

## Ladies Auxiliary Funeral Benefit Fund— IMPORTANT CHANGES

The Grand Auxiliary Officers, based on recommendations from the auditors and the actuary firm, have closed enrollment into the Funeral Benefit Fund, effect May 31, 2009.

What effect does this have on the current Auxiliary Members or members initiated prior to June 1, 2009?

- None.
- Any member who is a Funeral Benefit Member on May 31, 2009 will continue to be a Funeral Benefit Member. NO BENEFITS HAVE BEEN TAKEN AWAY.
- Auxiliaries will still continue to pay the \$1.00 per year of PCT for the benefit to the Grand Aerie, which the Auxiliary has collected from the participating members.

What effect does this have on the Auxiliary Members initiated after May 31, 2009?

- Members initiated after May 31, 2009 will not participate in the program. They will not pay \$1.00 per year; they will not be counted in Funeral Benefit per capita tax.

Why was this decision made?

- In 2009, a \$200 benefit does not make a dent in the cost of a funeral; therefore, the Funeral Benefit Fund does not have the desired effect it once had of attracting or retaining new members. Surveys to members indicated that the Funeral Benefit Fund has little effect on the decision to become a member.
- For several years, present value reports have indicated that the FB fund may not be collecting enough money to pay out benefits as our membership grows and ages. The auditors requested we do an actuarial study to determine if we could actually pay the benefits years down the road as the population ages.
- As the market started turning downward and investments began declining in value, we commissioned the study. Declining market value would make the situation worse, not better, so it was time to address the issue.
- The actuarial firm did the study and confirmed that long-term, the ladies would need to pay more money into the fund in order to keep the benefit sustainable. The participants should be paying \$6.50 per person to receive the \$200. As it is very difficult to pass an increase in FB PCT, the other alternative was to "freeze" the current members who are participating and not include anyone else into the program. Through natural attrition, the participant numbers will decrease over time which allows the plan to remain solvent for the current members.

Positive outcomes from the decision (see April Eagle Magazine for more details on the Diabetes Center Donation):

- With the closing of enrollment to new or re-enrolled members, some funds would be freed up to utilize for other projects. The Grand Aerie Board felt it was important that the Ladies Auxiliary fully make this decision and also be allowed to determine what to do with any excess funds. The donation to the Diabetes Research Center was a project the Auxiliary officers felt very strongly about putting their name on and this opportunity presented the Auxiliary with the funds to participate in a meaningful way, to literally choose "an investment in life over an investment in death".
- Important to note is that even if the Diabetes Research Center project did not exist, the FB Fund would have still needed to be addressed. The Diabetes project merely provided the ladies an opportunity to "get on the map" and do a great thing for the whole Order.

## Eagle Riders Still Zooming Forward

Eagle Riders continue to rack up miles and new members. Eagle Riders is the fastest growing internal unit in the FOE's 111-year history.

As of March 2009, there are more than 100 Eagle Riders internal units in the U.S. and Canada. Local clubs are comprised of brothers and sisters who promote the FOE and our causes while engaging in their favorite pastime—riding motorcycles.

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## Remembering our Roots

Theodore Roosevelt—who eventually became an FOE member—was still a rough rider in 1898, the year the Eagles were founded. It was also the year the first automobile was sold and the U.S. Senate agreed to annex Hawaii.

The date was February 6th when six theater owners sat on a pile of lumber in Moran's shipyard in Seattle to discuss a musicians' strike. Theater was popular at that time and residents were optimistic when construction began on the ornate Grand Opera House, located in an area where the Great Seattle Fire destroyed 64 city blocks nine years earlier.

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## Government Relations Program Continues Forward

The FOE has a long and distinguished history of striving to improve the lives of American families, children and workers by helping to shape U.S. government policies and social programs.

As many of you know, the CARES (Children's Access to Reconstructive Evaluation and Surgeries) Act did not pass the House of Representatives last year—despite the FOE's tremendous effort to reach key legislators. Financial issues took precedence and temporarily diverted legislators' attention away from the CARES Act.

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## Message from the Grand Worthy President

Thank you to all FOE members for your continued hard work! Your efforts are certainly paying off as evidenced by our growing membership rolls and our recent charitable contributions.

As of the end of February, we had 2,046 new members enrolled through our law enforcement, EMT and firefighter program. As you know, this program was approved during the 2008 International Convention and represents a great opportunity to reach out thank these public servants. It also opens the door for these individuals to benefit from our Eagles Memorial Foundation.

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## Message from the Grand Madam President

"A good leader inspires people to have confidence in the leader; a great leader inspires them to have confidence in themselves."

This anonymous quote is the perfect introduction for my letter this month and our key word, **leaders**. As our auxiliaries nominate their potential **leaders** and hold elections during the coming weeks, I want to encourage everyone to choose the best person for the job—not necessarily the member who should have her turn.

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## People Helping People Feature Story

The Lake Worth Auxiliary #3694 with help from the Grand Aerie donated \$4,241 to Home Safe for their Safety Net Program. The Safety Net Program provides individual and group therapy, crisis intervention and court advocacy to victims of family violence including their children.

"We have always had a special relationship with the Eagles whose interest in helping out non-profit organizations in our community has been remarkable," Brian McCarey, Home Safe Supervisor, said.

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Membership as of March:

Aerie: 616,937  
Auxiliary: 307,241



## Question of the Month

### IS YOUR AERIE/ AUXILIARY UNIQUE?

If your aerie or auxiliary is unique, different or outstanding, we would like to feature you in an upcoming email newsletter. What characterizes unique or different? Perhaps your members have a common interest or hobby. Maybe your group is comprised of travel enthusiasts who take a trip together every year.

You may be dog lovers, skydivers, horseback riders, swimmers, quilters, golfers or people dedicated to the same unique or unusual cause. You name it—and send us the details about your uniqueness. We look forward to hearing from you!

Please provide the following information and email to [newsletters@foe.com](mailto:newsletters@foe.com). Thanks in advance for your help.

Your name:

Your aerie/auxiliary:

Years as an FOE member:

What makes your Aerie Auxiliary unique?