

## FIRE RESERVE ASSOCIATION By: Herman R. Bishop, Assistant Chief Retired

(June 3, 2019)



In 1969 during the cold war, the National Civil Defense Organization made matching funds available to cities throughout the United States to develop and form auxiliary volunteer fire brigades to assist organized fire departments during war, nuclear attack, natural and man made disasters. In Albuquerque fire Captain Herman R. Bishop was appointed to plan, develop, and implement a cadre of citizen volunteers to augment the Albuquerque Fire Department during Major fires, nuclear attack and disasters. He was assigned to the local Office of Emergency Preparedness with the title Fire and RADEF Officer. The director of the organization, Mr. George Dunham was part of the City Manager's Staff and Captain Bishop was the Fire Department liaison assigned to that department. Locally Bishop developed a firefighter training program (130 hours), recruited and trained 40 volunteer firefighters at the fire academy. They assumed the title, "ALBUQUERQUE FIRE RESERVE ASSOCIATION." Because Bishop headed the program , and trained the volunteer firefighters, the active duty firefighters affectionately named them "Bishop's Raiders," Once the volunteers completed training they were certified as firefighters and were assigned to work shifts, nights and weekends by riding with the on duty District Chiefs throughout the City. The volunteers were on call and were called in to major fires, second alarms and greater. Some famous fires they assisted in were: Many river bosque fires, The Winrock Apartment Fires, Bruniccini Appliance Store Fire, Montgomery Apartment Fires, Rio Grande Title Fire and many other second alarm fires. The auxiliary fire brigade served with AFD for about 10 years (1969 to 1979). The last few years the volunteers served, they Provided fire protection at "Speedway Park." a local stock car race track, located On Eubank Boulevard SE, adjacent to Kirtland Air Force Base. A logo/decal was developed and used by the "Albuquerque Fire Reserve," Volunteer firefighters during their tenure with the Albuquerque Fire Department. After the volunteers disbanded, Retired AFD District Chief Paul Graves Kept this decal as a souvenir for 25 years. In 2019 he brought it back and displayed in the AFD Fire Museum. (September 14, 2019)