

President's Message for December 2018 by Richard C. Warbrouck

I want to extend our best wishes to you and your family for a Merry Christmas and a happy, safe and healthy New Year. Christmas is a time to receive and to give. I personally would rather give than receive. I want to give my thanks to each of you for your membership in the RFFOW and your continued support. I want to thank Vice President Jim Fossos for his dedication, support, for taking the minutes at the monthly meeting and for chairing the meeting when I am not able to attend. I want to thank our Directors for their time, service and many contributions. I want to thank Megan our Administrative Assistant for her cheerful attitude, willingness to help and unlimited ability. I again want to thank our eastside reporter, Ray Sanderson for his many years of service as a member of the City of Yakima Pension Board, for his knowledge of the Prior Act and LEOFF I Retirement System and for another year of interesting and informative articles each month for our Newsletter. And many thanks to Peggy at Savage Color, the printer of our Newsletter and Pam Arnhold who mails the Newsletter for their kindness and professional manner in which they handle our account.

We had our annual Christmas Luncheon at the Inglewood Golf Club, a spectacular event! We had 102 people attend. The food was hot, plentiful and delicious. I wish you could see this facility. The clubhouse resembles a southern plantation home, 1920 era, similar to the home shown in the movie "Gone with the Wind." I had to imagine Scarlett walking down the stairs and Clark Gable as Bret saying "Frankly my dear, I don't give a damn." The clubhouse and grounds were beautifully decorated. There were 7 Christmas trees, 3 in the dining hall all elegantly decorated with Christmas wreaths and Christmas decorations throughout the building. The Clubhouse was so beautiful that I had my granddaughters bring three of my little great granddaughters over to take pictures of the girls.

The auction and raffle were a huge success. Our members are so very generous. Thanks to all of you who donated items for the auction, your generosity didn't go unnoticed. This luncheon was not subsidized by your dues, nothing was paid for out of the General Fund. All the proceeds came from the raffle ticket sales and from the auction. In fact, due to the generosity of our members and guests we ended with a profit after expenses were paid which will be used to offset next year's luncheon. I want to thank Megan, Maureen, Charlotte Stanford and Marian Herth for their help.

I can't understand why one retired Seattle firefighter Dave Peery, who is involved with another group refers to the RFFOW as a social group in spite of the fact that we have members across the State whom we never see and we only have one social event a year at no cost to our General Fund and in spite

of all the service we provide, our political action activities and accomplishments in Olympia he refers to us as a social organization. I don't understand his logic.

We have been working on a bill to be introduced in the January 2019 session of the Legislature to help with the staffing of our pension and LEOFF I Disability Boards. We want to amend the language in all the retirement statutes, RCW 41.16, 41.18, 41.20. and RCW 41.26 the LEOFF I law to clarify and make the language more uniform as to who can serve on these boards. We also want to broaden the scope and definition of who can be elected to the board and who can elect the board members:

- We want to establish that any employed or retired firefighter in the jurisdiction served by the board can be elected by those members who are under the jurisdiction of the board.
- Any employed or retired firefighter who is a resident of the jurisdiction served by the board, city, county, or fire district can be elected to the board by those members who are under the jurisdiction of the board.
- If there are no employed or retired firefighters or law enforcement officers to serve on the board as in the above, any employed or retired firefighter or law enforcement officer can be elected to the board by those members who are under the jurisdiction of the board.

I will be testifying on this bill on December 11th at the Select Committee on Pension Policy (SCPP) meeting in Olympia. I would like to have this bill introduced by the SCPP as they are considered by other legislators as the experts on pensions and retirement systems.

In response to the letter elsewhere in this Newsletter from Del McNeal, the retired police chief from Bremerton who travelled from Florida to attend a disability board meeting. Pension and disability board members can now attend a meeting by teleconference to allow members who are out of town or for some reason unable to attend to participate and vote during board meetings.

We will be mailing out a questionnaire in January to all members of the LEOFF I Retirement System including surviving spouses and hopefully to all LEOFF II retirees and surviving spouses to get some information and suggestions for the representation of all retired firefighters and law enforcement officers.

We reached out to Joe Dawson, President of Washington State Retired Deputy Sheriff and Police Officers Association (WSRDSPOA) to schedule a meeting to discuss the development of a firefighter and law enforcement state association. His response was that he was not interested. At first, I

thought that I had offended him when I previously referred to the WSRDSPOA as a social organization but when I read his next Newsletter the editor herself said that when she first researched the association before joining she found out that it was more of a social group. We then asked for addresses of their members to send them a mailing, with the request being denied. I was quite disappointed but it does not make any difference as we will be mailing to each of them through the Department of Retirement Systems (DRS). I would hope and think that they would want to stay informed and want the best representation possible. I agree with the comments in the letters from Mark Thompson, Rudy Wallace and the suggestions from Elaine Paul. I appreciate Fred Corlis asking about forwarding my article or Newsletter to non-members. I don't mind forwarding the Newsletter or article now and then but I wish those of you who receive the Newsletter by email don't forward it on a regular basis as we all know some would say why pay the dues if I receive the Newsletter anyway.

Merry Christmas!