

AFD RETIREE NEWS

March 1, 2020

1-2020

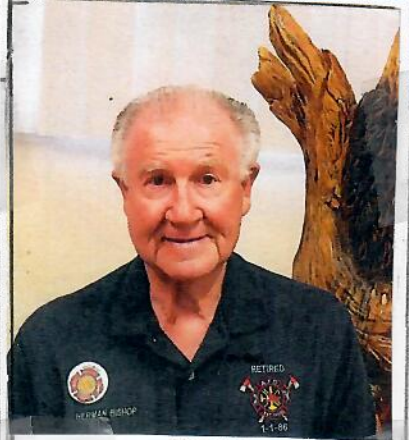
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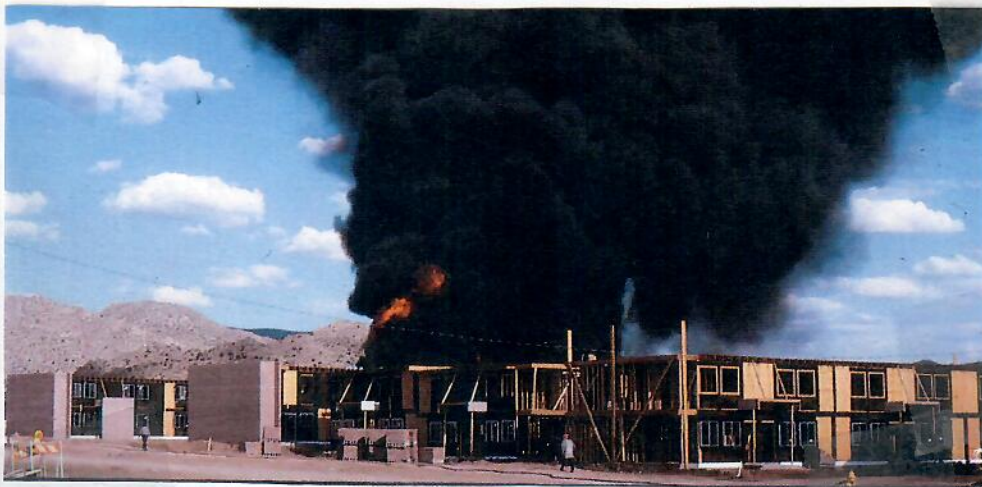
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THE AFD RETIREE'S
ASSOCIATION



**EDITOR
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DORADO APARTMENTS FIRE, EAST CENTRAL AVE. NE (1973)
(Photo By: Dave Windle, 1973)

CONTENTS

- P-1 Dorado Apt. Fire (1973)
Annual Fund Drive
- P-2 Death, T.V. Jaramillo
December, Minutes
- P-3 Chief Arthur Martinez Story
- P-4 Chief Fred Russell Story
- P-5 Death, Chief Fred Russell
- P-6 January Meeting
Death, Jesse Lopez
- P-7 Stories, Ed Abeita, 20 Years
History, AFD Retiree's Assoc.
- P-11 Kerry Horton, PERA Update
- P-13 "Unexplained," By: F. Maestas
- P-14 Photo Dorado Apt. Fire, 1973
- P-14 February, Minutes
- F Robert A. Sanchez Dies
- P-15 Dedication, "911 Memorial,"
Sta.# 20, (12-20-19)
- P-16 President's Message

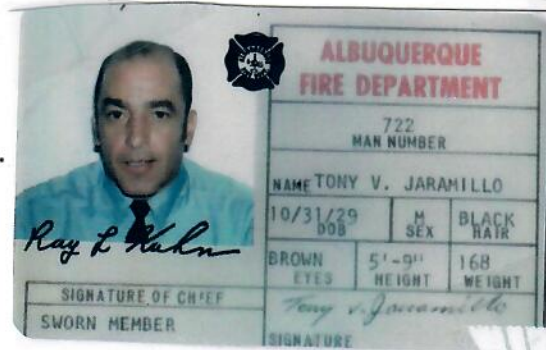
ANNUAL FUND DRIVE

SEND DONATIONS
TO: AFD RETIREE'S
ASSOCIATION
C/O MIKE FOX
805 RANCHITOS RD. NW
LOS RANCHOS
De ALBUQUERQUE 87114

******* ANNUAL FUND DRIVE *******

\$\$\$\$\$\$ MAKE CHECKS TO : AFD RETIREE'S ASSOCIATION \$\$\$\$\$\$
C/O Mike Fox 805 Ranchitos Rd. NW Los Ranchos de Albuquerque, NM 87114

Tony "T.V." Jaramillo Death - Regretfully we were notified of the death of retired firefighter/driver Tony "T.V." Jaramillo, age 90, who passed away on Sunday November 17, 2019. He joined AFD on July 31, 1954 and on December 31, 1983 he retired after serving over 29 years of faithful, dedicated service to his community and to the fire department. There was no fire academy when he joined. He was hired along with two other firefighters Robert Nevarez, and Alex Velardé. The cadet classes were not numbered in those days and training was mostly on the job. The training usually lasted a few days to a week conducted by the Lieutenant on Engine 1A from station # one. Tony was hired by Chief Art Westerfeld and station # 1 was located at Second Street and Tijeras NW in the old City Hall along with the City Manager's office and other City Departments. There was a seven story training drill tower on the back lot of station # 1. "T.V." was an easy going personable man and was liked by his co-workers and supervisors alike. His early career as a driver were spent on the east side floating crew, working at stations 11, 5, and 3 filling in for the regular crews on their days off. Towards the end of his career he worked at station 11 and most of the stations on the East side of town. He also served many years as acting Lieutenant when the regularly assigned officers were on their days off. When the AFD retiree's association was formed in the year 2000 "T.V. became a faithful member for over 19 years. He served with the retiree's association until the last year when his health failed and he could no longer attend the monthly meetings. Our most sincere sympathies and condolences are extended to the entire Jaramillo family.



December Monthly Meeting – On December 11, 2019 the monthly meeting of the AFD Retiree's Association was held at the firefighter's union hall, local 244, 4100 Edith NE. At 7:10 P.M. the 231 st monthly meeting was called to order by President Kerry Horton. After the "Pledge of Allegiance," the opening prayer was led by brother Morris Guterrez. Morris read the names of our 13 retired brothers who passed away during 2019. We held a moment of silence in memory of our deceased members. Roll Call – President Kerry Horton, Vice President, Mike Murphy, Secretary, Fred Casias, Treasurer, Mike Fox, Historian, Herman Bishop and President Emeritus, Sam Trujillo.

Kerry Horton gave the president's report. On Thursday December 19, 2019 a 911 Memorial will be conducted at fire station # 20, Wyoming and Carmel NE at 11:30 AM. This memorial is in honor of AFD personnel, both active duty and retirees who responded to the New York World Trade Center, The Pentagon and Shanksville, Pa. to assist in disaster recovery after the 911 tragedy. All AFD retiree's and their families are invited. During December the elections were held for officer positions for our firefighters union, Local 244. Justin Cheney was elected President. Congratulations to Justin and his fellow officers who were elected.

Kerry gave an update on the Investment and Pensions Oversight Committee conducted in Santa Fe at the NM State Capitol Building on December 4, 2019. The Committee gave approval to the recommendations submitted by the Governor's PERA Pension Solvency Task Force. The recommendations will be submitted to the NM State Legislature which meets in Santa Fe on January 21, 2019 for the 30 day short session. As of now it looks favorable to pass and is strongly supported by the Governor. A big thanks goes to Kerry for giving his time to serve on this worthwhile retiree pension committee. Kerry gave a big note of thanks to Captain Tony Justino and the crew at Station # 22 for their assistance in the maintenance of the Funeral Truck.

The Secretary's report was given by Fred Casias. A motion to accept was made by Eddie Abeita, and was seconded by Morris Gutierrez. The motion passed. The Treasurer's report was given by Mike Fox. He reported that the museum fund now has a balance of \$550.00 in donations from our members to build display cases at the museum. Members are asked to donate to this worthwhile project. A motion to accept was made by Joe Martinez and was seconded by Ralph Sedillo. The motion passed. The Historian's report was given by Herman Bishop. He reported that there was mix-up on printing the December newsletter but Kerry Horton rescued it and got it mailed, however although the pages were out of numerical sequence they were all there. Eddie Abeita advised that the retiree's Christmas dinner is all set for the evening of December 12 th at the Moose Lodge.

Best wishes go to our retirees on the sick roster: John Milligan, James Stevens, Carmen Gonzales, Jeff Elks, Paul Gonzales, and Joe Serna. The closing prayer was led by Morris Gutierrez. The meeting adjourned @ 8.50 PM.

**** DONATE TO THE SPECIAL MUSEUM FUND TO BUILD DISPLAY CASES. SEE MIKE FOX ****

ARTHUR B. MARTINEZ, FIRE CHIEF -1974-1980**(By: Herman R. Bishop**

After the retirement of Chief Ray Kuhn, Arthur B. Martinez served as Albuquerque's Fire Chief from July, 1974 to March 1980. Prior to his appointment to Chief by Mayor Harry Kinney he served three months as acting Chief while Ray Kuhn served as City Manager. In 1974 the City government by an amendment to the City charter and by popular citizen's vote was changed from the City manager, Commission form of government to the Mayor, City Council type of government.

On June 9, 1928 Arthur Martinez was born in San Marcial, New Mexico a small community south of Albuquerque. His father, Pete Martinez, was a supervisor with the City water department. In 1947 two weeks after his graduation from Albuquerque High School he took a job with the City paving department. After working two years with the Paving department he joined the Albuquerque Fire Department during January, 1949 as a fireman. He was hired by Fire Chief Art Westerfeld, and the Assistant Chiefs were Simon Seligman and Milton Grande. At that time fire station one was located at Second Street and Tijeras N.W. There was no fire academy as we know it today, however there was a seven story drill tower in the back lot behind the fire station. In those days the Department was small and they only hired four or five firemen at a time. Mostly new men received on the job training (usually three to seven days) by the engine one Lieutenant.



**ART MARTINEZ
CHIEF -1974-1980**

There were only five fire stations in 1949 and only 85 people in the entire department. The Chief had one civilian Secretary and there was no fire prevention bureau, no training Division, no paramedics, and no arson division. Financial management, personnel management, fire inspections, and fire investigations were handled by the Fire Chief and his two Assistant Chiefs. As there was no rescue division or paramedics, rescue calls were responded to by engine companies and the Chiefs in their cars.

Climbing the ladder of success quickly, Arthur was promoted to driver in 1952, Lieutenant in 1954, Captain in 1957, Assistant Chief in 1962, District Chief in 1966, and Deputy Chief in 1968. In 1974 he achieved his career dream and was promoted to Fire Chief. During his 33 years with City government Chief Martinez saw the fire department grow from five fire stations and 85 firemen to eighteen stations and over 500 firefighters. After serving as Chief for six years he retired in 1974. At his retirement party given by fellow firefighters and co-workers he said, "I have had a wonderful career in the fire service and I have enjoyed working as a firefighter, fire officer, and served as Albuquerque's Fire Chief."

Fire Station 19 located at Carlisle and San Andres NE was named in honor of Chief Martinez and was dedicated on August 15, 1997 during the tenure of Mayor Martin Chavez and Fire Chief Carlos Dominguez. Chief Martinez exemplified the hallmark character of Albuquerque Firefighters: Unyielding courage in the line of duty and unending compassion for the community they so proudly serve.

After retirement Chief Martinez enjoyed being a man of leisure, traveling, cross word puzzles, fishing, and his grandchildren. During his career his wife Thelma strongly supported him. He had three children Arthur Jr. Elizabeth, and Cathy. He spent fourteen years in retirement and enjoyed visiting with his friends, fellow firefighters and City Co-workers. He passed away in 1994, at age 66. His wife Thelma passed away a few years later in 1999.



FRED M. RUSSELL, ALBUQUERQUE FIRE CHIEF

BY: Herman R. Bishop)

March 1, 2020

Fred M. Russell was hired in 1908 by Chief A.C. Burtless during the horse drawn era of the Albuquerque Fire Department. There were two stations, # 1 Station Downtown and # 2 Station, The Highlands station. During his career he saw the department move from horse drawn apparatus to motorized pumper trucks in 1912. He was promoted to Assistant Chief in 1911 by Chief Jacob Klein. On March 17, 1917 Fred M. Russell was appointed to Fire Chief replacing J.W. Burnette. His tenure as Chief was short lived because he resigned a short time later. This was in protest after the City administration fired all the firemen for attempting to Unionize. William Collister replaced Russell when he resigned. Collister served as Chief from 1917 to 1922. Apparently Russell went back to the firemen ranks and laid low until the union turmoil ended a few years later.

From 1917 to the early 1920's Fred Russell was in and out of favor with Mayor and city Council. The records are not clear which years he served as Chief because many of the annual reports we reviewed are not signed. The reports were typed, and submitted by the fire chief but not signed. Obviously the City Officials took a rigid stance against unionization by the firemen. (Note: Nine annual reports are missing from 1926 to 1924.)

In November, 1918 the fire department ledger notes that Fire Chief Fred Russell bought and accepted delivery of a new Buick Six fire chief's car. In our photo collection we have a picture (Circa, 1920) of Chief Russell standing by the fire chief's car which we believe to be the 1918 Buick referred to in the 1918 ledger entry. The daily fire station ledger on April 29, 1922 shows William Collister as the fire chief. By about 1923 the union issues had subsided and the daily hand written ledgers shows Fred Russell on the roster as Fire Chief. He served as Chief from the early 1920's until his death in 1931 while still serving as Chief. Fred M. Russell died on August 21, 1931.



**Albuquerque, Fire Chief's Sedan (Circa, (1920's)
L-R, Fred M. Russell, Chief, "Art" Westerfeld, Fireman**

Photos enhanced by Eric Jones



FIRE CHIEF FRED RUSSELL PASSES AWAY, AUGUST 21, 1931

From an article in the Albuquerque Journal Mayor Clyde Tingley announced the death of Albuquerque's Fire Chief Fred M. Russell, age 46, Friday afternoon at St. Joseph's Hospital. Mayor Tingley said, "Chief Russell was one of the most capable Fire Chief's in the country. His death was a serious blow to the City. He always responded to every fire in the City whether it was a small brush fire or a second alarm." "He died working." The Chief had been suffering from health issues for the past several months. Some think his health issues resulted from severe injuries he suffered in 1927 during a wreck when the Chief's car collided with a fire truck and a street car at 2nd Street and Central Avenue while responding to a false alarm. He was Chief of the Department for 12 years.

He was born in 1885 and raised in Danville, Illinois. Earlier he had been employed by the railroad prior to becoming a fireman in Albuquerque. He was appointed to Chief under the administration of Mayor Henry Westerfeld. (Note: Mayor Westerfeld was the father of "Art" Westerfeld who was appointed to Fire Chief after the death of Chief Russell).

Tuesday afternoon final rites for Chief Russell was held at the Mason's Temple 6 with the Reverend George Weber officiating. He was buried later that day at Fairview cemetery on Yale Avenue S.E. The casket was carried on a fire truck, draped in a blanket of roses. The Fire Chief's car and a police escort followed with the funeral procession. A cadre of uniformed Albuquerque firemen and policemen marched behind the funeral cortage.

Note: During Chief Russell's tenure the fire department had a mascot, "Spider," the monkey. It was reported that even "Spider," the firemen's mascot sensed the air of tragedy. Usually scampering about the station and playing with the firemen he was strangely quiet and there were no playmates, neither firemen nor children who frequented the fire station yard to play with "Spider."

After Chief Fred M. Russell's death on August 21, 1931 Arthur "Art," Westerfeld was appointed to Fire Chief by Mayor Clyde Tingley on August 31, 1931. "Art" Westerfeld served as Albuquerque's Fire Chief for 31 years until his death while still serving as Chief during February, 1962.

Sources: - Albuquerque Fire Department ledgers 1906 through 1921

- Albuquerque Journal, July 8, 1983, Page B-1, "Fire Ledgers Unique look back
- Albuquerque Tribune, September 1, 1968, Page D-4, Fire Chief's Career
- AFD Annual Reports 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929, 1930
- Photo of Chief Fred M. Russell provided by former Chief Ray Kuhn (1968-1974)



Jesse Lopez Dies – We were notified of the death of our fellow retired firefighter Jesse Lopez, age 67, who passed away on Wednesday, November 20, 2019. He was hired by AFD on October 4, 1976 and after 19 years of faithful and dedicated service to his community and the fire department. He retired on August 1, 1995. He was a member of the 29 th cadet class. He was hired by Chief Simon Seligman along with 20 other fire cadets. The old fire academy was located adjacent to the zoo at 1510 Kit Carson SW. His class completed their training on December 20, 1976 just in time to be given their assignments to augment fellow firefighters for the Christmas holidays. He had a successful career and on September 1, 1981 was promoted to rescue driver at station one after completing paramedic training and certification at UNM Regional Medical School. He loved his job as a firefighter and was real happy to receive his promotion to paramedic/firefighter. He was a responsible and dedicated firefighter who knew his job and was well respected by fellow firefighters and supervisors alike.



JESSE L. LOPEZ

Jesse was a personable, likeable fellow who had a positive attitude about life and always was quick to smile and had a good sense of humor. He was always in on the daily firehouse pranks along with fellow firefighters. On June 6, 1991 he was promoted to fire inspector in the Fire Prevention Bureau and was later assigned as an Arson Investigator. After his assignment to Arson Investigator he completed Arson Investigator training at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. After his retirement he went to work as a driver for the Greyhound Bus Company. He also lived in Colorado for a few years. Recently he moved back to Albuquerque and became an active member of the AFD Retiree's Association. Our most sincere sympathies and condolences are extended to the entire Lopez family. Jesse was a good friend and comrade. He will be missed by our retired members.

January Monthly Meeting – On January 8, 2020 the 233 rd monthly meeting of the AFD Retiree's Association was called to order by President Kerry Horton at 7:04 PM at the Firefighters Union Hall, 4100 Edith NE . Kerry led the retiree's in the "Pledge of Allegiance," and brother Morris Gutierrez led the opening prayer. A moment of silence was observed in memory of our deceased members. Roll Call – President Kerry Horton, Vice President, Mike Murphy, Absent Secretary, Fred Casias, Treasurer, Mike Fox, Historian, Herman Bishop, and President Emeritus, Sam Trujillo. Our guests were: Robert Sedillo, Robert Miller, Jim Roszell, retired Captain from San Jose, Ca. F.D. who now resides in Santa Fe. Our guest speaker was Robert Miller, representative of Firefighter's First Credit Union. This credit union is by firefighters for firefighters. This credit union is affiliated with all credit unions across the nation. A large number of Albuquerque firefighters both active duty and retired are members. Mr. Miller said they offer full banking services found in credit unions nationwide. To set an appointment with Robert Miller call him @ (626)-807-2546, or E-Mail, RMiller@FireFirstCU.org

President's Report -Kerry gave a summary of the PERA Task Force recommendations which will be sent to the NM State Legislature when it convenes on January 21, 2020 for the 30 day short session. It is supported by our Governor and will protect the solvency of our pension fund, and provides an annual COLA provision. Kerry will keep us up to date on this legislation, SB 72. Two bills will go before the legislature to eliminate State taxes on retiree's social security income, they are HB 29 and SB 68. HB 45 proposes additional funding to protect the retired public employees Health Care Plan. More information regarding legislative actions will be provided as it becomes available. Members of our retiree's association extended our sincere condolences to the family of City Councilor Ken Sanchez who passed away recently in January. He was a true friend and supporter of the fire service and firefighters. He was a fine public servant. His passing was a great loss to the Albuquerque community.

The December Secretary's report was read by Herman Bishop due to the absence of Fred Casias. A motion to accept was made by Ed. Abeita and was seconded by Toby Pino. The motion passed. Mike Fox gave the Treasurer's report. He and Ed Abeita reported that all expenses were met for the annual Christmas dinner. Mike also reported that our special Museum Fund is growing slowly and requests members make donations to support the museum project. We hope to build display cases for historical exhibits. A motion to accept the Treasurer's report was made by Bill Raupfer and was seconded by Morris Gutierrez. The motion Passed. Herman Bishop gave the Historian's report. March kicks off our annual fund raiser. Please be generous with your donations. Also we are requesting your contributions to support the museum fund. Sam Trujillo made a motion to reimburse Kerry Horton for expenses he will incur while attending the January/February session of the NM State Legislature such as gasoline, food, and lodging. The motion was seconded by Ed Abeita. The motion passed.

Best wishes to those on the sick roster: Carmen Gonzales, John Milligan, Jeff Elks, Joe Serna, Jim Stevens, and Paul Gonzales. Sincere condolences are offered to Fire Chief Dow who recently lost his grandfather.

The raffle was won by Ron Sanchez, Toby Pino, and Bill Raupfer. The closing prayer was led by Tom Romero. The meeting adjourned @ 8:55 PM.

To Become a Member of the Retirees Association, it's Simple

Twenty-Year History

by Eddie Abeita

From Writer Eddie Abeita, this story is based on interviews with brother retirees who were instrumental in starting the retiree's association. There was duplication of information received so quoting a retiree for each phrase was difficult. If a key retiree was not mentioned, it was an oversight on my part. Prior to the year 2000 (or Y2K) one particular vision/idea was in the mind of a retiree. It may have been on the minds of others but they kept it to themselves until it came to light. When this vision/idea was brought up it blossomed into the creation of the retiree's association. During that time the focus was always clear, caring for our brother/sister retirees. Our historian Herman Bishop provided a lot of documentation and has also offered this to our membership via CD'S and zip drives.

The Beginning

Sam Trujillo gave an interesting account of the associations beginning. Sam remembers how conversations with Herman Bishop and other retirees always were so delightful. Sam said with every conversation we would reminisce about our old retiree brothers, some we worked with at the same station or just were good friends that we knew as firefighting brothers.

Sam said even though we had good talks there was the down side to these conversations, this came about when one of us mentioned the loss of a retiree. It was a sad thing to find out that a retiree died, buried and we missed their funeral. Another sad part was we referred to them "as our brothers", yet we were not there for the last time with them. Sam said, one retiree death I found out at the last minute that his funeral was happening that day. I rushed to the funeral and Jose Sales and Eugene Baldonado were there, so it was only us three retirees who gave the brother firefighter a good-bye. There were other retirees who passed away like brother Billy Mora, I missed his services because I did not know about it, that's the downer.

Sam said other retirees had the same issue, it's terrible that we lose a brother retiree and we did not know about their death, unless you ran into someone or you see it in the newspaper's obituary. This comes back to our original thought if we could see each other more such as a gathering or something like that, it would be great to share information with one another. I guess that thought would be considered the seed that started us thinking about forming some type of retiree group.

Sam said I called some retirees and invited them to what would be our first get-together that was held at my house, I told them to put the word out and call others. Ralph Sedillo said, I only had a few phone numbers but I knew where some lived so I drove to their houses invited them or left messages on their door.

To Become a Member of the Retirees Association it's Simple

Continued

The goal was to establish something, a group, organization, association or whatever we would call ourselves but mainly to open up communication among one another.

We also held meetings at Ralph Sedillo and Herman Bishop's homes this went back and forth to start or planning on what to do next. Once again communication was always something that we needed to established.

At our first gathering an assignment was given to all in attendance it was, to bring names address and phone numbers of at least 10 retirees to the next meeting. We found out that some retirees were hesitant, not sure of wanting to get involved. Later found out some concerns were, this maybe a one-time thing, or it may fizzle out in a few months.

Once we had an idea of what we would like to accomplish we felt it would be good that our group be recognized as a retiree's group said Sam. A meeting was scheduled with Fire Chief Morris Huling for help. Chief Huling said, I never forgot how the success of my career was truly affected by the foundation made by retirees, Chief Huling said what do you need help with? After a brief conversation about needs, Chief Huling offered help from his office and staff (of course within reason) such as providing names and last known retirees address.

Chief Huling said, this is our Albuquerque Fire Department anniversary and we are going to have a 100-year celebration at the convention center. This would be a great time to "kick off" the retirees association, all are invited.

Association Established

Approximately 20 years ago during Albuquerque Fire Department's 100-year celebration as a paid/career fire department, a retired firefighter association was formed.

Fire Chief Morris Huling hosted the centennial celebration at the Albuquerque Convention Center with a banquet. Retirees, active duty firefighters and other dignitaries were in attendance. Chief Huling was the Master of Ceremony and addressed the audience and recognized the retirees as the corner stone group of continued brother/sister hood camaraderie.

Chief Huling said; as fire chief I make a motion to call for a floor vote; "do you welcome an Albuquerque Fire Department Retiree Association to be formed and recognized? Signify by raising your hand. All in attendance raised their hand as a 100% yes vote in support, applause and cheers came about.

To Become a Member of the Retirees Association it's Simple

The next step, Chief Huling said the nomination of a President to oversee the association. Sam Trujillo was nominated for president and received full support. Sam then conducted the final election process with other nominations for Secretary and Treasure. Frank Sierra was nominated and voted in as secretary with Ralph Sedillo nominated and receiving the position of treasure. In the group that night was retired Fire Chief Ray Kuhn who was nominated for "Historian". However, Chief Kuhn immediately declined and said no not me. Chief Kuhn said, however the perfect person for this position of Historian is Herman Bishop. Herman received the full vote of those in attendance said Vince and Louie.

Developments

With the retirees being recognized as an association this brought interest to many more retirees. The first retiree's meetings as an association were held at Sam Trujillo, Herman Bishop and Ralph Sedillo homes. Some of the first retirees to attend the meetings were; Vince Holcomb, Bill Raupfer, John Herrera, Pat Cano, Robert Cisneros, Noel Baca, Joe Martinez, Charles Alderete, Eddie Torres, Santos Abeyta, Victor Sanchez and Bob Murphy. This is when we started to work on items to guide the association. Developed were a mission statement a goal and supporting objectives to start.

Ralph Sedillo and Herman Bishop searched for information to help develop a more legal area of the association. Ralph said we reached out to other associations for information. Denver Fire Retirees Association did provide some information. All information compiled was reviewed and formatted by Herman into by-laws. After a few meetings and discussions, the Retirees Association By-Laws were adopted.

Herman said, after the first few meetings Treasure Frank Sierra stepped down as secretary for personal reasons in which the position was filled by Robert Murphy. A short time later Robert passed away and the position was filled by Louie Trujillo.

With the growing number of retirees attending meetings space became a concern and it was evident a meeting facility was needed Sam said. So, a meeting with Chief Huling was once again scheduled with him to provide updates on our progress. In our meeting Chief Huling offered, us the use of the fire academy to hold monthly meetings, which we immediately accepted. The following year Local 244 Firefighters Union offered their facility to the association, the move was made to local 244 union hall on Edith Blvd, mainly because it was a centralized location.

Chief Huling had agreed that good communication was warranted and offered to help the association in printing and the mailing of a newsletter to reach out to retirees. The retirees first newsletter was one page in length and called *Newsletter*. Herman Bishop became Editor of the newsletter and still answers the question from retirees; why is the name still called newsletter? Herman will say because that's what it is, provides news and mailed out like a letter! [next issue "NEWSLETTER" developed].

Continued

At the time of our first association meetings another thing came about Sam said, a retiree passed away and we sent flowers however the association had no funds so we all pitched in for the flowers Sam said OK good. Well the following month(s) we lost other retirees and instead of passing the hat we sent the families a condolence card instead. This was a lot easier and less stressful then asking for flower donations over and over.

Sam said we needed something to help get any donations received secured. Ralph Sedillo said let me ask Lucy what she thinks. Sam said Lucy has helped us so many countless times over the years. What she did was help the association get financially established. Lucy was able to have the Rio Grand Credit Union, open a checking and savings account including a modest donation to get the association financially established.

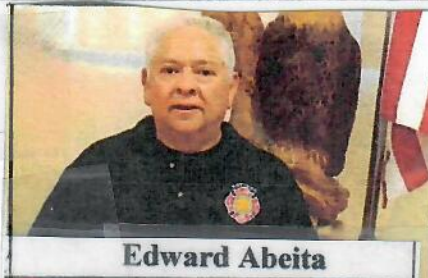
With donations being put into a credit union account we were advised that it would be good for us to request non -profit tax exemption with the Internal Revenue Service which I did said Ralph.

Within the first meetings that took place the unanimous concern was the need for communications with other retirees, which would be the corner stone of success. Right at the start retirees were asked to secure names and phone numbers of other retirees. This went right into the start of our telephone-phone tree". Also adopted were Qualification for Membership; *To Become a Member of the Retirees Association it's Simple*; all Albuquerque Fire Department Retirees are considered a member of the Albuquerque Fire Department Retirees Association! Also, the *Golden Rule, at Meetings; any and all ill feelings about another retiree shall be left at the door.*

So many other actions by the association have taken place at meetings, sometimes by a floor motion or just a simple someone needs help. The association has also assisted the fire department to act as spotters to report fires on the bosque during extreme fire seasons. Sam said we even offered our help, if there was a long-term incident. We could assist in non-hazardous areas to help with food, water, supplies or whatever was needed. The association is totally involved with "Random Acts" which provides assistance to retirees or active duty firefighters and a lot the time it's their family that needs help.

Albuquerque Fire Department dedicated a spare fire engine to be used for transport of deceased firefighters at funerals. Paul Garcia was the driving force in converting the pumper to its fitting use. This also led to development of providing support and information to deceased family. **[next newsletter issue, Retirees Funeral]**.

Eddie Abeita – Eddie Abeita comes from a firefighter family where his father was a driver in the Gallup Fire Department. His brother Alfred "Porky," was Fire Chief of Gallup, NM. His brothers were volunteer firefighters for the City of Gallup and Bureau of Indian Affairs. His nephew Jacob is a firefighter with the Pueblo of Isleta. He was the first career, "Native American, to join the Albuquerque Fire Department. He joined AFD in 1973 and retired with over 22 years service in 1985. Eddie was assigned as an instructor at the Fire Academy and served in the ranks of Driver, Lieutenant, Captain and was Appointed as Commander of the Academy during his last years with AFD. After Retirement he served on the staff of TVI community college, He also worked Several years with the U.S. Department of Bureau of Indian Affairs. He is an Active member of the AFD Retiree's Association. He and his wife Roberta chair the annual picnic, and Christmas Dinner. Recently he chaired the annual audit committee for the Retiree's association. He writes numerous articles for our quarterly newsletter. Eddie is an asset to the AFD Retiree's Association and is a valued and respected member of our organization.



Edward Abeita

PERA Solvency Bill Passes

Kerry Horton

I have been talking to all of you for almost a year about the solvency issues facing our PERA retirement fund. The problem has actually been studied for about three years now, and last year you know that Governor Lujan Grisham appointed a task force to formulate a solvency plan. The plan that came out of that task force became Senate Bill 72 in the Second Session of the 54th Legislature. Senate Bill 72, or more commonly called SB 72, was a complex plan that affected both retirees and current contributors to PERA. There were many debates regarding SB 72, and it faced a lot of opposition from the Retired Public Employees of New Mexico advocacy group, but SB 72 prevailed, and it is now awaiting the Governor's signature. I truly believe that our pension system will be healthier long into the future because of this reform.

I will concentrate on how this PERA reform will affect retirees first. If you are 75 years of age now, or will be by July 1st, 2020, your COLA will improve to a compounding annual 2.5 % for the rest of your life. This also happens if you're on a disability pension, or your pension is less than \$25,000 and you worked 25 years. For the rest of us there will be a three-year hiatus to our compounding COLA, and for the next three years, we will receive a non-compounding COLA equal to 2% of our annual pension. If your pension is \$50,000 a year, then you will receive \$1000 a year for the next three years. The payout will either be a once a year 13th check, or broken up into twelve equal parts. This will be a PERA administrative decision, and will be decided before July of this year.

In July of 2023, our compounding COLAs will resume, based on a formula that takes into consideration the fund performance over the previous four years, and our funding ratio. The minimum COLA you will receive is .5%, and the maximum COLA is 3%. For example, if the next several years are poor market years, say 6% average returns, and the funded ratio stays like it is now at 70%, then we would receive the minimum COLA of .5%. If on the other hand, fund performance averages 8%, and our funded ratio improves to 75%, then we will receive a 2% COLA for that year.

Will there be years when we receive less than a 2% COLA, I'm sure that there will be, but I also believe that there will be years that we receive better than 2%. The most important part of this is that no matter what the COLA is, the fund can afford it, and we will start reducing our six billion dollar unfunded liability immediately. There is also a provision that allows the COLA to go up to 5% after we achieve 100% funding, but that's getting ahead of ourselves.

SB 72 split the burden of reaching solvency between retirees and current contributors in a 40/60 split. Sixty percent of the burden falls on current contributors in the way of higher contributions, and longer working years. No one wants to lose benefits, or pay more into their pension system, but we must all make adjustments to preserve what is one of the best pension systems in the country. By making these adjustments now, we will get PERA back on a path of solvency, and assure that future retirees will have the same generous pensions as we enjoy.

There was a lot of people that worked many long hours to develop this solvency plan, and turn it into a bill, then get the bill through the legislative process, and then finally to become law. We

tend to look at everything from a firefighter's point of view, but this reform was developed by people from all over the spectrum that has a stake in PERA. New Mexico state, county, and city employers and employees all had a voice in these changes, and we will all benefit from the reforms that SB 72 will make to the fund. There are a lot of people not happy with this reform, their voices were heard, and that led to many compromises when this reform was being developed. No one can be absolutely sure what the economy will be in 10 or 20 years, but I'm confident that our fund will be stronger because of the changes made today.

I sent out a lot of requests the past few weeks for members to reach out to your Senators and Representatives, and ask them for their support for SB 72. You did just that, and the emails and calls they received were more positive than negative. Every vote taken was strongly in favor of SB 72, and what makes this even more miraculous is that this is an election year, and this was a very controversial bill. I do not want to spread negativity, and list those that did not vote for SB 72. Just because someone doesn't agree with you, does not mean that they are a bad person, but I do want to call out those that did support this bill, and who understood the importance of PERA reform, especially in an election year. So please reach out to these people and thank them for their support.

Governor Lujan Grisham, **Senators** Brandt, Candelaria, Cervantes, Gonzales, Gould, Ingle, Kernan, Martinez, Munoz, Neville, O'Neill, Ortiz y Pino, Payne, Rodriguez, Rue, Sedillo-Lopez, Sharer, Shendo, Smith, Soules, Steinborn, Stewart, Tallman, White, Wirth, and **Representatives** Akhil, Alcon, Anderson, Armstrong D, Bandy, Barrone, Bash, Cadena, Chandler, Chasey, Egolf, Ely, Ferray, Figueroa, Gallegos DY, Garcia MP, Garratt, Harpar, Herrera, Hochman, Johnson, Lara, Lunstrom, Martinez J, Martinez R, McQueen, Powdrell-Culbert, Romero A, Roybal Caballero, Rubio, Salavar, Sanchez, Sarinana, Small, Stansbury, Stapleton, Thomson, Trujillo C, Trujillo J, Trujillo L.

These people all deserve our support and a big thank you for their support of our PERA reform.

There was one person that needs to be singled out for his extra efforts to kill this bill. It is one thing for someone to disagree with you, and vote against your proposal, but this man proved that he is no friend of Fire, or any PERA member for that matter. Representative Antonio "Moe" Maestas went above and beyond to try and kill this bill, as well as the FLSA correcting bill SB 62 that I address in the Presidents Message. He is obviously friends with those that spread all the misleading and inaccurate information that was prevalent during our days in legislation, and he proved that he does not care for firefighters, retired or active. Mr. Maestas is Bernalillo District 16, and I am a constituent of his, and yes, I voted for him in the past. Mr. Maestas, you no longer have my vote.

In closing, I just want to thank all those that helped get this reform done. You are too many to name here, but we were shoulder to shoulder for days, weeks, and months, and I thank you all. We all believe that we did what was necessary to preserve the financial promise that PERA made to all of us and future retirees.

UNEXPLAINED (March 1, 2020)

(By: Former AFD Paramedic, Frank T. Maestas)

Many times in a persons life, first responders, especially firefighters, there comes a time when you go out on a call and it seems really strange. The incident that you answer seems to not make sense. You can't come up with a logical explanation.

Such was the case in the mid 70's when My crew and myself went on a rescue call. I was the LT. On Rescue 2 stationed at station 3 when the alarm came in. As I remember, it was between 10:00pm and midnight. Probably closer to midnight. The address was to the S.E. Heights around the Ridgecrest area.

My crew was Johnnie I. Berry Firefighter Paramedic and Landjur Abakusumo Driver Paramedic. We proceeded to the location and upon arriving, we noticed a very nice house in a very upscale neighborhood. We got our equipment and headed for the door.

We were met at the door by a women, middle age, and her daughter. They seemed very upset. We all went into the living room and they started to tell us their story. They said the Husband / Dad was an Undertaker and he was not at home. They told us that he had gone to South America on business. They thought he might have gone to study Voodoo, but they were not sure. When he had returned, he was a different person with very strange thinking and behavior. He did not act friendly towards them at all.

The reason they had called was that they kept hearing strange noises, almost like voices, coming out of the

ceiling air vent. They could also smell a foul odor emitting from the vent.

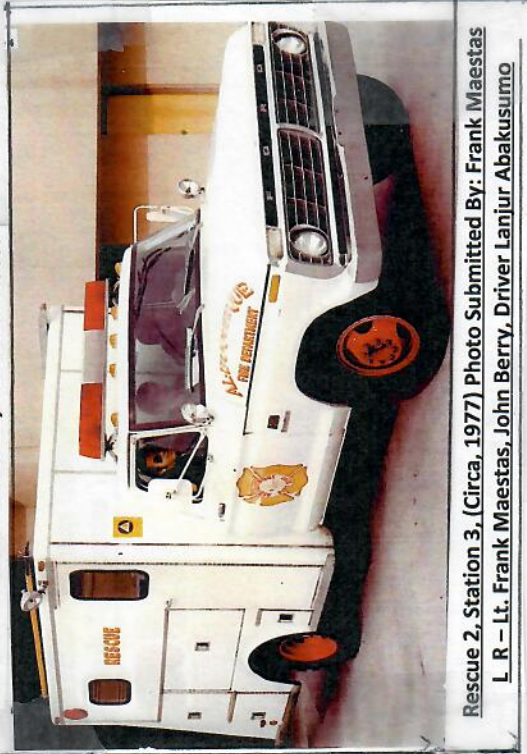
The family had a large German Shepard dog who came into the living room and sat near the two women. All of a sudden, all of us heard the eerie noise and could smell a horrible smell coming from the vent. The dog started to bark and look up at the ceiling vent. He then laid down by the women and stopped barking. He kept looking up at the air vent and seemed to cringe and be afraid.

My crew and I looked at each other and wondered WHAT THE HELL! Now we were searching and talking to each other as to how we were going to resolve this call. We told the two women that we had no clue as to what was going on but that was not normal for sure. We advised them that they and the dog should leave the house and maybe stay with friends for the night. We also told them that in the morning they should contact their Pastor or clergy. Someone who was a spiritual person whom they knew. After they both assured us they would do that immediately, They thanked us and we cleared the call and went 10-8. That was our call with NO explanation.

I hope other firefighters would share their Paranormal calls with this newsletter.

Herman Bishop and/or Eddie Abeyta would be more then willing to help you formulate your story. Their contact information is in every newsletter.

Source: Frank T. Maestas, Personal Notes



Rescue 2, Station 3. (Circa, 1977) Photo Submitted By: Frank Maestas
L R - Lt. Frank Maestas, John Berry, Driver Landjur Abakusumo

ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT	
7038 MAN NUMBER	
NAME: FRANK T. MAESTAS	BLACK HAIR
05/26/36 DOB	M SEX
BROWN EYES	5'10" HEIGHT
	200 WEIGHT
Signature of Frank T. Maestas	
SIGNATURE OF CHIEF	
SWORN MEMBER	

FRANK MAESTAS

Frank Maestas is a former Member of AFD. He joined in March, 1966, became a Paramedic and attained The rank of Lieutenant. After serving with AFD 13 years he joined the Colorado Department of Corrections. He keeps Close ties with the AFD Retiree's Association.



Artist's Depiction, Dorado Apartments Fire
 East Central Avenue, (Photo By: Dave Windle
 Display At, Firehouse Subs Winrock Center

1973

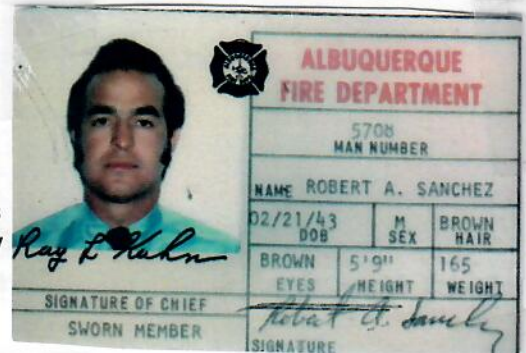
February Monthly Meeting – On February 12, 2020 the 234 th monthly meeting of the AFD Retiree’s Association was held at the Firefighter’s Union Hall, Local 244, 4100 Edith NE. President Kerry Horton opened the meeting at 7:03 PM and led members in the “Pledge of Allegiance.” Brother Jose Salaz led the opening prayer. A moment of silence was observed in honor of our deceased members. **Roll Call**- President Kerry Horton, Vice President, Mike Murphy, Secretary, Fred Casias, Treasurer, Mike Fox, Historian Herman Bishop, and President Emeritus, Sam Trujillo. Our guest speakers were: Don Mayfield who is running for the PERA Board. We were joined by Albuquerque Fire Rescue firefighters Lt. Athena Valerio Hirschfeld and Brian Breeswine. They head the heart wellness and fall prevention and recovery program. They are available to give community talks about their program and will assist all who request their services. Their Telephone: (505) 768-3798. Guest- Ruby Armenta, Gregg Armenta’s Daughter

President’s Report – Kerry Horton gave an update on the PERA Task Force recommendations which was sent to the NM State Legislature (Short Session) which convened on January 21, 2020. He reported that so far it was received favorably and has the full support of our Governor, Michell Lujan Grisham. SB 72 deals resolving the funding issue with PERA, and addresses the COLA issue for retirees. Also HB 45 adds sufficient funding to support the NM Public Retiree’s Health Care Authority.

The Secretary’s report was given by Fred Casias. A motion to accept was made by Ed Abeita and was seconded by Leroy Barboa. The motion passed. The Treasurer’s report was given by Mike Fox. A motion to accept was made by Joe Martinez and was seconded by Eugene Baldonado. The Motion passed. Herman gave the Historian’s report. The March newsletter reminds us that this is the month for our annual fund drive. He asked members to be generous. Also Herman issued a challenge to members to match him and donate \$100 to the museum fund. See Mike Fox to make your donations.

President Kerry Horton appointed Eddie Abeita to chair the annual audit committee. He was assisted by Toby Pino, Leroy Barboa, and John Barnum. The committee members gave a favorable report. Treasurer Mike Fox has managed the fund properly and our finances are in the black. Best wishes to our members on the sick roster: Bill Raupfer, John Millgan, Jim Stevens, Carmen Gonzales, Jeff Elks, and Hilario Chavez. Jose Salaz led the closing prayer. Meeting adjourned @ 8:42 P.M.

Robert A. Sanchez Dies – We regret to announce the death of our retired firefighter friend, Robert A. Sanchez who passed away on February 14, 2020 after a long term illness. He joined AFD on August 3, 1964 and after serving 20 years of faithful and dedicated service to his community and to the Fire Department he retired on August 4, 1984. He was promoted to driver during May, 1972 and to Lieutenant on May 1, 1975. He worked at most fire stations Throughout the City during his career. He loved his job as a firefighter and was Well liked by everyone he came in contact with. He was a congenial and happy Go lucky-fellow. He was a good role model for the new firefighters. He went along with all the pranks hid fellow firefighters played on him, and delighted when he could have fun with his friends when he got a joke on them. He will be missed. Our sincere condolences to the entire Sanchez family.



DEDICATION "911 MEMORIAL," STATION # 20, DECEMBER 20, 1920

By: Kerry Horton



On December 19th, 2019, the City of Albuquerque cut the ribbon on the new 911 Memorial Park located at Fire Station 20, 7520 Corona Ave NE. The project was spearheaded by Councilor Brad Winters, with financial support of Councilors Trudy Jones, Cynthia Borrego, and Ken Sanchez. The ribbon cutting ceremony was led by Mayor Tim Keller, with Fire Chief Paul Dow and many active duty and retired firefighters in attendance.

The memorial represents the Twin Towers, set inside a Pentagon, and has the flight numbers of the three planes that were used in the terror attack on that day. The names of the 41 Albuquerque Firefighters that responded to assist in the Pentagon response are memorialized on the face of the two towers, and the towers light up at night. Many of those 41 responders are now retired, but some are still active duty, and four of those responders now have children working for Albuquerque Fire Rescue.

The forty-one responders were; Tomas Benavidez, Marc Boisvert, James Breen, Rick Chadwick, Dave Clark, Richard Collado, Ruben Collado, Randy Crews, Gabe Criswell, David Downey, John Garcia, Eric Gonzales, Troy Hamby, Jediah Hyland, Gary Jones, Steve Keher, Thomas Krupiak, Chuck Langlois, Kenny Lucero, Coz Madrid, Paul McClure, Skip Navarette, Dominic Orozco, Victor Padilla, Melvin Parker, Heath Petty, Richard Pohl, Lloyd Rantanen, Billy Rogers, Tom Romero, Mike Royce, Karla Saavedra, Martin Salazar, Robert Sanchez, Gilbert Santistevan, John Sedillo, Reyes Solis, Henry Towles, Tim Tsoodle, Randall Walhert, David Weaver.

So, the next time you find yourself near the intersection of Paseo del Norte and Wyoming, swing by and check out the memorial. I know that you join me in giving thanks to Councilor Winters and all the Councilors that felt this project was important enough to appropriate some of their discretionary funds towards Albuquerque's own 911 Memorial.



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PRESIDENT, KERRY HORTON

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
BY KERRY HORTON**

Hello everyone. It has been a very busy few months, and we wanted to get all the news printed in this newsletter. We were up in Santa Fe for the 2020 legislative session, which ended on February 20th, so we have delayed the printing and mailing of this newsletter by a few days so we could report everything to you.

The PERA solvency bill, Senate Bill 72, is reported elsewhere in this newsletter, so I will concentrate on other issues of importance.

House Bill 45, a Retiree Health Care bill that aimed to increase the amount of money current workers contribute, and would put in a onetime appropriation of more than 12 million dollars from the state to improve the funding of the Retiree Health Care Authority. The onetime appropriation was amended out of the bill, leaving only the increase to the portion that current workers supplement. I do not believe that HB 45 made it to concurrence by the last day of the legislative session. The updates to bills are sketchy at the end of the session, so as I write this, it may not be accurate. This will probably be a big agenda item next year at the 60 day legislative session. Those of us that get our medical insurance from the Retiree Health Care Authority complain about how high our premiums are, but the reality is that they would be a lot higher if current workers did not contribute to the fund. We all complained about this when we were working, but now we are grateful that they do contribute.

Senate Bill 62, a bill that really only effects current firefighters, is aimed at reversing a wrong that we all endured during our careers. Many of you have relatives working in fire departments around the state, so I will talk about SB 62 here. SB 62 is about the FLSA rule, (Fair Labor Standards Act), that allows firefighters to work up to 53 hours a week without overtime. As you know, most firefighters work 56 hours a week, so every week they get 3 hours overtime as long as they work the entire pay cycle without taking time off. The problem is that PERA only recognizes base salary, and does not include overtime. So, during our careers, we were never credited by PERA for those 3 hours a week that we were required to work, because it was reported as overtime. It is too late to do anything about the time we lost, but SB 62 was trying to correct this for current and future firefighters. Unfortunately, the bill never made it through the entire Senate, House, and committee process, so it dead, for now. This bill is a cause that our active brothers and sisters will pick up again in next year's legislative session.