

BALTIMORE FIRE OFFICER

LOCAL 964

--STAFF--

STEPHAN G. FUGATE -- TOM NOSEK

By and For the Professional Fire Officer

IN UNION

THERE IS STRENGTH

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From the Desk of the President

By Stephan G. Fugate

IAFF Convention

Given that the last edition of our newsletter was literally in the mail just days prior to the start of the 49th. Bi-Annual Convention of the IAFF, this is going to seem like "old news" but we believe that there should be some form of a report to our members of the event so here goes.

Celebrating 90 years of proud history and service to the professional fire fighters and EMS personnel in the United States and Canada, delegates from every state in the Union and every Province of Canada convened in Las Vegas, NV from August 10 - 15 to help set the course of the IAFF for the next two years and beyond. The business conducted over four solid days of meetings ranged from deliberations of fifty-one proposed resolutions to the hearing of appeals of Trial Board rulings, to the elections in all twenty-one International Offices.

As either a reminder or something of a tutorial, the IAFF Officers include two "Principle Officers", the General President, Harold A. Schaitberger, and General Secretary-Treasurer, Vincent J. Bollon. Three Regional Trustees (eastern U.S., western U.S., and Canada), and sixteen Vice-Presidents twelve of who represent various geographic regions of the fifty U.S. States and Territories, three who represent relatively equal geographic regions of Canada, and one representing all Federal Fire Fighters in the U.S. and Canada.

Over the course of several previous Bi-Annual Conventions, all twenty-one elected officer positions have become aligned so that the terms of office run in concurrent, four-year cycles. And so it was that this 49th. Convention occasioned the opportunity for twenty-one contested elections, and I had the distinct honor and pleasure of Chairing the Convention Election Committee, allowing me the opportunity to play a significant role in the Convention proceedings. The Elections Committee and Sub-Committee consisted of sixteen members each, with one member being appointed by his or her respective District Vice-President. I would like to sincerely THANK Fourth District Vice-President and our dear friend, William V. Taylor, for appointing me to the Elections Committee, and I would also like to THANK General President Harold A. Schaitberger for selecting me to serve as Chairman. It was indeed an honor!

The two Principle Officers and three Regional Trustees are nominated from the convention floor before the entire delegate body. You may already know that both General President Schaitberger and General Secretary-Treasurer Bollon were re-elected by acclamation, and I must once again say it was quite an honor to conduct the process and declare General President Schaitberger's re-election.

Among the three Regional Trustees, the Eastern Region Trustee (ours) was unopposed though both the Western Region and Canadian Region Trustees were contested races.

Following those five officer nominations from the convention floor, a convention recess was called during which all sixteen Districts re-convened in sepa-

rate caucuses for the nomination of their respective District Vice-Presidents. Unlike the Principle Officer and Regional Trustee elections, only those members of each District are permitted to participate in the nomination and voting for their District Vice-President, and each of the sixteen individual processes are conducted by Election Committee and Sub-Committee members.

The convention then reconvenes for announcement of the results of the District Caucuses and of the sixteen District Vice-President nominations, only two resulted in contested races with the remaining fourteen (including, I am pleased to say, Bill Taylor of our Fourth District) were also re-elected by acclamation. In the final analysis, only a single incumbent Vice-President was defeated in his bid for re-election, and the remaining two Trustees who had also been challenged prevailed.

Of twenty-one incumbent, elected officers, only four were challenged and only one suffered defeat. In that particular race, there were 10,500 ballots cast and the margin of victory was only 158 votes. Lest you view the near absence of turn-over as either a sign of complacency or a lack of interest, let me assure you that it's anything but that. I know all twenty-one men to one degree or another, some very well, some only casually, and I will tell you that they represent the best of the best. The leadership of the IAFF is easily the class of International labor union executive boards, and we are very fortunate to have them working for us at the National level in both the United States and Canada.

As mentioned previously, there were fifty-one resolutions for consider-

...continued on page 2

From the President's Desk.....

...continued from page 1

ation by the 1,895 delegates and 772 alternates at the 49th Bi-Annual Convention. Resolutions are, in effect, the method of creating and/or changing the governing policies of the IAFF and include everything from budgetary matters to the official Censure of local elected officials and/or Fire Chiefs who have run afoul of a Union Local, and/or a State or Provincial Association.

I suspect that our Secretary-Treasurer will address the economic impact of convention actions elsewhere so I'll leave the detail to Anita. What I will say is that "you get what you pay for" and the per capita (monthly fee per member) paid to the IAFF is now approaching and will likely exceed \$11.00 by September of next year. For those who remain Active-Retired Members of the IAFF, the per-capita is half that for a working member. The total cost to the Local will now be something just over \$5,500 per month and that is not a complaint but an observation.

Our dues structure is what it is and though we appear to be slipping with the increases in IAFF per capita (5.7% this year alone) we do not anticipate any increases in dues anytime soon. Yes, with a fixed percentage of base pay in place, there is a marginal increase as our members advance in longevity steps, and we all receive negotiated salary increases, but I don't need to remind anyone that we seldom receive more than three percent. Trust me, that's not for lack of effort and Local 734's most recent experience with Arbitration showed once again how difficult it is to bargain with the City of Baltimore. But enough about the economics.

The voting process for Convention Resolutions is about as "democratic" as it gets with an escalating format as follows. First, there is the voice-vote and this is typically sufficient and determines the fate of most Resolutions. Should the volume of the voice-vote appear to be somewhat equal or even close, the yeas and nays are asked to raise their hands and though the convention hall is usually a HUGE facility, the Convention Chair (General President Schaitberger)

is able to visually determine which side prevails.

In the very few instances when those two methods are indeterminable, the Chair can call for a "division-of-the-house". Additionally, if the ruling by the Chair appears to be contrary to what it may appear by someone else, ANY delegate may challenge the Chair and call for a division-of-the-house as well. When a division of the house is called, all points of entry into or out of the hall are closed by the Sergeant-At-Arms and only those delegates present are permitted to vote.

A division-of-the-house is conducted by having delegates on both sides of the vote, separately stand and the Sergeant-At-Arms Committee members actually count each and every delegate. There are typically twelve or so committee members doing the counting, using hand "clickers" and the various counts are then reported to an IAFF Official for tabulation. Once proponents of both sides of the issue are counted, the Chair announces the results and that is the end of that. Usually. Though I have never experienced it, there is an ultimate "Roll Call" process available where each Union Local votes their total membership based upon the number of members for which per-capita is being paid. This process requires that each delegation Chair (usually the Local President) identify their self to the Sergeant-At-Arms and cast their total voting strength one way or the other. As you might imagine, this process can take several hours, and as I said, I have never seen it used at Convention.

As something of an almost humorous aside to the voting process, the division-of-the-house was used maybe three of four times during the convention and the Chair was proven wrong only once. There was a single instance, however, on Resolution 27 when a division of the house resulted in what seems almost impossible. The issue would have added another \$.01 to the per-capita and apparently seemed unnecessary to a large number of delegates. The voice-vote was so close, the Chair called for a hand-count. After announcing what he believed to be the result, quipping himself that it was "very close", a delegate challenged the Chair and called for a division-of-the-house. It took about fifteen minutes to conduct the standing-count, and it was

clear that the IAFF Official doing the tabulating was being VERY careful with the results. The final vote was 671 For and 671 Against! Fortunately, the Union Local and State Association that proposed the Resolution withdrew to avoid a possible Roll-Call vote, and I suspect we'll see that Resolution once again in 2010.

I would point out, by the way, that though there were just over 1,600 delegates to the Convention, two times 671 is only 1,342. We cannot account for the attendance (or not) beyond ourselves, and I can assure you that ALL FIVE members of Local 964's delegation were present and accounted for ALL the time. Of course, there are reasonable explanation for the lower count; perhaps not everyone present voted, and there is no count for "not-voting". Again, the doors are locked at the start of a division-of-the-house and many were likely caught taking care of personal business or Union issues via cell phone. Indeed, I am familiar with more than one circumstance that demanded a Local Union Officer return to their home location to take care of urgent matters.

All in all, it was a very productive and successful convention. My work on the Elections Committee took me away from the convention floor frequently, and the hectic nature of it all made time fly. The daytime heat was oppressive (don't believe the "dry heat" BS) and the nighttime temperature was only slightly better. We did, admittedly, have a little time for socializing and relaxing, but it was more working time than not and I do believe that we represented you and your interests well.

IAFF Fallen Fire Fighter Memorial Service

For the third time in the last four years, it was my honor and bittersweet pleasure to accompany the family of a Local 964 member lost in the line-of-duty to Colorado Springs, CO for the Annual IAFF Fallen Fire Fighter Memorial service. At this twenty-second observance, Captain Donald W. Hubbel was added to the black granite wall of the Memorial and will forever be honored and remembered for his duty and ultimate sacrifice to the greater good of us all.

The IAFF Memorial in Colorado Springs was conceived by members of Colorado Springs Local 5 and brought to fruition in 1984 when their city fathers granted a lease (\$1.00 per year) in what was already "Memorial Park", a beautiful and well-kept public park just east of the city's commercial district. The backdrop to that corner of the park, in the relatively short distance is southern edge of the Rocky Mountain range with Pike's Peak as the centerpiece. To say that it is a beautiful monument in a beautiful setting would be something of an understatement, and you really have to see it to appreciate it.

The first Memorial service was conducted in 1986 and it was in 1989 that the first of the now two black granite walls was erected bearing the names of The

Fallen. Although the IAFF was organized in 1918, it was determined that the names of those who died in the line-of-duty dating back to 1976 would be etched on the wall. It was not until 1976 that the U.S. federal government began to track Line-Of-Duty Deaths in the Fire Service, no doubt a result of the publication of *America Burning* in 1973.

At this year's Memorial Service, one hundred, thirty-seven names were added to the walls including a significant number of those whose death occurred long ago (dating back to 1987) but have since been recognized as Line-Of-Duty. Among the deaths attributed to the twelve month period stipulated were those IAFF members of the "Charleston Nine" and the two FDNY members killed in the Deutsche Bank Building fire in

August of '07. A complete listing of those honored is available on the IAFF website as well as established criteria for inclusion or consideration.

It seems that the Memorial Service grows with each year and this year's Service was hard to adequately describe and, again, you had to be there to appreciate it. I'm sure we've all been to a Line-Of-Duty Funeral and we're appropriately moved by the Honor Guard and, on most such occasions, the Pipe & Drum Corps. Imagine, if you can, an Honor Guard of 690 uniformed members from across the U.S. and Canada and a Pipe & Drum Corps of 237. It was an experience that few will ever experience and of all the things I wish for our members, I do wish that everyone would have the opportunity to witness it first-hand.

From the Desk of the 1st Vice President

By Michael Waldner

Welcome back from the summer vacation months, it is now time to get back to school and work. We can now look forward to many challenges at work and in our economy. Hopefully, Bush and associates won't run the country into the ground before they are relieved of command. Closer to home, there appears to be some major hurdles in our Department (staff reductions by any name or method is just the same, promotional test changes) even under what was supposed to be new management. Please be ready to supply all the possible support of the Unions to defend our positions as it appears there are some mighty struggles ahead.

Congratulations to all the members nominated and confirmed at the September meetings. Thanks for taking an interest in your Local, welcome to any new members. I'm sure a full listing will appear elsewhere in this issue. Congrats also to Mike Campbell and Steve Fugate who will be returning in their positions on your Executive Board. We, as a Board, will continue to serve you to the best of our abilities, as always.

The MDA / IAFF Softball tournament was plagued by rain and was shortened to include only the undefeated teams that remained on Sunday morning in a single elimination format. Our team had won both games prior to Sunday previously and returned on Sunday morning but forgot to bring our bats. We were eliminated by a strong Florida Combined team that went on to finish second. We will do better next year. Anyone interested in playing in September for the "40 and over" team please contact me. If anyone (any age) wants to join the Firehouse Tavern team for League play in Parkville / Perry Hall please contact me also.

Heart/Lung Scans and Physical Assessments

In the near future all members active and retired will receive a questionnaire from Union Memorial to inquire about your participation in or avoidance of our Heart / Lung Scan program. Please take the time to answer the several questions and put the form back in the self addressed envelope for return directly to Union Memorial. They are trying to keep the Program going and are looking for advice on what works and what could be improved upon, as well as what they can do to get those of you who have not participated interested.

As always participation has slacked off in the summer months. Please try to remember to make an appointment in the Fall, when things return to normal schedules following the vacation months. **We are in danger of this program ending due to lack of participation.**

This program is by appointment on every Tuesday and Thursday between 1200 – 1300 hours at the Fitness/Rehab Center and will include a wellness background questionnaire screening and blood test panel. **You can choose to do either or both programs.** There is also a cardio evaluation performed on a stationary bike. These programs (Assessments and heart/lung scans) at Union Memorial are now offered to **ALL** interested members, **active and retired of both Locals (734 & 964) and their spouses and widows.** The results will be available only to you or a Doctor you designate. **There will still be a fee of approximately \$150 for the scans but the assessment is free.** The entire program including the heart/lung scan will take less than 1 hour of your time and both will be done on the same designated days (Tuesday and Thursday) assigned to us. It will be worth it just to get all the rest of our active and retired members and their spouses through the

...continued on page 4

1st V.P.

...continued from page 3

heart/lung scans. Please take advantage of it. You are never too young or too old to monitor your health. **Again, these are open to active and retired members of both Locals (734 & 964), their spouses and widows.** Please take advantage of these appointments while they last. We need to keep the schedule full until all interested parties avail themselves of this unique opportunity. Union Memorial will only staff these programs if we use them.

Anyone who has participated and received his or her report is encouraged to email or call me (captal@aol.com or 410-879-4545) with any feedback, especially on the physical assessments. Please let me know good or bad features so we can adapt and improve this program.

Below are the directions, instructions and contact information to schedule appointments for the Assessment and heart/lung scans. You will have to contact the heart/lung phone # to coordinate your appointments for the same Tuesday or Thursday that you do the assessment.

FITNESS ASSESSMENT PRETEST INSTRUCTIONS

Guidelines recommended for the most accurate test results:

- Wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothing. Sneakers preferred.
- Avoid food, tobacco, and caffeine for at least 3-4 hours before testing.
- Abstain from alcohol consumption within 48 hours of the assessment.
- Avoid moderate or vigorous physical activity within 12 hours of the assessment.
- Ingest no diuretic agents, including caffeine, prior to the assessment.
- Get an adequate amount of sleep (6 to 8 hours) the night before the test.
- Drink plenty of fluids over the 24-hour period preceding the test to ensure normal hydration prior to the testing.

Directions to Fitness Center

Park in garage A (1st garage on your left) and take elevator to main lobby. Walk across bridge to security desk. Sign-in at desk. Go to 33rd Street Building which is straight ahead down the hallway past the pharmacy and to your left. Walk down the ramp past the Conference Center. Elevators will be on your left. Take elevator to 2nd Floor and turn left and proceed down the hallway to the Fitness Center. You will receive a voucher to cover the parking fee.

For questions regarding the assessment test and scheduling contact:

Rebecca Winch at 410-554-2167 (Please note that this is a new number)

She will refer you to 1-877-744-3278 to set up the coordinated heart/lung scan. Let them know you are a Firefighter and need a Tuesday/Thursday appointment to coincide with your assessment.

As always, I will mention again about the Community Outreach Program (parents/siblings, friends etc.) conducted by Union Memorial Hospital offering the heart/lung scans to the general public only on Saturdays at **the rate of \$75 each.** The phone # is **1-877-744-3278.** Getting both for a combined \$150 is a great bargain. If Union Memorial is not convenient for you, contact Franklin Square Hospital (sister hospital 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. These are also open to the general public.**

Remember, if I am your second due Chief (and I usually am), I am your Safety Officer and I will have your back. I'll look out for you, but most importantly you look out for you. Remember too, 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 and I promise to return your call ASAP or email at captal@aol.com.

Mike Waldner

From the Desk of the 2nd Vice President

By Mike Campbell

I wish to begin by expressing my **GRATITUDE** to the Fire Officer membership for allowing me the privilege to serve you first as a Battalion Steward then as Trustee, Recording-Secretary and now as your 2nd Vice-President! For those that don't know, I was recently elected for my second term in this position without opposition. I don't know if that is a good thing or not, but I can assure you that I will not rest on my laurels and will serve the next three years to best of my ability in looking out for our members concerns and their benefits! It truly is an honor that I don't take lightly and never will. I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge my wonderful wife Leisa, my son Jason and my daughter Megan who, begrudgingly at times, allow me the freedom to continue with one of my passions which is serving you, the Fire Officer membership! They have put up with the numerous phone calls at all hours of the day along with the countless days and nights where I am not at home. Thank you and I love you!

I would like to congratulate Harvey Webster in his re-election as Trustee along with those that will be serving as Board of Directors. Finally, I would ask for a little latitude in congratulating and thanking President Steve Fugate for his re-election. Steve was unopposed as I, but I **fully** understand why that was. Throughout the past three years, I have witnessed first hand what Steve does for our members and at times am amazed. I am not only amazed at his work ethic, his never ending defense of our members but also his stamina to continue long into the day dealing with various member issues. It seems at times that he has all of the balls in the air at one time, but when all is said and done, they come back down to earth in a neat little row with each one getting his full attention. Most would probably find this hard to believe but there are issues that Steve and I don't agree on and we voice our opinion with respect

and agree that the membership's best interests are what really count. Which is what these positions are really all about! I want to thank Steve for his friendship and for showing me the ropes of what it means to be a proper Union Official. I am looking forward to working with Steve for another three years and to continue to learn from one of the best! Thanks Brother!

I wish to thank Tom Nosek for two excellent Crab Feasts. Also, deserving of kudos are Frank Schlosser, Gil Brooks, Harvey Webster and Art Turner for their tireless efforts. I had a chance to dust off the 964 store at the 2nd feast and will have it open before and after Union meetings in the future along with other Social Affairs. Items available: shirts, decals, patches, license tags etc.

There is nothing new to report on the promotional front other than to say that we are up-to-date on promotions. Many members have called me regarding various promotional issues, and I will continue to give them what I feel is the correct answer. Sometimes though, that isn't what they always want to hear, and I fully understand that.

At this time, there is nothing new to report on the Battalion Commander issue. The Union has been given verbal notice by the Fire Dept. that they are abolishing the Port Engineer position and creating a Facilities Engineer position. This position will be remaining a Grade 341. The Fire Dept. has not given formal written notice, so we have filed a grievance over this issue. We have been given written notice in accordance with our MOU that the Fire Dept. is reclassifying (1) Suppression Capt. and (1) Suppression Lieut. position into Fire OEM Capt. and Fire OEM Lieut. positions. The Union is opposed to these reclassifications and has had many discussions voicing our opposition to these moves, but so far it has fallen on deaf ears! It is my opinion that since OEM reports directly to the Mayor, that these positions should come out of a separate budget and not the Fire Departments. There is also a possibility that this would disqualify those members from remaining in the F&P pension. Steve is looking into this. **All members should make themselves aware of**

MOP-113, Electronic Communications Policy. The City computers should be used only for City business, not for any personal business.

I attended the Deferred Comp. meeting on 8/26/08. Segal Advisors has been retained as the consultant to our Plan. The Committee voted to do a search to replace the Legg Mason Large Cap Growth Fund. The Committee also voted to give Brown Capital International Fund another quarter to improve. They will be kept on the Watch list for now. The Julius Baer Fund will change their name to Artio in October. This will not affect your portfolio! The top 3 reasons for Hardship Withdraw are: **1. Foreclosure 2. Eviction 3. Medical Expenses.** If you experience a hardship withdraw, you cannot make a lump sum payment back into your account if your financial situation improves.

If you have a pay issue, please let me know and also e-mail the Dept. at BCFD.Etime.

I am handling the Fire Officer organizational automobile/motorcycle tag applications. If you need applications for either auto or motorcycle, drop me a line. When you receive your tags, please remember to send back the letter that is provided and include your tag number. I am currently working with Central Payroll to get Box 414 Association a payroll deduction slot in some form or fashion. Please keep abreast by logging on the Fire Officers website at www.iafflocal964.org.

Please keep Alex Perricone and Larry Gruz along with their families in your prayers. Larry lost a son and Alex lost his dad recently. I would also ask that everyone keep Gordy Webster, son of Bill Webster in their prayers. Gordy's cancer has returned, and he will be going through more chemotherapy. May God bless all of them!

Health Care

Open Enrollment will run from October 20 thru October 31, 2008. The City will hold Health Fairs on 10/22, 10/23 & 10/24/08 at the War Memorial plaza from 0900 to 1600 hrs. Open Enrollment packets should be mailed by 10/10/08. You must notify Employee Benefits of a new address or you will not receive the packets. Express Scripts was awarded a new contract with the City. As part of the RFP,

the City changed the mail order prescriptions from a 100 day supply to a 90 day supply. This is not a violation of our MOU, but it sure would've been nice to receive some type of notification of the change. I have expressed this to the Labor Commissioner! I would like to remind those members who wish to drop the City's health care and receive the \$650.00 that this can only be accomplished during Open Enrollment. It cannot be done throughout the year. A reminder to Active and Retired members, if you have alternative health care and lose it, you can apply for the City's coverage as long as you show proof of loss to the City within 60 days of that loss in coverage. Retirees may also drop the City's health care at anytime. Also, if your spouse passes away you need to visit Employee Benefits or mail a letter to them explaining what has transpired and send in a copy of the death certificate as well to change your coverage. You can access Employee Benefits online at <https://www.baltimorecity.essbenefits.com> or by calling 410-396-5830.

p.s. I have included in this Newsletter a document explaining some of the more important issues in this year's Open Enrollment!

Safety and Health

The Safety & Health meeting was held on 9/18/08. The FD is in the process of changing over to the Ward Diesel Exhaust system. This has been approved by City Hall. These are internal exhaust systems that collect the particulates in a filter on the wagon. The Plymovent systems are over ten years old and now the hoses and the internal parts are disintegrating and falling apart. Chief Clack has applied for a grant of \$1.7 million to outfit all of the apparatus with the Ward Diesel System. The Chief would like to install 2 Ward Diesel systems a month currently and remove those Plymovents that are in place along with repairing the Plymovents that he can with what little money has been provided. This issue rests solely with City Hall for their failure to adequately fund a maintenance policy when the Plymovents were installed and for their lack of a proper

...continued on page 6

2nd V.P.*...continued from page 5*

Fire Station budget which is a measly \$500,000 for this entire year! It is my opinion that every member of the BCFD should complete an exposure report because of the City's disregard for our member's health due to the improper maintenance of the diesel exhaust systems. After completing the form, make sure that you make a copy for yourself. I do not trust the City to look out for your loved ones if in fact you have issues in the future! The Fire Dept. is awaiting architectural drawings so they can get back to replacing the remaining roofs. Next in line are E52, E51, and E36 & T15. The Safety Office is looking into issuing disposable hearing protection. New apparatus comes with the communications systems that can be used as hearing protection. The Safety Office also is looking at the bunkrooms and making sure there are Emergency Lighting and Exit Signs. Each company needs to make sure that we have smoke detectors in the bunkrooms as well. If you need a fire extinguisher in your house, contact Ms. Hendricks. Also, send in a Special Report.

- Apparatus floor repairs in front of T-23 have gone to the contractor. Lead paint has been confirmed in fire house. Units will have to be moved when the abatement process begins.

- Bunkroom/PM Office @ SQ54/T30 – sheetrock has been installed and electrical issues have been dealt with.

- E30/T8 – Have been issued a water cooler

- E44/T25 – FD looking to replace electrical system in house and put in new bay doors along with new lockers. This is also being assisted by the Community.

Make sure that you e-mail the Safety Office at (FDSO@baltimorecity.gov) if you have any safety related issues along with contacting me. If you are e-mailing Health and Safety Officer Bill Jones, you must e-mail William H. Jones, not Will-

iam Jones! You must also continue sending in Special Reports as is policy. The next meeting is scheduled for 10/16/08. Contact me with any issues. **BE SAFE!**

President's Club

I will be canvassing those members who have yet to sign up for the PAC Fund. Stay tuned! Retirees cannot contribute by way of dues deduction, but can still donate the full amount of \$100.00 by way of cash or check to be included in the Presidents Club! Please make checks out to: Local 964 PAC Fund! The PAC Fund is our most important tool to have the **local** politicians listen to our concerns. The Fund can **only** be used for Local and State politicians and **cannot and will never be used** for Federal politicians, (President, Senator etc.) If you contribute \$4.00 or more a pay you are automatically included in the President's 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

Worlds to twirl by...

Almost cut my hair
Happened just the other day
It's gettin' kind of long
I could've said it was in my way
But I didn't and I wonder why
I feel like letting my freak flag fly
And I feel like I owe it,
yeah ...to someone, yeah

Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young

**From the Desk of
the Secretary-Treasurer**

Anita Hatoff

I hope everyone enjoyed their summer. The annual crab feasts were once again wonderful. The food was fabulous and the crabs were even better than you could imagine. The people who catered the event from the UAW hall were outstanding. As always these events are never properly attended. If you have never been to one you should make the effort next year. They are well worth your time. Thanks to everyone who made the crab feasts come together.

If you haven't been to or by the Union hall lately Garceau Realty is now open for business. They are very excited about their new office location. Stop by if you get a chance. Everyone is very nice.

The Bank of America should be starting construction in October for the ATM. It will be in the doorway between the Daily Grind and Garceau Realty. They have been a pleasure to work with. They are having their electrician wire an electrical box above their ATM so we can put a light up to shine on the American Flag with no cost to us except for the light fixture we choose.

Now that we are back to having our monthly meetings I hope to see more faces in the crowd. The meetings last about 1 to 1 ½ hours. They are well worth your time. During the 2 monthly meetings in September we had nominations for President, 2nd Vice President, One Trustee and all Board of Directors positions.

HAPPY
THANKSGIVING

OPEN ENROLLMENT

The City's 2009 annual open enrollment will be held from **October 20, 2008 through October 31, 2008**. See below for important bullet points:

- Personalized open enrollment material, plan brochures and ID cards will be mailed to members' home address. Make sure that Employee Benefits has your current address.
 - The City will offer four (4) medical plan choices IN 2009: CareFirst PPN, UnitedHealthcare POS, Kaiser Permanente HMO and Optimum Choice HMO. Members enrolled in these plans who do not wish to make a change will be automatically rolled over to 2009 with the same medical plan coverage at 2009 rates.
- Open enrollment for active/retired members is online. Retirees can also visit Employee Benefits. Members must log on to the city's benefits website at www.baltimorecity.essbenefits.com <<http://www.baltimorecity.essbenefits.com>> to change plans, add, change or delete dependents or enroll in new coverage.
- All of the city's health care plans allow coverage for dependent children to age 25 regardless of student status. Dependent children who became age 25 at any time during 2008 will be withdrawn effective 12-31-2008 unless documentation is provided to EBD to support proof of disabled status.
- **Members who are eligible for medical coverage but who choose not to participate in the city's plans may be eligible for waiver credits. Any employee who wants to enroll for the \$650 waiver credit must elect the benefit each year for the following plan year.** Elections for waiver credits do not carry forward from year to year. Members are no longer required to bring hard copy proof of other coverage to the Benefits Division.

What's new in 2009?

- **Special Enrollment for Optional Life & AD&D:** The city provides all eligible members with a basic amount of life insurance coverage. During the 2009 Open Enrollment period only, City employees (not Satellite employees) will be given the opportunity to enroll in Optional Life & AD&D or change to any option and/or level of life coverage without providing Evidence of Insurability (EOI). Members will be able to purchase coverage amounts in multiples of annual salary up to five (5) times salary. The cost of additional life insurance coverage is determined by age and salary amount.
- **Healthcare Flexible Spending Account (HCFSA): NEW in 2009!** The City of Baltimore will offer a Healthcare Flexible Spending Account to Baltimore City employees (not Satellite employees). Health Care FSAs are IRS approved, tax-free accounts used to reimburse eligible health expenses. The account lets employees save money by paying for qualified health expenses using pre-tax dollars. Employees may contribute up to \$3000 annually (a maximum of \$115.38 bi-weekly) in the Health Care Flexible Spending Account. Fringe Benefits Management Company (FBMC) will administer the plan.

OPEN ENROLLMENT CONTINUED...

- **Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (DCFSA):** Effective January 1, 2009, the Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (DCFSA) will also be administered by Fringe Benefits Management Company. The annual limit for DCFSA accounts remains \$5000 annually. All employees will receive packages of introduction from FBMC explaining how both plans work.
- **CareFirst Traditional Plan Discontinued for Employees:** CareFirst Traditional Plan will be discontinued for all **active** employees effective December 31, 2008. Employees who are enrolled in the CareFirst Traditional plan must elect another medical plan for 2009. If another medical plan is not elected, employees will be defaulted into the CareFirst PPN plan effective January 1, 2009. Any **active** employee enrolled in the Traditional Plan will receive a personalized letter from the Benefits Division on or about October 1, 2008 advising that the plan will be discontinued. The CareFirst Traditional plan will continue to be offered to **retirees**.
- **Vision Plan Changes:** The Baltimore City Vision Care (BCVC) vision plan will be discontinued effective December 31, 2008. Employees who are currently enrolled in the BCVC vision plan will automatically be upgraded to the CareFirst BCBS Select Vision plan effective January 1, 2009. All members will receive a membership ID card. The cost of the vision care plan is paid 100% by the City.
- **UnitedHealthcare (POS) Plan:** The City's contribution toward the cost of UnitedHealthcare POS will be reduced from 90% to 85% effective January 1, 2009. It will now be an 85%/15% split.
- **Emergency Room Visits:** Effective January 1, 2009, emergency room co-pays for all plans will increase to \$50. The emergency room co-pay is waived if admitted into the hospital. For a transitional period, employees will be entitled to receive a \$15 rebate on Emergency Room visits. More information on the rebates will be provided at a later date.
- **New Membership ID Cards:** New membership ID cards will be distributed to all members enrolled in CareFirst PPN, CareFirst BCBS Select Vision, Optimum Choice, and Kaiser Permanente. All other plans will distribute membership ID cards for changes only.

The 2009 Open Enrollment Benefit Fairs will be held on October 22, 23 & 24 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the War Memorial Building. All of the city's vendors have been invited to participate to support the city's focus on fitness and wellness by providing literature and wellness services. They will also provide valuable screenings. During the open enrollment, Benefits staff will be available at the city's Benefit Fairs and at our walk-in office at 201 E. Baltimore Street, Suite 500 for any employee who needs computer access or assistance.

Michael B. Campbell, 2nd Vice-President Baltimore Fire Officers

From the Desk of the Recording Secretary

By Tom Nosek

I hope everyone enjoyed their summer, and now that we are back to regular Union meetings, it is good to see the hall filled with newly promoted members. Congratulations to all who were promoted over the summer months.

Local 964 held Union office election nominations the first two meetings of September, the election process was chaired by Brother George Jones, I would like to thank George for a job well done, great job George!! Elected without opposition were our current President Steve Fugate, 2nd VP Michael Campbell and Trustee Harvey Webster, congratulations Brothers. The Board of Directors only had a couple of changes and at this time no contested elections. Congratulations to all members of the Board of Directors.

The 49th IAFF convention was held in Las Vegas in August, the two issues the hit home most to me, were the sanctions of Fire Chiefs who have attacked the contracts, conducted unfair labor practices of IAFF members throughout the U.S. . The sad part is that many of these Chiefs were former IAFF members and some held Union office. The second issue was the success of the IAFF financial store, the IAFF borrowed a million dollars a few years back to create this avenue of helping us the members with financial instruments as CD's, mortgages, car insurance, life insurance etc. The IAFF has paid back the million dollars and is looking forward to a financial sound arm that would in the future pay for projects that benefit us all. This means instead of resolutions on the floor that would increase per capita, such could be paid for by the successful profits from the IAFF financial store.

MDA "fill the boot" at the end of August was again a success, members of both Local 964 and 734 should be proud of their efforts on raising \$59,218.30. I would like to thank several people, Chief Clack for allowing us an extra day to collect, thanks Chief, L964 members MDA co chair Mike

Campbell, Steve Fugate, L734 members Dave Cox, Jerry Robusto, Bob Sledgeski, George Kosta and Eugene Van berger.

I would also like to recognize Box 414/Walt Lemmon, Outback Steakhouse on Boston St, Max's bar in Fells Point, and Chief Rod Devilbiss MDA Board of Director. Top company was T12 with \$5000 and the top Engine was E40 with \$ 2723.14. Congratulatlions to T12 and E40, the members of the Liberty Rd station should be proud, THANK YOU!!!!

I sat as the Union representative to Lt Barry Broyles during the investigation interview of the Calverton Rd tragedy. This is my first time publicly speaking of such, I have always felt that Barry's actions that tragic day did not warrant termination, Barry welcome back.

The Local again held two successful crab feasts on Thursday 9/18 and Tuesday 9/23, 146 members attended the "best deal in town" for \$15, the crabs were great, the beer cold and the stories and lies were even better. Thanks to the Yuengling brothers for their help both nights Franks Schlosser and Gil Brooks, also thanks to Mike Campbell, Harvey Webster and Art Turner.

Just my point of view, the BCFD color guard under the leadership recently of Tyler Tyson and Mike Resisinger has not gone unnoticed, their efforts to see that the color guard made it to Colorado Springs was impressive, I don't understand why there are not city funds available to support members who carry the City/State flag.

BOX 414, is it anything that they don't do or attend, every where I have gone this summer the organization is either working a function or enjoying being with the BCFD, thanks Box 414.

I am accepting ideas to raise money for our VEBA fund (widows and orphans), we need your help.

In conclusion, in working daily with Steve Fugate it amazes me how fortunate that WE are to have someone of his caliber in our leadership and representing us on the pension board. The IAFF and NCPERS (National Conference Public Employee Retirement Systems) also recognizes Steve's talents as he was the Chairman of the election committee in Las Vegas and sits on the board of NCPERS, thanks Steve for all

you do and congratulations to another three years as President.

To the HARDEST working union official I know, congratulations Mike Campbell on another three years as 2nd Vice President.

Two years ago I took up golf, so for the members out there who have seen me in action, the Simon and Harris irons just aren't doing it anymore, so if you know of any good deals (free) on some irons, wedges etc., let me know. My putting is my strong point thanks to the free putter from Jerry Robusto.

THE PUTZ

Sick and Injured

By Bob Hatoff

Mike Dalton fell and cracked some vertebrae. The neck brace has been removed and he's doing good.

Joe Lippy had successful open heart surgery.

Manuel Henderson did some time in St. Agnes Hospital.

Charlie Williams had a couple of bouts with pneumonia but is back in good shape now.

Ed Kilcoyne had his thyroid removed and all looks well.

Burt Schabline was in Harbor Hospital for some tests.

Gordon Geller had a heart attack and is back home doing good.

Earl Seifert had the aneurism on his aorta removed and a new 5" piece put in. He's home and re-cooping fine.

Hubert Cheek had the top half of his left lung removed due to cancer. Doctors feel they got it all and he was in Ocean City with his wife when I called.

Carl Miles is in Blue Point rehab and was in good spirits when I visited.

Tired and Retired

By Bob Hatoff

On August 20, 2008 the Oldtown fire station was renamed in honor of Chief Thomas J. Burke. This was the culmination of years of hard work by the Emerald Society. On the sidelines were hundreds of his fans, like myself, hoping and rooting for this outcome. My only regret was my knee kept me from being there. I first met Chief Burke in 1968, when I made lieutenant and was assigned to Fire Prevention. Even though I was a hard head who had trouble following the rules, he was always patient and kind with me. It was easy to learn from him, because all you had to do was follow his example. He was a fine Christian man and I'm proud to have had the honor of working for him.

I just got back from the annual retreat. As always we had fun and some great fellowship. Chief Clack attended and seemed to enjoy it. However when they started telling stories about me I felt he was avoiding me. When we got up in the morning we found out he had already left. I do hope he comes back next year, but I'm worried because the guys didn't get into some of the really weird stuff I've done!

Charley Nolte called to see how I was doing. I wasn't home but he left his phone number. I returned his call 93 times, but never got an answer. Chuck it was nice to hear your voice on my recorder. If you should ever come home and your phone is in working order, give me a call. I can't call you because my button punching finger is now paralyzed!

I got a letter from Bucky Muth, but there was no return address. I guess when you move every 3 or 4 months using a return address is kind of silly. I'm considering starting a contest. The first person who can prove they talked to Nolte on the phone and found Bucky Muth will win a lifetime subscription to Tired & Retired. However you must present your address and phone number. Nameless street people are not eligible.

Attention Hugo Warns: Fred Riedel called to see how I was doing. Then he asked me notify you that he's another one who remembers you.

Irv Bauer had a surprise 80th birthday party which I couldn't make because of my knee. It's beginning to appear I may be a mere mortal like the rest of you!

Elsewhere in the newsletter you will find my sick and injured list. It needs to be updated because I've been hurting more then most of them and I got behind. In fairness many of them called to check on how I was doing.

I'm selling 8 X 10 pictures of the scar on my knee. They're \$10.00 a piece. If you'd like it autographed it will cost \$100.00. All proceeds will be donated to me.

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

THE BALTIMORE FIRE OFFICERS

Local No. 964

Meetings -- 1st & 3rd Monday

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