

Tucson Fire Department

May 1978, The Arizona Professional Fire Fighter



Courtesy Norman A. Wymbs, Bisbee Fire Department Chief

The
Arizona

Fire



Professional

Fighters

Volume 3, Number 1

The only OFFICIAL PUBLICATION of the

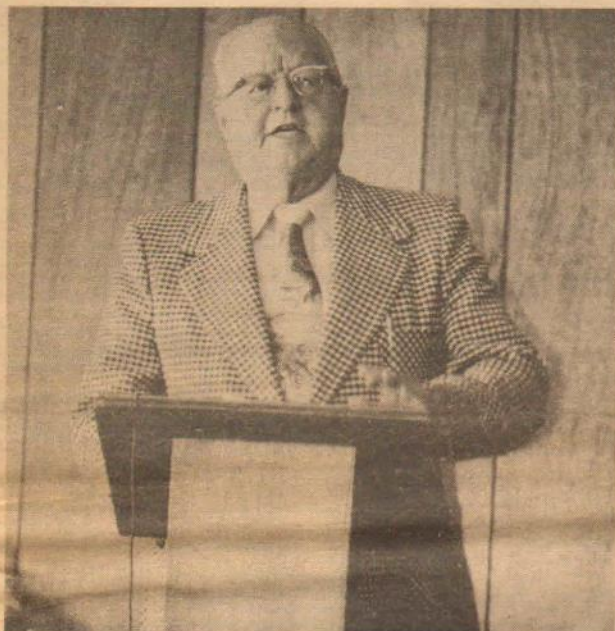
PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS OF ARIZONA

May, 1978

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1978 Convention Huge Success ...

Bisbee Hosts PFFA Delegates



International Association of Fire Fighters President Wm. Howard "Howie" McClennan addressed the Professional Fire Fighters of Arizona during the annual convention. McClennan noted the adversities facing Fire Fighters nationwide and urged the Arizona Fire Fighters to work together throughout the city, state, and national levels or their opponents will take away everything they have ever gained over the past years.

Phoenix Fire Fighters Skillfully Handle Dangerous Seed Silo Fire

by David C. Pearson
Phoenix Fire Fighters skillfully handled a seed silo fire May 1, avoiding the destruction of several million dollars worth of property. Fire officials said outstanding work by several units kept losses to the buildings of the Valley Seed Co. at a minimum.

"It was a big fire that became pretty routine due to a lot of real skillful fire fighting," said Fire Protection Engineer Gordon Routley.

He was at the fire three or four minutes after En-

gine 3 Captain Bob Adams called in a second alarm.

"There was no doubt from the way he (Adams) said it, he had a large building and a big fire," Routley said. Eventually four alarms were called. And more than 100 Fire Fighters and 28 pieces of equipment responded to the blaze at 1918 West Van Buren.

The fire was centered in a four-story metal-wood structure containing a grain elevator and 12 huge seed bins. That building was destroyed and a smaller

building was also damaged. All total, the damage estimate reached more than \$700,000.

Routley said that the main building was heavily involved. "And so it was obvious it was going to be a matter of protecting exposures. There was no way we were going to do anything about extinguishing the fire in the building that was going, and save anything of consequence. It was a matter of cutting the fire off and minimizing losses," he said.

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More than 200 delegates, guests, and wives enjoyed a successful, hard-working 3-day convention held April 26th through the 28th in Bisbee, Arizona. Delegates wrestled with several critical issues, sometimes into the early morning hours, before resolving the course of action to be taken. Many who were there felt it was the most productive and meaningful convention held to date by the Professional Fire Fighters of Arizona.

Special guests of the convention included Wm. Howard "Howie" McClennan, president of the International Association of Fire Fighters, Arizona Governor Bruce Babbitt, Dino Deaconini, Richard L. Sparks, director of Field Operations for the Joint

Apprenticeship Program for the IAFF, Vince Riddle, IAFF 10th District Vice President, and Dr. James W. Byrkit, professor at Northern Arizona University.

Some of the issues concerning the delegates of the convention included the establishment of a statewide collective bargaining agreement and a pension escalator clause as its two top priorities.

It was also agreed to establish a standing legislative committee to be available on short notice to work for passage of bills by the Senate or House as needed, to support the Labor Law Reform Bill S2467, and reaffirmed their belief in the right to strike until a reasonable alternative is

provided.

Delegates to the PFFA convention also elected Gary Ellis, Tempe Local 1643, as its secretary and re-elected Bill Lugo, Bisbee Local 2146, as the association's treasurer.

Tucson delegates won out in their bid to host next year's convention.

The wives and Fire Fighters from Bisbee did an outstanding job of arranging for and hosting this year's convention.

The banquets, dinners, and dances were well-planned and provided everyone with some exciting and enjoyable evenings. We salute the Bisbee delegates and challenge the Tucson Local to do as well in the spring of

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McClennan Notes Need For Greater Unity

"There is greater need now than ever before for a strong International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) because of the many problems we face all over the country," declared IAFF President Wm. Howard "Howie" McClennan to Fire Fighter delegates at the Annual Professional Fire Fighters of Arizona Convention April 28th, in Bisbee, Arizona.

For example, noted McClennan, the Hatch Act is an issue that affects every trade Unionist in America. Many firefighters have said that they don't think the Hatch Act (Labor Law Reform) affects them.

"That's just not so," declared McClennan. "It does have an impact on you the firefighter. Labor legislation does affect you, so never feel like you can sit back and act like it doesn't."

McClennan noted that it was unbelievable how much pressure was being put on the U.S. Senators by the "right to work" (for less) lobby. Additional pressures against the

American union worker is being brought to bear by Americans Against Union Control of Government, the League of Cities, the City Managers, and various manufacturers. Our U.S. Senators report, at last count, having received more than 3-million pieces of mail from the opposition against labor reform.

Big Business feels they have labor on the run because of a few victories they managed to win up on the hill. But it's just not the case at all. They haven't got the upper hand, but they are extremely powerful. That is why we must all stick together. Otherwise they will beat us.

The real important issue, according to McClennan, is Social Security.

"At the last session of Congress we were able to defeat an attempt to place all public employees under mandatory Social Security," said McClennan.

"We won it big. We won it something like 320 votes to 33. But that thing came out of a Congressional committee without any public

hearing, without any prior notification, as is generally done when legislation comes into the Congress," noted McClennan. "It came out of the blue and caught us all by surprise. We were totally unprepared for what they were attempting to do. With the help from people back home, however, who wrote to their Congressman and

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THE FIRE BELLES REPORT

By Shannon Zetich
President

Shirley Domzalski Named Fire Belle Of The Year

Mrs. Mike Domzalski (Shirley) has been duely honored by her co-workers and friends. Last year Shirley was our Sergeant at Arms, Parliamentarian and F.I.R.E. Committee chairperson. Not only did Shirley handle the burn-outs, she also did many of them herself and you always saw Shirley's beaming face at Belfry workdays always putting in more than her share of the work at hand.

Shirley Domzalski has always been one to turn to for advice, help, or for any information regarding Fire Belles business or past history. She is full of knowledge, wisdom, kindness, sweetness, and, well, I could go on and on about the fine gracious character of this neat lady. We Fire Belles salute you, Shirley Domzalski, and we thank

you for being the swell person you are!

At our April meeting we honored Shirley with a lovely charm bracelet, a beautiful bouquet and our sincere good wishes.

Tait bag winners this month are: Tad Callin, Jason Smith, Jacquelyn McDonald, James Escalante, and Bradley Bateman. Congratulations kids! Be sure and send in your kids names to: Tait Bag Drawing, c/o Fire Fighter Hall, 1650 Dreamy Draw, Phoenix, Arizona 85020.

Summer prizes will include Big Surf passes, movie passes or other neat summer surprises.

The following contest is for all firefighters' children in the state. — Have your child draw a Fire Prevention poster 11 x 14 or



Shirley Domzalski; Fire Belle of the Year

larger. The poster should display an important message for children about Fire Prevention. Deadline and

super prizes to be announced later.
Have a super summer!

The Arizona Professional Fire Fighter

Official Publication of

Executive Board of Administration
PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTER OF ARIZONA
2222 East Whittier, Phoenix, Arizona 85016
Published Monthly
\$6.00 per year or \$5.50 per copy

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Recipe of the Month

From the files of Dee Smith
STRAWBERRY CAKE

A delicious rich and moist dessert.

1 pkg. white cake mix
1 small pkg. strawberry jello
1/2 cup cooking oil
1/2 cup water
4 eggs
1/2 cup strawberries (fresh or frozen)

In mixing bowl add water, eggs, oil and jello. Mix well. Add cake mix and strawberries. Mix well. Bake in preheated oven at 350° and as directed on the cake mix box.

ICING

1 pound pkg. powdered sugar
1 cup butter or margarine
1/2 cup strawberries (fresh or frozen)

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Representatives of the Tucson Fire Fighters Association, Local 479, Contract Bargaining Committee and officials of the City of Tucson witness signing of a 3-year working agreement. Standing from left to right are: N. Ludwig, Ass't. City Attorney; George Gray, Ass't. City Manager; Jim White, Contract Committee T.F.F.A.; Les Soldani, Vice-Pres., T.F.F.A.; George Stedman, Contract Committee, T.F.F.A.; Larry Burkett, Contract Committee, T.F.F.A.; James Kay, Finance Director; Fred Rhyner, President, T.F.F.A.; Donald DeMent, City Clerk; Seated: Joel Valdez, City Manager; Signing contract: Paul Miner, Personnel Director.

Tucson Local Signs 3-Year Pact With City

On March 13, 1978, following 3-months of negotiations, the Tucson Fire Fighters Association, Local 479, signed their second, three-year contract with the City of Tucson.

The major provisions of this contract include: a minimum manning level for fire fighting and paramedic apparatus, increase in clothing and housekeeping maintenance allowance, grievance procedures, retention of longevity pay, secured parking for fire

fighting personnel, and a clause compensating individuals for acting in a higher capacity.

The manning level agreement provides for a minimum of four men per fire fighting apparatus and two paramedics for each emergency paramedic vehicle. This clause serves to prevent the inherent peril to firefighters trying to operate on a reduced manning basis.

In this agreement a section dealing with the com-

pensation of members who serve in a higher capacity requires the city to pay that individual an additional 5 percent of his hourly rate for each hour served in the higher capacity. This compensation would occur if the individual is required to act for more than one tour of duty (10 working days) or if the member serves in a higher capacity over 50 percent of his work days in a 3-month period.

Negotiations resulted in a 3-year pact that will

improve working conditions not only for firefighters in the City of Tucson, but there are areas in the contract that benefit all city employees. Both sides showed the ability to compromise in certain areas while in other areas they stood firm in their demands. All involved felt the agreement will improve relations and enhance future negotiations.

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Mesa Elementary School Learns Fire Safety

by Doug Ellis

The main responsibilities of the Fire Department of yesterdays were (1) saving lives and (2) putting out fires. Since then, the fire service has rearranged its priorities a little.

Fire prevention is now our main responsibility for the obvious reason; if you don't have a fire, you don't have to put it out and there is no loss of life. This arrangement of priorities has prompted Mesa Fire Department to start a unique fire prevention program geared at the children of its community.

A pilot program at Adams school in Mesa is almost at an end. Hopefully the program is to be expanded to more schools next year with inclusion of all schools within a couple of years.

Mesa Fire Department

feels the information on fire prevention learned by our young people is of the utmost importance. Only basic, usable information is being taught as part of the program with the hopes of saving a life and preventing a large amount of property loss.

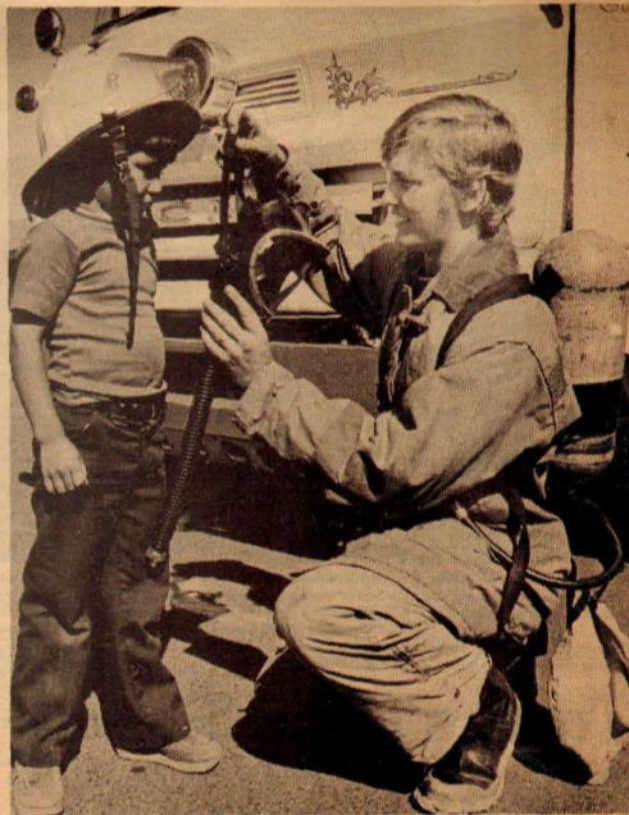
The program covers fire hazards (don't play with matches), fire drills (home and school), stop, drop, and roll (if your clothes catch fire), crawl under smoke (good air), what to do in case of an emergency (medical or fire), fire phone number (833-5233), and a course in mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, taught to the 4th through 6th graders. Games, home safety checklist, activities, coloring books, and stickers are included in the program to help make the teaching and learning easier.

The program consists of three visits to 1st through 3rd grade classes.

As we repeat the program each year, the children will have the opportunity to absorb alot of information — information that will be useful in times of an emergency.

As the children grow older and become more able, the cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) method and more advanced first aid information can be incorporated into the program.

The Fire Fighters enjoy presenting the information to the grade-schoolers, and, hopefully, the children will find the material fun to learn. In the long run, we hope to be able to prevent fires and save the loss of life and property. That's when we will have been successful.



The Fire Fighters of Mesa, Local 2260, have developed an elementary school fire safety program to promote a better understanding of fire hazards and dangers among the city's young people. Here a young Mesa student tries out some of the gear worn by the Mesa Fire Fighters.

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Phoenix Fire Fighter Wins 55 Out Of 68 Matches

David Oropeza is Professional Fire Fighter ... and Boxer

by David C. Pearson
Sunlight stabbed through a doorway, highlighting profiles and flashes of arms and legs.

Nobody ever said why a gym has to be dark. It must be an unwritten rule that boxers are to toil in darkness and only show them-

selves to the world when they climb into a ring.

The sound of jump ropes hitting the cement floor and body bags receiving stinging jabs and punches came from a small unobtrusive, almost hidden Boys Club in South Phoenix. Walking inside the rundown building

it takes a while for your eyes to adjust.

But there are boxers inside alright. You can hear them shuffle and snort as they move about.

Most are youngsters trying to impress trainers who sit on tables watching sporadically. But one fighter is older and more polished than the rest.

David Oropeza jumps rope in one corner. Beads of sweat sparkle on his body when he moves in and out of the sunlight. His body is firm. A large chest and strong shoulders and arms flex as he counts the revolutions.

At 32, Oropeza is not young by fighters standards and he knows that his career as a professional will end soon, maybe two more years are left in his body. He's not worried though, like some fallen champion who can see no further than his dreams of a comeback. Oropeza is also another kind of professional. He is a Fire Fighter.

He's been a Phoenix City Fire Fighter for five years, not nearly as long as he's been a boxer. Oropeza makes good money fighting and has been successful, winning 55 out of 68 bouts. He was ranked number seven in the world in the 147-pound class back in 1972. That's when he decided to become a Fire Fighter.

"All I was doing was fighting," he said. "I figured I wasn't going to be champion of the world. I think to be champion of the world you have to have the right breaks, have the right timing and have the right people backing you up."

Fire fighting has been good to him. Twenty-four hours on and 48 hours off gives him the time he needs to train and set up fights. "If I have a fight coming up then at least I'll be over halfway ready," he said.

Oropeza hits the punching bag ferociously. "I like to fight," he said. "I'm not saying I like to get hit. But that's the way the sport is. You know, I do get paid for it. So it comes out alright."

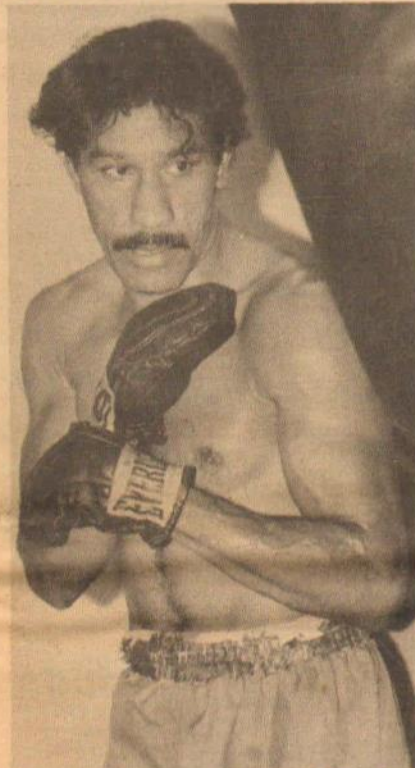
Just the same he knows that he'll have to hang it up soon. He wants to fight another two years. He laughs, "but I don't want to hang around too long 'cause I don't want to be a punching bag for somebody else."

Oropeza's seen plenty of fighters who've overstayed their welcome and got hurt. "All the young fighters that are coming up are stronger and quicker. They just punch them around."

He was a youngster out of Phoenix Union High School. Running had been his avocation. But, in the ranks of the professional, running is a dead end sport.

"I thought, even if I become the best runner in the world, all I can get is publicity or trophies and medals. So I started reading magazines about boxers like Elmo Griffith and Luis

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
David Oropeza has two professions. He's a Phoenix Fire Fighter, and is a professional boxer. At one time ranked seventh in the world, Oropeza plans on boxing two more years. Then, he says, he'll settle down and be content to have one profession ... fighting fires.

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McClennan Calls For Greater Unity

Continued from Page 1

gave us the support we needed, we were able to turn it around." "It is not over yet," added McClennan. "We've still got our work cut out for us on this Social Security business. The public employee issue as regards Social Security is still to be determined. All the Fisher bill did was postpone the decision date a few years. The committee on the hill is working on it right now." In the last 30 days (March) we have had 16 Fire Fighters killed in the line of duty, declared McClennan. It's unbelievable. We need to let the Senators and your representatives know that the nature of our job is very different than other public service employees. Our retirement system must take those differences into

account.

"Public employees are being made the scapegoat for everything that's going on," said McClennan. "They seem to think that because public employees and the cities are having problems, we're the ones who are causing the financial problems that cities face. The problems are much deeper than that. We're not the over-riding cause of city fiscal problems. We represent a very small part of the financial responsibilities of a city, and we haven't caused them to be in the tight squeeze they now find themselves in. Not by a long shot."

McClennan said he has found a great deal of dissatisfaction with President Carter and his administration among people in the labor movement across the country.

"So far its been promises, promises," said McClennan. "But we have nothing to show for it. And it's not just the Fire Fighters. It's labor people from every trade and sector."

"I've seen some tough things while I've been working with Fire Fighter problems around this country," said McClennan. "But, when a city can jail 24 young Fire Fighters for 42 days because three Captains want to be a part of the Fire Fighter bargaining unit in their city negotiations, I believe I've finally seen it all. That's what the whole issue is all about in Normal, Illinois where these guys are in jail. That's why the judge sen-

tenced them to prison. Can you believe it? It's unheard of. This is supposed to be 20th Century America. But it's happening right now in Normal, Illinois."

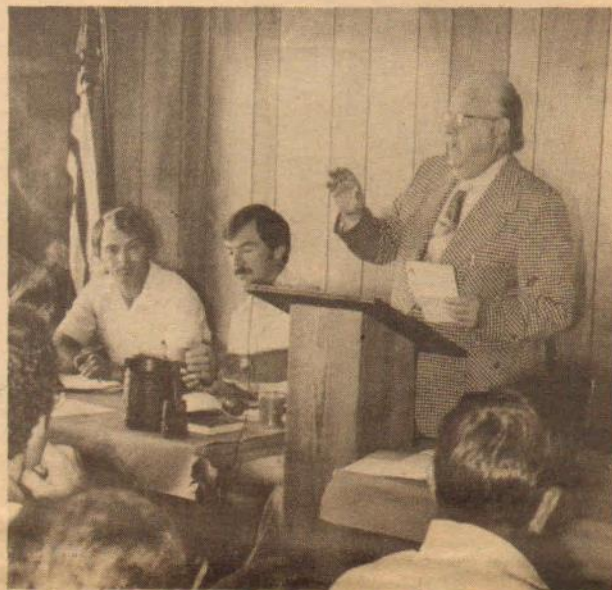
According to McClennan, who stopped in Normal, Illinois to see those Fire Fighters on his way to Arizona, the police escort 12 Fire Fighters at a time in a paddy wagon to the Fire Station from the jail house to work their 24-hour shift. The police then escort that

12-man unit back and bring the next 12-man shift. "When they've served their time, they will probably fire them," said McClennan. That's when things will really start getting tough."

"It's just an indication of the kinds of problems we face," said McClennan. "If we don't stick together we'll find ourselves facing similar problems in other parts of the country."

"We've got to work hard

to get a collective bargaining agreement on a national level, work on the state level for a similar agreement, support appropriate candidates, and communicate our needs, and why they are needed, to our various communities. It'll take all of that and more to establish the laws and protection we need to resolve our problems as they arise," added McClennan.



IAFF President Wm. Howard McClennan, addressing Arizona convention delegates, noted that Fire Fighters in Normal, Illinois are in jail today because they disagreed with the city council on the make-up of a bargaining unit. McClennan urged strong support for a national collective bargaining law.

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Who Was That Lady I Saw You With Last Night

... That Was No Lady, That Was My Tillerman

ERA is getting pushed by some people while others are taking a cynical view of the whole matter. Only a fool would argue against equal opportunity for everyone, however:

At the 1976 IAFF convention in Denver, Colorado everytime a speaker, addressing the convention, stated "brothers and sister," it made my blood boil! I'm really not against the few women attending the convention getting attention, they just over did it a little.

Most writers who address the issue of women in the fire service barely scratch the surface in their articles, allow me the same courtesy. The emotional issue facing our wives concerns their fears about their husbands spending nights with other women. The simple fact of women breaking into the macho man's world will be ignored here.

Several questions need to be answered: (1) What is a firefighter? (2) What are a firefighters duties? (3) Can a woman perform those

duties? (4) Who determines all of the above? Let's start with number four.

The female gender is sometimes considered a minority. They make requests or demands that are sometimes refused or ignored. Obviously women must become part of any process to determine whether or not they can handle the job of firefighting. Fire departments by their very nature determine specifications, qualifications and duties of their respective employees. Are they "writing" women out in the process or is it the physical makeup of a woman that does her in when she becomes involved in competitive tests for the position of firefighter? Let's stick to the physical condition and ignore for now mental ability, veterans preference, etc. Many of us non-veterans overcame the points given to veterans and as the saying goes; with certain changes of events, my Aunt could have been my Uncle.

All fire departments do not require the same quali-

fications to become a firefighter. Can we attack that fact legally? Should local fire departments have the right to establish criteria that few, if any, women can meet? Should national standards be set and adhered to? I find that we cannot separate the first four questions and that is what makes this such a sticky subject.

What would happen if the federal government or the courts stepped in and set firefighters standards? If the standards were not flexible they wouldn't work. If they were flexible there would be no need for federal intervention. What then would we need? Cer-

tainly more than the ability to handle a brush or car fire. Should we shoot for the maximum? Is it fair for a pumper to perform an annual "spurt test" and not the human? So assume the federal criteria would be set to cover rowhouses in Eastern ghettos — dragging 2½" hose up two or three floors! What would that do to the women's cause?

O.K., let's stick to local autonomy! Fire departments should continue to write their own specs with some sort of outside scrutiny to prevent discrimination. We can't allow standards to be lowered for the benefit of women or other minorities, but it's our concerted duty to make certain that realistic standards are set.

Firefighting is a young man's job! (Or young person) Why do you think we have a 20-year retirement? Now, these same standards that we expect women and minorities to meet! should you and I also be expected

to meet them? If we expect a woman candidate to be able to come to our aid under any circumstance, is it fair to also expect the same of 18 and 20 year veterans? Let's look at what we are now, not what we were when we first came on. I know, experience allows us to use our brain in place of muscle, but not always!

Women who can qualify should be welcomed into the fire service. In Tucson it would create a considerable change in lifestyle at the firehouse, but we could handle it. However, if "she" is assigned to Station #7-C platoon I will be calling on all of you healthy, able-bodied men to protect me from my little German Frau!!

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Allen Points to PFFA Progress During Annual Convention

PFFA President Jack Allen reported to the 1978 Annual Convention delegates that the International Association of Fire Fighters had made immense progress since 1968 when Wm. Howard McClennan took over as president of the Association. The progress made by locals throughout the country has been almost spectacular and the standing of the IAFF in the labor community has grown in stature to one of the most respected unions in the labor movement.

Our international President currently sits on the executive council of the national AFL-CIO, an extremely important position, especially in getting the labor movement to move in areas that are of vital importance to the Fire

Fighters.

"Our IAFF president, Wm. Howard McClennan, also President of the approximately 2 million member Public Employee Department, of the AFL-CIO," noted Allen. "As such he is able to provide the much needed critical leadership that affects all public employees."

"We're very proud of McClennan," continued Allen, "and we're delighted he could find the time to attend our state convention and speak to us."

On the state level the PFFA has continued to progress and we are pleased with the increasing leadership provided by the young Fire Fighters in the various locals throughout the state. This has been

especially obvious during this 1978 convention when many of the committees with the heaviest work loads were headed by these up and coming young Fire Fighters, declared Allen.

The State Association of Fire Fighters (PFFA) represents 93 percent of all the Fire Fighters in Arizona and each local is growing either in numbers, leadership capabilities or both.

"We must continue to work together; not only as Fire Fighters, but as trade union members with all unions. Isolationism does not work. It does not work as a nation and it does not work as union members. We must all work together so the progress we've enjoyed so far can be maintained for years to come," stated Allen.



President Jack Allen and Governor Babbitt discuss the needs of Arizona Fire Fighters during convention session. The Governor flew to Bisbee from Phoenix to meet with the Fire Fighters.

Duane Pell, left, president Phoenix Local 493, and Ed Matteson, president Mesa Local 2260 concentrate on the problems at hand during convention session.



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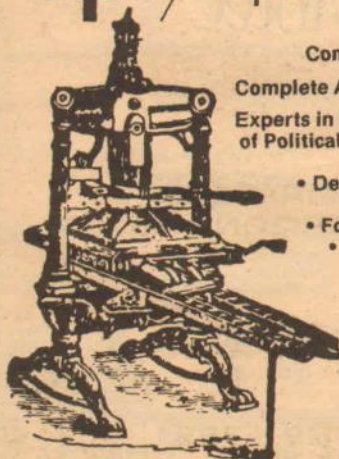


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Bisbee Fire Fighters and wives line up around an antique Fire Engine to welcome convention delegates to Bisbee. The Bisbee local did an outstanding job of hosting the 1978 convention, and the Fire Fighters of Arizona extend to them a hearty thank you.



Orson Phelps, Mesa Local 2260, is awarded trophy for winning golf tournament held prior to the convention in Bisbee.

Bisbee Hosts Delegates

Continued from Page 1
next year.

Delegates of the convention included a good mixture of experienced representatives as well as a number of delegates who were there for the first time.

Those who were attending their first convention expressed their appreciation for the opportunity of being present at the convention and most were

amazed at the amount of work involved in being a PFFA delegate.

President Jack Allen told the convention delegates he was extremely pleased by their efforts and promised that the PFFA would continue to press forward in its effort to achieve the goals established by the convention.

"We are growing stronger every year," said Allen. "As we keep working and pushing ahead we will continue to win our share of the battles."

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Ells New PFFA Secretary; Lugo Re-Elected as Treasurer



The Professional Fire Fighters of Arizona elected Gary Ells, left, as their new secretary, retained Jack Allen as their president, center, and Bill Lugo, right, was re-elected as treasurer.



The 1978-79 PFFA Executive Board, kneeling from left, Art Apodaca, Norm Wymbs, Cameron Moore, Charles Zalda, Jr., and Rick Bryan. Standing from left, Doug DeSanti, Orson Phelps, Gary Ells, Jack Allen, Mark Sullivan, Harley Williams, and Bill Lugo.

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Arm in Arm convention delegates, guests, and wives enjoy the music and the company during the evening dance held at the Naco Country Club.



Bisbee delegate, Ramon Zepeda, Local 2146, listens as Governor Babbitt explains his position on several key issues concerning Fire Fighters.



Stephen Verbill, Tempe Local 1643, addresses the convention floor to report on the recommendation of the standing committee concerned with problems dealing with Rural Metro.



Harley Williams, president of Yuma Local 1234, speaks from the floor to address an issue before the convention.



Phoenix delegates visit with Dino DeConcini, candidate for Attorney General, and PFFA President Jack Allen following an evening banquet.



Dave Villalobos, Glendale Local 1674, and Paul Tinnal, president of 1674, and their wives.



IAFF President, Wm. Howard McClennan greets Charles Zaida, Jr., PFFA Vice President from the Yuma Proving Grounds.



Glendale delegates and their wives relax together at banquet.

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Fire Fighter Newspaper Boon To PFFA Says Committee



Gary Ells, newly elected secretary of the PFFA, reports to the convention delegates the annual progress of the Fire Fighter newspaper. "The newspaper has been a boon to the Fire Fighters of Arizona," said Ells. "It is important that each local do whatever possible to support and assist those involved in its production."

The Professional Fire Fighters of Arizona (PFFA) Newspaper Committee reported during the Annual PFFA Convention held this year in Bisbee that the Fire Fighter Newspaper has been a significant boon to the PFFA bank account.

Gary Ells, committee chairman, local 1643 in Tempe, noted that an increase in per capita dues would not be necessary this year due to the success of the newspaper and urged all PFFA members to support the paper in the community and encourage local businesses to advertise their services in the publication.

In addition to providing a source of income for the PFFA, the newspaper has been a tremendous service to the Fire Fighters in areas of public communication and education. It has also served very well in keeping the Fire Fighters around the state informed on developments politically and professionally that are im-

portant to them.

The newspaper is published, under contract with the PFFA, by JUST Advertising and Apex Printing in Phoenix.

During the Committee Report, Gary Ells urged all Fire Fighters to be on the alert for stories of interest to other Fire Fighters as well as the general public that could be submitted to and used by The Arizona Professional Fire Fighter.

"We are constantly in need of good stories," noted Ells, "and we encourage all Fire Fighters and friends of Fire Fighters to submit their stories to: Jack Allen, President PFFA, 2219 North 24th Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85008.



Keith Schroeder, Phoenix Local 493, Named PFFA Fire Fighter of the Year

Keith Schroeder, a Phoenix Fire Fighter currently working as a mechanic outside of the Fire Department, was named by delegates of the 1978 Convention as the PFFA Fire Fighter of the Year.

Schroeder, whose fingers on one hand were cut off in an off-duty accident, then summarily dismissed from the department by the city management (despite his proving in a gruelling physical capability test that he could meet and exceed all Fire Fighting performance standards) was both excited and surprised to have been awarded the honor.

During the Easter week-end, Schroeder was able to save the lives of three fellow Fire Fighters who were involved in a car accident just 15 miles south of the Mexican border. (Read the complete story in the April issue of The Arizona Professional Fire Fighter.)

"I just hope someday I can break back into the Fire Department," said Schroeder. "Fire Fighting is my life. Until I do get back on I'll maintain a hope that I can."

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Convention Delegates Work ... And Relax



Glendale, Mesa, and Phoenix delegates review resolutions before the convention before casting their votes.



Art Apodaca, Tucson Local 479, reports committee recommendations to the floor of the convention.



Doug DeSanti, Glendale Local 1674, reports to the convention delegates the progress and recommendations of his committee.



Cameron Moore, president Douglas Local 2128, listens to Governor Babbitt during question and answer session.

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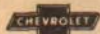
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Yuma and Tucson delegates and wives discuss the political concerns of Fire Fighters with Attorney General candidate Dino DeConcini. DeConcini came to Bisbee to meet with the convention delegates during an evening banquet.



Rick Bryan, president of Sierra Vista Local 2272.



IAFF 10th District Vice President Vince Riddle, right, and PFFA President Jack Allen, left, during convention session. Riddle announced to the delegates that he would be a candidate for IAFF Secretary during this year's international convention to be held in Las Vegas in August.

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Frank Tamayo, Tucson Local 479, during question and answer period with IAFF President McClenahan.



Mesa Fire Fighters, Local 2260, ham it up for a group photo during break in convention sessions.

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Mesa Fire Fighters work to contain a residential fire following the crash of small airplane. The pilot and one resident were killed. Damage to both houses was extensive, but the quick and skillful reaction of the Mesa Fire Fighters kept the flames from spreading to the other nearby homes. (Photo compliments of the Mesa Tribune.)

Plane Crashes Into Mesa Home; Kills Two

by David C. Pearson
Jerry Todd was driving down Baseline Road. A day off as battalion chief at the Tempe Fire Department. He and his son were near Baseline and Mesa Drive in Mesa.

Mesa Fire Inspector Mell Epps was inspecting some property. Nothing unusual.

Both men were busy. They couldn't have seen an airplane searching for a landing spot. The pilot was in trouble.

James Arthur Harrison, 48, of Nogales had radioed Sky Harbor International Airport that his Piper Aztec twin-engine plane was having difficulties in its electric trim control.

Residents later said they heard the engine sputter. Its wings were tipped as it tried to reach a nearby

field. The pilot didn't make it. The aircraft slammed into the narrow space between a house at 927 South Lesueur, occupied by two men, and 933 South Lesueur, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Howard Goodman.

Harrison died immediately when his plane exploded between the houses, setting both aflame.

Todd saw a dark black column of smoke and followed it to the site of the crash. He thought that it might be a natural gas explosion. Once there he saw two homes on fire. He didn't know that an airplane had crashed. "I was just concerned with the fire in the house," said Todd.

Besides, "there wasn't enough of the plane to tell it was a plane," he added.

Epps arrived at the fire scene about the same time Todd did. He was only four blocks away at the time of the crash, inspecting some property in an industrial park.

"I called the fire in. I saw a big column of black smoke and I grabbed my radio and called in. They said they had just received a report that a plane had come down," said Epps.

"I went straight there just as fast as I could. I wanted to get some idea of what we had. The column of smoke I saw wasn't very high, it was less than 100 feet in the air. So I think I was pretty much on top of it."

"I rolled up and came in on the back side of the fire," he said. Epps stopped his truck to get a

visual aid. "I ran through the houses there and looked over a fence and when I looked in all I could see was the two houses fully involved on the north end of one and the south end of the other."

Like Todd, Epps couldn't tell that a plane had crashed. "I wasn't really looking for an aircraft. I was looking at the whole scene to give it some kind of size-up. We had a lot of flames, a lot of black smoke, heavy black smoke. The fire was rapidly extending itself, which right away gives you some kind of impression that there is some kind of accelerant." That, of course, was the airplane fuel.

The plane was coming to Phoenix from Nogales where Harrison was a pilot for Franks Distributing Company, a produce firm. He was involved in the operation of the Mariposa Ranch there.

He died leaving a wife, Wanda, a daughter, Patricia, and a step son, William Mossburg.

They said tail controls on the plane weren't working right and Harrison was flying it to Phoenix for repairs. His wife was to meet him in Phoenix and return with him to Nogales.

The plane hit behind a carport and the flames quickly spread. Ken Turrentine, 27, was watching television when the plane exploded. He helped his roommate, Jack Thomas, 35, out of the home and then went next door to the Goodman's home and aided Mrs. Goodman, 74, to safety and pulled and carried Goodman, 79, outside of the burning house.

Todd said he saw Turrentine helping the elderly Goodman out. "It looked like he had second degree burns over 100 percent of

his body."

Mrs. Goodman said she was in the dining area and her husband was standing in the kitchen. The explosion blew him over toward her.

Todd and Epps said that shortly after they arrived, Mesa Fire Fighters sped up to the scene.

"When I got around front there was a gentleman on the front lawn (Goodman) and he was burned pretty bad and they (paramedics) went to giving him aid," said Epps.

"The first thing we did was hit both houses to search them to make sure there were no other people inside," he added. "I took the house on the north and the people on the rescue truck took the house on the south."

After a quick search, it was determined the houses were clear. "And when we came back out, the engine company was on the scene and they had their lines laid and they were putting water on the blaze," Epps said.

Three engine companies, a battalion chief and a lot of off-duty Fire Fighters helped get the fire under control in about 10 minutes.

Mesa Fire Fighters had Light water on the scene in case the petroleum fire got out of hand. "We knew it was a plane because it came in from the dispatcher as a plane crash," said Epps. "So we were ready to put Light water into effect if we needed."

The dispatcher told Epps she started getting calls at the time of the crash and that they continued for 30 minutes. After the first 10 minutes people stopped reporting the crash and instead wanted to know what was happening.

Although the fire was under control quickly, the

Mesa Fire Fighters were at the scene all day long. And so were onlookers.

Epps said "We had a big problem with traffic congestion. We had more people there than you could shake a stick at. They hampered our efforts of course. They were just smoke chasers. People are bad at that," he said.

Upon impact the aircraft fuel spilled into the houses. The fire spread quickly. It burned a section of the roof off one house and extended into the attic.

"It was the type of thing that happened so fast that there was very little that you could do to control it," said Epps. "It was fully involved, both houses, before our engine companies were able to arrive at the scene."

He said that initial response was through congested streets. However, no one drove over any lines. And Epps credits Mesa police with preventing that. "They took charge right quick and they did a real good job. They came in and did everything they could to make it as easy for everybody as they could."

Paramedics treated the injured, using a nearby house as a base of operations. Goodman suffered second and third-degree burns over 85 to 100 percent of his body. He died the next day in the burn unit at Maricopa County Hospital.

His wife fared better. She suffered first and second-degree burns over 25 percent of her body. Turrentine suffered minor burns during the rescues.

Meanwhile, authorities from the Federal Aeronautics Administration and the National Transportation Safety Board searched through what was left of the plane wreckage to determine the cause of the crash.

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Fire Fighters Retire At 20 Years ... Or Was It Terminate?

by Fritz Rhyner

Firefighters retire at 20 years, or so we're led to believe (I'm talking to you - John Q.). Presently Fire Fighters are under a pension bill that allows termination with a payment of one-half the average monthly salary of the past five years. Sounds good, doesn't it? But notice, I didn't call it a retirement bill.

Should age become a factor in retirement? Certainly, if someone is proven too old to perform the job it should. But, what about the inbetweeners? What if a man has his required time in at age 50 and he chooses to leave? Should he get the same consideration as the man who retires at age 60? Most certainly, if they both served the same amount of time.

Let's dissect the 20 years that are the minimum requirement under Public Safety pension laws. Most Fire Fighters in Arizona work at least 56 hours a week. That amounts to 25 percent more than the "normal" worker who has a 40-hour work week. With your permission, that would allow me to change the 20 years to an actual 25 years when comparing it with private sector employees. A Fire Fighter employed at age 30 and retiring at age 50 would compare equally



Fritz Rhyner, president Tucson Local 479

with other employees who were hired at age 37 and retiring at age 62. Nobody would complain about that, would they? In this article I'm going to leave out the death and injury rates of Fire Fighters and stick strictly to numbers!

Civilians could wait until they are 52 years old, work 40 quarters (10 years) and collect the same benefits as the man who worked 40 years and retires at age 62. Ten years fulltime employment under Social Security and you are considered fully and totally covered. Not so on the Fire Department! That same civilian can expect the U.S. Congress to periodically raise their Social Security payments to help offset the erosion that inflation

causes. Not so for the Fire Fighter or any other Public Safety Employee. The Arizona Legislature is moving to help our retirees ... but verrrry sloooooowly!

The City is paying more each year for their share of Social Security premiums. Their payments for Fire Fighters have been reduced each year for the past several years. In terms of total dollars spent on pension plans, this means that it is now costing the City less to retire Fire Fighters and police officers than other employees. What happens to a Fire Fighter after he "retires"? That is a story all in itself.

Joe Blow (Not the same Joe made famous in the story "Where the hell is Joe?") retired in the early 70's. His pay for the previous 60 months averaged out to \$720 a month. That means his "retirement" benefit would be half or \$360 a month. Not bad at that time if his family was grown up, his house paid for, etc.

How is he doing today? Collecting the same \$360 each month and wishing he hadn't retired. It's too late now to return to work and besides, who wants to pull hose and eat smoke when they're 55? The cost of living has gone sky high. Take hospitalization in-

surance, would you believe our City insurance premium is around \$120 a month for a family? We pay one-fourth the City pays three-fourths which is a tremendous help while you are employed. But, what happens when you retire? When was the last time you heard anything from the Insurance Steering Committee? Those premium payments are part of your salary and also part of your taxes. Do you see what I mean about poor Joe? Take \$100 a month for hospital insurance premiums each month and that only leaves him \$260 to live on.

What about this year's

retiree? Suppose today a Fire Fighter went out with \$500 a month, add inflation at a minimum of 6% per year which would mean that in 5 years from now it would be like trying to live on \$350 a month in today's economy.

Back to the point; if we can't get some sort of escalator clause attached to our pension bill let's stop referring to leaving as retirement. You can't call it retiring when you have to sweep out Circle-K stores to be able to buy pinto beans because nothing's left after you pay for taxes, medical insurance, gas and electricity, water and

sewer, etc.

Some of us are trying to make it happen; no frills, but real retirement. We can remember the Sunday morning drives to "Wimpy's" office for board meetings. We can remember having to stop for Fire Fighters who were backing their boats out of the driveway in preparation of taking their family to the lake. What we would like to remember a few years from now is that you got off your caudal and helped make it happen!

I'm talking to you ... John Q.



Captain Tait, Phoenix Fire Fighter's Local 493, prepares Gerald for a creamy pie in the face during a recent Wallace and Ladmo show on KPHO-TV. (Yes, those little girls would do it...and they did. Plop!) Wallace and Ladmo were obviously enjoying the whole affair; and they didn't even get the pie. Lucky Gerald. (Photo compliments of KPHO-TV.)



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COMMENTS

by: Jack Allen
President
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Fire Fighter's Pension

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

The Arizona Public Safety Personnel Retirement System, Article 4, Chapter 5, Title 38-841 B of the Arizona Revised Statutes describes the purpose "...to provide a uniform, consistent and equitable statewide program for public safety personnel who are regularly assigned hazardous duty (emphasis added) in the employ of the state of Arizona or a political subdivision thereof, ..." According to the June 30, 1977 Ninth Annual Report, 6,407 active Fire Fighters and police officers are covered by the system.

What are the benefits?

Fire Fighters and police officers are eligible for 50% of the average of their last five years salary upon completion of 20 years of service. If a member is disabled due to a job connected injury the same benefit applies.

In the event of the member's death, the surviving spouse or the guardian of the member's children is eligible for 33 1/3% of the average of the members last five years salary. An additional 1/9 of this amount is payable to a maximum of three surviving children until they finish school.

Example: a Fire Fighter with a five year average monthly salary of \$900 per month would be eligible for a \$450 per month (50% of

\$900) pension upon completion of 20 years of service or in the event of a job caused disability. If this same Fire Fighter dies, the surviving spouse would receive \$300 per month (33 1/3% of \$900). Up to three surviving children would receive \$50 per month (1/9 of \$450), until completion of their education or 18 years of age.

A Fire Fighter who stays on the job after 20 years of service will receive an additional one percent for each extra year of service to a maximum pension after 30 years of 60% of the average of his last five years salary.

Why should Fire Fighters be able to retire after 20 years when most workers must work until they are 62 or 65 years of age?

Firefighting is a young man's job and few people over 45 or 50 are able to meet the demands of firefighting duty. Firefighting requires athletic people with strength, stamina and agility. More importantly, however, firefighting requires teamwork, and the very survival of Fire Fighters and citizens alike often depend upon each member of the fire crew being able to accomplish assigned tasks.

At a working fire the Fire Fighter dons 90 pounds of protective equipment; his boots, helmet, coat, gloves and self contained breath-

ing apparatus before picking his tools.

The fire service generally has a very small bureaucracy, nearly all fire department employees are line personnel who actually fight fire on a regular basis. The result is that there are few "desk jobs" for members unfit for active duty.

Firefighting has been America's most hazardous job in eight of the last ten years according to figures from the U.S. Department of Labor and the National Safety Council. In 1975 American Fire Fighters suffered 90 "line of duty" deaths per 100,000 workers. In that same year 43% of all Fire Fighters were injured. Fire Fighters also experience a disproportionately high rate of heart and lung ailments probably due to frequent exposure to toxic atmosphere and heavy exertion under extreme conditions of heat, heights, tension and other unfavorable working conditions.

Fire Fighters pay a high

price in terms of damaged health and are subject to great personal risk. The older the Fire Fighter, the less the chance of recovery and survival.

Arizona cities particularly, demand more from fewer personnel. Phoenix, for example, is the 14th largest city in the nation. The Phoenix Fire Department however, is only the 25th largest (less than one Fire Fighter per 1,000 population). Sierra Vista employs approximately one Fire Fighter per 2,000 population, while most communities, according to the 1978 *Municipal Year Book*, employ 1 1/2 - 2 Fire Fighters per 1,000 population.

In other high hazard occupations such as mining, construction and longshoring, age and experience may possibly act to decrease the hazards of the job. Certainly youth and the accompanying physical superiority doesn't play as crucial a part in reducing the hazard as it does in firefighting.

The cities have an obligation to maintain a physically capable fire service. That means providing early retirement.

Couldn't someone begin a career in public safety at 21 and retire at 41?

Yes, however, according to actuarial figures from Martin E. Segal Company, the average age at entry into the public safety service is 26 1/2. Average length of service is 23 1/2 years. Thus the average age at retirement is 50, certainly the maximum age

Continued on Page 18

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Pension

Continued from Page 17
for most individuals to be able to perform the necessary tasks.

Isn't the cost to the employer burdensome?

The current, statewide employer cost for the present level of benefits is 11.24% of payroll. This means that the cost of providing retirement benefits for Fire Fighters hired since 1971 is 11.24% of payroll. This compares favorably with the employer contribution for all other

public employees. Retirement benefits for public employees other than safety personnel cost the employer 6.05% for Social Security (Fire Fighters under the "system" are not covered by Social Security) and an additional 7.8% for the supplementary pension, for a total employer contribution of 13.05 - 14.05% of payroll.

A few of the employers of safety personnel have substantial unfunded liability which adds to their contribution. The cities of Phoenix, Tucson and Douglas are the most notable in this respect. The two primary causes of the unfunded liability are:

(1) Prior to the 1971 amendment to the public

safety system benefits were substantially lower for certain groups of safety employees than others. Thus the improvements which covered existing workers created an unfunded liability for the employer.

(2) When in 1968 the initial uniform, statewide system was created, certain employers had not honestly contributed the funds they were obligated to. The state fund therefore was unable to collect all the monies that should have been forwarded to the Fund Managers.

How sound is the Arizona Public Safety Personnel Retirement System? Is it headed for bankruptcy like other pension systems which have been getting so much media attention lately?

Larry Woodall, the Fund Manager Chairman, states, "this system is one of the soundest major pension systems in the United

States." There are over \$200 million dollars in reserves making the "system" approximately 85% funded. The first regular session of the 33rd Arizona Legislature passed a bill which mandates the employers to amortize (pay the principal) the unfunded liability over a 40 year period. This means that eventually the "system" will be 100% funded.

The major difference between the Arizona public safety system and other funds, making headlines for their high costs, is where the money comes from for the pension checks. All too often the benefits received by retirees today are paid from contributions made by the current work force. The benefits paid to retired Fire Fighters comes from the fund built during his working career by contributions made by himself, his employer and the earned inter-

est. In other words, each Fire Fighter builds his own pension fund and is not a burden to anyone else.

It sounds like Fire Fighters have it made.

You'll have to be the judge. Consider the following from the June 30, 1977, Ninth Annual Report on the Arizona Public Safety Personnel Retirement System and other facts.

The average normal pension being paid is \$493 per month, the average disability pension is \$410 per month and the average survivors pension is \$233 per month.

The 73 year old widow of a retired Fire Captain, who served his city for 42 years, now receives \$451.14 per month.

The widow and two children of a young Fire Fighter killed by a falling wall while fighting a fire, currently receives \$343.91 surviving spouse pension.

A police officer's widow is now receiving \$327.84 per month. The officer was killed in 1975 attempting to

apprehend a burglar.

The widow of a Glendale Fire Fighter killed while responding to a fire in 1974 now has a pension in the amount of \$339.56.

What more do Fire Fighters need?

The prime concern of most Fire Fighters today, is the effect of inflation on their pensions. Because the pension amount is based on the five year average, the true pension amount is closer to 40% than 50%. Obviously it takes careful retirement planning to live on 40% of salary.

The real problem comes as inflation at the rate of 6% per year and up erodes the buying power of the pension check.

Fire Fighters make a substantial contribution to the communities in which they live. They make sacrifices which substantially shorten their lives and indeed sometimes end them abruptly.

Fire Fighters deserve a dignified and secure retirement.

Arizona Senate Votes On Pension Bill

The Arizona State Senate voted 29 to 0 with Senator Runyan abstaining on SB 1073. Passage by the State House of Representatives

and the Governor's signature will mean a minimum \$400 per month pension for all retired Fire Fighters and a \$266 minimum pension for widows.

SB1073 has been assigned to the House Commerce Committee, Jim Skelly, chairman and the House Banking and Insurance Committee, Tony West, chairman.

Now is the time to contact Representatives Skelly and West, and your own Representatives urging their support. Toll-free capitol telephone number is 1-800-352-8404.

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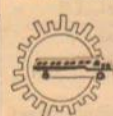


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from Page 1

Fire Fighters moved in close to battle the blaze despite concern that grain dust might explode and that one wall of the larger building might collapse in their direction.

There were eight storage silos, one of which was full, one a quarter full and the other six were empty.

The structures were wood with a covering of tin "and you can imagine how well they burned," said Routley.

"Of course one of the primary things in a deal like that is to do it safely and not expose personnel to unnecessary injury," he said.

The company is owned by Bill Corpstein Jr. and his brother, state Rep. Pete Corpstein from Paradise Valley.

Welders had been working that morning to repair a support for a spout, leading from the top of the building's grain elevator. The movable spouts are used to load seed or grain into trucks for shipment or into

bins.

Routley said, "As far as we're able to determine they set fire to something in behind the tin covering while they were welding, which dropped down into the bottom of the silo and smoldered probably for four or five hours before it took off."

In fact, officials in the company's office did not realize that a fire had started until someone came off the street and told them. It was about 2:30 p.m. and Captain Adams' company was on the scene quickly.

"There wasn't really anybody in danger," said Routley. "It was purely a fire fighting deal."

Fire Fighters managed to knock down the blaze in 45 minutes, preventing what could have easily been a multi-million dollar loss.

The Fire Fighters got some help from the weather. The buildings were lined up on a north-south axis and the "wind was blowing from west to east and carrying a lot of the heat up and over the building on the east side," said Routley.

He added however, "There was still plenty of heat."

The silos were mostly empty or the fire could have had the added hazard of dust explosions.

"Anytime you're dealing with grain there is the possibility of a dust explosion. In this case the fire was burning so fast that it

vented the tops of the silos which alleviated the possibility of an explosion right there," Routley said.

"If you're going to have an explosion, you're going to have it in a confined space. Once you burn the top off the thing you're no longer confined," he said.

"Although there was a chance of an explosion, you wouldn't say that there was a critical explosion hazard at the time," said Routley.

But he added, "Anywhere they handle grain there is a good coating of dust. All you have to do is shake it loose and have it come in contact with a fire and you can have an explosion. And that explosion can be anything from a bang to a tremendous boom."

One policeman told fire officials that he heard a small explosion.

Compared to other times of the year there was less grain and seed in the Valley

Seed Co. silos. But "it would have been a different fire if the silos had been full," Routley said.

"If the silos were full of grain it would have acted as an insulator and the fire probably wouldn't have spread as fast. This would have been a lot harder to extinguish because the fire burrows in and gets behind it. We probably would have spent four or five days trying to get it under control instead of 45 minutes," he said.

As it was, there were pockets of fire in the seed. "When they got the grain out of the silo there were hot spots the size of your hand in it," he said.

One of the silos contained 240 tons of barley seed. So Fire Fighters were there throughout the night keeping an eye on any smoldering debris.

They stayed on into the next morning as workers emptied the big building.

everything but I wanted to turn pro and fight for money," he said.

He gets plenty of support from his friends and relatives, although he admits his wife was not overjoyed at his boxing ambitions. "She didn't go for it too well at first but she doesn't mind about it now 'cause she knows that's what I want to do."

His fellow Fire Fighters know that's what he wants to do also. Oropeza has most of his fights in other cities but when he does box in Phoenix his company Station 34 is usually there to watch.

Oropeza

Continued from Page 5

Rodriguez making money. I figured if they can do it I don't see why I can't do it."

At 19 he started working out at a boxing club, winning the state Golden Gloves championship two years in a row. If 1968 was a good year, he would top it the next year with his second Golden Gloves title and then go on to become the first Arizona fighter to win a national amateur championship.

The Olympics had just finished and Oropeza missed out. Three years was a long time to wait for a shot at the gold medal. Three more years of fighting amateur.

"I didn't want to wait around because I was already 23 then. It's nice to win a gold medal and

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Greater Tucson Fire Foundation

Thank you for taking an interest in Tucson Fire Department history —

This is one of many sections that contain information, documents, letters, newspaper articles, pictures, etc. They have been collected and arranged in chronological order or by a subject. These items were collected, organized and entered into a computerized database by Dave Ridings Retired Assistant Chief Tucson Fire Department, Al Ring friend of the department, Greater Tucson Fire Foundation and with the help of many friends and fellow firefighters.

All graphics have been improved to make the resolution as good as possible, but the reader should remember that many came from copies of old newspaper articles. This also applies to other items such as documents, letters, etc.

Credit to the source of the documents, photos, etc. is provided whenever it was available. We realize that many items are not identified and regret that we weren't able to provide this information. As far as the newspaper articles that are not identified, 99% of them would have to be from one of three possible sources. The *Arizona Daily Star*, The *Tucson Citizen* and the *Tucson Daily Citizen*, for which we want to give a special thanks.

Please use this information as a reference tool only. If the reader uses any of the information for any purpose other than a reference tool, they should get permission from the source.

Should the reader have additional information on the above subject we would appreciate you sharing it with us. Please see the names and contact information on the 1st. TFD Archives page right below this paragraph.

