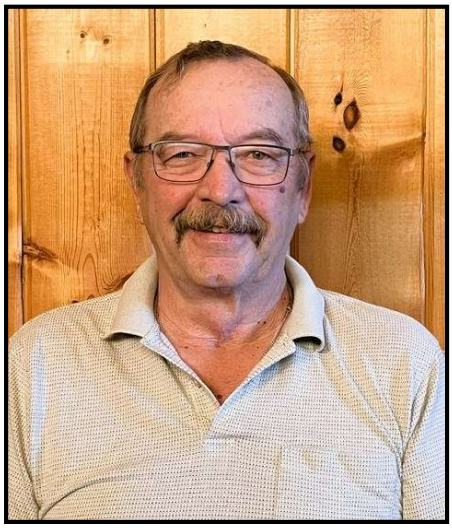
Spotlight on LAF Treasurer & Board Member Gary Bynum

Gary Bynum, Board Treasurer



Born and raised in Tucson, Gary started with the Drexel Heights Fire District as a junior firefighter in 1975 as a high school senior, becoming a volunteer firefighter upon turning 18. He went full time in 1976. Gary worked his way through the ranks obtaining the rank of Assistant Chief, and serving as interim Chief on two occasions during his career; the final time for over a year. While serving as the officer in charge of annexations, Gary worked closely with area residents to allow the Fire District to expand from its original 8 square miles to its current boundaries. He directed the apparatus committee and served as the project representative for station construction in the later years. Prior to his retirement in 2012, Drexel Heights effected an administrative reorganization and the Assistant Chief position was replaced with the position of Division Chief, the position at which he retired.

Gary attended Pima College throughout his career obtaining Associates Degrees in Fire Science, Emergency Medicine -Paramedic, and General Education. He received a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Business Management from the University of Phoenix.

During his career, Gary responded to the first EMS call to which the fire district responded. The scene was a motorcycle accident out in the desert with bi-lateral radius ulna fractures, he had to treat the patient and then wait for almost an hour before the ambulance arrived.

He participated in and responded to Rope Rescue, Aircraft Crash Rescue, and Wildland Firefighting. He responded to many wildland fires both in and out of the state of Arizona, including the 1988 devastating fire in Yellowstone National Park. He was also the initial Incident Commander for the Old Tucson Fire until relieved by the Fire Chief for Drexel Heights, upon his arrival. He participated in many committees with the Pima County Fire Chiefs organization including developing the new Department Identification System still in use today. Gary also worked on the PCWIN radio system which is the regional radio system currently in use by most fire and police departments within Pima County. He worked on the User Committee, Technical Committee and was the alternate on the Executive Committee.

Gary has volunteered for the National Firefighter Memorial Service every year since 2002, traveling back to Emmitsburg for the service. He was appointed to the Drexel Heights Fire District Board in 2014 to fill a vacated seat and then successfully ran for election later that year. He is currently the Board Chairman. He joined the Last Alarm Foundation in 2016 as a driver and was appointed to the Executive Board later that year and is currently the Treasurer and the Funeral Coordinator. He began doing work for The Greater Tucson Fire Foundation at their Safe Shift store when it was moved to its current location and was elected to the Board in 2023.