

State President's Report

March 2007

Respectfully submitted by: Thomas P. Canzanella

Died While in Active Service

Kindly keep within your thoughts and prayers the surviving family and friends of:

Fire Captain Michael Barcheski Perth Amboy FD / Local 4070

Firefighter William Harned Woodbridge FD / Local 290

Camden City Fire Company Closings

The Governor's new Chief Operating Officer installed to oversee all facets of city government issued a temporary halt to overtime in all agencies including the Fire Department in an effort we must suppose to get managers attention. On March 1st the CFD lost an engine and battalion for a 24 hour tour however, quick action by our locals 2578 and 788 in getting in touch with the PFA, who was in turn able to converse with the Governor's Office and those individuals who oversee Camden on his behalf, along with public outcry, led to units being reinstated the following day.

Communication to State Federation President Wowkanech

Concerning a meeting he orchestrated between agents of the CWA, the NJFMBA and our National AFL-CIO. The issue in the regard (we have no issue with the meeting itself) being the fact that we were never as a matter of courtesy or loyalty properly informed.

Firemen's Rule Struck Down

Arthur Kravitz, Esq., and the firm of Stark & Stark, our State Civil Counsel report that the State's Appellate courts are finally properly recognizing and enforcing the Firemen's Act signed into law in 1995 by then Governor Florio. The law allows firefighters a right to recovery for injury or death resulting from direct or indirect negligence on the part of property owners due to unsafe conditions encountered when responding to an emergency. Previously the law had been the subject of much court debate as to its scope and intention.

Statement before the Senate Labor Committee

Seeking to amend Senate Concurrent Resolution #58 to specifically denote public employee pensions as being protected from under-funding and raiding.

Statement before the Senate Law, Public Safety and Veteran's Affairs Committee

In support of S-2043 / A-2575 seeking to regulate the materials and actual manufacture of cigarettes towards making them more fire safe.

Battalion Chief's Test

Despite rumors to the contrary DOP's Michael Szuter insists that to date, there have been no alteration to the BC's exam. The fact is the test has yet to have been scored and to that end the DOJ not yet reviewed the resulting lists.

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Introduction of Legislation

Following a meeting with State Democratic Chair Joseph Cyan, the PFANJ on behalf of the AC Airport Firefighters local seeks to introduce legislation assuring that in the event State infrastructure ie., highways, airports etc., are sold or leased that firefighting and EMS provision remain under the control of one of the State's agencies. We are in the process of scheduling meetings with Assemblyman Wisniewski and Senator Madden.

Fire Service Gang Activity Training

The PFA supports the development of training aimed at making firefighters more aware of their surroundings as it relates to recognizing both gang and terrorist activities as are being developed and provided by the New Jersey State Police. That said, what we are categorically opposed to and have communicated such in various meetings with both the State Police and Division of Fire Safety, is that this type training should not be publicized to the extent that firefighters are depicted or perceived as informants of some sort that may tend to result in placing members at inordinate risk of attack or retribution. Accordingly, while we encourage recognition type situational awareness we will continue working to make sure there is an understanding that in many cases we respond well ahead of or even without law enforcement that might offer us force security while we are operating. While we encourage our departments to secure this valuable training so do we urge that they refrain from making such public by way of news articles that they may increase risk to firefighters and EMS personnel. The PFA will be communicating its concerns once again to the State Police and Career Fire Chiefs Association in this regard.

PFRS Mortgage Rate

Adjusted to 5.86% as of 2/15/2007 per our preferred provider Christine Tower of Washington Mutual. Call Christine at 201/678-3370 for all your mortgage needs.

IAFF National Legislative Conference

March 11 -15, 2007 - Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill

Bravest of the Brave Valor Awards

Saturday, April 28, 2007 - Jersey City Hyatt-on-the-Hudson. For acts occurring 1/1/2006 – 12/31/2007. Any local with a late valor, rescue or EMS filing please get it to the State Office no later than Monday March 12th by fax or mail.

PFANJ Annual Convention & Affiliate Leadership Seminar

May 29 – June 1, 2007 - Caesar's Hotel & Casino Atlantic City, NJ

Bravest Charity Golf Outing

Friday, June 1, 2007 - Seaview Marriott GC Absecon, NJ

IAFF Fire/EMS Conference

June 24 – 27, 2007 - Houston, Texas

Annual Bravest Beach Party

Wednesday, June 27, 2007 - Martell's Tiki Bar Point Pleasant Beach, NJ

end report