

BALTIMORE FIRE OFFICER

LOCAL 964

--STAFF--

STEPHAN G. FUGATE -- TOM NOSEK

By and For the Professional Fire Officer

IN UNION
THERE IS STRENGTH

Volume , Issue

December 2006/January 2007

From the Desk of the President

By Stephan G. Fugate

Election results

Much to the surprise of many who closely follow politics, the apparent results of the recent gubernatorial election were clear shortly after the polls closed at 8:00 pm on November 7th with the only unknown being the margin of victory for Mayor O'Malley. Given the relative closeness in some of the published pre-election polls and the unusual number of absentee ballots, predictions of not knowing the final results for several days after the election were common; but again, that was not to be and the race was really over well before midnight.

Such is the nature, I suppose, of politics in 2006 Maryland which underscores the difficulty in balancing the various and obviously divergent views of our membership against clearly best interests. As public employees, our collective fortunes rise and fall on the tide of political success, and as your elected representatives, we have an obligation to side with those best interests and be prepared to suffer the consequences of our actions if we're wrong.

The decision to endorse our Mayor for Governor of Maryland was made not based on any deals, promises, or certainly not for any self-interest. That decision was made based upon the experience of the last four years with our endorsed candidate of 2002 and the prospects of a less than fruitful future with a four year continuance. Like it or not, we

are part of organized labor and the actions, views and agenda of the Ehrlich Administration were clearly detrimental and contrary to our overall interests.

No, I don't need to be reminded of the often horrific experiences we've had with our Mayor, but I also have to acknowledge that some of the acrimony was self-inflicted and dated back to 1999. That's not to say, however, that we were wrong in our political actions then, and I remain confident that our logic and reasoning was well-founded; but we clearly backed the wrong candidate. The fact that we did so for the right reasons provides little solace in hindsight, but I sincerely believe that's well behind us now and 2006 was not the time to lose the courage to once again do the right thing for all the right reasons.

And yes, I've heard from many of you LOUD AND CLEAR and I understand full well that there was and there remains a difference of opinion. I also understand that the onus is now on us (me, in particular) to somehow justify our political actions, and I would only repeat one observation as a reminder. There were NO deals or promises, and you can rest assured that I will not be moving along to any personal reward because there won't be any. Whatever happens next will be the result of our best efforts to continue doing the right things for the right reasons.

Alas, just when you may have thought that "the election" was over... fasten your seat belts. We have already entered the starting gate for the '07 Mayoral election cycle, and we are but 285 days away from the City Primary (which IS the election) as I write. Ironically, and somewhat sadly, the City Primary will be held on September 11, 2007 and

though I truly wish that solemn date could be spared of such activity, I can only imagine the election laws mandate that the election be held on that second Tuesday in September.

The real point, however, is that we may well find ourselves in discord over preferred candidates in the Mayoral election as well which is arguably more directly consequential to our well-being. While I doubt that we'll be debating Republican vs. Democrat, there will surely be more than one credible candidate so please use some of the next 285 days to do some serious evaluation and be part of the debate when the time comes. With a September Primary, that debate might well occur after our last meeting of the year in June, but a Special Meeting is always in order and the membership can direct such a meeting be conducted for the purpose of an endorsement vote.

Finally, among the more obscure results of the recent election was the passage of "Question K" which, in effect, paves the way for future multi-year contractual agreements by making any fiscal obligations binding in "out" years. What the Charter Amendment will NOT do, however, is allow for negotiation of multi-year agreements that extend beyond the four year term of an incumbent Mayor. So, ironically, this first time back at the bargaining table in January '07 will be for a ONE YEAR agreement and there will be more about that further along.

DROP-2

On November 9, 2006, Councilman Mitchell's Taxation and Finance Committee conducted a hearing on CC06-

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From the President's Desk....

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0370 (DROP-2) which concluded with a commitment to convene a special work-session where all of the interested parties can meet to "iron-out" the several issues that were brought to light in the hearing process. Once that work-session takes place, the presumably amended legislation will go back to the Council for the requisite Second and Third Readings, and if adopted by the Council, will then await the Mayor's signature.

For any number of reasons, some obvious and some not so, there is a desire to have the DROP-2 legislation enacted as soon as possible and I suspect before Council President Dixon is sworn in as Mayor subsequent to Mayor O'Malley's Inauguration as Governor in mid-January. It is the preference of the Unions, however, to have a start-date of July 1, 2007 for the new DROP-2 provisions though that issue is subject to agreement in the pending work-session. We are relatively confident that the DROP-2 provisions will not be retroactive and there may even be a legal prohibition to retroactivity. So, once beyond January 1, 2007, the next logical date would be the start of the City and Retirement System Fiscal Year on July 1, 2007.

For those members possibly uncertain about their eligibility, the date of significance will be the date on which you attain twenty years of credible Fire Department service. So long as THAT date occurs before the implementation of the DROP-2 provisions, you are eligible for Original DROP even if your anniversary date falls inside of the thirty-day window from application to the first day of the following month.

Once the work-session has taken place and we are more certain of the finalized provisions, a "fact-sheet" will be produced for those members with an interest or concern.

Variable Annuity

Our retired members will surely know, but many of our active members may not be aware that our retirement plan does not provide for "cost-of-living" increases common to some other pub-

lic and private plans as well as Social Security. The current structure for post-retirement benefit increases is known as the Variable Annuity and is based wholly on the earnings performance of the invested assets of the System on a fiscal year basis.

Simply stated, if the return on system investments exceeds 7.5% for the fiscal year (July 1 to June 30), there is a pool of money created that is then subject to a formula to determine the percentage of increase payable based upon the anticipated return in the current Bond Market to sustain that increase through the expected pay-out stream (life-expectancy if you will) of the recipients. The benefit increase is expressed in an across-the-board percentage meaning that the higher your base retirement benefit, the higher your dollar amount of increase.

This Variable Annuity structure has been in place since 1983 and has produced increases to eligible retirees and beneficiaries in all but eight of the ensuing twenty-four years. The initial increase at the start was 9.66% PLUS an additional 1% for every year of retirement up to twenty years meaning that longtime (twenty years or more) retirees could have received as much as 29.66%. In those years when increases were provided, the increase ranged from a low of 1.75% ('00) to a high of 10.39 ('86) and averaging 3.367% over twenty-four years.

While an average of 3.367% over twenty-four years might well exceed the cumulative rise in cost-of-living, it has to be noted that of the eight years when no increase was payable, four of those years were sequential. And, though one might argue that such a benefit structure has "worked" for those twenty-four years, there is an underlying problem that has been highlighted and exacerbated in recent years.

In essence, there is a distribution of excess earnings in "good" years, but no reduction or sharing of the burden in "bad" years. The net result of such a structure is an erosion of assets to support the base benefit. In recognition of the apparent structural "flaws" of the current Variable Annuity benefit, a replacement plan will soon be proposed for consideration, the details of which will be available in these pages and on

Local 964's website.

Finally, there has been some discussion of late regarding eligibility for the Variable Annuity benefit and a widely held misunderstanding of said eligibility has come to light. It was commonly (and inaccurately) held that if one retired prior to July 1 of any given year, they would be eligible for the post-retirement increase payable two January's out. For example, it was commonly believed that if one retired in June of '06, they would be eligible for the increase payable in January of '08. The basis of the misunderstanding is absolutely clear and logical but incorrect nonetheless. In the example above, the member would be eligible for an increase payable in '09 which, given the funding mechanism, seems less than fair.

To be clear, you need to understand that the two billion plus dollars currently held in trust are segregated in two major categories for accounting and actuarial purposes. There is what amounts to "active" members' assets and "retired" members' assets and it is the excess earnings attributable to the "retired" members' earnings only that produces Variable Annuity benefits. When one retires, their accumulated contributions and interest is moved from the "active" category to the "retired" category and if that switch is made before July 1st of any given year, that member's assets contributed to the excess earnings for that fiscal year which produces the Variable Annuity benefit payable in January following that fiscal year.

The actual eligibility standard, however, requires that a member be receiving retirement benefits for "two full years" meaning that one is NOT eligible for an increase from that first year when their assets are pooled for investment and accounting purposes on the "retired" side of the ledger. I say all of that NOT to complain, but to explain how it is (I believe) that there could be such a misunderstanding and that it could be so widely held. Eligibility, as they say, is what it is and will not change with the soon to be proposed modifications to the post-retirement benefit structure.

Negotiations

My how time flies when you're having fun! It seems like just weeks ago

that we aborted an ongoing and rather contentious arbitration procedure in favor of mutual agreement on a three-year M.O.U. But, here we are a mere month away from the traditional start of the negotiations process and for the first time in decades we are scheduled to begin in the midst of a Mayoral transition. Not since then Council President Clarence DuBurns became Mayor upon William Donald Schaefer's inauguration as Governor of Maryland in January of 1987 have we faced a similar scenario, and though we've "been there, done that", once again we find ourselves the only constant in the process.

That's not a criticism but an observation and tacit acknowledgement of the potentially difficult process that lies ahead. It was our hope, quite frankly, that there might be a hold-over of the principles with whom we've dealt in recent years so that we would know with whom we'd be dealing and they would have the ability and experience to hit the ground running. There will surely be one individual on the other side of the table with more than ample history and experience but unless she is given the authority to make a deal, all of the institutional knowledge she brings to the process could be squandered.

The two Locals have met and begun to develop our agenda and we have enlisted the support of an independent specialist to assist with economic evaluations and provide expert testimony if and when necessary for both negotiations and arbitration should that come to pass. We are confident in her abilities based upon her previous work and expect that it will be an ongoing relationship for future negotiations as well.

Given the pending transition and attendant personnel changes we might anticipate on the City's side, the actual start of negotiations might well be delayed beyond the traditional and historical January start, but we fully expect compliance with the statutory time-frame and have reached agreement or impasse by the last day of February. We do not understand that our negotiations may not be a high priority in the early days of a Dixon Administration, but it is a high priority with and for our members and we have no intention of conceding our members' interests.

It's Christmas again

Just when you thought that we might be losing the battle of "political correctness" we read that the corporate giants who just a year ago forbade the "Merry Christmas" greeting have now backed-off and are actually encouraging their employees to get into the CHRISTMAS spirit! I do understand that not everyone celebrates Christmas as Christians do and we can debate the secular tone of the holiday forever but I will simply NEVER understand how a sincere and well-intended greeting can be viewed as somehow offensive. Offensive to whom? And why?

Consider this ample warning; I might well wish you a Merry Christmas at some point in the very near future, so if you are one who might find that offensive, DO NOT expect an apology or even an understanding of your personal proclivity. My intent is honorable and sincere but if YOU chose not to have or want a Merry Christmas, that's okay with me. Just remember... Santa is watching.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!!!!!

From the Desk of the 1st Vice President

By Michael Waldner

I would like to thank our members for taking the time to cast votes in the recent election. Congratulations to Tom Nosek who will continue as the Secretary for our Local. I would also like to thank the members for their continuing confidence and for continuing my services as 1st Vice President. Although only one vote was cast to re-secure my position, as I wound up unopposed, I still view that as a vote of confidence by the membership. I promise I will not let you down and will continue to represent all the members' interests to the best of my ability for as long as I can.

Congratulations to all the newly promoted members who have joined our Local or moved upward recently. Especially, welcome to my good friend Ken Killen, who also attended his first meeting this week and hopefully will lead more of our newer members to be regulars at

the Hall.

We are continuing our work with Union Memorial Hospital with the heart/lung scans. They have proven to be a life saving revelation to many of our Brothers. I will be sending out a mailing for the Sundays in January and February 2007. Please consider taking advantage of this important opportunity when the notice arrives and return the form ASAP so you will get an appointment that best suits your schedule. I will be contacting those members with 20+ years of service who have not used this service in the previous rounds. The fee has gone up to \$75 for each scan, the same as the Outreach rate. The former reduced rate was a buy down by the previous director of the program and the funds are exhausted and the discount is no longer available.

As always, I will mention again about the Community Outreach Program conducted by Union Memorial Hospital offering the heart/lung scans only on Saturdays to the general public at **the rate of \$75 each**. The phone # is **1-877-744-3278**. *Getting both for a combined \$150 is a great bargain.* There was a mailing that I received from Upper Chesapeake Hospital that offered a heart scan only for a \$799 fee. The Union Memorial program is much more reasonable and should not be ignored. Our retirees cannot take advantage of this program until we complete the active members; however, it is open to the general public (your spouses, parents, siblings are eligible in this program) but it is only on Saturdays. The wait is not as bad as it had been due to the opening of another scan program at Franklin Square taking some of the crush off the schedule at Union. If Union Memorial is not convenient for you, contact Franklin Square Hospital (sister to Union Memorial in the same Health group). They have a scan machine and are doing heart scans through its own Community Outreach Program. Check with them on pricing, but it should be similar. **The number for Franklin Square is 443-777-7900.**

If anyone (active or retired) has taken advantage of either Outreach program please give me a call (410-908-2179) or email (captal@aol.com) so I

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1st V.P.....*continued from page 3*

can add you to our list of participants. This is only a name list for Union purposes to track the # of members taking advantage of this benefit.

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to go with the arrival of this issue!!!!

Stay safe, attend a meeting and remember this is your Union. I can be contacted to answer any questions or try to help with any problems at (C) 410-908-2179, (H) 410-879-4545, or (W) 443-984-1737 or email at captald@aol.com.

**From the Desk of
the 2nd Vice President**

By Mike Campbell

October 16, 2006 was a solemn day. It was the day that the BCFD buried one of their own, Fire Fighter Allan M. Roberts T-26 who was tragically killed on October 10, 2006 in the line-of-duty while fighting a dwelling fire with reports of people trapped. Brother Roberts exemplified true heroism and succumbed doing what every member of the BCFD does on a daily basis and that is putting your life on the line for others. The turnout that day was quite uplifting and Chief Goodwin rose to the occasion with very spirited words in a highly dignified manner. We'll miss you Allan and will continue to pray for your family during this Holiday Season! A fund has been set up for Allan's children: **Allan Roberts Educational Memorial Fund, M & T Bank Fountain Green Branch, 1201 Agora Drive, Bel Air, MD 21014 Or any M&T bank will accept donations.** Truck 26 is also selling t-shirts and golf shirts and Jim Keefe has made a DVD of the funeral service with all proceeds going to the fund as well. Contact Captain Dave Goldman T-26 for more info. The Memorial Service, whereby we pay homage to our Brothers and Sisters who have passed on this past year will be coupled with Medals Day as a Day of Remembrance (date unknown as yet) in Archbishop Curley High School's chapel,

6701 Sinclair Lane. Fire Fighter Roberts will be honored at this ceremony. Please check the website for the date and plan to attend.

There have been a plethora (that means a lot Steve) of personnel changes at Headquarters and throughout the Dept. lately. Who knows what to make of all these changes but I will wait to see how it all plays out before commenting. It appears that there will be an increase in training especially at the Academy and all I ask is that you give it some time before just denouncing it. With that said, if you have any questions of what you feel are safety issues regarding this training do not hesitate to contact one of the Executive Board members. I attended my first Deferred Comp. meeting as the Fire Dept's representative and can report that the third quarter numbers for the Plan, which is administrated by CitiStreet, were on the positive side with Small Cap and Mid Cap stocks underperforming and the International stocks either meeting or outperforming against their benchmarks. Segal Advisors, who analyze the investment performance for the City of the Deferred Comp. plan, has recommended with approval of the Committee, that Legg Mason Value Fund and Legg Mason Partners Large Cap Growth Fund be placed on their watch list pending a 6-month oversight in which time if there is not improvement in the Fund they will recommend that the Fund be dropped. CitiStreet has begun an Advisor Service that will assist you in managing your account and give personal advice. You can contact them @ 800-905-1833 or visit their website. The next meeting is scheduled for February 27, 2007. If you are not participating in Deferred Comp, I would highly recommend that you begin immediately. This is an excellent avenue to save for the future and with health care costs increasing for Retirees, this may be your way of financing it in the future. It seems that since E-Time has taken hold, I have been handling more and more of our members pay issues. I am not laying the blame at E-Time but will say that either Central Payroll has gotten lax or someone made some boneheaded decisions based on the fact that E-Time was going to save the world. It hasn't!

I would like to congratulate Tom Nosek on his re-election to Recording Secretary. Tom works his tail off for our members and it was good to see our members recognize his efforts. As you already may or may not know Tom does an outstanding job providing our members with entertainment and the raising of funds for our VEBA Fund, which benefits our widows and orphans. He is constantly looking for additional ways to enhance both of these difficult tasks. Give him a call with any suggestions. Please check the web site for up to the minute information on various issues and events. The web address is www.iafflocal964.org.

**I HOPE EVERYONE HAS A SAFE
AND JOYOUS HOLIDAY SEASON!
MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

Health Care

By the time you receive this, Open Enrollment will be over. I hope that everyone had a painless time with the new enrollment procedures. I found it to be very simple. There were small increases with some plans and moderate increases with others. The 2007 Health Care rates for Active and Retired members can be found on page 6 of this Newsletter. If there are any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

Safety and Health

The Dept. has experienced a rash of vehicle accidents lately. Collisions at intersections being a major concern. It is my opinion that the Dept. will be placing more of the onus on the Company Officer and that you will become more responsible for the actions of your driver/operators. Being dressed, making sure that all of your members are wearing their seat belts, along with seeing that the driver is stopping at all Stop Signs and Red Traffic Lights are the three items that they are looking at. My advice is that to protect yourself and to follow the procedures stipulated by the Dept. prior to taking any run you must get fully dressed, walk around the wagon to check each seat belt and to stop at all the red traffic devices. I didn't pull these out of the air. These items were sent out by the Safety Office as responsibilities of the Officers and will be punishable if not adhered to. I disagree with

the Dept's. view on this, but it will be your butt on the line not theirs. Will this increase response times? Absolutely, but you will have to make that decision for yourself. Being a good aggressive fire fighter who goes the extra mile for the citizens and feels as though their expedient actions can contribute to a better outcome for the community has become a dinosaur with this Administration. It's all about the numbers, \$\$\$ and CitiStat! There is a case that is pending upon my writing this and I am waiting to see which direction the Dept. takes with the Officers of the two companies involved.

TB/FLU shots have been dispensed. If you were missed please contact Lt. Mark Fletcher by e-mail or call 410-404-1043. I would like to address a concern with regards to Safety & Health issues. If you are having a problem with your fire house, apparatus, clothing or any other item please let me know by way of e-mail or phone. I hear more often than not that something has been going on for some time and no one had knowledge of this from the Local. Also, House Captains if you are experiencing a problem make sure that you are writing a Special Report along with calling Ms. Hendricks and Jim Bellamy. I would also recommend that

you e-mail the Safety Office:

(FDSO@baltimorecity.gov).

Having documentation makes it much easier in having an issue resolved. The next Safety & Health meeting will be 12/21/06. Call me with any concerns.

President's Club

Currently we have 96 members who are contributing to our PAC Fund. Of those, we have 93 President Club members. The PAC Fund is our most important tool to have the local politicians listen to our concerns. If you contribute \$4.00 or more a pay you are automatically included in the Presidents Club. Thanks to those who have contributed and to those who haven't, contact me if you need a dues deduction card.

As always, keep your Beneficiaries up to date and don't hesitate to call or e-mail me at any time.

Cell – 443-629-0216

Work – 410-396-5773

E-mail: captain16@hotmail.com

Words to twirl by...

Hello, hello, hello

is there anybody in there

Just nod if you can hear me,

is there anyone at home

.....I have become Comfortably Numb!

-Pink Floyd

Box 414

by Walt Lemmon

The Club is saddened by the death of long time member Mr. Julian Katzenberg. Julian had over 50 active years of service with Box 414. He is survived by active members Roger (son) and wife Elizabeth, Morton (brother) and Alex Katzenberg (nephew) along with Alex's sons Brian and Andrew.

The funeral for F.F. Allan Roberts was a very busy detail. The Coffee Wagons (414 and 416) were assisted at the church by The Arundel Alarmers and a Coffee Wagon from the Gaithersburg VFD. Baltimore County Central Alarmers were at Dulaney Valley Cemetery and Baltimore County Box 234 provided coverage. We are grateful for the Mutual Aid relationship.

Both Wagons were on the 3rd Alarm fire at 2401 Sinclair Ln. (Old Goetz's Meat Packing). We provided service for our members for 34 hours. We went on a 2nd Alarm, a Train Derailment, and a Code F (fatality).

I will close by article by wishing everyone a Happy and Safe Holiday Season.

From the Desk of the Secretary-Treasurer

By Bob Jordan

First let us wish everyone a Happy Holiday Season and a Safe New Year. It seems that the years are going by a lot faster than they used to.

Local 964 Tags: WHO'S THAT Book

I am in the process of having a book printed with a list of our tag numbers and which member has that tag number and hope to have it out after the first of the year. It will be called "WHO'S THAT", and will only be given to Local 964 members. This way when you see another Local 964 tag, you will be able to look it up and see who that member is. I know a lot of our members have their cars and tags registered in their spouses name, but in the book I am going to **print only the member's name** for that tag and not the spouse name.

If you wish to have your **spouse's name listed**, if that car tag is registered that way, please let me know by e-mail at K9118@aol.com, or call me on my cell at 410-908-2434, or at my home at 410-256-7306.

Motorcycle Tags

Still trying to get 25 names on the list. If any new members (or old) are interested, e-mail me at K9118@aol.com or bfo964@aol.com



2007 Health Care Rates

Below are the bi-weekly rates for health insurance for ACTIVE MEMBERS

BC/BS Traditional		BC/BS PPN		Kaiser Permanente		Optimum Choice		United Health	
Ind.	\$ 43.53	Ind.	\$ 39.97	Ind.	\$ 13.77	Ind.	\$ 16.37	Ind.	\$ 13.93
P&C	\$ 85.69	P&C	\$ 77.42	P&C	\$ 26.15	P&C	\$ 29.75	P&C	\$ 26.46
H&W	\$ 98.48	H&W	\$ 89.22	H&W	\$ 28.91	H&W	\$ 32.64	H&W	\$ 29.25
Fam.	\$106.50	Fam.	\$ 97.27	Fam.	\$ 41.30	Fam.	\$ 37.28	Fam.	\$ 41.78

Below are the bi-weekly rates for health insurance for RETIRED MEMBERS

Non-Medicare Retirees

BC/BS Traditional		BC/BS PPN		Kaiser Permanente		Optimum Choice		United Health	
Ind.	\$125.50	Ind.	\$103.41	Ind.	\$131.42	Ind.	\$148.53	Ind.	\$111.55
P&C	\$236.60	P&C	\$196.49	P&C	\$249.71	P&C	\$261.90	P&C	\$210.64
H&W	\$274.64	H&W	\$230.61	H&W	\$262.53	H&W	\$270.73	H&W	\$221.06
Fam.	\$302.42	Fam.	\$250.27	Fam.	\$454.26	Fam.	\$454.72	Fam.	\$389.07

One person with Medicare Supplemental coverage

<u>UnitedHealth</u>	\$ 66.11
<u>Kaiser</u>	\$ 27.52
<u>Optimum</u>	\$ 78.94
<u>BC/BS Trad.</u>	\$ 40.15

Two people with Medicare Supplemental coverage

<u>UnitedHealth</u>	\$132.23
<u>Kaiser</u>	\$ 55.03
<u>Optimum</u>	\$156.70
<u>BC/BS Trad.</u>	\$ 80.31

One person with Medicare and One person without Medicare

<u>United Health</u>	\$114.30
<u>Kaiser</u>	\$ 29.75
<u>Optimum</u>	\$166.67
<u>BC/BS Trad.</u>	\$165.65
<u>PPN</u>	\$143.57

Express-Scripts Retail 30 Day Prescriptions & 100 Day Mail Order

	<u>Generic</u>	<u>Name Brand</u>	<u>Preferred</u>
30 Day Retail	\$10.00	\$20.00	\$30.00
Mail Order 100 Day	\$20.00	\$40.00	\$60.00

From the Desk of the Recording Secretary

By Tom Nosek

This newsletter article comes during the Christian holiday of Christmas, the birth of Jesus Christ and the start of a New Year 2007!! Let us all try to remember Brother Allan Roberts' family during the holiday, so when spending on the dolls, bikes and video games, put Allan's children down and make a donation to the Educational Memorial Fund. This is the first LODD for some of our younger members, and hopefully we won't see another. I would like to thank all of the people involved in the funeral planning, especially Bill Raab, Mike HineLine and Rod Devilbiss -- job well done gentlemen. Chief Goodwin made us proud and Captain Goldman even prouder. Wow, it just seems like yesterday that I was assigned to Aerial Tower 122 out of the Fire Academy, this Saturday the FD is dedicating the Firehouse to FF Littleton Wyatt who spent his entire career there. I will be out of town Saturday but I have fond memories of "Mr. Wyatt" as he was called, from his lifting weights or eating his famous bowl of vanilla ice cream. May he rest in peace.

I would like to THANK all who voted for me in the Recording Secretary election. Your support is appreciated, and I will strive to serve you 100%. I would thank Brother Kevin Rock for his class during the election process. I would like to thank Anita Hatoff for chairing the Election Committee -- job well done and Brother Campbell for being my representative during the process, Thanks Mike!!

President Fugate and I attended the IAFF Affiliate Leadership Training Summit in Atlanta November 12-14. We attended classes on negotiations and protecting pensions. This January will be my first time in negotiations, and I want to be prepared, thanks goes to the membership for sending us!

DROP II: Let me first say that I am not in the DROP and won't be eligible until 2009, I remember when the original DROP was signed into law. I also re-

member the FOP both 734 and 964 members filling City Hall Chambers and union meetings, we were all overwhelmed at obtaining such a pension benefit!!! Where are our members now? We have gotten complacent -- the lack of members attending the City Hall hearing on Nov. 9 was pathetic. Get involved in your pension benefits, enough said!!

Upcoming Events: Installation of Union Officers January 15, 2007. Officers being installed are: Brother Mike Waldner, 1st Vice President, Brother George Jones, Trustee and myself as Recording Secretary. We will be serving hot food and cold beer, location undetermined at this time due to our Hall renovations. Social Night will be March 21, 2007 and is always a good time, food and drinks served-- menu is under construction!!! Retirees Dinner/Dance honoring our retirees from 2006 will be Saturday, April 21, 2007 at Columbus Gardens 8-12 pm. The annual raffle to benefit our VEBA fund will start in January with two \$5 raffle tickets being sent to every member active and retired, this is the only time that the LOCAL ask the membership's help in benefiting the VEBA fund.

MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Enjoy your family during the holidays!

Recording Secretary Election Report

Ballots Mailed Out Total - 750
Active 324 Retirees 426

Ballots Returned Total - 512

Total Countable Ballots Total - 512

Active Ballots Total- 291
Kevin Rock— 35
Thomas Nosek—256

Retiree Ballots Total- 221

Kevin Rock— 54 ballots 14 votes
Thomas Nosek— 167 ballots 42 votes

Total Vote Count

Kevin Rock
Active 35 + Retirees 14 = 49 Votes

Thomas Nosek
Active 256 + Retirees 42 = 298 Votes

Final

Kevin Rock— 49
Thomas Nosek— 298

Thomas Nosek elected Recording Secretary

Respectfully Submitted,

Anita Hatoff, Election Comm. Chairman
Stephan Fugate & Michael Campbell,
Ballot Committee

Sick & Injured

by Bob Hatoff

Tom Whalen is home after bypass surgery. 10/13

Bud Greenwell is being treated for cancer. 10/13

Will Thompson had a cancerous kidney removed. He's home feeling good & the prognosis looks great. 11/18

Guy Puig has cancer and has good and bad days. 10/15

Buck Meurer had successful rotator cuff surgery. 10/28

Joe Wodarski is home recuperating from back surgery. 11/18

Adam Stacharowski is being treated for colon cancer. 11/17

Fred Riedel has been released from St. Joseph's Hospital after treatment for pneumonia.

Don Taylor's latest xrays showed no cancer and he's awaiting the results of a pet scan. 11/16

Russ Hassell has completed his treatments for prostate cancer and everything looks good. 11/20

Tired and Retired

by Bob Hatoff

I just got back from Fire Fighter Allan Roberts' funeral. I wanted to write down my feelings, before my senility kicks in and I forget. These services always bring out mixed emotions in me. I'm naturally saddened by the sudden loss of a brother, but proud of the huge turnout to honor him. The roads and overpasses, on the way to the cemetery, are lined with police and fire fighters saluting our loss. Even more touching are the civilians who stop to pay their respect. Mayor O'Malley, Chief Goodwin and Allan's Captain, Dave Goldman all spoke at the church service. I was deeply moved by the things they said. I had forgotten how much walking and standing were involved in the process. Fortunately I had my daughter, Anita, there to help me over the rough spots. I know some of the people who put this together, but not all of them, so I can't mention names. I will say they have my sincere thanks and admiration. You get so caught up in the emotions of the day that you don't stop to think of all the hours of hard work it took to make everything fall into place in a short period of time. Let's hope and pray we never have to do it again.

Now like most of you I tend to over spend for Christmas. So I came up with an idea how to make some extra money to cover my extravagance. I wanted to write a book about the hierarchy of the Fire Dept. This would include all mem-

bers above the rank of Battalion Chief. I wanted to include the Battalion Chiefs, but my publisher said that would require a second volume. Well anyway my idea was to have a picture of the Chief with a short biography of his Fire Dept. career. You know things like I came to work as a Fire Fighter and went home a Battalion Commander. Or I delivered a pizza to headquarters and they made me a Division Chief. Things of that nature, but I didn't factor in the Mayor becoming Governor. This I'm sure will in all likelihood mean a new magic wand wielder. Some of the Chiefs have left already and there is much infighting among the remainder as they jockey for positions. As a result some Chiefs were gone before I had their pictures printed. So I gave up my project and I'll fall back on my credit cards.

To all my fellow retirees we will be receiving a 2.54% raise in January. I know it's not much, but everything helps. Also the retirees do not discriminate and all fallen stars are welcome to join!

Additional thoughts about the funeral:

1. I'm glad to see so many retirees attended. I can't say how many because they were all still able to get into their uniforms, except for Harry Head who was held together by pins

and crazy glue!

2. There were only 2 of us in civies. Me because I couldn't button the sack coat and Bob Jordan because he's lost 60 pounds and his coat is too large. Remind me to hurt Bob at a later date.

3. Chief Goodwin, if you can fix me up with a larger sack coat, I'd be willing to get off your back in future columns!

4. The Mayor left the church first, followed by City Council President Dixon. Then Chief Goodwin left, followed by his Chiefs. By the time the last Chief exited the church, the sun was setting. Thank goodness there was enough apparatus at the cemetery to supply flood lights for that service.

Note to Chief Goodwin, I'm really sorry for that Bill, but as you know I can't help being me. P.S. I still would like the sack coat!

Well it's time to wrap it up. I want to wish each of you a joyous Christmas and a safe and happy New Year. Keep Christ in your holidays and in your life. We're celebrating his birth and through him all things are possible.

As always you can reach me at 1805 Greencastle Dr, Baltimore 21237 or 410-866-3235.

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