

The Western Gazette

October 2020

Volume 32 Number 1

A Publication of the Western Pennsylvania Firemen's Association Secretary's Office
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Meeting Notice

The next Western Meeting will be:

**OCTOBER 2020
MEETING CANCELLED
DUE TO SOCIAL DISTANCING
RESTRICTIONS**

**Due to restrictions in place on
October 1, 2020, that limit
indoor gatherings to 25 people,
the meeting for October 2020
has been cancelled.**

2020 Annual Convention Held as a Business Meeting Due to COVID-19 Pandemic

The annual convention was replaced with a business meeting that was held outside, under the pavilion at the Veterans of Foreign Wars lodge in Lower Burrell, PA. The officers of the association, in response to restrictions put in place by Governor Wolf and Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine, felt it was not prudent to hold the normal convention gatherings such as indoor meetings, memorial service, banquets, and parade.

An abbreviated agenda was conducted. It included nominations for officers and the election of a new slate of officers for the coming year. Changes to the normal procedures were publicized well in advance using the newsletter, email, and social media posts to inform members.

Awards were presented to several local members who were in attendance at the meeting and the awards committee is making arrangements to present other awards this year to members in small groups at their local fire departments.

Due to pandemic restrictions, the scholarship committee was unable to meet to discuss winners prior to the business meeting. They will be meeting this month to discuss the scholarship winners and those individuals will be notified by mail of their scholarship amount. The annual memorial service will be combined with the convention next year.

During the elections, the organization awarded the 2021 convention to New Kensington. Be sure to watch future editions of this newsletter for more details on convention plans and activities.

Ladies Auxiliary Dissolves and Members Accepted into Association

Over the past two years, Executive Director/Secretary Tedorski has been meeting with the leadership of the Ladbbreies Auxiliary concerning their wish to disband. At convention last year, both groups formally approved the merger and the Ladies contacted their attorney to complete the necessary legal paperwork. The proposal included using the savings of the Ladies Auxiliary to create a dues payment fund for each current member until age 80, with the dues after age 80 being absorbed by the association. The ladies that transfer into the association will be regular members and entitled to all rights and privileges, including the \$250 death benefit.

All legal paperwork has been completed and the organization has been dissolved. Assets will be moved to association accounts in the very near future. Correspondence related to death benefits will now be sent to the association offices instead of the ladies auxiliary officers. Any questions regarding membership should be addressed to the association offices at P.O. Box 504, New Kensington, PA, 15068.

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Dues Collection Deadlines for Delinquent Dues

The association bylaws now have a grace period for the payment of dues that are delinquent. This grace period extends to January 31 of the following year, at which time members who have not paid their dues will be dropped from the rolls of the association.

Along with this grace period come penalties for late payment of dues. Members who pay their \$6 dues individually will be assessed a \$1 late fee. Companies or Relief Associations who pay dues for all of their members will be assessed a \$25 late payment fee. If the company or department belongs as a \$10 member and is late in dues payment, they will be assessed a \$2 late fee.

The Board of Control has taken the position that this grace period for late payment of dues will be the final option for members and appeals for death benefits when dues are paid after January 31 will be denied. A list of delinquent companies will be posted on the association website. Individuals and company members will be notified by letter by November. An additional mailing to delinquent companies will be made in January to account for the change in officers that occurs in many organizations at that time.

Fire Prevention Essay Contest Applications Included with this Newsletter

The Fire Prevention Essay Contest this year includes the ability for fifth, sixth and seventh graders to submit essays. Due to changes in the rules, the committee is now also accepting typed essays, provided they follow the guidelines outlined on the entry form.

Included with this newsletter is a copy of the official application for the association's Fire Prevention Essay Contest. Use this application to submit essays from your local schools to the association for judging in our contest. You can make copies of this document for distribution to your schools. Fire companies should collect essays from the schools, judge them internally, and then submit their best three essays from each grade level.

Committee Chairman Martin Wetmore reminds all companies to stress the fact that the official application must be on the front of all submissions. Submissions with application sheets from other organizations (such as county association contests) will not be accepted.