UNITY

THRU STRENGTH AND PURPOSE

Quarterly Voice of the Retired Detroit Police and Fire Fighters *Volume 164, Winter, 2026*

PRESIDENT

Don Taylor

I hope all is well and everyone received everything they wanted from Santa. Our Michigan winter hasn't been too bad yet, but we still have a long time to go before spring arrives. The Association is already planning the events for 2026, and hope many of you will be able to attend them.

Things are going a little crazy around the country; some areas show a large increase in assaults and harassment of Law Enforcement Officers. Hopefully none of our members have family members that are active-duty officers working in those areas and required to work under these conditions. It seems like for the last several years there has always been something going on that splits our country apart. With any luck all this will end soon, and people will be able to discuss their differences in a reasonable manner.

Speaking of people discussing differences, our Michigan Legislative also appears to have had their problems. In 2025 the legislators were only able to agree on a total of 74 pieces of legislation that made it through the system and got signed into law. This is the fewest number of Bills passed in decades, if not ever. Compare this to the last year under Governor Snyder, in which he had 690 Bills signed into law. This may be a good thing. With nothing getting passed by our local and Federal legislators they can't screw anything up.

Our next issue is following the lead of the legislators, It has been almost a year since a Judge heard our case against the State of Michigan over the 10 million dollars appropriated in the budget for VEBAs established during a bankruptcy, and he still has not responded with a decision. Not much we can do but wait.

As you can see, by the length of my articles, they have been getting shorter and shorter. The reason for this is that our Association has no major issues to address. However, that's not to say we aren't monitoring The City, State and Federal governments to make sure we're aware of any changes that could affect our members.

That's it for now, stay safe and have a healthy, happy and prosperous New Year.

Notice Regarding the City of Detroit Police and Fire Retiree Healthcare Trust

If you are NOT enrolled in Priority Health, you will need to submit new HRA Reimbursement Forms for 2026, your HRA recurring payments do not carry over from year to year.

Login at www.ourbenefitoffice.com/DPFRHC/Benefits or contact BeneSys, Inc. Troy office at (833) 725-5336 or TMR Detroit office at (313) 963-1135 to confirm your current coverage and dependents are listed correctly.

There a time limit to file for HRA Benefits for 2025. HRA Claims for 2025 must be filed by March 31, 2026.

Who is eligible to participate!

Police and Fire Retires who separated from active service with the City of Detroit

ON OR BEFORE December 31, 2014

VICE PRESIDENT

Gregory Trozak

I would like to begin by wishing everyone a Happy New Year and I hope you all had a great Christmas and Holiday season celebrating with family and friends. Not that I am a "new year resolution" kind of person but at this stage of my life the only resolution I can think of is to be able to celebrate the Holiday Season again the next time it rolls around and make the same resolution.

Speaking of the new year, the City of Detroit has a new administration taking office which may or may not see some changes on the Pension Board. The Board has not met since the change as of this writing, so I cannot give an update on who was added or replaced but it will be an interesting year. As of today, the pension system is doing fine and the future looks good.

Again, this year the RDPFFA Annual Picnic will take place in Frankenmuth on Monday June 15, 2026, at Heritage Park which is right behind the Bavarian Inn where we will be hosting the hospitality rooms on Sunday evening June 14 and Monday evening June 15.

The June Breakfast and General Meeting will take place in the Bavarian Inn on Tuesday June 16. Rooms again this year will be $139.00 per night plus tax and fees. Reservations can now be made by calling the Bavarian Inn (989) 652-7200 using our group booking # 1429EH . More information will be coming soon.

A couple of reminders on future Association events. the March General Meeting will take place at the west side location which is the American Legion Stitt Post on March 5th. The May General Meeting has been canceled due to the fact the east side location is unavailable on the date of the meeting. We are sorry that the meeting had to be canceled and if anything changes we will post any updates.

The Association is again looking into having a get-together in November at a casino and resort within driving distance of the office. After the event at Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort in November, we are looking into going back to Firekeepers Casino Resort this year. There was a pretty good turnout the last time we were there and everyone seemed to have a great time. More information will be made available in the next few weeks and we will let everyone know, so stay tuned.

With this being the slow time of the year I will close out wishing all our snowbird members heading south or already there safe travels and enjoy the warm weather. Again, Happy New Year to all, enjoy these winter months and remember we should all be happy that we are still here and available to read this edition of the Unity. Until the next time, as always please be careful out there and remember this is a whole different world we are living in.

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(586) 795-1734 • Fax (586) 795-2183
Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m till 3:00 p.m.

OFFICERS
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Donald Taylor
Vice President
Gregory Trozak
Secretary/Treasurer
Allan Grant

PUBLICATION/EDITOR
Al Grant

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rdpffa.phanfare.com
Ken Gidner - Administrator

OFFICE E-MAIL
rdpffa@hotmail.com

WEB SITE
www.rdpffa.com

SECRETARY/ TREASURER

Al Grant

The following is the Retired Detroit Police and Fire Fighters Associations previous year activities, income and expenses from January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025.

A direct quote from the Restated Bylaws of the Retired Detroit Police and Fire Fighters Association states, in part, "The purposes of the Association shall be: To provide the Members with information concerning the status of Pensions, Hospitalization and Insurances." The organization achieves pension issue goals by supporting two elected pension representatives, one fire and one police, who in return report to the membership on all relevant activities. Hospitalization Benefits, are regularly monitored by elected Trustees, three are RDPFFA Board of Director members who report to the participants all applicable information.

Additionally, the Retired Detroit Police and Fire Fighters Association objective is to promote a spirit of good fellowship and a closer personal relationship among members and their families. Attempting to accomplish this goal the Association arranged an annual picnic along with a sponsored event at a casino, furthermore the RDPFFA coordinates a golf outing. The Association is organized and shall be operated exclusively for the purposes set forth in Section 501(c) (4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

This is a summary of year end numbers compiled by the Retired Detroit Police Fire Fighters Association Secretary-Treasurer. Over 4,500 persons were participants in the Association at the end of 2025, of those included, 3,635 started the year on payroll deduction and the Association ended the year with 3,507 on payroll deduction. Other members are those not enrolled who pay annually along with persons not eligible for automatic payroll deduction.

The following list represents categories identifying annual expenses; Events $5,700 (11 donations), General Membership Meetings $18,811., Honorariums $41,540, Insurance $5,980. (Average yearly cost - 3 year policies), Office Expenses $60,736, Payroll Expenses $66,613, Legal Fees $35,853, Professional Services $6,498, Professional Fees /Lobbyist $200, Property Taxes $9,315, Unity Magazine $13,162 and Utilities $12,511 along with a variety of categorized operating cost which is $209,552 total for building improvement or repairs. A majority of the Associations assets are professional manage and the investment expenses are not included in this piece of writing.

The yearly Retired Detroit Police and Fire Fighters Association expenses as of December 31, 2025, were $486,490. The Association had a total income of $199,555; this number includes $144,813 in dues, $22,635 in appreciation and $32,107 in other income. The dues assessment of $36.00 annually does not cover the Association's annual expenses which then, are supplemented by transferring investment funds. In 2025, $337,966 of investment earnings was transferred to the Association's fund to deal with expenditures.

December 31, 2024 total expenses was $486,490 December 31, 2023 total expenses was $330,112, December 31, 2022 end of the year total expenses was $338,283, December 31, 2021 end of the year total expenses was $261,118.

Left out from the above values of total assets is the office located at 2525 E. 14 Mile Road Sterling Heights, Michigan 48310-5969 which is owned by the organization. The above numbers are calculations for members' informational purposes only and are not to be construed as a professional audit and official certified numbers.

DEATH OF MEMBER

FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROCEDURE

Communications vary whether member was Police, Fire, or Sergeant and above. If you are Police make your first call to the Detroit Police Benefit & Protective Association, (313) 870-9304. Followed by either a call to the Detroit Police Officer Association, (313) 567-8770, or the Lieutenants & Sergeants (313) 961-5699, which ever applies.

While the Detroit Police Benefit & Protective Association will normally contact the City of Detroit with the information it would be reasonable to follow up with a call to the Pension Bureau, (313) 224-3362 Ext. 221 or 1 (800) 339-8344 and BeneSys (833) 725-5336 to make sure that they were notified. Last but not least, notify the Retired Detroit Police & Fire Fighters Association, (586) 795-1734.

Fire employees, start by notifying the Detroit Fire Fighter Association, (313) 962-7546, the Detroit Firemen's Fund Association, (313) 628-0099, Detroit Fire Mutual Fund call Firemen's Fund Association to leave a message, Detroit Pension Bureau, (313) 224-3362 or (800) 339-8344, ext 221 and BeneSys (833) 725-5336.

The above agencies will assist you with the notification process. It would be a good idea to put this information with your secured legal documents or some other obvious place where your survivors can locate it.

Detroit Police Department Retired Badges

Silver – $55.00 EA.* **Gold – $65.00 EA.***

Available to R.D.P.F.F.A. Members

Contact Retired Detroit Police Officer George Toy at:

(248) 572-4458

**Add $5.00 for Shipping & Handling. Allow 6-8 Weeks for Delivery*

Welcome New Members!

October 2025

Mark H. Williams - Police

Michael Borg - Fire

Russell Moler - Fire

November 2025

Jaysin Myers - Fire

Now Accepting PayPal!

We are pleased to announce that we now accept PayPal for Annual Dues, Political Action Committee (PAC) and Appreciation Donation payments. Please check the right side of the RDPFFA home page for a link!

PLEASE NOTE:

The RDPFFA would like to recognize and thank Olejnik Farms for their generous contribution of flowers adding to the beauty of our building grounds.

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

Fire Fighters Breakfasts

First Monday of the month at 9:00 A.M.

Dimitri's Opa Restaurant – **(NEW LOCATION)**
50875 Gratiot Ave, Chesterfield, MI 48051-3133

Third Tuesday of the month at 9:00 A.M.

Omega Coney Island
22501 W. Eight Mile Rd., Detroit, MI

First Thursday of the month at 9:00 A.M.

IHOP Restaurant ***(NEW LOCATION)***
8075 Nemco Way • Brighton, MI 48116
(810) 225-6020
Exit 145 off of I96 (Enter off Grand River)

Call the Association Office if you need additional information

MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE

For your information and the Association's benefit, it is important that when your summer/winter address changes, we are notified in advance of the move and again when you are returning to your home address. That way we can keep our records current. We don't want to lose you in the process.

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ASSOCIATION CALENDAR OF EVENTS* Updated!

General Membership Meeting Schedule:

AMERICAN POLISH CENTURY CLUB

33204 Maple Lane - Sterling Heights, MI - 7 PM
May **7, 2026** ***(Cancelled)***

AMERICAN LEGION
Carl E. Stitt Post 232

23850 Military Rd - Dearborn Heights, MI - 7 PM
March 5, 2026

RDPFFA ANNUAL PICNIC

Frankenmuth Heritage Park - Frankenmuth, MI
Monday, June 15, 2026

JUNE MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Bavarian Inn - Frankenmuth, MI
Tuesday, June 16, 2026

RDPFFA November Event

To Be Determined!

Snowbirds Of Michigan*

Meet 2nd Sunday of the month
May thru November
at "Fred of Roscommon"
430 N. 5th Street - Roscommon, MI
Social Hour 11:00 AM – Meeting at 1:00 PM

***Refer to columns for specifics or program changes**

Articles for the Spring 2026 Issue should be "submitted" by March 25, 2026

Snowbirds

Dan Zemaitis

Greetings from Florida

The "Snowbirds" organization was started officially on July 26, 1953 and we always look forward to publishing an update of our schedule and events for the Unity Newsletter. Due to untimed travels, we will not be able to publish this issue's updates.

Look for us in the next Unity issue.

Take care and God Bless.

Dan Zemaitis (989) 305-1035

Procedure to Obtain Retired Detroit Police Photo ID Cards

To obtain an ID card in person:

• Public Safety Headquarters

1301 Third Street, Detroit, MI 48226-2503

• Go to Central Photo for a digital picture

(located on the 3rd floor of Public Safety Headquarters)

You will be directed to the 6th floor to Detroit Police Personnel to complete process.

• Bring old DPD ID Card and Driver's License

-They will keep your old ID card.

Please call (313) 596-2810

for further information!

The Significance of the Maltese Cross

From the days of the first crusade, the cross has been the symbol of the Christian warrior who pledged not only to fight in defense of the Holy Land, but also to protect the lives of his compatriots. The Maltese Cross, now worn by modern firefighters, is actually an adaptation of a particular crusader insignia, the cross of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem.

During the crusades, many Knights became firefighters out of necessity. Their enemies had resorted to throwing bombs and sailing war vessels containing naphtha. Hundreds of Knights were burned alive. Others risked their lives to save their brothers in arms from dying painful fiery deaths. Thus these men became our first firefighters and the first of a long list of courageous firefighters.

The Maltese Cross is your symbol of protection. It means that the firefighter who wears this cross is willing to lay down his/her life for you, just as Crusaders sacrificed their lives for their fellow man so may years ago.

The Maltese Cross is a Firefighter's badge of honor, signifying that he/she works in courage... a ladder-run away from death.

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NOW LET US PROTECT *YOU*.

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Retired Detroit Firefighter

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Paul Parsell is an assistant to Eric Schroeder who offers securities and investment advisory services through **Osaic Wealth, Inc.** member FINRA/SIPC. **Osaic Wealth** is separately owned and other entities and/or marketing names, products or services referenced here are independent of **Osaic Wealth.**

Members Letters

Please accept this donation in memory of my husband, P.O. Hebert L Taylor. After serving his country in the USAF, he joined the Detroit Police Dept. in 1968 working mostly at #10. He was a hard worker willing to help everyone i.e. Patrol, accident car, Court Officer & last property clerk. Getting a duty disability in 1987.

Also P.O. Sharon Bouyer who also passed on the same day as Herbert, 03/12/25, may they both RIP.

Ret. P.O. Charleen Welch-Taylor
Pahrump, NV

Enclosed with my dues is a check to be used where needed. I deeply appreciate all you do for your members…especially those of us who are widowed. My donation is in memory of my husband Gerry Henningsen and his two best friends, Sgt. James Carter and Sgt. William Fumerola. Thank You

Geri Henningsen
Plymouth, MI

Enclosed please find the yearly dues for the RDPFF Association, plus a little bit more for all you do for us retirees every day. This is in memory of my husband Paul Laube, as well as all who have passed in and out of the line of duty. Thank You.

Judy Laube
Spring Hill, FL

Please use this donation where needed and keep fighting the good fight! Thanks

Bob & Linda Dombrowski
Grosse Ile, MI

My brother James Marshall was a Detroit Fireman for his entire career. He was retired and passed away in 2024. We would like to make this donation to the Retired Detroit Police and Fire Fighters Association in his name. We hope you will recognize him in your newsletter. Thanks for all you do for the retirees.

Katie Marshall
Grand Junction, CO

Please apply this donation as you see fit, in memory of Sgt. Mark "Buck" Belcastro a solid brave cop. Thanks

Den & Mag Barton
Caseville Twp, MI

Please accept our donation and use it where most needed. In memory of Officer Michael Pietrzak and Officer Emmanuel "Paco" Vetor.

Richard & Sue Hathaway
Punta Gorda, FL

I really appreciate all the work you do for the membership; I am especially thankful for your efforts to provide health insurance. Enclosed is check for 2026 membership & donation to the cause. Thanks

Judy Marchwinski
Odessa, FL

To the Officers of the RDPFFA, thank you for all your effort. Use this donation where needed.

Charles & Dorothy Mahoney
Las Vegas, NV

Hope every one of you are in good health, thank you for all that you do for us retirees. Please accept this check for the many friends and partners that have died in the past years especially Sgt. John Turney and Police Officer William Bowman.

Daniel & Diane Budz
Dearborn Heights, MI

In memory of Pete Gernand, rest in Peace Brother. Please use where most needed. Thank you for everything you continue to do for the Retirees every year!

Dave & Melanie Pauch
Mancelona, MI

Please use as you see fit. Thank you for your work and God Bless you.

Michael Cleland
Washington, MI

Thanks for the work you guys do, use wherever needed.

Kevin Greene
Clinton Twp., MI

To your wonderful staff, a genuine thank you and appreciation for all you do. In memory of P.O. Richard Santarossa. Thank You.

Connie Santarossa
Roscommon, MI

(continued on next page)

Members Letters *(continued)*

Please use this money as you see fit. In memory of my wife of almost 65 yrs, Char, and two of my partners from old TMU, Gene McVay and Will Christopher.

Jim Ruhlig
Linden, MI

Please use this check as needed in memory of Gerald Kreza and Steven Van Buren. Thank you for all you do for us.

Ted Ponik
Posen, MI

Would like to remember Dan Herrick and all the great cops I worked with at the old Second Precinct in the early 60's. Use this check as you see fit. Thank You.

John Tsampikou
Chesterfield, MI

"Standing up for you"

Bryan A. Sunisloe

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Michael O'Lear - Secretary • James Montgomery - Treasurer

The Trustees are:

Shannon Moran, Kim Fett, Jon Bozich, Patrick Schwartz, Christopher Alef

We are located at:

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13th Precinct

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IN MEMORIAM

Once again, we call the roll and acknowledge those friends and associates who have left us since our last publication. It is hard to let go of good friends but it is easy to remember the good times we shared and realize that now they rest in peace.

October 2025

Name	Rank	Dept.	Appointed	Retired	Date of Death	Age
Ball, Kenneth	P.O.	Police	6-1-71	1-8-00	10-26-25	76
Cordle-Mills, Flora	Invg.	Police	7-18-77	1-17-12	10-3-25	79
Granger, Brenda	Sgt.	Police	1-17-73	12-1-92	10-23-25	74
Habkirk, Gary	P.O.	Police	3-10-69	7-23-94	10-3-25	79
Harper, Carl	P.O.	Police	12-6-71	1-3-97	10-27-25	78
Mosby-Colbert, Kim	P.O.	Police	7-6-98	Died Active	10-14-25	65
St. Onge, Roy	Sgt.	Police	10-3-55	2-3-87	10-13-25	95
Stallworth, Darren	P.O.	Police	11-20-96	11-24-15	10-10-25	57
Stephens, John	P.O.	Police	5-13-68	5-15-93	10-3-25	79
Wilkewitz, Ralph	Sgt.	Police	1-25-65	1-27-90	10-17-25	82
Zelasko, Richard	P.O.	Police	6-12-72	7-25-85	10-11-25	74
Ziolkowski, Terrence	P.O.	Police	11-17-69	7-10-95	10-22-25	76
Delich, George	FF	Fire	9-9-57	3-25-74	10-15-25	89
Gartin, Gibran	Sgt.	Fire	8-3-87	8-3-12	10-14-25	59
Johnson, Clifford	FEO	Fire	10-7-74	7-20-95	10-20-25	80
Johnson, Earl	FF	Fire	3-30-53	4-18-72	10-5-25	99
Kelly, George	Bt. Chief	Fire	7-6-66	1-17-02	10-25-25	81
Matlock, Calef	FF	Fire	4-24-89	7-18-98	10-8-25	69
Michaels, Carl	FEO	Fire	2-11-74	10-17-91	10-1-25	78

November 2025

Name	Rank	Dept.	Appointed	Retired	Date of Death	Age
Hankey, Dale	P.O.	Police	10-4-71	4-12-97	11-2-25	75
Harrah, Roger	P.O.	Police	9-18-72	1-10-98	11-5-25	79
Hurley, Howard	P.O.	Police	7-6-54	6-27-92	11-6-25	94
Kauffman, Thomas	P.O.	Police	4-27-64	7-14-89	11-23-25	86
Kinnee, Robert	P.O.	Police	3-21-66	4-1-91	11-16-25	81
Klinefelt, Ira	P.O.	Police	8-13-62	8-11-89	11-4-25	86
Ludlow, Donald	P.O.	Police	4-3-67	4-3-92	11-28-25	81
MacDonald, James	P.O.	Police	11-1-70	7-3-98	11-20-25	77
Moran, Dennis	P.O.	Police	9-20-71	3-5-87	11-16-25	75
Norwood, Judith	Inv.	Police	8-31-87	10-31-12	11-12-25	75
Slappy, John	P.O.	Police	7-8-68	9-3-02	11-6-25	85
Warren, Betty	P.O.	Police	5-16-83	3-3-92	11-7-25	78
Williams, Gregory	Lt.	Police	6-28-71	1-4-02	11-13-25	79
Billing, Jerry	Dep. Chief	Fire	7-7-64	5-30-98	11-9-25	86

(continued on next page)

In Memoriam *(continued)*

November 2025 (continued)

Name	Rank	Dept.	Appointed	Retired	Date of Death	Age
Gusoff, Louis	Sr. Chief	Fire	4-4-66	11-21-05	11-14-25	79
Ross, Donald	Lt.	Fire	1-15-56	4-22-82	11-25-25	95

December 2025

Name	Rank	Dept.	Appointed	Retired	Date of Death	Age
Bajercius, Harv Arvidas	P.O.	Police	12-16-68	3-11-92	12-2-25	78
Baker, Richard	Lt.	Police	8-19-68	7-10-04	12-25-25	81
Bessinger, Gary	P.O.	Police	10-18-71	8-29-86	12-7-25	86
Brewer, Ray	Sgt.	Police	1-3-56	1-6-88	12-4-25	92
Jackson, Robert	Sgt.	Police	1-16-86	1-1-11	12-19-25	68
Kuklock, Andrew	Sgt.	Police	9-7-71	9-7-96	12-26-25	83
Miller, Jerome	Cmdr.	Police	3-26-62	12-3-86	12-13-25	89
Schmekel, Steven	Corp.	Police	4-21-86	Died Active	12-19-25	65
St. Clair, Maureen	Invg.	Police	4-10-86	10-1-99	12-26-25	62
Travis, Ernest	Lt.	Police	1-3-61	1-3-96	12-5-25	88
Woodcum, Oscar	P.O.	Police	4-26-02	4-23-18	12-8-25	54
Fane, Joseph	Capt.	Fire	2-11-74	7-6-06	12-6-25	79
Garden, William	FEO	Fire	7-5-66	7-5-98	12-10-25	85
Price, Cleveland	Capt.	Fire	10-3-70	5-20-02	12-15-25	83

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