

ASSOCIATION UPDATE



By Cheri Breneman
Association Administrator

Improving Member Engagement

The summer season brings an end to our busy season of education: recapping four training sessions, the winter and summer conferences and planning a webinar calendar. The focus will return to an important goal we have been working on for a few years and that greatly involves you. Our members are vital to the growth and stability and we have been working consistently to make sure that everyone with your District knows that we exist for their benefit and offer many programs and resources are available to them. This magazine is one of the greatest resources and we aim to have a copy in the hands of every trustee, fire chief, attorney and commissioner of your fire protection district. If they are not, we need to know and it's as easy as a phone call to our office 217-525-6620. The process is constant and the effort essentially starts by urging our members to contact our with any changes to their Board of Trustees. While our seasoned trustee members may be familiar with the Association benefits and regularly utilizing them, someone newly appointed or elected should immediately connect with IAFPD. We have resources they need to get acquainted to their position. Equally important, anyone new to the Board of Trustees, should consider our exclusive 3-part training program, the Essential Trustee Training (ETT). By the way, IAFPD presents this program (12-hours) annually and in conjunction with the Annual Conference held in June.

The communication efforts have proven successful with the recent conference and annual presentation of the ETT. IAFPD welcomed 43 first time attendees and issued 60 training completion certificates. This is great news! We also greeted a few members from districts who have not attended the conference in the last five years. I want to give a shout-out to those members (and of course the other 350 fire protection district members) for attending the *Setting Our Sight on New Horizons* Conference in June!

The process involves a ton of data analysis, which allowed us to recognize that there are a good number of folks not aware, disconnected, and not receiving news or program announcements. The good news here is when we (the IAFPD staff or member of the Board of Directors) eventually connect with less-engaged members, their profile is update and they usually learn something new about us and what we can do to help their fire protection district. The phone conversations are always productive and informative. The office has normal business hours and follows the state holiday calendar.

While nearly everything IAFPD offers is posted on our website or published in this magazine, I have inserted a snapshot view of the great resources available to our members. Please consider sharing the information with someone you know who may not be benefitting from IAFPD. If you attend a countywide meeting and the schedule permits a few minutes to speak,

IAFPD would appreciate the opportunity. Simply give me a call or send me an email on the meeting date and location and can arrange for a representative to attend on our behalf.

As we wrap up the summer season, we prepare for what's ahead this fall and next year. Please be on the lookout for emails calling on you to share insight on legislative proposals, to get details on upcoming programs and great opportunities to connect with IAFPD. ■

IAFPD Membership Benefits

Education:

- Trustee Training & CE Hours
- Open Meetings & Pension Training
- Webinars – Timely topics available 24/7
- Legislative Updates by Email
- Two Annual Conferences

Resources:

- The Fire Call Magazine
- Trustee's Pocket Guide
- Annual Calendar & Checklist
- Handbook for Trustees
- Text of Laws
- Legislative Directory
- Online Business Directory (FPDs & Industry Suppliers)
- Full time staff available to assist with FAQs
- Recognition Program
- Scholarships