

2nd Annual Retiree Roundup = April 27th at Grant Park. See below for RSVP.

ATLANTA FIRE DEPARTMENT RETIREE NEWS

April 2012 No. 122

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BI-MONTHLY MEETING April 4th at the Piccadilly, 2442 Godby Rd. Bull starts at 11:00 AM, eating and more bull about 11:30. Bring someone that will help keep the tall tales straight. We have had a great turnout of current and retired AFRD personnel at recent luncheons, the more the better.

Senate Retirement Committee Tables Dues Request

On Tuesday, February 21st, the Senate Retirement Committee met to consider Senate Bill 456, which addressed a dues increase for the Georgia Firefighters' Pension Fund. Our Executive Director presented the case for the need for an increase based on a burgeoning shortfall in revenue (combined taxes and dues) versus benefit payments that we are experiencing and the diminishing relationship of dues to benefits. We asked for a 67% increase in dues (\$10) considering that benefits had increased 76% since the last dues increase in 1988.

The Committee raised questions regarding whether the Fund could earn the shortfall in revenue and then whether the projected revenue, including an increase in dues, would support the Fund's demographics. The bill was tabled for an actuarial study of revenue requirements to be completed this summer.

From an article by Maria Saporta in the Atlanta Business Chronicle:

"High on the agenda is getting the city's health care costs under control for both employees and retirees.

Reed said the city has 7,000 employees, and there were 2,000 emergency room visits in the past year (an expensive way of getting health care).

Health care costs have grown 12 percent a year. For example, the retiree health care costs have gone from \$19 million to \$40 million between 2008 and 2011. "We know that 12 percent (annual) growth is not sustainable," Reed said in an interview after the meeting while sitting in Hannan's office at the downtown Georgia-Pacific building."

Three **Atlanta Fire Rescue employees** prevailed in their class-action lawsuit against Atlanta on Friday, February 17th when a Fulton County jury found the city didn't fully investigate allegations of cheating by black firefighters on a promotional exam. The judge then ordered demotions of the 5 provisional lieutenants who were alleged to have cheated and a retest of

them and others who failed to earn promotion on the test. The city has appealed and an appeals court has stayed the demotions.

The **Lawsuit by the Fulton County Taxpayers Foundation** was dismissed by the judge in our favor. This is a huge win for our pension, thanks to your support, especially through the Atlanta Pension Funds Members Association, et al. The FCTF may well appeal in an attempt to force us into spending beyond our means. Please don't let that happen. Join and support APFMA.

ARE YOU AWARE THAT RETIRED POLICE OFFICERS AND FIREFIGHTERS ARE ENTITLED TO A \$3,000 EXEMPTION FROM THEIR TAXABLE INCOME?

For additional information see IRS Publication 575, Cat. No. 15142B. Pension and Annuity Income.

Don't miss a fundraiser to benefit the **Gold Shield Foundation** April 22nd at the Hard Rock Café at 5PM downtown featuring singing group "Collective Voice" with AFD retiree "Bump."

The City of East Point annual **Health Fair** invites all AFRD retirees (and others) to the April 14th event at EPFD Station #1 from 11 to 3. **Fire Chief Rosemary Cloud** extends you a personal invitation. 2757 East Point Street.

IN MEMORIAM

Retired FAO **Randall C. Bryan**, age 75 best known as "RC" retired from Station 27 the father of Sergeant Christopher Bryan and Firefighter David Bryan both from Station 27 (B&C Shift) passed away February 13th.

Mrs. **Johnnie Mae Price**, mother of retired Communications Dispatcher Annette Stokes of Lithonia, GA passed on February 10, 2012.

The wife of retired Captain **Billy D. Cole, Lynell** died 1/8/12.

Retired Deputy Chief **Willie Warthen** lost his grandson, Devin Rayshaun Morton in February.

Retired Deputy Chief **Nish Willis** (Riverdale Fire Chief) lost her great nephew, **Mason Allen** (2yrs of age) in a fire in Lagrange in January. Her niece (the mother) and another child were also burned.

Tom Gish, 55, a native of Atlanta, passed away on January 26, 2012. He was the brother of retired **Captain Bob Gish**.

Bishop **Harrison E. Wilson Jr**, father of retired **Captain Sylvia D. Gardner** and father-in-law of retired **Section Chief Wade Gardner** passed away in February.

Jennifer Inman, wife of retired **Lt. David Inman** from Co. 2/B.

Sincere condolences to all these and any others who have lost loved ones.

Here are the new **retirees** for February 2012 as well as the annual report on our fund.

Michael H. Benfield
432 Shelby Lane
Hiram GA 30141
770-949-2397

Tavius D. Elder
1396 Plaza Avenue
Atlanta GA 30310
404-246-5174

"Amidst a sea of uncertainty, driven by macroeconomic and geo-political strife, the U.S. economy hobbled across the year end finish line battered and bruised but intact".

The same could be said about your Atlanta Fire Pension fund. A return of 7.94% for the 4th quarter allowed our fund to realize a 2.80% return for 2011, beating the S&P by 70 basis points. The beginning value on Jan. 1, 2011 was \$448,556,911; the ending value on Dec. 31, 2011 was \$479,138,361.

The continuing good news is that so far this 1st quarter Your fund have done very well and is at its highest value ever. As of Feb. 10, 2012 the funds value is \$509,322,999. Again let me remind you that the markets remain very volatile but we feel that we are well positioned for the future of the fund.

Larry Mahle, Trustee

The new revised web site for the Atlanta Pension Fund Membership Association (APFMA) is online at www.apfma.org.

You can join, renew, or upgrade to Lifetime Membership on the "Dues/Donation" tab. There will also be articles of interest on the site, which is a work in progress and still improving.

When you do join/renew/donate you will be directed to PayPal where you can enter your payment and personal information. There are a variety of ways to pay on PayPal, if you've not used it before.

Please visit the site - join if you haven't already - and let me know what we can do to improve it.

Remember, APFMA is fighting for your pension, and the results can be seen in the recent Fulton County Court victory over the Fulton Co. Taxpayers Foundation.

If you're receiving the newsletter both online and via U.S. Mail, please let me know. If you get it via U. S. Mail, but have an e-mail address, please let me know. Unless you just really need that paper copy, I would prefer to move gradually

to e-mail. To you mail only recipients, I will continue to mail them out, but I often send out a lot of updates between paper issues that are timelier.

Bob Gish is still looking for those apparatus photos for the book project. If you have access to the photos in the 5 AFD Annuals, 1960-2007, please let Bob know about their use for the book.

His contact information is; e-mail bgish@att.net or cell 678-223-5513.

E-mail addresses needed – I know that the e-mail addresses we have do not constitute the entire population of AFRD retirees, especially the many, many recent ones. Please help by forwarding this to as many retirees (or active FF's) as you can and ask anyone who does not get this directly from me to send me their address. Thanks.

SAVE THE DATE: The 2nd Annual Atlanta Fire Rescue Retiree Roundup is scheduled for Friday, April 27th at 10 AM at Grant Park. RSVP to Claudie Nash at (404) 392-0040 or Michelle Lynum at (404) 227-7383.

Clayton Fire Charities, Inc. is hosting their 1st Annual Golf Tournament!

Don't miss this great opportunity to join with friends, firefighters and the community in fellowship and fun as we come together to *make a difference*.

Date: Friday, April 13th

Time: Registration - 10 a.m.

Shot Gun Start - 11 a.m.

Location: Lake Spivey Golf Club

Registration Contact: Anthony Grimaldi

[404-702-1239](tel:404-702-1239)

anthony.grimaldi@co.clayton.ga.us

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