**EDIAFC President Bill Betts Report from the VCOS Conference**

**November 10-13 2016 Clearwater, FL**

I attended the VCOS Conference as President of the EDIAFC, and also made contacts as 2nd VP of the DVFA. The following is a synopsis of the sessions and events that I attended while I was there.

**Friday November 11th**

**General Session:**

**How to Supercharge Your Leadership Skills** by Tim Shurr-This was a dynamic presentation by a clinical psychologist, who has had success with many leaders by creating new concepts and ideas for leaders, and also in recognizing your members with problems such as PTSD.

**Suicide in the Fire Service** by Scott Geiselhart-This is a new pronounced problem in the Fire Service, with a new focus on PTSD.

The DVFA Officers and Executive Manager had lunch with Ron Sarnicki to discuss his experience with integrating Combination Fire Departments, and some of the pitfalls to avoid, along with successful implementations. Ron was asked to come up with a panel for the DVFA Seminar on March 11th in Rehoboth Beach to help the Delaware Fire Service in this regard.

The afternoon was spent visiting vendors such as ISO, VFIS, etc. I also had the pleasure of talking with IAFC Director Mark Light, and Treasurer Carissa about the Governance Program, and the progress it was making. I stressed that getting all of the Divisions of the IAFC together was a great idea.

Friday night I went to a dinner hosted by Bill Jennaway and Joe Giorgi of VFIS with the DFVA members, and several members of the Maryland Recruitment & Retention group, and had a lot of interaction on various fire service topics.

**Saturday November 12th**

**VCOS Talks was broken down into 4 areas which included:**

POV Response by Dan Eggleston, and the dangers of it

Sharing Resources by Fred Windich and Scott Seiffert who combined their Volunteer districts in Texas for better response times in their large area of territories.

What is Killing the Fire Service by Ed Rush who spoke on how we had to make everyone’s fire service experience enjoyable.

Meeting Community and Organization Needs by Norvin Collins, who spoke on the interaction of the needs between the fire company and community it served.

**Fire Behavior** by Eddie Buchanan and Brian Kazmierzak who spoke on reading smoke, fire progression, and new ideas on fire suppression.

**Crude Oil Transportation Emergency Response** by Brooke Martin of CSX who spoke on priorities of managing a railroad incident. He had a very nice handout to use as a flow sheet.

**Photovoltaic Design and Hazards** by Roy Stovall who spoke on the dangers of solar panels, and how to address them during fire situations. This is a new problem that the fire service will ultimately have to deal with.

Saturday night was spent at a Networking at the Beach Social, and followed with a light meal with PP Warrick, and his wife.

**Sunday November 13th**

**Preparing for Your Climb Down the Ladder of Success** by Rich Gasaway, who spoke on preparing for your retirement from a position. This hit home with me from when I lost a job when Playtex moved their glove operation overseas.

**Cancer in the Fire Service** with PP Jim Seavey, Dan Eggleston, and John Buckman. This was a very strong message on the dangers of cancer in the fire service and the new push to make everyone safer, by destroying the old days of dirty gear and sooty helmets. Jim Seavey was excellent as a cancer survivor.

**Modern Fire Attack-Going Dutch** by Dennis Van’tEnde of the Royal Netherlands Air Force. This was an interesting look at the fire suppression in the Netherlands where they use a lot of high pressure nozzles.

Overall, this was a great experience with good speakers, good topics, but there was more networking after the events than I have experienced in other venues such as FRI and FDIC.