

The

Spring 2021

COMMUNiqué



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The
COMMUNIQUE
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MISSION

To serve and strengthen through the provision and coordination of timely information, education, and legislation.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Curtis Hoopes
OFDDA President

With the arrival of spring, we leave many challenges behind while confronting those still ahead. Wildfires, COVID-19, and ice storms have taken a toll on districts we represent. I commend those first responders who continue to meet these challenges head-on, providing crucial public services to those in need in their districts.

OFDDA Board and staff continue to provide timely information and training to members. Through partnership with SDIS/SDAO, OFDDA offers additional Board training opportunities throughout the year. The OFDDA Fire Directors Academy and annual Fire Service Conference are examples of this dedication.

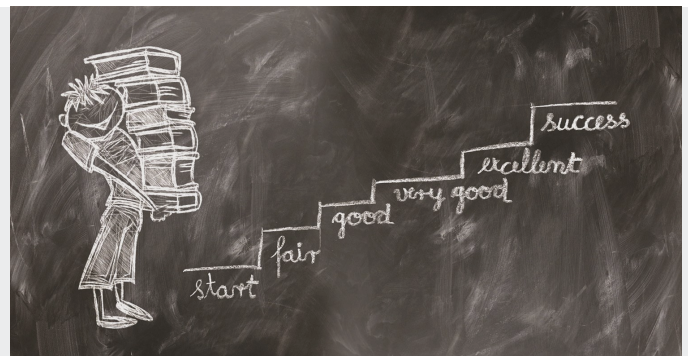
With the legislature in full session, OFDDA continues to be a strong voice in Salem, representing fire districts interests. Of note is House Bill 2927. This bill seeks to reorganize emergency services and public safety. Section 89 makes the Office of the State Fire Marshall an independent, stand-alone agency separate from State Police, answerable directly to the Governor. OFDDA, along with OFVA and others, spoke in favor of this bill during recent work sessions as it moves toward committee.

The OFDDA Board and Conference Committee currently are planning the annual Fire Service Conference scheduled for this fall in Ashland. We are excited about the speakers and sessions. The annual conference provides attendees the opportunity to gain a wealth of knowledge in one place as well as to network with colleagues and meet with vendors. I hope members will put the conference on their calendar and plan to join us in Ashland.

As always, OFDDA's mission to "serve and strengthen through provision and coordination of timely information, education, and legislation" remains my highest priority with a commitment to provide the best service to members.

"Excellence through Knowledge"

This year's conference aims to empower Fire District members to achieve excellence through knowledge by providing education and networking opportunities you won't want to miss. Watch ofdda.com and your email for more information in coming weeks!



Oregon Volunteer Firefighters Association (OVFA) Member Wins California Casualty's 2020 \$5,000 STIHL® Tools Giveaway

During a surprise presentation December 11, OVFA member Destry S. learned that he was the winner of California Casualty's 2020 Work Hard/Play Hard \$5,000 STIHL® Tools Giveaway. Destry, a Firefighter at Umatilla County Fire District 1, was one of over 20,000 entries received. The national contest opened January 2020 with the winning entry randomly selected November 2nd.

San Mateo, CA, December 15, 2020—California Casualty just awarded \$5,000 to OVFA member and Umatilla County Fire District 1 Firefighter, Destry S., through its 2020 Work Hard/Play Hard \$5,000 STIHL® Tools Giveaway. Destry was one of over 20,000 firefighters, law enforcement officers and EMT's to enter the national contest.

California Casualty Assistant Vice President and Partner Relations Manager, Brian Goodman along with OVFA President, Zack Wilson, presented the oversized check during a small, sociallydistanced get together with Destry's fellow firefighters and family in attendance.

"I thought I was coming to the station with my family so my kids could get a picture with Santa Claus. I'm shocked and happy, to say the least!" said Destry. "I'm going to buy my wife Mandy something great for Christmas with the money. She's

my biggest supporter. I couldn't be as dedicated to my firefighting and search and rescue work without her."

"California Casualty, the auto and home insurance company trusted by these American heroes, offers an annual Work Hard/Play

Hard contest as a way to thank all public safety for their role in our communities. We owe them this thank you for all that they do." said Sr. Vice President Mike McCormick.

Destry has been a Firefighter an OVFA member, for 22 years.

OVFA President Zack Wilson commented, "We are very appreciative of our longstanding and mutually beneficial relationship with California Casualty and excited for our member, Destry! Thank you to California Casualty for being a fantastic partner to the OVFA for over 40 years."

Reflecting on the underlying purpose of the Work Hard/Play Hard giveback campaign, and what it means to represent the Auto and Home Insurance member benefit program, Goodman said, "It is an honor to award this gift to an OVFA member. California Casualty truly values our longstanding



affiliation with OVFA. We began our partnership in 1981. Our 40 year milestone is another reason to celebrate. All of us here are proud of the relationship."

Previous Work Hard/Play Hard sweepstakes from California Casualty have awarded public safety personnel with:

- Liberty Safes
- DeWalt Tools
- Motorcycles
- Cash

Past winners include an Oregon Police officer; a Colorado Sheriff's captain; firefighters from California, Nebraska, Ohio and Pennsylvania; and a California Highway Patrolman.

Founded in 1914 and headquartered in San Mateo, California with Service Centers in Arizona, Colorado and Kansas, California Casualty provides auto and home insurance to educators, firefighters, law enforcement and nurses across the country. Learn more about California Casualty at www.calcas.com or call 1.800.800.9410.

**STIHL® does not endorse or sponsor this promotion.*

The beginning of a new year is the ideal time for your Board President to find those Board Rules (sometimes called Board Working Rules of Order), dust them off, and read them. Ideally, your Board Rules should be 2-4 pages long and simply describe how your Board has decided to work together and the general process for your Board meetings. Your adoption of Rules will set the tone for the rest of the year—and can play an important role in ensuring that your district meets its goals and serves your community efficiently.

The Legal Beagle

Time to Dust Off Those Board Rules

by Christy K. Monson
Local Government Law Group P.C.

The best process for reviewing your Board Rules is first to have your Fire Chief, Board President, and District legal counsel review them and suggest edits. The rules should then be placed on an agenda for discussion and a vote by the Board. (If staff and the Board President have done the advance work, this agenda item should take approximately 30 minutes.) A successful discussion would include the entire Board agreeing not only to follow the newly adopted rules but also to hold each other accountable for acting in a collaborative, respectful manner—*especially* when times get tough. In this conversation, the most important goal is to secure the entire Board's *buy-in and public commitment* about how you will treat each other, how you will treat your staff, and what your Board meetings ideally will look and sound like.

Below, I provide you with some key concepts to discuss and include in your Board Rules:

- Who has the authority to create your agenda? How would someone else get an item placed on an agenda? (Remember: no blindsiding. All items should be clearly listed on a future agenda so that the public has a general idea of the topic to be discussed and the vote, if any, to be taken.)
- Will your Board use Work Sessions when no votes are taken? Why or why not?
- Will you allow your fellow Board members to abstain from votes when they don't have a conflict of interest? What is the effect on other Board members if someone frequently abstains?
- How should conflicts of interest be handled?
- How closely will your Board follow Robert's Rules of Order? Do you wish to follow a simplified version of Robert's Rules?
- What are your Board's options if a Board member repeatedly misbehaves or breaks your Rules?
- Who has the authority to appoint people to committees and vacant Board positions? Why or why not?
- Who has the authority to discuss personnel issues at a public meeting? What happens if a member of the public discusses personnel issues?
- How will you take public comment? When during the meeting will you take it? Will the public be limited to three minutes of non-repetitive comments? Why or why not? What happens if a member of the public makes comments that are inappropriate or outside of the Board's authority to address?
- What are your options to increase Board member participation and to avoid one or two members of the Board from dominating the conversation?
- How much staff time is a single Board member allowed to use per month? Why or why not?
- Who has the authority to contact your District's legal counsel?

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- Who has authority to speak to the press on behalf of the District?
- Does the Board wish to designate a Board member to handle routine personnel matters involving the Fire Chief, such as vacation/sick leave requests and monitoring?
- What will your Board do if a public meeting turns disrespectful? Does your Board President have additional authority in such cases? Anyone else?

Your district's legal counsel should be able to provide you with some sample Board Rules and a process for evaluating and adopting them. Good luck and thank you for your service to your community!

SDAO Resources and Awards

by Jennifer Quisenberry
Director of Membership Services
S | D | A | O

SDIS Best Practices Program and Cybersecurity Resources

The 2021 SDIS Best Practices Program has officially kicked off! This program is designed to keep your board members, staff and volunteers informed and trained to reduce risks that special districts in Oregon are currently facing. With the increase in cyberattacks on our nation's local governments, we have chosen this year's topic to focus on cybersecurity. By participating in the program, SDIS will award your district a credit of up to 10% off 2022 general liability, auto liability, and property insurance contributions.

There are five credits available, each worth 2%, including:

- ◇ Maintain a membership with an SDAO/SDIS affiliate organization **(including OFDDA!)**
- ◇ Attend a cybersecurity webinar or training
- ◇ Implement a cybersecurity policy
- ◇ Complete a cybersecurity checklist within the Best Practices survey
- ◇ Attend an SDAO/SDIS training in 2021

All participating districts must complete the Best Practices survey to receive credit. Credits cannot be awarded unless the survey is submitted. Please visit www.sdis.org, sign in, select insurance on the left, click on Best Practices, and then select Take Survey.

Additionally, to help protect your district from a potential shutdown and having to pay enormous amounts of money to get your systems back up and operational, SDIS has teamed up with Eide Bailly to provide no-cost cybersecurity training and resources to members. The goal of this partnership is to help educate SDIS members on the principles and practices of cybersecurity and risk mitigation. All SDIS members are provided with access to a [cybersecurity guidebook](#), cybersecurity virtual webinars on varying cybersecurity topics and best practices, training sessions on cyber-related topics and access to cybersecurity resources. Please visit our website at www.sdao.com/cybersecurity-resources to learn more.

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SDAO Awards Program Recipients

Each year, the SDAO Awards Program gives recognition to member districts for accomplishments which allow them to provide better service to the public and honors individuals who have greatly contributed to the success of their organization. These awards celebrate the ingenuity, creativity, and diversity of our members. Within this program are two special recognition awards; the Outstanding Special District Program award, and the Outstanding Special District Service award.

At the 2021 SDAO Annual Conference, we presented awards to two districts, five individuals with special districts, an SDAO staff member, and an Oregon congressman. The fire service was well represented in our group of recipients and included the following:

Howard Terpenning Lifetime Achievement Award

The Howard Terpenning Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to an individual who has shown an outstanding commitment to Oregon special districts and to SDAO.

- ♦ **Clark Balfour**, Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue

Outstanding Special District Program Award

Special districts are recognized for innovative projects and programs, outstanding safety, public information, public involvement in a district decision-making process, and outstanding achievement.

- ♦ **6-25 Employees:** Canby Fire District

Outstanding Special District Service Award

This category recognizes an individual who has contributed substantially to the improvement and successful operation of his or her district.

- ♦ **Manager:** Chief Joshua Williams, Aurora Fire District
- ♦ **Volunteer:** Wayne Austen, Canby Fire District

For a list of all recipients, award videos, and more information about the program, please visit www.sdao.com/sdao-awards-program.

SDAO Internship Grant

We are now accepting applications for the 2021 SDAO Internship Grant Program! This program is available to SDAO members to assist in meeting or improving loss control and best practices, ultimately benefiting both the district and the intern. This grant is not intended to fund routine maintenance needs or normal staffing requirements, but to help with project needs.

Interns must be hired by the district as temporary employees to be in compliance with wage and hour laws relative to compensating student interns. A freshman through junior college-level student will need to be hired to qualify for funding of this grant. The maximum grant per district is \$3,000; the funding must be matched by the district by 50%. For example, you may be eligible to receive up to \$3,000 on your request for a project that will cost your district \$6,000 or more. You may be eligible to receive up to a maximum of \$2,100 on your request for a project that will cost your district \$4,200. SDAO may not fund all grant requests.

The deadline to submit your application is **April 16, 2021**. The SDAO Awards Committee will review each application to determine which projects are eligible to receive funding. Funds will be disbursed before July 1.

Learn more at www.sdao.com/internship-grant-program.



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Moved to 2021! Keynote speaker: American hero Kris “Tanto” Paronto

Watch for an email and check our website in coming weeks for information about your chance to hear Mr. Paronto speak in person. Autographed copies of his book, *The Ranger Way*, will be sold on-site.

Information, including tickets and pricing, will be available later this year.
Thank you for your patience as the Conference Committee finalizes details.

