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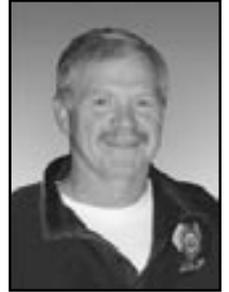
Professional Firefighters Newsletter

August 2003--Inaugural Issue

Welcome to our Newsletter...

Think of a name and win a free PFFUI golf shirt!

I am pleased to send you this first issue of the NEW Professional Firefighters of Indiana newsletter. Your State Union Executive Board will determine how this newsletter evolves based on your input to the Executive Board. They will be asking the Local Union leadership at the state districts meetings. Please send your ideas. This is your State Union and we are only effective if you are involved.



The look of this publication will change in the future, and we will have articles from each of the four districts, which make up the State Executive Board along with articles from Vice President Chuck Sosbe and myself. We will also reprint important articles from other publications on issues you need to know.

The name of the publication will also change. I will be taking suggestions via email (hanify@indy.rr.com) to consider the new name. The brother or sister who submits the name we use will receive a PFFUI golf shirt. If more than one person submits the name selected, the winner will be chosen from a random drawing.

I hope this quarterly publication will be the anchor of many changes in our State organization. Our ability to communicate with you, the membership, is pivotal, if we hope to enhance our lobbying efforts at the Statehouse and around the great state of Indiana. In future articles, I will discuss our plans in more detail for building our organization.

Please check out our new and improved web site at www.pffui.com

I hope all of you consider the purchase of our new career firefighters' license plate. The funds raised from this new plate will help fund our efforts around the State.

Fraternally,

Tom Hanify

Indiana State Executive Board

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Be Careful What You Ask For...

The unintended consequences of eliminating Social Security offsets

A recent congressional hearing has raised the prospect of expanding Social Security to all public sector employees as a way to eliminate two Social Security offsets that penalize retired firefighters and others. The May 1 hearing before House Subcommittee on Social Security was the first public airing of an issue that had long been quietly rumored: Any plans to eliminate both the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) are inevitably linked to mandatory Social Security coverage.

Firefighters who do not pay Social Security payroll taxes but qualify for Social Security benefits, either by paying into Social Security at a second job or because their spouse is covered by Social Security, may see their benefits reduced by the two offsets. This is the result of two laws, one passed in 1977 and the other in 1983, to eliminate what legislators called "windfalls" for public employees who received both Social Security benefits and a government pension from non-Social Security covered employment.

The GPO reduces the amount that a firefighter can receive from his or her spouse's Social Security, roughly equivalent to the amount of their non-Social Security firefighter pension. And for firefighters who contribute to Social Security from a second job, the WEP reduces their Social Security benefits on a sliding scale.

For several years, public sector organizations have walked a fine line between advocating the elimination of the offsets, while defending pension systems that are outside of Social Security. This balancing act is even more complicated now, since lobbyists for these groups (including the IAFF) must pick which issue is more important to their members.

While the IAFF has long opposed offsets, protecting firefighter pensions systems remains a top priority. "We will not be party to the dismantling of carefully crafted firefighter retirement systems," said General President Schaitberger. "We will continue to seek to eliminate the offsets, but not at the expense of our members' retirement security."

Legislation to repeal the offsets has been introduced in both the House and Senate, and the bills have been gathering steam. Most congressional observers believe the controversial offset issue will not be addressed until Congress tackles the much more complicated issue of broad Social Security reform - something that is unlikely to happen until after the 2004 presidential election.

Advocates of repealing the offsets before Congress considers overall reform are looking for ways to make their proposals more affordable and defensible, and mandatory coverage of public employees appears to answer both of those needs. Whether or not there will be a formal proposal linking the two issues remains to be seen.

For more complete information on the effect of current offsets, visit the IAFF web site

<http://www.iaff.org/across/news/archive2002/jf02field2.html>

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President James Gream (right) of New Albany Local 410 along with FOP Lodge 99 President Dow O'Neal cohosted the 1st New Albany Candidates night. Over 15 New Albany candidates attended and had an opportunity to speak.



Indiana Professional Firefighters Special Recognition License Plate

Available January 1, 2004

The Indiana Firefighters' special recognition license plate is available to Firefighters and their families along with individuals who want to show their support for the career Firefighters in the state of Indiana.

The funds collected by the Professional Firefighters Union of Indiana, the Indiana Firefighters Association, and the Indiana Fire Chiefs Association will be dedicated to the education and development of firefighters in leadership positions throughout the state of Indiana in these organizations.

The cost to individuals for the special recognition plate is \$40.00. A \$25.00 check or money order must be remitted to the PFFUI Secretary-Treasurer at the time of the request for application from the PFFUI. At that time, the individual will designate which agency the application fee will be donated to:

- *The Professional Firefighters Union of Indiana
- *The Indiana Firefighters Association
- *Indiana Fire Chiefs Association.

The Bureau of Motor Vehicle will collect the remaining \$15.00 of the fee when the individual takes the firefighter license plate application to their local license branch to obtain their plate.

These plates are available for any passenger vehicle, trucks under 16,000 pounds gross vehicle weight, and recreational vehicles. They are not available for motorcycles.

To apply for an Indiana Professional Firefighters' plate, you must first obtain an authorization form by the following method:

Send a \$25 check or money order per plate request to:

PFFUI
PO Box 15735
Ft. Wayne, IN 46885-5735

At this time, please designate in writing which agency to dedicate your \$25 donation.

Your authorization form(s) will be validated and sent back to you. After January 1, 2004, you may take the form to your local license branch to obtain your plate(s).

If you have any questions please contact the PFFUI Secretary-Treasurer Michael Pinkham at 260/414-6889 or Secretary@pffui.com

Indiana Professional Firefighters
Special Recognition License Plate
Specific Number Requests

1-9999 (DO NOT BEGIN WITH ZERO)

Individuals may request a specific number for the Indiana Professional Firefighters license plate. An additional \$30.00 'pull fee' will be assessed for this request at the BMV when you obtain your plate. This fee is only assessed once during each plate cycle when new plates are created. The next plate cycle begins in 2007.

You may only request specific numbers, no letters or words. All requests must be in writing and in addition to the number requested, you must indicate your name, address, telephone number, and the license branch you will pick your plate up at after January 1, 2004.

NUMBER REQUESTS ARE A LIMITED ONE-TIME OPPORTUNITY. REQUESTS MUST BE RECEIVED PRIOR TO AUGUST 25, 2003.

MAIL YOUR REQUEST TO:

MICHAEL PINKHAM
PFFUI SECRETARY-TREASURER
P.O. BOX 15735
FORT WAYNE, IN 46885-5735

Secretary@pffui.com

If more than one individual requests a specific number we will conduct a random drawing to award the number and notify you whether or not you received your request.

If you have more than one vehicle for which you wish to obtain specific numbers, you may request additional numbers. Each specially requested plate will be assessed the \$30 pull fee.

Calendar of Events



August 5, 2003

PFFUI Committee Meetings

Courtyard by Marriott Downtown Indianapolis,
501 West Washington Street - Noon

August 6, 2003

Roberts Rules of Order Seminar

Local 416 Hall - 1:00 p.m.

August 7, 2003

PFFUI Executive Board Meeting

Local 416 Hall - 8:30 am

August 16-17, 2003

**Fort Wayne Local 124 26th Annual
Hoosier-Buckeye Tournament**

Kreager Park, Fort Wayne, IN - Cost: \$135.00
prior to August 4, 2003 \$150.00 after
Hotel: Holiday Inn Northwest (260) 484-7711
Contacts: Jim Kohrman 260-625-6452 (H)
260-427-1275 (S) kohrman185@comcast.net
Joe Tarney 260-485-6446 (H) 260-427-2188 (S)
joetarney@cs.com

August 25, 2003

Special Recognition License Plate

Deadline for ordering specific number for the
license plate. Available January 1, 2004
See article on page 3 for details.

August 28, 2003

Gerald Freed Memorial Golf Outing

Presented by Elkhart Local 338
Registration deadline August 24, 2003

Contact: Elkhart Local at 574-361-7894 or
Rick Truex at home 574-522-1771

October 5-9, 2003

IAFF Redmond - San Francisco, CA.

October 11, 2003

Angola Local 3962 presents

“Fire Officer Leadership and Development”
Instructor: Dennis Compton

Fire Chief (Retired) Mesa, AZ Fire Department
Angola High School Auditorium

Course Fee: \$60.00 per person - Limit: 250 people
(Please Register no later than October 1, 2003)

Contact: Brian Bowden bbowden@angolain.org
(260) 665-6840

see www.pffui.com for details.

January 25-28, 2004

IAFF Human Relations Conference

Santa Monica, CA

May 11, 2004

**PFFUI Brian Reed Memorial
Golf Tournament**

Fort Wayne, IN - Riverbend Golf Course

Contact: Mike Pinkham - Secretary@PFFUI.com

May 12-14, 2004

PFFUI State Convention

Fort Wayne, IN

Marriott Hotel

Contact Mike Pinkham - Secretary@PFFUI.com



Professional Firefighters Union of Indiana
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Indianapolis, IN 46202
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