

# 7TH DISTRICT RAG

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## FROM THE DESK OF THE DVP

At issue in the 7th District is the topic of “volunteering and secondary employment”. Of course, I am not referring to volunteering for United Way or working a second job at the local parts store. I am referring to volunteering as a firefighter or moonlighting in the public EMS field. This issue is emotional and widespread among our ranks both in the US and Canada.

Before expanding on my particular views on the subjects I would be remiss if I did not begin with quoting the Constitution and Bylaws of the IAFF. I refer you to Article XV, Section 3, which reads, “Any member of the Association found working a secondary job as a paid-on-

call fire fighter or an employee of a public employer, nonprofit corporation, or a private contracting firm providing fire protection or emergency medical services to a city, county, municipality, or a fire protection district as a volunteer, reserve, part-time, part paid, police officer, police reserve, or public safety officer may be subject to charges being filed against that member.” In addition, Article XV, Section 1, Subsection E states, “Advocating or encouraging any labor or any other rival organization, or acquiring membership in any such organization including volunteer fire departments or associations....constitutes misconduct.” And for those that took an oath to comply

with the mandates of the IAFF Constitution & Bylaws upon entering your local, Article XV, Section 1, Subsection G reads, “Acquiring membership by fraud, false representation or deceit... constitutes misconduct.”

Now the Constitution & Bylaws is what it is and I will leave it at that but to emphasize my point of view on the subjects, I will share a couple of conversations I have had with members and for those members this it not meant to be demeaning to you. In speaking with one member he stated that he volunteers to help his small community. This is very noble and goes to the heart of why we chose this respected

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## 7TH DISTRICT CAUCUS EDUCATES STATE LEADERSHIP IN SEATAC

The 7th District Caucus was held in the city of SeaTac on November 21-22. The attendees were state principals and executive boards as well as IAFF state reps. The class was jointly sponsored by the IAFF 7th District and the WSCFF. The caucus revolved

around state leadership interacting, as well as training in the area of problem solving. A class was developed and presented by renowned problem solver and negotiator Bill Lincoln. Leaders were able to interact, sharing successes and getting to know

each other on a personal level. “This type of opportunity within the 7th district is unique and invaluable”, stated WSCFF 8th D-Rep Mike Wilson. SeaTac L-2919, MDA, and DiMartino provided lunches and hospitality.

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### Special points of interest:

- IAFF 7th District Calendar
- From the Desk of the DVP—Opinions regarding “part-timers, part-paid, volunteers” and the relationship to the IAFF Constitution & Bylaws.
- Reminder—Get your passport for Toronto!

## 7TH DISTRICT LEADS NATION IN 2005 FIREPAC CONTRIBUTIONS



For the third straight year the 7th District led the nation in FIREPAC contributions in the percentage category by contributing 516% of their assignment.

All states in the 7th District exceeded their 2004 totals in both dollars and members contributing. This is largely due to the work of local presidents and PAC chairs. After a record breaking year in 2004, there was a 50% increase in individuals making voluntary contributions to FIREPAC. As a district the 7th outpaces the national average with 11% of the membership contributing. Idaho led the district in the percentage of members contributing with 21%. The national average is 3%.

Washington State led the nation in dollars raised with an unprecedented \$153,744.93 in contributions. Local 3674 regained the top honors in "locals under 100" by contributing 5,453% of their assignment and had 100% of its membership participate.

Idaho raised \$15,374.83; Alaska \$4,615; and Montana \$2,970.65. "I believe that the increase is two-fold" states DVP Ricky Walsh. "Members are realizing the benefits arising from contributing and have decided that it is incumbent on all to assist in the process. Secondly, members realize that their International is truly non-partisan in its approach to political endorsements—supporting those who support fire fighters and EMS personnel issues regardless of party affiliation."

Currently Republican candidates receive 34% of FIREPAC campaign contributions while Democrat candidates receive 66%. GP Schaitberger states, "if you are with us you will receive our support, if you are against us we will campaign against you".

## HUMAN RELATIONS CONFERENCE ATTENDED BY 7TH

Several members of the 7th District attended the IAFF Human Relations Conference held in San Antonio, Texas, January 27-29. The conference topics were focused on addressing issues of diversity in the workplace and our union. Those topics included recruitment, recognition and mediation of workplace conflict, and inclusion in union leadership roles.

IAFF GP Harold Schaitberger opened the conference and stressed the impor-

tance of workplace and union diversity and the IAFF's continued commitment to address the issue.

Other speakers included Reg Weaver, President NEA, the Honorable Ciro D. Rodriguez and noted speaker Dr. Steve Robbins, who used humor in highlighting human relations and how people develop perceptions.



Human Relations Executive Board Chairperson Ann Peggs presided over the event.

7th District members attending were BJ Perry and Jerry Pospisil of Local 8-Great Falls, Joe Coultman-Local 27-Seattle, Tom Lovell and Tracy Raynor of Local 672-Boise, Tom Sanchez-Local 1257-SeaTac Airport, Lynn Miller and Terry Brown of Local 2175-Central Pierce, Ernest A. "Buddy" Mass was honored.

## WSCFF LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE A SUCCESS

Washington State Council of Firefighters held their annual legislative conference in Olympia, Washington, January 30-31. The conference was attended by representatives from 77 locals. The focus of the conference was to get firefighters into the Capitol to meet with their legislators and lobby for important firefighter issues.

Among legislation being pursued by the WSCFF are pension issues in rela-

tion to both LEOFF I and LEOFF II. As well department accountability and local government revenue streams.

The regional fire authority legislation passed last year is being watched as fire chiefs, fire district commissioners and city managers attempt to tweak the law to be more user friendly.

Speakers at the event included two of our own members of the legislature, Geoff Simpson (D-47th) and Richard

Curtis (R-18th). Supreme Court Justice Tom Chambers addressed the assembled delegation about the relationship of the court and its citizens.

WSCFF principals Kelly Fox and Greg Markley as well IAFF 7th District Vice President Ricky Walsh also addressed the members.



## **BYRON SMITH REPRESENTS 7TH AT MDA TELETHON**

L.A. was a unique experience for my wife, Angela, and me. Before this trip, Seattle was the biggest city that we have ever traveled to. When we arrived in LAX we were overwhelmed by the traffic and the number of people. I forgot some of the information about the hotel and we seemed to be lost. Once we figured out which hotel we needed to be at and arrived, Ron Kulley, IAFF MDA, was standing at the door and quickly recognized a confused firefighter from North Idaho. He helped us to relax and informed us of the events of the weekend. All of the firefighters gathered for a meeting that night to get to know each other. Angela and I joined three other couples for a night on the town and we had a great time. A Universal Studios visit the next day was great. We enjoyed the rides and entertainment provided for all of the MDA sponsors. The causal night of food and drinks was more than what I would consider causal. It was nice to be treated like a star the way they do it in Beverly Hills. The day of the Telethon was crazy. People and equipment everywhere in somewhat organized confusion. To see how a production like this works for the inside was a fascinating treat. As I watched all the different sponsors give donations to Jerry, I thought about how proud I am to be apart of the IAFF and able to help. Each of the documentaries of the people with MD was a reminder of how important it is for me to stay involved with MDA and try to find ways to make it better every year. One of the best parts of being sent to L.A. to represent the 7th District was the brotherhood of the IAFF. I had never before had the opportunity to attend conferences or union trainings out of town. Interacting with US & Canadian members, I found that we are all brothers & sisters working for the same cause. The icing on the cake was being accepted into the MDA family as well. I am a proud member of the IAFF and honored to be apart of the MDA family. Thank you for this opportunity—**Byron Smith, Local 2856 Kootenai Co. FF's**

## **7TH DISTRICT MEMBERS BECOME PEER REVIEWERS**

In October I had the opportunity to go back to the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland, to take part in the Peer Fire Prevention and Safety Grant Review Program put on by FEMA. I was part of group of approximately 70 people from around the country brought together to read, rate and rank requests for funding from Fire Departments and non-profit organizations, specific to fire prevention and safety programs.

It had been 20 years since I had been on the NFA campus and attended any programs there. When I was last there, you shared a room with someone and, if you were unlucky like me to draw a snorer/talker, it made the two-week stay miserable. Now they have upgraded to single rooms and created a friendlier and more comfortable environment.

I had the pleasure to meet up with **Jeff Wainwright**, Local 3711, and **Dan Cottrell**,

Local 521\*. Like me, both are IAFF 7th District members and first timers to the grant review process. We had all gone through an online FEMA tutorial prior to arriving, so there was a bit of knowledge about what we would be doing and the expectations. However, I was not prepared for my first grant...sitting at a table with two others we received packets containing six grant requests from organizations. First we were to review them and confirm that there would be no conflicts of interest. Then we read and ranked each one depending on need, criteria, cost, evaluation, etc.

My first grant was a 2-inch, run on sentence with no punctuation, no capitalization, numerous spelling errors and a confusing statement. It was from a volunteer department in Toenail, West Virginia, or some such place. We were not to grade or judge the grants on their

writing quality (or lack thereof), but on the request itself. This made the process interesting, as I am one to seize the spelling and punctuation mistakes.

The days were long—reading and discussing the various grants, but I felt a sense that I was making a difference and changing and improving programs that affect our constituents and members. The week gave me a greater appreciation and perspective on how to accomplish and implement prevention and safety programs. I enjoyed the opportunity to meet folks from around the country who shared an interest in keeping our citizens and fellow fire fighters safe. I encourage anyone to participate and welcome the chance to return—**John Stockman, Local 2829 & WSCFF 7th District Representative.**

*\*Please feel free to call the members for more on their experience.*

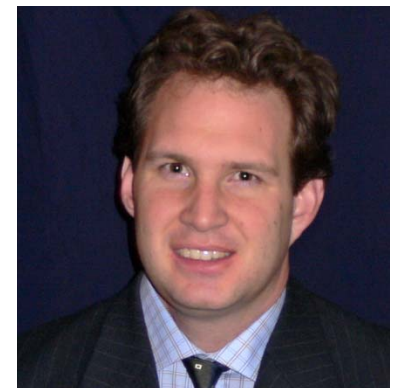
## **LABOR BOARD APPOINTS MCSORELY**

Matt McSorely, Local 1264 member and Secretary/Treasurer of the Alaska Professional Firefighters Association, has been appointed to the Alaska Labor Board. The appointment came from Governor Murkowski to fill one of two positions reserved for labor advocates.

"I believe this to be a great opportunity for the APFFA and to labor in Alaska. It will certainly heighten the awareness of

the newly formed state association," states McSorely. "Matt is a tireless Union Fire Fighter advocate and will achieve great things during his tenure in this position," said 7th DVP Ricky Walsh.

In addition to his responsibilities in this new position and the APFFA S/T duties, Matt is an avid outdoorsman. He and his wife are expecting their first child this spring. Good luck to Matt!



**IAFF 7TH DISTRICT**

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*We are all in this together*



**DATES TO REMEMBER**

- March 19-22  
\*\*IAFF Legislative Conference
- March 27  
\*\*Mini-Ed Day—Helena, MT
- April 18-20  
\*\*WSCFF Educational Seminar
- April 28  
\*\*Mini-Ed Day—Blackfoot, ID
- May 8  
\*\*Mini-Ed Day—Richland, WA
- May 23-25  
\*\*MSCOFF Educational Seminar
- June 27-29  
\*\*WSCFF Annual Convention
- August 27-September 1  
\*\*IAFF Bi-Annual Convention-  
Toronto, Canada *(get your passport  
now—don't wait till the last minute)*

**7TH DISTRICT AT IAFF  
POLITICAL ACADEMY**

Doug Niell-Local 8, Dominic Lozano-Local 1324, Jason Fox-Local 3062, and Scott Duncan-Local 3390, attended the 2006 IAFF Political Training Academy (PTA) held in Baltimore, February 6-10. Fifty members from around the US and Canada annually complete training that gives them the tools to be a campaign manager or a successful candidate for public office. The PTA is funded by contributions received from FIREPAC. The PTA is open to members or spouses of members of the IAFF. Past graduates state that this training is intense and of the highest caliber, with expert instruction on the subject matter of successful campaigns. It is coordinated by the Political Affairs Division of the IAFF. If you are interested for the 2007 class, please contact DVP Walsh.

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**FROM THE DESK** *(Continued from page 1)*

and worthwhile profession. And as professionals, I would encourage members to evaluate that with any organization there are rules and expectations. The rules are written by our members for our members benefit. The Constitution & Bylaws serves as our governing document that arose from initial writing; is re-evaluated bi-annually; and reaffirmed by majority votes at our bi-annual conventions. One of the expectations of our organization, from the top to the grass roots of a local is that we are to abide by the majority, even though it may conflict with our own personal views. It is the foundation of reasons the IAFF is successful in its pursuits on behalf of its members, not only at a national level but at the state and local level. In this case I suggested that if the member (or his local) felt strongly on this issue that he attempt to make change by the process afforded to him.

In a different conversation it was expressed to me that while members may be aware of the articles in the Constitution & Bylaws, that many members find it difficult to "blindly follow" any rules of any organization. My response was that I do not advocate any member blindly follow any directive but in this case "blindly following" was not the issue. At issue here, in my view, was that members were purposely with knowledge violating the rules of the organization. Now I will admit that at times I drive 80 mph in a posted 70 mph zone but I do so knowing the potential consequences if I am caught. My discussion was not to argue whether or not it was a fair rule but rather if members violate the rules of the organization there may be consequences to your actions. To again quote the IAFF Constitution & Bylaws, Article XV Section 1, "...conviction of any of the following offenses, may be reprimanded, fined, removed from office, suspended, or expelled as the evidence and circumstances may warrant..." Our individual worksites have disciplinary processes and most of us endeavor to abide by the rules of the organization to avoid said process. Again, I encouraged the members to use the process to make change, as they would in their own worksites, and to not ignore the rules while hoping not to get caught.

We are engaged in the most respected profession in the land. The general public expects that we as fire fighters and EMS providers are trustworthy and of the highest moral character. My personal view is that while the reasons members may engage in the subject matter may be honorable and noble, knowingly violating the rules of your organization places into question the very attributes the profession of fire fighting and EMS are admired for.

I put this before you for you not to cause conflict with other members of your organization but to cause a re-examination of yourself because that is what I advocate for: constant personal growth that can only occur when you look at yourself with a high degree of honesty.

Until next time, stay safe,  
Ricky