

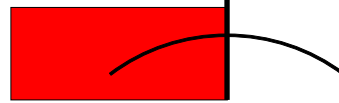


**ARIZONA FIRE  
DISTRICT  
ASSOCIATION**

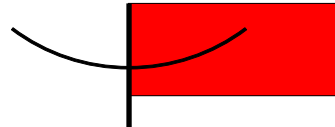
Volume 18, Issue 2  
Summer 2011

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## President's Message

By Simon Davis, Green Valley Fire District

Page 3



I hope this newsletter finds you all well with budgets complete and not fighting Wildland fires!

As we struggle through yet another very tough budget season, balancing the need to provide increased service requests with significant reductions in funding has made the process a significant challenge for all of us.

Before getting into the main topic of my report this month, I'd like to address what I think are the key functions of the Association and where our strengths and yes, our weakness, are. Since the early eighties when the Association was formed, the founding key principles for AFDA included the need to educate Fire Board members and maintain an awareness of legislative issues impacting fire districts. As an association, we have obviously grown both in membership (Districts) and public served (our communities) and the one size fits all model no longer works to meet the needs of member districts. Each one has a unique set of concerns and wants and as the Association represents all members, we have to do the 'most good' for the most members. Does this make everyone happy? Usually not, and over the years conflicting issues have caused some heated discussions. (For those that remember, think of CON reform eight or nine years ago or the Elected Chief/Secretary issue five years ago)

But through all of these challenges, we focused on what was truly in the best interests of the entire membership and, in my opinion we have become a better organization because of working through those issues together. We are constantly evolving to better serve you, the membership and the makeup of the current Association board is a reflection of that. Not only do we have geographical area representation, but also different types of districts are represented so that every member has a voice, from the very small volunteer district to the large 'municipal' career type districts with hundreds of personnel. Using that

foundation, we have the knowledge and willingness to assist and help all our members work through these trying times.

Over the last few weeks, I've received several calls from district's wanting to know why AFDA supported Senate Bill 1218 and what was the rationale behind such a move, particularly the FDAT (Fire District Assistance Tax) language. One of the components of the bill was a revision of how FDAT is distributed. This was not put forward by AFDA, but by the Arizona Tax Research Association (ATRA), an association that represents the interests of commercial property taxpayers in the State. ATRA's leadership has had serious concerns for quite some time regarding the way the old statute allowed merging Fire Districts to combine their FDAT funds with no limits. ATRA was successful in amending the statute in 2010 in a negotiated agreement with AFDA; however a court filing and decision nullified the amendment. Thus, this past session ATRA was back and geared up to fix the problem.

As you all know, we all rely on FDAT in some form or another and any changes to this revenue source is always taken very seriously. In many districts, FDAT is a primary source of revenue, so any cut directly impacts service delivery in that area. In this case, AFDA leadership needed to see what was on the table and, quite frankly, we were not coming from a position of strength, based on the makeup of the AZ legislature this session and their intense desire to lower taxes. Our lobbyists attended meetings with the various stakeholders and a compromise was reached again. As I noted before, this was a direct result of using the founding principle that the result of our actions needs to benefit the most Districts and negatively affect the least.

The net result of the negotiated compromise was this: seven districts have lost a portion of their FDAT, twenty-one districts will see an increase based on the limit going to \$400k in 2012 and the rest of the association membership should see no change, based on their respective county funding of FDAT. (Please note that the FDAT formula remains unchanged for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2011).

Was this a true win-win situation? No, but based on the original intent to lower or even do away with FDAT altogether, this *was* a modest victory. In a nutshell, this is how every legislative session goes. Someone or some group puts forward a bill that we then have to analyze, judge the impact to fire districts and respond to accordingly. It is unfortunate that in

the current state and federal political climates, taking shots at government spending and lowering taxes regardless of the consequences on service delivery seems to be the easiest formula for legislative action.

In closing this month, I would like to thank Lee Miller and John Flynn for their tireless campaigning at the state legislature and looking out for our interests in what was, by any measure, a very unique session. I urge you all to get in touch with your local, state and federal representatives this summer and foster a strong, respectful working relationship. This will ensure that our issues have a responsive ear at the next session and hopefully will require fewer future compromises on critical issues.

Stay Safe and cool this summer. I look forward to seeing all of you in Tucson for the summer conference on July 7<sup>th</sup>.

## AFDA Wraps-Up Successful Legislative Session

By John Flynn, AFDA Lobbyist

The 50th Arizona Legislature - 1st Regular Session adjourned sine die on April 20, 2011 and with the adjournment AFDA concluded another successful session establishing legislative changes in support of member fire districts. This was the first time in recent memory the Legislature concluded their session within the statutorily imposed 100 day time limit. This made for a brisk pace as AFDA bills were moved through the process in the closing days of the session. A total of 1,350 bills were introduced (posted) during the session, 386 bills were passed by the legislature, with Governor Brewer signing 357 bills into law and vetoing 29.

AFDA began the session with a list of legislative priorities vetted by the board and membership during the summer and fall of 2010. The legislative priority list was culled to a workable number of items by the AFDA Board based upon the most pressing needs of the members and in response to external stakeholder concerns (typically property tax and funding issues). A number of the AFDA priority items were coalesced into several bills initially, and other issues were combined with bills AFDA was moving as session progressed. In all, AFDA engineered the passage of five bills which directly and positively impact a majority of member fire districts.

In every session the association's number one priority is to defend against harm to fire district revenue sources. The assault on fire district revenue sources can be either direct or indirect. Direct harm usually is legislation intended to diminish or limit direct secondary property tax revenues a fire district collects (think FDAT and levy limits), while indirect harm can occur with legislative changes intended to modify the state's property tax system in a way which limits or reduces a fire districts ability to generate the adequate property tax revenue (think changes to the assessment ratio for various types of property). This past session, AFDA was faced with both direct (S1279 - FDAT) and indirect (S1041 - among a raft of other proposals) measures to change the property tax system.

The most onerous of the bills initially directed at fire districts was S1279 which, as introduced would have limited all fire districts to \$300K annually in FDAT funding; regardless of whether the fire district has previously merged or consolidated (merged and consolidated districts received combined FDAT funding which can exceed \$300K). The proposed change was

brought forward by the Arizona Tax Research Association (ATRA) in response to an issue in Pima County in which a fire district was able to garner \$900K annually in FDAT funding through what was viewed by external stakeholders as "gaming" the system. Whether this was the case or not, AFDA worked to negotiate a settlement with ATRA and was able to secure an increase to the maximum annual FDAT funding at \$400K annually for all eligible fire districts (the FDAT funding formula remains intact; each district receives in FDAT funding equaling 20% of the direct property tax levy up to a county-wide rate cap of 0.10 per one hundred dollars secondary assessed value). Given the conservative make-up of the legislature as a whole, AFDA was fortunate to be able to get this negotiated change passed. As property values recover in future years, the FDAT funding issue will benefit a significant number of fire districts.

Legislation aimed at reforming the state's property tax system was plentiful this past session. While most of the legislation was either defeated or abandoned (typically coalesced into a single bill), several bills passed which impact Arizona's property tax system. These included S1041 (which was vetoed by Governor Brewer on April 29<sup>th</sup>), H2552 which changes agricultural property exemption / classification requirements and the "Jobs Bill" which mandated changes to property tax assessment ratios for commercial (Class 1) and vacant / agricultural properties (Class 2). These changes will have the effect of incrementally transferring an increasing share of the property tax burden annually to homeowners (Class 3), which make up the significant majority of all fire districts taxpayers.

Fire district bills which AFDA supported / introduced were well received throughout the session. AFDA was able to gain legislative support for a majority of the priority issues identified prior to the session. In all, four AFDA sponsored bills were passed and signed into law by Governor Brewer.

The four AFDA priority bills are summarized below. The effective date for legislation passed during the session is July 20, 2011, while the implementation date for various requirements varies. A detailed legislative wrap-up report will be provided for the membership at the July AFDA Conference in Tucson.

**S1218; FIRE DISTRICTS; ACCOUNTS; FINANCE (AFDA position: SUPPORT)** was signed into law by the Governor on April 28, 2011. S1218 provides various additions to Title 48 to improve fire district financial

administration. S1218 was amended mid-way through the session in House Ways & Means Committee with the language from **S1279; FIRE DISTRICT ASSISTANCE TAX (AFDA: SUPPORT as amended)** which eliminated combined / averaged FDAT amounts for merged or consolidated fire districts while increasing the FDAT funding cap to \$400K maximum annually, beginning July 1, 2012.

**S1259; NONCONTIGUOUS COUNTY ISLANDS; FIRE SERVICES (FORECLOSURES; PROOF OF OWNERSHIP) (AFDA Position: SUPPORT)** was signed into law by the Governor on April 26, 2011. S1259 was a strike everything (s/e) effort of AFDA which developed late in the session to facilitate the formation of a contract fire district for the Rio Verde Foothills area of northeast Scottsdale.

**S1361; FIRE DISTRICTS; JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY (AFDA position: SUPPORT)** was signed into law by the Governor on April 29, 2011. S1361 provides a methodology for forming fire district /municipal joint powers authorities (fire authorities) for fire and EMS delivery and other ancillary services. **S1502; FIRE DISTRICTS; MERGER; CONSOLIDATION (AFDA Position: SUPPORT)** was signed into law by the Governor on April 26, 2011. S1502 addresses various issues with the fire district merger and consolidation process, along with district name change and boundary change issues.

There were a number of other bills which impact Arizona's fire districts and fire service community in general. It was a mixed bag with either the passage or defeat which will influence how Arizona's fire service operates in future years. A summary of some of the key bills are listed below. A detailed legislative report will be provided for the membership at the July AFDA Conference in Tucson detailing the impacts.

**H2003; EMERGENCY RESPONSE SERVICES FEES; PROHIBITION (AFDA position: OPPOSED)** was signed by the Governor on April 13, 2011. AFDA was able to negotiate fire districts out of this onerous legislation very early in the session. Unfortunately, cities and towns were unable to defeat the bill and will be severely limited in their ability to charge fees for motor vehicle related events. Fire districts should anticipate the insurance industry will be back within the next several years to include fire districts within this fee prohibition.

*Continued on page 7*

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## Area 2 Report

By Bill Miller, Fry Fire District & Area 2 Director

**H**ello from Area #2

AFDA welcomes newly appointed Fire Chief in Rio Rico, Chief Les Caid. Chief Caid retired as a Battalion Chief from Tucson Fire Department in 2004 after twenty-five years of service. Chief Caid was very instrumental in getting the MMRS established in Southern Arizona. He has served on several state and national committees from EMS to border issues. Chief Caid also owns his own Emergency Management firm. Chief Caid has been married to Debra for 27 years and has two children – a daughter, Erin, 25 and a son, Christopher, who is 18 and just graduated from high school this year. Chief Caid holds a B.S. in Public Safety Administration from Grand Canyon University and continues work on his master's degree in Executive Fire Service Leadership.

Well I have some great news from Fry Fire District. The State Compensation Fund of Arizona (SCF) has recognized us as being in the 1% of the very best in the state for high quality efforts in safety. This is the first time any Fire Department or Fire District in the State of Arizona has been recognized as being the "Best of the Best". We're very proud to receive such an honor and we thank all of our employees for their safety efforts throughout the year.

We're also happy to announce that we have purchased a new Pierce pumper that will be on display at the Arizona Fire Chief Conference in Glendale during the last week in July. Stop by the Pierce booth and see our new engine.

Lastly I am sure you all heard about the Horseshoe II fire in the Portal area on the border with New Mexico. This fire is being recorded as being the fifth largest fire in Arizona history. Many of the fire districts in Arizona have been on this fire since May 8<sup>th</sup> and scorched over 65,000 acres. The estimated time to containment has been place around July 1.

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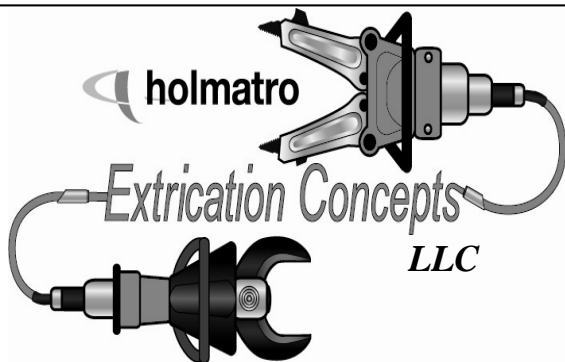


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Legislative Wrap-Up - Continued from page 4

**H2153; MUNICIPALITIES; COUNTIES; FIRE SPRINKLERS; CODE (AFDA position: OPPOSED)** was signed by the Governor on March 9, 2011. H2153 prohibits the adoption of residential fire sprinkler codes by cities and counties. This issue was the number one priority for the homebuilders this session.

**H2157; DHS; STROKE CARE PROTOCOLS (AFDA Position: SUPPORT)** was signed into law by the Governor on April 12, 2011. H2157 requires DHS to establish stroke care protocols for use in the pre-hospital environment.

**H2436; EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIANS; FINGERPRINTING (AFDA position: OPPOSED)** would have been a redundant and costly requirement for fire districts. AFDA worked with the bill's sponsor; Representative Yee (R-10) to amend the bill to address the fire district requirements of Title 48 which already require firefighters to be fingerprinted. The ambulance industry killed the bill.

**H2548; MEDICAL HELICOPTERS; NON-TRAUMA PATIENT; GUIDELINES (AFDA Position: SUPPORT)** was signed into law by the Governor on April 19, 2011. H2548 establishes various regulatory guidelines for non-trauma air ambulance operations.

**S1314; COUNTY ISLAND FIRE DISTRICTS; MEETINGS (AFDA position: NEUTRAL)** was signed into law by the Governor on April 18, 2011. S1314 changes various administrative requirements for county island fire districts which include maintaining all public records in an electronic format.

**S1379; CONSUMER FIREWORKS; REGULATION (AFDA Position: Neutral)** was vetoed by the Governor on April 29, 2011. S1379 was a strike-everything bill sponsored by the fireworks industry addressing issues of perceived overreach by cities. The Governor cited the local control issue as the factor necessitating the veto of S1379. The unfortunate consequence of the veto is the loss of the complete prohibition for sale and use of consumer fireworks in two of the state's most heavily forested counties (Yavapai and Coconino). AFDA should anticipate the fireworks industry will be back next session with similar legislation. This will provide an opportunity for fire districts to negotiate some measure of control over the use of consumer fire districts within their respective jurisdictions. Additionally, we may be able to target a prohibition for sale and use in heavily forested counties (Yavapai, Coconino, Navajo, Gila). **S1601; CERTIFICATE OF NECESSITY (AFDA position: Neutral)** was the League of

Cities and Arizona fire service's long-awaited effort to change the ambulance CON process. The bill was sponsored by Driggs (R-11) and Shooter (R-24 Yuma) and was spearheaded on the municipal side by the City of Yuma, currently in the regulatory hearing process for a CON. Yuma is facing fierce opposition by its current provider; Rural Metro – Southwest Ambulance. The ambulance industry killed this bill without a committee hearing. AFDA's neutral position is dictated by the number of current ambulance CON holders which are fire districts (41 total). Fire districts hold the greatest number of ambulance CON in the state.

Fire district CON holders by DHS region: Central - 8 fire district CON; Northern – 13 fire district CON; Southern / Eastern – 12 fire district CON; West – 8 fire district CON.

**S1609; RETIREMENT SYSTEMS; PLANS; PLAN DESIGN (AFDA position: NEUTRAL)** was signed into law by the Governor on April 29, 2011. S1609 was the Legislature's pension reform measure which modifies / reforms portions of all four of the state's pension systems: PSPRS; EORP; ASRS; and CORP. S1609 will mandate a variety of changes for Arizona fire district as employers in both the PSPRS and ASRS systems.

## VFIS Announced New Backing Safety Program

Accidents as a result of backing an emergency vehicle happen very frequently. Often these incidents result in minor damages, but sometimes the results are severe and even fatal. Backing an emergency vehicle can be hazardous because of blind spots that interfere with the driver's ability to see hazards. These hazards can include other vehicles, fixed objects such as trees and poles, and sometimes pedestrians, children or other emergency workers.

To reduce the risk of accident and injury, emergency service organizations may want to develop standard operating and training guidelines. VFIS suggests that you follow these best practices, which include, but are not limited to:

### Administrative Controls

- ◇ Have a written backing policy and see that all drivers receive a copy.
- ◇ Include in this policy a section for all personnel who will act as spotters.

- ◇ Recommend that spotters always be involved when drivers are backing emergency vehicles.
- ◇ Provide for specific backing evolutions included in all driver training (*examples may be obtained in the VFIS Emergency Vehicle Driver Training program*).
- ◇ Adopt standardized hand signals and verbal commands to be used by both drivers and spotters (for *examples, see the VFIS Emergency Vehicle Driver Training program*).
- ◇ Always include spotters during driver training evolutions.

### Spotter Responsibilities

- ◇ Conduct a "circle of safety" and survey the backing area and all other sides of the vehicle, checking for hazards.
- ◇ Communicate any observed hazards to the driver before proceeding to back unit, being sure to also check overhead clearance.

- ◇ Obtain either visual or verbal acknowledgement with the driver that you are acting as his/her spotter.
- ◇ Place yourself eight to ten feet to the rear of the unit in view of the driver's mirror.
- ◇ Establish visual and verbal contact with the driver and continue eye-to-eye contact in the mirror at all times.
- ◇ Be mindful of hazards that come into play as you are moving, for both your and the vehicle's safety.
- ◇ Be familiar with hand signals before allowing backing maneuvers to begin.
- ◇ Stop the driver if any hazards are observed or if you are uncertain of the direction in which the driver is maneuvering.

### Driver Responsibilities

- ◇ Consider whether there is a way to avoid backing when parking the vehicle.
- ◇ Don't be in a hurry when backing.

*Continued on page 11*

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## AFDA Meets with Arizona's Congressional Delegation

By Simon Davis, AFDA President

Leaders of Arizona's fire district community spent the week of April 4, 2011 in Washington D.C. advocating for continued federal grant funding and other issues critical to Arizona's fire service. Funded through a grant program sponsored by Volunteer Fireman's Insurance Service (VFIS), Chief Gary Hatch, Hellsgate Fire District and President-Elect of the Arizona Fire Chiefs Association (AFCA) and I were asked to attend the Congressional Fire Service Institute (CFSI) event held annually to address fire service issues on a national basis.

Established in 1989, the CFSI is a nonprofit, nonpartisan policy institute that works with members of Congress in promoting fire and life safety issues. Working with other national fire service organizations, the CFSI focuses its attention on issues that benefit all first responders. Members of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus, the largest caucus in Congress, look to CFSI for guidance and information to enhance their level of understanding about the challenges and needs of our nation's fire and EMS communities.

Chief Hatch and I spent the week leading up to the CFSI event meeting with Arizona's ten Congressional delegation members. Wiatt Wong, Arizona's VFIS representative and elected governing board member with the Daisy Mountain Fire District, Chief Jeff Piechura, Northwest Fire District and John Flynn, AFDA Lobbyist rounded out the team which spent the week advocating on behalf of Arizona's fire service. In all, the Arizona team was able to meet with all ten of Arizona's congressional delegation and or their respective staffs. Advocating primarily for continued funding of federal Fire Act and SAFER grant funding, along with critical radio spectrum (referred to as D Block) for future emergency service needs, the Arizona team was able to make important connections with lawmakers and ensure Arizona's fire service needs were communicated. The team also communicated issues concerning border security and response, along with various local, state and federal partnering opportunities.

Chief Paul Adams, Avondale Fire-Rescue Department and AFCA Executive Director, along with Chief Jim Critchley, Tucson Fire Department and Western Fire Chiefs Association President were also on-hand for the week meeting with various Congressional leaders. In all, Arizona turned out a significant number of representatives to press the need for federal support of the Arizona fire service.

At the CFSI Annual Dinner and Awards presentation, Arizona's own Northwest Fire District was presented with the national Excellence in Fire Service Based EMS Programs Award. Congratulations to Chief Piechura and his staff! And a special thanks to Wiatt Wong and VFIS for their continued sponsorship of this important program which enables Arizona's fire service leaders to participate with the CFSI and our Congressional delegation.



## Daisy Mountain Fire District's New Fire Chief

Daisy Mountain Fire District welcomed our new Chief Mark Nichols on April 1<sup>st</sup>. No April Fool's joke, Chief Nichols has rapidly become an integral part of the Daisy Mountain family. He has done a phenomenal job of absorbing what it means to be the Chief of a Fire District.

Chief Nichols began his fire service career in 1972 as a Wildland Firefighter for the U.S. Forest Service in Payson, Arizona. In 1978 he joined the Glendale Fire Department, where he served as Firefighter, Paramedic, Tox Medic, Fire Engineer, and Hazardous Material Technician. He was promoted to Captain in 1993, to Battalion Chief in 2001, and to EMS Division Chief in 2002. While with Glendale Fire Department he served as Recruit Training Officer in 1994 and as Lead Recruit Training Officer in 1995 and 1997. In July of 2003 Chief Nichols was hired by the City of Peoria to serve as Chief of Training.

He earned his AAS in Fire Science from

Glendale Community College, his B.A. in Public Administration from Ottawa University, and his M.S.T. in Fire Service Administration from Arizona State University. Not one to let an educational opportunity pass him by, Chief Nichols has served on the Glendale Community College Faculty since 1996 and has been an instructor for State Wide Mutual Aide Response since 2003.

The new Chief is eager to be involved in AFDA and has been attending the AFDA Board meetings as often as his schedule permits. He is a member of the Arizona Fire Chiefs Association, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the National Fire Academy Alumni Association, and the International Association of Professional Fire Fighters. He has been a member of the Maricopa County Community College Educational Council Advisory Committee since 2000, an Arizona State Training Committee Board Member since 1999 and the Arizona State Fire School Program Coordinator since 1999.

On a personal note, Mark has been married to his wife Kerry for 34 years. They have two grown children and two grandchildren that reside in the Phoenix area. His hobbies include hunting, fishing, golf, and competing in triathlons.

Mark has brought a new vision to Daisy Mountain and in two short months has reorganized the organization in order to flatten the structure and provide learning opportunities for all employees to cross train in areas beyond their scope of responsibilities. He has also been working diligently on bringing together employees from all areas (Operations, Administration and Support) to work on projects and plans for the future of the District.

Please look for him at his inaugural AFDA conference this July in Tucson. Be sure to say hello and offer him congratulations on his new job with Daisy Mountain Fire District.

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**Carl Kilgore, AIA**

### Tri-City Fire District Purchase Fire-Training Structures

The Tri-City Fire District was the recipient of a 2009 Department of Homeland Security Grant for the purchase of two mobile fire-training structures. The two units allow for live fire training, SCBA crawl through, confined space, and high angle training. With the addition of the mobile units, Tri-City installed concrete walkways around the two mobile units including a new self sustaining water system for the training center.

A 12 thousand gallon water tank was located and purchased, along with two diesel fire pumps donated by the Town of Payson Fire Department.

Two (2) Patio Canopies are currently under construction on the site for the pump house and pump test pit areas.

The district paid for the training center infrastructure and concrete. The training center will allow fire fighters from the local community many options for training. The districts goal is to be able to bring in fire departments from around the state for training. The training center sits on four acres of land leased from the Freeport McMoran Copper and Gold Mining Company.

Training Officer, Manny DeAnda has overseen all the work and improvements for our training center and we thank him for his hard work.

If you are interested in touring the training center or would like more information please contact Tri-City Fire District at 928-425-0815 or email one of our Officers listed on the web site [www.tricityfiredistrict.com](http://www.tricityfiredistrict.com).



## A Quick Heads Up about SB1218 regarding District Finances

There have recently been a lot of emails flying around about the impact of SB 1218, when it takes effect and what Districts need to do to comply with the law. First off, the Bill will not become law until July 20th, which is 90 days after the Legislature ended its 2011 Regular Session. That means it WILL NOT affect the FY 2011 financial budgeting or reporting, so District's have a whole year to consult with financial advisors on how to proceed for next fiscal year. Secondly, SB1218 does not require you to materially change what you are currently doing with regard to reporting. Per AFDA Lobbyist Lee Miller:

"What SB 1218 did was add the word "government" into the phrase "generally accepted auditing standards" effective July 20, 2011. There really are two different standards. "Generally accepted auditing standards" is something established by the American Institute of CPAs while "Generally Accepted Governmental Audit Standards" are established by the General Accounting Office of the US Government..."

This can be a bit confusing, but the bottom line is before doing anything it would be wise to consult with your current District financial advisors for advice as it pertains to your District specifically. District staff can also contact the Area AFDA rep, who can direct them to more resources as needed. That's what the area representatives are there for so feel free to use them.

One final note, SB1314 the bill that requires electronic reporting of permanent documents ONLY affects County Island Fire Districts (in Maricopa County), so you can stop scanning now...

Hope to see you all in Tucson in July – if the fires let up!

*VFIS Announces - continued from page 7*

- ◇ Roll the driver's window down completely.
- ◇ Confirm who your spotter is and confirm any hazards he or she has observed.
- ◇ Make visual and verbal contact with the spotter and maintain this contact. IF YOU CANNOT SEE OR HEAR THE SPOTTER, STOP!
- ◇ Develop a thorough knowledge of spotter hand signals.
- ◇ Give a two-blast warning on the horn just prior to backing.
- ◇ Use a spotter if at all possible. If there is no spotter available:
- ◇ Reconsider backing up. Is it really necessary?
- ◇ Make a reasonable attempt to get someone to act as a spotter.
- ◇ If a spotter cannot be obtained, get out of the unit and walk around it, completing a "circle of safety" and surveying the backing area. Before proceeding to back the unit, be sure to also check overhead clearance.
- ◇ Give a final warning of two horn blasts just prior to backing.

By understanding the importance of safe vehicle backing measures and adopting these or similar best practices into your organization's driving procedures, you will reduce the risk of damage and/or injury.

## AFBEA Nominations Being Accepted!

The Arizona Fire & Burn Educators Association (AFBEA) is looking for nominations for the 2010 AZ Fire & Life Safety Educator of the Year! The winning recipient will receive a plaque and weekend get-away. Individuals may be nominated based on their significant accomplishments and contributions in Fire and Life Safety Education in Arizona. Selection of the Fire and Life Safety Educator of the Year will be firmly established on outstanding work as an educator, success in increasing public awareness about safety issues, a positive role model in their community, achievements in the fire and life safety field locally, statewide and nationally, and a commitment to excellence in their educational efforts. Nomination forms can be found on the AZ Fire Training website ([azfiretraining.org](http://azfiretraining.org)) under the "State Fire School, Presentations" tab. NOMINATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN August 5, 2011. Send completed nominations electronically to: Tracy Koslowski at [tkoslowski@drexelfire.net](mailto:tkoslowski@drexelfire.net).

## Wittmann Implements Advanced Life Support Service

The Wittmann Fire District now responds to every emergency with a paramedic on board the fire truck. As of April 1st the department implemented fire based Advanced Life Support service to the district. Previous to this date the fire department responded to medical emergencies with EMT'S, who did not have advanced skills training. This could mean up to 20 minutes for a patient to receive the advanced treatment.

The Fire District received a \$20,000.00 grant from The Gila River Indian Community to train 4 firefighters to the paramedic level. The advanced equipment needed to support the paramedics was funded by the district budget. The process of training and equipment purchase has taken over a year to complete. "This is an exciting time for our department and means the citizens of our district will receive advanced care within minutes, and those minutes in certain situations means saving lives," Fire Chief Eddie Rios said.

## Scholarships Benefit Children of Statewide Firefighters

*Students of officers and firefighters are awarded scholarships through the 100 Club of Arizona, a non-profit that supports the men and women of public safety.*

The 100 Club of Arizona, a non-profit that is dedicated to standing behind the men and women who stand behind the badge, proudly announces 18 recipients of the 100 Club Scholarship Program from families of firefighters from statewide departments.

Out of the 18 fire affiliated recipients, 13 of them are children of Phoenix Firefighters. One recipient is the daughter of a Green Valley Firefighter, three of the recipients are children of Mesa Firefighters and one is the son of a Sierra Vista Firefighter.

Scholarships are awarded to immediate family members of public safety officers or firefighters that are active within the state of Arizona and are based on eligibility, quality of application and essay, and interview performance. For the 2011-2012 school year, the 100 Club of Arizona received 121 applications, and interviewed 62 applicants, finally awarding 48 scholarships to remarkable young students throughout the state of Arizona totaling more than \$159,000. The 100 Club will also re-award 15 continuing scholarships totaling \$53,000. The 100 Club Scholarship Program was started in 2006 and officially launched in 2007. Since it began, the 100 Club has given out just over \$450,000 in scholarships to Arizona's public safety families.

The recipients will be recognized at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Jason Schechterle Scholarship Ball on Saturday, September 24, 2011 at the Arizona Grand Resort. The annual event recognizes scholarship recipients, honors the Firefighter and Officer Outstanding Performance awards, and this year will be presenting Dr. William Leighton with a Lifetime Achievement Award for his lifetime dedication to the treatment and reconstruction of burn and accident victims, such as Jason Schechterle himself. This year's black tie ball will be accompanied by the first ever Jason Schechterle Scholarship Golf Tournament the day prior to the main event. Foursomes will include a member of public safety or a 100 Club beneficiary. Tickets for the ball and golf tournament are on sale now at [www.100club.org](http://www.100club.org).

Applications for 2012-2013 scholarships will begin being accepted starting January 2012. For more information on the 100 Club of Arizona Scholarship Program, visit [www.100club.org](http://www.100club.org).

*The 100 Club of Arizona is a nonprofit organization that provides financial assistance to public safety officers and firefighters when they are seriously injured or killed in the line of duty, and provides resources to enhance their safety and welfare. It was started in 1968, and has given more than five million dollars in financial support to Arizona's men and women who stand behind the badge. For more information, log on to [www.100club.org](http://www.100club.org) or email [info@100club.org](mailto:info@100club.org).*



## Harquahala Fire District Becomes Part of Phoenix Regional Dispatch System

As of April 1st, the Harquahala Fire District became part of the Phoenix Regional Dispatch System. After several years of negotiating and hard work, Harquahala Fire is now being dispatched through the 911 system. Residents and commuters are now able to dial 911 within Harquahala's borders, and contact a Phoenix Emergency Dispatcher. This will aid in response times and give more accurate information to the fire crews. These improvements are partially due to establishing a radio tower on top of Burnt Wells Mountain. With this tower, communications through Phoenix Dispatch extend beyond Maricopa County lines.

Harquahala has been awarded several grants this year. A grant through the Arizona Department of Homeland Security has provided the department with backup generators at each station. Our generators will provide redundant power needed to keep communication systems operational and provide a place of refuge for citizens in case of a community emergency.

We have been honored by receiving the Community Action Award from West Valley Hospital. This award recognizes organizations in their community involvement and programs they have established. The Community Action Award is voted on by all West Valley Mayors and the administration of the hospital. Harquahala has been very involved in the local

community. HFD hosts a Wednesday afternoon preschool at Station 371, a Fall Fire Prevention BBQ, Toys for Tots event (providing toys for every needy child in our community), hosting CPR classes, child seat installs, and a blood drive. We are thankful for the recognition.





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## Sun Lakes Fire District – Economic Survival Strategy

By Paul S. Wilson, Fire Chief



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The Sun Lakes Fire District (District) located southwest of Chandler AZ. recently completed a two year Economic Survival Strategy, including a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for FY 2011/12 and FY 2012/13 with the International Association of Firefighters Local 3560 - Sun Lakes Professional Firefighters Association. The District has suffered a cumulative loss of thirty-five percent in net assessed valuation during the past three years.

This decline in tax revenues created a rollback in the FY 2011/12 operating budget of \$7.3 million to a level less than the operating budget in FY 2007/08.

The Board of Directors, Management and Labor all committed to two economic survival goals;

- A. Maintain adequate emergency services for the community and
- B. Keep all employees working.

In order to prepare for the coming fiscal years the District worked with Local 3560 to create an economic survivability plan. The strategy used a three point approach to balance the operating budget;

1. Generate new revenues through increases of fees and the tax rate
2. Make adjustments in District programs and services (some scaled back and some eliminated)
3. Develop concessions from salaries and benefits

To achieve the strategy, the following changes were implemented;

### **New Revenues**

Application for ambulance rate increase

Replacement of overtime funds through the Governor's Office of Economic Recovery Grant.

Tax rate increase of twenty-seven cents (net effect to taxpayer was less tax than in prior years)

### **District Programs and Services**

#### Reductions or eliminations

Travel and Off-Duty Training Sponsorship

Educational Assistance and Officer Training

Electricity, Landscaping, Telephone, and Water / Ice Contracts

Overtime through On-Duty EMS Recertification

Overtime for CPR Training & Staffing, in 12 hour increments

Engine Follow-ups to Hospitals

Community assistance and public education

CPR & AED / Heart Saver programs

Immunization program

Car seat program (eliminated)

Blue hydrant marker program (eliminated)

Administrative & Support Staff Medical/Physicals (eliminated)

### **Salaries and Benefits**

Hiring freeze (5 vacant positions unfilled)

Reduction of staffing from 4 firefighters (2 of which are paramedics) to 3 firefighters and 1 paramedic for up to 12 hours, on one engine company.

Step increase freeze (26 positions)

Holiday pay reduction for emergency responders from 11.2 to 8 hours

Paid holiday reduction for staff from 12 to 9 days

The Sun Lakes Fire District is committed to providing quality emergency services to the residents and visitors of the community. It is only through the collaborative efforts of elected officials, labor representatives and management that the services can be provided in a cost effective manner.

The keys to the fire district's economic survival are communication and cooperation.

## News from Sun City West Fire District

### Sun City West Fire District Honored as Glendale Community College Outstanding Community Partner

During its annual Recognition Dinner and Gala event on April 16, 2011, Glendale Community College (GCC) presented the Sun City West Fire District with a 2011 Outstanding Community Partner Award for Excellence. As mentioned during the ceremony, the partnership between the Fire District and GCC provides highly-skilled firefighting professionals and continuing education to the District. The District provides the manpower and apparatus for firefighter classes; assistance in developing videos; and training in procedures such as extrication. Several graduates from the Glendale

Community College programs are now employees of the Fire District. The communities served by the Fire District are the ultimate winners as they reap the benefits of the partnership between the GCC training programs and the Fire District.

### Sun City West Rotary Club, in Partnership with the Sun City West Fire District, Receives Over \$195,000 in FEMA Fire & Life Safety Grant Funding

The Sun City West Rotary Club and the Sun City West Fire District partnered in submitting an application to the FEMA Fire & Life Safety Grant for funding to mount a concentrated smoke alarm replacement program in approximately

3,200 homes in the older section of the senior citizen community of Sun City West. Many of these homes are over 20+ years old and the residents have neither the means nor the ability to replace their existing smoke alarms. The proposed replacement program will take approximately eighteen months and the District will utilize its cadre of Fire Corps volunteers to assist with the alarm replacement. The funding provides for the purchase of dual sensor smoke alarms, specialized hearing impaired detectors, and batteries. The Rotary Club and the District are extremely grateful to FEMA for recognizing the importance of this endeavor and providing the funding to make it a reality.

## Wittmann Fire District Receives Improved ISO Rating

By Rachelle DeMoss, Wittmann Fire District

The Wittmann Fire District has received notification from the Insurance Service Office (ISO) that their Public Protection Class (PPC) is now 4/8b. This is an improvement from the previous rating of 9/10. Several areas of the fire department ISO evaluated assisted in the improved rating such as; dispatching services, increased personnel, increased training hours, and improved water supply. By comparison, Sun City West Fire District's ISO rating is 2 and Surprise Fire Department is 3.

Insurance companies use ISO's Public Protection Classifications in marketing, underwriting, and pricing homeowners and commercial property insurance. In general, the price of fire insurance in a community with a good PPC is substantially lower than in a community with a poor PPC, assuming all other factors are equal.

"One of the main concerns of District residents was the ISO rating," said Fire Chief Eddie Rios. "We made it one of our goals to achieve an improved rating and we have accomplished that goal," Rios stated. The rating will take effect July 1, 2011.

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## Respect on the Road

### Bikes & Cars: Same roads, same rules, same rights and responsibilities

By Merry C. Shanks- Verde Valley Fire

With our beautiful spring weather, it's time to get the biking gear out and hit the road! Bike riding is a fantastic mode of transportation on so many levels, whether it's the economical consideration, the health benefit, or just the enjoyment of our beautiful surroundings, but it also involves respect and responsibility by EVERYONE using the road. That means the bike rider shares the rights as well as the responsibilities that apply to motor vehicle drivers. Your path and actions should be predictable and considerate. It also means that as a driver of a motor vehicle, you have the responsibility to provide the bicyclist with a safe passing distance—designated as **not less than** 3 feet by law (A.R.S. 28-735) with 5 feet recommended.

We live in communities that have winding, rocky, hilly terrain, road shoulders that do not necessarily provide a safe biking path, or a clear view of the roadway, so it does take some patience and understanding on everyone's part to keep everyone safe, and enjoy a shared cooperation in using our roads. Many of us have chosen to live in this area because of the opportunities for diverse interests in the outdoors—so many wonderful things to do, but we must respect how others might be enjoying these terrific surroundings. Whether your choice is bike riding, cruising on your motorcycle, walking, or taking a road trip in your car, we need to respect each others choice, making it safe for everyone.

#### Cyclists

It is important for us to start our children on the right safety path at a young age. Insist that they wear a helmet and teach them the rules of the road as they apply to biking. Discuss "defensive" driving as it relates to biking. Consider this your child's first vehicle—educate them and insist on safety gear, reflectors, as well as riding techniques. If you ride as a family, be sure to set the example by wearing your own helmet, and talk about wearing clothes that will provide additional visibility on the road. As your child gets older, reinforce the rules of the road, emphasizing their responsibility to others they share the road with. Very often we still see young teens cruising down the middle of our rural roads, against traffic, with no helmet, as they get into their "invincible" mode. Make sure they understand that wearing headphones and using cell phones is no more acceptable on a bike

than in a car. Cyclists also need to be considerate of pedestrian traffic. Respectful behavior is the key.

ADOT has a great guide called "Share the Road", which goes into detail about sharing the road, and covers many of these topics, laws, signals and safety issues to discuss with your children, and review yourself whether you are a bike rider or motor vehicle operator. Even before teens start driving cars, it would be a great resource while they consider all of the potential hazards drivers face. Stress that they need to be especially careful at intersections where people are turning, pedestrians are crossing, and lights are changing. As we add roundabouts to our traffic configurations, this book shows how to maneuver them on a bike. Maneuvering through areas with parked cars and driveways certainly calls for additional cautions and considerations. You always have the option of getting off your bike, walking it as any pedestrian when unsure of the right action to take. For more information from ADOT on their biking and pedestrian program visit their website at <http://www.azbikeped.org/>.

#### Motorists

If you ride a bike, and realize the multiple level of hazards the cyclist faces on our roadways, it may be easy to determine the need for caution when approaching a cyclist, especially on some of our narrow, winding roads. Some drivers tend to get very impatient with bike riders, wondering why they don't just pull over and let the cars pass. There are a few different things at play here. First of all, some motorists don't understand that the cyclist does have a right to ride on the roadway, and may even take a full lane when appropriate. Cyclists may ride two abreast as long as they don't unnecessarily slow traffic. The car driver may not realize that the road contains debris or dangerous conditions requiring the bike rider to take the lane. Assume there is a need for the cyclist to maintain their position on the roadway, and allow room for the cyclist to maneuver. Along those same lines, if the rider is holding up traffic, they need to move over and allow the vehicles to pass when safe to do so. An impatient motorist that decides to whip past a bicyclist, cutting in close and perhaps even causing a crash, can be cited. Unsafe passing can result in a \$1,000 fine—totally unnecessary if we take the time to assess the situation, and take those few extra minutes to respect the use

of the roadway for everyone.

Motorists driving larger vehicles, trucks, or pulling trailers should be extra cautious and allow a full 5 feet for passing a bike, and then make sure your trailer is clear before moving back to the right. It is a good idea in one of these larger vehicles to slow down and give the cyclist a full lane if possible. Don't use your horn to startle the cyclist, as it may cause them to swerve into traffic. Do not park in bike lanes. When you are parking in a designated parking space, especially if the area is congested, be sure to check before you open your door.

Respect & Share the Path



Safety for everyone on the road depends on cooperation, knowledge of laws, and respect by all of us. If you respect other users of the road, hopefully you will get respect back. Be friendly and assume there is a reason the other user is not responding as you think they should—maybe some unseen hazard is beyond your sight. If you run into a discourteous driver/rider, do not react with anger. Let's all work together to teach safety and respect on our roadways, helping us all safely reach our destination. Most importantly, get out and enjoy our beautiful State, regardless of your mode of transportation. Perhaps when we reach that final destination—there will be fewer hills to climb, obstacles to avoid, and bike paths down every roadway we take!





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## VFFA Volunteer Firefighter Retention and Recruitment Campaign

By Kate Redden, VFFA Grant Manager

In the last VFFA Newsletter, VFFA President Chief Bobby Apodaca announced that VFFA was awarded a 4-year Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant in the amount of \$930,400. The SAFER grant aims to retain and recruit additional volunteer firefighters throughout Arizona communities. This grant was awarded to help you increase the number of total volunteers in your department and will be successful if all Arizona fire service leaders work together to take full advantage of the opportunities included in the grant.

### Why Is This Campaign Needed?

Throughout rural Arizona, citizens and current firefighters are at risk because of the lack of volunteer firefighters to adequately protect people and property from fire and fire-related hazards. As call volume increases, more departments depend on volunteer firefighters. Throughout Arizona, over 2 million citizens are protected by volunteer or combination departments. In order to comply with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, the Arizona fire service must increase the number of volunteer firefighters by 30 percent.

VFFA attributes the volunteer recruitment problem to the lack of communication between the fire service and the public. The public does not realize there is a need for volunteer firefighters and does not know where to obtain more information about becoming a volunteer firefighter.

To turnaround the declining trend of volunteer firefighters, VFFA was awarded a retention and recruitment SAFER grant.

### How Will the Grant Funds Be Spent?

The grant funds will be used to implement a media marketing program. This is a volunteer recruitment marketing campaign focused on raising awareness about the need for volunteer firefighters. The integrated marketing campaign will be modeled after the successful campaigns designed and implemented in Alaska, Idaho, and California. VFFA will implement the same components that were successful in these campaigns, such as television commercials, printed material, online Facebook ads, and an interactive web site with an application distribution process.

VFFA will track responses and collect applications from prospective volunteers, then send the information about the prospective volunteers to local fire service leaders in the respective area. Throughout the next 4 years, the marketing campaign should generate more than 3,500 responses from prospective volunteers.

### What Is Your Role?

This project depends on the active participation of Arizona's fire service leaders. Your role can be summed up in four easy steps:

1. Contact the prospective volunteer within 2 weeks of receiving the lead
2. Educate prospective volunteers about your department's volunteer program

3. Provide prospective volunteers with an application and other materials needed to volunteer
4. Complete follow up surveys sent by the VFFA

SAFER grant funding is being provided by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and VFFA has the responsibility to report all of the grant activities and the final results of these activities.

### Who Will Manage the Campaign?

The Redden Group will be the VFFA Project Manager. The Redden Group has assisted a variety of clients for over 26 years with retention and recruitment initiatives, from local fire departments to the National Volunteer Fire Council.

The Redden Group provides associations like yours the tools to apply for and manage SAFER grants. They oversee the management of 8 DHS SAFER grants across the country, ranging from local incentive programs to statewide media campaigns. The Redden Group team is available to help all VFFA members obtain and manage additional SAFER grants. You can learn more by emailing [greg@reddengroup.org](mailto:greg@reddengroup.org), calling 208-345-5109, or visiting the Redden Group's web site at [www.reddengroup.org](http://www.reddengroup.org).

## Verde Valley Pink Heals Tour

By Marry Shanks, Verde Valley Fire District

The first weekend of August, Verde Valley Fire District will be joining others in our local Communities to kick off the Pink Heals Tour. We feel this is a great way to support our local ladies who are fighting cancer, so have joined with our Cornville Community Association, Cottonwood Fire, the Town of Jerome, and Camp Verde to promote the tour. Each of us will be hosting events in our individual Communities to raise money that will go into a fund at our local hospital to help women in our Community that are fighting cancer. If you happen to be up in the Cornville area on August 6<sup>th</sup>, come and join us at Windmill Park for a fun event, from 4 to 7 pm. And yes, real Firefighters do wear pink!

Verde Valley Fire District also received grants from both SMILE and Energizer to help support our smoke alarm project. We have been focusing our efforts in an area of low income, high density, older mobile homes, providing smoke alarm checks, installs, as well as changing batteries for families. At the same time we are replacing faded reflective house addresses, and providing reflective number for homes without any identification. It has been a great opportunity to meet the people in that area and answer their questions and concerns. This past week, many have come out to greet us and want to talk about the wildfires in the State. This gives us a chance to talk about weed abatement, as well as other fire and life safety issues. It has certainly been a win-win situation for us and our residents.







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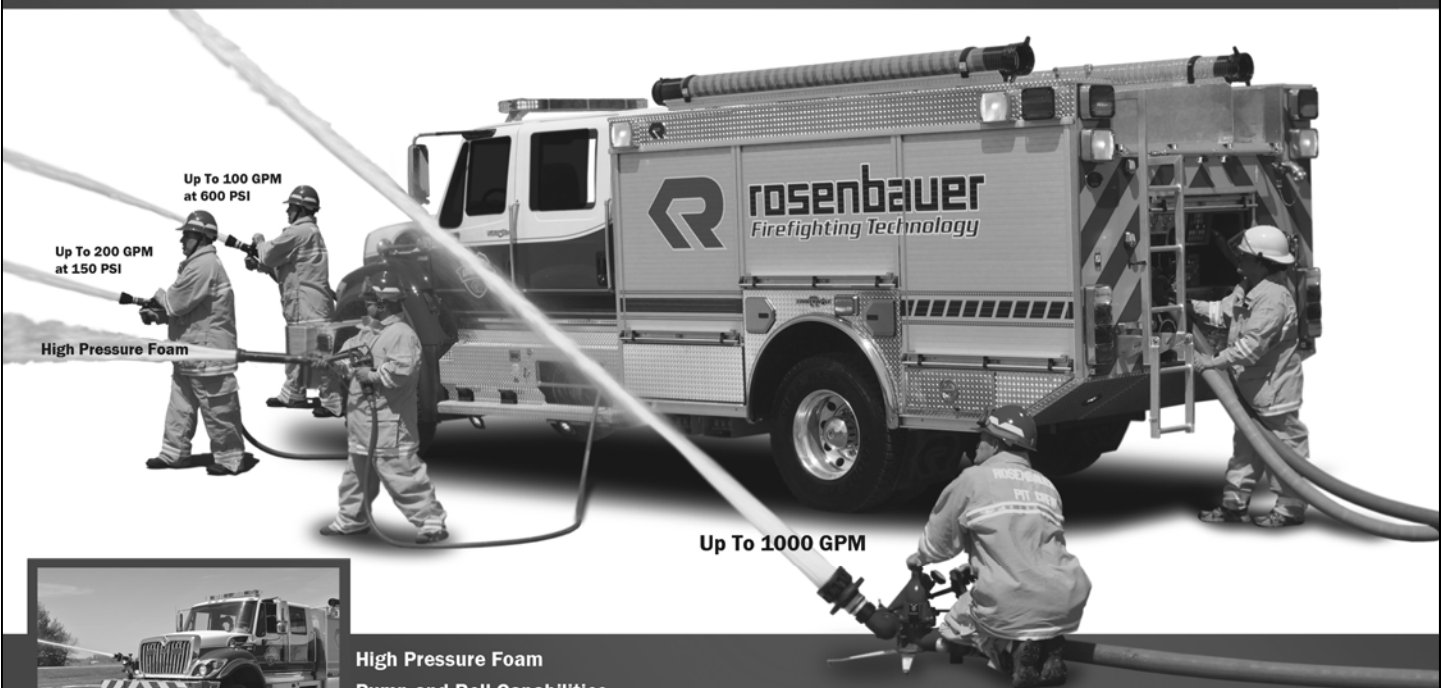
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**Committee Chairs**

Legislative - Mike Van Dyke

EMS - Rebecca Haro

Audit - Simon Davis

Budget - Simon Davis

Nominating - Rick Southey

Fund Raising - Mike Van Dyke

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Newsletter - Mary Dalton

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### Goodbye from a Dear Friend...

Dear Friends, Fire Family and Fellow AFDA members:

After more than 12 challenging and wonderful years with the Daisy Mountain Fire District, I find myself ready to retire and move on to other adventures. I will be moving to New Mexico this summer and getting married early next year.

I am excited and yet saddened by the idea of leaving. Many of you have heard me state that my career at DMFD was something I truly enjoyed so much, that I would have done it for no pay if I didn't need money to live! That is absolutely true. I found satisfaction in every day, every challenge, and every opportunity to play a small part in the extraordinary growth we have faced. I believe that the Fire Service offers value to every life that it touches, whether in the community or in its employees. I feel honored to have been a part of it.

That said, I am announcing that I will retire at the end of this fiscal year, on June 30<sup>th</sup>. I will make myself available to help with the new fiscal year transition for the next few weeks after that as needed. My goal is to leave everything as clear and as complete as possible. Chief Nichols has done a phenomenal job of absorbing all that it means to be the Chief of a Fire District and the staff in the Admin office is extraordinary in their performance of their duties. I know that I leave the administration of the District in extremely capable hands.

Many of you have been like family to me. I feel like your mother, your sister, your aunt and in some cases, your grandmother! Words cannot express what you have meant to me. I thank you for your friendship and for being such a terrific group of caring and hardworking individuals in the fire service. I am privileged to have known you.

Very sincerely yours,  
Candice Tatum, AFDA Administrative Section Director

