

# Houston Professional Fire Fighter's Association, Local 341

## Celebrating 75 Years

### 1932 to 2007

In honor of our anniversary, we are printing Local 341's list of all the presidents who have served our union since its beginning. We are missing some information and will be researching to fill in the blanks during the year. In the following months, we will be printing information and pictures of our past presidents.

#### JOHN DODSON FRASER

Served HFD from 1920 to 1950

President of Local 341-1936 to 1938, 1946

#### HERMAN DIEZI

Served HFD from 1911 to 1945

President of Local 341-1938 to 1940

#### \* ROY BOYLE WHITTLESEY

Served HFD from 1935 to 1959

President of Local 341-1940 to 1943

#### CLYDE MEAD DUFFIELD

Served HFD from 1926 to 1962

President of Local 341-1944

#### JOHN GOLDEN

Served HFD from 1933 to 1957

President of Local 341-1945

#### \* CLAUDE MELVIN "RIP" BULLOCK

Served HFD from 1937 to 1964

President of Local 341-1947

#### HARRY HUGO "BUBBA" FINN

Served HFD from 1929 to 1973

President of Local 341-1948

#### JOSEPH JAMES "JOE" SOLITO

Served HFD from 1938 to 1953

President of Local 341-1949

#### CADY P. PRICE

Served HFD from 1928 to 1974

President of Local 341-1950 to 1951

#### \* JOE W. LOBUE

Served HFD from 1938 to 1964

President of Local 341-1952 to 1953

#### LESTER CARL PRICE

Served HFD from 1939 to 1974

President of Local 341-1954 to 1955

#### WALLACE ANDREW WHITLEY

Served HFD from 1946 to 1973

President of Local 341-1956 to 1959

#### H. STEPHENS

President of Local 341-1959 (9 months)

#### CECIL FLOYD STRANGE, SR.

Served HFD from 1928 to 1971

President of Local 341-1959 (3 months)

#### \* EARL JAMES McWILLIAMS

Served HFD from 1943 to 1978

President of Local 341-1960 to 1961

#### JESSE JAMES "J.J." PRUITT

Served HFD from 1954 to 1974

President of Local 341-1962

#### JAMES ALLEN STAHL

Served HFD from 1946 to 1972

President of Local 341-1963 to 1964

#### HOWARD PRESSLY WILLIAMSON

Served HFD from 1940 to 1974

President of Local 341-1964 to 1966

#### WESLEY DEFORD GIBSON

Served HFD from 1942 to 1977

President of Local 341-1967 to 1968, 1970

#### \* JOSEPH HENRY "JOE" PERINO

Served HFD from 1955 to 1978

President of Local 341-1969, 1971 to 1973

#### \* LESTER W. TYRA, JR.

Served HFD from 1969 to 2002

President of Local 341-1974 to 1991

#### WESLEY JAMES "WES" WARNE

Served HFD from 1969 to 2005

President of Local 341-1991 to 1994

#### GEORGE LEON FRESS

Served HFD from 1971 to Present

President of Local 341-1995 to 1996

#### ROBERT THOMAS BRITT, JR.

Served HFD from 1974 to Present

President of Local 341-1997 to 1998

#### JERRY LANE MCDANIEL

Served HFD from 1965 to 2002

President of Local 341-1998 (4 months)

#### STEVEN DALE "STEVIE" WILLIAMS

Served HFD from 1979 to Present

President of Local 341-1998 to 2004

#### ROLAND MORALES CHAVEZ

Served HFD from 1979 to Present

President of Local 341-2004 to Present

*\* Went on to later serve as Fire Chief  
of the Houston Fire Department*



# REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN FIRE FIGHTERS

by Scott Mellott, Retired

After keeping up with the recent deaths of our fellow Fire Fighters for over five years, the tough part for me is that I knew about half of them and this year was not an exception.

In January of each year, I try to talk about one or more of our brother Fire Fighters who died during the previous year. The subject of this article is going to be Captain "Bill" Radtke.

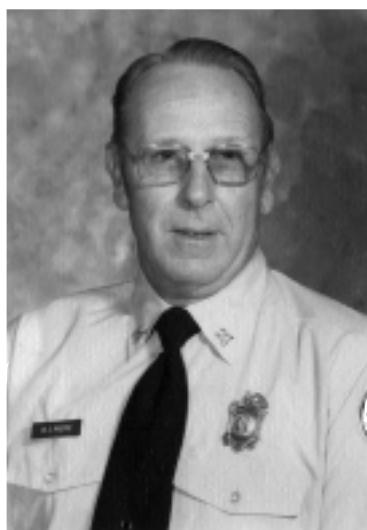
Captain "Bill" William Radtke, entered HFD in 1955 and retired in 1978. Captain Radtke died on September 18th at age 86.

The first time I crossed paths with Captain Radtke was while working at Station 8, the first year of my career. He was transferred from Station 17 to Station 8 after Captain Danny Huchthins was promoted to District Chief.

The "C" Shift at Station 8 at the time, from my "rookie" point of view, was somewhat, lacking in "discipline." I never really paid too much attention to them because of my duties as a Fire Fighter on probation.

The "C" Chief in the district during that time was Earl McWilliams. Chief McWilliams must have had many problems with the crew at Station 8. When their Captain was promoted to Chief, Chief McWilliams transferred Captain Radtke to Station 8, supposedly to "straighten out the crew." I don't know personally how much of this was done, but a very humorous incident came out of Captain Radtke's tenure on the C Shift at Station 8.

I have told this story many times and this time I won't add the names of the Fire Fighters involved but, in the past, the story was changed by me because it sounded better, and I will promise to do



Photos provided by the Radtke Family

my best to tell it the way it really happened.

Two of the Fire Fighters on the C Shift, who will be described only as one "big one" and one "small one," must have not gotten along very well, and knowing both of them, they had more than one argument while working together. However, one particular argument caused them a whole lot of problems. As the argument progressed, it began to get physical - the "shoving match" had started. During the scuffle, the "small one" inserted the "big one's" behind into a hole in the sheet rock that had not been there at the beginning of their shift.

Captain Radtke came out of his room after hearing the commotion and looked at the new hole in "his" wall. He simply stated that the two needed to have the new hole fixed or they both would be without a job.

Ironically they called their Captain, who had just transferred and happened to be a sheet rock "doctor," to come bail them out of their dilemma.

Now, once the sheet rock work was completed, the two came in the next day and painted around the damaged area.

When Captain Radtke inspected the finished job, he stated that the paint did not match the wall and they would have to paint the entire wall all the way to the kitchen. The two did what they were told and finished the job, so they thought.

The next time their shift worked, Captain Radtke did an inspection of the newly painted wall and stated that the wall in the kitchen did not match the first wall painted and of course made them paint the kitchen wall. Well as the story goes, each day the C Shift worked they were required, by Captain Radtke, to paint a new section of wall simply because it did not "match" the other sections until the upstairs hallway, lounge and kitchen had a shiny new paint job. That pretty much meant that they had painted almost 100 feet of walls!

The conclusion of this story will begin with a brief history of Bill Radtke.

At age 17, Bill married his childhood sweetheart, Billie. This was in the late 1930's and several years later in 1941 the United States entered into WWII. Bill, being of age during that time of course, joined the Navy to do his part for his country. Bill served his time in the Pacific and toward the end of the war he served in occupied Japan. His absence for all those years caused his marriage to fall

*continued on page 12*

## UPCOMING EVENTS OR INFORMATION

### 7th ANNUAL FIRE FIGHTER MEMORIAL CEREMONY

Saturday, March 17, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. The ceremony will be held at Memorial Gardens located on the grounds of the Houston Fire Fighter's Fund, 4225 Interwood North Parkway, Houston, Texas. **MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

### MEMORIAL WEB SITE:

**[WWW.HOUSTONFIREMEMORIAL.ORG](http://WWW.HOUSTONFIREMEMORIAL.ORG)**

Please visit my personal website, the Fire Fighter Memorial website. It contains listings of Houston's line-of-duty Fire Fighters from when the department went paid in 1895 to 2004. We also list as many Houston Fire Fighters (that can be found through research) that are now deceased, from 1895 to present. We have added, because of 911, all the Fire Fighters who died on September 11th and have added a link to FDNY's line-of-duty deaths from 1865 to 2004.

*Scott Mellott*

### **LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH ANNIVERSARIES FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY:**

**January 04, 1983**  
**RONNIE LUZETTE**  
**FRANKLIN**  
**District Chief, Station 7**

**January 07, 1954**  
**FRANK CATINO**  
**Fire Fighter, Station 1**

**January 21, 1949**  
**VERNON JOHN DORSETT**  
**Assistant Fire Chief, Station 1**

**January 31, 1951**  
**JOSEPH "BULL" CONNOR**  
**Chauffeur, Station 1**

# Remembering To Never Forget

**BERT LEE HOSEA, JR.**  
Served HFD 1955 to 2004  
Died December 16, 2006

**KENETH WAYNE RAINS**  
Served HFD 1966 to 1992  
Died December 15, 2006

**DAVID LYNN MARTIN**  
Served HFD 1956 to 1977  
Died December 13, 2006

**WAYNE WINFORD COLLINS**  
Served HFD 1966 to 1987  
Died November 14, 2006

**CHARLES JOSEPH DRAGNA**  
Served HFD 1968 to 2000  
Died November 8, 2006

**RUBIN LEROY PUCKETT**  
Served HFD 1950 to 1990  
Died October 8, 2006

**JOHN MYLES NYE**  
Served HFD 1950 to 1972  
Died October 4, 2006

**TERRY RAY LEWIS**  
Served HFD 1969 to 1979  
Died September 19, 2006

**WILLIAM "BILL" SAMUEL RADTKE**  
Served HFD 1955 to 1978  
Died September 18, 2006

**WALLACE "RED" REID JOHNSON**  
Served HFD 1956 to 1979  
Died September 3, 2006

**SAMUEL HAMILTON**  
Served HFD 1978 to 2003  
Died August 15, 2006

**SETH RUFUS PARKER**  
Served HFD 1941 to 1967  
Died August 15, 2006

For current information on  
deceased fire fighters,  
please go to my web site  
[www.houstonfirememorial.org](http://www.houstonfirememorial.org)  
and click on "Recent Deaths"

*Total for the year from  
January 1, 2006 to present - 42*

**RALPH TALMAGE THOMAS**  
Served HFD 1953 to 1976  
Died August 12, 2006

**HERMAN HOLLAN BRIDGES**  
Served HFD 1956 to 1987  
Died July 29, 2006

**JAMES ROBERT BAKER**  
Served HFD 1950 to 1972  
Died July 2, 2006

**GARY LYNN GOODLETT**  
Served HFD 1969 to 2004  
Died July 2, 2006

**CHARLES RAYMOND BRUNER**  
Served HFD 1950 to 1972  
Died July 1, 2006

**DONALD RAY LEVRIER**  
Served HFD 1953 to 1980  
Died June 28, 2006

**BRET WAYNE MOITY**  
Served HFD 2003 to 2004  
Died June 26, 2006

**CHARLES "CHARLIE" VINCENT  
MUSACHIA**  
Served HFD 1942 to 1972  
Died June 15, 2006

**SIDNEY ROSCOE DURBIN**  
Served HFD 1947 to 1970  
Died June 8, 2006

**RICHARD ARTHUR RAILSBACK**  
Served HFD 1964 to 1984  
Died May 23, 2006

**JAMES HOLMES ALLEN**  
Served HFD 1950 to 1976  
Died May 19, 2006

**EMRIC EDWIN NOWAK**  
Served HFD 1952 to 1981  
Died May 7, 2006

**JAMES GORDON MILLER, JR.**  
Served HFD 1968 to 2003  
Died April 10, 2006

**W.D. "BIRDIE" THOMPSON**  
Served HFD 1949 to 1991  
Died April 6, 2006

**THOMAS "TOM" RAYMOND  
HUTCHINGS**  
Served HFD 1976 to 1997  
Died April 2, 2006

**HOMER LEWIN PRICE**  
Served HFD 1941 to 1963  
Died April 2, 2006

**ROBERT DAN EVERITT**  
Served HFD 1959 to 1974  
Died March 28, 2006

**DANIEL "DAN" LEE FLETCHER**  
Served HFD 1948 to 1978  
Died March 26, 2006

**JOHN EDWARD MEADOR**  
Served HFD 1966 to 1990  
Died February 28, 2006

**ROBERT "BOB" AUGUSTIN LANCLOS**  
Served HFD 1956 to 1981  
Died February 24, 2006

**WILLIAM "BILL" GARNER  
STANSEL, JR.**  
Served HFD 1952 to 1984  
Died February 6, 2006

**DONALD LEE ROSS**  
Served HFD 1958 to 1983  
Died February 5, 2006

**EDWARD BENARD DOOLIN**  
Served HFD 1960 to 1981  
Died on January 31, 2006

**GEORGE VIRGIL JOHNSON**  
Served HFD 1957 to 1982  
Died January 25, 2006

**VERNON "MIKE" ALONZO BOWEN**  
Served HFD 1954 to 1984  
Died January 21, 2006

**JOHN WESLEY MITCHELL**  
Served HFD 1975 to 2005  
Died January 21, 2006

**ANTHONY CHARLEY BURNETT**  
Served HFD 1946 to 1977  
Died January 21, 2006

**NORMAN GEST**  
Served HFD 1966 to 1977  
Died January 10, 2006

**GYNN SHEARER WELLS**  
Served HFD 1956 to 1977  
Died January 7, 2006

**JAMES THOMAS ROWELL**  
Served HFD 1958 to 1979  
Died January 3, 2006

# Houston Professional Fire Fighter's Association, Local 341

## Celebrating 75 Years

1932 to 2007

As some of you may already know, this publication will be doing a two page picture spread each month for the year 2007. We will focus on the faces of our past and present membership to celebrate Local 341's 75th year.

Scott Mellott



Station 21 (Fire Boat) - 1931  
J. D. Fraser and Station Mascot

Photo furnished by the Clifford Malek family



Station 22 - 1930's  
Jesse "Smokie" Jones and Station Mascot

Photo furnished by the Jones Family.



Station 6 - 1920's Frank Catino (Center) & Station  
Mascots. Fire Fighter in back ground identity unknown.

Photo furnished by the Joe Catino Family.



Station 10 -late 1920's  
Unknown Fire Fighter and Station Mascot

Photo furnished by the Butch Edmonds Family.

## The Crew of Station 28 - 1955



*John Dixie "JD" Fisher*



*Joe E. Daniels*



**The Crew of Station 28 - 1955**

# FALLEN FIRE FIGHTERS

continued from page 8

apart and they soon were divorced.

Bill remarried and was blessed with three children and over 40 years of marriage. In 1990 his wife Marie died. Some time later he received a call from his sister-in-law who happened to be the family "reporter." She had found out that Billie's husband of many years had died and that she had moved from California to the Houston area to live with her sister. She called Bill and told him he should call Billie. They had not talked for 50 years and Billie was not warned that he would be calling. She immediately knew who he was. They were both in their 70's and remarried where they remained together until she died in 2004.

Bill had served in the US Navy during WWII and Korea but his biggest battle was being diagnosed with lymphoma in 1972 and later fought problems created by the cancer. The doctors gave him just 6 months to live and he lasted 34 more years and outlived all but one of those doctors.

Bill Radtke will be missed by all his brother Fire Fighters who had the chance to meet him and work with him. His family and those that had the opportunity to meet him will not soon forget such a great human being.

I have always said that a person's funeral is something the family and friends will never forget. When I interviewed Bill's daughter, Mary, for this article, she told me that the funeral was very comforting for them and they were impressed by the way the different groups took care of their part of the process. The groups that partic-

ipated were the HFD, Reagan Masonic Lodge #1037, the US Military and the Houston Firefighter' Relief and Retirement Fund..

In order to end this article it seems that the following words to Bill are appropriate.

*Captain Radtke, thank you for the pleasure of being acquainted with you. You were an inspiration to me and I am sure that I gained strength from you by seeing how you dealt with your road blocks in life.*

*May your eternal life be as interesting  
as the one here on Earth.*

*Rest in Peace, Sir.*

## 5,300 Houston Janitors Score Big; Strike Ends in Historic Contract

Office janitors in Houston see brighter days ahead after their spirited four-week strike won an historic city-wide first contract. Through higher wages and more work hours, the workers will see their income more than double within 24 months, according to Houston Justice for Janitors, an affiliate of the Services Employees International Union. (SEIU).

More than 5,300 workers are covered by the 3-year agreement. They organized with SEIU in 2005, and voted to strike in October after months of fruitless negotiations. Their targeted work stoppage against five companies involved about 1,700 janitors in key downtown Houston buildings.

The win, in a southern right-to-work state, was being viewed throughout the labor movement as a huge victory and the beginning of a new phase of labor organization in the south.

"If Houston janitors can win by standing together, then workers anywhere can win by standing together," said SEIU spokesperson Lynda Tran.

The new agreement will increase work hours to six hours per shift for the Houston janitors, lift hourly pay to \$7.75 and put in place an affordable health insurance plan, to be available January 2009. Previously the workers were limited to four hour shifts, at a pay rate of \$5.30 an hour. The contract also includes six paid holidays per year and paid vacation beginning the first year of the contract.

"Houston janitors have shown that organized labor still has the power to inspire and improve the lives of workers. When ably led workers unite, they can win major improvements," said Julius Getman, a professor at the University of Texas Law school.

*Reprinted from UCS News Service December 2006*

### "Quotable Quotes"

*Success has a simple formula: do your best,  
and people may like it.*

**- Sam Ewing**

### BUYING OR SELLING A HOME?

Attention Active/Retired Firemen and their Families  
I will donate 5% of my total commission to the  
**Dennis Holder Scholarship Fund** at closing.

**RONNIE DEES (99/A)**  
**Century 21 Outstanding Homes**  
Residential/Commercial Real Estate  
**281-610-5627 Direct Line**  
Email: [ronniejenndees@houston.rr.com](mailto:ronniejenndees@houston.rr.com)



*You can make a difference for  
children and grandchildren of Fire Fighters  
who plan to go to college!*