

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS



Vincent J. Bollon
Affiliate Leadership Training Summit

Ernest A. "Buddy" Mass
Human Relations Conference

January 19-22, 2020 | Lake Buena Vista, Florida



ERNEST A. "BUDDY" MASS
HUMAN RELATIONS
CONFERENCE

Engage Members for Life: The Power of Orientation

Dave Coker: IAFF Strategic Organizing Specialist

**Mark Treglio: Assistant to the General President for Communications,
Media and Strategic Campaigns**

January 22nd, 2020

Check In/Tweet The Day

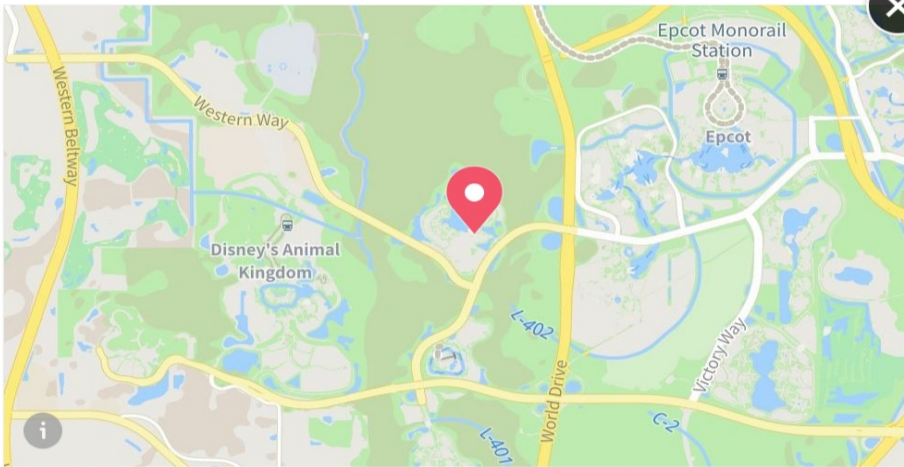


Mark Treglio — with **Dave Coker** at **Disney's Coronado Springs Resort (1000 West Buena Vista Drive, Orlando, FL).**

Public

+ Album

ALTS 2020: Engage Members for Life. The Power of Recruit Orientation



Disney's Coronado Springs Resort (1000 West ...
Hotel Resort

@iaffnewsdesk

@DaveCoker_PFFG

@iafftreg



“I communicate, but the members don’t pay attention... they don’t care.”

“My members don’t give a shit about issues!”

“My members aren’t interested in doing anything. They expect me to do it.”

How many of you can say the same things?



What's different about local unions that have high levels of membership participation and those that don't?



**“Positive personal contacts”
with their union during the first
months on the job.**



Introducing Your Union

First impressions make a lasting difference



“The cost of unlearning is greater than the cost of learning.”

Dr. Paul Clark

Director, Penn State School of Labor and Employment Relations



Membership Engagement is key...

And it begins at recruit orientation



Recruiting is Tough

- There is no magic tool.
- Quality Orientation is key.
- Signing members up is hard... Keeping them is harder.
- Local must build loyalty and commitment from the onset, while consistently showing value.



Recruiting is Tough

We assume new employees understand our role!

However... The new kids joining the fire department are the future of our union... but they don't know that.

Chances are he/she has never been educated on labor issues.

Due to low labor density... the new recruit might not have a “Labor DNA” and doesn't have a family member that is a union member.



Fighting Against Stereotypes



Recruiting is Tough

We can't assume recruits understand unions.

Do they even know what your union is? You may have to explain the basics.

And remember... Impressions of your local start on day 1

If you are in a recruit orientation, your first impression has already started



Recruiting is Tough... But Necessary

**Orientations are a strategic tool
for building union power.**



Why Orientation?

High-quality orientations have proven to increase sign-ups among new hires and bolster their commitment to the union.

Committed members are more likely to stand with the union in tough fights and political attacks.

Educating recruits about what our union does for individual members can overcome anti-union stigmas and political biases.



Why Orientation?

Orientations allow us to devote more resources into offense, instead of wasting precious money and energy shoring up members for defensive fights.

An effective orientation program can have a lasting and outsized impact on unions' future strength.

Orientations deliver a valuable return for the modest investment required to establish, administer, or even simply upgrade a program.



Orientation should be upbeat and positive...

Many recruits want to get involved in the union... however they are never asked or given a path to contribute...



Orientation and recruitment need not be elaborate, but it needs to have an objective.



Most of all...

**Do not make joining the union
seem like a controversial step.**



Two Types of Orientations



Formal Socialization

Structured and organized experience
Typically occurring in a group setting



Formal Socialization

- **Showcases Value.**
- **Listens to new member.**
- **Instills a sense of loyalty or commitment.**
- **Teaches about the organization's rules and processes.**
- **Introduces formal expectations to new members.**



Informal Socialization

Less structured, adaptive by nature
More likely to occur at individual level



Informal Socialization

- **Reinforces information presented in formal socialization.**
- **Provides further guidance about the unwritten customs, traditions, and practices that may exist.**
- **Allows more time to listen to wants and needs of newbie.**
- **Continues to showcase value.**



Commitment is strongest and most lasting in recruits who experience both formal and informal socialization



Preparing For Orientation

**Orientation is not a event....
it is a long-term program/process**

You must take a systematic approach



Prepare Ahead of Time

Your local is more likely to have a high-caliber orientation program if you have a plan.

Get into recruit school even for a quick “hello” ASAP

Negotiate/Arrange for a structured time during the employer’s orientation program for you to come in.

On the clock... Mandatory. Held the first few days on the job.

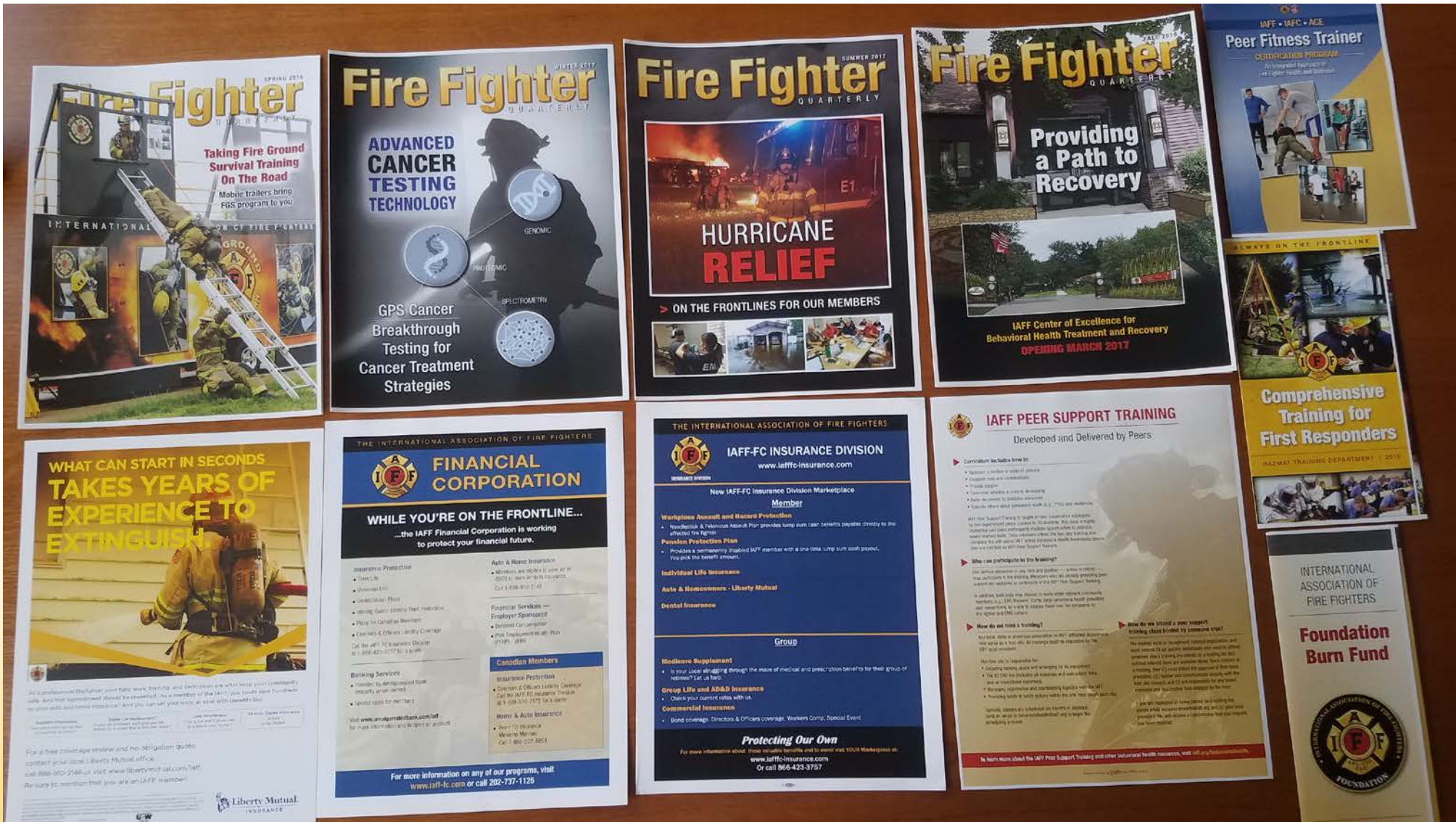


Prepare Ahead of Time

Pick facilitators that connect and train them well.



Bring Materials That Highlight Value

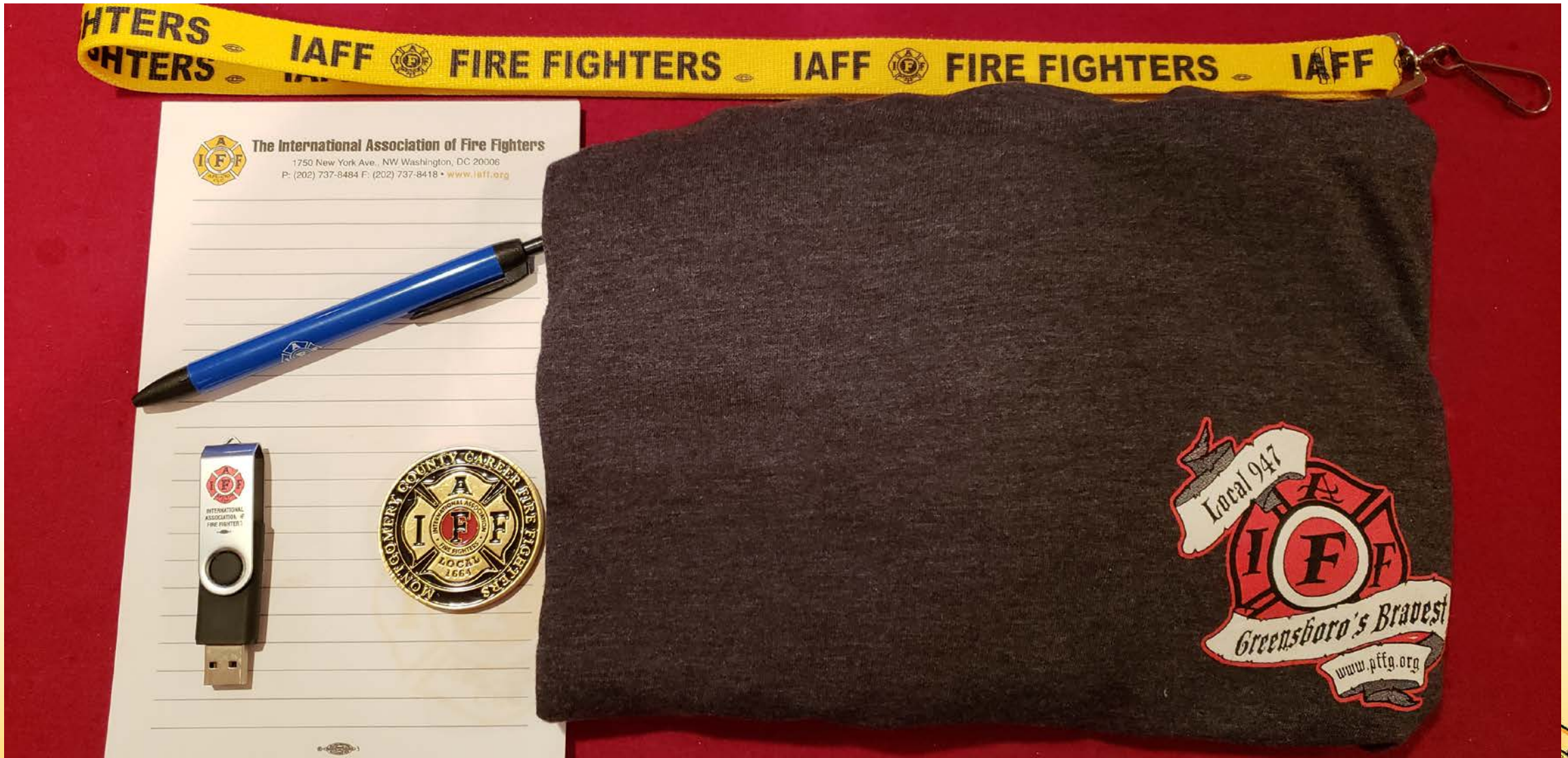


Prepare Ahead of Time

Assemble material packets well before the day of the orientation



Bring Swag



Preparing Your Pitch

What's the goal of the orientation?



Prepare Ahead of Time

Review your presentation outline and practice.

Shoddy presentations, typos, outdated information, and poor presenters can cast doubt about the union.



Prepare Ahead of Time

Consider what questions a recruit may ask and have answers ready



Prepare Ahead of Time

The amount of information a recruit gets largely influences their views of the union moving forward



Prepare Ahead of Time

Be cognizant that the quality of the program is important in influencing the attitudes of new recruits



**Talk about OUR union,
....YOUR union, WE.**

Avoid “THE” union

What to Say



MAKE THE ASK!!

First and foremost...

You must ask people to join our union throughout the orientation

The last thing we want is for someone to not be a member because no one ever asked them.



You're In The Door... Now What?

**Start the orientation with a
question or bold fact
to get attention and discussion**



What to Say

Why did you become a fire fighter?

**What does this have to do
with our union?**



What to Say

- Any one in a union before?
- What do you want in three years, five years?
- What do you think our union is all about?
- What do you believe our union can do for you?
- Why become a union member?



What to Say

Educate recruits about specific ways that they benefit from union membership.

They need to understand that joining the union is an investment in their future, not an obligation or a bill.



What to Say

Return on Investment vs Membership Fees/Dues



What to Say

Highlight that our union works to improve lives.

Acknowledge the union's key achievements... showcasing gains over time... including tangible benefits one...



What to Say

Overview of the union's history



What to Say

Don't hard sell the union

Avoid the temptation to oversell what the union can do.

Make sure that recruits expectations are accurate



What to Say

Teach recruits that our union can be there to guarantee a fair process, but it cannot get them out of trouble if they are found to have violated policies



What to Say

Focus on the union as a source of solutions.

However... our ability to achieve solutions depends on the strength of the local and the engagement of members in the process.

Explain that our union expects participation.

And yes... politics does play a role in the day to day operation of the local



Politics

Discussing politics can be a difficult task, as everyone has different beliefs and opinions. However, recruits need to know:

Every aspect of their career is influenced by someone who is elected or appointed by an elected official. Whether they like it or not, their career will be affected by the political climate.

It is a local's duty to be involved in every step of the process, fighting to ensure your voice is heard. Remember...

If you aren't at the table... you are on the menu.



Activities

Did You Know Statements

Fast Facts About the Local

Family Dinners

Rip Up the Contract Game

Spouse/Family Orientation



Long-Term Activities

Two week and six month follow-up

Celebrate new members.

Assessments

Quarterly meet and greets



Need assistance strengthening your local's orientation???

Mark Treglio

202-368-7315

mtreglio@iaff.org



Sample Presentation



New Member Orientation

welcome!



Why Did You Become A Fire Fighter?

- **To help people/Community service**
- **Love the challenges**
- **Problem solver**
- **Lifestyle**
- **Job benefits**



Community of Colleagues

- **Our union is an association of fire fighters being active and involved to create better lives for all of us.**
- **Our union is about participating together to provide a strong cohesive force --- power in numbers.**
- **Your success on the job is a priority of our union**



Unionized Fire Fighters Advocate

- **Fire Fighters advocate for public safety.**
- **Fire Fighters advocate for safe staffing levels.**
- **Fire Fighters advocate for proper equipment.**
- **Fire Fighters advocate highest quality training.**
- **Fire Fighters advocate for fair salaries and benefits.**
- **Fire Fighters advocate a strong career path.**
- **Fire Fighters advocate for your future.**



**Fire Fighters with a unified voice have
the power to make things happen!**



Our Union's Mission Statement



Our Union's Top Five Goals



Our union's top accomplishments



Relevant Topics in the Workplace

- **Overtime**
- **Staffing**
- **Cancer precautions**
- **PTSD support**
- **Charity work**



**Our Contract.....
particularly pay and benefits,
plus rights enumerated.**



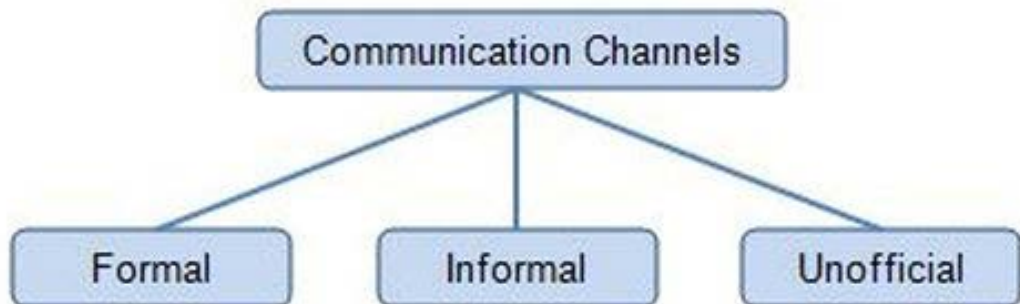
**Our local professional fire fighter union
is one of 3,300 local unions across the
United States and Canada, all part of the
IAFF.**



Let me provide some history...



Communication Channels



Reach Out to Union – We're Here for You

- **To volunteer**
- **With concerns**
- **Understanding issues**
- **Clarifying policies**
- **Contract insights**
- **General information**



List Leadership, Staff and Hours

President- John Doe (555-2156)

Vice President- Sam Smith (555-2161)

Secretary- Warren Peace (555-6246)

Treasurer- Burt Newman (555-2160)

Office Manager – Jenny Smith (555-1234)

Office Location
123 Main Street
Anytown

Office Hours
M-F
9-5pm



**Your investment in your future
is \$14.87 every month.**



Besides the services we discussed earlier, your membership has a number of benefits.



Union Benefits

- **Discount Mortgage Services**
 - **Banking Services**
 - **Pet Insurance**
 - **Discount car rentals**
 - **Discount tires**
 - **Discount ATT wireless service**
-and much more.



**Membership application is first step
to be an active member.**

Join Our Community!

