AFDRA Retiree News

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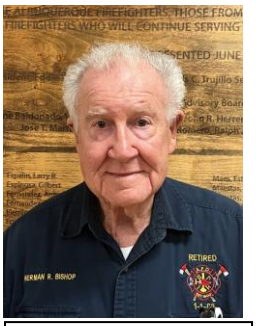

HERMAN R. BISHOP, ASSISTANT EDITOR

Inspirational Quote

To acquire knowledge, one must study; but to acquire wisdom, one must observe.

Marilyn vos Savant

MIKE FOX, EDITOR

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2026 PICNIC

The Albuquerque Fire Department Retiree's Association 2026 picnic will be held in Bernalillo at Rotary Park Pavilion on August 22, 2026. Festivities and Lunch will be enjoyed by all. Please bring your family and join us for a wonderful event. See page 2 for details and some pictures from last year.

Headlines

In this newsletter, we have two special articles that are part of a series. We have part two of a Trauma series that is written by Patrick McKinney and is full of incredibly important and useful information. The second one is part one in a series on AFD History by Herman Bishop. As many of you know, Herman has gathered an incredible amount of AFD history and has authored many articles that document its important history.

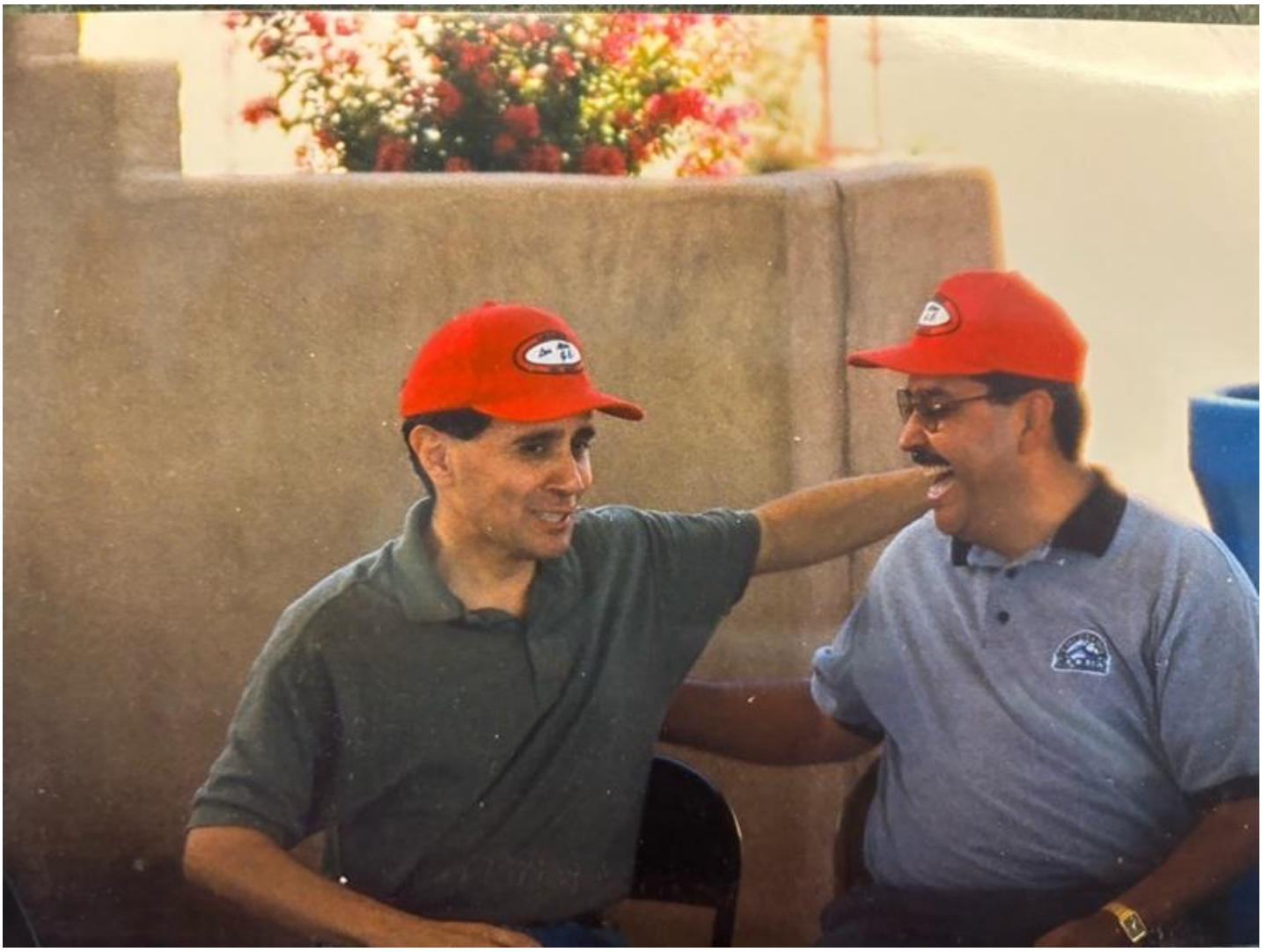
AFDRA 2026 PICNIC

The 2026 annual picnic for the Albuquerque Fire Department Retiree's Association will be held at Rotary Park in Bernalillo on August 22, 2026. The park is located at 370 Rotary Park Rd. Bernalillo, NM 87004. Festivities will kick off at 10 o'clock. Lunch will be served close to noon, if you want to come early and help set up, please feel free. Hope to see you there!

Here are a few photos from last year.

A tribute to David Marquez

Morris Gutierrez is working on a book as a tribute to David Marquez, who passed away much too young. Morris has received many donations from our generous members and is finishing the book for publish. Here are some examples of David's fine artwork (David is pictured on the left in the photo).



Meeting Report, March 2026

(by Kerry Horton)
March 11th, 2026

The 307th AFDRA meeting was called to order at 1900. Attendance was good for this busy time of year and after Morris Gutierrez led us in an opening prayer, we had a Moment of Silence for Toby Pino and family. Roll call of Officers and Advisory Board members. Donny Sanchez, Eddie Abeita, and Mike Fox all had excused absences but are required to write "I will not be absent anymore" 100 times.

President's Report; By Kerry Horton

Herman Bishop and I are meeting with AFR Fire Chief on Friday, March 13 to discuss naming station one in honor of the late Fire Chief Art Westerfeld. Senate Bill 128, a very progressive revamping of the current Presumptive Causation Bill, was signed by Governor Grisham thanks to the hard work of the States active-duty firefighters. The new Bill is posted on our website and can be looked up at nmlegis.gov. There is more interest in holding Medicare and Social Security seminars this spring, so I will work on getting them arranged and let you know the dates as they become available. If you are interested in a new retiree ID card, please text me a shoulder up selfie at 505-934-2969. I'm trusting that you all will behave.

Vice President's Report; By Donny Sanchez No report

Secretary's Report; By Eddie Abeita In Eddie's absence, a motion was made and passed to suspend the reading of the February minutes. It appears that no one puts the enthusiasm into the reading of the minutes like Eddie does.

Treasurer's Report; By Mike Fox I read the financial report, and a motion was made and passed to accept the February financial report. As always, the financial books are open for everybody to review.

Historian's Report; Herman gave a report on the accomplishments that Art Westerfeld was able to do over his career and how he was able to modernize the Albuquerque Fire Department, by increasing staffing, fire stations, training and equipment. For a complete report on Art Westerfeld's importance to AFD please see the article in the March newsletter.

Committee Reports; Funeral Committee, Sam is working with the Pino family, and we will publish service details as they become available. **Christmas Committee**, **Museum Committee, Election Committee,** Louis Trujillo was appointed as the election committee chairman and will be accepting President and Secretary nominations up to the June meeting date. If you are interested in running for either position, or want to nominate someone for either position, call Louis Trujillo at 505-604-7732, or contact Eddie Abeita who is assisting Louis. **Matters Good for the Association.** We will be organizing a work crew to assist Bill Raupfer in some spring cleaning at his residence in Edgewood. I will post details as the plans develop.

March Kitchen Table meeting dates, new ones have been added.
March 12, 6:30 pm at 4004 Carlisle Blvd, NE
March 16, 10 am at 2721 San Mateo Blvd NE
March 19, 6:30 pm at the union hall
March 26, 6;30 pm at 4004 Carlisle Blvd NE
March 30, 10 am at 2721 San Mateo Blvd NE

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 2030.

Trauma: *What Remains When the Job is Done*

(Second in a series on Trauma by Patrick McKinney)

When firefighters hear the word trauma, they often think of a specific call—a fatal fire, a serious accident, a child who did not survive. But trauma is not defined by the event itself. Two people can experience the same incident, and one may carry long-lasting effects while the other does not. Many retired firefighters recognize this when they move through Albuquerque long after the job is done. A familiar intersection, a stretch of highway, a neighborhood street, or the sight of a roadside descanso can bring an old call…a memory back without warning. Driving across town, running errands, or taking a familiar route, there are often few places that don't carry some association with a past call. Understanding trauma begins with understanding how it is defined and, more importantly, how it is experienced—personally, uniquely, and over time.

"Trauma is not defined by the event itself. It is defined by how it is experienced."

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) defines trauma as the result of an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening and has lasting adverse effects on a person's functioning and well-being. Another working definition builds on this by emphasizing experience over exposure:

- ***Trauma occurs when an event overwhelms a person's ability to cope, creates helplessness or hopelessness, and exists outside what the nervous system understands as a normal or safe world.***

This distinction matters because trauma is subjective. It is not measured by how dramatic or severe an incident appears from the outside. The nervous system does not evaluate trauma based on training, rank, experience, or toughness. It responds to perceived threat and lack of control. Two firefighters may work the same call, but their nervous systems may experience it very differently depending on timing, exhaustion, previous exposure, and internal resources at that moment.

Helplessness and hopelessness are central ingredients in trauma. Firefighters are trained to act, intervene, and solve problems. Trauma often forms when action

is impossible, when outcomes cannot be changed, or when human limits are painfully clear. In those moments, the nervous system records not just what happened, but the felt sense that nothing could be done and nothing would make a difference. That internal experience can linger long after the call ends.

In many calls, firefighters step briefly into a world where the usual rules don't apply—where fairness breaks down and outcomes feel random. In that space, decisions carry weight, time feels compressed, and the margin for error is small. We do the work that needs to be done, then step back into everyday life where people are shopping, driving, laughing, and moving on as if nothing unusual has occurred. The transition can be abrupt. There is often no gradual reentry, no pause to process what just happened. The shift moves on—the truck is restocked, reports are finished, tones drop, the next call begins—but the body does not always reset at the same pace. Life continues around them, while the nervous system is still registering what it just carried. The mind may orient to the next task, but the body often carries the experience forward.

"Life moves on, but the body often carries the experience forward."

Trauma also tends to live "***outside the normal world***." It violates expectations about safety, predictability, and fairness. Many firefighters instinctively compartmentalize these experiences because they do not fit into everyday life. Compartmentalization is not a flaw or a failure—it is a practical survival skill. It allows firefighters to set something aside so they can return to service, focus on the next call, and keep functioning in environments that demand clarity and control. The mind may move on, but the nervous system holds onto what it does not know how to place. Understanding trauma as an experience rather than a failure is often the first step toward reducing shame and self-blame.

In the next article, we'll explore how firefighters often become co-participants in trauma over the course of a career—not as victims, but as observers and to a degree participants to thousands of intense human experiences. We'll also begin looking at how trauma is absorbed through the senses and stored by the brain long before it is understood by the mind.

AFD HISTORY (Part 1)

By Herman R. Bishop, Historian
(March 1, 2001)

The first reference to an organized fire brigade dates back to 4000 B.C. in China. By 2000 B.C. Egypt had an organization for fighting fires. The great London fire of 1660 destroyed London Bridge and resulted in the passing of a building code and fire regulations. In the United States organized fire departments were popular early as 1653.

Boston had the first real fire organization by 1715. They had six fire companies. During the 1850's New York and Cincinnati had paid firemen. Albuquerque has had an organized Fire Department since the late 1800's. At that time the firemen were volunteer including the Fire Chief. The Chief usually was a local businessman.

We don't know the exact date of the organization of the first Albuquerque Fire Department. An old photo dated February, 1882 of the "Albuquerque Fire Company," a hook and ladder company in front of the Montezuma saloon was taken prior to the incorporation of Albuquerque in 1885. The ladder wagon was hand- drawn. The saloon was located at the SW corner of Second Street and Railroad Avenue (Central Avenue)

The Albuquerque Morning Journal on February 24, 1882, reported that the Albuquerque volunteer hook and ladder company was headed by Chief William Sanguinette. It was reported that "The Hook and Ladder Company" is efficient but a better water supply is needed. A big fire was reported on March 9, 1882."The pump of the R.R. news Company proved of much service. The pump was used to fill hundreds of buckets.

On July 13,1882 William Sanguinette was re-elected to Chief. The Fire Company name was changed from "Albuquerque Fire Company" to "Albuquerque Hook and Ladder Company." John Borradiale was named Foreman, and James Blanchard was named Secretary. Names of inactive members were removed from the membership roster.

From a newspaper column entitled "Nubs of News" on October 8, 1882, it was reported that "The fire boys are erecting a building for a new truck on Front Street (First Street) opposite Holiday and Sanguinette Saloon."

The first Fireman's Ball was held on March 17, 1883, and the men wore their uniforms. The lady's attire was not reported and the name of the Band is not known. The location of the Fireman's Ball is unknown or the number attending. The Firemen received their first badges on April 7, 1883.

A Railroad Fire Company was organized on August 12, 1883. It was called the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad Company in those days. At this time the fire company tested it's first fire hose and the test proved successful.

A City Water Works Company was proposed on August 17, 1883. At that time the City Water Company was not sufficient to supply fire hydrants, but the hand-drawn fire carts and horse drawn fire wagons carried their own water. On September 28, 1883 a bad fire was reported at the Hub Saloon. No further information was provided. Later in the year on December 8th an improved Water Works Company was decided upon. Then on December 11, 1883 the King Building sustained heavy losses after a big fire.

The Maden Store suffered heavy fire losses on April 22, 1884. A new type of ladder was purchased and arrived on June 13, 1884. It was called a "Fire Escape Ladder "(extension ladder) This ladder apparently was similar to a 40 foot Bangor ladder. It was described as having sections held together by brackets which allowed the sections upward and downward mobility. The first fireman's tournament was held on October 3, 1884.

The election of June 1885 allowed the citizens to vote on whether or not to incorporate Albuquerque as a town. The citizens voted in the majority to incorporate. Just five days after the election a contract for installation of a city water system was awarded.

William Sanguinette was re-elected Chief, and the first hose company was organized during November 3, 1885. This hose company was comprised of 23 volunteer members. Two hose carts were approved for purchase by the City Commission during December, 1885. Also awarded in the contract for the two hose carts was 1200 feet of 2 1/2 inch fire hose. The name "Scott Moore Hose Company" was adopted for the first hose company in early January, 1886.

To provide fire service to the south Albuquerque area, on January 18, 1886, a second hose company was organized. The name, "A.A. Grant Hose Company" was adopted. At this time the ladder company was known as the "Albuquerque Hook and Ladder Company" The company's fifteen volunteer members elected C.E. Cramer as Foreman.

The two new Gleason and Bailey two-wheel hose carts arrived on February 15, 1886. The "Scott Moore Company" hose cart was cream colored and the "A.A. Grant Hose Company" was colored brown. (The wheels on the cart measured 6' 3")

On February 15, 1886, Volunteer members of both hose companies, "Scott Moore", and "A.A. Grant" held their first practice drill along with the "Albuquerque Hook and Ladder Company." Although the water works was not complete at this time the volunteers were able to hold their drill with hoses hooked up to new fire hydrants. The drills were reported a success by all three companies.

An election was held in March 1886 and William Sanguinette was elected Fire Marshal by members of the three fire companies. 1- "Scott Moore Hose Company " 2- "A.A. Grant Hose Company." 3 - "Albuquerque Hook and Ladder Company"

Sources: This information was taken from Official Albuquerque Fire Department Ledgers dating prior to the turn of the century (Late 1800's)

Credit is given to Dave Wendle who presented a mini- research paper on AFD History on May 30, 1978. Another research paper was prepared by Marilyn Lobdell on December 1, 1978. and presented to the Albuquerque Museum. Information from both these papers were used in this article.

NEXT TIME: (Part 2) - A Brief History of the paid Fire Department beginning in June, 1900

AFD Station 2, September 1, 1914

Meeting Report, April 2026

(by Kerry Horton)

April 8th 2026

The 308th AFDRA meeting was called to order at 1900. Attendance was very good with some old friends and a new member showing up, and after Morris Gutierrez led us in an opening prayer, we had a Moment of Silence for Toby Pino and Amado Pargas. Roll call of Officers and Advisory Board members and all Executive Board members were present. Bernalillo County Sheriff candidate Philp Snedeker was our guest speaker.

President's Report; By Kerry Horton - Retire Public Employees of New Mexico is looking for a new member to serve on their Board of Directors, if you are interested please send an email to rpenm@rpenm.org with your name, contact info, qualifications, and reason why you wish to join their board. The Legislative Financial Committee oversees implementing Senate Memorial 31 and as of this week no action has been made to put together a work group to discuss the COLA issues with PERA. I have reached out to be put on the work group; we'll see if anything happens. I was supposed to be part of a ZOOM meeting with Deb Haaland's team today regarding our concerns over the lack of COLA's, but the meeting never happened, although those of us that were supposed to attend did get an apology and a reschedule. We will be sponsoring another round of Social Security Seminars this month so if you are approaching SS age, please attend. They are very informative and this time are going to be tailored towards firefighters and Social Security. The dates are April 21, at 10 am at the union hall, and April 27 at 6:30 pm at the union hall. We will be washing the Last Alarm Truck on Saturday, April 11 at 9:30 am in preparation for Amado Pargas's services. The truck is housed at Station 23, 9631Amole Mesa SW, on 98th south of Blake. If you live in that area, drop by and lend a hand. If you are interested in a new retiree ID card, please text me a shoulder up selfie at 505-934-2969. I'm trusting that you all will behave.

Vice President's Report; By Donny Sanchez - No report

Secretary's Report; By Eddie Abeita - With Eddie's absence last month, and our inability to get him notes on the meeting, Eddie had no report and a motion was made and passed to accept his non-report.

Treasurer's Report; By Mike Fox - Mike read the financial report, and a motion was made and passed to accept the March's financial report. As always, the financial books are open for everybody to review.

Historian's Report; Herman gave a report on his recent health issues and wanted to assure everyone that he is mending fine, and on the road to perfect health. Greg Aragon stepped in and presented a brief review of AFR's more recent accomplishments since 2024.

Committee Reports; Funeral Committee, A reminder that Amado Pargas services are this Monday, April 13, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church at 412 Stover SW. The Rosary is at 10 am and Mass is at 11;30. Interment will follow at Mt Calvary Cemetery. Toby Pino's services will be held in May, and we will send out notifications as soon as they are arranged. Christmas Committee, Museum Committee, Election Committee, Louis Trujillo was appointed as the election committee chairman and will be accepting President and Secretary nominations up to the June meeting date. If you are interested in running for either position, or want to

nominate someone for either position, call Louis Trujillo at 505-604-7732, or contact Eddie Abieta who is assisting Louis.
Matters Good for the Association. Cindy Raupfer thanked everyone that helped with the cleaning, painting and paver project at her dad's house. Greg Aragon talked about a fund-raising program for Folds of Honor coming up in September. If you wish to help, please contact Greg. Morris Gutierrez and Mike Fox have put together a book of David Marquez's drawings, anecdotes, and letters and needed to collect $427 to publish 100 books. That money was raised at the meeting, Thank You to all who donated, and the books will be free to the first 100 that reach out to Morris for a copy. GQ Sanchez and Hollow Spirits Distillery donated a $100 bottle of honey infused whiskey that will be available at our silent auction at this year's picnic. If you have any quality items that you wish to donate to the auction, please contact me at 505-934-2969.

April Kitchen Table meetings are as follows
April 9, 6:30 pm at 4004 Carlisle Blvd NE
April 16, 6:30 pm at the union hall
April 23, 6:30 pm at 4004 Carlisle Blvd NE
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 2035.

Death of Amado Pargas

We received notification that Our AFD Retiree Brother Amado Pargas Jr. passed away on 3/12/26 … Amado was living in Oregon with his daughter and is survived by his wife (Paula) … Amado joined AFD on 3/7/1957 and he retired on 10/3/1983 … Amado was 90+ years old … Amado was a US Navy Veteran that served during the Korean Conflict …

Amado Pargas Funeral Services were held on 4/13/2026 and were at Sacred Heart Catholic Church (412 Stover SW) … A Rosary was held @ 1000 followed by a Funeral Mass @ 1030 … Interment followed at Mt. Calvary Cemetery (1900 Edith NE) … AFD Retirees Association Officers read "The Resolution of Condolence" following the Funeral Mass … AFDRA Honor Guard "Stood Vigil" prior to the Rosary and they "Struck The Four Fives" at the Cemetery graveside … Amado will be greatly missed by his entire fire family, our best wishes go out to his immediate family.

Death of Toby Pino

We have been notified that our brother AFD Retiree Toby Pino passed away on 3-10-2026 at 1140 … Toby Pino joined AFD on 3/9/1964 and he retired on 4/2/1984 … Toby was in the first Paramedic class in 1974 and served as Paramedic Lieutenant for 10 years … Toby was also a US Marine Corp Veteran … The family requested a FireFighter Funeral …
Services for our Brother Toby Pino were as follows. A Celebration of Life was on Saturday, May 9th, at 10 am, at the APOA (Albuquerque Police Officers Association), 3813 Hawkins Rd NE.
AFDRA read the Resolution of Condolence and Eulogy. Toby will be greatly missed by his entire fire family. Our best wishes go out to his immediate family.

Death of Anastacio Padilla

Our AFD Retiree Brother Anastacio "Mike" Padilla passed away on 5/17/2026 … Mike was 87+ years old … Mike joined AFD on 3/19/1962 and he retired on 12/1/1980 … Mike spent most of his career(17 years) in the Alarm Room as a Dispatcher … Mike was also a Licensed Contactor that specialized in Custom Home Construction in the North Valley …

French Funeral is handling the Funeral Services and a future "Celebration of Life" his planned. Please check the website at www.afdraretirees.com for further updates

Meeting Report, May 2026

(by Kerry Horton)
May 13th 2026

The 309th AFDRA meeting was called to order at 1900. Attendance was very good with some old friends showing up, and after Louis Trujillo led us in an opening prayer, we had a Moment of Silence for all those that have passed before us. Roll call of Officers and Advisory Board members and all Executive Board members were present. IAFF Local 244 President Miguel Tittmann was our guest speaker. Local 244 and the NM State Firefighters Association are hosting the IAFF District 10 conference at the Tamaya Resort from June 10 through the 26th. Local 244 has invited retirees to attend some of the informal gatherings and possibly help with registration tables, driving vans etc. These details will be worked out, and I will pass on the information. Miguel also talked about the possible opportunity for retirees to become IAFF Retiree members with voting rights and the opportunity to participate in conferences and seminars. This program would require that retirees pay IAFF dues, but this is a new program, and the details will be forthcoming. If you are interested in this program, please give me a shout via email or text so that we can get an idea if this program even interests our retiree members. This would be strictly a volunteer program.

President's Report; By Kerry Horton - The annual picnic date has been set for August 22 so mark your calendars. The picnic opens at 10 am, our festivities start at 11 with opening remarks and food serving starts around 11:30. We will have door prizes and a silent auction supporting our Retiree Assistance Program, and the IAFF New Mexico Motorcycle Group will have a raffle to support this year's ride to the IAFF Motorcycle Rally in Pennsylvania. The location is Rotary Park in Bernalillo. Our May 28th Kitchen Table meeting will take place at AFR Station 19. This is the first time we are holding our meeting at a firehouse, and we hope to have one of the stations with a conference room host a Kitchen Table meeting once a month. We hope to see you there. If you are interested in a new retiree ID card, please text me a shoulder up selfie at 505-934-2969. I'm trusting that you all will behave.

Vice President's Report; By Donny Sanchez - VP Donny Sanchez has a friend that is a Denver FD retiree that has the IAFF Retiree program and will reach out to him to see how their program works.

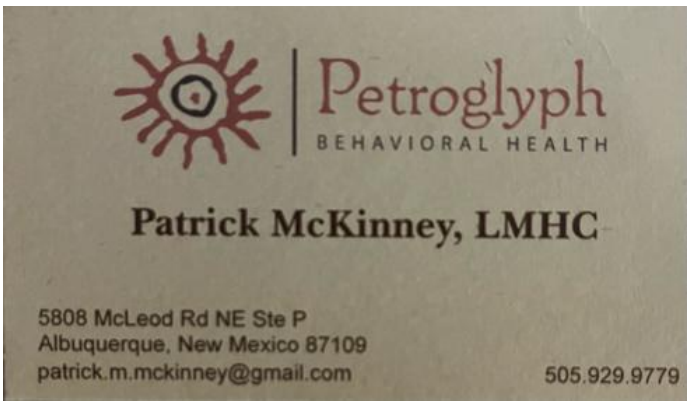
Secretary's Report; By Eddie Abeita - Eddie gave an entertaining and accurate reading of the April meeting minutes. A motion was made and passed to accept the minutes as read.

Treasurer's Report; By Mike Fox - Mike read the April financial report along with the 2025 annual treasurer's report that is required every May. According to the report, AFDRA finances are healthy and stable, and you can request a copy of the report through our treasurer Mike Fox. A motion was made and passed to accept the April financial report. As always, the financial books are open for everybody to review.

Historian's Report; - Herman gave a brief history of how he became our historian and Greg Aragon shared a PowerPoint presentation of the earliest days of firefighting, and fist fighting, in Albuquerque, brought on by the expansion of the city when the Railroad came to town.

Committee Reports; Funeral Committee, Sam and Eddie reminded everyone of the importance of preplanning your funeral, letting your family know what type of services you want and whether you want a Firefighter service. These things do not happen without planning, and we have provided all the information you need to do the planning with your family on our website-afdretirees.com under Fire Box in the menu.
Picnic Committee, as stated, the date of the picnic is set for August 22nd, so make your plans to attend. The location is at Rotary Park in Bernalillo.
Election Committee, Louis Trujillo reported that this year's nominations for the positions of President and Secretary are closed, and that with no additional nominations for each office, by acclamation, Louis made a motion that Kerry Horton and Eddie Abeita be sworn in to their elected office. The motion was passed and we will be sworn in in July as per our by-laws.
Matters Good for the Association. With the help of an organization called the New Mexico COLA Coalition, I have met with the Deb Haaland and Sam Bregman election camps to discuss the importance of getting our colas back. After an in-person meeting and a ZOOM meeting with the Haaland camp, we never saw Deb and they so far have been unable to give us their support in this issue. When we met with Sam Bregman, he met us personally and has issued a news release that he will seek to get PERA retirees their colas back and that he will look to eliminate State income tax on PERA pensions. There has been no contact with the Republican candidates as of this writing and this should in no way be interpreted as a political endorsement. Kevin and Tim O'Brien's father, who was a volunteer FF for BCFD for years, has passed away and his services will be May 15th, at the Lutheran Church at 10000 Spain Rd. NE at 10:30. 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 2040.

A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR DONORS!!



President's Message

By Kerry Horton

Hello everybody, as I talked about in the last newsletter, the only PERA COLA legislation that was passed in the 2026 Legislative session was Senate Memorial 31-a-directive to create a work group of retirees to explore ways to fund and improve retiree colas to help us keep up with the rising cost of living, were we have fallen way behind. I have been appointed to the work group, but as of this writing, there has been no meetings, nor have any meetings been planned. My hope is that as summer starts, those assigned to the work group will get a chance to meet, but we will see.

It is also political season, and though we do not endorse any candidates, we encourage you to get out and vote. A new governor and a few new legislators will be elected, and this could have a big influence on our PERA and future colas. The Santa Fe New Mexican article asked all the gubernatorial candidates their opinion on our PERA fund and the hardship retirees are facing with the lack
of colas. All the candidates gave the expected political promises and only time will tell. So, do a little research into the issues that affect retirees and how your favorite candidate measures up to the issues that are important to you, then get out and vote.

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) 400-3644**

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