



MICHIGAN PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTER

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Rally in Detroit



International Association of Fire Fighters General President Harold A. Shaitberger, center, and 8th District Vice President Tommy Miller, left of Shaitberger, lead Detroit firefighters in a march toward the Coleman A. Young Municipal Center in Detroit. *See more on page 12.*

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— FYI —

You too can be a contributor

It's very easy to do. Just send us a story, a picture, or both. It can be about anything that is going on in your local or general information that has something to do with unionism or being a firefighter (union event or of fire, rescue or EMS incidents involving local members) and we will publish it on the web and/or magazine.

Please submit your material ASAP to:

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Note: I also wish to remind you that it is the policy of the MPFF editorial staff to not publish any information that is sent anonymously.

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Is your local threatened by PSO?

Public safety departments once again are being promoted by a few city managers in Michigan. Cross training police as firefighters in an attempt to provide fire services appears to be coming back in vogue after lying dormant for many years. About half dozen cities around the state have discussed the idea of a public safety officer department to address their real or perceived financial problems. One city is pursuing the switch to public safety officers.

Kalamazoo is the largest city in Michigan, and probably the country, that converted to a PSO department. The changeover occurred in the early 1980s following a prolonged effort by the city manager and city commission to dismantle a fire department with about 140 IAFF/MPFFU firefighters protecting a city of 80,000. It continues operating under that arrangement today. There are approximately twenty-five cities or townships in Michigan that operate under some form of public safety officers.

In all of the PSO conversions in Michigan that I am aware of, the decision for the firefighters and police to cross train was voluntary. No local bargaining unit challenged the transfer of firefighting responsibilities to the police department. Kalamazoo's switch to public safety officers about twenty-five years ago was no different.

A short history of how the dismantling of the Kalamazoo fire department and IAFF local came about will illustrate the importance of a political action program and a proactive union membership to preventing PSO in your city or township.

The city manager was hired by Kalamazoo to pursue the implementation of a public safety department. A committee was formed to study the feasibility of combining the departments on the premise of reducing the city's operating costs and providing more effective police services, while arguing that fire services would also improve under the plan. The union agreed to have a representative on the committee. Not surprisingly, the committee came back with a report that agreed with the city manager's proposal.

At about the same time, the firefighters

union was in negotiations with the city on cross-training as police officers. The police union was already onboard and willing to be trained as firefighters with the promise of a significant increase in pay. During negotiations with the firefighters union, incentives were offered to various segments of the membership to entice them to agree to cross training as police officers.

The city offered significant increases in pension benefits to senior firefighters in order to promote retirements which would allow the city to bring more cross-trained police on board. They also offered large pay incentives to firefighters willing to cross train and work as police officers.

The incentives worked. The firefighters voted to accept the proposal to cross train. The majority supporting the agreement were senior firefighters who received increased pension benefits and the lower seniority firefighters who received large pay incentives to cross train as police.

Once the contract took effect, firefighters were given the choice to cross train or remain as firefighters/drivers in positions that would eventually be phased out through attrition. About 40 firefighters refused to cross train and remained in the IAFF/MPFFU bargaining unit. Today, one firefighter remains in that bargaining unit. Once this individual retires, the firefighters bargaining unit will disappear.

The largest fire department in the country to date that was converted to public safety officers voluntarily agreed to the program. Until now, that has been the case in every city/township in Michigan that has converted to public safety officers.

An example of how a local union successfully defeats an attempt to eliminate an effective fire department occurred in the early 1990s. The Meridian Township Fire Fighters-Local 1600, defeated attempts to implement PSO in their township through the political process. With the support of local residents, they removed township board members who supported PSO at the ballot box. The newly elected Trustees restored the traditional fire and police departments that



continue to provide services today.

In the most recent PSO battle the Iron Mountain Fire Fighters, Local 554, have been in a struggle against public safety officers in their city for more than a year. The city council brought in a city manager to force a public safety officer department on the citizens. The city council is attempting to destroy a fire department that has serviced the city for well over one-hundred years and in the process break the firefighters union. Four firefighters were laid off last year as the police union agreed to take those firefighters' jobs for a small increase in wages. Kevin Pirlot, MPFFU 1st District Vice President and member of Local 554, discusses the details of his local's fight against public safety officers in his report in this magazine.

The Iron Mountain firefighters are the first union to fight the implementation of a public safety officer system through the Michigan Employment Relations Commission, arbitration, and the courts.

We know that PSO does not reduce costs for a city; it typically costs more to implement and operate than traditional fire and police departments. Where PSO is implemented, fire service and protection suffer serious damage. There are more police on the street, but ultimately, the city suffers severe reductions in fire protection and safety.

MPFFU and the IAFF are standing alongside Local 554 and have committed resources to assist them in battling the introduction of the public safety officer concept into their community and the City of Iron Mountain's blatant violations of their contract and Michigan's labor laws. We are also prepared to work with other locals threatened by PSOs in order to protect fire and emergency services in their communities.

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Please make your voluntary contribution to the MPFFU FIRE PAC FUND today. Send personal checks only to: MPFFU Fire PAC Fund, 1651 Kingsway Court, Suite E, Trenton, MI 48183-1959

EFT

Now, we have made it even easier for you to contribute to the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union FIRE PAC Fund. You can sign-up for small, (\$2.00 - \$10.00) monthly, electronic fund transfer payments (EFT) from your personal checking or savings account directly into the MPFFU FIRE PAC account. It's a safe and convenient way to make your contribution to assist our FIRE PAC program.

Your participation will be recognized in the next issue of the Michigan Professional Fire Fighter magazine and you will receive immediate membership in the MPFFU FIRE PAC Superior Club. All you need to do is fax or mail a copy of a voided check to us and state the amount you wish to contribute each month. We will do the rest. And, you can stop the payments whenever you'd like. Call the MPFFU office for more information. (800.886.7338)

Local Presidents should contact their District Vice President for all the details about the MPFFU FIRE PAC Partnership Program. Participation in this program will make it easier for your local to become more politically active at your local level. Call today (800.886.7338) to find out more information.

MPFFU POLITICAL ACTION FUND CONSENT FORM

2006 Affirmative Consent For Political Contributions

Section 55(6) of the Michigan Campaign Finance Act provides that a corporation, a joint stock company, a domestic dependent sovereign, or a Labor Organization "may solicit or obtain contributions for a separate segregated fund established on an automatic basis, including but not limited to a payroll deduction plan, only if the individual who is contributing to the fund affirmatively consents to the contribution at least once in every calendar year."

I, _____, authorize the Secretary-Treasurer of the MPFFU to deduct
(PRINTED NAME OF MEMBER)
 \$_____ on the _____ of each month for the purpose of making a political contribution to the Michigan Professional Fire
 Fighters Union PAC Fund.

I want these funds deducted from:

- Checking account (voided check attached)
- Savings account routing # _____ Account # _____
- Credit card (Visa/Mastercard only) account # _____ Exp. _____ 3 Digit _____
(BACK OF CARD)

Address: _____

Phone: _____

This consent is for the calendar year 2006.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Mail to: MPFFU, 1651 Kingsway Ct., Suite E, Trenton, MI 48183

Why is this happening to us?

Whazzzzzzzzup?

Arbitration, Attrition, Bankruptcy, Budget Deficit, Concessions, Co-pays, Defined Contribution, Grievances, Health Insurance Reductions, Give-backs, Layoffs, Legal fees, Millage Defeats, Overtime Elimination, Police-Fire Consolidation, Premium sharing, Receivership, Staffing Reductions, Station Closings, Two-tier benefits, ULP's, Wage Freeze.

One hundred and twenty-eight locals belong to the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union. During the last few years, each and EVERY ONE of them have experienced or at least been threatened with one or more of the negative issues listed above.

Many of our members are asking: WHY is this happening to us? We save lives, we protect property, we support charities, we get good PR, and we helped elect many state and local politicians.

Most of us thought we were immune from all of this. After all, isn't one of the benefits of being a public employee supposed to be job security and decent benefits? We certainly aren't overpaid, so how can we be expected to accept concessions in health care and retirement benefits?

Although there are unique circumstances in every community, there are some common elements that are contributing to all of these negative subjects.

- Reductions in State Revenue Sharing.
- Extreme increases in Health Care Costs.
- Decline in Investment Revenue for Pension Funds.
- No Growth in older communities.
- Anti-tax Attitude of Citizens and Elected Officials.
- Rainy day funds have been diminished or entirely spent.
- Politicians more concerned with re-election than making hard decisions or doing what is the best for the citizens.

Political Action:

The First Line of Defense

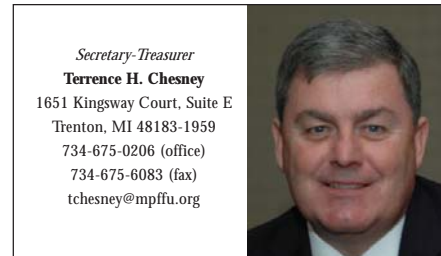
During the last decade, the number of locals that have become involved in political action activities such as making political endorsements and making political contributions has increased ten-fold. Many of you got involved because of the encouragement of the IAFF and the MPFFU. The expectation was that if we supported candidates, they would never do anything to harm firefighters after they got elected. Lately, we have come to realize that this expectation was unrealistic. Now, many of our members have become discouraged with political involvement because many of the candidates they endorsed have since voted for staff reductions, station closings, etc.

In defense of some of these elected officials, several communities really are in deep financial crisis and they had no choice but to make budget cuts. The question that is asked most frequently is why don't they make the cuts somewhere other than in the fire department budget? Obviously, there are other areas of the budget that are less important than the fire department, right? So why have these candidates betrayed us after we supported them?

The most common scenario that I have observed goes something like this: Usually, the candidates received contributions and endorsements from several organizations in addition to the fire union. Every one of these employee groups or organizations all had the same expectations associated with their endorsement as we firefighters did.

In a legitimate financial crisis, it is very difficult for any elected official to play favorites. The easiest thing for them to do is to cut everyone equally, especially if they received endorsements from several employee groups or other organizations.

I acknowledge that this is a rather simplistic overview but the point I want to make is that political action is more than



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just sending a candidate a check or a letter of endorsement every couple of years. It isn't just talking to the elected official at election time or at budget time, or when WE need something.

Successful political action is a 24/7 event. It takes a lot of time and effort. Personal contact and communications with the elected officials needs to occur on a regular basis. A personal connection needs to be established. Every effort needs to be made to educate them about what duties and responsibilities our job entails. Inviting them to lunch or dinner at the station, inviting them to attend your charity events, making sure firefighters are visible at community functions, and encouraging your members to speak to them whenever they see them around town, are just some of the ways to make your endorsement special.

We shouldn't expect automatic support from candidates just because we endorse them. What we should demand from any candidate before we give our endorsement to them is a promise that they will take the time to learn all they can about our job.

If they will take the time to do this, maybe it will be easier for elected officials to justify leaving the fire department budget intact when a financial crunch takes place.

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The Iron Mountain Fire Fighters IAFF Local 554 has received assistance from the IAFF Emergency Disputes Fund. With the support of the International this small local will be able to continue to fight the elimination of their jobs through cross training of police officers as firefighters. Four firefighters from Local 554 were laid off in September of 2004 following the city council's adoption of a recommendation by the city manager to cross train police officers to perform dual roles as law enforcement officers and firefighters.

Local 554 has been reduced from fifteen to nine firefighters over the past few years. They now work with three firefighters on duty each day, not meeting basic two-in/two-out safety standards. The city is currently in the process of providing Fire Fighter I-II training for the police. When that training is completed, police officers will respond to fires and work alongside IAFF firefighters. It is the city's goal to have all cross-trained police officers delivering fire services, eventually eliminating IAFF firefighters.

The IAFF has lost many locals through the years to public safety conversions; however, most of those have occurred thru the bargaining process or the inability of the union to oppose the changes. The Police Patrol Association in Iron Mountain sadly would not stand up for union rights and took the money to do firefighting work against the advice of the Police Officers Labor Council. The POLC has since severed their representation of these officers.


This unilateral removal of bargaining unit work by the city is being fought by Local 554, both legally and politically. Citizens for Quality Fire Protection have submitted a ballot initiative for a charter amendment that would require staffing full

time professional firefighters and it will be on the November election. Another group of citizens concerned about the reduced level of fire safety is circulating a petition to recall three council members. The union has filed grievances and unfair labor practice charges against the city. Also, their contract has expired and they have been forced to file for binding arbitration because of the city's refusal to bargain in good faith for a new agreement. The city has submitted more than 36 issues for arbitration in an attempt to cause delays and financial hardship for the membership.

This will be the first time an IAFF local in Michigan will have the opportunity to challenge a city that is cross training police and eliminating firefighter jobs. It will be an important and precedent setting action that will impact all locals in Michigan. If this city is allowed to completely disregard the labor agreements in place, eliminating union positions at will and replacing with non-union personnel it will truly be a severe blow to the collective bargaining rights of all unions in the State.

With the support of the International and the MPFFU the Local will now be able to continue to carry their fight through both MERC and the court system in Michigan. Many thanks go to President Hufnagel, General President Schaitberger and V.P. Miller for their recognition of how important this issue is to all union firefighters.

2nd District

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Well the summer is over and I hope everyone had lots of time to be with family and friends. I would like to thank all of you who attended the district meeting and made the phone calls to your state representatives on behalf of the Fire Fighters Training Council funding. They heard us loud and clear

on what needed to be done.

The Health & Safety Conference was a great success with helpful presentations that we can take back to our members. The presentation involving our members who helped out in St. Bernard Parish in Louisiana was especially encouraging. The efforts, energy, and devotion to helping others in need once again shines through. A rescue involving 3,000 people including food, shelter and various other emotional needs, all with no assistance for seven days, proves yet again what we are made of; another job well done by the Health & Safety committee for our members.

This past year has been disappointing for a lot of locals with department layoffs and reduced health care coverage, however, it does look as though things may have stabilized at least for the time being. We can only hope the State doesn't cut revenue sharing any more and incoming revenues for the State will actually increase.

We as locals need to start looking very hard at charging for some of the services we provide to help bring funds back locally to our departments. Charging for auto extrication is an easy example. Most insurance companies will pay for the service; call me if you need any more information about this service. If you are providing ambulance service receiving optimal payment is vital to keeping this service alive and functioning. You may want to explore your return rate and look into third party billing. Such services can increase your return rate dramatically and save these services and personnel. Another example revenue option might include charging for false alarms when they exceed a certain amount of calls in a 24 hour period, or something similar. One department is considering fire prevention advertising on their trucks and looking for sponsors that they can bill. I realize that in the past we have never had to think along these lines, however, it is time to think out of the box.

It looks like the 2nd District will be getting another local (Grand Haven Twp) if all goes well with the vote to join the IAFF/MPFFU. By the time the votes are counted this newsletter will be to press, but all indications are the votes are there and they will be onboard.

HOT NEWS FROM THE DISTRICTS

The final thing is staying political in your local area. Get people to run for office that will support your issues when it comes time for layoffs or when it's time to bargain your next contract they will support you.

Stay safe, stay united, and be strong!

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A fall hello to the 3rd District and members of the MPFFU, I hope that each and every one of you had a great summer and were able to spend time with your families.

Since my last article events in the 3rd District, unfortunately, have not been for the positive. Members from both Saginaw Local 102 and Flint Local 352 have had numerous on-the-job injuries due to the lack of manpower through either lay-off or attrition. Both locals have seen the rate of fire alarm response increase at the same time.

Saginaw Local 102, under the leadership of President Maurice Patterson, has filed grievances and Unfair Labor Practice charges against the City of Saginaw. The charges stem from the City violating a minimum staffing level that was agreed upon by both parties in their last contract. A minimum level of 74 persons with no layoffs was agreed upon, however, the City has failed from the start to keep their promise. Staffing has been reduced to 66 through attrition with no indication of replacing personnel losses.

In Midland Local 1315, an Act 312 decision (May 2005) has devastated member's health care insurance costs. After completing a 2 ½ year arbitration, Chairman Maurice Kelman awarded the City of Midland the following:

1. Members will pay 15 percent of the monthly premium for active health care, resulting in premium sharing costs ranging from a low of \$178 per month to a high of

\$216 per month depending on the coverage plan.

2. Any person hired after August 1, 2005 will pay 50 percent of their health care coverage upon retirement.

The two decisions issued by Chairman Kelman completely reverses the award issued by Chairman Martin Kotch in 1999. Members of Local 1315 have attempted to fight this change for the past six years costing members nearly \$300,000 in arbitration fees.

During the panel meetings, Chairman Kelman, explained his decision, "Though the Union's external comparables support the position of the Union, the Chair had to account for the internal comparables." More notably, all of the other bargaining units including the Police Patrol Union had accepted the City's offer for both active and retirement health care. Chairman Kelman went on to state "What makes the firefighters any different from any of the other union members." As panel delegate for the Union, I attempted to explain the nature of our job encompassing of the risks associated with being a firefighter. Furthermore, I pointed out to the Chair that he had not accounted for the sound financial stability of the City.

During the Act 312 hearings, the City of Midland actually lowered its operating mileage to unprecedented 8.69 mills. Even with the low mileage the Chair was compelled to award the City its position simply based on internal comparables.

I strongly encourage all locals to begin to have dialogues with the other bargaining groups within their cities or townships. A unified position by all union members makes any award by an arbitrator more difficult to justify if all bargaining members speak with one voice.



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Economy, economy, economy. This is the buzz word throughout Michigan, the 4th District and our cities. Everywhere we turn in our area, fire departments are strategizing over how to cope with the current downturn in the federal, state and local economies.

From layoffs to downsizing to regionalizing, almost every local is facing difficult struggles. Locals are losing members, funding and expansion capabilities. We are seeing bankruptcies, threats or takeovers by receivers and deep slashes in budgets. How do we as MPFFU members respond to this?

Here in the 4th District, locals are responding in many different ways. Some are working on millage increases, some are actively campaigning for candidates in the upcoming elections with the support of their PAC funds, some are strategizing with their local governments through negotiations and grants and some are staring down the barrel.

Chuck McBride and Frenchtown Township is actively working with their government to pass an important millage which will decide the possible continuance of their department. In the period of days they went from possible significant contractual benefits to finding out that their rainy day fund was all but gone.

Mark Swider and his Hamtramck local have taken a different tack. Tired of their dealings with their appointed receiver, they have gone to Lansing to pass a Bill that will significantly change the selection, powers and responsibilities of any receiver in Michigan. A well done use of political action to cause change.

Detroit has used political action, public relations, court and grievance action and the IAFF as it fights to stop the biggest hits

Continued on page 8

HOT NEWS FROM THE DISTRICTS

since the 1970's. They have lost Divisions personnel, 5 fire companies, one Battalion and had 60 firefighter layoffs. The next wave of 5 more companies, 3 more Battalions and their respective Chiefs, 65 more layoffs and changes in response capabilities are now in a Circuit Court judge's hands. And there may be even more to come.

Some locals are facing bullying tactics from their leaders with threats to the local leaders and the membership. Rest assured, these will be dealt with in swift and unrelenting ways by the MPFFU, IAFF and their legal batteries.

Many more are in the same unenviable positions but, due to the delicacy of their negotiations, suffice to say that all are working as hard as ever to maintain.

Pensions, wages and health care are the battle cries of the governments. They usually won't even consider alternative ideas from fire locals in their zest to redesign their governments in the way they believe is needed. The problem with this is that they ignore SAFETY in their quest to satisfy the taxpayers.

During these hard times many government leaders show their weaknesses and our locals show their true commitment to our profession. We will continue to make sure that budgets do not ignore the lives and well being of citizens and firefighters. We will cast a hard light on the shadows of number crunching politicians who are only trying to save their own necks by using an economic crisis to circumvent the laws of this State.

Recent Doings

The MPFFU Health and Safety Seminar had a great turn out and the agenda was thoughtfully planned out and professionally presented. Many current topics were covered with an underlying theme of safety throughout. Thanks from the 4th.

The last 4th District meeting was held in Southgate and it was great to see old and news faces attending in strength to share information. Former 4th District VP's **Paul Diedrich** and **Tom Fischer**, both from Southgate, were there and warmly recognized for their past service. Lots of good updates came from the dais and from the Local reports. There was some good news

such as a strong new contract in Westland as well as others.

Locals from the western edge of the 4th are meeting on a regular basis to form a strong solidarity among contiguous neighbors and keep a line of communication between themselves. The last meeting that I attended even had a guest speaker to give some education to the group.

New contracts are still trickling in and I encourage every local to continue to read them. There is a lot of strong information and forward thinking inside of them that helps out every size local. Keep reading the MPFFU website, the attached links and contract database. And, most importantly, keep the faith.

See You Around the 4th!

5th District

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Lately it seems that many locals have been calling regarding two tier items being proposed by their respective cities and townships. Two tier items are items that are different for some of the members of the union and either are not enjoyed at all by the rest of the membership or are less than what others enjoy. Usually these items are proposed for new hires so as not to affect current employees.

One of the big items is retirement. Some locals that currently have DB (Defined Benefit) plans are being pressured by their municipalities to initiate DC (Defined Contribution) plans for new hires. Another is longevity. They want to limit or eliminate completely longevity for new hires.

The rationale being presented to the unions is that there will be no change for the current employees and to save money it would only affect new hires. Also, they may be willing to give a bit more in negotiations if new hires are treated differently.

I have been hearing that many members are falling for this, arguing that they don't have to bargain for new employees and that their focus should be on current employees. This couldn't be further from reality.

The problem with this thinking is that for older employees close to retirement there may not be any affect to them before they retire, but for younger current members it may, and probably will, cause problems in the future. Any new employees will be in the minority and probably won't be in the position to do anything about the differences that occurred by the two tier item. This obviously could cause problems within the department as well as the union when one segment of the union enjoys benefits the other segment does not.

What those going along with the two tier item are not thinking about is that at some time in the future, they will be in the minority and those receiving a lesser or different benefit will be in the majority. When that occurs, who do you think is going to be doing the negotiating and what will their priorities be?

The municipalities are trying to make compelling arguments regarding two tier items but I encourage all negotiating teams to resist any proposals that treat members of your membership different from one another including those that have not been hired yet.

MPFFU Standing Committee Meeting Dates

Political Education Committee (1:30 PM)

- December 13, 2005
- March 14, 2006

EMS Committee (10:00 AM)

- December 13, 2005
- March 14, 2006

Safety and Health Committee (10:00 AM)

- December 15, 2005
- March 16, 2006

Education & Training Committee (1:30 PM)

- December 15, 2005
- March 16, 2006

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The issues facing today's executive boards are many: state revenue, layoffs, staffing, health insurance, EMS, pensions, etc. Every executive board strives to make the right decisions, decisions that are in the best interest of the entire membership of their local. Executive board members need to be educated on the issues facing them.

Executive board members should keep up with the knowledge required to be effective and successful by taking advantage of the educational conferences and seminars provided by the MPFFU and the IAFF. The opportunity and availability of receiving and education on the above mentioned issues and many more is a reality today. The MPFFU provides on a regular basis seminars on: Labor Relations, Safety and Health, Collective Bargaining, and Local Union Administration. The MPFFU seminars are provided at a very low cost to the locals and their membership. These seminars should not only be attended by the executive boards, but the general membership as well can learn much from the information provided so please take the time to attend.

The MPFFU and the IAFF also send out information on a weekly and monthly basis covering the issues that local union executive boards need to be made aware of. Please take the time to educate yourselves and read the material that is mailed to you. Take the time to ask your District VP, the State Office or the International Office when you have questions on a particular issue. Education is the key to success.

FAREWELL

On August 10, 2005 Brother Jim McRoberts a 40-year career firefighter, past president of Southfield Local 1029, a comrade, family man, and a friend passed away.

Whether you had known Jim many years, or had only just met him, it was very clear that he was passionate in everything he did and in everything he believed. Such conviction and determination would not always lead to smooth sailing, through calm waters, but if Jim made waves he did so for a reason. The path of least resistance, while easier and without controversy was just not his way.

Jim spent 40 years in the fire service and brought forth a level of pride and professionalism the Southfield Fire Department and the fire service in general that made us all proud to be members. He was one of the finest firefighters I have ever known. You will hear that a lot from many of us who had the privilege to know him and work with him.

His contributions extended well beyond the Southfield Fire Department and Local 1029. He served for many years the MPFFU as Chairman of the Consolidation Committee and later the Labor Issues Task Force Committee. In these positions he helped many locals throughout the State through some very difficult times.

To say Jim had a way with words would be an understatement, he rarely held back if he had something to say and would expect no less from those with whom he was speaking.

Most of us who knew him thought the world of him. A few could take him or leave him. A very few, did not care for him. None of us however, will ever forget him.

Take care and stay safe.

MPFFU District Meeting Dates

- 3/13/06 – 6th District (Location TBD)
- 3/24/06 – 2nd District (Location TBD)
- 3/28/06 – 5th District (Location TBD)
- 3/30/06 – 4th District (Location TBD)
- 3/31/06 – 3rd District (Location TBD)
- 4/03/06 – 1st District (Location TBD)

MPFFU Services & Benefits

Legislative Services:

- Monitoring Legislation
- Introducing Legislation
- Testifying for and against Legislation
- Lobbying members of the Legislature
- Attendance at various committee hearings
- Maintaining and administration of the MPFFU Fire PAC fund
- Providing updates on legislative activities via newsletters to all members

Services Provided to Locals:

- Collective Bargaining Assistance
- Contract Data Base Information
- Assistance with Grievances and Disputes
- Education of Union Leadership through Seminars and Conferences
- Assistance with Health and Safety Issues
- Assistance with Public Relations
- Assistance with EMS related issues
- Research and distribution of customized information
- Emergency Financial Assistance Grant Program
- Millage Campaign Grants
- Fax Machine Program
- Legal Fee Subsidy Programs
- Educational Grants
- Establishment of a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Team
- Assistance with everyday issues and problems

Means of Communication:

- Publication to all members
- Special Newsletters to all members
- Web Site
- Regular mailings to all locals
- Telephone Contacts
- Conferences and Seminars
- New Member Orientation Program

Representation on State/Federal Level Organizations and Committees:

- Michigan State AFL-CIO
- Central Labor Body Organizations
- State-wide Health and Safety Committees
- State-wide EMS Committees
- Michigan Fire Coalition
- Joint Fire Services Council
- Fire Fighters Training Council
- IAFF Conferences and Conventions
- Federation of State/Provincial Fire Fighters
- NFPA (National Fire Protection Association)
- Women in the Fire Service
- Many, many others...

9th Annual MPFFU Family Fire Fighters Ski Weekend

January 6-8, 2006

This is unbeatable weekend ski package for the Michigan Professional Firefighters Union including Friday & Saturday nights lodging, plus skiing Friday night, Saturday & Sunday. Where else can you find a complete weekend package for ONLY \$139.00 per person! *

Treetops offers 23 downhill ski runs, Midwest longest half-pipe and an expanded tubing park. Other amenities include Spa & Fitness center, pools, hut tubs, children's center, three restaurants and much more. Enjoy your stay at Treetops Resort.

Arrival: Friday January 6, 2006

Departure: Sunday January 8, 2006

Package includes: 2 Nights Lodging, Skiing Friday, Saturday and Sunday, including taxes.

Inn Rooms: \$139 per person based on Double Occupancy

Lodge Rooms: \$169 per person based on Double Occupancy

Additional Lift Tickets:

Adults: \$50

Children: \$40



Call in Reservation

Call the reservations department during our normal business hours to make your Call In reservations.

Please Note: Reservations may be made for one room per union member. If you choose to reserve additional rooms in your name, there will be a \$100 non-refundable deposit applied to each additional room.

Cancellation Policy is 7 days prior to your day of arrival.

* Package based on double occupancy per room. Children under 5 & Under are FREE. Children 6-17 can be added to this package for only \$40 per person and additional adults for only \$50 per person. Limit 2 rooms per person.

For reservations or more information please call:

1-888-TREETOPS

3962 Wilkinson Road, Gaylord, MI

www.treetops.com

MPFFU believes in your dreams!

\$1,500 Yearly Award for Full-time College, Vocational-Technical Schools or University Study

We are pleased to continue the MPFFU Scholarship Program for the dependent children of members of the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union.

Scholarship recipients will be chosen on the basis of past scholastic achievement, work experience, school and community participation and the student's career aspirations.

The program is being administered by Scholarship America. Scholarship America is a national organization that has managed company-sponsored scholarships for a number of years on a confidential and impartial basis with very successful results.

We believe this scholarship is a most fitting way to support higher education and to recognize the achievements of our children. We encourage you and your children to review the program as outlined in this brochure.

The Program

The MPFFU Scholarship Program was established in 1999 to encourage and support higher education. Awards are made on the basis of academic merit and potential, without regard to race, creed, color, gender, religion, national origin or disability. This scholarship program is administered by Scholarship Management Services, a department of Scholarship America. Scholarship America is a national nonprofit educational support and student aid organization that seeks to involve and assist the private sector in expanding educational opportunities and encouraging educational achievement.

Eligibility

Applicants must be high school children, age 17 or older, of active members in good standing or children of members of the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union who have died in the line of duty.

Members must have a minimum of two years of membership as of the application deadline.

Applicants must be high school seniors or graduates who plan to enroll or students who are already enrolled in a full-time undergraduate course of study at an accredited two or four-year college, university, or vocational-technical school.

Previous recipients are ineligible to apply.

Scholarship Awards

The MPFFU Scholarship Program authorized distribution for new awards will be \$9,000. Six, one-time only, awards of \$1,500 each will be granted. At least two of the six scholarships will be awarded to students enrolling in a Fire Academy Program and/or a Paramedic Program provided there are qualified applicants in this area. Otherwise, six general study scholarships will be awarded. Financial need will not be considered. Awards are not renewable. Awards are for undergraduate study only.

How To Apply

Interested students must complete the application (Call the MPFFU office at 800.886.7338 for an application) and mail it along with a current complete transcript of grades to Scholarship America postmarked no later than April 15.

Applicants are responsible for gathering and submitting all necessary information. Applicants are evaluated on the information supplied; therefore, answer all questions as completely as possible. All information received is considered confidential and is reviewed only by Scholarship America.



How Recipients are Selected

Recipients will be selected based upon past academic performance and future potential, leadership and participation in school and community activities, work experience, statement of career and educational aspirations and goals, unusual personal or family circumstances, and an outside appraisal.

Final selection of the scholarship recipients from among the applicants will be made by Scholarship America. Officials or members of Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union will not participate in the selection.

Not every applicant will be a recipient. The number of scholarships awarded will be based upon Scholarship America selection procedures and on the funds available.

Scholarship Payment

Recipients will be notified in late April of their scholarships. Scholarship America will pay scholarships in two equal installments. The first check will be mailed about August 15, and the second mailed about December 30. All checks will be made payable to the institution for the students account. Extenuating circumstances regarding either payment must be sent to Scholarship America in writing.

Confidentiality

All applicant information is available only to the Scholarship America scholarship committee, and is strictly confidential.

Responsibilities, Obligations and Revision Policy

Applicants must gain admission to an accredited two-year junior or community college, four-year college or university or vocational-technical school. Recipients are required to supply Scholarship America with complete transcripts and to notify Scholarship America of any changes of address, school enrollment, or other relevant information. No other obligations of any kind will be imposed upon scholarship recipients and no obligation or liability is assumed by MPFFU in connection with any scholarship.

The general conditions and procedures under which scholarship awards are made may be reviewed from time to time by MPFFU. However, any previously approved scholarship award will not be affected by new conditions or procedures.

For More Information

Questions regarding any other aspect of the MPFFU Scholarship Program can be directed to Terrence H. Chesney at 800.886.7338 or addressed to:

MPFFU Scholarship Program
Scholarship Management Services,
SCHOLARSHIP AMERICA
One Scholarship Way, P.O. Box 297
Saint Peter, MN 56082
Telephone: (507) 931-1682

Detroit Local 344

Judge Borman's Decision Regarding City's Restructuring Plan

On Monday, October 17, 2005, 3rd Circuit Court Judge Susan Borman ordered the current 312 Arbitrator, Michael Long, to convene hearings on the issues pertaining to the city of Detroit Fire Department's restructuring plan, which violates Section 13 of Act 312, and changes job duties without negotiating with Local 344, as well as impacting the safety of Local 344 members.

Following the hearings, the Arbitrator is to submit his written decision to the Judge by October 27, 2005.

The Judge has enjoined all actions and put an injunction in place against all further closings, layoffs, chief demotions, etc., until October 31, 2005.

