

ASSOCIATION UPDATE



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New Year with New Concepts

Wow, what a year to welcome and I hope that yours is off to a great start! For IAFFPD, 2021 will introduce a few 'firsts' and we have embraced them as new opportunities that can allow us to learn and grow.

The Continued Trustee Education (CTE) training season is a great example. While keeping with the 36-year tradition of gathering members regionally for a day of legal training, lunch and fellowship, we have added an online participation option (live stream) to these sessions. With gathering restrictions, social distance guidelines and members who are not ready to meet in person, we have kept their needs in mind. We are working diligently with the meeting facilities and presenters to ensure the events will present a safe and sanitary set up that presents the same quality program for both the in-person and online audiences. Thank you to the Education Committee for their leadership, the speakers for their adaptability and our members for their support and patience while we endure the situation. Each training session provides insight on legal changes during COVID, timely legislative information and updates from our fire service agencies.

We are proud of the six-year run of growth and success we have had with the Winter Conference since its launch in 2014 and hope to see a similar outcome

for 2021. The new concept and all-virtual 7th Annual Winter Conference is reduced to a one-day event that offers the same quality presenters our members expect and appreciate, but doing so without travel, winter weather or risking a spread of COVID-19. The in-person visits with our loyal and supportive sponsors who exhibit are hard to replace but we have plans in place that will acknowledge their support, promote their company and urge our members to conduct business with those companies who support our organization during this time.

The beauty of these plans is that our members **have more options to earn CE hours** and can now **choose one of five dates to participate, learn and interact** with the presenters, other fire district officials and the IAFFPD. If you have questions, this is a great way for you to get answers! There is still time to get registered for Feb. 6 (Fulton), Feb 20 (Virtual Only), Mar. 6 (Champaign) and Mar. 27 (Cherry Valley). Register online at IAFFPD.org using your member login.

The IAFFPD Foundation has planned one single raffle drawing that invites its traditional participation from the training session and winter conference attendees and supporters. Instead of conducting multiple drawings at each training session, we will sell tickets at these events and award several prizes on one date for all

attendees or other ticket holders. We have received event donations to support a higher value grand prize along with other items, gifts and gadgets we traditionally award with this going for the scholarship fundraising event. The goal is to keep the momentum for Scholarships during a time COVID presents limitations.

Finally, as you may have heard, the Annual Conference this June will take place, but for the first time, we will host the event in Champaign! The decision is based on various challenges and unknowns with COVID and the brand-new meeting space at the I-Hotel Conference Center. The venue is cost-effective and AV-equipped to accommodate the in-person and virtual conference format. The hotel blocks will open in March. Watch for more details to arrive by email in the weeks ahead.

Speaking of email, if you are not receiving monthly emails from our office, we urge you to check your junk or spam folders. If you have nothing, please subscribe to our email list on the home page of IAFFPD.org.

I am excited about all new developments and welcome your ideas as I work with the committees to bring each of them to fruition. ■