

## MEMORANDUM

FROM: PAC Chairman Ron Brister  
TO: all IAFF Local F-282 members  
Subject: Benefits of remaining in the WSCFF

All firefighters are comrades in arms. Whether they are paid or volunteer, private, public or government. We all support one another in every aspect of our jobs and our well-being.

At issue here is what are we getting from the Washington State Council of firefighters for our dollar. It's much like the old axiom that was prevalent in the federal service 30 years ago, "if you don't produce anything, you aren't worth anything."

The WSCFF's mission is to "coordinate the statewide efforts of professional fire fighters by providing creative leadership and dedicated service, resulting in a unified, progressive membership that strives to improve social attitudes and promote legislation to benefit fire and EMS communities."

Reading between the lines of their home page on the web, their goals are primarily political. Lobbying state and national legislators to create legislation that supports the mission statement. What they are able to accomplish on the local level makes it easier for us to accomplish on the national level. On the local level this legislation may not have a bearing on our jobs, but it will have an affect on our home life. They also coordinate training and education in various labor related fields that is done in conjunction with the IAFF. By doing this close to home we can save costs. Registration for a 7<sup>th</sup> Dist./ WSCFF class is \$75 vs. \$275 for a national class.

The IAFF, thru the 16<sup>th</sup> District and its agents, gives the local advice on settling grievances and helps with negotiating contracts. If this can be accomplished by a phone call or an e-mail, great. However, if a personal presence is required then we have time and travel restraints that have to be taken into consideration. The WSCFF have people available a short drive away.

Granted, the WSCFF people may not be as informed when it comes to specific federal issues, but they are knowledgeable. They have different resources and many connections. We have access to their law/legal library if

we wish to use it. They have different benefit plans available (life, health, legal) if we wish to use them. They have provided a secure link to Canada Prescription Plus (a source to purchase cheaper drugs) and to Kids Change (an organization that provides scholarships for dependants & spouses of workers who are killed or permanently disabled on the job). They have many other programs available also.

Prior to this locals' attendance at the IAFF Legislative Conference, it was the WSCFF that lobbied our congressman for support on federal issues. They were there for us. As I stated earlier, we support each other and we must continue to do so.

A question was brought up as to why we didn't have a separate "federal district" within the WSCFF as some other states have? According to the WSCFF by-laws, you must have 300 members to have a separate district. There are approximately 140 federals between Puget Sound, Ft. Lewis, and Bureau of Reclamation. It also costs about \$30,000 a year to fund a position.

A second question has been raised as to who votes for the state officers? The WSCFF members who attend the state convention every June elect the state officers.