



**SDFRA**  
 SAN DIEGO FIREMAN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
 SINCE 1907

2017  
 Winter  
 Edition



IN THIS ISSUE

# Message from the President

By Robert Bunsold



composed of Top Brass and Union Leadership from around the country, Bryan Frieders, President of the FCSN, singled out our Cancer Awareness and Prevention Program as a national model stating, "These guys are doing it right!" This recognition prompted Chief Officers and Union Leaders from some of our nations largest and most prestigious Fire Departments to reach out to us and seek guidance and input regarding the development of their own Cancer Awareness and Prevention Program.

To be acknowledged is a distinguished honor in itself, but what is most significant is that it's a testament of how our Members feel about the service they receive from SDFRA. And that's what matters the most!

Whether it's visiting our office, calling a Board Member, browsing our website, or taking part in one of our many programs and services...dedication to doing what is right for our Members is the motivation behind everything we do.

While we're proud of this esteemed recognition from FCSN, we're not resting on this. We'll continue to find ways to serve you with excellence and exceed your expectations. On behalf of the entire SDFRA Team, I thank you for continuing to put your loyalty and trust in us!

Wishing you and yours a fantastic holiday season!

The world moves fast and the San Diego Fireman's Relief Association is working hard to stay one step ahead of it. Serving you, our Members, to the best of our ability is the top priority for all of us here at SDFRA. I'm proud to share that our efforts are getting noticed outside of our Fire Family.

In September our work in the arena of Cancer Awareness and Prevention has been noticed by the Firefighter Cancer Support Network (FCSN) at the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation and the Fire Service Occupational Cancer Symposium in Phoenix, Arizona.

During his opening remarks and while presenting to a room

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# Benefits Update

By Sierra Lawrence-Dabasinskas, Member Services

2018! Already?

As 2017 comes to a close, so will the Benefit Year. This means that all reimbursement allowances will reset on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018. To ensure that we have the most current and up to date information, please be sure to notify me if you have a change of: address, email, phone number, dependents, beneficiary, or status (Active/Retired).

With the coming of the New Year, we remember those we lost in 2017. With the help of Curt Glaser, San Diego's Human Resource Manager, we were able to compile a Memorial Registry on our website, [www.sdfra.org/memorial-registry](http://www.sdfra.org/memorial-registry). It's very important to us to remember each and every one of our Members who have passed. If you do not see your loved ones'

name listed, please let me know by sending an email with their full name and year of passing.

As a quick reminder, all confidential inquiries regarding the Fire Family Services program can be made directly to Tina Casola on her confidential cell phone (619.955.0292).

If you have any questions regarding your Member Benefits, please feel free to contact me at [slawrence@sdfra.org](mailto:slawrence@sdfra.org).

Wishing you a very happy and healthy New Year!

Don't forget...you can receive \$50 per year as a gym membership reimbursement. So there's no excuses for breaking your New Year's resolutions! ☺



Fireman's Rest at El Camino Memorial Park.

# Retired Corner

By Arnell Garcia, Board Director

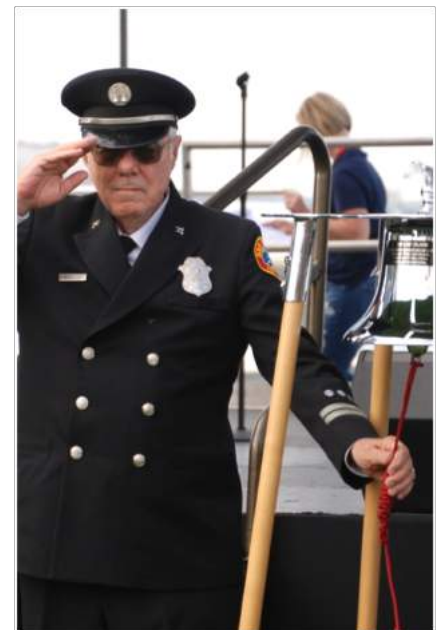
For those of you who were unable to attend this year's SD911MSC, we were honored to have Jim Kline as the Last Alarm Bell Ringer. We at the Relief take so much pride in having our Retirees around us as teachers and inspirations.

Jim Kline has dedicated his life to service. He served 8 years in the Air Force National Guard Fire Department and then joined the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department in 1957 where he served for 33 years and retired as a Captain. But his service wasn't over then. Jim

continued to serve on the Boards of the Relief and the Retired Fire and Police Associations for several years. This man is the picture of dedication and honor, and his marriage of 62 years is evidence of that!

Jim, thank you for showing me the way to volunteering in the community and making a difference! If you get a chance to see Jim in the future, please help us in thanking him for his service.

Until next time, have a fantastic holiday season with your families!



2017 SD911MSC Last Alarm Bell Ringer, Jim Kline.

# Board in Action

By Brandt Truver, Secretary/Treasurer

What does it mean to be Secretary/Treasurer? Good question...

It means: being the jack of all trades, and the master of none. Sounds familiar right? It really is what all of your Board of Directors are though, and what all Firefighters are. This article is going to focus on the role of Secretary/Treasurer. At the Relief we have a group of 7 Firefighters that serve as your Board of Directors. Within that Board there's a group of 3 that serve as your Executive Board: the President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer. With such a small board each Board Member must wear multiple hats in order for the Relief to operate smoothly and efficiently.

The Secretary has many responsibilities, the common responsibility is making sure that the meeting minutes are accurate; with proper spelling, and any motions are captured correctly. The minutes are legal documents, so it's very important to keep them detailed. Other responsibilities include retention of Membership, Board of Directors, and staff of the Relief. This includes helping to develop outreach plans and marketing to our Membership and future membership, this ensures our mission of taking care of one another is still being carried out correctly. The Secretary also chairs the Recruitment and Education Committee. This committee has the responsibility of educating not only the Membership but also the Board of Directors. This ensures that our message is being relayed to the new recruits and that the presentation to them is relatable, informative, and inspires them to want to be part of this great organization. Within the Board, the Recruitment and Education Committee trains, educates new Board Members, and develops Board Members to take on leadership roles in the future.

The Treasurer has one of the most important roles, ensuring there is still money in the bank at the end of the day. I have to be knowledgeable about the budget and financial status of The Relief, while keeping the rest of the Board up to date. The Treasurer also chairs the Finance Committee, which isn't always the most glamorous but is vital to the success of our organization. This committee helps prepare/review the annual budget, as well as meeting regularly to review the monthly statements and make sure we are on track for success. Fundraising is huge for us, it enables us to help Firefighters, not only in SDFD, but across the county and even the nation. That's why the Treasurer and the Finance Committee are tasked with exploring new fundraising avenues as well.

The last and perhaps the most challenging duty that the Secretary/Treasurer has is writing articles for the newsletter. Thank you for taking the time to read it. Be safe and Happy Holidays!



Above: Brandt volunteering at the 2017 SD911MSC.

Below: Presenting a donation check to the Firefighter Cancer Support Network on behalf of the SD911MSC.



# SD911MSC

By Carlye Wund, Director of Development

It is with utmost pride that I come to you with news that the 2017 San Diego 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb truly was our most EPIC climb ever! Not even two hurricanes and a mass of wildfires could stop us from blasting past our fundraising goal of \$150,000. Together, we raised **\$182,195** and 100% of those funds are going directly to providing programs and services that support Firefighters, honor the fallen, and care for your families.

I say this with a grateful heart... THANK YOU to ALL of our volunteers, staff, amazing fundraisers, climbers, sponsors, vendors, and partners! We cannot reach the goals that we do without your dedication and hard work. This year's task force and strike team deployments threw us for a loop, but you had our backs! We're truly grateful for you! If you still need a letter from us for your donated hours, the 2017 letter is available to download at [www.SanDiegoStairClimb.com](http://www.SanDiegoStairClimb.com).

9/9/17 was a day filled with honor, remembrance, tears, and celebration as our Fire Family and community joined together to honor those Heroes we have lost. Please remember, registration fees helped make the event happen, but it's your donations and support that moves the needle and allows our programs to grow.

The spirit and energy of the day was brilliantly captured by our talented event photographers and local media. View photos and coverage from the event on our Youtube channel, Facebook page, and website. Special thank you to Paul Savage Photography, Bob Graham, Nicole Vasquez, David Takata, Karen Cook, and SDCFCU for sponsoring the photo booth.

We can't thank our honored sponsors enough for their support of Firefighters and the mission of FirefighterAid, to love and care for you. Thank you to the Hilton Bayfront Hotel for hosting us every

year since day one. Thank you, Fox5 for the air time, shout outs, for the lovely Heather Lake's time to co-emcee the event, and for your climb team. Thank you GovX for taking care of those who care for us. Thank you, AMR, Sycuan Casino and Tribe, Soapy Joe's, SDCFCU, SDG&E, Sysco Riverside, Enso Rings, and Plymovent.

If you missed treating yourself to a Stair Climb souvenir this year, don't worry we've got you covered. Our Climb Team is hard at work building our online merchandise store and restocking all of our sold-out gear, just in time for the holidays!

Some of our Members may not know this, so I feel it's important to point it out, the SD911MSC is the equivalent of our nonprofit's annual gala. We know you're not much for \$500-per-plate dinners, floor-length gowns, and French food you can't pronounce, so that's why we cater this event to our culture and to what's important to you. Honoring those who came before us, remembering those who made the ultimate sacrifice; memorable times with family and friends, tasty food from trucks, cold beer, chill music, and supporting your fellow brothers and sisters.

Thank you for being a group that's all heart, easy to cater to, and ready to do what it takes to support one another! I look forward to seeing you in 2018 on the stairs. Same time. Same place. New goal.



# FirefighterAid

By Carlye Wund, Director of Development



Hello Friends! 2017 was another amazing year at FirefighterAid! We created new partnerships with amazing organizations in the community and beyond! San Francisco's First Responder's Stair Climb, Soapy Joe's Car Washes, and the Sycuan Tribe just to name a few.

Our programs have been growing and are now able to reach out beyond the limits of San Diego county to assist other Firefighters and Fire Departments with like-minded goals. We're now able to reach our Members when deployed on strike teams. It's just one more way we can be there for you when you need us most!

I said it once and I'll say it again, our SD911MSC had its most successful year, but I know 2018 resets the fundraising clock and we're up for the challenge. We're most excited that we broke an all-

time fundraising goal and now we get to put those funds right to work for you.

We're wrapping up a successful Giving Tuesday campaign, and our Cadets Scholarship program gave out \$6,000 to deserving Cadets in San Diego City in 2017. This is an amazing program that benefits from your donations. Congrats to this years' winners: Braden Sade, Chloe Cole, Daniel Warren, Erika Nilsson, Tyler Beatty, and Xavier Bartig!

We're gearing up for our annual Valentines Boxes project in February in which we send over 50 of our special Members and friends love in the mail. Our CAPP program is moving full steam into 2018.

In closing, I wish you good health, happy holidays, and thank you for a job I am most grateful for...serving you. Gratefully, Carlye



Carlye and rockstar fundraiser Monica at a Belly Up fundraising event.

# San Francisco Stair Climb

By Carlye Wund, Director of Development

This past September, we created an exciting new partnership with another Stair Climb event in San Francisco, the San Francisco First Responders Stair Climb. For four months, coinciding with our own SD911MSC, a small group of our Climb Crew, here in San Diego, worked very hard with a like-minded organization up in San Francisco, and their Local 798.

On 9/9/17, a group of 207 climbers in San Francisco climbed 52 stories at 555 California Street, also known as the Bank of America building, at the same time our 1,300 climbers climbed 110 stories at the Hilton Bayfront Hotel here in San

Diego. Those climbers climbed with intentions much like ours...to honor the fallen, never forget, and raise money for Firefighter wellness. They climbed to support the fight against PTSD, Firefighter suicide, properly addressing mental wellness, and Firefighter job-related cancers. The group in San Francisco was so grateful for our help and support, they donated \$35,000, 25% of their total fundraising efforts to FirefighterAid. This is so exciting for us and we hope you feel just as proud as we do to be a part of this movement that is happening in our great state. Two organizations, two cities, one state, one goal...saving Firefighter lives.



SF Firefighter, Greg Collaco, climbing his 52 stories.

# Changes at the Relief

By John Allen, Director of Operations



**George Duardo**  
Former SDFRA President

Well, they say the only thing constant in life is change! Things have been busy at the Relief with much needed building upgrades such as lighting, paint, tenant improvements, and our biggest venture...repairing and resealing our parking lot. This was no small project. We had National Paving come out and replace our aging 25+ year asphalt curbing with concrete. Next they worked on all the buckling asphalt and tree root removal and then leveled out certain areas to facilitate proper drainage. The asphalt is curing now and we will be getting a slurry seal (front and back) at the end of December, with new paint all the way around. Over all, this project will improve safety for the occupants and visitors of the building and increase curb appeal, which increases rental value.

It's a bitter sweet notice that President **George Duardo** formally resigned a few months early in his term to take the reins as Vice President of Local 145. George served almost 9 years as President of SDFRA and his mark will forever leave a lasting impression on the membership. With his vision, along with others, many programs were instituted and still remain, those would include: the highly successful SD911MSC event, formation of our 501(c)(3)-FirefighterAid, development of Fire Family Services and the Cancer Awareness and Prevention Program, retooling of the business model for SDFRA, and numerous building upgrades. Georges reach is unquantifiable when it comes to building and maintaining relationships and has really made SDFRA a player on the National stage when it comes to occupational cancer prevention, mental wellness, and fundraising. George will always be welcome and sorely missed at the Relief. Please take a moment to thank President Duardo for his many years of service and selfless dedication to the membership. The coffee is always on for you George!



**Kelly Doan**  
Board Director

With the vacancy of President, the Board reassigned current Board Directors to new positions and had the opportunity to appoint a new Director per the SDFRA Bylaws. We would like to introduce and welcome our newest Board Member, **Kelly Doan!** Kelly was appointed to the vacant Director position by SDFRA President, Rob Bunsold. Kelly was born and raised in San Diego. When asked who inspires her, she replied: "My 102-year-old grandma who lives in Escondido. She has always had the best outlook on life. She says, 'you can't always control what happens to you, but you can control the way you respond to it.' It's about your attitude and sometimes things are just an 'oh-weller'." Kelly is excited to be part of the Relief Board and she brings a positive vibe, bright smile, and an open ear to anyone who needs it. Kelly has been married to Micah Doan for the last 9 years and they have a seven-year-old son named Evan. She attended UCSB, earning a degree in English & Sociology, and was hired as a single role EMT in 2003 and as a Firefighter/Paramedic in 2005. Kelly was recently promoted to Engineer in February 2017 and is stationed at FS35/A. Her appointed term is up, but she looks forward to running in our 2018 Board Election! Voting for this year's election will be held on December 18<sup>th</sup> through the 20<sup>th</sup>.

In closing, and as stated in my last correspondence with you, we are wheels up and soaring at the Relief. Your Board and Staff are hard at work, fighting for you and your families. Be it assistance with a medical condition, proper mental health counseling, assisting our retirees and widows, preventing occupational cancer, processing claims, securing donations for firefighter assistance and the like... we are here for you. Feel free to give me a call should you have any questions, comments, or concerns. Enjoy time spent with family and friends during the upcoming holiday season. - John

# Re-CAPP

By Kurtis Bennett, Vice-President

We are excited to announce the arrival of the FirefighterAid "I Beat Cancer" Grinder (pictured right)! FirefighterAid obtained an antique grinder and had it mounted atop a beautiful wood stand, crafted by Jess Hartnett, of Firehouse Boards. In the future, Firefighter Cancer Survivors will have the opportunity to place their name on the stand and then "grind" away in celebration of completing treatment. This will announce to all that they beat

cancer and are returning to work. In time, this ritual of celebrating will become engrained in our culture and the sound of a grinder will be a reminder of the tremendous courage and perseverance exhibited by each and everyone one of our Cancer Survivors and their families. All of our SDFD Cancer Survivors and their families will be invited to attend the inaugural "I Beat Cancer" event in order to place their names on the grinder stand and crank away!



# Where in the World is SDFRA and FFA?!

By Sierra Lawrence-Dabasinskas, Member Services

Is it on a beach, strike team, plane, train, fire engine, or suitcase...we want to know where you're taking us! Stop by the office, grab your official SDFRA and FirefighterAid sticker, slap it on your wheels, and take us on an adventure! We can't wait to see where you take us next!

Tag us on Facebook: @FirefighterAid

Tag us on Instagram: @sd911msc\_ffaid



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## Still Loving It?

We continue to get great feedback from our newsletters, but we also want to make sure we are delivering content you enjoy reading!

If there are any specific topics you would like to see in our next issue, please let us know!

You can email [slawrence@sdfra.org](mailto:slawrence@sdfra.org).

Thank you!



# Happy Holidays

**CARING FOR FIREFIGHTERS FOR OVER 100 YEARS**