



AFDRA Retiree News



Published by the Albuquerque Fire Department Retirees' Association

December 1, 2025

4-2025



HERMAN R. BISHOP,
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Inspirational Quote

“Say something positive, and you’ll see something positive.”

Jim Thompson



Mike Fox,
Assistant Editor

CONTENTS

- P-1 Dalmatians**
- P-2 16th Annual Blue Mass**
- P-4 History of the Blue Mass**
- P-7 AFDRA Peer Support Group**
- P-8 Additional fire department stories**
- P-11 Meeting Report, September**
- P-12 Ron Herrera retirement celebration**
- P-13 Meeting Report, October**
- P-14 Meeting Report, November**
- P-15 Thank you Donors!**
- P-16 President's Message by Kerry Horton**

Dalmatians

The Dalmatians were mistreated animals saved from the city kennels.

Firefighter Roy Winchester was stationed at Fire Station



sixteen and became the caretaker for the dogs. They were named Dandy and Chelsea. During their time of service they were both trained to “STOP, DROP AND ROLL.” The dogs were used for station tours, school presentations, parades, and other City functions.

Dandy, who was more timid, would ride the open-air covered cab on engine 16. Chelsea loved to stand on top of the engine compartment in the open where everyone could see her.

(Submitted by retired firefighter, Roy Winchester. September 7, 2025)

ALBUQUERQUE'S SIXTEENTH ANNUAL BLUE MASS



16th Annual Blue Mass

And Reception

The **Blue Mass** is a blessing for all **FIRST RESPONDERS** in New Mexico
and **everyone is invited.**

Thursday September 25, 2025

12:00 p.m. Mass

Principal Celebrant:

Most Reverend John C. Wester, Archbishop of Santa Fe

Queen of Heaven Church

5311 Phoenix Ave NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110

*The Blue Mass is a blessing for all FIRST RESPONDERS in New Mexico
Police Officers, Sheriff Deputies, Firefighters, Military,*

Emergency Medical Personnel, Correction Officers, and Probation Officers.

It is also an opportunity to honor our fallen heroes who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

*The Mass is a prayer of thanksgiving for ALL First Responders, their families,
and their service to our communities.*

For more information, please contact:

Deacon Steve Rangel 505-249-6416 OR Sjb78@msn.com

Or visit: Archdiocese of Santa Fe: archdiosf.org



Mass Streaming Link: [16th Annual Blue Mass - Archdiocese of Santa Fe - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16th Annual Blue Mass - Archdiocese of Santa Fe - YouTube)



Sponsored by the Archdiocese of Santa Fe

On Thursday September 25, 2025, the 16th blue mass, in New Mexico was held at the Queen of Heaven catholic church, 5311 Phoenix Avenue NE. The mass was conducted by the principal celebrant: the reverend John C. Wester, archbishop of Santa fe. The blue mass is a blessing for all first responders in New Mexico including police officers, sheriff deputies, firefighters, military personnel, emergency medical personnel, correction officers and probation officers. It is also an opportunity to honor our fallen heroes who have made the ultimate sacrifice. The mass is a thanksgiving prayer for first responders and their families for their service to our communities.

A POLICE OFFICER'S PRAYER

Lord, I ask for courage
 Courage to face and
 Conquer my own fears.
 Courage to take me
 Where others will not go,
 I ask for strength
 Strength of body to protect
 others
 And strength of spirit to lead
 others...
 I ask for dedication
 Dedication to my job. to do it
 well
 Dedication to my community
 To keep it safe.
 Give me Lord. concern
 For others who trust me
 And compassion for those who need
 me.
 And please Lord
 Through it all
 Be at my side.
 --Author Unknown

A SOLDIER'S PRAYER

When I am called to serve, Dear Lord,
 Wherever war may be,
 Give me courage to fight the battles,
 My country may ask of me.
 Grace me with Your presence,
 And know that I love You,
 While I fight the enemy,
 My country needs me to.
 Help me protect my comrades,
 As You expect me to,
 And keep me in Your loving hands.
 While I do what I must do.
 I want to do my duty,
 And to give the best in me,
 To do what I've been called to do.
 And protect our liberty.
 And if, according to Your will.
 I must give up my life,
 Please bless with Your protecting hand,
 My children and my wife.

Fred White
 Chief Warrant Officer
 U.S. Army (Retired)

THE FIREFIGHTER'S PRAYER

When I'm called to duty, God.
 wherever flames may rage
 give me strength to save a life
 whatever be its age
 Help me to embrace a little child
 before it is too late or save an
 older person from the horror of
 that fate
 Enable me to be alert, to
 hear the weakest shout and
 quickly and efficiently to
 put the fire out
 I want to fill my calling, and
 to give the best in me to
 guard my neighbor and
 protect his property
 And if according to your will I
 have to lose my life, bless with
 your protecting hand my
 children and my wife.

--Author Unknown

CORRECTIONS OFFICER'S PRAYER

Lord, when it's time to go inside.
 That place of steel and stone.
 I pray that you will keep me safe
 so I won't walk alone.
 Help me to do my duty.
 Please watch me on my rounds.
 Amongst those perilous places
 And slamming steel door sounds.
 God, Keep my fellow Officers
 Well and free from harm.
 Let them know I'll be there too.
 Whenever there's alarm.
 Above all when I walk my beat.
 No matter where I roam.
 Let me go back whence I came.
 To family and home.
 By Lt. Larry Peoples

THE BLUE MASS: A CLEAR, ENGAGING HISTORY

What Is the Blue Mass?

The Blue Mass is a special Catholic Mass celebrated across the United States to honor public-safety professionals—police officers, firefighters, EMS personnel, 911 dispatchers, correctional officers, and other first responders. It is a public moment to pray for their safety, remember those who died in the line of duty, and show gratitude for their service.

The ceremony takes its name from the blue uniforms traditionally worn by many first responders. Today, even as uniforms differ across agencies, the name “Blue Mass” remains a symbol of service, courage, and community support.

Origins: The First Blue Mass (1934)

The first Blue Mass was celebrated on September 29, 1934, at St. Patrick Catholic Church in Washington, D.C., led by Father Thomas Dade of the Catholic Police and Firemen’s Society. More than 1,000 police officers and firefighters attended in full uniform. The date wasn’t accidental—September 29 is the Feast of Saint Michael the Archangel, patron saint of people who work in dangerous service roles, especially law enforcement and firefighters.

The intention was clear from the beginning:

- Pray for the protection of public-safety professionals
- Give thanks for their work
- Honor those who had fallen

Pause and Revival (1970s–1990s)

Though the Blue Mass continued for decades, attendance began to slip in the mid-1970s, and the celebration was eventually suspended.

Then, in 1994, the tradition was revived in Washington, D.C., with a broader vision. It now includes:

- Local police
- Federal agents
- Firefighters
- Paramedics and EMTs
- 911 dispatchers
- Correctional personnel
- Retired first responders

This revival sparked new momentum, and the Blue Mass soon spread across dioceses nationwide.



Typical Elements of a Blue Mass Today:

A Blue Mass varies by parish, but many share signature features that make the ceremony powerful and moving:

- Uniformed Processions:
First responders often attend in full uniform. Honor guards, color guards, and bagpipe units frequently lead the entrance procession.
- Reading of Names of Fallen Responders:
Local agencies often submit names of officers, firefighters, or EMS personnel who died in the line of duty. The names are read aloud—sometimes accompanied by a bell toll or the playing of “Taps.”
- Blessings for Active Responders:
The presider offers prayers for protection, strength, and courage for first responders currently serving.
- Blessing of Public-Safety Vehicles:
Outside the church, priests often bless fire trucks, ambulances, patrol cars, and equipment.
- Community Reception:
Many parishes host receptions afterward to thank responders and their families.



Why the Blue Mass Matters

The Blue Mass holds deep meaning for both responders and the communities they serve:

1. Public Honor for Hidden Service
Much of a first responder’s work occurs behind the scenes. The Mass provides public recognition for their sacrifice and courage.

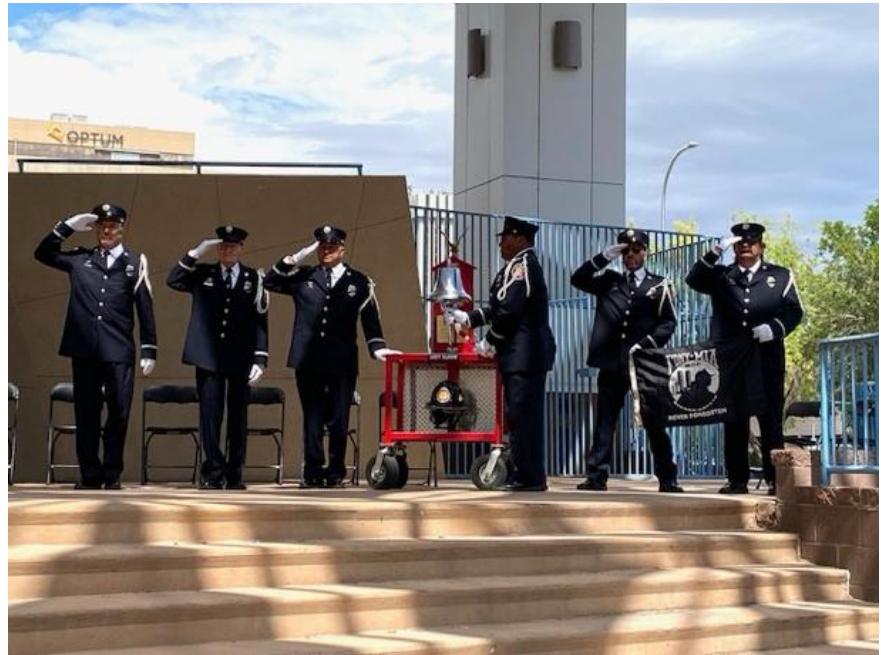
2. A Moment of Unity

It brings faith communities, families, and agencies together—an important gesture in times when public-safety work can be emotionally and politically difficult.

3. A Memorial for the Fallen

Hearing the names of those who gave their lives reinforces the importance of remembrance and gratitude.

4. Spiritual Support



For responders who face danger, trauma, and uncertainty, the Mass provides emotional and spiritual grounding.

The Symbolism of “Blue”

While the Mass now honors a wide variety of public-safety workers, blue remains the symbolic color because:

- It was the primary color of early police uniforms
- It represents calm, protection, and steadfastness
- It visually unifies attendees during the ceremony

Growth in the 21st Century

Since the 1990s revival, the Blue Mass has spread widely. Today:

- Many dioceses hold them annually
- Some schedule them around Police Week (May)
- Others celebrate them near September 29 (Saint Michael’s Day)
- Others choose September 11 to honor first-responder heroism

The ceremony has evolved into not just a Mass, but a community celebration—often with public proclamations, agency participation, and interfaith partnerships.



1934 – First Blue Mass at St. Patrick’s, Washington, D.C.

1970s – Tradition fades as attendance dips

1994 – Blue Mass revived in Washington with expanded scope

2000s–2020s – Blue Mass spreads across the U.S., grows in diversity and participation

Legacy and Continuing Purpose

The Blue Mass continues to be meaningful because it honors what society sometimes forgets: Public-safety work is brave, human, and deeply sacrificial.

Every reading of the fallen, every blessing of a fire engine, every uniform in the pews sends a message:





"We see your courage. We honor your losses. We pray for your safety."

The Blue Mass doesn't glorify danger—it dignifies service. And in doing so, it strengthens the connection between first responders and the people they protect.



AFDRA Peer Support Group

AFDRA's Peer Support Group consists of 8 retirees that have gone through training to help our members navigate life's problems and issues that we all go through, but with the compounding effect of the stressors and traumas that we experienced during our careers. The peer support group members training does not qualify them as trained professional mental health care clinicians, but our program is supervised by Patrick McKinney who is a trained mental health care clinician. If you are in crisis, and feel like harming yourself or others, please seek help immediately by contacting Patrick McKinney, 505-929-9779, or any mental health care clinician, or by calling the Suicide Crisis Hotline at 988.

If you would like to reach out to one of our peer support group members and just talk to someone that may have gone through the same issues that you are experiencing, please call any one of our members for a one-on-one confidential conversation.



ADDITIONAL FIRE DEPARTMENT STORIES

"A Public Relations Fiasco" by Herman R. Bishop

In 1966 I had recently been promoted to Lieutenant and was working out of station nine (Salem and Menaul N.E.) Naturally I wanted to do a good job and as the saying goes, "A new broom sweeps clean." Throughout the City that year we had experienced an unusual amount of fire rekindles. We received several training sessions about the importance of preventing re-kindles and to be thorough and diligent during salvage and overhaul operations after fires.

Early one afternoon we received a call to a residence on Mary Ellen Street N.E. When we approached the scene heavy smoke was coming from the house. We had a good working fire in progress. We caught the fire hydrant on the corner and laid a 2 1/2 supply line. Things were going well, and we made a quick attack on the fire and brought it under control within a few minutes. The fire was really hot and smokey. It had started in a large couch in the living room and had spread into the attic. The insulation in the attic was still smoldering, and we had to send someone up there with a small line to extinguish the rest of the fire and to remove the burning insulation. I sent Ignacio Perez into the attic cautioning him to stay on the rafters and to be careful not to stand on the sheetrock ceiling and especially not to fall through the ceiling. Because Ignacio originally was from Durango, Mexico we called him "Senor Perez." Meanwhile I had the other two pipemen, Kenneth Alvis and Chris Lovato, take the still smoldering couch out to the front yard for salvage and overhaul. Remembering the re-kindles classes and wanting to make a good impression as a new Lieutenant, I was determined not to have any re-kindles at any fires I was responsible for.



After giving members of my crew instructions about overhauling the smoldering couch and sending "Senor Perez" into the attic I went through the house to ensure that all the fire was extinguished and that things were under control and in good order. I came back into the living room at which time I met District Chief Carl Macaluso who had just arrived on the scene, assessed the situation and was fuming mad. He said, "Bishop what are those two firemen doing with that couch in the front yard creating a public relations fiasco?" Following my instructions they had taken their axes and totally dismantled the couch. By this time, it was nothing but a pile of rubbish, only good for a bonfire. One thing for sure there was no danger of a re-kindle.

If this situation was not bad enough, and even worse, Chief Macaluso had encountered "Senor Perez" in the kitchen who had fallen through the ceiling and was standing on the refrigerator in his firemen boots pulling and throwing the burning insulation on to the kitchen floor and wetting it down with the booster line. Now he was flooding the house unnecessarily with water to further add insult to injury in an already bad situation.

After a strong admonishment and lecture Chief Macaluso said, "well Bishop you have the fire out, but you and your crew are an embarrassment to the entire Fire Department". "I'm leaving before the reporters come or worse yet, I hope the Fire Chief himself (Chief Simon Seligman) doesn't show up to see this mess, Goodbye!"

"The Lady's White Purse" by Herman R. Bishop

It was on a warm summer night somewhere in the northwest part of town, in fire station seven's district that we had an almost tragic fire, but all turned out well. I don't recall the exact location of the fire but that is not important. It was the story itself which is outstanding in my mind. We received a call to a small two-bedroom house which was totally involved in fire upon our arrival. I was the District Fire Chief working out of Station One downtown in District One. When I arrived on the scene heavy black smoke was emitting from the house and Engine seven's crew headed by Lieutenant Bob Murphy had entered the front door of the dwelling and was

omaking an attack on the fire.

As I approached the house, I noticed an elderly lady maybe in her early seventies sitting in a lawn chair on the sidewalk. She was dressed in her housecoat, smoking a cigarette, appeared to be fine and was chatting with her neighbors. The neighbors advised me that this lady lived in the house which was on fire and was in the house when it caught fire. She had barely escaped with her life, and the neighbors had called 911. After determining that the lady was doing fine, they gave her a lawn chair and a cigarette to make her comfortable. Meanwhile the firemen were doing a good job of bringing the fire under control and within thirty minutes or so they had extinguished the fire. Soon as the smoke cleared Lieutenant Murphy took me for a tour to assess the fire damage.

After a few minutes we declared the entire house a total loss. It had been a very hot, smoky, fast-moving fire. The living room was the most heavily damaged and Lieutenant Murphy led me to the remains of an easy chair by the front door where he believed it to be the point of origin of the fire. All the contents of this room were in ashes, you could see the remains of the television set across the room, a couch, some end tables, lamps, and parts of curtains hanging on the windows. There was also an empty Jack Daniels liquor bottle lying on the floor not too far from the easy chair where we suspected the fire had started.

After our preliminary fire investigation, I went to the front yard to interview the lady of the house to try and find out what information she might have about the fire that would assist us in determining the fire cause. Soon after talking with the lady, I determined that she was highly intoxicated and smelled strongly of alcohol.

She said, "Chief I want to thank you and the firemen for coming and putting the fire out. I almost died in that fire. You see today I received my social security check, and I was having a little celebration. Early this evening I decided to sit down, relax, in my favorite chair, watch some television, have a few drinks, and smoke some cigarettes. I remember putting my social security check in my purse and placing it in my lap. I would have a drink, smoke a cigarette, and occasionally I would fall asleep. Then I would wake up to have another cigarette and another drink. I was having such a good time relaxing and watching television. Then all of a sudden, I remember waking up and the place was on fire. It was awfully scary and really hot. God, it was hot! I finally made it to the front door and got the neighbors to help me.

"By the way, did your boys find my purse with the social security check in it?" I told her we had not found her purse and that everything in her house was in ruins, just ashes. She said take me into the house and I will show you where I was sitting and that she was sure we could find her purse. You just need to search hard, and you will find it where I was sitting when the fire broke out.

In order to humor her I assisted her into the burned-out living room accompanied by Lieutenant Murphy and his crew. She pointed to the burned pile of rubble where her favorite chair had once been and said "Officers just dig in there you will find my purse. The firemen sifted through the burned pile of ashes to no avail. She said, "Chief, tell the boys to dig harder and to keep looking. When you find my purse you will recognize it right away, it is a white one!"



"Jessie's Wrestling Match With The Big Fire Hose", By Tom Romero January 1, 1982

One of the most memorable fires I attended happened on New Year's Day about 1982. I was a rescue driver assigned to Rescue Three at Girard and Central. We were dispatched to a multiple alarm fire at the Cox Estates apartments. It was dark and falling snow seemed to "freeze in motion" as it fell through the "strobe light effect" of our emergency lights. We were all driving cautiously to avoid skidding, but with our lights and sirens blaring! Many cars passed us as we made our way north on Carlisle toward the Cox Estate apartments. From just south of Candelaria you could see the orange glow of flames and the rising columns of dark smoke moving

straight up into the early morning sky. We all knew that we were in for a hard night's work as we drove toward the fire. This was the early days of our department adopting the Incident Command process for fire ground control, and many of our senior members would not or could make the change. from the previous system of everyone attacking the fire from whatever side you're on and work as hard as you can, but for God's sake don't call the Chief on the radio, that was reserved for calling the Alarm room, who's job they thought it was, (especially when Sammy Mirabal was working) to coordinate fireground tactics and communication as well as setting priorities and rotation schedules for units on the fire ground all without any presence on the scene. Each unit was independent and was ordered on the scene by other units that had either arrived ahead of yours or by whoever could shout over the commotion and give you an assignment. Many times, I saw multiple first in units assign multiple other units to perform the same function, which of course had already been assigned by multiple other units. However, such was the state of my beloved department, and I was proud to be a Firefighter. I was 23 years old and working alongside many men who knew my father as a childhood friend of theirs, and they would often share with me tales of their lives together. Some of these same men were serving with me this night in about 1982. As we approached the fire I could not drive any faster than 30 MPH because the Rescue we had that night was a leftover from a failed experiment by the Department to use military surplus four wheel drive vehicles as front line Medical response units, and it would shudder from side to side terribly sometimes causing you to cross lanes while driving. As I complained about this to my officer, Lieutenant Rick Winters, he told me "It's always done that, just keep driving we'll be fine!" I would always drive slower after it would change lanes without my control, and this would infuriate Rick. As we arrived on the scene, we could see that it was a large complex of two-story frame stucco buildings with multiple units per building. Flames were shooting up the sides and through the roof of one of the buildings in the middle of the complex. We were staged in the west parking lot. As Engine Eight arrived they were assigned to lay a five-inch supply line to a forward pumper. As they were securing a hydrant their driver, Jesus Frias, also known as Jesse, was struggling with the five-inch connection. (The five-inch line was also a new innovation in those days). Just a few weeks before he was a paramedic and was the central figure in many colorful chapters of our department's history! He bluffed his way through hooking up the five inch line. As the call went out for more water, they charged the five-inch line which of course broke loose and became a "wild line." Jesus immediately began to walk out the line from Engine eight. The line was flailing around and throwing more water than I had ever seen in my life! Many people yelled and pointed toward Jesus who was being dragged and thrown through the parking lot by the five inch wild line. Anyone who attempted to reach Jesus was quickly knocked down by the force of the water or by the impact of the hose itself.

Jesse, (Jesus) was shouting for someone to go to the panel of the pumper and shut down the line. The roar of escaping water and Jesse screaming as he would be lifted in the air and slammed into the ground or slid sideways in "S" curves ten to fifteen feet wide made it very difficult to understand him. Besides all this, lots of people were shouting orders, not only about this situation but also about the monster-sized fire we were called to fight in the first place. Lots of ice formed as the water froze and people were falling all over the place! Soon a small band of firefighters were slipping and falling as they were running around gathering equipment and fallen friends while trying to bring some control to this very funny scene at the fire which raged only a few hundred feet away! The apartment fire was extinguished, no one lost their life that night, Jesse was alright and we all had a memorable story to tell.



Meeting Report, September 2025

(by Kerry Horton) September 10, 2025

The 301st AFDRA meeting was called to order at 1900. Attendance was very good, and after the Pledge of Allegiance, Morris Gutierrez gave the opening prayer. We had a moment of silence for Gibby Roybal, and family and Mike Fox read a letter from the Roybal family thanking AFDRA for our support of the family in these hard times.

Roll call of Officers and Advisory Board members. Secretary Eddie Abeita was absent.

President's Report; By Kerry Horton Recent retiree James Parra Jr. attended his first AFDRA meeting and was introduced as the newest member of the AFDRA Honor Guard. We reviewed the itinerary of the 9-11 ceremonies at Civic Plaza on Thursday, 9-11, and reviewed the Blue Mass ceremony on September 25th at Queen of Heaven at 5300 Claremont Ave. NE at 12 noon, and we reminded everyone that there would be a 9-11 Mass at Sacred Heart at noon and 5pm. I have scheduled two Social Security Seminars in October, so if you are getting near the age to draw social security or just want to review whether you are getting all the benefits that you are entitled to, attend one of the seminars. I will advertise the dates as we get closer because if I told you now you will just forget! Local 244 has made 40 more AFDRA 25th anniversary T-Shirts for those that did not get one at the picnic. If you want one, text or email me your size. Once these are gone, they are gone. Sizes are limited so first come first serve.

Vice President's Report; By Donny Sanchez No report. **Secretary's Report;** By Eddie Abeita -A motion was made by Sam Trujillo to suspend the reading of the August meeting minutes, the motion was seconded by Eulogio Lucero and passed. **Treasurer's Report;** By Mike Fox - Mike gave the financial report for August, and all funds are accounted for. As always, the financial books are open for everybody to review. A motion to accept the financial report passed.

Historian's Report; By Herman Bishop - Herman reviewed the September newsletter and shared a brief history of the development of the AFDRA newsletter, from a one-page typed letter to a handmade 25-page monster newsletter, to the 16-page electronic version we have now.

Committee Reports; Funeral Committee, Sam commented on how well the Gilbert "Gibby" Roybal services were attended, and that the Honor Guard did a wonderful job, as usual. Picnic Committee, the picnic was a lot of fun, and we want to thank everyone that made it a great success. Museum Committee, Election Committee,

Matters Good for the Association. Donny gave a report on the IAFFNMMG trip to Oregon, as they make their way up to Portland for the IAFF motorcycle rally.

Greg Gonzales encouraged members to attend the September 25th Kitchen Table meeting, at the union hall at 630 pm, and share stories that can be shared with cadet classes in a way to pass on our knowledge and experiences to future FF's. Greg is catering dinner at the Kitchen Table meeting on the 25th, so please attend, eat some good food, and help Greg on this worthwhile project. Morris Gutierrez is looking for stories about the late AFD retiree David Marquez to put in future newsletters. If you worked with Dave or have stories to share, please send them to Mike Fox or contact Morris. Keep up with events and dates by checking out our website or Facebook page. Visit our website at afdretirees.com The meeting was adjourned at 2025.



Ron Herrera Retirement Celebration

By Kerry Horton

On December 29th, Albuquerque Fire Rescue held a retirement celebration at station 21 for Lt Ron Herrera. Ron started his career on December 17th, 1973 as a member of the 24th cadet class, and will have completed 52 years with the Albuquerque Fire Department when his retirement is official on December 31st, 2025.

The celebration was attended by many of his family, friends, coworkers along with some dignitaries such as Mayor Keller, AFR Chief Emily Jaramillo, DC Marrufo, DC Sotelo, Local 244 City VP Greg Montoya and Herman Bishop who spoke on Ron's achievement as the longest serving firefighter in AFD's history.

Ron was honored with the naming of station 21's apparatus room the "Ron Herrera Apparatus Bay", and Engine 21 has Lt. Herrera #076 gold-leafed on the officer's door. 76 is Ron's man number. Keep in mind that man numbers now number in the 1400's. Congratulations Ron on a long and well-respected career with the Albuquerque Fire Department.



Meeting Report, October 2025

(by Kerry Horton) October 8th 2025

The 302nd AFDRA meeting was called to order at 1900. Attendance was very good, and after the Pledge of Allegiance, Morris Gutierrez gave the opening prayer. We had a moment of silence for Arthur "Art" Cowen and family. Roll call of Officers and Advisory Board members. The Vice President and Treasurer were absent.

President's Report; By Kerry Horton

Reviewed the services for Art Cowen, being held on November 8th in Moriarty at the Victory Faith Fellowship located at 1100 8th Street at 10 am. Discussed New Mexico Retirees association's attempt to restore our PERA COLA's back to 2%, but doing so without a plan to fund the COLA's. The Investment and Oversight Committee did not add them to the agenda at their next meeting, so they will try for the November meeting. AFR has opened Fire Station 23, on 98th street south of Gibson, and our Last Alarm truck will be temporarily stored there until it can be relocated to old station 12 in the next few months.

Vice President's Report; By Donny Sanchez No report

Secretary's Report; By Eddie Abeita Eddie read the September minutes and a motion was made and passed to accept the report.

Treasurer's Report; By Mike Fox Prior to Mike's absence, he sent the September financial report to me, and I shared that with the membership. A motion was made and passed to accept the September financial report. As always, the financial books are open for everybody to review.

Historian's Report; Herman shared some fond memories of working with Art Cowen and how he kept everyone around him in a good mood with his wit and humor. Herman also reviewed last month's Blue Mass ceremony and said that it made him very proud to be a Firefighter and that the AFDRA Honor Guard got a very nice compliment from APD's Police Chief at the ceremony.

Committee Reports; Funeral Committee, Salazar Funeral Home gave our Honor Guard a very nice donation to help with the costs of purchasing and maintaining the uniforms. Thank You Salazar Funeral Home.

Christmas Committee, the date for our AFDRA Christmas Dinner will be December 11th, at the Moose Lodge on Edith Blvd. There is a planning meeting at the Moose Lodge on October 16, at noon and all are welcome to attend. We will release final details as they become available. Museum Committee, Election Committee, Matters Good for the Association. Robby Sanchez and Richard Sanchez gave a report on the IAFF Motorcycle Group Rally in Oregon and continued the trip to Colorado for the IAFF Fallen Firefighter Memorial. The trip was a safe and successful ride, and a good time was had by all. Greg Gonzales encouraged members to attend the October 16th Kitchen Table meeting, at the union hall at 630 pm, and share stories that can be shared with cadet classes in a way to pass on our knowledge and experiences to future FF's. Greg is catering dinner at the Kitchen Table meeting on the 16th, so please attend, eat some good food, and help Greg on this worthwhile project. Don't forget that there's a Kitchen Table tonight, October 9th at 4004 Carlisle Blvd. NE at 6:30 pm, and on Monday, October 13 at 2721 San Mateo Blvd. NE at 10 am.

Eddie Abeita informed the membership that AFD retiree Leo Tafoya is the Isleta Fire Chief and that several of our retirees are manning the trucks in Isleta. The next Social Security Seminar will be held Tuesday, October 28th, at the union hall at 7pm. Keep up with events and dates by checking out our website or Facebook page. Visit our website at afdretirees.com

The meeting was adjourned at 2025.



Meeting Report, November 2025

(by Kerry Horton) November 12, 2025

The 303rd AFDRA meeting was called to order at 1900. Attendance was very good, and after the Pledge of Allegiance, Morris Gutierrez gave the opening prayer. We had a moment of silence for Tony Anaya and family. Roll call of Officers and Advisory Board members. Treasurer was absent. Russell Perea was our guest speaker. Russell is the husband of AFDRA retiree Stephany Perea and Russell represents Noblin Funeral services and spoke about their burial plans at a much-reduced rate for public safety. We will be holding seminars in December and January to give our members a better chance to learn about the program. I will keep you informed on the seminar dates.

President's Report; By Kerry Horton

There are some revisions in our December Kitchen Table meeting dates, December 4th will be at the union hall at 6:30 pm, December 15th will be at 2721 San Mateo Blvd. at 10 am, and December 18 will be at 4004 Carlisle Blvd at 6:30. On November 20th, our Kitchen Table meeting will be at the union hall and we will be serving beef and chicken fajitas courtesy of Greg Gonzales, hope we see you there. Sam Trujillo was appointed to the AFDRA Advisory Board.

BCFR Firefighter Hunter Stramm unexpectedly passed away, and we extend our deepest condolences to our County Brothers and Sisters for their loss.

Vice President's Report; By Donny Sanchez No report

Secretary's Report; By Eddie Abeita Eddie read the September minutes, and a motion was made and passed to accept the report.

Treasurer's Report; By Mike Fox In our Treasurers absence, Vice President Donny Sanchez read the financial report. A motion was made and passed to accept the October financial report. As always, the financial books are open for everybody to review.

Historian's Report; Herman shared a report on the funeral services of Art Cowen, the retirement ceremony for Ron Herrera, and then gave a preview of the December Newsletter. Herman, Zach Romero, and others shared some fond memories and stories of working with Tony Anaya.

Committee Reports;

Funeral Committee,

Christmas Committee, the date for our AFDRA Christmas Dinner will be December 11th, at the Moose Lodge on Edith Blvd. Tickets are now on sale and can be purchased on Saturday December 6th at the Union Hall from 10 am to 1 pm, or you can contact John Barnum at [505-582-6887](tel:505-582-6887) to reserve your tickets.

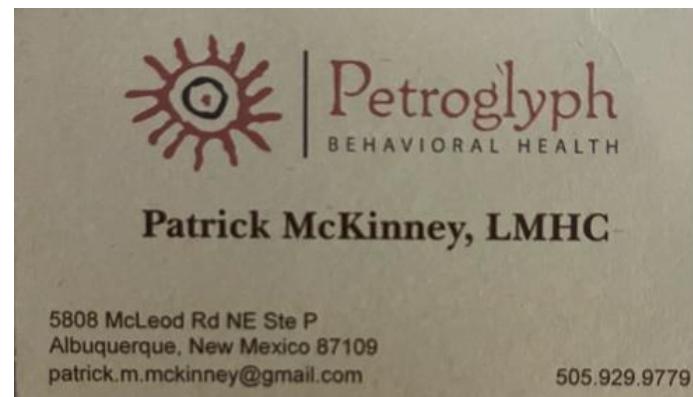
Museum Committee, we are hosting a historical talk to the Albuquerque Business Historical Society at the museum on November 19 at 11 am, all are welcome to attend.

Election Committee,

Matters Good for the Association. Morris Gutierrez is selling the last few copies of his AFD Firefighter Nickname book at half price and all proceeds go to AFDRA. They make great Christmas gifts! Keep up with events and dates by checking out our website or Facebook page. Visit our website at afdretirees.com The meeting was adjourned at 2025.



A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR DONORS!!



"Our Family Serving Yours"



President's Message

By Kerry Horton

Hello everybody, on behalf of the entire AFDRA Executive Board, we hope that you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving and that we will see you at the Christmas Dinner. The last day to purchase Christmas Dinner tickets will be December 6th, at the union hall from 10 am until 1 pm. This year's dinner will be at the MOOSE Lodge, 2121 Edith Blvd. NE on December 11th, starting at 6pm. The menu is ribeye steak with all the fixings and tickets are \$20 apiece.

I want to give one last shout out to Ron Herrera on his retirement at the end of the year. Ron was a member of the 24th cadet class from December 17th, 1973, that's 52 years in the Albuquerque Fire Department. I'm sure you will all agree that 50 plus years is a milestone that will not ever be matched. On behalf of all the retiree's Ron, we thank you for all your contributions into PERA, but now it's time to start withdrawing what you've earned.

AFDRA Leadership

President, Kerry Horton (505) 934-2969
 Vice President, Donny Sanchez (505) 228-3286
 Secretary, Edward Abeita (505) 250-7895
 Treasurer, Mike Fox (505) 385-7292
 Historian, Herman R. Bishop (505) 294-7165
 President Emeritus, Sam Trujillo (505) 899-1500

ADVISORY BOARD

Eulogio Lucero, Morris Guiterrez, Pablo Garcia Jr. Santos Abeyta, Vince Holcomb, Fred Teupell, Louis C. Trujillo, Tommy Romero, Bill Raupfer, Anthony Nuanez, Jose Salaz, Emiliano Chavez, James Parra

