

" Standing Fast." Retired But Still The Bravest.....the Gene O'Kane
Division of FDNY Retired celebrates 45 years!
Age is just a Number...we've never looked better. Come and join us.
Membership application is available on our website
www.okanefdnynretirees.com, and in this newsletter.

WELCOME to
 "Standing Fast." The
 official newsletter of the
 Gene O'Kane Division of
 FDNY Retired, the first
 and oldest FDNY retirees
 organization in the U.S.
 We have been chartered
 in the state of Florida
 since 1979.
 Postal Address: FDNY
 Retired, 2053 Blue Beech
 Ct., Trinity, FL 34655



okaneclubfdny@icloud.com
 email us for more info.



Who Are We?

We are an organization of retired New York City Firefighters living on the west coast of Florida in the areas of Pasco, Hernando, Citrus, Pinellas, Hillsborough counties.

Although now retired, we share the bond of having had the privilege of protecting lives and property of the residents of the City of New York as members of the greatest fire department in the world, the FDNY. As retirees of the FDNY, in 1978 we banded together to form the first chapter of the FDNY RETIRED, received a charter from the state of Florida and named our organization after our founder, Gene O'Kane. Thus we are "THE GENE O'KANE DIVISION OF FDNY RETIRED." Our division is the oldest of all the divisions of FDNY Retired, one of nine divisions located in Florida and one of twenty six divisions scattered across the United States. We are also a member of the the "URFA, the United Retired Firefighters Assn. We welcome all FDNY retirees, of all ranks, retired volunteer firefighters from all other municipalities and non-firefighters to join us in friendship and brotherhood as members of our proud organization.

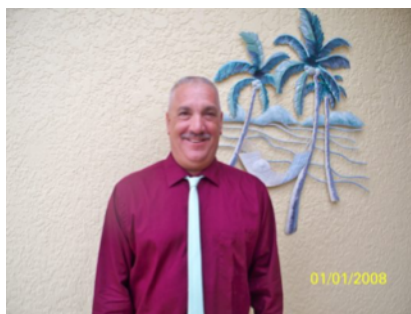
Membership and Meetings: Membership in the Gene O'Kane Division of FDNY Retired is open to all FDNY retirees of all ranks, paid and volunteer firefighters from all cities across the U.S.A., also non-firefighters are accepted as "Associate Members." Applications for membership can be obtained by completing the application located in this newsletter and mailing it in as directed. Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month with the exception of June, July and August, at 7 p.m. at the America Legion "Paradise Post" located on Veterans Drive in New Port Richey, FL 34654.

**NEXT MEETING: 9/16/25, 7pm. American
 Legion Paradise Post, New Port Richey, FL**

2025 EXECUTIVE BOARD



KEVIN DOHERTY, PRESIDENT
727-744-5748



RICH MICCIO, VICE PRESIDENT
727-947-7734

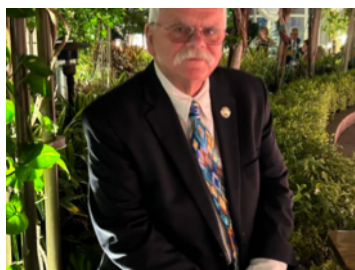


Louis Kikis, Treasurer

727-946-2933



MIKE DOYLE, FINANCIAL
SECRETARY
631-624-8293



JIM SAVARESE, RECORDING
SECRETARY

914-753-4833



JIM DUNSCOMB, SARGENT-AT-ARMS
722-846-8875

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Jack D'Andrea. 727-862-7415

John Pasquale 352-683-7964

John Murphy. 352-666-9391

Steve McNally. 914-329-4319



PRESIDENT'S REPORT - AUGUST 2025

Dear Members,

We are mid-way through our summer break and getting close to our annual 9/11 memorial observances. Our club is proud to have so many such events that we are able to take part in and to attend. For complete details, see the September 11th Calendar in this newsletter and on our website.

Last month I mentioned our Booster Club and the importance of these simple messages of remembrance and honor. The O'Kane Boosters have been an integral part of our club from the very beginning. As of this month; however, we have had more boosters expire and no renewals or new messages submitted. Please consider adding a booster to help support our club. They are only \$5.00 per message and run for 12 full months. The booster dollars help us to pay club expenses such as facility rental, meeting refreshments, and more. The list of Boosters and information on how to submit yours are detailed in this newsletter.

As always, we send our prayers and best wishes to those recovering from surgeries or illness. Stay safe and be well as we move through the summer.

Best Regards,

Kevin Doherty, President

ARE YOU AN O'KANE BOOSTER? NO? READ BELOW **TO LEARN HOW TO SUPPORT. YOUR CLUB.**

Included in every issue of our newsletter is a listing of O'Kane Boosters. These simple messages are our way of remembering and honoring those who have passed. Each Booster costs just \$5.00 and helps with the club's operating expenses. Anyone may buy a Booster, you don't have to be a member. Family, Friends, Associate Members - are all welcome to contribute. The Booster runs for 1 full year.

As you read the list of Boosters on the following page, you'll see that many will be expiring soon. Please send in your new or renewable Boosters so that we can continue to support the memories of those you wish to honor.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: While we are on our summer break, please send your Booster checks and messages to:
LOUIS KIKIS, TREASURER
4973 W. Breeze Circle
Palm Harbor, FL 34683

Make checks payable to: O'Kane FDNY Retired

Sample Booster Submission:

Your name: John Doe

Your address: 1234 Happy Lane, Hideaway, FL 12345

Your phone: 727-111-1111

Your Booster Messages (Samples, you create your own)

9/11 Never Forget

343 Rest In Peace

Honoring all who gave all

TOTAL # BOOSTERS: 3

TOTAL \$ ENCLOSED: \$15.00 (\$5/PER MESSAGE)

OKANE BOOSTERS: reminder...if your number is a 7 it's time to renew! ***Indicates booster renewed.**

Send your Booster request to: Louis Kikis, Treasurer, 4973 W Breeze Circle, Palm Harbor, FL 34683. Boosters run for 12 months. The number following your name indicates when your Booster will expire. Thank you for your support. (Rev. 6/25)

*Kikis Louis1 E22/ L13 "The Yorkville Nine"

*Kikis Louis1 343 Never Forget

*Kikis, Victoria6 Honoring the memory of those who gave their all. 343 Never forget.

*Kikis, Victoria6 RIP Jeff Giordano - 9/11/01

McCarthy William11 Members of L25, 9/11 Never Forget

*Martinsen Ron1 Mem BC Tom Neary L134

*Martinsen Ron1 Mem BC Chris Scalone E332

*Miccio, Rich6 Tom Gambino L163 - 9/11/01 - RIP

*Miccio, Rich6 L163/E325 - Woodside Warriors

*Nilsson Mike1 E303

*Nilsson Mike1 L 126

*Nilsson Mike1 deceased 343

Savarese Jim11 The Tin House Gang E-232/L176 BMA

Savarese Jim11 Watkins St. E-231/L-120/44BN

Savarese Jim11 Briggs Ave E79/L37/27BN

Savarese Jim11 RIP Ron Quartuccio

*Tarantino Ron1 Mem Lou Tarantino

*Tarantino Ron1 Detective Sergeant James Van Valen

*Tarantino Ron1 Nick Barone

FLASH FLOODS DEVASTATE TEXAS HILL COUNTRY - DEATH TOLLS AND MISSING NUMBERS CONTINUE TO RISE



July 4th brought unprecedented flash flooding to the beautiful Texas Hill Country with numbers of fatalities and missing rising daily. The latest accounts are 132 dead and more than 150 missing and unaccounted for.

The flooding occurred during the early morning hours while most residents were asleep. Warnings were issued but the tumultuous pace of the waters left little time to find shelter and safety.

The flooding was triggered by heavy rains that caused the Guadalupe River to rise nearly 30 feet in less than an hour.

As efforts to recover and account for the missing go on, heavy rains continue to thwart efforts.

cont'd.

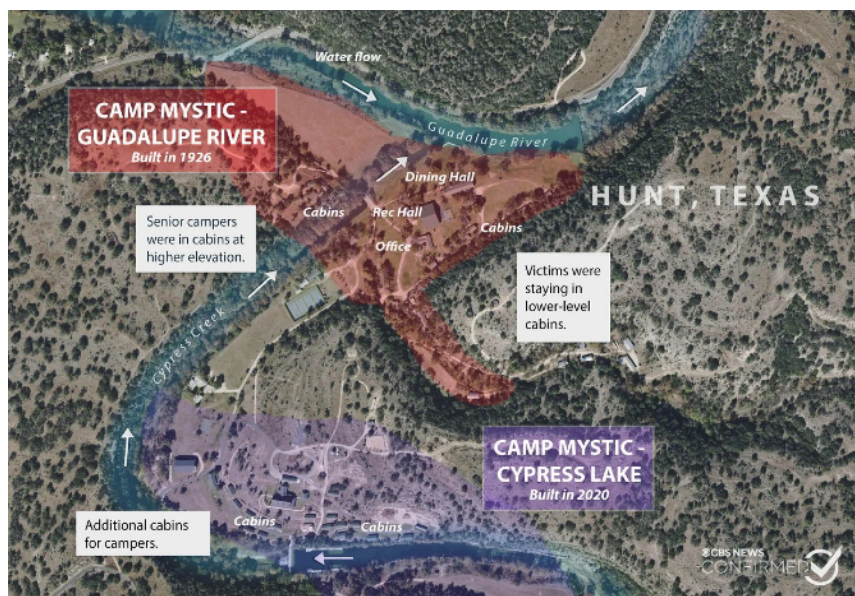
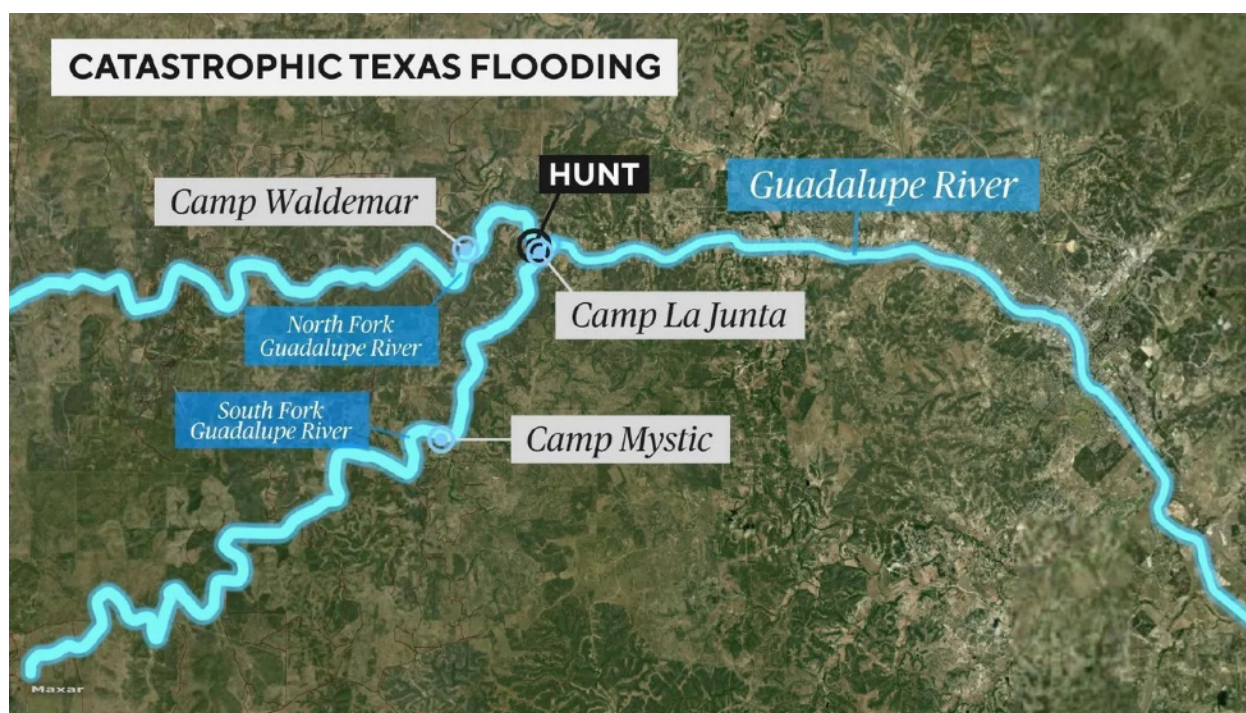


FLASH FLOODING cont'd.

Among the hardest hit areas from the flooding was Kerr County, specifically a well-known girl's camp called Camp Mystic, located on the banks of the Guadalupe River. The tragedy claimed 27 campers and counselors.

Other camps are also located along the river, including Camp La Junta, where 2 young brothers were among the campers who escaped the floods.

Camp La Junta and another nearby camp, Camp Waldemar, posted on social media that all their campers and staff were safe.



IF DISASTER FORCES YOU TO FLEE, WILL YOU BE PREPARED?

Here are some tips for your safety and well-being if you ever need to get out of your home quickly. These tips are important for everyone, regardless of where you live; however, they are particularly essential for those living in sensitive areas where hurricanes and tornados are frequent.

STEP #1 - Personal documents. Take original or copies of your Social Security cards, passports, birth certificates, marriage and divorce documentation, wills, and other estate planning papers.

STEP #2 - Home inventory. Make a video or take photographs of every room in your home. Include your closets and drawers. Document all your possessions.



STEP #3 - Cash On Hand. Make sure that you have some cash available for times when extensive power loss renders ATM's and credit card readers inoperable.

STEP #4 - Medications and First Aid. Have a back-up supply of your medications ready in case you run out and have trouble refilling your prescriptions in time. Keep a simple first aid kit including pain medication like aspirin and Tylenol, sanitizer wipes, band-aids and antiseptic.

Step #5 - Insurance Policies and Account Information. Have your insurance company's contact numbers and your policy numbers available. Simply make copies of the declaration pages and that should be enough to get you started. Keep your bank accounts and any safe deposit box information handy so you may access it if needed.

Step #6 - Phone Numbers and Contacts. Make a list of phone numbers and other contacts as backup in case power outages. If your cell phones aren't properly charged you won't be able to access this information.

EVERYONE IN FLORIDA SHOULD ALSO HAVE A HURRICANE KIT CONTAINING STAPLES OF WATER, FOOD AND OTHER ESSENTIALS TO BRING ALONG WITH THE BACKPACK. BEING PREPARED IS THE BEST DEFENSE WE HAVE TO SURVIVE NATURAL DISASTERS.

BIG BEAUTIFUL BILL SPARKS INTEREST OF FIREFIGHTERS AND OTHER UNIONS

On Independence Day 2025, President Trump's One Big Beautiful Bill was signed into law. The bill passed by a vote of 218 - 214 in the House of Representatives. [whitehouse.gov](https://www.whitehouse.gov) writes: The bill combines the largest tax cuts in history with landmark investments in America's future and defense.

The bill is an extensive piece of legislation which covers many areas of our lives from health care to farming, to Social Security and more. While the pros and cons were hotly debated throughout the creation and ultimate passing of the bill, many high-profile unions believe it will be a great win for our citizens.

Among those is the International Association of Fire Fighters. Prior to the July 4th official passing, IAFF General President Edward Kelly said, "We believe that this bill is going to impact the lives of working families all throughout the United States, in particular our seniors, with tax breaks on Social Security as well as our hardworking firefighters throughout the United States that are putting in excess overtime."

IAFF Political Program Coordinator, Chris Bartley says the "plan to stop taxing overtime would be a great benefit to our firefighters, where they can keep the money they actually earned."

The National Police Union also is on board in support of the bill. National Fraternal Order of Police President Patrick Yoes said that the "one big, beautiful bill act is more than legislation - it is a promise kept to the public safety officers across the country and a bold step toward an economy that respects, rewards, and uplifts the people who keep it safe." The FOP represents 377,000 members.



FDNY RESPONDS TO 2 INCIDENTS OF EXCESSIVE PROPANE STORAGE TANKS

On Tuesday night, 7/15/25, the NYPD was responding to a vehicle collision involving a white minivan on 42nd St. and 10th Ave. The driver of the van attempted to dispose of his keys, claiming he could not open the van. Officers requested FDNY assistance after noticing a strong smell of gasoline and propane tanks in the back of the van.



Members from E65 forced entry into the van and FDNY Hazmat Units removed 76 20-pound propane cylinders, 15 5-gallon fuel containers (for a total of 75 gallons of gasoline), and 10 gallons of diesel.

The driver was charged with reckless endangerment and was in violation of multiple fire codes. The department did not provide any details as to why the man had so many tanks in his van. The Manhattan District Attorney's Office is not handling the case.

it doesn't stop here. A few days later another hazardous discovery was made. This time in lower Manhattan. See details on next page.



**if you see
something...say
something!**

On Friday, 7/19/25, just a few days after a large seizure of illegally stored hazardous materials were found, the FDNY received reports of a van storing a large amount of propane in front of 72 Spring Street in lower Manhattan. FDNY Fire marshals arrested Marcel Djiba after 82 20-poung propane cylinders and 12 portable gasoline containers were discovered inside the van.

This case underscores the FDNY's continued efforts to identify and eliminate illegal and dangerous propane distribution operations throughout the city, particularly in high-traffic areas. Thanks to the swift action of the FDNY members, a tragedy was avoided.

During questioning, Mr. Djiba stated he was delivering propane to food trucks throughout New York City on behalf of a company. Djiba was previously arrested by Fire Marshals in 2010 for a similar incident involving the illegal transport of hazardous materials.

ELDER FRAUD IS SKYROCKETING....WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

IN A RECENT REPORT, THE FBI CITED a marked increase in crimes targeting seniors, with financial scams taking the forefront. Last year the FBI received more than 40,000 complaints with \$5.8 billion reported stolen.

These scams often come in random telephone calls asking for your personal information, maybe threatening you about supposed unpaid fines or road tolls, and even sending bogus warnings of hackers on our various accounts.

REMEMBER: THINK BEFORE YOU EVER RESPOND TO UNSOLICITED PHONE CALLS, TEXTS, OR EMAIL MESSAGES. UNDERSTAND THAT THERE ARE BAD FOLKS OUT THERE JUST WAITING TO PREY ON YOU. YOU KNOW YOUR SITUATION BETTER THAN ANYONE. IF SOMEONE CALLS ABOUT UNPAID FEES, DON'T PANIC. HANG UP OR END THE CONTACT. ONCE THEY GET A GRIP ON YOU, YOU WILL HAVE VERY LITTLE RECOURSE TO EVER GET BACK THAT HAS BEEN STOLEN.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT SENIOR FRAUD, YOU CAN REACH OUT TO THE AARP Fraud Watch Network Helpline: 877-908-3360.



5 WAYS TO THWART A TEXT SCAM - Ever get something like this? "Your UPS package is undeliverable at the address on the box. Click on the link below to confirm the address."

1. Filter your unknown phone numbers. Set up your phone to block unknown numbers.
2. Read the message carefully and slowly. If the text urges quick action, it is most likely a scam.
3. Don't respond. Ignore texts from unknown numbers. Legitimate callers will know how to contact you.
4. Verify numbers. If a text asks you to call a bank or other company, look up the number. If you use the number in a scam text, they've got you!
5. Beware of red flags. Don't click on any links, or call any number. If they mention "crypto" hang up...delete and block the call.

People are more trusting of text messages these days, with most of us getting messages from friends and family. We are used to responding to them promptly as opposed to emails which are often quickly deleted. Be smart and stay sharp. When in doubt, trust your instincts and **BLOCK AND DELETE.**



We are very proud to have our club take part in commemorative services and memorials throughout the Tampa Bay Area. Many of our members serve on planning committees and take active parts in area ceremonies, including speaking about their experiences, displaying periodicals, artifacts, and videos. Our members are active volunteers for area organizations including Tunnel 2 Towers, Fire and Ice, and more. Please make note of these upcoming events. Share the information with your family and friends. Step up to ensure that we NEVER FORGET.

Calendar of upcoming events honoring September 11, 2001

September 8, 2025 St. Leo University 33701 State Road 52, St Leo, FL 33574

This is an event sponsored by the Pasco Patriots Association and St. Leo University. The day begins with a 5K run at 7:00am. The memorial program will begin at approximately 8:00am. O'Kane member Steve Spelman will be speaking at this event. For complete details go to Pasco Patriots Association Facebook Page.

September 10, 2025 George Steinbrenner Field 1 Steinbrenner Field, Tampa, FL 33614

Annual Wreath laying ceremony at the 9/11 Memorial. The O'Kane Club had an integral part in the creation of this monument donating a piece of a beam from Ground Zero. Event begins at 10a.m. Service is brief (in keeping in mind the heat of the day). Water is provided and restrooms area available.

September 10, 11, 2025 TOWER OF LIGHTS Curlew Hills Memory Gardens. Nightly display of twin light beams soaring into the sky. Free viewing after sunset.

September 11, 2025 Curlew Hills Memorial Service 1750 Curlew Rd., Palm Harbor, FL 34683

Annual Memorial Service. Our members sponsor the essay contest for middle school students, as well as having several members serving on the planning board. Members participate in the event and our club has an extensive display of articles and artifacts available for viewing before, during, and after the ceremony. Ceremony begins promptly at 10:00am. Water and restrooms are available.

September 11, 2025 Annual Memorial Service 7:00pm. Club Treasurer, Louis Kikis will be guest speaker. Sims Park, 6341 Bank St., New Port Richey, FL 34652

The longest running memorial honoring September 11th in the Tampa Bay area. Ceremony begins in the evening at 5pm. Our club members serve on the planning committee and have displays and a video running throughout the event. Water and restrooms are available.