transition as long as needed. I have also asked him to join us during the February Executive Board meeting to work with the new General Secretary-Treasurer throughout that meeting and again, he has kindly agreed and is committed to help throughout this period.

I join all of you, as we wish Vinnie, and his wonderful wife Linda, nothing but the very best in his retirement years.



Bollon

** Convention Notice **

PFFUI Convention

May 12-14, 2010

Indianapolis Hilton - Downtown

The 34th Annual Convention of the Professional Firefighters Union of Indiana will be held May 12th - 14th, 2010 at the Indianapolis Hilton Downtown located at 120 W. Market Street Indianapolis, IN 46204.

A block of rooms is available under our name at a rate of \$99.00 single or double occupancy. Reservations must be made prior to April 10, 2010 by calling the hotel at 1(800) 315-1906.

The registration fee is \$50.00 if received prior to April 10, 2010 or \$75.00 thereafter, per registrant (delegate, alternate, or guest). Registration on-site will be held Tuesday May 11th and again the following morning beginning at 8:00 a.m. prior to the start of the Convention at 9:00 a.m.

Individuals are encouraged to register early and use the PAC Contribution Option of paying the registration fee by personal check as a voluntary contribution to benefit the Indiana Firefighters PAC.

Credentials will be available for downloading and printing on our web site and will also be emailed to Local Affiliate Officers. One copy of the credential for each delegate and alternate who will be attending should be completed and returned to the Secretary-Treasurer by April 10, 2010 and the original is to be carried by the member to convention for registration. Locals are allotted an equal number of alternates for their delegates however you do not even have to send your allotted number of delegates to receive your full per capita voting strength. Votes will be divided evenly among a Local's registered delegates. All Locals must have their per capita tax paid through the month prior to convention to be entitled to representation at the convention.

The cutoff date to remember is April 10, 2010. You should make your hotel reservations, return your credentials, and forward to the Secretary-Treasurer any resolutions your Local wishes to introduce by this date. If your resolution is not received by this date you will need to bring 200 copies and ask the delegation's approval for introduction as a 'late' resolution.

Nominations and elections of the offices of President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, six (6) District Vice-Presidents, and four (4) Regional Trustees shall take place in accordance with Article V of the PFFUI Constitution and By-Laws.

Any Local Union of 99 or less members, which does not send a delegate to the convention may be represented by giving their proxy votes to another Local Union, within their district, provided the following conditions are observed: The Local Union granting the proxy and the Local Union accepting the proxy must be in the same district of the State Union. A proxy must be authorized by a majority of the votes cast by secret ballot of the members present and in good standing of the Local Union granting the proxy(s) upon a 15 day notice of the vote. No Local Union may, in addition to its own delegation representation, accept proxies to represent Locals in excess of 100 votes. Proxy voting shall be permitted only in a roll call vote and the election of Officers and shall be cast by the Chairman of the delegation casting the votes.

It is important that your Local be represented at the convention. Any questions should be directed to Secretary-Treasurer Michael Pinkham.

Huntington Blaze at Medical Office Building

Originally printed at <http://www.indianasnewscenter.com/news/local/79229942.html>

FORT WAYNE, Ind. (Indiana's NewsCenter) Fire heavily damaged a medical office building in Huntington, Sunday December 14. Firefighters worked for four hours to extinguish the fire at The Huntington Pediatric Medial Group and Women's Medical Specialist, on Etna Avenue, Sunday morning.

Officials believe the fire started near an air conditioning and furnace unit on the roof, but the cause remains under investigation.

Firefighters say they were forced to call in off-duty men to help the team on the scene, because they were short handed due to recent layoffs.

Last month, Mayor Steve Updike closed a fire station and laid off six firefighters after a city budget shortfall of \$1.7 million. Fire officials say this was the most significant fire since the layoffs, and they were impacted by the cutbacks.

"The actual outcome of the fire was not impacted due to the layoffs," Huntington Fire Department Fire Marshal Jeff Caley said. "Due to the nature of the fire and the type of fire it doesn't matter how many we arrived with, it would have been that amount of

damage. It did slow us down in some of the efforts to get the situation mitigated." Firefighters say files were damaged due to the smoke, but can be restored.

Caley says the department is rethinking how they tackle fires shorthanded after Sunday's blaze.

Have a story to tell?

Email the latest news happenings in your Local to Kara Glennon at kglennon@indy.rr.com. Be sure to include photos if you have them, and we may publish your story in the next quarterly PFFUI newsletter!



The PFFUI is now a group on Facebook!

Firefighters make their voices heard loud & clear

Firefighters gathered on December 7 at the statehouse to let members of the House Ways and Means Committee know what is happening to the fire service across Indiana and the problems currently being created by the tax caps. Firefighters from across the state encouraged the lawmakers to refrain from allowing the tax caps into the constitution before 2011 and the full impact is felt. President Tom Hanify testified that “To put them in the constitution before we understand the full impact would be a disservice to the taxpayers, the men and women serving in the fire and EMS services and a potential disaster.



We must proceed with caution as we revamp Indiana’s tax system to make sure that our communities remain safe.” He further stated that firefighters are in favor of a positive environment for businesses in the state of Indiana, because we understand that a good economic environment is good for Indiana and our citizens.



Indiana AFL-CIO Constitutional Convention

REPORTED BY
4TH DISTRICT VICE PRESIDENT MIKE REEVES

I had the honor of acting as a delegate to the 26th Constitutional Convention of the Indiana State AFL-CIO Convention in Indianapolis December 7-9, 2009.

Indiana AFL-CIO President Ken Zeller is retiring. He will be replaced by Nancy Guyott (USW) who was unanimously elected as the new president. Joe Breedlove will continue as secretary-treasurer. Chuck Sosbe was reelected to represent firefighters on the executive council.

- Quite a few resolutions were presented and passed by the delegates in attendance:
- Resolution #1 – Campaign to organize Federal Employees of the TSA.
 - Resolution #2 – Opposing unfair Trade Regimes.
 - Resolution #3 – Opposing Privatization of Public Services.
 - Resolution #4 – Opposing California-Style Referenda on Public Construction Projects.
 - Resolution #5 – Creating and Sustaining Good Green Jobs.
 - Resolution #6 – Recognizing and Encouraging Diversity in Our Movement.
 - Resolution #7 – Urging Strong Standards for Those Hired to Teach Our Children.
 - Resolution #8 – Opposing Vouchers by Any Name.
 - Resolution #9 – Supporting the Development of High Speed Rail System.
 - Resolution #10 – Supporting the Constituency Group of Young Union Members.
 - Resolution # 11 – Endorsement of Andre Carson CD 7. (Democrat)
 - Resolution # 12 – Endorsement of Joe Donnelly CD 2. (Democrat)
 - Resolution # 13 – Endorsement of Brad Ellsworth CD 8. (Democrat)
 - Resolution # 14 – Endorsement of Baron Hill CD 9. (Democrat)
 - Resolution # 15 – Endorsement of Pete Veslosky CD 1. (Democrat)
 - Resolution # 16 – Endorsement of Evan Bayh. US Senate (Democrat)
 - Resolution # 17 – Endorsement of Democratic House Members.
 - Resolution # 18 – Endorsement of Democratic Senate Members.
 - Resolution # 19 – Supporting Community Service Activities Throughout the State of Indiana.

Calendar of Events Winter 2010



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|----------------------------|---|---------------------------|--|
| JANUARY 24-27, 2010 | IAFF Human Relations Conference
Buena Vista Palace – Lake Buena Vista, FL | MARCH 14-17, 2010 | IAFF Legislative Conference
Washington, DC |
| JANUARY 27-29, 2010 | IAFF ALTS Conference
Buena Vista Palace – Lake Buena Vista, FL | MARCH 27, 2010 | Save the Date! Battle of the Badges
Ron Melsner Jr. (574) 272-2144 (W)
South Bend, IN |
| FEBRUARY 1, 2010 | Indiana Fire & Emergency Services Dinne
Hyatt Regency Downtown - Indianapolis, IN | APRIL 19-24, 2010 | FDIC
Indianapolis, IN |
| FEBRUARY 15, 2010 | PFFUI PEP Seminar
Hilton Downtown - Indianapolis, IN | MAY 12-14, 2010 | PFFUI Convention
Hilton Downtown - Indianapolis, IN |
| FEBRUARY 16, 2010 | Thomas H. Miller Legislative Conference
Hilton Downtown - Indianapolis, IN | AUGUST 23-27, 2010 | IAFF Convention
San Diego, CA |

Indiana Professional Firefighters PAC

The Political Action Committee of the Professional Firefighters Union of Indiana desperately needs your support.



The successes we achieve in the Indiana General Assembly protecting and enhancing our pensions and other benefits could not be realized without participation in the political process.

Elected officials at the state level of government have the ultimate ‘say-so’ in the statutes governing virtually every aspect of our careers, particularly our disability and retirement benefits. The state officials we lobby with cross all party lines and we are totally bipartisan in our support of those elected representatives who support professional Firefighters. These are the individuals who control your disability, retirement, and survivor benefits, and who write the statewide statutes governing merit systems, collective bargaining, residency requirements, disciplinary procedures, and countless other issues affecting you and your family as an active or retired Professional Firefighter .

The Indiana Firefighters PAC relies solely upon voluntary contributions. The PFFUI is requesting each member dedicate a minimum of \$1.00 per paycheck to build an effective political action committee.

To find out how your Local can start a PAC, contact your District Vice-President.

These contributions are not deductible for income tax purposes. Fill out the form below and mail it in today. Let us know that we can count on your support.

Sign Up Now!

cut here

Indiana Firefighters PAC Contribution Form

Name _____
 Address _____ City _____ State _____
 Zip _____
 Phone _____
 Shirt Size (circle one) XXXL XXL XL L M S

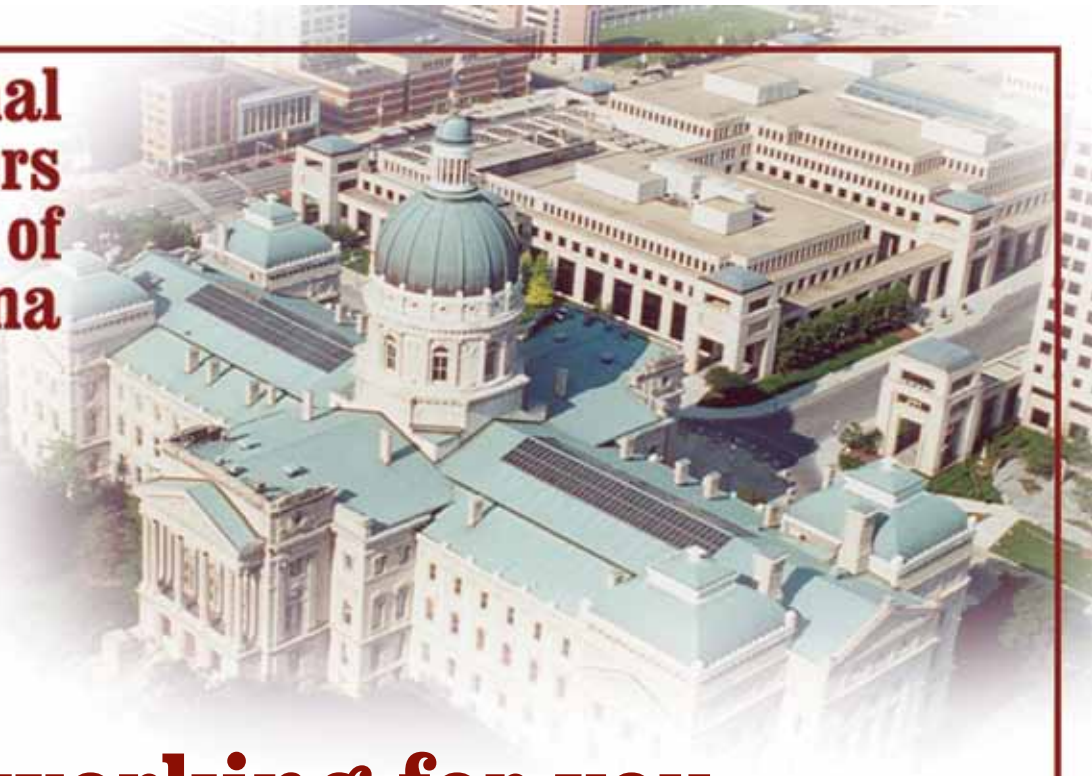
Mail to:
 Indiana Firefighters PAC
 P.O. Box 15735
 Ft. Wayne, Indiana 46885-5735

Check the box to indicate the level you are joining.

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 \$200 or more per year
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 Indiana FIREPAC Windshirt</p> | <p>● CAPITOL CLUB LEVEL
 \$100 or more per year
 (\$4.00 per paycheck)
 Receive an
 Indiana FIREPAC Polo Shirt</p> | <p>● LEADERSHIP LEVEL
 \$50 or more per year
 (\$2.00 per paycheck)
 Receive an
 Indiana FIREPAC T-Shirt</p> | <p>● MEMBERSHIP LEVEL
 \$26 or more per year
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 Receive an
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• Photo courtesy of Nancy Flanigan

Professional Firefighters Union of Indiana



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