



JUMPLINE

DADE COUNTY FIREFIGHTERS
IAFF LOCAL 1403

Not a job - A commitment

Throwback
Edition

THE FIRST PUBLIC EMPLOYEE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA September 23, 1968

THE FIRST COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT...

On May 28, 1968, by a memorandum subject as above, reported to the Board of County Commissioners on the collective bargaining which the administration had concluded with representatives of the International Association of Firefighters, pursuant to Chapter 67-900, Laws of Florida, as amended, "The Firefighters Collective Bargaining Law." The indicated memorandum, a copy of which is attached, detailed the agreements reached and the estimated costs. The tentatively adopted budget for fiscal year 1968-69 includes sufficient funds to meet the costs of the provisions which were agreed to by both parties.

The results of the collective bargaining between the administration and the Association have been incorporated into the attached agreement, which has been ratified by the members of the Association. Approval by the Board of County Commissioners is now requested and recommended.

Also attached is a memorandum from the County Attorney concerning the legal ramifications involved in this matter.

PWH:md
Attachments

MEMORANDUM

Honorable Chuck Hall, Mayor
Members, Board of County
Commissioners

DATE September 19, 1968

SUBJECT Collective bargaining for firemen;
Chapter 67-900, Laws of Florida
1967

Thomas C. Britton
County Attorney

The subject 1967 statute grants all firemen, but no other public employees, in Dade and Hillsborough, but no other counties, the right to bargain collectively, the right to "advisory" arbitration and the right to enter into a collective bargaining contract.

The County Manager has proceeded properly under this statute to negotiate a contract now before the Board for its ratification or approval.

The County's right to question the validity of this statute has been preserved explicitly throughout these negotiations.

At this point, it is my responsibility to advise that in our opinion this statute could be challenged successfully by the Board before, but not after, approval of the collective bargaining contract now before the Board.

However, there is no legal duty upon the Board to challenge this statute. Until the statute is successfully challenged, the Board is fully justified in complying with it.

The County Manager, aware of this option, recommends compliance with the statute. I have no basis for, nor do I intend to imply, a contrary recommendation.

Thomas C. Britton
Thomas C. Britton
County Attorney

TCB/sb
cc County Manager

The President's Report

by Al Cruz



On-going Local Topics

Contract Negotiations continue to progress at a slow and steady pace. We began with a totally unreasonable offer by the County. We have met across the table numerous times. As of this writing, we have TA'ed (Temporarily Agreed) many articles, but significant issues remain, the main one is our pay, but health care, disability (light duty), and bids are still also on the table.

On the pay issue, the 2011 3% wage adjustment was immediately confiscated by the State as part of the pension contribution. In reality it has been over six years since we got a positive wage adjustment. Later in 2011, wage cuts and other givebacks were also negotiated, so in reality, we are where we were eight years ago. At the same time the cost of living has gone up and the price of housing is once again getting out of reach for some of our members.

On the health care front, the County lowered its contribution to the health trust significantly, while we deal with an explosion of cancer claims.

This issue needs to be addressed.

The County has also asked to discuss light duty. The initial proposal is unacceptable. But we will also need to discuss the County's whole system for dealing with injuries and disability. When a Fire Fighter gets hurt, he or she may wait weeks for an initial appointment. It is well known that untreated injuries often get worse, so the County ends up paying a lot for a dysfunctional system.

A lot of people have asked that we get back into the wellness business. At the last South Florida Council of Fire Fighters meeting, it was suggested that all of the South Florida locals work together toward this goal. When it comes to cancer and other occupational diseases, early detection is key. When it comes to injury, being able to be treated quickly will substantially reduce costs. It is an idea worth exploring.

Chief Downey has asked for the right to appoint 40 hour CFO's, in what he calls "succession planning". I would say that it is an attack on our bid system. We have a grievance going to arbitration, but the contract is clearly being violated. Your Executive Board supports the seniority system and the notion that everyone will eventually get a turn and should be able to work where they want to work. (continued)

Official Publication of the Metro-Dade Firefighters Local 1403

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The President's Report

by Al Cruz

On-going Local Topics

(from page 1)

We built an excellent service with the bid system. It is fair and not broken.

There are other issues, and there are some small changes we have agreed to that in my opinion correct some problems, such as exchange time, the grievance system, and a few other changes.

On June 23, the Executive Board authorized me to declare impasse, if necessary. I am hoping we can work out our remaining differences soon and it won't be necessary to go to impasse. I was disappointed that there were a few Board members who did not support the motion. When we fight for your rights and benefits, we all need to be united. It has been a long time since we started negotiations. The recession is over, construction is booming. It is time for the County to be fair to its employees. I am proud that the majority of the Board has remained strong on fighting for your contract. Whatever happens, it will be essential for everyone to come out and support each other should we put out the call.

Our Building

We had a rather contentious building meeting the other day. A copy of what seems to be an incomplete lease between our Building Corporation and the Health Trust was submitted to the Local. It speaks of remodeling and renting 1800 square feet of the former wellness center space to the Health Trust for an approximate cost to the membership of over \$100,000 plus an increase in monthly rental space premiums. That amount of money seems quite high to spend when the members are finding themselves paying more for Insurance premiums, more for all co-pays, medications, and hospital stays and

are being provided less coverage specifically with medications. At the same time, our insurance trust is spending more on health care than it is taking in, which means eventually, those additional costs may be passed on to you. As it stands, we are running our trust in an approximate 2.5 million dollar deficit yearly due to the County's declining contributions to our fund. Our attorneys were not involved in this agreement and I have questioned the process of how this agreement was done. I have obtained legal opinion that this agreement was not executed properly and there are several inconsistencies making it null and void. The trust currently remains in the same space within our Local offices and continues to pay the same rent as they did over 10 years ago. Our building has plenty of free and available space with private offices that are built out and move-in ready across the hall. This can be used by the trust and would not cost the members any additional funds, on the contrary would be a cost savings overall to the trust. During this process we have also come to find out that our Local's Building Corp. is Non-profit. We will be providing information on available space, cost and possible uses and will allow the membership to vote on these matters. Currently, I have several Board members who think that we should get back in the wellness business. As your President, I have to look at all of this. I have been criticized by a few for taking this approach, but I think we need to use the building in the membership's best interest, this the reason why I am glad to send a ballot out and let the member's decide.

Last word

I attended a memorial service for retired members Sid Vihlen recently. Sid began his career in 1955 and served our community for 42 years. When he started, we had one-man engines, and ten fire stations. Since our last issue, Stan Wolf and Cliff Tanner also passed away. In talking to several of our retired members who knew these men, it is always interesting to hear the stories of how our department used to be and how we have changed and improved. May they rest in peace and may we continue to improve.

I have spoken to several members who are struggling with cancer and injuries. It is a lonely battle for many of them. If you can take some time to call or visit them, it is what being a Fire Fighter is all about. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers.

On June 30th, we paid tribute to our brothers and sisters who died in the line of duty, including cancer deaths. The 2ND annual Firefighter Memorial Display downtown was impressive. I can't say enough about the display that Nick Digiacoimo and his team put together.

A special recognition to Maria Chin, secretary of Local 1403, for ensuring the completion of our Local's website and has also updated our "Last Alarm" section. This took much work and dedication on her part. Please visit our website which is also mobile, Local1403.org and were also on Facebook as Metro-Dade Fire Fighters IAFF Local 1403.

As I said earlier in this article, it will be vital to be united in order to get a fair and decent contract. Please support each other and your Union. Until next issue, stay safe and healthy. ♦

It's Hard to Believe

by Retired CFO, Gary Gonzalez



It's hard to believe I've been writing Jumpline articles for you for nearly 7

years, sharing what I know and what I've learned through professional and personal retirement planning experience. During that time, I've met with many of my brother and sister firefighters of all ranks and stages of retirement planning.

Over and over again, I've observed one common planning tool that seems to be an important determining factor in how financially prepared you will be when transitioning to your newly retired lifestyle.

I wrote about this earlier when I published the first edition of my retirement guidebook. Now with several years of investment consulting as well as personal retirement experience under my belt, I feel that it warrants revisiting.

This important tool is your deferred compensation account. I believe there are several reasons why taking advantage of this account seems to predict how smooth your retirement transition will be, and why it applies regardless of which retirement option you choose.

First, and most obvious, the more money you are able to defer into a highly diversified deferred compensation account, and the sooner in your career you start, the more likely you are to have accumulated a substantial source of supplemental retirement income.

Second, developing the practice of deferring part of your biweekly income into this account, and sticking with it no matter what, builds the discipline to spend less than you make. This one habit is a powerful predictor of financial success at every stage of life, and arguably most importantly in retirement.

Finally, since many of you will

retire before the year you turn 55 years old, having a retirement account that places no restrictions or penalties for early withdrawal of your money from that account will go a long way towards easing your adjustment to retirement.

To summarize, if I had only one piece of retirement planning advice I could give you to improve your chance of enjoying a smooth and peaceful transition into retirement, it would be to begin immediately, if not sooner, to defer as much income as you are capable into your deferred compensation account.

If you would like help setting up your initial allocation, or would like an evaluation of your current allocation, I'd be happy to help.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, feel free to call me at Northstar Financial Planners, 954-693-0030, or on my cell, 954-804-5539.

Be safe out there.❖

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WHAT DO FIRE FIGHTERS DO?



(The following article written by a Dade Co., Fla. Local 1403 member no doubt reflects the feelings many professional fire fighters must have felt at some time or another during their career in the fire service. We hope this article and the accompanying photo montage will answer the question "What do fire fighters do?" once and for all.)

By Richard La Valley

Every time I see my neighbor this is what I hear, "How much sleep did you get at the fire house last night?" I thought I'd just write the answer down.

I've been a fire fighter for 10 years and it is certainly different from other occupations. Around the station it is an easy going, relaxing atmosphere. It could be compared to a fraternity or even a family setting. Bosses are nearly partners, no time clocks or quotas. We find time to eat, exercise, read, watch TV or occasionally, even nap while waiting for our next alarm.

Then come the alarms. The buzzer sounds at all times, but especially in bad weather or under particularly haz-

ardous conditions. You must respond immediately from what you are doing even if you are on the pot. The alarms are always pressing, often confusing, always dangerous enroute, and often physically or biologically harmful.

On arrival, besides excitement, you may experience revulsion, fear, dread, or wish you were somewhere else. There are no atheists in burning buildings.

In a recent 90-day period, 24 fire fighters were killed on duty across the 50 states. Since the discovery of rubbing two sticks together, fire fighters have rescued people from fires. More recently fire fighters aid people in every type of circumstance. In this process

we get sneezed on, coughed on, bled on, regurgitated on, urinated and defecated on. We confront, cancer infection, T.B., hepatitis, AIDS, and who knows what other contagious diseases.

During the common house fire a variety of chemicals under the sink would baffle Einstein if he mixed them and added fire. Our skin, eyes, lungs and blood stream come into contact with these chemical mixtures. The fire jackets we wear, unbeknownst to most people, are not fireproof, much less vapor, gas, or explosion proof.

We stopped rescuing cats in trees, because we started rescuing people in all situations, besides fires. Fire fighters climb after suicide ledge walkers, medically sustain victims of car, boat, truck, bicycle, motorcycle, and pedestrian accidents. We respond to chemical, oil, gas, or nuclear spills. Fire-Rescue is the first called for plane crashes, floods, hurricanes, tornados, lightning strikes, electrocutions, power

line emergencies, riots, domestic violence, child abuse, hostage situations, robberies, rapes, and murders.

In place of rescuing cats, we deliver babies, give physicals to street people, provide some public transport, work large crowd situations, fireworks displays, athletic events, parades and do blood pressures for the elderly.

A fire fighter can earn his entire years salary on one call or end his life in one short moment.

Yes, neighbor, occasionally we do sleep. If the station duties are done, training over, building inspections completed, the equipment cleaned and checked and the time is right, weather good, the police not busy, the crime rate down, rush hour over and the drunks, crowds, emotionally disturbed, insane, sick, wounded, the aged, the lost and the homeless are all home in bed and doing just fine, we just might take a nap.

AGREEMENT

This agreement, made and entered into this 23rd day of September 1968, by and between Dade County (hereinafter referred to as the "COUNTY"), and Local No. 1403, International Association of Fire Fighters (hereinafter referred to as the "ASSOCIATION") on behalf of the classified uniformed employees of the Dade County Fire Department (hereinafter referred to as the "EMPLOYEES"), subject to the ratification and approval by the membership of the Association and the Board of County Commissioners of Metropolitan Dade County, Florida.

The classified employees of the Dade County Fire Department covered by the terms of this agreement shall include all employees in the following classifications:

Fire Fighters
Fire Lieutenants
Fire Captains
Fire Chief Officers

Now, therefore, the parties hereto agree as hereinafter set forth:

1. Recognition and Representation - The Association, as previously designated, is recognized as the agent of the Employees, pursuant to Chapter 67-900, Laws of Florida, until such time as the recognition of the Association as the Employees' representative is withdrawn by vote of a majority of the Employees. The Association shall act as the Employees' representative in collective bargaining with the County as to wages, rates of pay, hours, working conditions, and all other terms and conditions of employment of the Employees.

2. Wage Increase and Retirement Contribution - The County agrees to provide, effective October 1, 1968, to the Employees a 12% increase in their individual rates of pay. In addition, the County will, effective October 1, 1968, contribute an amount equal to 3% of each employee's gross pay toward the employee's required contribution to the State and County Employees' Retirement System.

3. Disability Retirement - Subject to approval of a similar plan for all County employees, the County agrees to provide for the Employees a disability insurance plan for job-connected injuries of long term duration. Under such plan the County would pay, or provide insurance to pay 66-2/3% of the employee's total salary, not to exceed \$1,000 per month, after an eight-month waiting period, which is presently covered by the County's Workmen's Compensation Insurance plan. If the final disability retirement plan, as approved by the Board of County Commissioners, provides for a board or committee to administer such plan, the County Manager agrees to provide or recommend appropriate representation by employee organizations.

11. Strikes Prohibited - The Association and the Employees agree that during the term of this agreement neither the Association nor its officers or members will, engage in, encourage, sanction, support, or suggest any strikes, slow downs, mass resignations, mass absenteeism, picketing or other similar actions which would involve suspension or interference with the normal work of the County Fire Department. In the event that Association members participate in such activities in violation of this provision, the Association shall notify those members so engaged to cease and desist from such activities and shall instruct the members to return to their normal duties.

12. Savings Clause - All job benefits heretofore enjoyed by the Employees which are not specifically provided for or abridged by this agreement shall continue under conditions upon which they had previously been granted. This agreement shall not be construed to deprive any Employee of any benefits or protections granted by the Laws of the State of Florida, ordinances of Metropolitan Dade County, or Personnel Rules and Regulations of Metropolitan Dade County.

13. Conformity to Law - If any provision of this agreement is or shall at any time be contrary to law, then such provision shall not be applicable or performed or enforced except to the extent permitted by law and any substitute action would be subject to appropriate consultation and negotiation with the Association.

14. Period of Agreement - This agreement shall be in effect for one calendar year beginning October 1, 1968, and terminating September 30, 1969.

This agreement executed this 23rd day of September, 1968, by

WITNESS:

John van Wazer

WITNESS:

S. Ziller

WITNESS:

W. T. Kaine

METROPOLITAN DADE COUNTY

W. W. Homer
County Manager

LOCAL 1403, INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF FIRE FIGHTERS

George J. White
President

LOCAL 5-5, INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF FIRE FIGHTERS

Franklin H. Mabe
President

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4. Promotional Examinations - The County agrees to require the Director of the County Fire Department (County Fire Chief) to consult with representatives of the Association as to the training and experience requirements which will be established for promotional examinations in the various fire fighter classifications.

5. Manning - Subject to the approval of funds by the Board of County Commissioners, the County agrees to provide minimum manning for fire fighting equipment as soon as additional personnel can be recruited and trained, as follows:

3 persons per pumper unit
3 persons per aerial ladder unit
1 person per tanker unit

6. Relief Personnel - The County will provide sufficient personnel for relief purposes in order to meet most normal operating requirements and most contingencies. Under this provision the County will provide three additional Fire Lieutenant positions, inasmuch as the Department's manning table provides twelve fire fighter positions for relief purposes.

7. Work in Other Classifications - The County agrees to take necessary actions to minimize the utilization of Employees out of their classification. When it is necessary that an employee work in a higher classification, he shall receive an additional 5% pay for the time that he is required to work in a higher classification in excess of two weeks during the period of this agreement.

8. Call Back of Personnel - When it is necessary for the County to require Employees to return to work, not on their regularly assigned shift, the County agrees to compensate the employee for a minimum of one hour's work, at the established rate of 1-1/2 times normal salary.

9. Transfer of Personnel - The County Manager shall direct the Fire Chief to make every possible effort to minimize the transfer of personnel between shifts and duty assignments which would result in changes in the number of working hours in an average three-week period.

10. Inspectional Responsibilities - The Employees agree that uniformed Fire Department personnel who are assigned to regular combat fire fighting duties will conduct, at the request of the Director of the Metropolitan Dade County Fire Department (County Fire Chief), while attached to combat equipment, building, fire, and other inspections necessary to check compliance with appropriate County Fire Codes and in connection with any procedure requiring a permit from the County Fire Department.

THE FIRST PUBLIC EMPLOYEE
COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT
IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA
September 23, 1968

Throwback
Edition



CONTRACT SIGNING 1971

LEFT TO RIGHT CHIEF VIRGIL RADFORD,
FIRE CHIEF MILTON Q. BULLOCK,
PAUL POTHAM, MANAGER RAY GOODE,
VICE PRESIDENT EMERITUS NELSON BRADSHAW,
BILL KING, CLARENCE SIGMON AND FRANK MUHR

Sid Was There

by Retired CFO Frank “Catfish” Spadaro



Sid Vihlen

In the formative years of every firefighter there is always one or two people who help chapter proficient firefighter that we all hope to become. Of course, there were the instructors in fire college that gave us the minimum standards required to perform. I don't want to diminish the value of that training, but, to those first few months at a fire house where you become part of a team in my mind is the most valuable training you'll ever get. For me, those months were

spent on Engine 5. Sid Vihlen was the driver. Emil Yde was shotgun and Harry Kirkland was with me hanging off the back. Harry Barnett was on the tanker. As is usually the case, rookies were to be seen and not heard, and be in constant motion. No sitting around. In the early 70's, the style was generational. Harry and I had long hair and big old side burns. One of our first shift together, all the veteran were at the table in the morning drinking coffee and chatting it up. This fellow named JB Barfield, who was apparently religious, was stating to the other guys that Harry and I were going to burn in Hell because it was, unbeknown to us, that it was a sin to have long hair. I looked at Harry and suggested that we go outside and check the trucks, but just before we got out of ear shot, I heard Sid say "I don't know JB, I've seen paintings of Jesus and he had long hair". That was the first time Sid defended me and it never stopped. Sid was there for many important days in my career development.

That year was on of the worst grass fire seasons on record and most shifts we left the station in the AM and got back in the PM. It was so dusty on the back of that truck, that Harry and I looked as though we

were wearing white uniforms from the lime rock dust on all those back roads. On one occasion, we had a grass fire that we could not get to with a hose so Harry and I suggested that we would take fire brooms and take care of it. Sid said "you sure you want to do that?" we, with our youthful invincibility said "yep we got this." As we were in that cane grass giving it hell, I would occasionally look back towards the truck to see Sid standing on top of the hose bed with his hands cupped over his eyes watching out for us. About two hours later we heard another vehicle come to the scene and it was FI. Forestry with bombadiers. Sid knew we wouldn't be able to get it all so he called for help. Harry and I crawled out of that field completely exhausted, but we put a hell of a dent in it. Sid looked at us both and suggested that we not do that anymore. No problem, we said.

On another call, we had a building fire at a restaurant at 2 AM. Emil and I made entry and were advancing a hose toward the fire when, an AC unit fell out of the ceiling attached to a 4X8 sheet of ply wood and pinned me right to the floor. I yelled at Emil but he could not hear me.

(continued on page 10)

Sid Was There

by Retired CFO Frank “Catfish” Spadaro

(continued from page 9)

I gripped the hose so that he could not advance and when he came back to assess the problem he found me and helped me get out. When I got outside Sid was there waiting. He gave me water and told me how lucky I was. So, at that point, it became a surround and drown. Sid set me up with a B-800. At the time it was the largest handline we had. A big heavy nozzle with two big ears to hold it with. So, I'm by myself of this thing and it's kicking my ass. After about 5 minutes I feel the hose go slack and no more water. Sid came over and asked "what are you doing?" I said - Sid, that room is full of fire and I

think I'm getting the best of it. He said the fire is out son, that is a bathroom with red walls and the lights from the truck are twinkling off of it making it look like it's on fire. We walked inside after the overhaul and Sid said to me, "ya know I've eaten here before and have used that bathroom and it have been so clean". He laughed about that for a long time. Lesson learned.

I could go on and on about this guy. He was there when my mother died and was a great comfort to me. He was there when I married my wife. He was always there in the background watching out for me. I always knew that he had my back. He was there for the

birth of my children. He was non-judgmental, kind and professional. He loved his family above anything else. Sid was hired in December of 1953. I was two years old. He had 21 years on the department before I ever got on. Sid retired in January of 1996. He lived in Key Largo the whole time I knew him. Sid passed away recently at Baptist Hospital. His nurse was my daughter Serafina who assured me that he passed quietly with dignity while she held his hand. Of all of the souls I have known in my life, this man was of the highest order. Thanks Sid for having my back all those years. Rest easy now and I'll see you again soon enough. ❖



Lt. Keith Bell
receives the
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of the Year
award at the
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of Foreign
Wars)
Convention in
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Retired Chief Jim Gillis

Fire Rescue Today: When Public Service Infuses Customer Service (for better or worse) and Protecting Our Brand.

by John O'Brien, Executive Board Member

When most people think about branding and protecting a brand, that concept is usually reserved for major corporations. Branding is expressing an inherent value in an organization, product, or service; it serves to communicate characteristics and values of what a particular brand is, and often just as importantly, what it is not. In thinking of a strong brand, images of Coca-Cola, Apple, and Disney can quickly come to mind. These are powerful companies that immediately conjure positive thoughts in good times, or an often unshakable negative sentiment in bad times. We, as firefighters and union members, are no different, as we are a brand. Polls routinely show that the firefighter brand is arguably the strongest when compared to other public servants, both locally and nationally. Our hard working and dutiful men and

women donning MDFR uniforms protect our brand every day. Whether it's through delivering exemplary service on a call or dealing with the public out in the field, we are each stewards of our brand, and it is important that we take ownership of that awesome responsibility.

The advent of cell phones with video recording capabilities has forever changed the landscape of interaction with patients and our local populace. In good times, that cell phone can capture A9, R9, EMS 43, and A43 working to extricate a patient from a lump of metal now unrecognizable as an automobile. In bad times, that phone can capture our interaction with a patient where a crew member is at his/her wits end, giving in to the desire to tell that patient 'what they can stick where.' That moment, now immortalized, only serves to damage our brand as

firefighters. Gone are the days where we are simply public servants. It is now expected that we, as firefighters, infuse customer service into our public interactions. Fire Rescue, with a smile. It may not always be easy, as some territories have demanding constituencies, but abandoning the customer service mentality could threaten to damage our brand. Even in today's forgiving local political climate, where tax rolls have increased and the darkest days are certainly behind us (for now), we can ill afford to damage our brand, in the eyes of the public, the voters, the commission, and our Mayor. I don't have all the answers; I'm no Alex Trabek. But I do know this: moving forward, each call should be viewed as an opportunity to showcase our value, our brand, as we collectively aim to 'Deliver Excellence, Every Day.' ♦

DADE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF
FIREFIGHTERS LOCAL 1403

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Back in the day. . .

by Maria Chin, Secretary/Editor



Do you have more than 15 years on with our department and find yourself reflecting on the way things used to be? Well, now that I have 22 years on the job, I guess it's

par for the course. So many of my mentors, friends and coworkers are retired or are retiring. Several of them have passed away. I'm getting close to being the "old-timer". I'm dedicating this issue of the Jumpline to the past. As you see the pictures and read of our first contract and our founding fathers of Local 1403, think about the path they paved for your future. And even now, with contract negotiations in progress, look at what we have and where we are

now as an organization. Without collective bargaining, none of it would be possible. If you read the article on page 6, you will see that as far as we've come, it seems we still talk about the same things as they did in the past. Come and visit the hall and check out the pictures in the museum and the administrative offices upstairs.

As most of you know, I am in charge of Recruit Training. We have been hiring classes for a little over 2 years now and that means there are many probationary firefighters in operations. I'm asking you all a favor brothers and sisters. Please find the time to become a mentor. Please find the time to become that brother or sister for our new employees in the field. Please find the time to look out for our newest members of Local 1403. Take them under your wings and show them the way - not just

about drills, but about all that you know that is good about this job. And yes, even the bad! Be there for them. Back in the day, my mentors made it possible for me to fall in-love with this profession. They helped me reaffirm that I made the right decision being in the fire service. They made it possible for me to see my career dreams come true.

Back in the day, our Local leaders showed me that everything we have, all of it, was a fight worth having. It's very important to make sure that we keep the good fight for all of our members and that as a Union we stay united. No matter if we disagree, it's vital to our existence to walk the walk, together!

*Honor the past, it's the
foundation of your future. ❖*

MDA Boot Drive

Miami-Dade Fire Rescue's Boot drive will be held November 6-8, 2015.

Each year, for over 60 years, we hit the streets collecting for the children and adults with neuromuscular diseases. Our hope is that one day soon there will be a cure.

Until then, our efforts give a child the chance to attend summer camp, wheel-chairs, clinical and medical assistance and any other resource that is needed while they fight these debilitating diseases. I'll be seeing you soon at the Battalion meetings where you'll receive your supplies.

Retiree's Picnic

Each year the Retiree's Picnic is held in Dalhousie, Georgia. This year the picnic will be held October 2- 4. You don't have to be retired to attend. I'm sure a great time will be had by all!