

AFDRA Retiree News



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President, Kerry Horton	5605 Sweetwater Rd. N.W. Albuquerque	87120	934-2969
Vice President, Donny. Sanchez	5313 5th Court NW, Albuquerque NM	87107	228-3286
Secretary, Edward Abeita	37 Tribal Road 76	87105	250-7895
Treasurer, Mike Fox	3508 32nd Circle S.E. Rio Rancho, N.M.	87124	385-7292
Historian, Herman R. Bishop	12501 Royal Crest Ct. N.E. Albuquerque	87111	294-7165
President Emeritus, Sam Trujillo.	5318 La Colonia Dr. NW Albuquerque	87120	899-1500

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**HERMAN R. BISHOP,
EDITOR IN CHIEF**

AFDRA Summer Picnic 2023 (sponsored by RGPU)

Don't forget this years AFDRA annual summer picnic held at Rotary Park in Bernalillo New Mexico. This year our picnic will be on **Saturday August 19th at 11:00am**. Last year's event was well attended, and everyone enjoyed a good meal and the camaraderie associated with our outstanding membership. Mike Padilla again took pictures for us last year. To see the photos, go to the AFDRA website(www.afdretirees.com)



CONTENTS

- P-1** AFDRA Summer Picnic '23
- P-2** Minutes, February 2022
- P-3-4** Deaths – Edward Brito, Bobby Halton, Paul J Gonzales, Mark Dillard, Billy Chennault and Christopher Montoya
- P-5** "Slim" Davidson interview by Herman Bishop
- P-7** Retiree Assistance Program
- P-7** Honor Guard Trifold
- P-8** Minutes, March 2023
- P-9** The John Braden Memorial Fountain
- P-10** "Tidbits" stories by Mike Fox
- P-11** Minutes, April 2023
- P-12** Emily Jaramillo appointed Fire Chief
- P-13** Large Donor Tribute
- P-14** The Financial Side by Kerry Horton
- P-15** Deaths – Joseph Jones, Thomas "Tom" Skidmore
- P-16** President's Message by Kerry Horton

Memorial Flagpole Fundraiser



An update to the Memorial flagpole is underway. The majority of the cost is being donated by a local metal worker. Historian Herman Bishop has donated \$100 and is challenging any member to match his donation. If you would like to donate to this project, send your donations to a AFDRA c/o Mike Fox, 3508 32nd Circle SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124.



Mike Fox, Assistant Editor

Minutes, February 2023

AFDRA 270th Meeting called to order @1900hrs. by President Kerry Horton. Pledge Allegiance recited. Opening pray by Tom Romero.

Notice of Last Alarm, no deaths this past month. Call to mind our oldest retiree, Silver Sanchez. Kevin Pearce lost his son and brother Sam Trujillo lost his sister.

Roll Call of Officers in attendance, President Kerry Horton, Vice president Pablo Garcia, Secretary Eddie Abeita, Treasure Mike Fox. Emeritus President Sam Trujillo Advisory. Board members; Bill Raupher, Noel Baca, O.G. Lucero, Anthony Nunez, Donny Sanchez and Tom Romero.

First AFDRA meeting attendee, Mike Romo retired 2015. Guest BCFDRA, Paul Strittmatter and wife Wendy also county retiree Mike Romero [Mike said they wanted to attend AFDRA meetings to help them restart their association, Sam Trujillo indicated several years ago he met and gave their association a copy of AFDRA By-Laws to help get them organized].

Presidents Report, letter received pertaining to a garnishment, the information was vague. Sammy Trujillo had his daughter (a lawyer) look at the document also Kerry Horton asked his wife, who works at a law firm for interpretation. Subsequently this letter was to inform an individual that his garnishment was over. However, Kerry said we are still wondering who this person was and why it was sent to the association, *no action taken*.

PERA update, Newsletter from Retired Public Employees of New Mexico. PERA had 1.67% total loss however across the board (national level) other funds lost 9.1%

In July we will receive a true COLA of ½% or up 3% we won't know until July, this is based on a 4-year average.

New Mexico State Legislature 4 Bills of intent.

House Bill 150, increase of PERA contributions, this pertains to municipalities. Senate Bill 193 is part of House Bill 150. *Senate Bill 210* to continue 13th check, retirees 65 and older through 2028.

Senate Bill 124 would amend the Public Employees Retirement Act to allow retired public employees to return to employment with a PERA-covered employer without the need to suspend their retirement benefits.

Statement from Sam Trujillo: Pertaining to **Bill 210**. I am with the New Mexico Fire Fighters Association and the history of this bill, was to sell the 20-year retirement that "*this is a young man's job*". Now it's back up to 25 years for public service employee and could go higher. Kerry Horton stated as incentive for longer years of service, retirement can be up to 90%. *House Bill 106* also had language for up to 100% retirement but was tabled by committee and most likely Bill 106 will NOT survive.

Last Alarm Truck, State of New Mexico Capital outlay funding approved. Late e-mail message received from Santa Fe to submit bill information. Due to short timeline for bill submission the window had closed to submit. Diego Arencon was contacted in Santa Fe and said they have a meeting scheduled the following day and would resubmit the bill, it had to be "hand carried" by a representative for discretionary funding.

Local 244, No Contact Information

Albuquerque Fire Rescue received names of 2022 retirees. There were 27 with 5 taking an early out, the 5 will be recorded as retiring 2023.

Vice Presidents Report, Pablo Garcia advised Kerry and Sam that he will focus on scheduled visitations to retirees that have long term or a severe illness. Pablo said at times some of these retirees are at home receiving care and because of it being a long illness the number of visits by retirees start to decline. Pablo said, "I don't want our brothers to feel like we forgotten them". Pablo reported, *Silver Sanchez* is down and would like retirees to visit. *Father Bob Martinez* is at home with his 3 daughters taken care of him. *Eddie Brito AKA Brutes* is in bed at home wife Rose and son at his side *John Serino* is receiving care at home. Pablo's message

to all, if you need information about visiting any of them, please contact me. ***Also, if you know of other retirees that maybe sick, please contact me or other board members.***

Herman Bishop by Kerry Horton, weeks back Herman was feeling ill, he went to an Urgent Care where he was diagnosed with a serious condition. He was taken to Women's Hospital awaiting, an open bed at the Heart Hospital. Herman had surgery at the Heart Hospital and days later back to the Women's Hospital for final recovery and observation. Herman is at home moving toward a good recovery. He wants retirees to give him a call but currently, please no visitors.

Secretary's Report, Eddie Abeita read the minutes from January meeting. Motion to accept minutes, first by Tom Romero 2nd by Ralph Sedillo, vote to floor all in favor, oppose none. Motion passed.

Treasure Report, Mike Fox reported on our Rio Grande Credit Union checking account. Mike gave an overview of all transactions for the previous month. Check payment were made to AFR Local 244 for the Survivors Fund, Check made TLC for 2 Honor Guard uniforms. Payments were made by check for business operations expenses and Odyssey Counseling. Deposits made from donations from, Don and Jane Seelinger, Earl and Darla Gleason, January's raffle and meeting donations. Mike submitted to our bookkeeper tax filing information for the year 2022 also Mike maintains a copy of what was submitted. Mike stated once again *"the books are open to retirees for review"*. Motion to accept Treasures report, First by O.G. Lucero 2nd by Robbie Sanchez, oppose none. Motion passed.

No Historian Report, Herman at home recovering from surgery.

Committee Report Honor Guard, by O.G. Lucero, the honor guard will be practicing on Friday. We also learned; our two honor guard uniforms are about 99% complete. Previous uniform orders took about 11 months for delivery, it has been tremendously shortened by Sam's intervention with the uniform dealer. Sam reported a widow donated her husband's Class "A" dress blouse. Sam said there have been request from family members wanting their deceased buried in a firefighter uniform, so this donation helps out for future request. Keep in mind one size fits all.

Sam reported that he had requested donations from funeral homes, in which he had two replies. Kerry said one funeral home requested a W 9 form, which is positive thing. The Last Alarm truck will be stored at the Fire Academy. The annual picnic will be held August 19, Bernalillo NM. The meeting raffle brought in \$95.00 in ticket sales.

Matters Good for the Association, we had a FACEBOOK page with local 244, the page did not pertain to information about our association. We started our own Facebook Page with approximate 124 members. Some of the members were declined for use, not knowing who they were. Our Facebook Page has news and information pertaining to our association such as mental health and obituaries.

New Business by Mike Fox. Our website features our Honor Guard, we have pictures but lacking a "BIO" of the members. We also need help with the motorcycle group, more information and pictures needed. Robbie Sanchez said he will work on the information dating back to the start of the group in 2013.

Meeting End, Closing Prayer by Tom Romero.

Death – Edward Brito

We were notified that our brother AFD Retiree Edward Brito passed away on 4/3/23 after a long illness. Eddie joined AFD on 3/19/1962 as a member of the 2nd AFD Cadet Class, and he retired on 7/1/1985. Eddie was also a USMC Veteran. The Brito family requested a traditional FireFighter Funeral. The AFDRA Honor Guard "Stood Vigil" prior to the Rosary Service, and they "Struck The Four Fives" following the Funeral Mass. AFD Retirees read "The Resolution of Condolence" following the Rosary Service. Burial Services were in Santa Fe.

Please keep the Brito family in thought and in prayer.



Death – Bobby Halton

We were notified that **AFD Retiree Robert “Bobby” Halton** passed away suddenly on 12/19/22 in Oklahoma where he resided. Bobby Halton joined AFD on 4/16/1984 (38th AFD Cadet Class) and retired on 7/23/2004. Bobby was employed as Editor of “Fire Engineering” Magazine. Please keep his family in your thoughts and prayers.



Death – Paul J Gonzales



We were informed that **Our Retiree Brother Paul J. Gonzales** passed away on 12/21/22 following a long battle with cancer. Paul was 60 years old and joined AFD on 9/14/1987 (44th AFD Cadet Class) and retired on 12/1/2011. Paul was the son of AFD Retiree Nick Gonzales who passed away in 2002 ... The family had requested a Fire Fighter Funeral. **Funeral Services for Our Brother AFD Retiree Paul J. Gonzales** were held as follows: **Monday 1/9//23, Rosary @ 1800** at Church of The Ascension (2150 Raymac Rd. SW). **Tuesday 1/10/23, Funeral Mass @ 1000** at Church of The Ascension, Interment followed at Pajarito Cemetery (Coors & Pajarito SW). AFR “**Last Alarm**” Truck transported the Cremation Urn from the Church to the Cemetery following the Funeral mass. **AFDRA Honor Guard**

“**Stood Vigil**” prior to the Rosary and “**Struck The Four Fives**” at Graveside. **AFD Retiree** “**Resolution of Condolence**” was presented following the Rosary.

Death – Mark Dillard

It is with sad hearts that we announce the passing of our **AFD Brother Mark Dillard**. Mark passed unexpectedly on January 5, 2023. Mark was a member of the 57th Cadet Class, hired on August 5th, 1996, and retired out of the alarm room as a Driver on June 1st, 2016.

A “**Celebration of Life**” was held for our **AFDRA Brother Mark Dillard** on Friday 1/13/23 from 3 pm to 4:30, and a reception followed from 4:30 to 6 at French Funeral Home on the West Side (9300 Golf Course Rd. NW). The family had requested that the AFDRA Honor Guard attend. The AFDRA Honor Guard “**Stood Vigil**” at the services and “**Struck The Four Fives**” following the reading of “The Resolution of Condolence”. Our Brother Mark Dillard will be buried in Oklahoma next to his father at a later date.



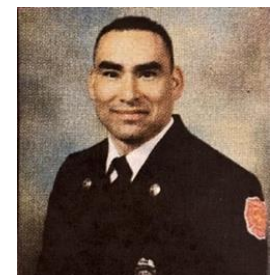
Death – Billy Chenault

We were informed that **Our Brother AFD Retiree Billy Chenault** passed away this afternoon (1/17/23). Billy joined AFD on 10/19/1959 and retired on 8/1/1983. Billy was a Fire Prevention Inspector at the time of his retirement. Billy was 95+ years old and he was our oldest AFD Retiree. Funeral services will be private ... Please keep the Chenault family in thought and in prayer.



Death – Christopher Montoya

We were notified that **Our Brother, Retired FireFighter Christopher Montoya** passed away on 3/25/23 ... Chris joined AFD on 9/12/1994 (55th AFD Cadet Class) and he retired on 12/31/2013. Chris was also a USMC Veteran. AFD Retiree's Association extends our sincere sympathy to Christine (wife) and the Montoya family, please keep The Montoya family in your thoughts and prayers. A “**Celebration of Life**” in remembrance of Chris was held by Christina Montoya on April 1, 2023.



John "Slim" Davidson Story (interview by Herman Bishop)

(March 17, 2004)

My name is John C Davidson, and I was born May 12, 1915 in Quay County near Tucumcari, New Mexico in the community of Forest, New Mexico. In 1939 I went to work for the City Parks and Recreation Department and was paid \$.75 cents per hour: My boss was Glen Wilson, and my job was mowing grass in the parks, trimming trees, watering the plants, landscaping and general parks maintenance. The City Manager was Mr. Charlie Wells, and the mayor was Clyde Tingley. After three years there I was looking to better myself. I thought the Police Department would be a step up. When I applied there were no vacancies, but they told me the Fire Department was hiring. They sent me to talk to the Fire Chief. I was hired by Fire Chief Al Westerfield and went to work on December 9, 1941. My pay was \$48 per month.

Albuquerque was a small town then and I think there were only 36 people in the Fire Department and only three Fire Stations. Fire Station # 1 was located at 2nd Street and Tijeras N.W. Station # 2 was at High and Silver SE and the old Fire Station #3 was at Monte Vista and Central Avenue N.E. At Station #1 there was Engine IA, which was a 1941 Seagrave Quad. It was a combination pumper and ladder truck. It had a full complement of ground ladders including a 50-foot Bangor, but no aerial ladder. It was much longer than a regular pumper and was very difficult to maneuver around city streets. There was Engine 1B, a 1927 American La France 750 GPM pumper, chain driven. This pumper was used for County firefighting because Bernalillo County didn't have a Fire Department then. Ladder #1 was a 1919, American LaFrance 75-foot aerial ladder truck with a tiller.



Original Fire Station number three. Built in 1936 with \$60,000 from Works Progress Administration funds.

Chief Westerfield drove a new 1941 red Buick Roadmaster convertible as his Chiefs car. He went to almost all fires then, day or night. Because he hired me, I always liked him. As the boss he was friendly enough, but he was always business like. It was hard to be buddies with him because he was always busy, meeting with higher ranking officers, city officials, or people of the community. He always treated me fairly and with respect. He usually called the Firemen "Son."



1941 Buick Roadmaster convertible.

There was a training program for new hires, but it was very short in 1941, maybe three or four days. Because the seven-story drill tower was located next to the main fire station, they assigned me and three other new hires, Emmet Rice, Jack Major and Lucius Springer to the County truck Engine IA. The first day Lieutenant Joe Bowdich began training us on catching fire hydrants with 2 1/2-inch fire hose. We started catching fire hydrants, laying out all the hose, reloading the hose, again, and again, and again all day. At first the driver went slow and each time he increased the speed of the truck, 10 mph, 15 mph, 20 mph, then to 30 mph or until you would fall. The objective was to increase the speed until you went sprawling on your knees. No matter how strong or quick you were eventually the increased speed would throw you down. Our knees and elbows were bruised, and we hurt all over. Occasionally a man would get a sprained ankle. I don't recall anyone getting seriously hurt laying hose.

The second and third day of training we learned to position and to place ladders, then we learned all the tools on the truck and became familiar with taking orders from the officer in charge. We laid more hose, drilled with the ladders, and learned to use all the equipment on the pumper. After about four days our training was over. We were ready to fight fires and attend to other emergencies. Every Friday was training day, all day.

There were two shifts of firemen in those days. Some of the people I worked with in the early years were Assistant Chiefs Simon Seligman, and Milton Grande. People assigned to Engine 1A, Engine 1B and Ladder 1 were: Lieutenants, Joe Bowdich, Reno Stebelton, Ed Lucero and George Tafoya. Drivers, S.B. Skidmore, Carl Macaluso Max Gutierrez, and Matt Ortiz. We didn't have days off then and no sick leave. We did have two weeks' vacation and if you took a day off for any reason it was charged to vacation, then leave without pay after that.

The pumpers only had a crew of four each, and Ladder one had two Lieutenants. Lieutenant Ed Lucero drove the front and Lieutenant George Tafoya drove the tiller in the rear. There were only two people assigned to the ladder truck and no pipemen were assigned.

The first fire I remember going to after joining the Fire Department was to the 1200 block of High Street S.E. It was a yard fire involving a big pile of rubbish and trash. I suppose every fireman remembers his first fire even if it wasn't a very big one.

There was not a Fire Prevention Bureau, Arson Division or Rescue Division when I joined. We did have company fire inspections. All rescue calls and first aid calls were made with the engine companies. If the engines were busy, then the Assistant Chief on duty and a fireman made rescue calls with the Fire Chiefs car. We carried oxygen resuscitators on the fire units then. Arson investigations were handled by Assistant Chief Grande and the Police Department. On big fires Chief Westerfield worked on the investigations too. I served all my career as a line fireman. I went through the ranks of Firefighter, Driver, Lieutenant, Captain, and District Chief. I always enjoyed my job, and I liked being a District Chief. I got along well with the men, and I enjoyed making the rounds of the Stations in my District and talking to everyone. Most of the times the men would invite me to eat meals with them. I still miss that part of the Fire Department.

The most memorable fire for me during my career was the Sears Fire at Central Avenue and 5th Street N.W. I believe this was about 1953. I was off duty, and they called all off duty personnel in to help. Although I was a driver, by the time I arrived on the scene the hose lines had been laid and positioned. The pumpers were connected to the hydrants and were pumping water on the fire. The building was totally involved in fire and heavy black smoke when I arrived. I was assigned to man a hose line outside for a while, then our crew moved inside to make an attack. It was dark and heavy black brownish smoke all around and very hot. Sometimes the heat and heavy smoke pushed us outside again. Then we would go back in. The men took lots of punishment at that fire. As I recall no one was seriously injured. Several firemen were overcome with smoke. Our breathing masks were not very good during that era. They were the old filter type masks with a canister attached. We didn't have the type of self-contained breathing apparatus that the firefighters today have. We spent about two days cleaning up hot spots and mopping up that fire.

When I was fairly new on the job some of the older men, George Tafoya and Ed Lucero, sent me to a nearby bakery on 4th Street N.W. to get food for the firemen. They told me to tell the restaurant

manager that we had a big fire and the firemen needed something to eat. They said if I mentioned the big fire that the manager would give me the food for free. Sure enough the manager put our order together and there was no charge. Several days later Chief Westerfield called me in and said, "Son," why were you at the bakery a few days ago begging for food? You shouldn't be doing that. Don't you know that is not professional?" The Chief didn't give me a disciplinary action but firmly told me that type behavior was not acceptable. Of course, I was embarrassed, and it never happened again.

In May 1975 after 42 years with the City of Albuquerque and the Fire Department combined, I retired. I have enjoyed my retirement years and have always been active. Mainly I do mechanic work on my cars and repair the cars of friends and family. Also, I do some carpentry work and fix air conditioners for friends and family and do general maintenance work. I have always enjoyed working and keeping busy. A few years after retiring I was mowing my lawn and had an unfortunate accident when the lawn mower chopped off the big toe on my left foot. I soon recovered and am able to do almost everything I always did. Unfortunately, the year of my accident our family had planned a vacation trip to Disneyland. We had to cancel the trip.

I often think of the Fire Department and my career there. When I hear sirens or see a fire truck go by, I do miss being a part of the Department. My career at the Fire Department was a satisfying and rewarding one. I always enjoyed being a fireman. Also, I miss visiting with the firemen and most of all, the firehouse cooking.

Retiree's Assistance Program (RAP)



The Albuquerque Fire Department Retirees' Association recognizes the importance of receiving behavioral or counseling services. With this in mind, the AFDRA has developed a Retirees' Assistance Program (RAP) that is modeled after the IAFF Local 244's Members Assistance Program (MAP). This program is designed to take the financial burden off of an AFD Retiree requesting assistance by providing help with their insurance co-pays. The program is currently providing assistance to members who will remain anonymous. **To request assistance or inquire about the program. Please contact the AFDRA treasurer directly at afdtratreasurer@outlook.com.**

Honor Guard Trifold

A trifold handout pamphlet has been created for use by the Albuquerque Fire Department Retirees Association Honor Guard. This will assist the organization in many ways, including soliciting donations to offset the cost of Honor Guard uniforms.



Minutes, March 2023

The March meeting of the AFD Retiree's Association was held on March 8, 2023 at the Firefighter's Union Hall, Local 244, 4100 Edith NE. President Kerry Horton called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

He led members in the Pledge of Allegiance and Tommy Romero led the opening prayer. A moment of silence was observed for our deceased members. Roll Call- President Kerry Horton, Vice President Pablo Garcia, Treasurer Mike Fox, Historian Herman Bishop, President Emeritus Sam Trujillo. Secretary Eddie Abeita was absent.

President's Report – Several PERA related Bills are making their way through the current NM Legislative session.

“Do Not Pass” Bill recommendations Are: HB 106, working to achieve 100% pension. HB210 relating to continuing the 13th check for retirees over the age of 65, and retirees over 75 to get an auto 2.5 % pension increase every year. HB 294/SB 124 relating to “Return To Work” for public safety officers. HB 150 relating to an increase in contributions by current workers into Retiree Healthcare to offset losses sustained by the program.

Legislators did pass a bill to increase the Line of duty Death benefit for firefighters from \$250,000 to \$1 million. There is a growing movement across the country to get PFAS chemicals out of PPE for current firefighters who are getting cancer. The refurbishment of the Last Alarm Truck will begin in the next several weeks, and the work could take many months to complete.

Vice-president's Report by Pablo Garcia. Hilario Chavez is in the hospital and will soon be transported to a rehab facility. Ed Brito is bed-ridden after suffering an aneurism, and Robert Martinez is resting at home dealing with bone cancer.

The Secretary's report was read by Mike Fox who filled in for Eddie Abeita who was absent. A motion to accept was made by Dennis Lowder and was seconded by Joe Martinez. The Motion Passed. Mike Fox gave the Treasurer's report and stated that our 2022 tax returns are complete. All funds are accounted for, and the books are in good order. A motion to accept the treasurer's report was made by Tommy Romero and was seconded by Eugene Baldonado. The motion passed.

Herman Bishop gave the Historian's report. He reported that he had major heart surgery due to an aneurism, Bladder surgery, and later suffered a mini stroke. He is home now and is slowly recovering. It is expected to be a few months before his recovery is complete. He begins Heart Rehabilitation on March 10th. On behalf of Herman and his wife Carmen they gave a heartfelt thank you to all his firefighter friends for their prayers, well wishes, support and concern for his health.

The retired firefighters extend their best wishes to Chief Gallegos on his retirement. Congratulations are in order for our new Fire Chief Emily Jaramillo. We wish her our very best as she assumes her new leadership role.

The Fire Chief tags are being updated at the Fire Museum to reflect Chief Gallegos retirement and the appointment of Chief Emily Jaramillo.

Election Committee- We will appoint an election committee chairperson at the April meeting to make nominations for this year's election. The positions of Vice President, Treasurer, and Historian are up for election. Nominations will close at the May meeting. The election will be held at the June meeting and the winners will be sworn in at the July meeting. The raffle was won by Carmen Gonzales, Paul Strittmatter, and James Parra. Tom Romero led the closing prayer and the meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

John Braden Memorial Fountain

There is a Memorial Fountain in Robinson Park in Albuquerque on 8th and Central downtown, there to honor one of Albuquerque's fallen heroes. On October 16th, 1896, there was a parade in downtown Albuquerque to celebrate the completion of the Carnival of Sports which was held at the New Mexico Territorial Fairgrounds. Near the end of the parade there was an ammunition wagon loaded with fireworks driven by 74-year-old John Braden. He had been hired by the New Mexico Territorial Fair Association to drive the fireworks wagon to the end of the parade. Just as the parade turned South on 5th Street from Copper Avenue, there was a fire and explosion in the wagon caused by fireworks that had been set off in the parade ahead. The fireworks exploding in the wagon spooking the horses and they took out on a dead run with massive flames coming from the wagon. Braden stayed on the wagon as the horses turned on Railroad Avenue, even though he himself was engulfed in flames. The horse and wagon finally crashed into a fire cart and stopped. Braden fell from the wagon and was assisted by parade goers who tried to save his life. He died the following day. The personal heroism he showed that day was unparalleled. On Monday, October 19, the schools and businesses in Albuquerque closed for the afternoon of his funeral to honor his heroic actions. It was reported that it was the largest funeral in the city of Albuquerque up until that time. Two years after he died, the Ladies Park Association placed the Memorial Fountain in Robinson Park.



1880s. After settling down in Albuquerque, he was employed for about 15 years at a local livery stable until the time of his death.

John Braden was born in the early 1820s and died October 17, 1896. He was 74 years old. He was born somewhere in either Pennsylvania or Ohio but made his way steadily west. By the 1850s he started working as a stagecoach driver for the Northeastern Stage Company. He later drove for the Overland Stage Company, the Kansas Stage Company and Wells Fargo. His travels took him through Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, and New Mexico, where he settled in the early

Tidbits (Stories by Mike Fox)



“Never Ending Dishes”

The general rule around the firehouse, is if you cook you don't have to clean up or do dishes. With this being said, it is frustrating when a cook uses a lot of utensils and pots and pans to prepare a meal. We had such an individual, no matter what he cooked, he would make the biggest mess you have ever seen. It seems as though every pot and pan in the kitchen was used. One day, while this gentleman was responsible for the dish washing, a plan was hatched, and after each dish was rinsed and dried it was given back to him to wash again. After washing everything at least two times, he noticed that he was repeating the same dishes over and over. He said the point was well taken, and we all had a good laugh.

“The Great Nacho Fire”

Late one afternoon, prior to going on shift for the night, my wife and I decided to treat our kids to our favorite takeout meal from Padilla's Mexican kitchen. We placed our order, and I went to pick it up. Upon my return, I see my wife and two young children standing on the neighbors' front porch with my front door open and smoke pouring out of the house. My immediate reaction was to run in and find out what was causing all the smoke. My wife yelled at me not to go in as I ran through the door. The smoke was coming from the kitchen out of the oven. I pulled the oven out, unplugged it, turned the gas off and left the house. I asked my wife what happened, and she told me that she was going to make us some nachos while I was gone. As happens when you have small children, she got distracted and the nachos caught on fire. She did the perfect thing, she turned the oven off, closed the oven door, grabbed the kids, went next-door and called 911. As she's telling me this, I can hear the sirens in the background. Oh no, here it comes! As the first engine company arrived, I immediately jumped up on the officer's door and told him all was well, he could cancel all the other units. With a grin on his face, he said “no I think will let everybody come in code one”. For the next few minutes, I stood in my front yard, waving to all the firefighters as they drove by in their various apparatus. That night, as it turns out, I was working at the station that responded to my house fire. As I arrived at the station, I tried to sneak in the back door, however, immediately upon entering, the vocal box cracked open, and the Captain said, “attention all personnel, there will be a nacho class in the kitchen, Mike Fox will be teaching, make sure to bring your self-contained breathing apparatus.” It was well played. I tried to explain that I was not home when it happened, of course it made no difference.



“Is This Wall Moving?”

Did you ever get the feeling that you were being watched? This is such a story. As it usually seems, when you get a rescue call, it's always in the very back room of the house and completely dark. This was such a case, there were no light fixtures in the room or lamps to be seen. Fortunately, I had a very good smoke cutter flashlight that my wife bought me. The technique was to turn it on and stand it upright on a table, and it would shine off the ceiling and create a very nice light in the room. I had my back to the doorway, and we were assessing the patient. I kept looking over my shoulder at the doorway because I felt as if there was something there. After doing this several times, I decided to grab my flashlight and take a look down the hall. As I grabbed my flashlight and swing it around toward the door it shined on the wall behind me, and I noticed the entire wall is covered with cockroaches. Cockroach's so thick you could not see what color the paint was on the wall. The strangest thing of all was that there was not a single cockroach on any other wall, floor, or ceiling. We immediately grabbed our patient and went outside. I guess there were a lot of eyes looking at us after all. I never could figure out why just one wall was covered. Strange events.



Minutes, April 2023

AFDRA 272nd Meeting called to order @1900hrs. by President Kerry Horton. Pledge Allegiance recited. Opening prayer by Morris Gutiérrez. **Notice of Last Alarm**, Moment of Silence, Chris Montoya, Eddie Brito. Joseph Jones (Oct.2022). **Roll Call of Officers** President Kerry Horton, Vice president Pablo Garcia, Secretary Eddie Abeita, Treasure Mike Fox. Emeritus President Sam Trujillo Advisory. Board members; Bill Raupher, O.G. Lucero, Donny Sanchez, Joe Martinez, and Morris Gutierrez. Guest BCFDRA, Paul Strittmatter

Presidents Report, Legislative and PERA issues, House, or Senate Bills. Bill #64 Failed, return to work for public employees. Bill # 65 Failed, return to work for affiliated public employees. Bill #106 Passed, active-duty firefighters may work approximately 28 years and receive 100% of their salary for pension. Bill #210 Failed, retirees over age 65 would have received a 13th check. Bill #250 Passed, signed by governor. Firefighter Survivor Benefits. Line of Duty death from 250K to one million dollars.

Last Alarm Truck, The AFR mechanic is preparing a repair schedule, to ensure main components such as drive train, wiring, hydraulic system etc. are repaired first, in the event of cost increase. Cosmetic items such as paint and minor body repair will be done with residual funding. Additional work may be handled by Pablo Garcia. The Last Alarm Truck will be out of service for approximately 6 months.

Out of Service Last Alarm Truck, AFR Chief has given permission to AFDRA to use their Expedition SUV to transport deceased retirees. Pablo Garcia did an initial survey of the vehicle and found it would serve our needs for funerals. Currently the Last Alarm Truck is housed at the Fire Academy, the 100th fire cadet class is providing care.

Local 244 provided, list of newly retired firefighters. Fire station 17 is now the Haz-Mat station, Station 4 is now the Heavy Rescue station.

Legacy Run, to *commemorate* the graduation of the 100th fire cadet class, a 7-mile run from the fire academy to Civic Plaza will take place June 15th. Retirees are asked to participate; yellow tee shirts will be provided. For those unable to run, a chartered bus will transport retirees from the fire academy to civic plaza and return. Food trucks will be available. This event is open to retirees' families. No bicycles or roller skates allowed. The 100 number is arbitrary number, the first known fire class was not numbered, a number was given to a class in the year 1961 and were called trainees.

Brawl on the Bosque, sponsored by AFR this is a boxing match between Fire and Police April 29.

Vice Presidents Report, Pablo reported HH Chavez will be in rehab at Advanced Health Care, for 3 weeks. Robert Martinez health has improved and is at home. Pablo said one of my last visits with Eddie Brieto , I asked him if he felt like eating anything special, Eddie said yeah "tacos". So, my next visit I brought him some tacos and he scarfed them down. That was our last visit together he passed away the following week. The past few years I tried making contact with Joseph Jones, one visit to his house his neighbor said Joseph died at the Veterans Hospital.

During the Vice Presidents report, Morris made a call to Tom Skidmore who is ill. Tom was in good spirits and said, "I am sorry for not ever attending a retiree meeting". Message from Kerry; Tom there are no membership dues, so you have always been a member!

Sam said he received a call from John Paulson who is ill, he was one of AFD firefighters who responded to 911.

Secretary's Report, Eddie read the March minutes to the body. Motion made to accept, First by Kenneth Goodyear, Second by Morris Gutiérrez. Secretary's report accepted.

Treasure's Report, Mike gave an overview of all expenditures and deposits made to the retiree's account at Rio Grande Credit Union. Motion made to accept, First by OG Lucero, Second by Bill Raupher. Treasures report accepted. Mike reiterated; the books are open to anyone in attendance to view.

Historians Report, Herman said his health is improving and going to rehab under supervision of Doctor Ramo. Herman gave thanks to Mike for his computer talent in putting the newsletter together. Herman also noted that the late Joseph Jones son, Eric reproduced pictures that were used in our first retiree brochure. Mike Fox

has redone the brochure. Herman said he received a call from Russel Heineken (one of Bishop's Raiders) asking for his copy of the newsletter. Herman directed him to the web page.

Committee Reports, waiting for final funeral arrangements for Eddie Brieto.

Picnic Committee, Annual retirees' picnic will be August 19, cost for use of park is \$200.

Election Committee, by *proxy* Louie Trujillo has accepted to be Election Committee Chairperson, Eddie was appointed to serve as vice chair. Two positions are up for election, Vice President and Treasure. Nominations will start at next month's meeting.

Raffle was won by Paul Stripmatter and Joe Martinez (x2). Special prize won by Cindy Raupher.

Matters Good for the Association, Morris reported Nick Mendez said we should not drill any more holes in the memorial flagpole. Currently in planning and design for a new memorial for retirees' tags, also planning for the next tag hanging ceremony.

Discussions at previous Executive Board meeting was the need to construct a storage shed to archive all history of our department's documents at one location. Mike fox has donated space at his residence to construct a shed. The shed would be approximate 8'x10', designed with a skid in the event the shed has to be moved. The approximately cost is \$2,000. A motion was made to retirees in attendance to provide funding. First motion to accept by Bull Raupher Second by Donny Sanchez Motion Passed.

Also discussed, trailer tire replacement. The trailer used to store and transport our tables, chairs, barbeque grills and ice chest are the original tires installed on the trailers about 12-15 years ago. Motion made by Sam Trujillo to provide \$800.00 for five tire replacement and wheel covers. Motion Passed.

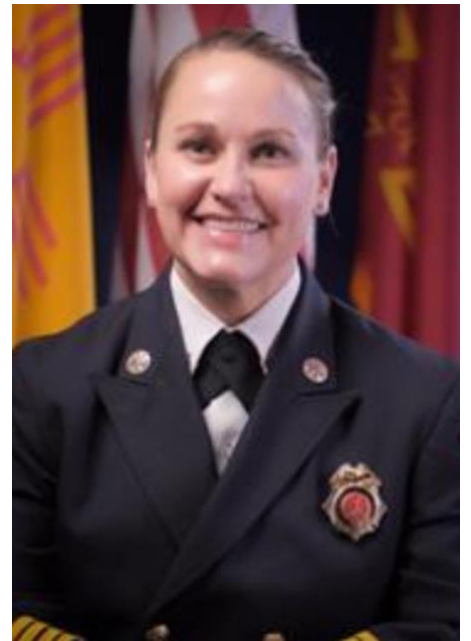
In Discussion, relocate the trailer to another location, Pablo Garcia offered to provide a place at his residence for storage. Sam Trujillo felt an agreement should be considered for the use of the trailer outside of the retiree's function. In the event of damage or loss to the trailer and its contents.

New Business, Morris Gutiérrez would like to start another fund raiser with a story publication. The book would be called "*Fire House Antics or Stories or Fire House Stories*".

Closing Prayer by Morris Gutierrez, Meeting End

Emily Jaramillo Appointed Fire Chief

Fire Chief Emily Jaramillo grew up in rural New Mexico. She achieved a BA in English and Secondary Education at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa in 1999. After returning home to New Mexico, Emily taught and coached for four years at Albuquerque Public Schools before joining the Albuquerque Fire Department in 2005. During her time at AFD, Emily has served as an officer in both the Paramedic and Fire Suppression Divisions, represented the department at regional and local STEMI meetings, served on the AFD Safety Committee, taught in the EMS Training Division, and coordinated both the Professional Development and Firefighter Health and Wellness programs. For six years, as Deputy Chief, Emily managed the departments Peer Fitness Training Program. She also teaches fire officer development classes as an adjunct instructor for the New Mexico Firefighter Training Academy and taught Paramedicine in the USAF Pararescue training program for the University of New Mexico. In 2015 she was the recipient of the IAFF 244 Outstanding Leadership Award.



Large Donor Tribute

The Albuquerque Fire Department Retirees' Association would like to thank the following sponsors for their generous donations.

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Like you, a heart to grow a stronger New Mexico is in our roots!

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- CREDIT UNION -
we understand
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Thank you Rio Grande credit union for provided us with funding for our summer picnic as well as additional funding toward our honor guard uniforms.



A special thank you to Jim Summers for his generous contributions and assistance. If you need realtor services, call him! (505) 450-1842



Thank you to Daniels family funeral services for your kind assistance in providing Uniforms for our honor guard.



Thank you to Gabaldon mortuary for all of your compassionate assistance and providing funding toward our honor guard uniforms.



Thank you to Salazar, funeral home and crematory for your kind assistance in providing Uniforms for our honor guard.



A special thank you to Pat McKinney for his generous contributions and assistance. If you need behavioral health services, call him! Petroglyph behavioral health

The Financial Side of Making Our Association Work by Kerry Horton

Twenty-three years ago, when Sam Trujillo, Herman Bishop, Louis Trujillo and all the other retired visionaries formed the Albuquerque Fire Department Retirees' Association, they may or may not have known that it would eventually evolve into as big an association as it has. They knew that we needed to be a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and they knew that they did not want to require dues, and that is true to this day. When our association was in its infancy, the E-Board thought that it would be a good idea to send flowers to the families of retirees that passed away. They soon exhausted all AFDR's working funds on flowers and felt really bad when they had to stop that practice. When the Honor Guard was first formed, the members had to pay for their uniforms out of their own pockets, and for years the picnic and Christmas dinners were potluck. Now that we have grown to about 700 members on our books, we have had to evolve in many ways to keep this association going strong.

AFDRA has always relied on the generous donations of our members to keep our programs active and strong, and we thank everybody that has and continues to support us with your donations. None of our programs--the Honor Guard, the annual picnic, Christmas dinner, the random acts program--none of it would be possible without your donations. With the help of your donations and those of our corporate donors, we are now able to purchase Honor Guard uniforms for our members, offer our picnic meal to you and your families for free, and give you a greatly reduced rate on the Christmas dinner tickets, not to mention maintaining our utility trailer and all those picnic tables and chairs, fund our website and newsletter, and all the little expenses that come with operating our association. But over the years, we have been blessed with some great corporate sponsors as well, and I would like to highlight some of them here.

Our longest corporate relationship has been with Rio Grande Credit Union and their great employees like Lucy Sedillo, Hena Torres, Olga Melancon, and Mike Athens. For years RGCU has made financial donations that have helped us offset our picnic expenses and helped us pay for the Honor Guard uniforms. Our relationship with RGCU continues to grow, and we are now providing some advertising for them in our newsletter aimed at helping RGCU reach out to retirees regarding programs that may be of value to them.

As you know, we have worked with the Albuquerque area funeral homes for years assisting in funeral planning to show honor and respect for our deceased members and their families. A benefit of these relationships is that Sam has reached out to French's, Daniel's and Gabaldon's yearly soliciting donations to our Honor Guard program, and they have always stepped up with generous donations.

In recent years, due to retiree connections at Smith's and Costco, they have donated groceries for our picnic. And most recently, when we needed new tires on our utility trailer, Eric Walsh, Store Manager at Discount Tire, 5701 Coors BLVD. NW, gave us a 50% discount on a set of tires.

It must be said that Joe at Southern Tire Mart also gave us a very generous offer on a new set of tires as well. So, as you go about your busy lives, please keep these corporate sponsors in mind. If you need their particular services, patronize the companies that have helped us over the years, but we will forgive you if you are not in a hurry to patronize the funeral homes, that can wait.



Death – Joseph Jones

We are sad to report that our retired firefighter friend Lieutenant Joseph Jones Passed away on October 18, 2022. The family did not notify the retirees and did Not request a firefighter funeral. The family had reported his death to the VFW Military Veteran's post on 4th Street NW and gave his Fire uniforms and badges To the VFW post. Friends from the VFW post notified Sam Trujillo about Joe's death.



Death – Thomas “Tom” Skidmore



We were informed that **Our Brother AFD Retiree Thomas “Tom” Skidmore** lost his battle with cancer. Tom joined the Albuquerque Fire Department on 7/11/1966 (13th AFD Cadet Class) and he retired on 6/17/1987. Tom was also a military Veteran. Please keep Irene and the Skidmore family in thought and in prayer ...



President's Message

By Kerry Horton



Hello everybody! Summer is in full swing, and I hope that everyone is doing well. This is a very busy time of year for the Executive Board with elections going on for the positions of Vice President, Treasurer, and Historian, plus we've appointed an audit committee chairman to do our annual financial book audit, and we have the picnic coming up in August.

Pablo Garcia has tendered his resignation as Vice President, and I want to thank him for everything that he has done for our association while serving as VP over the last two years. Pablo is not going anywhere as he will stay busy helping out AFDR in an Advisory Board position. He is still going to check on our ailing members and give us welfare reports at the meetings. We are now storing our utility trailer at Pablo's house, and he will stay as busy as ever helping our association as he has always done.

Donny Sanchez has accepted the appointment as audit committee chair, and he will choose two members to assist him in auditing our financial books. If you remember, his team found that our books were .27 cents short a few years ago. These guys are hound dogs when it comes to sniffing out corruption in the treasurer's office. I'm pretty sure Mike was just trying to get fired, but we forgot to tell him that this is a lifetime appointment.

Our 2023 annual picnic will be at Rotary Park in Bernalillo, on August 19th. Morris Gutierrez is our picnic committee chair again this year, and we are anticipating a great turnout. As always, we will have a silent auction and lots of great door prizes to hand out. If you have anything that you would like to donate for the silent auction, please reach out to any board member. Mark your calendars now and bring the whole family.

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