

THE BUGLE

Fall 2023

SAVING HISTORY, SAVING LIVES!

Volume 29, Number 4

MUSEUM CELEBRATES FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

BY JOAN OLIVER

This year's National Fire Prevention Week was Oct. 8th – 14th. To celebrate the Museum held an Open House on Saturday, Oct. 14th from 10am to 2pm. There was no admission charge that day. With a threat of rain and cooler temperatures, the event had to be move inside, but there were plenty of things to see and do. There were activities and games for the kids, fire safety lessons, museum tours and plenty of free hotdogs, popcorn & beverages to eat and drink. As a special treat for everyone, there was delicious ice cream to sample courtesy of Brian & Bruce Page and Honey Hut Ice Cream. Everyone who attended had a great time and left with a full stomach. A special thank you goes out to Jim Bell, Debbie Hubbard, Frank Novak, Tom Kulick, John Sanders, Tom Johnson and Keith Devine who volunteered that day to make the event a success.



Joan Oliver Photos

Kids with Grandma learning about fire safety

PRESIDENT'S LOG

BY JIM BELL

As you will read on the next page, the Fire Museum is launching it's annual Capital Campaign. This is an especially important time of year for the Museum as the financial support we receive during this campaign drives our decisions for the coming year. Where do we spend our money? What are the highest priority projects that need to be completed? Where do we get our best return on investment?

These are the questions the Executive Committee asks themselves all the time. We understand the money our supporters send to us is hard-earned; and it is gratefully received. We try hard, to spend your donation money in the most prudent, productive way possible. We look at every purchase through a microscope and try to get the biggest bang for our buck. However, we are looking at some upcoming purchases that are high-dollar expenditures.

The renovated second floor dormitory event space still needs some additional touches to make it fully functional and attractive to renters. We need to complete the installation of the professional audio/visual system that was purchased, install a security system, sound dampening treatments to reduce echo, and exhibits and decorations which reflect our mission. These projects all cost money.

The Fire Museum is fortunate to have received significant financial support in the past and continues to do so to this day. There have been generous donations from foundations as well as from certain board members. Other museum members have contributed money that totaled in the tens of thousands of dollars. But the future of this organization cannot rest on the shoulders of a few. Now is the time for our membership to dig deep and support our future.



Brian Page delivers Honey Hut Ice Cream Treats

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This newsletter is dedicated to informing the members and friends of the Western Reserve Fire Museum and Education Center of its activities and events.

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www.wrfmc.com

LOG

(Continued from Page 1)

I ask all of you for help. First, renew your membership. Stay involved with the Fire Museum. Second, give generously now. Help us complete the projects needed to raise our museum to a world-class institution that will be a shining example for us all.

Happy Holidays to you and your families.

Jim

OUR CAPITAL CAMPAIGN NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

BY JOHN ZANGERLE

The Fire Museum has had a wonderful year. We have been open all year four days a week staffed by our volunteer docents. On a recent Saturday we hosted sixty-four visitors. Our patrons have come from all over the U.S., and we have had a surprising number of international visitors. A visitor from North Carolina was so impressed that he did a photo illustrated article about our Museum for his local club.

In addition to our regular open hours, we have sponsored a wide variety of special events ranging from our unique Steamer Day, Apparatus Day, Dalmatian Day, our 9/11 Ceremony to our Fire Safety Week Open house. We are also supporting community activities for events like the Firefighters Memorial Ride, Boy Scout Merit Badge programs at the Museum and Safety Day at the Zoo. On top of all that, the Museum publishes four issues of the Bugle each year that include fire history and fire safety articles. In addition, the Museum has a strong presence on social media.

I have mentioned all the above because we need your support to continue to fulfill our mission. The Museum held its successful Luau fundraiser in August and we earned income from admissions, the gift shop, and various grants we have applied for and received. However, that is not enough to maintain the building which is in constant need of repair. Last December we held a successful Capital Campaign which raised more than \$25,000.00. This money was used to complete construction on the dormitory room. Unfortunately, an emergency repair was necessary in the spring of this year after we learned that the dormitory area was leaking and masonry tuck pointing had to be done. As reported in our Spring issue, this was a

major project and ended up costing approximately \$45,000.00. Not only did this project consume all our capital reserves from last year, but it was also necessary for several of our Board members to step up and make their annual contributions early just to cover some of the expenses of this project.

The Museum has recently completed building the required fire wall for the temporary safety corridor in the alarm office which is necessary for our occupancy permit to use the newly refinished dormitory. The next step in the process of putting the dormitory area "in service" as a rental meeting room space is to install an A/V system in that room and a security system to protect the building. The security system has been long overdue, and we have an excellent contractor who is ready to provide the work, but this was delayed by our spring masonry repairs.

All of this is a long explanation of why the Museum needs your support more than ever. Any contribution, large or small, will help us continue the work needed to finally open the dormitory space so we can generate an income stream from rentals. Our target for this year's Capital Campaign is an ambitious \$50,000.00 which would cover the cost of the A/V and security systems that we need. Any type of monetary support is appreciated. Our terrific members have generously supported our Capital Campaign each year. However, we need to reach out again as you make your end of year contributions and ask that you remember the Museum as our building approaches its 100-year anniversary. Please add your name to the list of those who are helping keep fire history alive in Cleveland.

BOY SCOUT SAFETY MERIT BADGE STILL GOING STRONG

BY JIM BELL

Earlier this fall the Fire Museum continued its collaboration with the Lake Erie Council, BSA by hosting a training session for Fire Safety merit badge. On Saturday October 21 the museum saw twenty-three Scouts and ten parents arrive for a two-part training session. Each Scout was required to meet with the museum staff to learn about the importance of fire safety, the science of fire/combustion, ways to prevent a fire from starting and a hands-on component of operating a fire extinguisher, handling various fires in a kitchen, safe fire practices while outdoors and safe fire practices while operating gasoline powered equipment. Prior to the session the Scouts had to perform a fire safety inspection of their homes and create a family fire escape plan. This training session would not have been possible without the help of museum volunteers John Sanders and Ken Rybka. We thank them for their assistance.



Joan Oliver Photo

Scout uses extinguisher to douse flames

MUSEUM RECEIVES UNIQUE DONATION

BY JOAN OLIVER

Last month the Museum received an extensive donation consisting of some very unique items from the family of deceased Cleveland firefighter Thomas F. Smith Jr. These items will be a nice addition to the collection. There were fire department uniforms from various countries around the world such as Morocco, Germany, and Australia to name a few. There were also a wide variety of hats, pins, badges and other fire collectibles from cities inside and outside the U.S. We thank you for your thoughtfulness and generosity. If it were not for retired CFD firefighter Kenny Jordan playing baseball with one of the family members this donation might not have found a home with us. Thanks Kenny!

Joan Oliver Photos



Uniforms from various cities local & abroad



A vast selection of pins, patches, badges, hats, etc.

CFD BROADCASTS FROM MUSEUM ON COOKING SAFETY

BY JIM BELL

On Wednesday October 11th Cleveland Division of Fire members Lt. Mike Norman and Firefighter John Kearns came to the Fire Museum to shoot a video for Fire Prevention Week. This year's theme was cooking safety and the Museum was happy to have CFD use our Hazard Kitchen as the backdrop for their video. Both gentlemen demonstrated the correct way to cover a stove-top fire, proper use of a fire extinguisher, keeping the handles of pots and pans turned into the center of the stove and never put water on a grease fire. Besides CFD, local TV station channel 19, Cleveland government channel 20 and radio station WTAM were also involved. Our thanks to Lt. Norman for putting in a plug for the Museum during his presentation.

Joan Oliver Photo



Mike Norman & John Kearns demonstrate kitchen safety

HOW TO KEEP YOUR HOME SAFE THIS FESTIVE HOLIDAY SEASON

BY JOAN OLIVER

Your home is never as cozy as it is during the holiday season. It can feel quite magical this time of year with the lights twinkling on your Christmas tree, candles burning and your fireplace a glow, but these warm and fuzzy additions bring a risk of fire to your abode. According to the National Fire Protection Association during 2013 and 2017, U.S. fire departments responded to an average of 940 home fires started by Christmas trees and other holiday decorations every year.

Below are some tips from firefighters to keep your home safe this year:

- Don't use your oven for storage or heat.
- Water your Christmas tree daily.
- Only put up fire resistant artificial trees.
- Inspect the lights on your tree.
- Don't throw wrapping paper in your fireplace.
- No more than 3 electronics should be plugged into a power strip.
- Never use an extension cord or power strip with your space heater.
- Place space heaters 3 feet away from everything.
- Don't use indoor lights outside.
- Don't run Christmas lights through window or doors.
- Have multiple fire extinguishers and know how to use them
- Exercise caution when it comes to candles.
- Make sure your home is equipped with smoke detectors
- Have an emergency escape plan & practice it



LOCAL 93/GUARDIANS TAILGATE PARTY

BY JIM BELL

The Fire Museum was pleased to host another tailgate party for our friends at Cleveland Fire Local 93. On September 26 the Museum was crowded with close to 100 firefighters and family members as they enjoyed a pre-game party complete with hamburgers, hot dogs, potato salad, chips, and beverages. While members of Local 93 grilled the meat, the grownups chatted with friends and co-workers, and the children played in the Museum Kid's Korner. As time for the first pitch approached the crowd moved over to Progressive Field to cheer on the Guardians.

If your organization would like to have a tailgate party at the Fire Museum, please call us at 216-664-6312.



CFD firefighters & family enjoying food & festivities before Guardian Game

SANTA WILL BE VISITING ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10TH

BY JOAN OLIVER

The Western Reserve Fire Museum and Education Center has just received word from the North Pole that Santa and Mrs. Claus will be visiting the Fire Museum again this year. So, mark your calendars for Sunday, December 10th as they will be arriving at the museum at 11:00 am. Instead of coming to the museum on his sleigh with reindeer, Santa and Mrs. Claus will arrive by way of a bright, shiny fire truck with lights flashing and siren wailing. They will be here for 2 hours to talk to all the children and hear all their Christmas gift wishes. They will also be available for pictures. A great photo opportunity for the whole family. The museum will have refreshments for all and goodie bags for the kids. Festivities will end at 1:00 pm, when they will be return to the North Pole to get ready for Christmas. This is a free event. So bring your children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews and neighbors and come spend the day with Santa at the fire museum.



Santa & Mrs. Claus pose before visiting with children

ANNUAL MEETING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY, 4, 2024

BY JIM BELL

Mark your calendars now for our Museum's Annual Membership Meeting to be held at the Museum, Sunday, February 4, 2024 at 1:30 PM. In addition to our business meeting, the meeting will give members an opportunity to hear about the Museum's plans for 2024 and provide input. The Museum will have pizza and beverages. As is our tradition, we encourage members to bring an appetizer or dessert to share. We look forward to good food and good stories. See you there.



REMEMBERING TOM GREEN

BY JOHN ZANGERLE

It was with sadness that we learned of the passing of Tom Green of Hudson, Ohio in October at age 86. Tom, a member of WRFBA, joined the Fire Museum and was an early Board member who generously supported the Museum. Tom was a successful businessman who became CEO of Cleveland based Oglebay Norton Company before retiring in 1999.

Tom purchased his first fire engine while a student at Amherst College and learned an important lesson about maintenance of antique trucks when he tried to drive it back to college and discovered the prior owner had filled the cooling system with water and not antifreeze. The cracks in the cylinders started steaming and

Tom ended up towing the engine back to school. Showing Tom's persistence, the experience did not stop him from purchasing other fire engines. At one time Tom owned and drove a 1920's Cleveland Seagrave. Tom's favorite truck was his 1952 American LaFrance 700 Series open cab pumper from his native Shelby, Ohio which he had re-powered with a diesel automatic that is still owned by his family. He also beautifully restored a 1924 Ahrens Fox NS4 that he took to the Frankenmuth muster.

We will miss Tom's engaging smile and high energy. Our condolences to his wife, Gretchen, and his entire family.

AVIS TRUCK GARAGE FIRE

FOUR CLEVELAND FIRE FIGHTERS KILLED IN EXPLOSION AND FIRE

BY PAUL NELSON

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Avis Rent-A-Truck garage fire that killed four fire fighters, the largest single loss of life to date in Cleveland Fire history. The decade of the 1960's was also the most tragic in Department history with a total of 20 fire fighter line of duty deaths. It would include another fire that would claim the lives of four fire fighters on August 4, 1966. That occurred at Metallurgical, Inc., 9801 Wolford Avenue.



All photos CFD Archives

Avis Garage with roof and walls collapsed

The 1963 incident occurred at the Avis Rent-A-Truck Garage located at 1204 Carnegie Avenue, on the south-west corner of E. 12th Street and Carnegie Avenue. A propane double tank delivery truck capable of carrying 1,500-gallons of propane had been brought to the garage for routine maintenance on August 13, 1963. The Avis structure was a 125-ft x 100-ft, 1-story brick and steel typical vehicle repair facility. At 1:53pm workers noticed a leak coming from the tank truck and called the Fire Department.

The Alarm Office transmitted Box 2181 sending Engine 3-14-28; Ladder 1-7; Rescue Squad 1; and, Battalion 1 to the scene. Engine 3 and Ladder 7 were first due from their quarters a block away on Carnegie Avenue. They found a white cloud escaping from the tank truck upon entering the garage. Ventilation of the building began immediately. Next action was to deploy hose lines to attempt to disperse the cloud with fog streams. A 1½-in. line from Engine 3 and a 2½-in. line from Engine 14 were stretched inside the garage and played away on the cloud. Truck companies continued to ventilate. Members of the Squad began to search for potential ignition sources.

Battalion 1 Chief Kazimore arrived and took command. He noticed a small flame in the south-west corner of the building. It was a dancing blue flame about 3-inches off the floor. He ordered an evacuation at seven minutes into the incident. At that time an explosion ripped through the building. It was initiated when the flame reached a gas water heater. Battalion Chief Kazimore was blown out through the large garage door onto the street. He radioed

for a triple three alarm skipping the second alarm. It was 2:00pm. Response on the call was Engine 2-7-27-1-18-6; Ladder 1; Battalion 5; and, Assistant Chief.

There had been about 50-gallons of propane left in one of the double tanks of the truck. Nine fire fighters inside the garage were blown about in several directions. The garage had been demolished and several nearby buildings damaged. Search and rescue

personnel began looking for victims. FGF John T. McKenna (E 14) was found blown outside and fatally buried under debris. Lt. Edwin J. Hart (E 3) was found under debris at the side of the truck and also had been killed instantly.

FGF Robert L. Marquard (L 7) was found suffering from serious burns and was removed and transported to the hospital. He died on September 1st as a result of those burns.

FGF Robert H. Jones (E 3) was found seriously injured buried under debris inside. He was removed and transported to the hospital. He succumbed from those injuries on the day following the fire.

Two other fire fighters were removed and hospitalized for an extensive period with serious injuries. Three others were treated and released. A total of 16 civilians were injured in the incident.



Engine 28's damaged pumper in front of building

Engine 28 from quarters a few blocks to the west on Carnegie Avenue arrived on the scene and positioned in front of the building. It was operating with a spare 1949 Seagrave sedan pumper (ex E 14 and E 30) when the blast occurred. The pump operator FGF Ralph Simon was injured. The right side and front of the apparatus were severely damaged and the pumper was eventually scrapped.

The resulting fire was spectacular but was able to be controlled by the triple-three alarm companies on the scene. No additional help was needed.

Later investigation found that the valve was not disconnected on the tank to allow complete draining. It was determined later that if the fog water streams had continued another minute or two, the white cloud of propane would have dissipated. But, that was not to be.



Double tank truck inside garage

HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT - OLD FIREHOUSES

BY KENNY RYBKA & JOHN ZANGERLE

Members Frank Novak and Kenny Rybka had a discussion about former Cleveland fire stations and that discussion led to a more serious investigation of which former Cleveland Fire Stations were still standing and what they were being used for now. Kenny and Frank ultimately put together the attached list of 17 former Cleveland stations no longer in use by CFD. They also went out and photographed a number of these stations. One thing led to another and the dynamic duo created a second list to include some closed suburban stations as well as stations in surrounding counties. Their second list is a work in progress. They thought this might be an interesting feature to add to the Bugle since the museum is, after all, a repurposed fire house. Below are a few pictures to get us started. We will be adding photos and lists in future issues. Feel free to submit information and pictures of your neighborhood fire houses still standing but not now in use as a fire station.

Several of these stations were investigated as possible Museum sites before our current building became available. One of the first we considered was the former quarters of Engine 4 and Ladder 2 located at 1455 West 29th Street at the intersection of Church and 29th. Built in 1852 as the former headquarters of the Ohio City Volunteer Fire Department, was vacated in 1976 when Engine 4, Engine 8, Ladder 2, and Battalion 5 moved to their newly constructed station on Lorain Avenue at West 32nd. Old Engine 4 has had several different tenants and now houses the well known Larder Delicatessen & Bakery. When the station was closed, Museum members attempted to have the City donate it as a Museum site, but the City ultimately sold the building. Fortunately, the Museum was able to obtain a very complete set of journals from the station's hay loft just after it closed.

Very few of the Cleveland stations have been converted into residences, but the former home of Engine 8, located at 2589 Scranton Rd was sold by the city in 1986 and was ultimately converted into a very well furnished and attractive residence. The new owners of the building reached out to the Fire Museum for old photographs and information. This station was built in 1871 and originally housed a single steam fire engine.



Joan Oliver Photo

Old Engine 4 as it exists today



Kenny Rybka Photo

Old Engine 8

Another old fire house which is on Cleveland's Southeast side was Engine 11 and Ladder 4's quarters on East 91st and Walker. It was built in 1875 to house Engine 11 with an addition in 1876 to add Ladder 4. After this station was closed by CFD in 1989 it was sold and remodeled to be used as the home of an alarm company. That company moved out and the property was on the real estate market for several years, but appears to be vacant at this time.

Future issues of the Bugle will highlight other closed CFD and suburban stations. Our members are encouraged to provide any updates or information on closed stations.

Former Cleveland Firehouses			
Sta No.	Location	Year built	Present usage
3	1325 Carnegie Ave.	1900	Sold by City in 1987 – Office space
4	1455 W. 29 th @ Church	1854	Sold by City in 1975 - Deli and Bakery/Office space
5	3201 Lakeside Ave.	1965	Fire Training Academy extra classroom space
L-5	3069 W. 25th St. north of Clark	1906	Sold by City in 1989 - Tire Depot Discount Store
8	2599 Scranton Rd. south of Starkweather	1871	Sold by City in 1986 - Private residence
9	6712 Woodland Ave.	1954	"Closed and Secured" in 2011. Owned by the City. Unoccupied
11	4090 E. 91 st @ Walker	1875	Sold by City in 1995. Unoccupied.
13	4749 Broadway	1877	Sold to private owner in 1988 – SDS Design Inc.
15	1283 Riverbed @ Cuyahoga River (Fireboat)	1921	According to County records still City owned. Unoccupied.
19	1321 E. 55th St. north of St. Clair	1894	Sold by City in 1989 - Unoccupied
24	3725 Pearl Rd. @ Willowdale	1895	Sold by City of Cleveland in 1986 – Office space
28	310 Carnegie	1926	Western Reserve Fire Museum
31	747 E. 152nd St. @ Pepper	1912	Sold by City of Cleveland in 1993 – storage space (?)
33	10102 Lorain Rd.	1912	Sold by City in 1975 – Currently Tito's Tacos
36	3720 E. 131 st @ Bartlett	1921	Companies moved in May of 2016. Unoccupied.
37	2314 Broadview Rd. (Former Village of Brooklyn FD/PD/Village Hall)	1922	Sold by City in 1980 - Privately owned business with an old fire truck parked out back
38	12902 Lorain Ave	1923	Sold by City in 1986 – Appears unoccupied.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- **Sunday, December 10, 2023** – Cleveland, OH. Visit with Santa & Mrs. Claus, 11:00am to 1:00pm at the Western Reserve Fire Museum, 310 Carnegie Ave. Goodies for the kids. Bring your camera, great photo opportunity for the family. For more information visit Museum website at www.wrfmc.com or call 216.664.6312.
- **Sunday, February 4, 2024** – Cleveland, OH. Annual Membership Meeting, 1:30pm at the Western Reserve Fire Museum, 310 Carnegie Ave. Review plans for 2024, Museum will supply pizza and beverages. Everyone is asked to bring appetizer or dessert to share. For more information visit Museum website at www.wrfmc.com or call 216.664.6312.
- **Wednesday, February 21 - Saturday, February 24, 2024** – Memphis, TN. SPAAMFAA National Winter Convention is being hosted in partnership with the Fire Museum of Memphis. Host hotel Crown Plaza Memphis Downtown, 300 North Second Street, Memphis, TN 38105. Registration deadline January 31, 2024. For more information call Daniel at 901.636.5650 or visit <https://spaamfaa.org/calendar/>.
- **Saturday, March 2, 2024** – (Tentative) Cleveland, OH. Annual Firematic Flea Market, held at Cleveland Fire Training Academy, 3101 Lakeside Ave, Cleveland, OH. 8am – 1pm. Admission \$5.00 with children 12 and under free. For more information visit the Museum website at www.wrfmc.com.
- **Saturday, April 20 – Sunday, April 21, 2024** – Allentown, PA. 2024 Spring Melt Fire Memorabilia Auction and Market. Location – Agri-Plex at Allentown Fairgrounds, 302 N. 17th Street, Allentown, PA 18104. Nations premier and largest fire memorabilia auction and marketplace, over 250 vendors. For more information visit Spring Melt 2024 (unionhistoricalfiresociety.com).

ANNUAL FLEA MARKET SLATED FOR MARCH

BY JOAN OLIVER

The Museum is pleased to announce that we will again hold our annual Flea Market the first Saturday, March 2, 2024, at the Cleveland Fire Training Academy, 3101 Lakeside Ave., Cleveland. This is always a welcome sign that spring is on the way and a time to buy and sell fire related items and to catch up with old friends. Clean out your garage or basement over the winter and take a table at the Flea Market or just come down to browse around and find that special item you've been searching for. More detailed information will be posted on our Facebook page and our website. Steve Hildebrant and Bob Shimits have once again agreed to chair the event. We look forward to seeing you there.



Joan Oliver Photo

Family browses wares at Flea Market

CFD TRIVIA

BY PAUL NELSON

Q: When was the last steam fire engine for CFD acquired?

A: In 1916 for Engine 14.

Fire Chief George A. Wallace ordered the first automobile pumping engine for CFD in 1912 but he still had passion for the steam fire engine. A \$7,837.50 contract was awarded to American LaFrance on October 4, 1915 for a second size, 750gpm double piston steamer with a 2-wheel ALF motorized tractor. It would be assigned to a downtown company, Engine 14, whose quarters were at 1777 E. 12th Street on the corner of Chester Avenue. A motorized hose wagon would be needed and a contract was awarded on December 12th in the amount \$3,500.00 to the South Bend Fire Engine Company. They would supply a 60hp hose wagon with a 35-gallon chemical extinguisher tank.

There were other steam fire engines covering downtown in 1916 and all had been modified with motorized tractors. Engine 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 18, 27 and 28 were steamers with 2, 27 and 28 finally replaced between 1926 and 1927. Engine 14 was the last steamer then left downtown being replaced in 1929. It went to Engine 33 on Lorain Avenue replacing their 1885 Clapp & Jones steamer with motorized tractor. The 1916 ALF steamer remained in service until 1930 at Engine 33 when it was replaced by a traditional motorized pumper. That last-acquired steamer would also be the last steam fire engine in front-line service for CFD. A 68-year span of using steam fire engines had come to an end. It also marked the end of CFD using a two-piece engine company of pump and hose wagon.



WRFM Photo Collection

Engine 14 1916 ALF 750gpm double piston steamer



Western Reserve Fire Museum at Cleveland, Inc.

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Dates to Remember
Visit with Santa Dec. 10th
Annual Membership Mtg. Feb. 4th

**Don't Throw
That Away**

The Fire Museum is looking for fire related photos, articles, artifacts from Cleveland and all of the Lands of the Western Reserve as we preserve area fire history.



Membership Renewal/Donation Form

Name: _____

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City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Please Charge my: Visa Mastercard Discover Amex

Charge Amount \$ _____ Renew Automatically: Yes No

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**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL**
Please remember us when making
your year end contributions