

TEXAS

FIRE FIGHTER

1st Quarter 2019 | www.TSAFF.org

**FIREFIGHTER
DAY AT THE
CAPITOL**

JOIN US IN AUSTIN
MARCH 26

*Helping
Fire Fighters
in Mexico*

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*TSAFF urges passage of legislation targeting
illegal denials of workers' comp coverage*

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The Texas Fire Fighter Magazine

Editor - Brandon Day

Assistant Editor - Cindy Gonzales

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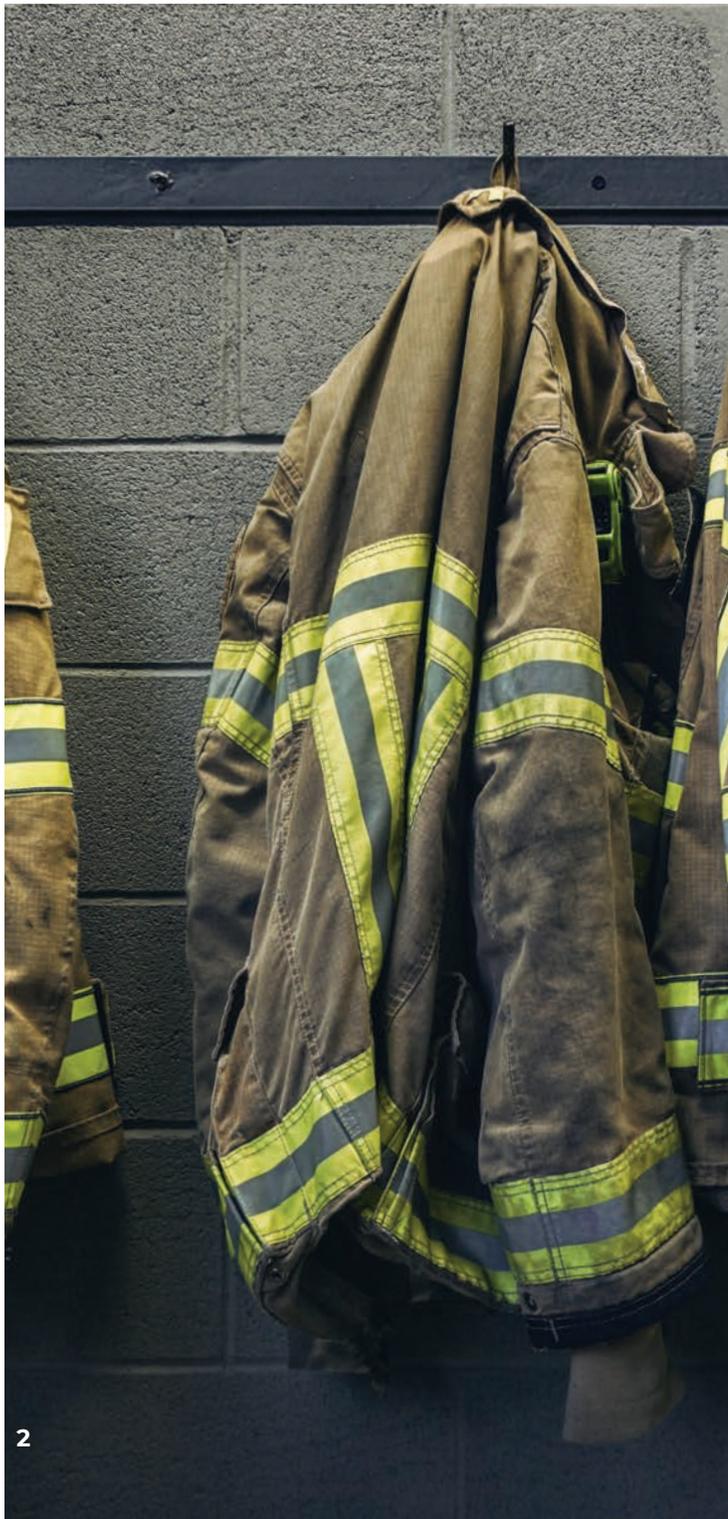
Texas State Association of Fire Fighters

627 Radam Lane

Austin, Texas 78745

(512) 326-5050

FAX (512) 326-5040



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Special Appointments

TLFFRA Liaison - Albert Chapa

TMRS Liaison - David Riggs

District Legislative Agents - David Crow, Lloyd Sandefer, Tyler Houchin, Brad McCutcheon, Mike Silva, Jack Todd

Health and Safety Liaisons - Daniel Buford, Howie Minor, Scott Streater, Scott Robertson, James Younger

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From the President

John Riddle

I hope this newsletter finds you all well. I also hope you hit the ground running to begin 2019, after getting plenty of rest over the holidays, because this year is already extraordinarily busy for us politically.

On January 8, we kicked off the 86th Texas Legislative Session. Many of our Local leaders were in attendance, visiting with their state legislators about firefighter and public safety issues. The TSAFF Fire Fighter Issues book is available to assist you with talking points on many of our most important issues. If you need copies, please contact your District Vice President. I look forward to seeing you in the halls of the state capitol.

At our Legislative Convention last year, we passed resolutions to address several issues ahead of this legislative session. While we will have bills filed to address each of these important issues, our number one priority this session will be reforming the workers compensation insurance system. Medical research shows us that firefighters are diagnosed with cancer at a rate of 63 percent. That harsh reality means that nearly two out of three firefighters will be diagnosed with some form of cancer. Numerous studies have shown links between many types of cancer and firefighting. With ever more proof that firefighters are at higher cancer risks than the general public, it is appalling to me that our workers comp system denies 91 percent of firefighter cancer claims around the state. While cancer claims are not the only problem

with workers comp, it is a glaring one and your TSAFF is committed to shining light on and reforming this broken system.

Last year, your TSAFF was successful in strengthening the regulations for clean gear through the Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP). These rule changes help ensure that fire departments are providing our members with the ability to have clean gear. We also recognized that the cost for extractors or second sets of gear could be burdensome for some departments so, we started promoting the idea of the state providing a grant program that would assist departments with these purchases. Rep. Ken King has filed legislation, HB 319, which will create that grant program. We will be working diligently to help pass this legislation and help identify sources of funding for the program.

Dirty gear is a proven exposure to cancer causing contaminants. As you can see, your TSAFF is working hard to ensure that regulations are in place, programs and funding for the proper equipment are available and that the workers comp system will work if you need it. In the field, we need your help to prevent and mitigate toxic exposures on the fire ground, in the fire station, and elsewhere. So, help keep yourself safe and keep your gear clean.

With all of us working together, I believe we are going to have a very productive and successful 2019.

STAY SAFE!



→ **John Riddle, President**
12615 Brandi Lane
Willis, TX 77378
Cell: (936) 537-0727
E-mail: jriddle@tsaff.org

From the Editor

Secretary/Treasurer
Brandon Day



→ **Brandon Day,**
Secretary/Treasurer &
Editor of the Texas Fire Fighter
731 Baxter Trail
Rockwall, TX 75087
Cell: (214) 415-0201
E-mail: bday@tsaff.org

We are off and running in 2019. There are many things to be aware of, from taxes to Convention. It is a very busy time of year for Locals.

First, most should be gathering tax information and finalizing their 2018 financials. 990s are due the 15th day of the 5th month following the end of your fiscal year. For most of you, that is May 15th. If you bring in under \$50,000 gross for the year, you can file a 990-N. This should be easy for Locals to complete. If you need any help, please reach out to me. If you bring in more than \$50,000 to \$200,000, then you can file a 990-EZ or a 990. At this level it is recommended to reach out to a CPA for help. Over \$200,000, you must file the 990 and once again you should reach out to a CPA for help with this.

For our Locals with private employees, you should be filing your LM report with the Department of Labor within 90 days of the end of your fiscal year. If you are under \$10,000 in Annual Receipts, you can file a LM-4. Over \$10,000 to \$250,000, you would file a LM-3. If you are over \$250,000 in annual receipts, a LM-2 is required. If you need help or assistance, please reach out and we will get you the help you need.

Beginning of the year usually brings officer changes in Locals. Please make sure you are keeping up with the changes by filling out the Local Officer Update form on our website at www.tsaff.org. Speaking of our website, we are in the process of building out a new website and mobile app. Those should be available by May. These updated platforms should allow for better dissemination of information to the members of the TSAFF.

We are almost 1 year into our auto-draft availability. We have over 100 Locals that have taken advantage of this program. If you wish to sign your Local up, the form is on the website or you can email lwright@tsaff.org for a form.

Finally, we are planning for our Biennial Convention in McAllen. This will be approaching quickly. This year, we will be going to total online registration. You will also be able to pay for registration, President's Dinner, and other activities at one time in advance. It will be important that the principal officers of each Local are registered through www.tsaff.org as officers of their Local in order to approve credentials. If you have any questions, please email cindy@tsaff.org.

As you can see there is a lot going on and we didn't even talk about the Session and what work that will bring. I look forward to seeing many of you at Fire Fighter Day at the Capitol

in March. Thank you to everyone that makes this TSAFF what it is and as always if there is anything I can help you with, please let me know.

TSAFF Secretary-Treasurer Workshop

April 16-17, 2019

Hosted by Victoria Firefighters Association, IAFF L-3679

- Two days of hands-on training with emphasis on budgeting and Quickbooks.
- Recommendation: Please bring a laptop computer with Quickbooks Pro installed
- Essentials of Secretary-Treasurer communications.

TSAFF hotel rate will be available soon at:

Homewood Suites by Hilton
6705 N.E. Zac Lentz Parkway, Victoria, TX 77904
361.578.1900

To confirm participation now or for more information, please contact
TSAFF Secretary-Treasurer Brandon Day at bday@tsaff.org



inside HB 1521

TSAFF Urges Passage of Legislation Targeting Illegal Denials of Workers' Comp Coverage

↑ Above: Mission firefighter and cancer survivor Homer Salinas was sued by the City of Mission after winning four rounds of workers' comp proceedings in the fight to get his cancer treatment.

Rep. Dustin Burrows (R-Lubbock) and four joint authors filed House Bill 1521 which would penalize insurers that illegally deny Texas first responders access to medical treatment for line-of-duty injuries covered under state workers' compensation laws.

Filed on Feb. 7, this proposed legislation would amend Section 415.021 of the Labor Code to add sanctions, administrative penalties, and other remedies, including attorney's fees, for administrative violations by self- or collectively insured municipalities obligated to cover eligible workers' compensation claims. The amount of the administrative penalty shall not be less than two times the total amount of benefits payable in connection with the first responder employee's claim.

Rep. Burrows said, "The current workers compensation system for firefighters and police officers in Texas is plagued by delays and abuse. Private insurers have largely been replaced by cities that are either self-insured or in a risk pool. This has resulted in widespread denials and delays by the cities when it comes to nearly any on duty related injury or illness." Joint authors of HB 1521 are Rep. Joe Moody (D-El Paso), Rep. Jeff Leach (R-Plano), Rep. Oscar Longoria (D-La Joya), and Rep. Morgan Meyer (R-Dallas).



TSAFF President John Riddle said, “Texas cities and their workers’ comp administrators, such as Texas Municipal League, too often deny coverage of life- and career-saving medical treatment for firefighters with legitimate insurance claims. Up to now, they have done so with impunity. With state law clearly on our side, Texas firefighters will continue to fight to hold workers’ comp insurers like Texas Municipal League accountable. We thank this bipartisan group of legislators for standing with first responders that become ill or are injured in the line of duty.”

Riddle also thanked the TSAFF team for helping advance HB 1521, including Legislative Director Glenn Deshields, Political Director Joe Tellez, the TSAFF executive board and legislative agents, Johnny Villarreal, and the locals that already are advocating for the bill around the state.”

Riddle added, “HB 1521 clarifies that cities cannot hide behind sovereign immunity when acting as insurance providers. The bill confirms that the state can regulate cities and fine them at least twice the total cost of an injured or ill firefighter’s insurance claim when they violate the law. The bill also allows firefighters to recover legal costs when they are sued by a city and the firefighter prevails.”

Chapter 607 of the Texas Government Code provides that Texas firefighters are entitled to receive the medical treatment they have earned as they risked their own lives protecting others. Yet about 91 percent of Texas firefighter cancer insurance claims are denied despite Texas’ “presumptive” law which covers related medical care, according to the Texas Department of Insurance.

◀ Left-top: Rep. Dustin Burrows, who introduced HB 1521, with Jack Todd, TSAFF District 1 Legislative Agent, at the state capitol.

Left-bottom: Mission firefighters Leroy Garcia, Homer Salinas, Michael Silva and Robert Lopez meet with State Rep. Rep. Oscar Longoria (center) at the state capitol.

TSAFF Seeks Donations of Gear for Fire Fighters in Mexico

Many thanks to Garland Fire Fighters Association for donating a pallet of gear for this restarted TSAFF project to provide donations of decommissioned and new gear to firefighters in the Lake Chapala area of Mexico, near Guadalajara. We are working to provide support to firefighters at some of the 70 fire stations in the area which also is home to more than 100,000 U.S. and Canadian retirees.

TSAFF is working with Lakeside AG, an established international charity with a strong record of success. Its members on the ground in Mexico include retired U.S. and Canadian firefighters, including retired TSAFF members. The charity is well established and registered with the Mexican government and has tax/tariff exemptions and legal releases from the Mexican government regarding donations. TSAFF will coordinate transportation of donated equipment with LAG.

Please contact Erin Powers (epowers@tsaff.org) or Brandon Day (bday@tsaff.org) if you know of sources of gear or can help.

Here's a list of prioritized requests:

- Personal protective equipment, including helmets, hoods, boots, gloves, self-contained breathing apparatus sets, pass/man-down alarms, and breathing air compressors
- Hose lines and nozzles (1 1/2" and 2 1/2") and adaptors (Storz)
- Road traffic collision and rescue equipment
- Paramedical equipment - AED, airway and suction tools, and oximeters
- Paramedic uniforms
- Hand tools, pry bars, hydraulic and screw jacks, wire stretchers, and backboards
- Stabilizing equipment
- Rope rescue equipment sets
- Ladders - 10', 20' and 35'- 45'
- Water pumps - portable and gas-powered
- Hose reel units off of decommissioned fire trucks (with or without small-bore hose reel tubing)
- Thermal imaging cameras
- Ventilation fans for smoke extraction

↓ Caption



District 1

Vice President
Bobby Whiteley

A new year and new energy to go with it I hope because we have a lot on our plate as usual. The legislative session has started and the Board, Staff, DLAs and others are prepared and working daily on our issues. Your pension, dues deduction, workers comp reform, are some of the top issues that will take up most of our time.

Fire Fighter day at the capitol will be March 26th, please attend if you have a chance. Face to face interaction with your lawmakers in Austin goes a long way in our efforts to protect the interests of our profession. Networking with your peers is always an educational experience.

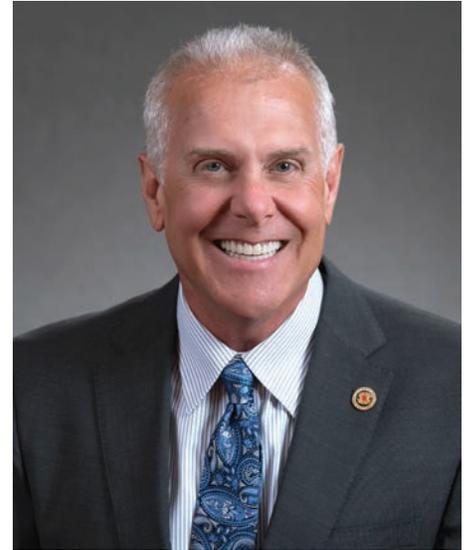
In the last newsletter I asked each of you that read this newsletter to send me an email simply replying “yes” to let me know how many of our Brothers and Sisters are reading it. Apparently, I’m only talking to 9 of you. I would ask the 9 of you to please ask others to read our newsletter. In my opinion we need to revamp this avenue of information to our members so as to engage more of them. Any ideas you have will be of value.

I would like to talk about the changes for our profession. Change is constant. In my career we have gone from:

- Standard transmissions on apparatus to automatic.
- Number one death of fire fighters cardiac to cancer
- Spraying foam on each other during training with AFFF to only using it for emergencies. (Hazardous chemical)
- Easy workers comp issues to fighting for each claim
- Remarkable improvements in our equipment
- Writing a check for dues, to automatic draft

You get the idea, change in constant. I think it is the same with our Union. We provide many more services now than we did 10 or 15 years ago. Our board has our members best interests in mind on how we try to take care your needs. Those who came before us have paved the road that we now drive on. It is our time to continue to make changes that carry us into the next generation.

Protecting and improving your pay, benefits and rights will continue to be priority one. I can foresee that we possibly will need full time board members in the coming years. Most likely not in my tenure but taking care of our issues is becoming an everyday need, not just a day here and a day there. Stay engaged, informed and think about the future of our TSAFF and what you want from your union.



→ **Bobby Whiteley,**
District 1 Vice President
1105 Scott Ave.
Wichita Falls, TX 76301
Cell: (940) 733-4273
E-mail: bwhiteley@tsaff.org

Hope to see you at Fire Fighter Day – let’s network.



↑ TSAFF Secretary-Treasurer Brandon Day, Rep. James Frank, TSAFF District 1 VP Bobby Whiteley, and TSAFF District 2 VP Steve Dorris discussed the ongoing legislative session in Austin recently.

District 2

Vice President
Steve Dorris

We are less than a month into 2019 and it's already shaping up to be a very busy year for your TSAFF. Tuesday, January 8th was the start of the 86th Legislative Session and the TSAFF was there, from Day One, putting in the good work. The Board, Legislative Team and members representing multiple Locals from around the state were there to meet with legislators. We wasted no time laying out our goals for the session as well as delivering several of our 2019 Fire Fighters Issues Books (available on the TSAFF website and app). If you haven't already done so, now is a great time to meet with your legislator(s) to introduce yourself and start building those relationships which are critical to our success. If you would like a hard copy of the TSAFF Fire Fighters Issues Book to give to your legislator(s) when you visit them, let me know and I will get one in the mail to you. Additionally, mark your calendars now for Fire Fighter Day at the Capitol on March 26th. Full details and hotel info will be coming out soon. If you have any questions about our legislative

agenda, the session, etc., do not hesitate to contact myself, District Legislative Agent Brad McCutcheon or TSAFF Legislative Director Glenn Deshields.

Feb. 25-28 - IAFF DVP Sandy McGhee and I will be out in the District for the second leg of Every Local Matters Tour. This one will be a four-day trip meeting with 24 Locals in the northern and eastern parts of the District. Our goal is to answer any questions you have about the TSAFF or IAFF and discuss how we can better serve you and your Local.

I know it's five months out, but it's never too soon to start making plans to attend the 46th Biennial Constitutional Convention, June 24-28. For Locals of 100 or less, don't forget the TSAFF provides a mileage allowance as well as room reimbursement. See Article VII, Section 12 of the CBL for details.

Finally, I would like to welcome several new Presidents around the District:

- Bill Crews (Garland)
- Harlan Owens (Denison)
- Phil Cunningham (Mesquite)



→ **Steve Dorris,**
District 2 Vice President
948 Nightingale Dr.
Allen, TX 75013
Cell: (214) 551-0205
E-mail: sdorris@tsaff.org

- James Dority (Paris)
- Brennan Smithson (Van Alstyne)

Congratulations and look forward to working with you.

As always, if there is ever anything you need do not hesitate to contact me.

← Welcome to members of the Gladewater Professional Fire Fighters Association, a new TSAFF and IAFF affiliate.



District 3

*District 3 Vice President
Aidan Alvarado*

2 019 Begins a New Year and that means the TSAFF Convention is coming to District 3 in the city of McAllen. McAllen Local 2602 is looking forward to welcoming members from across the state and show what their beautiful city has to offer.

Also, with 2019 is the start of a new legislative session in Austin. Work has begun establishing current relationships with familiar Legislators and meeting new members in both the House of Representatives and Senate. Committees in both chambers have recently been announced and now the playing field is settled as to which members we will be discussing the TSAFF agenda to better serve our members. I am excited that our DLA

Program will be active again this session with all six TSAFF Districts represented to assist and keep the line of communications with the Legislators in their respected districts.

As a current board member of my home local in Laredo, I will be in Austin for the 140 days of the 86th legislative session and help the TSAFF in any way possible. I continue to ask that you establish and keep relationships with your home local Legislators so that we can hopefully have a successful session for the TSAFF Members.

I would like to extend to you a Happy New Year and let's work to make 2019 a fruitful one for every member in the State of Texas and I am also looking forward to seeing you in McAllen later this year.



→ **Aidan Alvarado,**
District 3 Vice President
113 Michoacan Loop
Laredo, TX 78045
Cell: (956) 286-3070
E-mail: aalvarado@tsaff .org

FIREFIGHTER DAY

TEXAS STATE CAPITOL

86TH TEXAS LEGISLATURE

MARCH 26, 2019

• PLANNING MEETING WILL BE HELD ON AFTERNOON OF MARCH 25 (LOCATION TBD).

• PLEASE WATCH TSAFF EMAIL / SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATES FOR MORE INFORMATION.



District 4

Vice President
Mark Medrano

2 018 is behind us now and it is time to get ready for a new year!

I want to congratulate newly elected District 4 Presidents, Jeff Nesom of Beaumont, Mac Grace of Lufkin and Brannon Stegal of North Lake Travis. Also, welcome back Port Neches.

Ted Hillin has resigned as the 4th District DLA and his replacement is Lloyd Sandefer from Conroe.

The 4th District DFSR is Marc Clifford out of Killeen. Lloyd Sandefer and I met with Killeen, Waco and Temple to discuss matters going on in their Locals.

IAFF 11th District VP Sandy McGhee and I met with Victoria, Beaumont, Nederland, Port Arthur, Orange, Port Neches and Lufkin

to update everyone on what we are presently doing and where we are going. We will be visiting the rest of the Locals as time permits.

We will be working the Capitol as much as possible during Session. I would highly encourage you to contact your State Representatives and Senators to voice your concerns. Contact Lloyd Sandefer if you have any questions regarding your District.

The TSAFF Convention will be in McAllen, June 24-28. As we become more active, it is important that everyone has a voice at the table when we meet in Mc Allen to have a vote on any Resolutions that come up. "Every Local Matters."

As always, if you need any assistance, please do not hesitate to call. Be safe, Brothers



→ **Mark Medrano,**
District 4 Vice President
119 Caldwell St.
Baytown, TX 77520
Cell: (281) 932-3513
E-mail: mmedrano@tsaff.org



Let's Make a Difference: Donations of Texas Firefighting Gear Sought for Fire Fighters in Mexico

TSAFF is working with Lakeside Assistance Group (LAG), an international charity in the Lake Chapala area near Guadalajara, Mexico. We hope to provide decommissioned equipment and apparatus to firefighters at some of the 70 fire stations in the Chapala area. LAG is well established and registered with the Mexican government and has tax/tariff exemptions and legal releases from the Mexican government regarding donations. TSAFF will coordinate transportation of donated equipment with LAG. Here's some of what the Chapala-area firefighters need:

- Personal protective equipment, including helmets, hoods, boots, gloves, self-contained breathing apparatus sets, pass/man-down alarms, and breathing air compressors
- Hose lines and nozzles (1 1/2" and 2 1/2") and adaptors (Stortz)
- Road traffic collision and rescue equipment
- Paramedical equipment - AED, airway and suction tools, and oximeters
- Paramedic uniforms
- Hand tools, pry bars, hydraulic and screw jacks, wire stretchers, and backboards
- Stabilizing equipment
- Rope rescue equipment sets
- Ladders - 10', 20' and 35'- 45'
- Water pumps - portable and gas-powered
- Hose reel units off of decommissioned fire trucks (with or without small-bore hose reel tubing)
- Thermal imaging cameras
- Ventilation fans for smoke extraction

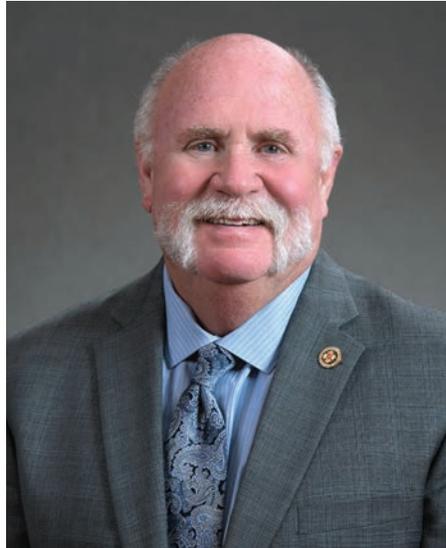
For more information, please contact Erin Powers (epowers@tsaff.org) or Brandon Day (bdlay@tsaff.org).

District 5

Vice President
Curtis Dunn

Well the new year is off to a fast start, a Board meeting, a trip to the capitol to meet our representatives and watch the swearing in from the gallery. The turnout was good from District 5 and congratulations to Arlington President David Crow who was allowed on the floor to stand with Representative Chris Turner as he was sworn into office. The board recently returned from the IAFF ALTS Conference in which we attended classes taught by IAFF staffers and PEP instructors from all over the US and Canada, including Fort Worth President Michael Glynn. The conference was attended by over 1,600 IAFF firefighters. We also marched with the Los Angeles teachers who were on strike for better pay, smaller class rooms and more nurses. The day we marched the teachers settled that afternoon and are back to work.

Firefighter Day at the capitol will be March 26, this year please make plans to attend. On March 25, we will meet to get a briefing on the bills we will be attempting to pass this year. On March 26, we will gather at the Capitol for special recognition in the house and senate gallery. That evening we will gather on the



→ **Curtis Dunn,**
District 5 Vice President
1829 Westcrest Dr.
Arlington, TX 76013
Cell: (817)925-0245
E-mail: cdunn@tsaff.org

roof of the trial lawyers building for fellowship. Please try and send as many of your members as you can for this important day.

In closing, if there is anything going on in your local and would like us to attend please let me know. IAFF District 11 VP Sandy McGee and I have tentatively set March 21-23, as dates to meet with members from District 5. If you would like us to stop by call me and I will put a schedule together. Have a good new year and let's make this a great year for the TSAFF.



Calendar of Events

Dates of events are subject to change.

- IAFF Legislative Conference
Washington, DC
March 10-13, 2019
- TSAFF Executive Board Meeting
McAllen, TX
April 10, 2019
- TSAFF 46th Biennial Convention
McAllen, TX
June 24-28, 2019
- IAFF Redmond Symposium
Nashville, TN
August 19-22, 2019
- Fallen Fire Fighters Memorial
Colorado Springs, CO
September 21, 2019



← Denton Fire Fighters Association L-1291 and the Denton Fire Department co-hosted city council members, news media, and other guests at a recent Fire Ops 101 event and grand opening of a new training facility.

Legislative Report

*Legislative Director
Glenn Deshields*

The 86th Legislative Session has begun with a new Speaker, Dennis Bonnen, and a lot of new committee chairs. The new Speaker will probably be a more hands-on leader than Speaker Straus. That is neither good nor bad. On the committee chair side, I expect a few challenges and some good gains. The membership of our important committees appears to be beneficial to our needs.

Our biggest legislative goal this session is to pass meaningful workers compensation reform. While details of our bill are being kept confidential for now, we plan on holding providers to the law, giving the Division of Workers Compensation the ability to regulate from a position of power and ensuring treatment for workplace injuries and illnesses by workers compensation. Cities and risk pools have for too long abused fire fighters by denying treatment from everything ranging from minor injuries to cancer. The law is good but the ability to regulate is lacking. Providing the tools to give the Division the ability to regulate cities and risk pools and make them follow the law is the best and quickest way to

reform the system. All our locals will be called upon to help push this measure. This is an issue that goes from the smallest to the largest.

Our DLA program provides us with fire fighters from different parts of the state that are willing to help a few weeks out of each legislative session. Please talk to you District Vice Presidents if you have questions about how the program works. It is invaluable to have active fire fighters talking to legislators that they know from their home districts. They visit legislators' offices and help provide an on the ground perspective for members and staff. In addition to being fire fighters, they are generally active constituents. This is extremely helpful.

We also expect something to happen with pensions. Fort Worth has a looming issue as well as possible legislation out of the Houston area. We will do everything we can to prevent bad measures from being passed. Generally, we hope that these issues are taken care of on the local level but oftentimes it is impossible. This means that we are tasked with keeping the solutions local and ensuring that the parties can come to an agreement. Even after a bill is



→ **Glenn Deshields,**
Legislative Director
627 Radam Lane
Austin, TX 78745
Office: (512) 326-5050
Email: gdeshields@tsaff.org

filed, no matter how bad it may seem, there is an opportunity to get the bill how you want it. Generally, the parties that are unreasonable are the losers. We will be very busy until the end of May, but my contact info is on the TSAFF website and I am available to discuss all issues. If you have questions about who is your legislator, committee membership or bill info, that can all be found on www.capitol.texas.gov.

Notable Bills in the 86th Legislative Session

LEGISLATION	AUTHOR	ISSUE	STATUS
HB 1521	Burrows	Workers Comp	Introduced
HB 1861	Mando Martinez	Prevailing Wage	Introduced
HB 1895	Nevarez	Investigative Rights	Introduced
SB 681	Alvarado	Prevailing Wage	Introduced
SB 797	Alvarado	Binding Arbitration	Introduced
SB 858	Hinojosa	Workers Comp	Introduced

* As of Feb. 24, 2019

Political Report

Political Director
 Joe Tellez

Coming out of the runoffs, we had 26 races in which we had endorsed candidates headed to the general election. While every race that we were involved with was important, the Executive Board identified four key races that we focused on.

In the Mike Collier campaign for Lieutenant Governor Brother David Riggs (Garland) worked closely with this campaign and coordinated our efforts. In the race for Senate District 30 one of our own, Brother Kevin Lopez a fire fighter, in Arlington was in a tough campaign against Pat Fallon. Jack Todd (Lubbock) and Tyler Houchin (Odessa) coordinated with Kevin's campaign in this race. Even though we were not successful in these two races, our involvement and political action did make a difference.

In the two critical senate races we were involved in our efforts were recognized by the

campaigns as making a difference. In the race for Senate District 10 Beverly Powell defeated incumbent Senator Konni Burton. Brother Pete Martinez (Arlington) coordinated our efforts in this race.

In the race for Senate District 16 Nathan Johnson defeated incumbent Senator Donald Huffines. Brother Brad McCutcheon (Plano) coordinated our efforts in this race.

The use of targeted Facebook ads by our communications team of Braden Frame (Lake Travis) and Erin Powers in these campaigns was highly effective.

These efforts helped our fire fighter-friendly candidates defeat those who work against us and our issues. A good political program as well as a good communications program are vital and sets the stage for success in moving our agenda forward.

With the general election behind us we now focus our attention on the 86th Legislative



→ **Joe Tellez,**
Political Director
 627 Radam Lane
 Austin, TX 78745
 Office: (512) 326-5050
 Email: jtellez@iaff.org

session. I urge each local to reach out to their legislators and build a relationship with their respective State Representative and State Senator.



Preserve the Past

Please help ensure that the extraordinary work of TSAFF firefighters is included in our history.

We seek recent and historical fire and EMS incident photos and video for display at the upcoming 2019 state association convention. We will ensure original materials are handled carefully, credited if used, and returned. An FTP link to conveniently upload videos and photos is available. If you can help or have questions, please contact us at your convenience.

Thanks to the following locals for submitting materials:

Hurst, Haltom City, Houston, Keller, Pampa, Robstown and Sugar Land.

Photo Credit: Plano Firefighters Association.



Services Report

Service Director
Rafael Torres

There have been several departments that are applying the most extreme discipline on firefighters without regard to the alleged infraction or past discipline for comparable alleged policy and rules violations. This means that it has become very important for your local to be involved in discipline and keeping track of the type of infractions that are being charged. Developing some way for your local union to track and record the final discipline that was given for the infraction. This record keeping makes it easier for your members to bring forward and prove the argument of disparate discipline. It creates a database for future conversations between Labor and Management with facts and final outcomes of appealed discipline cases. Often chiefs or local union leadership change and when that happens years and sometimes decades of historical information are forgotten or just lost. Developing a union discipline database serves your members in many ways that can and will eventually affect someone in the future.

The hypothetical example is FF "A" violates rules x, y and z and gets three calendar days suspension. Several months later FF "B" violates same rules x, y and z. (FF A and B both have same type of disciplinary backgrounds) the chief issues a 10-calendar day suspension.

This is disparate discipline; this argument can be made and often holds weight at a hearing.

As mentioned earlier for this approach to work best it will take the local to develop & maintain a method to collect and file this information for keeping at the local level. There are several locals doing this currently and if you have questions on how to start this record keeping please call me and I'll be glad to assist you. The TSAFF Board started a State District Service Field Representative (DFSR) program. Remember to call these individuals in your district. Your District Vice President will have their numbers if you don't already have them. The DFSRs for your respective districts are as follows and should only be called by the president of your local or his designee:

- District 1- Jimmy Hall (Abilene) and James Williams (Amarillo, Ret.)
- District 2 - Beau Simpson (Plano)
- District 3 - Leo Mendoza (McAllen)
- District 4 - Marc Clifford (Killeen)
- District 5 - Alan Jacobs (Keller)

I'd like to bring to your attention that when you or your members are disciplined it's always good to be acquainted with the appeal procedure that your department or city uses. Regardless if you're an "at will" department or protected by TLGC 143 time is most important to keep in mind. Most all appeal processes



→ **Rafael Torres,**
Service Director
 627 Radam Lane
 Austin, TX 78745
 Office: (512) 326-5050
 Email: ratorres51@aol.com

have a number of hours or days that the appeal must be filed so don't waste precious time looking up the process after discipline has been done, review your process and have a good working knowledge of this before it's needed. Make sure you send me a copy of the final discipline as soon as it is handed down so that we can assist you and your member with their appeal. If you as local leader don't have the bandwidth to accomplish this task, make sure you delegate this to someone who has the same understanding of the appeal process and past discipline within your city.

ATTENTION!

All TSAFF Affiliate Officers

It is vital that we are notified of all principal officer email and address changes to ensure TSAFF Affiliates receive all of our communications.

To make changes, please visit our website to complete the local officer update form.

Texas Commission on Fire Protection

TCFP Liaison
Jim Reidy



As a representative to the Texas Commission on Fire Protection it sometimes falls to me to report to you the good, the bad, and to inform about issues. As the recognition of firefighter cancer prevalence increases and departments take measures to try their best to reduce and prevent the incidence of occupational cancer among us, we also need to be vigilant that standards and rules in place are followed by everyone including departments, firefighters, cleaning providers, gear rental businesses, training academies, and TCFP. One important aspect of occupational cancer reduction is the cleanliness of our PPE, especially our bunker gear. Below is an excerpt from an August 3, 2018 letter sent to all regulated Texas departments and can be found on the TCFP webpage: “the Commission adopted NFPA 1851 as the requirement for the Texas fire service, it is important to be clear about what the standard calls for. With that in mind, the Commission has introduced a template and additional guidance for use by fire departments, training facilities, and other entities subject to NFPA 1851, to help refine their required SOP regarding care and maintenance of protective clothing. The template outlines the minimum information that must be addressed in the SOP. Newly adopted Commission rule language also reminds organizations that they must, of course, comply with the SOP they have developed.”

Departments must have and comply with an SOP that meets all the requirements of 1851. Sadly, this is not new information, but the resistance to the increased frequency of cleaning that also increases the health and safety of our firefighters and reduces the contamination the public incurs on non-fire responses is a sad statement of priorities of the day. Seems simple to those of us that ride



→ **Jim Reidy,**
TCFP Liaison
 627 Radam Lane
 Austin, TX 78745
 Office: (512) 326-5050
 Email: jreidy@satx.rr.com

on the rigs, right? Use clothing, it gets dirty, you wash it, it's ready to use again.

NFPA 1851 section 7.3.2; “Ensemble and ensemble elements that are soiled shall receive advanced cleaning prior to reuse.”

Seems like more times than not, it ends up with union being the one to sound the alarm when practices that negatively affect us are not modified or completely changed. Nobody is perfect and mistakes in opinion, observation, or judgment occur, but we must hold the enforcing entities accountable to the rules and standards that are in place. From the line firefighter to the regulatory compliance officer, we must continue to turn the cultural battleship in the right direction. While we may not see the effect of the mandatory cleaning today and upfront costs may be pricey; it is a wise, prudent, mandatory, and a fiscally responsible investment in the future for everyone involved in our profession. Keep up the good fight for everyone.

Upcoming TCFP Events

- Fire Fighter Advisory Committee Meeting
 March 21, 2019, 9 AM
 Room 1-104
- C & T Committee Meeting
 March 27-29, 2019, 9 AM
 TCFP Conference Room
- Commission Meeting
 April 25, 2019, 10 AM
 Room 1-104
- Fire Fighter Advisory Committee Meeting
 June 27, 2019, 9 AM
 Room 1-104
- Commission Workshop
 July 17, 2019, 2 PM
 Room 1-104
- Commission Meeting
 July 18, 2019, 2:00PM
 Room 1-104
- Fire Fighter Advisory Committee Meeting
 September 19, 2019, 9 AM
 Room 1-104

Meetings are in the William B. Travis Building and begin at 9 AM unless otherwise noted. Please call the commission at (512) 936-3838 to confirm dates and times.

MDA

National Director – Organizational Partnerships,
Muscular Dystrophy Association.
Jenny Hanie

MDA proudly stood by your Locals and the 11th District at the 2019 ALTS Convention in Los Angeles, California on January 21-22.

Happy Anniversary! The IAFF and MDA celebrate their 65th Anniversary! YOU have raised \$650 Million in 65 years! We are grateful for your longstanding dedication to finding cures and treatments for neuromuscular diseases! Through your support MDA is able to provide top-notch clinical care, medical equipment support, handicap accessible

summer camp and more!

History of Fill the Boot - The tradition began in 1952, when a father in desperate need ran to IAFF member George Graney's Fire Engine Company 1 in South Boston. IAFF Local 718 immediately rounded up 20 fire fighters and set in motion a door-to-door canister drive that raised \$5,000. In 1953, Graney launched a citywide fundraising campaign with the help of Boston fire fighters and made appeals across Massachusetts in behalf of children with muscular dystrophy.



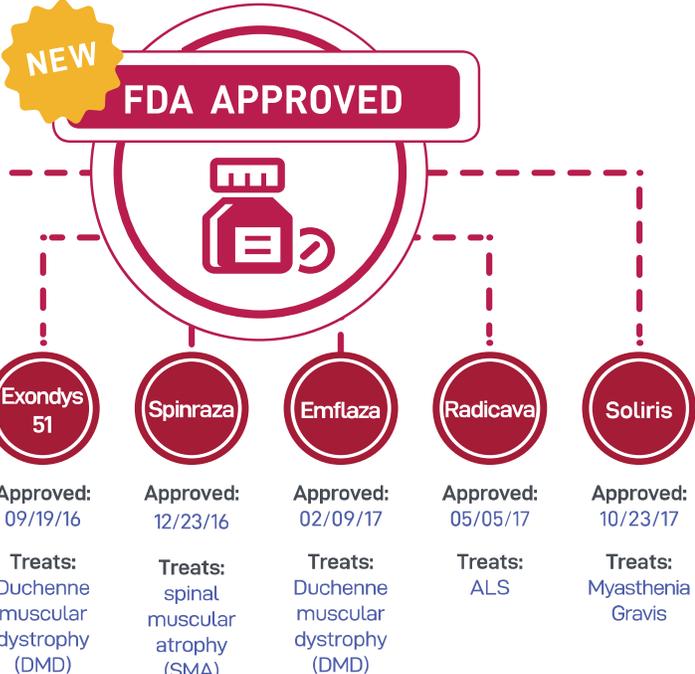
→ **Jenny Hanie,**
National Director -
Organizational Partnerships,
Muscular Dystrophy Association.
Cell: (512) 672-9512
Email: JHanie@mdausa.org

Realizing the potential that fire fighters had to offer the cause and their excellent image in the community, Graney approached and persuaded IAFF members to support MDA. In August 1954, Graney raised

his voice at the IAFF's biannual convention in Miami and proposed that MDA be established as the International's "charity of choice." MDA Goodwill Ambassador Luis Grant, who had a form of muscular dystrophy, gave an emotional presentation to IAFF members, helping to gain unanimous approval of Graney's proclamation. This marked the beginning of a formal bond between the IAFF and MDA.

Since then, fire fighters have taken this vision and made it their mission, raising funds a thousand ways: by placing collection jars in stores and restaurants, sponsoring charity softball games and running auctions. These days, their signature fund-raising activity is the MDA Fill-the-Boot drive.

Because of your support - We have entered a time of unprecedented progress in drug research and FDA approval! Through your Fill the Boot efforts, you are funding lifesaving drugs for the children and adults MDA serves! MDA has had more progress in drug research and approval in the last 5 years than in the last 50! THIS IS BECAUSE OF YOU!



TAFPAC



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ANSWER THE ALARM

FORT WORTH 440
DALLAS RETIRED FF
ARLINGTON 1329
McALLEN 2602

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