

Oklahoma State Firefighters Association Convention Report

The Oklahoma State Firefighters Association held its 113th convention June 5-9 in Enid, Oklahoma. This OSFA Conference themed, "Another for a Brother," honored the memory of fallen executive board member John F. Futhey II. Futhey, the Hunter Volunteer Fire Department Chief, unexpectedly passed away April 19, 2006. In remembrance of "Big John," the state fire school celebrates his legacy by bearing his name. Hunter, Dewey, and Enid Fire Departments joined forces to host this five day event.

IAFF Local 2067 representation included: Grant Deason, Frank Crawley, Charles Littleton, Keith Nelson, Dana Cramer, Richard "Dick" Hartless, Bobby Anderson, Jason Smith and Nick Terhune.

CONVENTION SUMMARY

Wednesday, June 6, 2007

- Convention festivities kicked-off with numerous activities lasting throughout the day and night. Those activities included: a fishing tournament, held at Sooner Lake, a golf tournament (Meadow Lake Golf Course), a 5 Stand Competition (Grand National Gun Club), a Poker Run and a Bar Crawl.

Thursday, June 7, 2007

- The morning launched a breakfast for the past presidents of OSFA. Dana Cramer, OSFA President 1999 and IAFF Local 2067 member, participated.
- Current OSFA President Tom Smith, Dewey Fire Department, called the first session to order with the State Honor Guard presenting the colors.
- A memorial service honored the memory of Oklahoma's fallen firefighters. Families of deceased firefighters and convention participants paid respects with silence as 3rd Vice President Les Foughty, Oklahoma City Fire Department, and 2nd Vice President Ray Hammons, Tahlequah Fire Department, read the names aloud. 1st Vice President Don Chambers, Tulsa Fire Department, struck the bell after each name.
- Chaplain Tim Dorsch delivered the invocation.
- Enid Fire Chief Philip Clover and Enid Mayor John Criner welcomed convention participants.
- Following special announcements and door prizes the first session of the 113th convention ended.
- Upon session adjournment, participants enjoyed firefighter games, horseshoes, multiple social mixers and a picnic provided by the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA).

Friday, June 8, 2007

- President Tom Smith, Dewey, called the meeting to order with Don Froese, retired Enid Firefighter providing the invocation.
- Jerry Bower, newly retired Shawnee Fire Chief, received the David Bain award.
- Reports presented to the delegation included: State Fire Marshal, Firefighters Pension System, Legislative Report, Fallen and Living Firefighters Memorial, Oklahoma Fire Chiefs Association, Oklahoma Retired Firefighters Association, Professional Fire Fighters of Oklahoma, Fire Service Training, Museum Report, Firefighters Clown Society and the presentation of the Pete and Lela Stavros Scholarship.

MDA

John Sharp, Dibble Volunteer Firefighter, expressed his gratefulness to Oklahoma firefighters for their efforts in raising money for MDA. John's daughters, Chelsea, 15, and Ashley 9, are stricken with Friedreich Ataxia. This disease affects 1 in 50,000 people and causes muscle weakness, impaired sensory functions, diabetes, and skeletal dysfunction. Projected life spans are thirty (30) years after diagnosis. Chelsea also touched the congregation with her words of appreciation.

Legislative Report

Long time OSFA director Jim Minx announced he will step down as consultant for OSFA. A full legislative report is discussed later in this report. Additionally, this information will also be presented at the next union meeting. If you have an immediate need concerning legislation contact any IAFF Local 2067 delegate.

Firefighters Pension System

Executive Director Bob Jones spoke about the difference between Defined Contribution versus Defined Benefit Pension System. A hot topic on Capital Hill, Jones stressed the important of firefighter unity on this subject in favor of the current Defined Benefit system. Detailed information concerning this topic will be presented at the next union meeting.

Fallen and Living Firefighters Memorial

Granite purchased a year ago has now been installed. Inscriptions of firefighter's names are beginning. The memorial committee hopes to raise approximately \$400,000 to pay off the balance of the memorial and create a surplus used for additions and upkeep. A recent poker run raised nearly \$10,000.

Fire Service Training

Fire Service Training Director, Ralph Brown, spoke about Constitutional Resolution #06-01. Resolution 06-01 called for FST to be established as a separate and individual organization known as the Oklahoma Institute of Fire Service Training at Oklahoma State University. Additionally, funding should be sought from the legislature to go directly to the above mentioned organization. Brown declined support of this resolution.

Museum Report

The State Fire Fighter Museum and OSFA offices received an upgrade to their electrical system. Replacement work of light fixtures and electrical wiring is complete. These upgrades cost nearly \$4,000 and are projected to pay for themselves in just eighteen (18) short months.

Nominating Committee

Kevin Winters, Enid, Skip Jump, Ponca City, and Bert Norton, Midwest City are candidates running for 3rd Vice President.

- Afternoon activities consisted of an educational program dealing with thermal imaging cameras.
- The eloquent banquet reserved the prime time slot. Lt. Governor Jari Askins delivered the keynote address. Askins expressed sorrow for the passing of Harry Hill, describing him as “a dear friend of the fire service.” Hill, a political consultant, former PFFO consultant, and big fan of the fire service, died unexpectedly at his Oklahoma City home June 4, 2007. Askins continued by describing how the fire service positively affected her life and because of those affects the fire service will always have her support.
- President Tom Smith, Dewey, presented Askins with a white Chief’s helmet complete with her name inscribed on the front.
- Norman Firefighter Dana Cramer posed for pictures with Lt. Governor Askins. Cramer served as one of Askins “positive effects” by chauffeuring her during the busy campaign season.
- Immediately following the banquet, an auction featured two (2) airbrush painted firefighter helmets created by Ronny Davenport of the Norman Fire Department. These helmets boast the finest air brush work. The first helmet sported a poker run theme with brilliant red color, detailed playing cards complete with a Maltese Cross and finished with inscriptions of the convention event. The second helmet honored the memory of John F. Futhey II. This red, white, and blue helmet displayed the “In Memory of John F. Futhey II” emblem created for this convention along with soaring eagles and white stars on top of blue resembling our American flag. The words “Another for a Brother” presented on the side and “BIG JOHN” on the back. These helmets collectively raised \$1800. The Hunter Fire Department purchased the John F. Futhey II tribute helmet.

Saturday, June 9, 2007

- President Tom Smith, Dewey, called the meeting to order with retired Enid Firefighter Don Froese delivering the invocation.
- This session, reserved for legislation discussion, featured the presentation of three (3) voting resolutions plus the election of the 3rd Vice President. Resolutions and voting results are listed below:

Constitutional Resolution #07-01

*****RESOLUTION #07-01 PASSED BY MAJORITY VOTE OF THE OSFA DELEGATES.*****

Whereas the construction of the Oklahoma State Firefighters Association Executive Board is an important issue to the membership and the organization; and

Whereas the clear understanding of who the members of the Executive Board are and how they are selected is also a very important issue; and

Whereas the term “Junior Past President” is out-dated and no longer used anywhere except in Article 4, Sections 1 and 2;

Therefore be it resolved that the Constitution and By Laws be amended in Article 4 – Officers, Section 1 and 2 to read as follows:

ARTICLE 4 - OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers of this Association shall consist of President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Third Vice President, and Immediate Past President. These officers shall be known as the Executive Board. There shall be at least one of the officers of the Executive Board who is a Volunteer Firefighter who is an active member of the Oklahoma State Firefighters Association.

Section 2. All officers of the Association, except the Immediate Past President, shall be elected from the active membership of the Association by the duly accredited delegates on the last day of each annual convention. A majority of the votes cast by the duly elected delegates shall constitute an election.

Constitutional Resolution #06-02

*****RESOLUTION SENT BACK FOR FURTHER STUDY BY THE 2007 DELEGATES.*****

To: Oklahoma State Firefighters Association
Re: Convention Constitution and By-Laws Resolution

WHEREAS, the Oklahoma Retired Firefighters Association is to support the efforts of the Oklahoma State Firefighters Association;

WHEREAS, the objectives of the Oklahoma Retired Firefighters Association are to assist the Oklahoma State Firefighters Association in pursuit of their goals;

WHEREAS the Oklahoma Retired Firefighters Association is to cooperate with Oklahoma State Firefighters Association Executive Board and Executive Director in serving the best interests of active, volunteer, retired and widowed firefighters of Oklahoma;

WHEREAS members of the Oklahoma Retired Firefighters Association have many years experience and history that would aid in the debate and discussion made by the Executive Board of the Oklahoma State Firefighters Association;

WHEREAS Oklahoma Retired Firefighters Association contributes financially to Oklahoma State Firefighters Association and has no vote on the Executive Board;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Article 4, Section 4, shall be amended to read, "One additional person shall serve as liaison officer on the Executive Board, the President or his designee from the Oklahoma Retired Firefighters Association (ORFA), being recognized as the liaison officer. Being recognized as a liaison officer, he therefore, shall have a vote, but not nor proceed through the chairs.

Legislative Resolution #06-01

Resolution failed

To: Oklahoma State Firefighters Association

WHEREAS training for the Oklahoma fire service is a top priority issue;
WHEREAS, fire training is an imperative part of safety for the citizens and the firefighters of Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS fire departments are the primary provider of safety to the majority of citizens; and

WHEREAS fire departments face many federal and state training mandates;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Oklahoma Fire Service Training shall be established as a separate and individual organization heretofore known as the Oklahoma Institute of Fire Service at Oklahoma State University; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that additional funding be sought from Legislature to go directly to the Oklahoma Institute of Fire Service Training at Oklahoma State University

3rd Vice President

Midwest City firefighter Bert Norton won a run off election with Skip Jump, Ponca City, to become 3rd Vice President at the 113th annual OSFA Convention.

President- Don Chambers, Tulsa

1st Vice President- Ray Hammons, Tahlequah

2nd Vice President- Les Foughty, Oklahoma City

ORFA 3rd Vice President

Randy Rose, retired Oklahoma City, was elected as 3rd Vice President for ORFA.

President- Bud Shepherd, Slaughterville

1st Vice President- Perry Brinegar

2nd Vice President- Mike Bower, Midwest City