Spotlight on LAF Founding Board Member Frank Tamayo

Frank Alday Tamayo (Founding Member)

President Emeritus

Frank is a Native Tucsonan and was born July 28, 1938, in Tucson, Arizona. Frank started school at Davis Elementary and when his family moved, he transferred to Miles Elementary. He attended Middle School at Mansfeld and then attended Tucson High School.

After graduation from high school, Frank attended Basic training at Lackland Airforce Base for training with the Arizona Air National Guard. Six years later, Frank was promoted to Staff Sargeant and later was Honorably Discharged.

In High School, Frank began working at Sear's and when he got laid-off at the age of 22, in December in 1960, he decided to apply with Tucson Fire Department. Out of the 700 applicants, Frank was number 13th in his class of which TFD was hiring only 15 new firefighters.

July 10, 1961 was Frank's first day on the job with TFD. After a short time of on-the-job training on the streets of Tucson with Engine-3, Engine-7 and Ladder-2, he was assigned as a temp on Engine-13 at Liberty and Ajo for one year.

Frank's next assigned station was old Fire Station 1 at 142 S. 6th Avenue. He was there for one year. The remainder of his 23 years were at Station 10. When TFD first created the position of Fire Engineer, Frank took the very first test given for this new position and passed. (He is proud of the fact that he beat out a lot of senior Firefighters who were on the job longer than he had been.)

Frank has stayed active with Local 479 Union for 62 years. 24 active-duty years and 38 years retired. He was the Treasurer under three different presidents, including when the union was on strike.

The biggest Fire Frank was on, happened on December 20, 1970. It was the Pioneer Hotel Fire which killed 29 people. At the time, Frank was Tillerman on Ladder-3. It was the battle of all fires to happen in Tucson to this day. All TFD firefighters were called in to fight this horrendous fire which claimed so many people's lives.

Frank has been married to Rosa, his current wife for 35 years, and is the proud father of five children and 16 grandchildren.

As one of the founding members of Last Alarm Foundation and the person responsible for coming up with the idea of finding a old fire truck to perform the services for Last Alarm in 2005, Fire Departments all over Arizona can thank Frank Tamayo for his vision and helping it come to fruition. Thank you, Frank Tamayo!!!