

7TH DISTRICT RAG

Volume 3 Issue 1
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FROM THE DESK OF THE DVP

"I have to pencil it out and see how it affects me" "you may be right BUT this works out for US (one Local).....or , "I am going to leave my family, err my daughter this 457 account and this will be my legacy".

Three statements that I have personally heard over the last four months or so when discussing issues dear to unionism with several of our members. I shall return to them later in this article to show relevance.

I have now announced at two forums that , in my opinion, the biggest problem facing this Union is "ME'ISM". Yes, a new word that simply means "what is best for ME". I witness or

hear everyday, examples of our members making union related decisions squarely on the merits of how it will affect them individually, discounting how it may affect the whole, today or 20 years down the road. I can only say that I am dumbfounded and disappointed at the prevalence of this sentiment.

Now there has always been a small percentage of our members that shared this value (or non-value) as their personal mantra. Presently, it is a virus that has infected almost every local in the IAFF. What is further disturbing is that it appears to have infected many young local leaders who may have missed the message. There are many reasons why this

has occurred and I will put forth a few for your consideration.

Obviously, first and foremost is that too many of today's union members are oblivious to how it used to be and how it got to be what it is today. There are many among us who believe it was the employer that unilaterally offered the current benefits packages. Please take the opportunity at the beanery table to correct them (just look south).

Additionally, I know a few who believe that, no matter their actions, Union leadership will fix thier issues, in spite of their contrary efforts and/or disregarding the recommendations of

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Special points of interest:

- IAFF 7th District Calendar
- From the Desk of the DVP, Me-ism is the virus that will take us down
- 7th District Benevolent Fund
- www.iaff7thdistrict.org

OUR FRIENDS IN OFFICE

IAFF Local 1747, Kent Fire Fighters, have been gracious in lending the WSCFF membership Geoff Simpson (D) 47th Leg District. Geoff is a tireless friend of firefighters and of Labor. During session he is the mover and shaker of not only our issues but for Labor issues and has

stated before....."if I can't help those that are unable to help themselves, then what am I doing here?" and he certainly does. Geoff is a past recipient of the WSCFF Labor Leader of the Year, continues to ride an engine, and works the district to ensure his re-election.



2007 FIREPAC STARTED IN JANUARY AS 7TH DISTRICT WORKS TO GET BACK ON TOP



It happens every time our organizations make a victory. We misguide ourselves into believing that it will magically happen again, on its own, without our help. That we can sit back and take a breather. We might even convince ourselves that "I did my part last time, so let another do it this time". WRONG! The effort by our members to FIREPAC from the 7th has steadily risen in dollars and participants and contributed to the amazing election results in November 2006. Now is not the time to sit back — instead we must ramp up and contribute more in time and money.

It is up to each and every local to put forth an effort to engage in participating in FIREPAC at a level higher than last year's total. It is time to initiate and put into place a dues check off program to allow members to contribute at a steadier pace, virtually painless to the pocketbook when stretched out over the entire year. In fact, this is the time to put into place a dues check-off program that will allow members to participate in the local, state, and IAFF PAC. All state organizations in the 7th, that are allowed by law, have a state PAC.....Have you contributed? I would not ask any of you to dance unless I was on the floor myself and I assure you I am a contributing member to all 7th District state PAC's, the IAFF FIREPAC, and participate in my home local politics. It is time for you to realize that allowing others to carry your water is simply inexcusable! Put the partisanship aside and take comfort in the fact that your IAFF and state organizations support those who support firefighter/public EMS issues regardless of party or majorities.

Contact your state council representative or me today for guidance on the properly starting your dues check off program. We all benefit from increased participation.

SCHAITBERGER ADDRESSES WSCFF CONVENTION

The 68th Annual Convention of the Washington State Council of Fire Fighters was held the last week of June. The event was opened by President Kelly Fox, followed by an address from IAFF GP Harold Schaitberger (the GP had just had breakfast with Local 29 members at a station visit). His address consisted of the state of the IAFF, politics in the nation's capital, as well as future goals and expectations of the Union.

The convention lasted three days, and

at times was contentious. Several esteemed guests made an appearance including IAFF VP Emeritus Jim Hill and WSCFF S/T Emeritus Howard Vietzke.

As in the past, and in the tradition of firefighter conventions, it is not all work. The evenings offered events purposefully intended to entertain the attendees and their families. Such events were hosted by the Local 29, Spokane City Fire Fighters, and included a BBO in the park, casino night and the

awards dinner. The WSCFF annually gives out the Honorary FF (Lambert Award) of the year and the Labor Leader of the year (Waller Award). This year's recipients were Steve Nelson and Ricky Walsh respectively. Both appeared surprised by the honor as attendees commented on their stunned appearances.

Overall, the delegates acted on 26 resolutions, raised per-capita to \$13.49, and parted fraternal brothers and sisters.

7TH DISTRICT BENEVOLENT FUND UP & RUNNING

The 7th District Benevolent Fund is up and running, having completed three fundraisers at the time of this writing. The Fund is another way in which DVP Walsh is creating opportunity for the Magnificent 7th District to work collectively for the benefit of all four states.

Fundraising efforts to date are ongoing as the just-completed 2nd Annual Shad Fishing Tourney raised over \$800, the 3rd Annual Benevolent Ride (in conjunction with the WSCFF convention) raised

\$320, and the offering/selling of the "Magnificent 7th District" t-shirts has generated \$400. In addition, Local 31, in an impromptu effort at the Jimmy Cason Golf tournament, raised over \$300 for the Fund. In those efforts Scott Brines/Chris Roney, Greg Borg/Rick Snodgrass, MT Headed Inc, and Local 31's E-Board all are mentioned and thanked for their efforts and continued support for the Fund.

The Fund is for benefit of 7th District

members and their families in times of need or tragedy. In addition, a scholarship program will be instituted as the fund grows. Kelly Walsh is the initial director of the organization and will oversee fundraising efforts and attend board meetings.

If you would like to host and sponsor a fundraising event benefiting 7th Dist. Members and families, please email kelly@iaff7thdistrict.org with your thoughts and ideas for consideration.

SEE WEB CAST OF PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE FORUM

at www.iaff.org and we need not write anymore on this issue. Get informed and tune-in for candidate updates.

THE MAGNIFICENT 7TH OFFICIAL WEB SITE IS ONLINE

www.iaff7thdistrict.org

I recently reestablished the official web site of the Magnificent 7th District at the above address. After some technical difficulties with the former site, www.rickywalsh.com, I had to re-group and do something exciting. I hope you will agree that this is it.

The web site will focus on information that is useful to the members of the 7th. As you will see when visiting, that there are many points of interest and, I hope, something for everyone. I wanted to provide a one stop shop that where you could navigate the Magnificent 7th and find what you were looking for from somewhere or someone close to you.

As you visit the site, you will notice several areas that are of interest to our members. At the heading you will find a "Vendors Trusted" in which I will list business ventures I have personally dealt with and have had a positive experience, thus earning my support and endorsement. Also at the headings are a photo gallery and guest book. The right side of the main page has links to the web sites of all 7th District states. The main page contains recent news or events in the 7th District. The left side of the main page has several sub-pages containing useful information for you and your members, including a "Classified Ads" sections for members to sell some of their treasures, access to past editions of the "7th District Rag" and an opinion page on which I will continue to express my thoughts on controversial issues facing the 7th and the rest of the IAFF.

Some of the information contained on the site is of sensitive nature and will require you to log in, which you can do on the upper right side of the page. It takes 24-48 hours for me to review your information and approve you for such access. Please fill out the information completely and be patient.

My family is assisting me in this endeavor and, as we learn, we hope to improve the site for your enjoyment, use, and information source.

FIRE FIGHTERS HONOR ERIC LYONS WITH MEMORIAL

On July 12, fire fighters gathered in Kennewick, Washington, to honor the life and service of FF Erick Lyons who suffered a LODD on July 5. Brother Lyons was a member of Local 1296 and the Kennewick fire department for 13 years. He earnestly enjoyed his profession, life, and shared his zest with others who knew him well.

Fire Fighters representing Locals from Washington, Idaho, Montana, and Alaska traveled to show their respect for a fallen Brother in traditional style. The Tri-City convention center held the occasion to celebrate the life of one of our own. The Seattle Pipes and Drums, Walla Walla honor guard, and WSCFF 2nd District Rep Scott Brines assisted L-1296 in preparing for the service, ever diligent of the parents of Brother Lyons wishes for a traditional service for our uniformed Brother including the tolling of the bell signaling the last alarm. Many of Brother Lyons' colleagues spoke of their personal interaction with Eric, which was at times comical, a trait exhibited to all who knew him.

As well, the surrounding FD's/Locals manned Kennewick stations to allow all members of the Kennewick FD to attend uninterrupted. Local 1296 thanks all who attended.



NEW LOCALS ORGANIZE, JOIN OUR FAMILY OF LABOR

Eagle, Idaho Local 4553 is among the newest addition to the family of labor in the "Magnificent 7th District" and promises to be an active, visible, and productive organization. New officers of the local are President Jamie Vincent, VP Rob Shoplock, and S/T Brad Devourde. Special thanks to Brian Fendley for setting up the initial meetings. "It was time for us to join the firefighter labor family in the Treasure Valley and we are excited to be welcomed", stated President Vincent.

A new supervisory local has been established as the Spokane Valley Chiefs, Local 3701. Additionally, McCall, Idaho Local 4564, Gowen Field Fire Fighters Local 4571 (Boise), Skamania EMS Local 4574 in Stevenson, Washington, and Local 4589 Jerome, Idaho joined our Magnificent 7th and are welcomed aboard..

All additions understand the benefits of affiliation with the IAFF and have

agreed to IAFF 7th DVP Walsh's expectations as follows: To set minimum dues at 1% of Top step firefighter (officer for supervisory locals) identified in their CBA, to join their state association, to join the central labor counsel, to attend the state events at minimum, and to host at least one MDA event per year. "For the service we receive from the IAFF, that is minimal", says Wayne Howerton, Local 3701 President.

IAFF 7TH DISTRICT

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We are all in this together



2007 DATES TO REMEMBER

- August 21—7th Dist. Mini Ed Day
**Sandpoint, Idaho
- August 28-29, PFFI Ed Seminar
**Pocatello, Idaho
- September 8-15, IAFF-MG ride
**Tacoma to Colorado Springs
- October 2-3, 7th District Caucus
**Missoula, Montana
- October 4, 7th District Mini Ed Day
**Missoula, Montana
- October 22-25, IAFF Redmond
**Chicago, Illinois
- January 21-23, 2008 IAFF ALTS
**New Orleans, LA
- May 10, 2008 FIREOPS 101 (ta'd)
**Richland, Washington-HAMMER

7TH DISTRICT MEMBERS SACRIFICING

We are fortunate to have many 7th District members willing to put in the personal sacrifice, money and hard work to get elected for the purposes of doing the good work for Fire Fighters and Labor. As of this writing the following have announced and are on the campaign trail and could use both muscle and monetary assistance from each of us. Cory Henson (L-1052), Chass Perkins (L-8), Chris Edmundson (2781), Pat McGanney (437), Roy Kadow (1488), Darrell Roberts (2394), Tamera Jenkins (3829), Mike Scott (1747), Kevin Garling (1747), Del Spivey (1604), Rick Gaines (1604), Scott McMullen (1-66), Jerry Childs (27), Dave Walker (2545), and Brian McGee, Bob Homan, Stew Kunkel, all (864).

FROM THE DESK (Continued from page 1)

those in the know (state and national leadership). We know by experience that 10 percent of the membership do 90 percent of the work, and unfortunately, most are comfortable with that. Again, next time you're at the beanery table, let them know that it is not fair that "WE" must carry their water. It is contrary to the "team" approach in our fire service and it should not be acceptable in our UNION! **HELP US HELP YOU!**

I also observe that many of our members do not realize that this Union and their Local is THEM! Our Union is different than others. It is run at a grass roots level...at the Local level. When there is trouble, your leadership is the first to act. Their job is not to simply run Union meetings and do what you tell them. The responsibility is much greater. We are our own business agents. If in fact they criticize the Union, they are directly, and likely unknowingly, criticizing themselves.

It is also apparent that many of our new members and, quite frankly, some of our old members have forgotten their oath, or Local leadership failed to swear them into the Local when they joined. The part I am thinking of is...."I promise to support the will of the majority."

I hope this gets you thinking and I am committed to find a cure to this problem, with the help of your state leadership, at the 7th District Caucus in October. But back to the lead-in.

"My 457 account will be my legacy for my family". After it is verbally stated or written as above it seems shallow. Maybe I am alone in my thinking and I only speak for myself, but it is my hope that my legacy will be more on the lines of, "my kids are good social beings and contribute to society and I had a hand in it," or that I treated others fairly and at least tried to be nice, or that I was honest with those whom I dealt with. I could go on and on, but I will not have my legacy tied to dollars left behind. **"It works for us" (one local)**. There are many things that work for us individually or as a unit, but all states in the Magnificent 7th are comparable states and what you do has the potential to come to being in another jurisdiction. It has happened before and will happen again. This is why I send in IAFF State Reps to do first and second contracts for new locals....I don't want a rookie mistake on a contract to stare us in the face at another bargaining session in a different BUT comparable jurisdiction. **"I will have to pencil it out and see how it works for me"**. Let me put it to you directly: It is not about ME! I will put forth this for your consideration...how much do you think AWC, Montana League of Cities, Idaho League, the Alaska League, or whoever, on the other side would pay for a Kelly Fox, Tod Miller, Mark Drygas, Ron Davies, myself or any of the other talents we have in our Union to join their ranks in negotiating or lobbying the state capitals on the employers' behalf? Look up what they spend on their attorneys and lobbyists currently as it is public record. **If all of us were concerned about how it penciled out for 'ME'**, there would be an empty chair on your side and a familiar face on the other.

We are at a critical junction in our Union's existence and it is up to each of you to kill this virus of "MEISM" before it runs rampant and terminates our Union. Look at yourself in the mirror...are you infected, or can you work to spread the cure to others? **Until next time: BE SAFE! Ricky**