

Iowa Firefighters Association
Mid Year Business Meeting
April 6, 2013
West Des Moines, Iowa

Those present were: President Roger Bissen, 1st VP Al Esch, 2nd VP Brad Yeager, 3rd VP Mark McNees, 4th VP Bill Halleran, 5th VP Marv Trimble, Past President Jack Runge, and Executive Director Wendy Lensing. Also present were: Tom Campbell, Panora; Kendal C. Warne, Atlantic; Dave Zimple, North Liberty; Jeff Gore, Eldora; Kenny McAdoo, Tama; Jim Huber, Solon/West Branch; Randy Novak, FSTB; Curtis Maddux, Madrid; Don Scott, Redfield; Don Foxy Cox, West Des Moines; Rodney Kolthoff, Wellsburg; Leo Caloud, Hudson; Kirk Steinke, Lowden; David Boettcher, Lowden; Jim Cunningham, Guttenberg; Myland Hepker, Rowley; Ryan Sattizahn, Rowley; Bob Platz, Dyersville; Gordy Clarke, Hudson; Jim Takes, Urbana; Pat White, Grinnell; Jerme Trotter, Hudson; Chad Schmidt, Hudson; Rusty Hockman, Jewell; Mark Stoneking, Monticello; James (Louie) Shutts, Belle Plaine; Richard C. Harman, Cedar Rapids; Tim Cappel, Atlantic; Marty Petersen, Atlantic; Jim Kenkel, Waukee; Pete Weber, Evansdale/Raymond; Brian Platz, Iowa City; Jon Reyhons, Solon; Cliff Renslow, Stuart; John Novak, Traer; Jeannette Dye, Ventura; Drew Haag, Monticello; Mike Wink, Monticello; Ron Kelchen, Monticello; Josh Kray, Monticello; Don McCarthy, Monticello; Ellen Hagen, Jewell; Al Muhlhausen, Maquoketa; Brian Seymour, Indianola; Jeremy Scott, Pella; Robert Edwards, Maquoketa; Bryan Hafner, Maquoketa; Gary McCool, Guthrie Center; Randy Sheeder, Guthrie Center; Tony Whitmore, Iowa Falls; Jeff Goldsmith, Delhi; Dennis Payne, Colesburg; Bill Willenborg, Dyersville; Merlin Clemen, Dyersville; Walter Cook, Walker; Tim Gansemer, Dyersville; Bob Siddell, Solon; Jim Donovan, Solon; Al Wessels, Dyersville; Rex Meyer, Colesburg; Dan Smith, Solon; Bruce Blum, Harlan; Terry Jacobsen, Harlan; Mike Kienast, Harlan; Leonard Baker, Alden; Roger Carr, Holland; Dick Frank, Forest City; Shirl Frank, Forest City; Dustin Brown, Liscomb; Harold Brown, Liscomb; Ray Reynolds, Indianola; Ed Tibbott, Manchester; Todd Nylund, Manchester; Mike and Joan Reuman, Traer; Denny Drabek, Garner; Terry Jass, Garner; Greg Leerer, Garner; Kirk Rice, Iowa Falls; Bob Storby, Lake Mills; Dave Deeringer, Wellsburg; Brittane Deeringer, Holland; Bob Hagen, Jewell.

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by President Roger Bissen.

The Harlan Fire Department Honor Guard presented the colors.

Mark Johnson welcomed everyone on behalf of the West Des Moines Marriott.

West Des Moines Fire Chief Don Cox welcomed everyone to the city of West Des Moines. He commented on the legislation issue of the joint training facility and said he thought that with the changes that had been made the fire service was well represented and that the money was going to be controlled by a neutral party. He also talked about a summit that they were having with all the schools in the district about school security. He urged everyone to talk to their schools because some schools are taking initiatives on their own that may be against fire code such as some types of locks.

Resolution # 1 – Gene Evans:

To the members of the Iowa Firefighters Association assembled here in West Des Moines, Iowa on this 6th day of April in the year 2013.

WHEREAS: We would like to thank the West Des Moines Marriott, the West Des Moines Fire Department, the Mid Year Committee and the citizens of West Des Moines for their gracious hospitality

THEREFORE: Let it be resolved that this resolution be passed by a standing ovation from all members present at this annual Mid Year meeting of the Iowa Firefighters Association.

Respectfully submitted by the Resolutions Committee.

President Bissen asked all first time attendees to stand to be recognized. He thanked them for coming to the meeting and asked them to gather at the break for a picture.

Guests:

Muscular Dystrophy Association: Elizabeth Simpson & Marcie, Sid and Ella Strouse

Elizabeth Simpson of the Cedar Rapids MDA office spoke to the members present. She said they work with a lot of the departments with the Fill the Boot campaign. In Iowa alone they raised over \$400,000 last year to help families get flu shots, clinic visits, wheel chairs and equipment and attend camp all thanks to those donations. They are always looking for more departments to join the Fill the Boot campaign. There are 2500 families in Iowa fighting muscular dystrophy. She attended the convention meeting in Manchester last September when Travis Krapfl's mom spoke at the IFA meeting. Travis passed away just a few days later. She said the support that was shown to the family by the firefighters that had never even met Travis really meant a lot to the family. She introduced Sid and Ella Strouse. They are 9 year old twins. They got to go to camp for the first time last year and had a blast. Camp is June 23 – 28 this year at Camp Courageous in Monticello and everyone is welcome to come out on Sponsor Day which is June 26th starting at 1:00 so you can see where your dollars go and what the kids get to do. Liz introduced Sid and Ella's mom, Marcie. Marcie said Sid and Ella were born 13 weeks early and only weighed 2 lbs each so they had a struggle from the start. They were 7 before they got the diagnosis of Carnitine Deficiency. The best part of that was that it is part of MDA. They were able to get involved and be part of a community that understood the struggles that they were going through. Sid and Ella are optimistic and hopeful and that makes her want to work harder every day to make sure that other kids like them get the support that they need. Getting to go to camp last year was huge for them. They had the time of their lives and were with other kids that are like them. They got to do things that they normally wouldn't get to do. The family is also very engaged with their local firefighters. They helped them with the Fill the Boot and stood at a busy intersection and they were blown away by the number of people that stopped and put money in the boot. Sometimes people think they don't make a difference, but every dollar really helps and they all add up. MDA relies completely on donations. If you have any questions or your department wants to help contact your MDA office.

President Bissen presented Sid and Ella with IFA fire alarm banks and VP Mark McNees presented them with IFA challenge coins. A boot was passed and \$565.29 was collected. Wendy will send a check to MDA for that amount.

Elks of Iowa – Milt Watkins:

The Elks appreciate what the Iowa Firefighters Association does and they are proud sponsors of the fire safety trailers around the state. They hope the IFA keeps writing the grants and getting the trailers and they will support them.

Iowa EMS Association – Mark McCulloch:

The Iowa EMS Memorial Service will be May 18th at 10:00 a.m. at West Des Moines Public Safety Facility 19, 8055 Mills Civic Pkwy in West Des Moines.

IEMSA Legislative Update: SF 304 – Public Safety Task Force – IEMSA is supporting this.

SF 421/HF 510 – E911 Equalization – These bills equalize the 911 surcharge for cell phones to that of land lines at \$1.00. In the Ways and Means Committees. IEMSA supports both bills.

HF 579 – Medical Malpractice Reform – Makes changes to state law governing medical malpractice lawsuits. IEMSA is neutral until the bill covers emergency medical providers “certified under Iowa Code chapter 147A”.

The IEMSA website is www.iemsa.net .

Iowa Emergency Management Association – Polk Co. Emergency Manager AJ Mumm:

Members of Iowa Emergency Management Association extend congratulations to the fire service for the success of the smoke detector project.

Thank you for including their members in the fire schools. A number of them attend with an informational booth.

Legislative: SF 304 is also strongly supported by the Iowa Emergency Management Association. Their association is also part of the task force and they look forward to working together on this.

They also support the 911 equalization surcharge. An amendment came up earlier that identifies a single point of contact for 911 issues that come up.

There is also a bill on the governor’s desk that elevates the Iowa Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division to a departmental level. It’s largely symbolic but the effective outcome is that it is a more direct relationship between emergency management at the state level and the governor’s office especially during a disaster when time is of the essence.

Important for planning and training to take place together between fire, law enforcement, emergency management, EMS and the schools for disaster events.

Iowa Association of Professional Fire Chiefs – Rex Mundt:

Chief Mundt’s message is the need to be unified in talking to legislators. This was his first year to work with the board of the IFA as President of the IAPFC in the lobbying efforts. He appreciated the professionalism of the board and the welcome he has received. The Firefighter Day on the Hill and breakfast was a phenomenal success. Our strength is in the unity that we are starting to have between the Iowa Fire Chiefs, the Iowa Association of Professional Fire Chiefs and the Iowa Firefighters Association. We have a lot of unified thoughts. We are all firefighters. We have the same desires about our communities, our kids and our fellow firefighters.

Iowa Fire Chiefs Association – Ellen Hagen:

Echoed the sentiments of Chief Mundt. Ellen can remember when there were only about 2 people besides the board that showed up for Firefighter Day on the Hill. It was wonderful to see the turnout this year and how well the boards of the associations are working together.

The Fire Chiefs Workshop is April 20th in Ames.

The 62nd Annual Conference of the Iowa Fire Chiefs Association will be in Story City November 1st – 2nd.

Iowa Society of Fire Service Instructors – Doug Kolkman

2013 marks the 49th year that the Iowa Society of Fire Service Instructors has either assisted or provided professional development to the Iowa Fire Service Instructors.

They have overhauled their website to provide tools and resources for Iowa instructors. Since 2009 they have visited Instructor I courses for the purpose of introducing themselves to instructors. They attend a variety of regional fire schools to set up their display and have face to face contact with other instructors and training officers. They have an active, working relationship with the Fire Service Training Bureau. They have obtained their 501c3 status. They approved at their annual meeting to become an affiliated member of the Iowa Firefighters Association. They are working to establish a dual membership agreement with the International Society of Fire Service Instructors for those instructors that wish to belong to both at a reduced fee. They are working with Randy and the FSTB on planning of Instructor's conference for November 15th – 16th. Later this year they will be looking at a mentoring program to where experienced instructors can provide guidance for new instructors. The Society will begin submitting a monthly instructional article to the *Iowa Firefighter*. A resolution was passed by the board at their last meeting to support and adopt the 16 Life Safety Initiatives and support the Everyone Goes Home campaign. September 1st is the deadline to submit your nominations for Instructor of the Year. You can visit their website under the awards page to look at the criteria.

State Fire Marshal – Ray Reynolds:

Ray thanked the Elks for stepping in and providing funding for a replacement bomb dog. He also thanked the fire service for their support of Commissioner Brian London. They are working on changes to the way they think in the Department of Public Safety. There is increased branding and visibility. They are using more data to make decisions rather than doing it a certain way because that's the way it's always been done. There are over 1400 arson cases in this state that never see an investigation. That is not acceptable. The case load on arsons now is going through the roof rather than undetermined causes and accidentals. They are also adding K9s to their fleets.

As far as the Fire Service Training Bureau – they need facilities and staff. Everyone is working together on the issue of a joint training facility. On the building code side of things they are working to create one class of inspector. When they look at resources, they spend 50% of their time driving rather than inspecting. Schools went to 42% for on-time inspections. That is unacceptable. There are 4000 inspections that need to be done and 11 inspectors. So there are going to be some changes.

A number of departments have been involved in installing smoke alarms and are to be commended. At the end of the year 40,000 smoke alarms will have been installed. Five states are trying to mirror the Iowa effort. 239 departments have been installing smoke alarms. It's not good enough to hand them out. They will end up in a drawer. You have to go out and install them. That is how they save lives.

We are getting energy in the fire service. You guys are the fire service, you are 18,000 strong, if you just pick up the phone one time you can't believe the facilities and the resources you would have. We need to go for the resources that we need to do our jobs. This job doesn't get easier. We need to be vocal.

Ray presented IFA President Roger Bissen with the Stuart Crine award for the support that the association gives to the Fire Marshal's office.

Fire Service Training Bureau – Randy Novak:

SF304 proposes a dedicated trust fund. This would be a funding stream that would alleviate the IFA and other groups from having to fight for the volunteer firefighter training fund every year. This money would be dedicated and go into this fund. It would be used to help fund the cost of training for all the public safety entities that have been included in the bill. For some groups, that's money they've never seen before and for others it is an increased amount of money that we feel is necessary to train firefighters, law enforcement officers and others. The funding as designed was to come off the increased

amount of dollars collected from the 1% tax on fire insurance premiums. They are not going to adjust the 1%, but every year as values go up so does the cost of insurance and so that difference would be what is put into this fund. They would establish a task force that would be put together for the purpose of looking at a mechanism for how that money would be spent, taking some of that money over the next so many years and dedicating it towards a public safety training center where fire, law enforcement, EMS, etc. would all be able to come to train both individually or in some cases have opportunities to train jointly.

It has passed the Senate intact. It went to the House to the Public Safety Committee and the House stripped the dedicated trust fund. It will now go to the full House. Now that there is a difference in versions of the bill it will have to be ironed out between the House and Senate. Keep an eye on this. Go to the website www.legis.iowa.gov and search for SF304 and there you can see amendments that are made and the current version of the bill and the status of it.

The FSTB has received some Federal grants. They are providing some courses for free under a National Fire Academy state training support grant. This year's grant that runs through Sept. 30th was about \$24,000. The window has not opened yet to apply for the automatic grants for next year. There is concern because the sequestration and budget issues are starting to impact the NFA as well as efforts being put forth at a local level. The NFA reaches about 8000 students a year on campus. It's what they do off campus in partnership with the state fire training delivery system that makes up the biggest bulk of the numbers and if the \$24,000 times 50 states disappears that will impact the ability to get training out at no cost. They also received \$250,000 through a Fire Prevention and Safety grant through AFG program for the purchase of a mobile arson lab. This is a 3 room burn trailer that will be used for fire and arson investigator training. Through the IFA the State Fire Marshal's office received a \$245,000 grant to purchase smoke detectors.

A new FFI and FFII program will be rolled out this summer. One option that will be presented will be the opportunity to do a blended learning process where the classroom portion can be done on-line and they will just come in and do the skills portion as a delivery. The standard delivery will also still be available. They are working on Inspector II and are also looking at Fire Officer III and IV. The new Instructor I course has been rolled out and will be rolling out Instructor II and III as combined course. They are working with the volunteer and combination officer section of the International Association of Fire Chiefs on a course called "Leadership Skills for Volunteer Chiefs and Officers". They are going to incorporate the 16 Life Safety Initiatives into courses where they can as well as information from the National Firefighter Near Miss reporting system. They are also working with the Iowa State Patrol, Dept of Transportation and other fire groups to roll out the Crash Scene Management program. It is a 1 – 2 hour program. It reinforces the value of talking about things ahead of time and working in a unified command process to recognize we all have the same goal, safety on the roadway when an incident occurs. They have a new prop for propane for the LP class. They also have a 5 – 6 hour shortened version of Incident Safety Officer class that was initially developed by the National Volunteer Fire Council. They have signed an agreement with the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation to support the *Everyone Goes Home* program through the *Courage to be Safe* and the *Leadership, Accountability, Culture and Knowledge* classes. These classes are free and if you are interested contact the FSTB. The Training Officers Workshop will be Saturday, April 13th in Ames. The Volunteer Fire Chiefs Workshop will be April 20th in Ames. Live Fire Skills will be May 4th. The International Association of Fire Chiefs is holding a class called *Training for Regional Collaboration* and it is meant for senior leaders in all of the public safety organizations and community representatives. The Recruit Academy for new career firefighters is July 22nd – August 2nd. The Hazardous Materials Symposium is October 24th – 25th in Ames. The Instructors Conference is November 15th – 16th. Sign up for automatic e-mail notifications on the FSTB website at www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/fstb as course announcements are made on-line before being sent out.

A motion was made by Jim Shutts, Belle Plaine and seconded by Gene Evans, Osage to approve the minutes of the convention meeting held in Manchester on September 9, 2012. Motion carried.

Executive Director's Report – Wendy Lensing:

President Roger Bissen and his Mid Year Committee did a great job putting the weekend together. We are looking forward to convention this September and the great job we know Vinton and Garrison will do hosting it.

Past due notices have been sent out to departments and individuals that have not paid dues and/or calls yet for 2013.

Have had some calls regarding the \$2000 AD&D policy letters from American Income Life. This is legitimate. Every member of the IFA is now covered with a no-cost \$2000 AD&D policy. If you return the postcard a representative from AIL will contact you and you can name your beneficiary and they will deliver a health savings discount card and child safe kits to you as well as offers for additional insurance which you are under no obligation to purchase. If you don't return the postcard, you are still covered by the \$2000 AD&D policy but any payment would be made to your estate.

Roger, Al and Wendy are traveling to Washington, DC the first week in May to meet with legislators. Meetings are in the process of being scheduled.

The credit card program now has 264 accounts. It is generating in the neighborhood of \$200 + per month. With 15,000 IFA members we could be earning much higher amounts. The IFA receives \$10 for each new account and a percentage of the retailer fees and finance charges. The card has no annual fee, no fees for balance transfers, rewards are earned with every purchase, double rewards for first 60 days, many redemption options, zero liability fraud protection, 24/7 customer service. You can apply on-line through the IFA website or call Wendy and ask for an application.

Scheduling has begun for the Hall of Flame at the Iowa State Fair. Dates are August 8 – 18th. Also looking for drill officials for convention. Let Wendy know if you can help with either of these events.

Financial Report – Wendy Lensing:

The current assets of the Iowa Firefighters Association as of March 31, 2013 are \$598,070.26.

Current assets of the Iowa Firemen's Foundation as of March 31, 2013 are \$68,040.27. That total does include monies that have been deposited for the smoke detector project and not paid out yet. Actual totals for the memorial accounts are about \$26,000.

Motion was made by Pat White, Grinnell and seconded by Kendal Warne, Atlantic to approve the financial report. Motion carried.

Proposed Budget – Wendy Lensing:

The board met in January and put together a proposed budget for 2013. The estimated total income for the year is \$190,800 and total estimated expenses are expected to be \$203,500. That leaves a loss for 2013 of \$12,700.

President Roger Bissen commented that when the board works on the proposed budget they try to be conservative on estimates of income and consider the high end on expenses. Last year was also expected to be a loss but we came out positive. We do have money in savings that can be used to cover expenses if we do in fact have a loss this year.

A motion was made by Al Muhlhause, Maquoketa and seconded by Rusty Hockman, Jewell to accept the proposed budget for 2013. Motion carried.

Audit Report – Mark McNees

Iowa Firefighters Association, Mutual Aid Department, Iowa Firemen's Association Auditing Report: We, the auditing committee, have examined the books of the Iowa Firefighters Association, the Mutual Aid Department and the Iowa Firemen's Foundation for the year ending December 31, 2012. We have compared the books with the financial statements of all divisions. We have reconciled the books with the respective bank account statements, compared the checks written for mutual aid deaths with the completed statements covering the respective death. We have examined other phases of the office operations as we deemed necessary. It is our opinion that the financial operations of the Iowa Firefighters Association, the Mutual Aid Department and the Iowa Firemen's Foundation are in order and the financial statements of all divisions are correctly stated. Signed, Mark McNees, Chair; Marv Trimble; and attested by Roger Bissen, President.

A motion was made by Don Scott, Redfield and seconded by Richard Harman, Cedar Rapids to accept the audit report. Motion carried.

Credentials Report: Dick Frank

Alden – 25, Atlantic – 47, Belle Plaine – 41, Carson – 27, Colesburg – 20, Dyersville – 60, Eldora – 31, Epworth – 60, Forest City – 37, Garrison – 33, Guthrie Center – 48, Hudson – 38, Indianola – 94, Iowa City – 30, Iowa Falls – 42, Jewell – 23, Lake Mills – 36, Lowden – 20, Madrid – 32, Manchester – 43, Maquoketa – 41, Monticello – 39, Osage – 48, Solon – 38, Stuart – 31, Tama – 44, Traer – 33, Urbana – 30, Walker – 35, Waverly – 45, Wellsburg – 26, West Des Moines – 38. Total towns – 32. Total votes – 1235.

Motion was made by Cliff Renslow, Stuart and seconded by Dustin Brown, Liscomb to accept the credentials report. Motion carried.

Officers' Reports:

1st VP – Al Esch:

Things are going pretty well legislatively. Thanks go to the IFA lobbyists John Pederson and Matt Eide and to Capture Marketing for all of their work and expertise. It is frustrating at times. At one point it was thought that the training fund would be getting an additional \$142,000 only to find out that they had cut the original source of that fund by that same amount so it was still level funded. There is still hope to get additional funding before the session is over.

This year's Firefighter Day on the Hill was very successful. This needs to continue. Senators and Representatives do appreciate the phone calls and face to face meetings. They get a lot of e-mails and sometimes we need to go back to basics. Next year's tentative date for Firefighter Day on the Hill is March 17th, St. Patrick's Day. This is a Monday and the legislators are just getting back so the day would not include the breakfast. A breakfast could be held earlier, towards the beginning of the session. The 17th would include partnering again with the Fire Marshal's office for a cook off that could possibly include Irish foods besides the chili and maybe bringing in some pipe and drum corps.

Al serves on the Propane Education and Research Council. That council is responsible for extending the marketing of propane products throughout the state of Iowa. Part of their mission is to educate the public and fire officials on safe handling of the product. The FSTB has been very active in creating a new prop and they would like to see it used throughout the state.

The training fund is a key component of the IFA's relationship with the FSTB and the State Fire Marshal's office. It's a challenge to go in front of the legislators and ask for more money and have it shot down time after time. We try to look at different avenues. SF 304 would address a lot of those. We need to back this. Thanks go to those that have contacted their legislators on this.

Ethics in the fire service has come to light in the past few months. It has to be addressed at some point. There are people within our membership that give the fire service a black eye. Mechanisms need to be

in place to define a process of what happens when a member or board member steps out of line. Whether they are in the by-laws or policies they will need to be well thought out and something we need to be thinking about.

2nd VP – Brad Yeager:

Over the past couple of months I've been honored to deliver certificates totaling 240 years of service. This is something I don't take lightly. It truly is an honor to be invited into your departments to recognize the service and sacrifices made by fellow firefighters and I may not always find the right words to justify all those years. It truly means a lot to be there on those days.

Website has been updated - Looking for someone that knows Wordpress to tweak it. Also, if anyone has experience with Microsoft Access we could use some help updating the member database. Please get in touch with me if you can lend a hand.

Working on updating the candlelight service presentation. Looking for pictures from departments around the state of training events, community events, fires, and department celebrations, especially from past generations. Send photos to byeager@iafireasn.org

We've been working hard to get the new training facility off the ground. This subject has been brought up many times in the past and there are even some hard feelings about it. I wasn't in on those earlier discussions and can only speak about this bill with firsthand knowledge. To follow up on what Chief Cox and Chief Mundt said about being in the game, I believe right wrong or otherwise that Jack got in front of this bill last year and got the IFA in a lead position; putting fire first and making sure that we had a level playing field. It's reassuring to me that in the meetings I've been in about this bill the overwhelming majority of players in attendance have been from the fire side making sure our voice was heard. As this bill moves forward, it's important to note that it does not set up the training facility in any way. This bill lays the groundwork for a building but more importantly puts together a task force made up of us, law and fire association members who are out doing our jobs every day. This task force is where the real work will be done to put a new facility on the map and making sure it has everything we need in a state of the art facility. If you have questions, comments, or concerns let us know.

As Ray said, the new DPS commissioner, Brian London, was confirmed this week. Roger, Randy, Ray and I had the opportunity at fire school to show him what fire training was all about in Iowa. I just wanted to thank him for taking the time to do that to better understand what it is we do and the pride we take in what we do. I have great feeling about our leadership and between Commissioner London, Fire Marshal Reynolds and Bureau Chief Novak our voice will be heard in state government.

3rd VP – Mark McNeas:

Thanks to Chief Don Cox and WDM fire, Roger and DeaAnn and the mid year committee for a great set up here. Good to see so many in attendance and so many friends.

I have had the opportunity the past month to attend two fire dept banquets, one in Exira and the other in Harlan. I had the chance to again see how individual depts. go about recognizing their members and the respect and camaraderie that they share. Being able to present an IFA certificate to someone who has dedicated over 20 years is a special honor (and I would like to add that I presented Roger with a certificate for 25 years) and while everyone is different, I have noticed that those people appreciate the acknowledgement, but they are universally humble and you can that some don't really see themselves as anything special. However, I and everyone in here knows their service to their communities is special and finding people who will continue to learn, and train, and respond for up to 50 years in some cases (such as Paul Shellhase) is VERY special and RARE anymore. I know sitting in front of me in this room are some of the most dedicated firefighters in the state and I am speaking to the choir, but I remind us all that it is our job to continue to nurture and bring along the next generations of leaders and firefighters

for our communities and our state. I am hoping the recruitment and retention program is helping depts. with their membership and encourage everyone to get it into their counties and see what they can glean from the program to help gain and keep firefighters. My work schedule has prevented me from attending some of events that others here have attended and I am hoping in the future things will improve time wise so I can attend even more.

I and the committee are in the process of gathering information from those housing the ELKS and IFA fire safety trailers. Ken Swank, a Shenandoah firefighter, is the ELKS major project SW Iowa director and has been gathering the totals of times and attendance for 2012. We are asking the departments to respond on the immediate and possible future repair needs of each trailer. The ELKS provide funding for repairs as they are reported and as they turned into the organization. Roger is going to meet this month at the ELKS spring convention to meet with their Major Project committee to discuss our working relationship and the needs. I would like to thank the ELKS again publicly for their support of this program and urge everyone to schedule and use these to educate children on fire safety, and you don't have to just wait until fire prevention week either, community events, county fairs, etc. are prime times to utilize the trailers.

We installed a hearing impaired smoke detector this week provided to a deaf couple in Atlantic by the fire marshal's office and since then have had another request. I want to thank Ray for this program that dovetails with the smoke detector project for homes with children. I encourage you to discuss this with the fire marshal office if you have known deaf residents and see if there is a possibility to help protect them from fire in their homes. It's another fire prevention effort we can all easily take part in.

I will let others speak to some of the legislative efforts we are undertaking this year in more depth, but will add that I am pleased that the training facility task force bill is moving forward and that all public safety entities are working together to support this, from fire, to law, to EMS. It's another example of how much we can accomplish if we work together for our betterment, and that of Iowa's citizens. The potential of where this task force can take us is exciting. I also thank all those that have contacted their representatives on this and other issues whether you are a county contact for the IFA or just responding as a firefighter. We can use more so let us know if you are interested in helping us expand our grass roots network.

Another subject that was brought up today is working with the schools on plans for an active shooter. Our county sheriff recently contacted our county association at a meeting and discussed what our role would be in a school shooter activity. Our own school and many others have looked at the ALICE training and discussed it but we are seeing resistance in a couple of districts. The chiefs are trying to set something up but it seems like the schools don't want to admit that there is a possibility that it could happen. I think unfortunately we've seen it can happen anywhere. You need to work with your sheriff's office or local law enforcement if they haven't already contacted you and see how you fit into that program. Most likely it's on the evacuation end of things and getting the students out and to a safe location. You need to know the layout of the buildings and the land and area around it to know where you can be protected and where you can get everyone away and let law enforcement do their job. If they don't know and you haven't preplanned it, flying by the seat of your pants in an event like that is not going to be that successful. It's very dangerous.

And finally we have had some discussions on the board regarding donations to fire departments and how many companies are now demanding that you prove you are a 501c3 or are a part of your city in order to receive their donations. We are looking into finding a professional to write an article or a series to advise and discuss the pros and cons of setting up as an association or setting up trust and agency

accounts within your city accounts. If you have any suggestions on who may be a good source of this information please contact us so we can get this information out to our members.

4th VP – Bill Halleran:

It's always nice to come to Mid Year and see so many people that you only get to see and visit with a couple times a year.

Thank you to all the county contacts that we have out there. Your work is paying off and very well received. One thing we still need to work on is even if you aren't one of the designated county contacts, we need everyone to get a hold of their legislators and assist with our efforts. Firefighter Day on the Hill was very well received. It's nice to see more and more firefighters attending. The joint training facility will be a very, very good thing. Next year's chili cook-off is proposed to be a "Crock-pot creation" so prepare your recipes accordingly.

Certificate presentations have been talked about and we really do enjoy doing those. It is nice to present the certificates and honor those that deserve it for the years of service they have given. Try to contact Wendy or one of the board members well in advance. With our calendars and schedules at home and work it is hard to get everything covered.

5th VP – Marv Trimble:

Firefighter Day on the Hill was a great success. I heard from everyone how much it has improved. Hopefully it will keep getting better. We need to be sure we are there with a united front. I can feel things coming together with all the other entities. It's like a rope – if everyone pulls in the same direction we're strong as can be, but if someone starts pushing or going different directions, you don't get anywhere. We need to keep working together and get this done.

Certificates were talked about and I remember when I received my 30 year certificate, Ellen Hagen drove in a snow storm to present it. I couldn't believe she did that and very much appreciated that. I know how I appreciated it, so I am willing to go out and do this for other people.

Garrison has been installing smoke detectors in homes for about 10 years and making sure they are working and had fresh batteries.

I attended the 3 day Wide Area Search Class with Iowa Task Force 1. That is a resource that is out there. If you have something and you're not sure your department can handle it, Task Force 1 can step in and help you. That is what they are there for. This Wide Area Search can be a missing child, someone that hasn't been seen for a while, someone that walked away from a nursing home, etc. The resources are here, you just need to ask for them.

I'm going to put a training item in each one of my articles. The last one was calling a May Day. When you go out to help others, you have to take care of yourself first. You have to remember that.

Past President – Jack Runge:

The NFIRS system is up and running and about 75% of the departments are now reporting which covers about 95% of the population. That is key when we go to Des Moines and try to tell our story to the legislators. They love to hear the numbers. With the increased accuracy of the reporting we are finding that the fire service in Iowa is responding to twice as many calls as previously thought.

I'm optimistic. I think we will get the task force for the joint training facility passed this year. Next year in our legislative session may be the most important year for the fire service in recent history. How we guide this task force, our visibility on the hill next year will be the most important in could ever be. We have our liaisons for the counties now; Firefighter Day on the Hill is established; I want to throw another challenge out there. When we have our legislative breakfast and the legislators come to the door, the first thing they ask is, "Is there someone from my district here?" They love being there and having their picture taken with someone from their district and have it posted on their website. With schedules what

they are I like what Al said about the breakfast being one day and Firefighter Day on the Hill and the cook off being another day and that way we get two chances to be there. Another organization I'm with does it a bit differently and they have an individual day on the hill. If you have a day that works for you or your fire department to come to Des Moines and meet with your legislators, give Wendy or one of the board members a call and we'll get you hooked up with John Pederson. Take a day and go to the hill. When you talk to them it brings home the fact that this is important in their own district.

We've talked about the certificates and it is great to go out and do these and see the people that have dedicated their entire life to the fire service.

Jack talked about the smoke detector installation that was done in Lake City following the fatal fire there.

Following the installation of detectors throughout that community Jack went with Ray to deliver a LODD death check for the LODD that occurred in Gilmore City last year. This was the result of a heart attack that occurred while on way to a fire.

Jack had written an article for the paper about physicals. He received many calls on that, but 50% of all LODDs are heart attacks and strokes. We have to think about that. If we address it ourselves it will get handled right. If we let someone else do it, it may not get handled right.

President – Roger Bissen:

As you start out on the board and move up through the ranks, you start out on the board as 5th VP and really don't know what to expect. As you move up through you get more involved and last year I was invited to a lot of meetings with Jack and this year Al and I have gone to different meetings. The doors open for us and we get into these meetings where we are really making a difference and I'd like to thank Randy and Ray and Commissioner London for all of their efforts and allowing us to be a part of that. We have a lot of respect when we go to the capitol. They understand we are representing the fire service. This is not just in Des Moines but last year I had the privilege of going to Washington, DC and we have the same respect in Washington, DC. They know who we are and what our mission is. That doesn't happen overnight. That happened over the years and I see many past presidents and you folks have set that groundwork for us. We thank you for establishing that. I look down both sides of these tables and I see the professionalism here. Everyone has their own unique characteristics that they bring to the table. It all makes everything work very well. I've been amazed this year at the different involvements and meetings I've seen. This all can't happen without a hub and that is Wendy. She keeps us going in the right direction.

Some of the others talked about going out and doing the presentations and I've had the opportunity to do that as well. A couple of weeks ago I went to Walnut and I had the privilege of presenting a 50 year certificate to their former chief. One of their members also has had some medical complications due to diabetes. He had a double amputation. His name is Gene Eblen and he works for Raycom. They are having a fundraiser on May 11th to help raise some money to modify his house and make it easier for him to get around. If you can go to Walnut that day that would be great and if you can't I'm sure they could use some support.

At the convention meeting I talked about the Administrative Rules change for the Firefighter plates. We've been trying to work on allowing those of you that have firefighter plates to be able to keep your same number if you wish when new plates are issued for your vehicle. It is finally coming down to the end and there will be an administrative rules meeting next week. The way the rule reads is this:

401.9(4) Plates. *Firefighter plates are limited to five characters. Personalized plates are not available. When a new series of firefighter plates is issued to replace a current series or the plate has been lost, stolen, or damaged, an applicant may obtain replacement plates containing the applicant's previous plate number upon payment of the statutory fee.*

That statutory fee is \$25. That is where things stand now. I plan to attend the meeting. Does anyone have any comments or concerns? The goal is for you to be able to keep your same plate number if you want to. Rusty Hockman asked if that was a change in fees. He said he had gotten replacement plates with the same number in the past for \$5. Roger said he would check. Roger said he tried to get new plates last year and could not get the same plate number. Beginning in November at renewals you will be issued a new plate number unless you pay to keep your same plate number. Jim Huber asked if it was a one-time fee or annual fee. Roger said it is one-time fee until possibly the next time the plates are up for replacement again. These plates were issued in 1994 so they are 20 years old for those that got them when they first came out.

Several of you talked about having meetings with your schools on school safety. In Harlan we have set down with Emergency Management, Sheriff's Office, Police Department and our school and we've been putting together a plan. We are getting to the point where we're just about ready to have a table top and something else that we have started to do is and it will be implemented real soon is that under Harlan Fire we are going to have a Tactical Medical Team. That is a group of 9 people that is doing extensive training with law enforcement and they will be going into the hot zone too. If you are interested in that or would like to know more about it get in touch with me.

At 12:10 the meeting recessed until 1:15 p.m.

John Jensen, DSM Firefighter:

John talked about the Detroit "BURN" movie. John saw the movie back in January and was inspired to bring it to the Des Moines Fire Department to help promote it. It is a documentary film that was produced last year in regards to the dilemma that they have in Detroit. The producers were on vacation in Detroit and there was a firefighter fatality while they were there. They wanted to know why it wasn't a big issue up there. After they investigated and went through the economics of it they wanted to bring the firefighter's service to light for the community and it's just kept building on that. It talks about the economic downturn of Detroit, some mismanagement, but at the same time, we as firefighters need to have the equipment, the support, the camaraderie of our own department.

John thanked Roger and the IFA for supporting this and spreading the word about the movie.

Committee Reports:

NVFC – Bob Platz and Brian Seymour:

They showed a 5 minute video on what the NVFC does.

Brian Seymour:

Iowa is part of the NVFC's All-State Membership program. You can find information on our website. Membership in NVFC is only \$15 for members of the IFA. Iowa has 143 members in the NVFC. Overall membership in the NVFC is just under 20,000. 11,000 of those members are from North Carolina with the balance coming from the remaining 48 states. The NVFC only represents 49 states because Hawaii is all career and does not have membership in NVFC. There are many benefits. Consider joining NVFC. The fall meeting took place during convention in September. The next meeting will be in May in DC. The biggest hot topic right now is the fire grant program and trying to maintain those funds. Current cuts are not affecting grants as of today but staffing cuts, etc. are delaying things.

Some of the legislative items being looked at by NVFC in order of priority are: AFG/SAFER grants, Volunteer Emergency Services Recruitment and Retention Act, Volunteer Responder Incentive Protection Reauthorization Act, the USFA (they have taken significant cuts lately – since 2002 there has been a 35% cut to Fire Administration).

The NVFC has in the past been primarily focused on the fire service but as EMS has become a bigger part of the fire service there has been a larger representation of EMS as part of the NVFC also.

There are several training opportunities within the NVFC. You can contact Bob, Brian or Randy. These are primarily programs that can be conducted at a fire school. They are: Recruitment and Retention for the Volunteer Emergency Services; Grant Writing for Emergency Services; From Volunteer to Combination and Making that Transition; Leadership and Department Management; Starting and Implementing a Fire Corps Program; Incident Safety Officer Training; BEST Safety Management Training. Another benefit that NVFC provides is some disaster relief for volunteers that have been hit by disasters themselves. Iowa took advantage of this benefit a few times, most notably following the Parkersburg tornado. They are asking for help for this fund. The fund has taken a pretty severe hit following the Hurricane Sandy disaster. If anyone wishes to make donations to this fund contact Bob or Brian. Don Scott said that while we were on the subject of disasters that two of the Iowa representatives that voted against the Hurricane Sandy legislation. He feels we should look at why they did that. Iowa has benefitted a lot from disaster relief and so they should look at that. Brian said hopefully that could be addressed.

Another thing to be aware of if you have fees for ambulance services and you charge for your services you can expect a 2% cut from Medicare based on their federal cutbacks.

The National EMS Advisory Council was put together a while back. One of the volunteer reps on that council is Katrina Altenhofen from Washington, IA. She is the State Emergency Medical Services for Children Program Director and she is also a volunteer paramedic, so Iowa has a voice on that council. They met at the end of last year and established 5 working groups: Leadership Development Planning in EMS; NEMSIS: Achieving it Full Potential for Advancing Healthcare; Fatigue in EMS; Compiling Evidence to Discuss the EMS Education Agenda for the Future; Improving Internal NEMSAC Processes. The fall meeting will be in College Station, TX at the end of October 31st – November 2nd.

Brian serves on the regional development committee for NFPA. I have the opportunity to represent the state and provide input on the code standards. He is also on the wireless radio committee. The NVFC recently started an International Membership program and Brian serves on the International Committee as well. Italy is the first International Membership that they have received.

Bob Platz: Bob is the chair of the conference and education committee. They set up the conferences and the education that takes place at the meetings. Bob tried to get the meeting dates for NVFC to come before the board trip to DC like they used to rather than after but that didn't work out. When the NVFC meeting dates were at the beginning of the week the board was able to attend some of the meetings, especially the legislative committee meeting, before going to meet with legislators. They are going to have a legislative webinar on May 1st though so that the board will have the latest information.

Bob read AFG and SAFER grants in Maryland last fall. Things have been moving slowly but money is starting to go out. About 3 weeks ago he went to Atlanta, GA to read FP&S grants so those should start coming out soon also.

An e-mail just went out asking everyone to contact their representatives and have them sign on to a letter to not cut funding to AFG/SAFER for 2014.

NVFC is starting a mentoring program for grant writing. If you have never gotten a grant let Bob know and he'll try to get you on the list and they will go through different things with you on the computer as much as they can to try to help with areas that may be causing difficulties.

Memorial Committee – Mike Reuman:

The 19th Annual Memorial Service will be Sunday, June 9th at 10:30. The candlelight service will be Saturday night, June 8th. If anyone is planning to attend they can always use help setting up and tearing down. The next cutoff date for adding names to the wall is May 10th.

Next year will be the 20th Anniversary. Rusty Hockman and Jack Runge are going to work together to design a challenge coin for the 20th Anniversary.

Mike Kuk that does the music for the memorial service every year has retired as the Chief down in Ft. Polk, LA in December. His back is shot and the big speakers and a lot of the equipment that is used at the memorial service is his. He hauls all that up here from Louisiana. Loading all that stuff is getting to be too much for him. He considered selling everything but has instead decided to donate most of that equipment to the Iowa Firefighters Memorial. It's a gift that is just short of \$7000. It is all in good shape and should last the memorial for many years to come. If you are at the memorial service this year be sure to thank Mike. Coralville FD has agreed to find a place to store the equipment so that it will be in a climate controlled environment.

President Bissen added that the next Board Meeting will also be on Saturday, June 8th at 1:00 p.m. in Grinnell so you can go to the meeting and then go on to Coralville for the candlelight service that evening.

Legislative Committee – John Pederson:

There are four weeks left in the session. The Democrats control the Senate 26-24 and the Republicans control the House 53-47. We are one of 3 states in the country with a split legislature. Governor Branstad is a Republican. When his budget came out it was status quo for the training fund at about \$725,500. Last year we tried to get an additional \$70K that was stripped out in the end. This year there was \$142K from the cigarette safety fund and John talked to some legislators about getting that moved to the training fund. They went along with that and then when the House budget came out they had taken \$142K out of the budget in hopes it would be replaced by the cigarette funds. So now we are back to trying to get the budget back to the governor's recommended budget and adding the \$142K on top of that. That budget starts in the House so we will continue to work with Gary Worthan and other members to get additional dollars in there.

As far as the budget in general between the House and the Senate they are anywhere from \$300M-\$400M apart on what they want to spend. Iowa is in great shape. By the end of the fiscal year with the rainy day fund we probably have over a \$1.3 billion in the bank. They will never touch the \$600M rainy day fund but they won't leave without having some of those extra funds go to property tax relief or schools or something. They will spend some money but they need to come to an agreement and right now they are miles apart.

We've been very successful moving the statewide public safety training facility forward. They have allocated \$50K for this task force that was set up.

Firefighter Day on the Hill was very successful. Many of you were there and it was much appreciated. It's a very effective way to get our message out and we hope it continues to grow. It is a great asset to have everyone talking to their legislators.

Some Action Alerts will be coming out to have you contact your legislators, particularly about the training funds.

One of the things that we will be adding eventually is a fund for the training facility itself. We want to be able to collect donations too, not only state appropriations. What this will do is allow us to get more stable funding for our training so we don't have to beg and plead every year.

Something else being discussed right now is the 911 equalization bill. This is to bring cell phone fees up to the same \$1 level as land lines since land line numbers are dwindling and additional funds are needed to continue to fund E911 across the state.

For next year we will start early, particularly with the governor's office, to reiterate our need for more training dollars. It is important for the governor to hear from us early so that he puts something in his budget for training and other things we may need. A lot of times legislators ask, "Is it in the governor's budget?" If it isn't then it is easy for them to say they are trying to stick to the governor's recommendations. So we will work hard to get the funds increased in the governor's proposed budget.

We encourage you to continue to meet with your legislators any time you can and keep building those relationships.

Convention Committee – Brad Yeager:

Convention Committee had a phone conference to discuss a few things in the convention contract that we have the convention host sign. These things are moving up the date for final payments and reports to IFA to December 1st following convention to keep things in the same accounting year and also asking the hosts to pay a portion of the registration fees after Mid Year so that if things don't work out well we have at least collected some of our money. So we are asking the host town to pay \$4000 by July 1st with the remaining amount of the registration fees due by December 1st. The other thing was that years ago we started a reimbursement program where up to \$4000 of the expenses incurred by the host town for upgrades and repairs to the equipment could be reimbursed by the IFA upon presenting receipts for and explanations of upgrades and repairs that were done. That has worked well to make sure that upgrades are done as well as keeping the cost of the equipment down. It was initially put in place for a 5 year period. That has already passed. The committee was asked if we should continue that, do away with it, and if it continued for how long? The majority felt it should be continued for another 5 years.

Brad Yeager made a motion that the IFA continue the convention equipment reimbursement through 2017. It was seconded by Mark McNees. Motion carried.

Hall of Flame Committee – Rusty Hockman:

We had a pretty good run at the fair this past year but if you were there during the first 5 days you may have noticed that Sparky took a little vacation this year. He had spinal surgery on Thursday night. He went home with Rusty and relaxed and had some additional surgery and made it back on Monday to work the rest of the fair.

The Stop, Drop and Roll mat is starting to show some wear and we may need to start thinking about replacing that.

We have not picked a color for the shirts for this year yet. Rusty threw pink out for an idea and it wasn't very well received.

Unfinished Business – None

Resolutions – None

New Business :

Drills – Wendy Lensing:

There was an issue last year during drills where a department had a participant that was new on the department and they accidentally had not gotten him signed up as a member of the IFA. In order to be sure that this doesn't happen when you bring in your drill entries to the table we will be checking the participant names against the membership list. This will take some additional time so please be patient and please make certain all members attending and participating in drills are IFA members.

Jeff Gore, Eldora:

Jeff talked to several past presidents and board members and by no means wants to pick on anyone in particular but would like to see a solution to problems that occurred during Mid Year registration of long lines. He would like the convention committee to look into making some standards or guidelines for the registration day at Mid Year.

Good of the Association:

Tom Campbell, Panora:

I, Tom Campbell, make a motion that Past President Mike McKinnon be revoked of his Lifetime Membership and Past President Benefits and or Recognitions from the Iowa Firefighters Association. Motion was seconded by Leon Abels, Wellsburg.

Roger Bissen: This subject could have legal ramifications to the Association so please make your comments appropriately.

There was no discussion. Motion carried.

IFA Scholarship – Cliff Renslow:

Cliff Renslow presented this year's IFA scholarship to Cass Fox from Center Point and plans to go to school at Kirkwood Community College for Fire Science.

Cass accepted the award and thanked the IFA for the opportunity. He knows that firefighting is what he wants to do he wants to gain as much knowledge as he can and this scholarship will help him along that path.

Marv Trimble – Garrison:

Marv first said he felt Jeff Gore's pain. He said they didn't realize how badly they messed up until they got here. He agreed there should be some guidelines so that it is the same every year. He said Grinnell has been asking some great questions and he knows that if they know they should be ready to go by noon or 1 p.m. or whatever, they will be ready.

Numbers from registration so far: Golf – 76 (about 2/3 full); 136 bowlers (about ½ full); 919 camp spots (62% full) and 84 registrations.

Gene Evans – Osage:

10th Annual Guns and Hoses Memorial Motorcycle Ride will take place on September 11th starting in Osage. There will be a memorial service honoring those that have gone before us and then they will depart working their way over toward the Mississippi River. Watch the website. More details will be coming as the date gets closer.

Roger Bissen –

Happy Hour begins tonight at 6 p.m. and the banquet begins at 7 p.m.

Al Muhlhausen, Maquoketa:

I would like to announce my candidacy for 5th Vice President of the Iowa Firefighters Association. I have the blessing of my wife and children, my fire department, and my employer. I'm asking for your support at the Vinton/Garrison convention. If you'd like to speak to me or have a person to person chat I have some cards with me and can hand them out to you with my information on there and you can get ahold of me.

Listening to some of what was said today – ALICE training, get the superintendent involved and it will go a lot easier. They just had 2 days of training in Monticello.

Jim Shutts, Belle Plaine:

I too am asking for your vote for 5th Vice President of the Iowa Firefighters Association. I announced this at convention last fall. I want to stress this to people; I've been really involved since I originally ran for 5th VP. I feel that the Iowa Firefighters Association has given me a lot through the years and I want to return some of that. Any of you that want to ask me some questions I will be here and my e-mail and phone numbers are on the letter that is on the IFA website. I would appreciate your support.

Kirk Rice – Iowa Falls:

Iowa Falls FD is having an open house on May 4th from 7 – 11. There is a free breakfast.

Also Jeff Fiscus, the mayor of Alden asked Kirk to let everyone know that Alden FD is celebrating their 100th year on June 15th. The parade is at 11:00 and he is inviting all the Past Presidents. They have a trailer for all the Past Presidents and current board to ride on. They are having a cook-off for beef and pork. Jeff Fiscus is the contact for any information and his e-mail is jfiscus@ifacadets.net . They are selling coins if you are a collector of the coins.

Meeting adjourned 2:19 p.m.