

THE CALL BOX



SPRING 2008

From the Prez

By Jerry Taylor, President, RSPOA

It has been a busy four months since the last issue of the Call Box, both as to RSPOA activities and personally.

My wife had knee surgery in January - very successful knee surgery, by the way. I got to play caregiver for a period of time during her recovery. Not a very big issue relative to the experiences of some of our members and spouses, but, nonetheless, one with a big lesson. Friends showed up on our doorstep to visit with and cheer up the patient. Often they brought dinner. Sometimes they just came by to relieve me so that I could attend to meetings or other duties. It has made me mindful of how important these friends are and how important it is to reach out to our friends when they are in these situations. I often think of those members in our group that are in similar and often much more onerous situations. The lesson? Recognize that even the smallest gesture is valued and appreciated. Do more.



Jerry Taylor

I guess this is a good segue into the importance of keeping the RSPOA active and growing. This organization is the place to keep those friendships, acquaintances and associates an active part of our social circle. We need to work to bring in new members as they retire and encourage the participation of all members. So, attend the next meeting. Call up someone you know that does not or seldom attends and drag them to the meeting. Oh, focus on bringing LEOFF 2 members as well.

Over the past months I have had meetings with several legislators, leaders of other LEOFF groups and DRS Director Sandy Matheson. The focus has been to track the development of efforts relative to LEOFF 1 medical benefits. This issue is still in play. DRS got \$40,000 to conduct their study. We are working to ensure we have a voice in any study that is conducted. John Nordlund and I serve as the RSPOA representatives to the LEOFF 1 Coalition and in that role we both will continue to work this issue.

This last legislative session produced no raid on our

system, so we are safe for a while. As always the concern remains that the various political entities will see our pension trust funds as a funding source. We will stay vigilant but are happy to note that as of this writing no particular attack is in play. The Select Committee on Pension Policy has its first meeting since the legislative session ended on April 15th. It should be interesting as there will be a report from the State Investment Board and updates on pension litigation and legislation. This is the committee to watch as it will most likely be the stage from which any new pension legislation will launch.

As you may know, the Retired Fire Fighters of Washington filed a law suit to reverse the LEOFF 1 pension premium holiday. After a second hearing on March 8, 2008 in King County Superior Court, Judge Yu denied the RFFOW motion for Summary Judgment against the State of Washington. She also denied their request for certain records from the State Attorney General citing attorney/client privilege, and their request for attorney fees. Currently the RFFOW is evaluating the possibility of filing an appeal.

Looking for a bright side on this loss the RFFOW points out that they did manage to get the State Attorney General to claim that the pension is a "defined benefit plan". Having such a statement by the Attorney General on record does solidify the argument that regardless of the solvency of the LEOFF 1 fund, the pension benefits must be paid.

I recently had lunch with a member of the Guild nego-

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The Official Publication of the
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2008 Ol' Blue Clan Reunion : 3/15/08 Golf: 3/16/08

By Pat Munter, Trustee RSPOA

(Photos on pages 4 and 5)

Once again, the reunion was held at Turf Paradise Horse Racing Track in Phoenix. This year, Jim Johnson and Ken Baggen hosted. Great party!

Special thanks to: Retired Seattle Police Officers Association which contributed six large bottles of good wine for door prizes (plus funds for miscellaneous small overages). Also, Ted Fonis contributed funds for an assortment of high quality adult beverages for additional door prizes.

Some new things: Jim Johnson's daughter, Cheryl, who's in the restaurant business, contributed several very desirable assorted gift baskets for door prizes. Denise Baggen made up some really great door prizes, too, but just for the ladies.

Being so close to St. Patricks Day the Honorary Stewards for Ol' Blue Clan Purse were all the Irishmen in attendance.

Golf Tournament: This year the tournament was held at The Lakes at Westwood Village in Peoria, the same course where we've held the post parties in previous years.

Weather was cool and windy, but very playable. The course was in great condition. Highlight was Hole #17, a par 3, right at the party patio, which was played from the black tees (this hole only)—a carry of 180 yards over water. No one hit the green.

The winning team was made up of Denny Jorve, Brian Feldman, Larry Hart, and Dan Keller. Long Drive winners were Mel Rasmussen and

"Johnny Deuce" (John Nordlund). KP winners were David Johnson and Pat Murphy (2). There was no KP winner on Hole #17 (see earlier item).

The golf post party was great, including great food prepared by Joanie Munter and an assortment of refreshing beverages.

After the "normal" people left the party, the remaining miscreants

took their clubs out to the immediately adjacent 17th hole (see earlier comments) and hacked away, finally proving it is possible to hit the green.

Closing items:

1. Special thanks to the Seattle Police Golf Association which provided funds for long drive and KP prizes and post golf refreshments.
2. Jim Johnson and Ken Baggen have asked for someone to step forward to host the function next year (the Munters will still do the Golf Tournament).
3. Participation was down this year. Many people reported they couldn't attend because they waited too long to arrange hotels and air fares. Book early! Tell your friends. It's a great party and golf tournament.
4. You don't have to be retired to attend. This is a great event and you can also enjoy Mariner baseball, golf, trips to Mexico, etc.
5. The event is tentatively scheduled for March 21st and 22nd in 2009,



LEOFF I COALITION REPORT

By Jerry Taylor, RSPOA President, LEOFF 1 Coalition Representative. and John Nordlund, RSPOA Trustee

Eight years! It all started back in mid-2000 and officially began on October 26, 2000 at a meeting in Yakima. The outcome of that meeting was the formation of the LEOFF I Coalition. Things looked bright at that meeting and the first few meetings of the Coalition Executive Board. Items of concern were identified. Prominent legislators met with the board. There was talk of increases in benefits. The Pension Trust Fund was \$1.1 billion in surplus. The state had entered a gain-sharing agreement with the Teachers and Anchorage had won a major lawsuit forcing the distribution of their surplus.

On January 27, 2001, the Coalition issued its promise to the members of LEOFF I. They said:

- The LEOFF I COALITION is organized to insure the equitable distribution of LEOFF I Pension System surplus funds; and

- The MISSION of the LEOFF I COALITION is to protect the integrity of the LEOFF I Law and LEOFF I Retirement System Trust Fund

That original Coalition was formed of six groups. The Retired Seattle Police Officers Association was, and is, the largest group in the lot. Turmoil soon erupted with the Coalition and two groups, WSCFF and WACOPS left. Local 27 Firefighters joined. Subsequently the RFFOW left. Most, but not all, of the member groups provided seed funding in the amount of \$1000 to the Coalition.

Also, on January 27, 2001, the Coalition embarked on their first fund raising effort. They issued a letter asking for \$100 donations. The RSPOA even provided the Coalition with its mailing list to aid the solicitation. It worked well. They raised about \$150,000 in that first effort. Most of it came from RSPOA members.

Quickly, the bright light faded as the

legislature began its session and quickly proposed the first attempt to raid the surplus. That was HB 1072. It first surfaced at the December 13, 2000 Joint Committee on Pension Policy meeting and was introduced as soon as the legislature convened. It would have taken some of our pension funds and created a medical benefits risk pool to pay the LEOFF 1 employers' costs. Political action by LEOFF 1 members, organizations and some organizational efforts by the Coalition stopped that bill.

Then in late February the Legislature introduced SB 6166. Not disguised as a relief for LEOFF 1 employers, it was an outright raid on the Pension Trust.

Governor Locke, speaking about this bill, said, *"By using the surplus assets in Plan 1 of the Law Enforcement Officers and Fire Fighters Retirement System (LEOFF Plan 1) to support state programs, this budget proposal helps us all avoid making onerous cuts to social service and health care programs that are important to our children and the elderly."*

Thankfully, this bill was killed. It was killed by the political action of LEOFF 1 members and the last minute filing of a law suit supported by the Coalition. The issue died and the potential for a large legal settlement diminished in an economic downturn. The lawyers lost interest and the Coalition went dormant. The Coalition board continued to meet but severely limited communications with members. So far, the Coalition has not taken any action to move forward with its stated goal of seeking a distribution of the surplus. In fact, it appears as the Coalition has walked away from that goal altogether. From a legislative perspective it now seems that the Coalition is content to simply oppose almost any bill dealing with LEOFF 1.

Over the intervening six years the Coalition offered some verbal support

for the survivor benefit and joined with other organizations (including RSPOA) in supporting a precedent setting lawsuit dealing with medical benefits. Additionally, the Coalition has recently provided seed funding for a lawsuit in Moses Lake dealing with the same issue. We feel it has yet to develop a strong lobbying arm. The Coalition has lost contact with many LEOFF 1 members.

Over the years the Coalition has spent about \$190,000 and has about \$148,000 in the treasury. It is currently spending at the rate of \$30,000 a year.

Over the past year and a half the RSPOA has been pushing the Coalition to keep its promise and to do a better job of identifying and organizing all LEOFF 1 members and beneficiaries. We think that may well be decisive in protecting our pension benefits and maybe even getting some taste of the surplus which now stands at almost \$2 billion. (The February 2008 CTF balance for LEOFF 1 was \$6,266,139,054.68.)

As a LEOFF 1 member please remember that, individually, you have no voice with the Coalition. It is made up of organizations. Your only input to the Coalition is through the RSPOA Board. It is our job to represent your interests to the Coalition.

The Coalition will elect new officers in May. Nominations will be made by the Coalition Board and the only votes will be those cast by the Coalition Board. We anticipate there will be no change in leadership in May.

Our goal as your representative to the Coalition is to move the organization towards being more communicative with the LEOFF 1 community at large, identifying and building a political base and keeping the promises made back in 2000. To accomplish this we

(Go to Coalition, Page 6)

OL' BLUE CLAN



More linked at <http://rspoa.homestead.com>

MARCH 15/16,



Photos by Call Box Staff Photographer John Nordlund

Scramble Winners!

Ring In

By Nick Bulpin, Secretary/Treasurer RSPOA

The Seattle Police Officers Guild needs your help! Since 1954 the Guild has always been active in politics. The legislature of the State of Washington enacted a bill called 41.20. 41.20 basically guaranteed the payment of retirement benefits by the ten first class cities that consisted of Aberdeen, Bellingham, Bremerton, Everett, Richland, Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma, Vancouver and Yakima. The Washington State Police Officers Association (WSCPO) represented those first class cities and successfully lobbied for improvements to 41.20. Those improvements consisted of widow's benefits, escalator clause, etc. The Guild spent a lot of time in Olympia assisting the WSCPO in their efforts.

In the late 1960's the legislature sought to enact a bill that would represent all Police Officers and Fire Fighters throughout the State. The WSCPO originally objected to this new bill 41.26 (LEOFF 1) and through the efforts of Arnie Roundtree, head of the Washington Fire Fighters and Charlie Marsh, Executive Director of WSCPO, the LEOFF 1 bill was refined and made acceptable to the WSCPO by offering the best of both 41.20 and 41.26 to those retiring after March of 1970. Once 41.26 was law there was a major run on pension funds by those officers and fire fighters that were aware of the impending bill becoming law. This raised concerns of law makers and as a result LEOFF II, with significantly less benefits, was seen to be needed and became law in 1977. Sponsors of the LEOFF II movement became anti LEOFF 1 and were deemed to be enemies. The Guild along with the WSCPO successfully campaigned for Larry Vognild of Snohomish County to unseat August Mardesich. Ken Eikenberry of Seattle gave up his seat in the legislature to unsuccessfully run against Helen Sommers with the support of the Guild and WSCPO.

The Guild along with the Seattle Fire Fighters picketed city hall in the early 1970's for wage negotiations and were successful. The Guild successfully backed five out of six candidates for city council positions in the recent November elections. Elected positions in the city are not new to police and fire with Wayne Larkin and Jack Richards holding elective office with the support of the Guild. Mike Rodosovich, Tex Roddam, Bob Moffett, and Jerry Taylor were unsuccessful in their bids for Council positions even with the Guild's support, primarily due to lack of monetary funds.

The Guild has formed a Political Action Committee and is receiving monetary support from its members to continue being politically active. This is where you can

SPRA CONDO OPENINGS

For reservations call Lisa at 726-9095 or email

lisa@reliefassociation.org

WHISTLER - (\$85 per night, 4-night minimum, 7-night max)

May 3 through May 21

May 27 through 31

June 8 through 24

July 1 through 5

July 21 through 24

September 15 through 20

October 1 through November 25

November 30 through December 4

SUNRIVER - (\$85 per night, 4-night minimum, 7-night max)

April 13 through 26

May 2 through 21

May 26 through June 5

July 1 through 4

September 27 through October 2

October 11 through 22

November 3 through December 6

December 12 through 22

PHOENIX - (\$85 per night, 4-night minimum, 7-night max)

April 7 through May 4

May 9 through June 6

June 14 through July 1

July 9 through August 12

August 23 through September 30

October 1 through 8

October 27 through November 30

December 1 through 15

MAUI - (\$110 per night - 7 night minimum)

7 or 8 nights - June 13 or 14 through June 20

6 nights - July 30 through August 4

Coalition (from Page 3)

need the continued support of all RSPOA members.

We have a number of additional concerns about the directions and actions of the Coalition, but many of these concerns are either not yet clarified or inappropriate for discussion in an open circulation publication. Attend the RSPOA meetings and speak with us directly. That is the venue where we will discuss and debate these issues.

NOT CROSS POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS POLICE LINE

help by contributing to that PAC. You can contribute by sending a check to the Political Action Committee, C/O Seattle Police Officers Guild 2949 4th South Seattle, Washington 98134

RSPOA Dues

For those who write a check for their dues every year, we now have the ability to have your annual \$12 RSPOA dues deducted from your retirement check by the State Department of Retirement Systems once a year. If you would rather have your dues deducted from your retirement payment annually instead of writing a check, please contact Nick Bulpin at 425 349 5373. He will need your name as it appears on your retirement account and your social security number.

RSPOA life members or those whose dues are deducted from their City of Seattle check in February are not affected by this announcement.

Prez Message (from Page 1)

tiations team. Poor guy was tired after a long session of negotiations. But, he did report that it looked like they were finally making some progress. Since the Guild honors their promise of confidentiality in these negotiations I am not privy to any specifics, but I am certain we are all pleased to hear there is progress.

And finally – the government wants to help you. Congress passed into law the Economic Stimulus Act of 2008. Under this new law, those who file a 2007 tax return may be entitled to a payment of up to \$600 (\$1200 if filing a joint return), plus additional amounts for each qualifying child. In order to receive an Economic Stimulus Payment, you must file a 2007 tax return. For those members who normally do not have to file a return, the new law provides for payments to individuals who pay no income tax but have a total of \$3000 or more in earned income, Social Security benefits, and/or certain veteran's payments. Remember, in order to receive your payment you must file a 2007 income tax return.

Hats and Bats



Not sure exactly when Dennis Laws took this photo, but the guy in front is John Patrick Sullivan

MY TURN REDUX

By Dick Rovig, Call Box Editor

Now that Ol' Blue (our annual spring reunion) has passed, we thought it would be interesting to revisit where our members live. Are they enjoying the sun in the desert for instance? Or are they sitting in the Pacific Northwest shivering.

Well we did a check of our mailing list. Not surprisingly, 65% of our membership live in Washington, most in the Puget Sound area. Though it doesn't seem like it, not really that many make their permanent home in Arizona and Southern California.

Of our 872 members, 571 reside in Washington. Seattle houses most, 160 to be exact. Over 200 live in Seattle suburbs with Shoreline having the most SPD retirees, 30. A significant number live on the Kitsap Peninsula.

The outside state with the most SPD retirees, 60, is Arizona. Most live either in or near Phoenix or Tucson. Naturally enough, California is next with 23 residents. Most of these reside in the Palm Springs area. A number live in neighboring states, Oregon, Idaho and then, Montana.

The member who lives the farthest is Larry Stewart who resides in New Zealand. Dick Ramon makes his home in the State of Maine, the farthest away in the U.S

Of course, as this is being written in the early spring, many snowbirds will soon return to their Puget Sound environs, building up our local statistics enen more.

So there you have it. Most of us are happy shivering our buns off and growing webbed feet until summer comes in mid-July through August.

While we're on the subject of statistics, another fact came to light. 102 folks who were members in 2006 and 07, have not renewed for 2008. RSPOA treasurer Nick Bulpin thinks this is because those who were having their \$12 annual dues from their initial City of Seattle retirement checks, just forgot to renew when, for whatever reason, the city checks ceased. Now, in conjunction with the Washington State Retirement, we have worked out a method to have RSPOA annual dues deducted from your January state LEOFF payment (see article this page for more).

We are distributing this first 2008 Call Box to those who last paid in 2006 or 2007. If you think you might be on that list, contact Nick at 425-349-5373 or email him at bulpin@comcast.net. He'll check and get you back on board, if renewing has slipped your mind. Otherwise, those who have not renewed will be dropped from the membership roles.

KICKED BACK E-MAILS

Below are the names of members whose email addresses have been returned as undeliverable.

Dennis Jorve
Bob Holter
Mike Burke
Dick Niemic
George Marberg
Dale Douglas
Dan Capps
Al Citron
Donn Matthews
Dave Hortin
Steve Perkins
Cal Rowley.
Ron Schimke

If you are on the list please email retired.spd@aol.com with the correct information.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

RSPOA Luncheon Meetings

Every second Wednesday, October through June, 11:00 AM, Four Seas Restaurant, 8th S. and S. King Street

RAP (Retired and Active Police) Club

Every Thursday, 11:00 AM, throughout the year, Lake City Elks.

Retired Officers Banquet

Wednesday, September 10th

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c/o Nick Bulpin
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