

STANDING FAST
THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF O'KANE FDNY RETIRED
SPECIAL JULY 4TH - AMERICA 250 EDITION

Membership application is available on our website
www.okanefdnyretirees.com.

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



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 on our website 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: Tuesday, 9/15/2026. 7pm,
 American Legion Paradise Post, New Port Richey, FL.



okaneclubfdny@icloud.com

email us for more info.

2026 EXECUTIVE BOARD



KEVIN DOHERTY, PRESIDENT
727-744-5748



RICH MICCIO, VICE PRESIDENT 727-947-7734



LOUIS KIKIS, TREASURER
727-946-2933

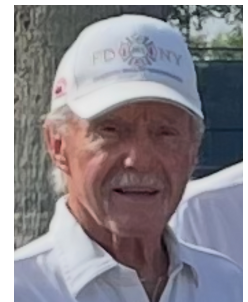


MIKE DOYLE, FINANCIAL SECRETARY
631-624-8293



JIM SAVARESE, RECORDING SECRETARY

914-753-4833



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

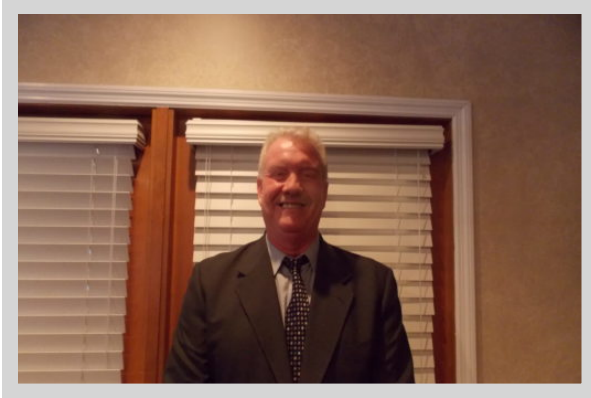
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Jack D’Andrea. 727-862-7415

John Pasquale 352-683-7964

John Murphy 352-666-9391

Steve McNally. 914-329-4319



**PRESIDENT'S
REPORT -
JULY 2026**

Dear Members, Family and Friends,

What a great June we have had. The weather was beautiful and summer arrived in true Florida style - hot, hot, and getting hotter!

I hope you all enjoyed a fun Father's Day with your family and friends. There was no meeting in June, but that did not stop us from continuing to plan for upcoming events. Several of our members are on the boards of two Sept. 11th planning committees - Curlew Hills in Palm Harbor (Pinellas County), and Simms Park in New Port Richey (Pasco County). All event details are in the process of being finalized and we will be posting the specific information once that has been completed.

Remember that this will be the 25th anniversary of that fateful day. Please plan to attend a service in remembrance. Many events may be viewed via live streaming so, even if you are unable to travel, you may still be able to attend virtually. These details will be confirmed in the next few months and be posted here in this newsletter.

Meanwhile, we have another milestone event to celebrate, that is the 250th anniversary of our country's birth! If you are planning a gathering and would like to share photos, we'd love to see them. Just e-mail them to the club at: okaneclubfdny@icloud.com. Inside this edition we will include some fun facts about Independence Day.

Enjoy a safe and happy July 4th! Remember to keep an eye out for stray debris from any exploded fireworks.

Fraternally Yours,

Kevin Doherty, President

Note: Booster Reminder: It's never too late to start being a Club Booster. Boosters are open to anyone, including you spouses, family and friends - so take a look at the Booster pages coming up in this newsletter and think about showing your support.

OKANE BOOSTERS: reminder...if your number is a 4 it's time to renew! Boosters run for 12 months. The number following your name indicates when your booster will expire.

Thank you for your support. Anyone can be a booster. Family members, friends, etc.
(Rev. 4/26)

Byrnes, Brian 1 Lt. Gene Sullivan, E39
Byrnes, Brian 1 Firefighter James Byrnes 1824. Batt 21
Byrnes, Brian 1 BC Carlo Andersen 456. Safety Batt
Byrnes, Brian 1 Firefighter Marty Celic Murdered 7/2/77 13108. T.L.18
Chichester, Dan10 Members of E275 1963-1987
Chichester, Dan10 Members of L126 1963-1987
Chichester, Dan10 Members of E234 1963-1987
Dunscumb Jim11 Honoring all members of E82
Dunscumb, Jim 1 Always in our hearts, E82
D'Andrea, Jack10 Members of Ladder 126
Incarnato, Charles10 Rockapulco - E268, L137 - Best on the Beach
Incarnato, Charles10 On The Edge - E314 Members LOL
Incarnato, Charles10 Never A Dull Moment E72, For Sure
Incarnato, Charles10 Mid-town High Rise E8,L2, Batt8
Incarnato, Charles10 The Bronx, must I say more? Great Memories
Incarnato, Charles10 In memory of John Askin, E48, my friend and brother
Kikis, Louis1 E22/ L13 "The Yorkville Nine"
Kikis, Louis1 343 Never Forget
Kikis, Victoria6 Honoring the memory or those who gave their all. 343 Never forget.
Kikis, Victoria6 RIP Jeff Giordano - 9/11/01
McCarren, Charles 1 BC Richard De Prima. Batt 49
McCarren, Charles 1 Lt. James McCarren E48
McCarren, Charles 1 Lt. Charles McCarren III FDNY Safety Command
McCarren, Charles 1 Lt. Daniel McCarren E298
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 L 126
Nilsson, Mike1 Remembering members of E303, L126
Nilsson, Mike1 September 11, 2001. 343 - Never Forget
Powers, Jim1 Honoring members of E35
Ragusso, Rob11 Honoring all members of E289

Boosters continue on next page.....

BOOSTERS CONTINUED.....

- 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
- Segreto, Vincent1 DC T. Campbell
- Segreto, Vincent1 All the members of FDNY who died on 9/11
- Segreto, Vincent1 All the members of FDNY who have died since 9/11
- Segreto, Vincent1 In honor of all FDNY members
- Tarantino Ron1 In Memory of Louis Tarantino

**BY SENDING IN YOUR BOOSTER!
YOUR MESSAGE COULD BE HERE. SHOW YOUR SUPPORT**

Becoming a Booster is simple. Just enter the name of your honoree and the message as you want it to appear. Each message is \$5.00 and runs for 1 year.

Example:

Your name and address

Your booster message:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

**Send your Booster. (\$5.00 per message) to:
Mike Doyle, Financial Secretary
5157 Silent Loop. Condo #314
New Port Richey, FL 34652**

You may also find booster applications on our website:
www.okanefdnyretirees.com.

Boosters run for 12 months. The number following your name indicates when your Booster will expire. Thank you for your support. **Anyone can be a booster. Family members, friends, etc.**

FDNY UNVEILS MEMORIAL WALL FOR RETIRED 9/11 RESPONDERS

On June 12, 2026, the FDNY unveiled a new World Trade Center Retired Responders Memorial Wall at a dedication ceremony at FDNY headquarters in Brooklyn. This was the final dedication ceremony in a series of 3. The first was on June 9 for Manhattan and The Bronx, the second held on June 10 for Staten Island and Brooklyn, and the 3rd held on June 11 for Queens. These were held separately in order to accommodate the thousands of family members and friends wanting to attend.

The wall honors 154 retired FDNY members who responded to the World Trade Center after the 9/11 attacks to assist in rescue and recovery. All later died from WTC related illnesses.

You may visit the wall, located inside FDNY headquarters at 9 Metrotech Center. It is directly across from the existing FDNY World Trade Center Memorial Wall, which honors active duty members who died from 9/11-related illness.

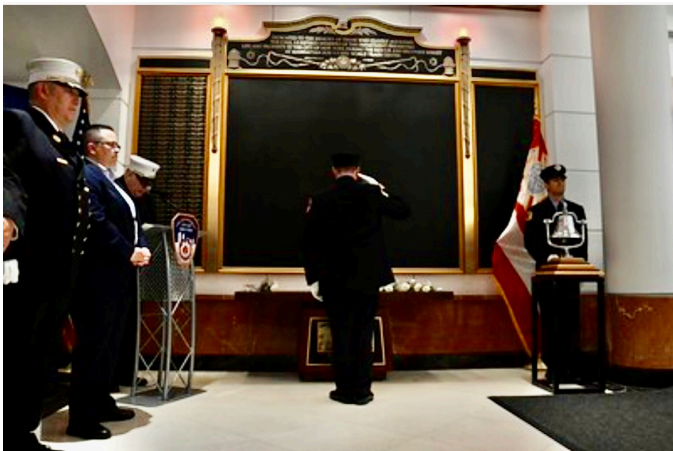
“In the safe confines of our WTC Health Program, they fought through the treatments, surgeries, transplants, pain, suffering, and the uncertainty of whether they would see the next day,” said Chief Medical Officer David Prezant.

Chief of Department, John Esposito stated, “We are pleased to dedicate this wall because we know it more completely tells the story of Sept. 11th. I know and remember the impact that our retired members had in the response and recovery and rebuilding after that terrible day.

At the final dedication ceremony on June 12th, FDNY Commissioner Lillian Bonsignore said, “This moment, this place, this time, we are all experiencing something together. We have exactly the same thing in common. We are one people, we are family of FDNY. It is my privilege to welcome you home today.”



Commr. Bonsignore speaking above. Below final dedication of the Wall.



Chief Med. Officer, David Prezant



Chief of Dept., John Esposito

America 250....Fun Facts

The Declaration of Independence:

Did you know that only 2 people actually signed the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776? They were John Hancock and Charles Thomson. The other 54 delegates signed the document weeks later. This was due to the fact that not all delegates were in Philadelphia at that time. On August 2, 1776, most of the remaining delegates affixed their names to the engrossed parchment.

Exactly one month after the signing of the document congress had accepted a resolution stating, “Resolved: that these colonies are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved.”

News of the Declaration of Independence arrived in London eight days later on August 10, 1776.

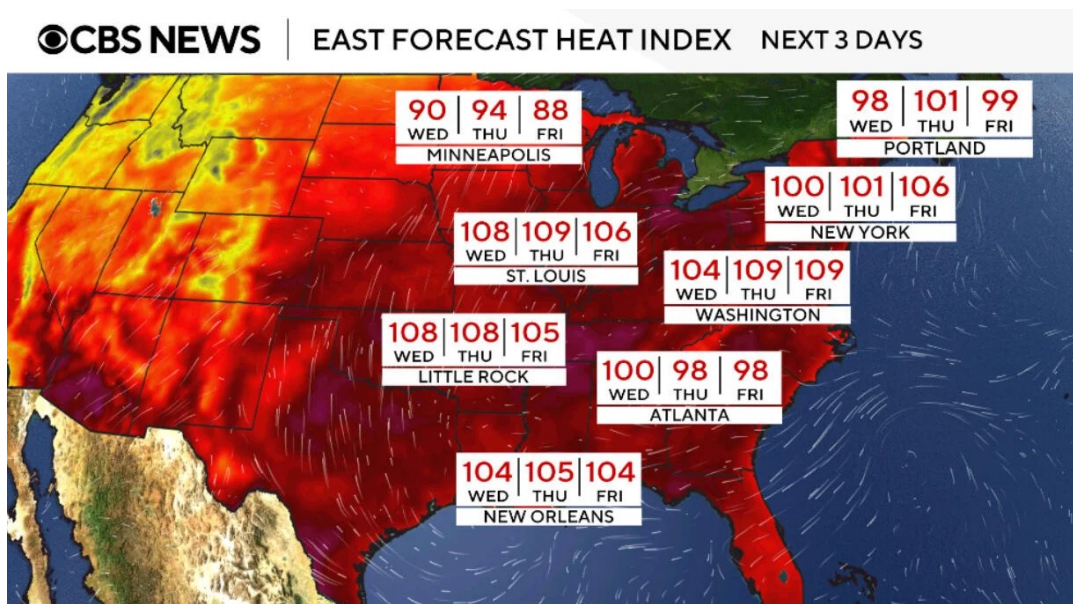


HEAT DOME TO SCORCH MAJOR U.S. CITIES IN UPCOMING DAYS

The first widespread heat wave of the summer will put millions of Americans under a heat dome, areas of very strong high pressure that trap heat over a large area. The phenomenon can last for days to weeks, making heat feel insufferable and dangerous because the human body cannot cool off as effectively if sweat stays on the skin.

During extreme temperatures, people should limit outdoor activity, stay hydrated, and ensure access to air-conditioning. If you do not have air condition in your home, visit shopping malls, libraries, and public cooling areas for relief.

Of all climate-related impacts and hazards, heat is the biggest killer. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that heat can impact anyone. Be mindful for signs of overheating including muscle cramping, dizziness, unusually heavy sweating, shortness of breath, headaches, weakness, and nausea.



This long and dangerous heat wave will blast a large swath of the United States this week, with temperatures rising ahead of the July Fourth holiday, and feeling even hotter because of the humidity that’s arriving with it, according to the National Weather Service.

The Heat Dome is expected to build over the eastern two-thirds of the country with New York City, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington D.C., among the cities expected to see record highs into the 100s.

More than 100 record highs are expected to be set through the 4th, along with about 250 record-warm overnight lows.

Be smart, stay safe and keep cool.

MESSI CLEANS UP AT FIFA!



Soccer legend Lionel Messi made history during the group stage of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, becoming the first player to ever score in seven consecutive World Cup matches. He set this milestone with a late free-kick goal in Argentina's 3-1 victory over Jordan.

Throughout the tournament Messi continued to rewrite the record books with these additional record shattering feats:

All-Time Top Scorer - Messi extended his all-time men's World Cup scoring record with 19 goals.

Record Appearances: Messi cemented his legendary status by participating in an unprecedented six different editions of men's World Cup (2006, 2010, 2014, 2018, 2022, 2026).

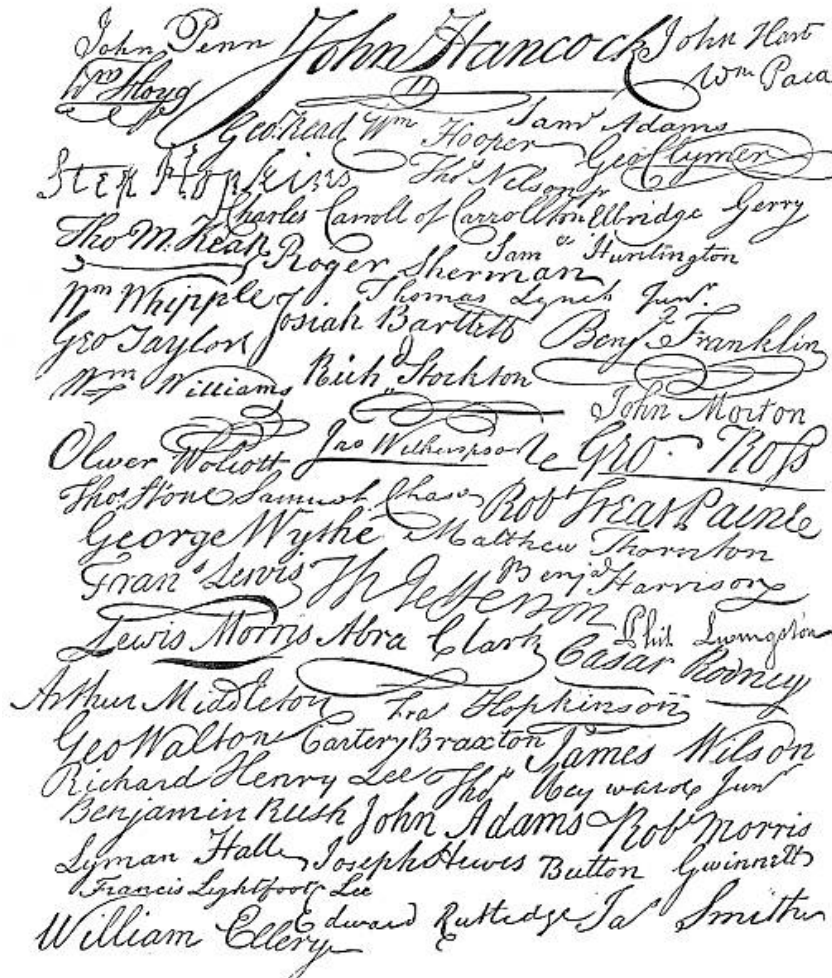
You can watch the Argentina team captain in action at his next FIFA game against Cape Verde on Tuesday, July 7.

America 250....Fun Facts

Why did John Hancock sign the Declaration of Independence so largely?

Hancock was the President of the Continental Congress and as presiding officer he was the first to sign and had ample space. He used his naturally flamboyant handwriting style and prominent placement as a deliberate act of defiance against King George III. Legend suggests that he wrote his name so large so that the British King could read it without his spectacles.

As you can see in the photo below, he used up so much space at the top of the document that the 55 other signers had to squeeze their signatures into the remaining space to ensure that everyone's name fit on the parchment.



NBA Championship Knick Player Pays Visit To Local Firehouse

What do you do after winning an NBA Championship? Say thanks to your local firefighters, of course! FDNY members got a surprise visit from New York Knicks starting center, Karl-Anthony (KAT) Towns recently. Towns spent time with members of Engine 1/Ladder 24 (the firehouse near KAT’s home base, Madison Square Garden). He brought boxes filled with T-shirts and took time to visit and take some pictures, making great memories for all.



A RESCUE TO REMEMBER...FIREFIGHTERS SAVE DOG

AS REPORTED BY NEW YORK POST.....

A viral video captured the moment firefighters rescued a dog from the rubble after two earthquakes devastated Venezuela.

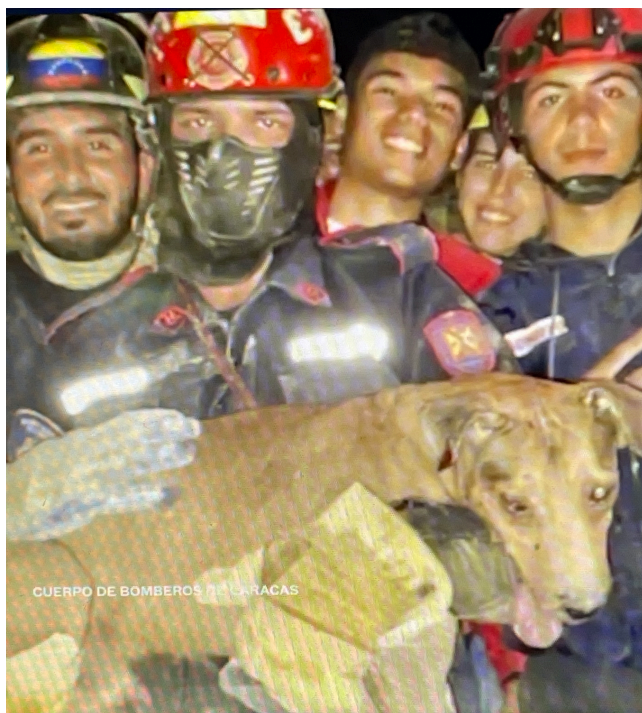
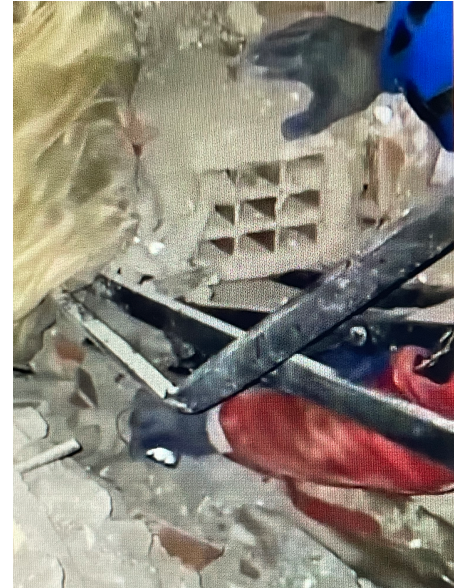
The Caracas Fire Department said a unit concluded a search and rescue mission at a home when they heard a bark. Instead of abandoning the scene, the team was able to locate the dog and worked on a plan to pull it out safely.

The video showed a fireman sliding a bottle of water to the trapped dog, who was pinned under a metal bar.

“We’re going to get you out,” one of the firefighters said in the video that was posted on June 25th. The crew cleared the debris with their own hands before they were finally able to extract the dog from the remains.

“This extraordinary discovery has served as a symbol of hope for everyone at the disaster site,” the Caracas Department stated.

(Photos were taken from the original video. You can watch the actual footage on Youtube.)



America 250....Fun Facts

When and where was the first official July Fourth celebration held?

The first official state celebration of the Fourth of July was held on July 4, 1781, when Massachusetts became the first state to make Independence Day an official holiday. Prior to that, the tradition began spontaneously on July 4, 1777, with a massive celebration in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Below is a timeline of the transition of the 4th from an informal gathering to an official federal holiday.

July 8, 1776: The very first public celebration of the Declaration of Independence took place in Philadelphia, but it occurred on July 8 rather than July 4.

July 4, 1777: Philadelphia hosted the first annual commemoration specifically on the Fourth of July. The celebration featured a 13 gun salute, bonfires, and a grand exhibition of fireworks.

July 4, 1870: The U.S. Congress officially made the Fourth July an official federal holiday (unpaid) for federal employees in Washington, D.C.

1938 & 1941: Congress expanded the observance, turning it into a paid federal holiday for all federal employees.



That's it for now. Have a wonderful Independence day!

Note: Your club treasurer will be making a trip out to Mt. Rushmore this month. There will be photos in the next edition of "Sanding Fast!"

