

Remembering



NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL WEEKEND

October 6 – 7, 2018

Emmitsburg, Maryland



The Fire Hero Family Flag

A special American Flag was presented to our Fire Hero Families in October 2014 by the National Honor Guard Commanders Association as a way of honoring the families of firefighters who have paid the supreme sacrifice to their community. The history, tradition, and meaning of the U.S. Flag parallel the significance of our culture and represent the core values of the American Fire Service.

As a sign of honor and respect, this flag was requested through the United States Congress in honor of our Fire Hero Families. The flag was flown over the U.S. Capitol on June 14 (Flag Day). The flag then traveled to Emmitsburg, Maryland, and was flown over the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial. The flag then went to Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia, The Wildland Firefighters Monument in Boise, Idaho, the IAFF Memorial in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and the Department of Defense Firefighters Memorial in San Angelo, Texas. These sites were selected as national representations of the agencies served by our fallen firefighters.

This special flag, dedicated to the Fire Hero Family community, also represents the spirit of hope we receive from each other. The bond formed between the families of fallen firefighters and the community of honor guard members can only be described as special. We understand each other without speaking words; we know when a hug is needed without having to ask. We know and appreciate when to flip the switch from humor to seriousness, because we understand and respect each other. The U.S. Flag is a symbol of strength and unity, two characteristics families and honor guard members share. It's no surprise then, that the presentation of a dedicated U.S. Flag further joins these two communities together.

The Fire Hero Family Flag is posted at the family hotel during the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend. It is on display in the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Chapel at the Foundation and present at the Fire Hero Family events.



*“Uncommon valor
was a
common virtue.”*

– Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz

*B*efore the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend, the Foundation asked families to submit information about their fallen firefighters for the Remembrance Book. If no information was received, the best information available to us for each firefighter was used. We regret any inadvertent errors or omissions. Fallen firefighter profiles can be viewed on the Foundation's website at: www.firehero.org





37th Annual National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend ★ October 6 - 7, 2018



October 7, 2018

From the day firefighters take their oath, they are embraced as part of a fraternal organization whose sole purpose is to care for and serve the greater community. When tragedy strikes within our fire service family, we rally together to care for and serve the loved ones of our fallen brothers and sisters.

In 1992, Congress formally established the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation to honor all firefighters who died in the line of duty, and to offer support and comfort to the loved ones of the fallen. Since then, these Fire Hero Families have counted on the Foundation for reassurance that their firefighters will never be forgotten, and that resources they need are available as they rebuild their lives.

Today, the names of your loved ones join more than 3,500 others enshrined on the Memorial in tribute to the ultimate sacrifice they made in the line of duty. Each year, thousands of visitors pause to read the names and pay respect to their courage and sacrifice. They also pause to remember you, the families, fellow firefighters, other co-workers and friends of the fallen. At the same time, they reflect on the courage, sacrifice and inspiring strength you summon every day on your new journey.

We at the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation hold our mission dear. We are grateful to our friends, supporters and partners who make our work possible and assist us in adapting to the evolving needs of those we serve.

Long after the Memorial Service concludes, and you leave this hallowed ground, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation remains committed to helping you find the support and comfort you may need. As we look to the future, the Foundation is resolute in our commitment to you, vowing that we will travel this new journey together.

The true legacy of those we honor today will continue to shine in the hearts and minds of each of us. It's important that we share their individual stories so that their spirits will live on and serve as inspiration to others for years to come.

Sincerely,



Chief Dennis Compton
Chairman, Board of Directors

Remembering

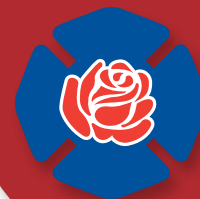


Christopher Lane Foster

*Demopolis Fire and Rescue
Department – Alabama
Career Lieutenant*

March 23, 2017

Age: 54



Christopher Lane Foster was born in Selma, Alabama, on March 22, 1963, to Billy Ray and Geraldine Foster. He had six brothers—Mark, Darien, Brian, Todd, Paul, and Steven. Chris grew up in Demopolis, Alabama, and attended Westside Baptist Church. In high school he worked at Miller Lumber Company with his dad and grandfather. Chris was in the high school band and played the drums. He attended Clarke College in Mississippi.

His love for firefighting started when he joined the Old Springhill Volunteer Fire Department in 1991. He was voted chief, a position he held for the rest of his life. Chris was hired by the Demopolis Fire Department on March 1, 1994. He had finally found a way to help his community. Chris enjoyed going into the community and talking with anyone about fire safety. He loved to swim, so he joined the River City Underwater Rescue Team. Chris attended many classes at the Alabama Fire College and used his knowledge and training to answer calls on and off duty, day or night. Chris reached the rank of lieutenant. He enjoyed working and spending time with his fire department family.

On May 19, 2002, Chris proposed to his girlfriend, Vanya, and on November 30, 2002, they were married at Fairhaven Baptist Church. While attending church there, Chris helped in any areas he could, including Vacation Bible School. Their first child, Mary Azilee Foster, was born on December 14, 2003. Chris was the proudest dad. He loved his baby girl from the moment he found out she was on the way. On March 19, 2007, Chris welcomed his only son, Matthew Lane Foster, to the world. He was so excited to meet him face to face. On September 23, 2016, the family was complete with the birth of twin daughters, Rebekah Phares Foster and Sarah Ruth Foster. Chris was surprised and happy when he found out Vanya was expecting twins. He was not afraid to change their diapers, feed them, or hold them. He loved it. He supported his family in everything they did. Mary and Matthew took their first steps at the Demopolis Fire Department.

Chris went fishing, on field trips, coached softball one year, and attended ball games. He was always the loudest cheerleader for Mary, Matthew, and the other kids playing. He attended many plays, school programs, church programs, and anything else the kids were doing. He enjoyed taking them to school and picking them up. Chris kept bees and had 18 hives.

On March 23, 2017, he went to bed and woke up in heaven. Chris loved God, family, and his community, and we love and miss him every day.

Remembering



Clint Hardemon

*West Blocton Volunteer
Fire Department – Alabama
Volunteer Lieutenant*

August 13, 2017

Age: 58



*D*ale Clinton “Clint” Hardemon was born to Frank and Shirley Hardemon in Bessemer, Alabama. He grew up in West Blocton, Alabama. He has two sisters, Tammy and Wanda. Clint is survived by his wife, Lisa Lane Hardemon, and his son, Assistant Chief Clinton James “CJ” Hardemon.

Clint always said he joined the fire department to watch over his son, who had joined previously. In fact, every time CJ went on a fire call, he would see his dad standing around watching him. After joining the fire department, Clint put his heart and soul into it, learning all he could, and was promoted to lieutenant.

He was a good friend to many. He loved NASCAR racing and collecting and restoring guns. He was a proud and loving “Paw Paw” to his grandchildren, Cooper and Aisley Hardemon. He passed away several hours after a fire call when he suffered a fatal heart attack.

He is truly loved and missed by many.



Remembering

Eddie Parell Harris was born December 20, 1969, to Willie Mack Harris and Bernice Harris. He lived in the small town of Courtland, Alabama, all his life. He was one of ten siblings. He graduated from Courtland High School, where he was a standout football player. He was a member of numerous state championship teams while playing for Courtland High.

Eddie later married Gloria McGhee. At the time of his death they had been married 23 years. To this union were born three children, two sons, Eddrick and Edquerion, and one daughter, Edrianae. Eddie always made sure they were taken care of and knew they were loved.

Eddie had a special love for helping and caring for others. He spent the last few years of his life as the primary caregiver for his disabled mother. He was the rock for his entire family when they went through the deaths of six of his siblings and his father.

His help and concern went far beyond taking care of his family. He also reached out and helped others in the community that were in need. Whether it was a ride somewhere, food, or physical care, Eddie could be counted on. He was always happy and made others happy when they were around him. That's just the type of person he was.

Eddie began his firefighting career as a volunteer with North Courtland Volunteer Fire Department. He served his community in this capacity for 16 years. He loved being a firefighter almost as much as he loved his family. As a firefighter, Eddie battled numerous fires, some more dangerous than others. He received training from the Alabama Fire College, which helped him rise to the rank of chief in early 2017. He took the position of chief very seriously and had begun putting higher standards of training in place to raise the quality of the fire service for North Courtland, along with keeping his firefighters safe.

Everyone who knew Eddie knew him to be a loving, caring husband, father, son, fire chief, and community leader. He was known to be dependable, dedicated to what he believed in, and hard working. His death has left a big hole, not only in the lives of his family, but for everyone who knew him.



Eddie P. Harris

*North Courtland Volunteer
Fire Department – Alabama
Volunteer Fire Chief*

April 21, 2017

Age: 47



Remembering



Tracy L. Sanders

**Mount Olive Volunteer
Fire Department – Alabama
Volunteer Fire Chief**

January 13, 2017

Age: 44



Chief Tracy L. Sanders, 44 years old, was a lifelong resident of Ohatchee, Alabama. She graduated from Ohatchee High School and then obtained her bachelor's degree from Jacksonville State University. Tracy enjoyed reading and art.

Tracy entered public service as a dispatcher for a local police department where she worked for several years. She left this job shortly after her second daughter's birth. Her passion to serve the community remained, and she found her true calling after setting the family farm on fire. The Mount Olive Volunteer Fire Department responded, putting out the few acres of pasture that had burned. Shortly after this, she and her husband became members, eventually leading to both daughters also joining the department.

Tracy shared a love and true passion for the fire service that only its brotherhood can understand. She rose through the ranks at Mount Olive Volunteer Fire Department, where she became chief of the department. She believed training and education couldn't be over-utilized. She led this thought through example and completed numerous training courses, becoming a certified firefighter, fire instructor, and advanced EMT. Our department followed her example and had more members obtain certifications in the fire and medical fields than ever before. She truly brought our department to a new level of response.

Tracy's love of the fire service was only surpassed by her love for her two daughters, Shelby and Raegan, and her granddaughter, Baila. Seeing them happy, healthy, and growing up in the world was true happiness for her. Success and happiness for them brought peace to her heart. Family was precious to Tracy; she called her mother daily to chat and just say goodnight.

Chief Tracy Sanders will be missed by the Mount Olive Volunteer Fire Department. Her wisdom will remain for decades as those who have dug deeper, reached heights thought to be unachievable, and followed the path she established carry on its service. Rest easy, hero; they have the watch from here!

Life without Tracy will never be the same for her family. She will be missed dearly for all our days! The many memories of times past we will carry until we meet again!

End of Watch January 13, 2017
Always Remembered – Never Forgotten

Remembering

Crystal Dawn Rezzonico was born June 20, 1960, to Dicksie and Joe Arnold. She grew up riding horses in Phoenix with her two sisters, Jolynn and Shelly. Crystal was a devoted mother to her two sons, Cutter and Austin.

Crystal was hired on to the Phoenix Fire Department on March 4, 1991, one of two women in Class 91-1. She worked her way up to become an engineer in 1996 and was promoted to captain in 2006, ranking #1 on the captain's test. Crystal was a mentor at the Phoenix Fire Academy and helped initiate Rosie's Ladder, a service to support the recruitment of women firefighters.

She was an accomplished competitor at The World Police and Fire Games, winning the gold medal in body building in 1997 and again in 2007.

While on duty on August 10, 2009, Crystal's Engine 960 was involved in a high-speed collision. Captain Rezzonico was ejected from the truck and suffered traumatic brain injuries. After relearning to walk and talk, Captain Crystal Rezzonico was able to rejoin her crew at Station 60. In 2011, she returned to the World Police and Fire Games to win the gold medal, once again.

Crystal loved being a firefighter. Her passion was to serve and protect. She loved spending time with her family and traveling around the world in search of the perfect beach. One of her biggest personal accomplishments was building her own home, which was featured on the cover of *Phoenix Home & Garden Magazine*.

Crystal retired from the Phoenix Fire Department on December 30, 2014. She was laid to rest on February 18, 2017, as a result of her injuries. Her son Austin now serves with the Phoenix Fire Department, and Cutter's first daughter was named Crystal.

Crystal's spirit lives on with all those whose lives she touched and loved.



Crystal Dawn Rezzonico

***Phoenix Fire Department –
Arizona***

Career Captain

February 18, 2017

Age: 56



Remembering



Scotty Douglas "Doug" Deckard

**Cove Creek-Pearson Fire
Department – Arkansas
Volunteer Fire Chief**

April 30, 2017

Age: 51



Scotty Douglas Deckard (Doug) was born on July 27, 1965, and no one knew what a hero he would become. As a teen, when most boys are out doing teenage boy things, Doug began serving his community. He took a job at a local grocery, and his favorite thing was delivering groceries to the elderly.

Doug also joined the Quitman Fire Department at the age of 16. Doug grew to love his community and served diligently for the people. He was the water and sewer manager for Quitman for many years. He said once that he had been in every house in Quitman in some capacity—water, sewer, plumbing inspector, fire, or EMS. He served as Quitman EMS Director, Quitman Fire Chief, Cove Creek Fire Chief, and Cleburne County Search and Rescue Director. He worked as an EMT for the ambulance service when it was through the hospital and was a longtime volunteer for Quitman EMS.

Doug served on the AEMTA Conference Planning Committee, as a board member for the Arkansas EMS Foundation, and with Arkansas Interpolarity Committee. He was a HAM radio operator and the state representative for Hyteria radios. Chances are, if you talked on a radio in Cleburne County, you were hitting a repeater on one of Doug's towers. Deckard Enterprises took care of a majority of the radios, radio programs, and consoles for Cleburne County.

Doug dedicated his life to helping others, and he never complained. He was a father to the younger firemen and Unkie Doug to all the kids. Doug loved children, and they all adored him. He taught them about fighting fires, about having a giving heart, and how to shoot a rubber band farther and harder than anyone else.

Our hero was killed on April 30, 2017, while assessing storm damage. You will forever be missed and will always be in our hearts.

Remembering

*R*etired shift captain Randy Treat, 71, of Kingston, Arkansas, became a firefighter in January of 1966 in the Municipal Fire Department of Springdale, Arkansas. On February 13, 1968, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant. On July 16, 1971, Randy was promoted to captain, a position he held until his retirement in March of 1986.

Upon retirement, Randy ran a welding shop and a cattle ranch. He returned to the University of Arkansas and completed his bachelor's degree in agriculture education in 1992. His first teaching job was with Decatur Public School in Decatur, Arkansas, where he taught agriculture education until the summer of 1998, when he and his wife, Shirley, packed up and moved back to her hometown of Kingston, Arkansas. Randy started the Kingston Public School's Agriculture Department.

In January of 2005, he joined the Kingston Rural Volunteer Fire Department, where he was an active firefighter, safety officer, and vice president of the Board of Directors until his death. He died on August 26, 2017, while responding to an assistance call for the Kingston Rural Volunteer Fire Department. While responding on that call, Randy suffered a medical emergency himself and ultimately lost his life that day. His wife, Shirley, also an EMT and volunteer firefighter; his daughter, Myle; and his six-year-old grandson, Ryder, frantically worked to perform CPR until fellow firefighters and the ambulance arrived at the scene.

Randy is remembered by anyone that crossed paths with him in his elder years as the big man with the handlebar mustache. No one ever had to wonder what he was thinking; there was always a suggestion fixing to be given, whether you wanted to hear it or not. He is missed by so many, as Randy wore so many hats. He was a rancher, firefighter, educator, granddad, father, and husband. Anyone who met this man, no matter which hat he was wearing, never forgot him and walked away a better person.



Randy R. Treat

*Kingston Rural Volunteer
Fire Department – Arkansas
Volunteer Captain*

August 26, 2017

Age: 71



Remembering



Frank Arturo Anaya III

*California Department
of Corrections and
Rehabilitation – California
Inmate Firefighter*

July 11, 2017

Age: 22



*F*rank “Frankie” Anaya III was born on October 4, 1994, in Santa Paula, California, to Rosa Magana and Frank Anaya Jr. Frankie had a younger brother, Mark, and a younger sister, Francine Anaya, who he loved dearly.

Frankie’s hobbies included music, writing lyrics, and baking, especially with his grandmother, Gloria, with whom he shared a special bond. Frankie also enjoyed spending time with his grandfather, Arturo, with whom he often read the Bible. Frankie had an immense love for family and for his two American bulldogs, Champ and Cali.

Frankie took ownership of his choices and sought out the Conservation (Fire) Camps program within the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to provide a positive impact on society. Despite the danger, Frankie enjoyed the demanding physical and mental aspects of being an inmate firefighter.

Frankie will be remembered for his strength, courage, and the respect he gave to his Cal Fire chief and crew. In the end, Frankie paid the ultimate price for others. In a world of chaos, he did his part to help bring a little peace, help protect lives, and conserve property.

He is and always will be loved and will remain in our hearts.



Remembering

*M*atthew James Beck was born on March 13, 1991, to Karen Twiford and James Beck in Venice, California. Matthew was a very sensitive and caring boy. He had an older brother, Ronnie, whom he looked up to as a child. Matthew became a big brother at the age of four to his sister, McKenna, of whom he was always very protective.

Matthew's childhood was surrounded by family and friends, spending most of it playing with his cousins and his siblings. Matthew was an avid reader and loved all types of books. He was very articulate and smart, with a great sense of humor. Matthew was well liked by his peers and enjoyed making people laugh.

As Matthew went from childhood to young adulthood, he began to experience some trials and tribulations. During those tough times, he was surrounded by angels, his family and friends who loved him unconditionally. On October 27, 2012, Wesley James Beck was born to Matthew Beck and Analisa Curzi.

During Matthew's incarceration, he continued developing his relationship with his son through family visits, phone calls, and letters. It was because of this relationship that Matthew chose to make a positive change in his life by volunteering to become an inmate firefighter. After completing his training, he was sent to Alder Conservation Camp in Del Norte County, California, where he became a line crew leader. Matthew immediately developed a sense of pride in the work he was doing and had hoped to continue volunteering as a firefighter upon his release. Matthew would call home and tell his son, who was four, that he was working to help save people.

On May 24, 2017, at the age of 26, Matthew made the ultimate sacrifice. While clearing brush with his crew, Matthew received a fatal blow from a tree that uprooted. He is and always will be loved and will remain in our hearts. Matthew will be forever missed by his friends and family, especially by his son, Wesley.



Matthew James Beck

*California Department
of Corrections and
Rehabilitation – California
Inmate Firefighter*

May 24, 2017

Age: 26



Remembering



Gary D. Helming

**USDA Forest Service, Los
Padres National Forest –
California**

Battalion Chief

August 31, 2017

Age: 47



Gary was welcomed into the family on April 14, 1970, by parents Gary and Elizabeth and his sisters, Leslie, Pam, and Deanna. Born and raised in El Cajon, California, he graduated from Valhalla High School in 1988. Gary learned to ski and ice skate at Yosemite National Park, where he returned many times. He honed his swimming and diving skills on family trips to Hawaii and absorbed the Aloha spirit with the importance of “Ohana” (Family). At a young age, he developed a keen lifelong interest in U.S. military history and understood what it meant to protect and serve. This passion led him into what would become a 22-year career with the fire service.

In 1995, Gary volunteered with the Pine Valley Fire Department and then as a seasonal firefighter on the Cleveland National Forest. He served on engines and crews with the BLM in Colorado, Yosemite National Park, and BLM in Ridgecrest, California, before accepting the opportunity to have his own engine with the BLM in Grand Junction, Colorado, in 2001. Over the next eleven years, Gary split his duties between fire suppression and training.

In February 2005, he and fellow firefighter, Andrea Mohrhussen, whom he met while in Yosemite, joined forces in a beautiful wedding ceremony in Marin County, California. Gary was a co-owner and off-road racing car driver, racing in many S.C.O.R.E and Baja 1000 events with his teammates as part of the Fire Guys Racing Team.

In 2008, Gary and Andrea’s lives changed forever with the birth of their son, Riley Jackson Helming. Gary continued his training, becoming qualified as an Air Tactical Group Supervisor (Air Attack), as well as having the honor of becoming a member of the BLM National Honor Guard. He was proud to be part of this organization and became a strong advocate for fallen firefighter organizations.

In 2012, the family returned to California as battalion chiefs for the Los Padres National Forest, putting down roots in Pismo Beach. On December 12, 2016, Andrea gave birth to twins, Walker Reef and Nalani Christine.

Gary lost his life while returning from the Railroad Fire near Yosemite, after completing an air attack assignment. His professional accolades were numerous. Gary left a large footprint in an extended family within the firefighting community, in addition to his personal “Ohana.” He is greatly missed. If Gary could speak, he would say, “Tell your family you love them.”

Life is a journey that’s measured not in miles or years, but in experiences. – Jimmy Buffett

Remembering



Cory D. Iverson

CAL FIRE – California
Career Fire Apparatus Engineer

December 14, 2017

Age: 32

Cory David Iverson began his fire service career in 2008 as a volunteer firefighter with the Elfin Forest-Harmony Grove Fire Department in San Diego County. In 2009, Cory accepted an offer for a Firefighter I position with the Riverside Unit of CAL FIRE. During that time, his most treasured assignment was as a firefighter assigned to Helicopter 301 out of the Hemet-Ryan Air Attack Base. In 2012, he spent one season as a federal firefighter with the Bear Divide Hotshot Crew before returning to the airbase in 2013.

This was also the year that he met the love of his life, Ashley. They were married in 2014, and he began his most important role as husband and daddy. In 2015, Cory and Ashley became the proud parents to their firstborn daughter, Evie Rose. Two months later, Cory accepted a promotion to fire apparatus engineer and spent one year in the Tuolumne-Calaveras CAL FIRE Unit before accepting a permanent FAE position in the Monte Vista Unit assigned to Dulzura Station 30.

In 2017, Cory was elated to learn he would be a daddy again to another little girl, who he unfortunately was never able to meet. On December 14, 2017, while battling the Thomas Fire in Ventura County, Cory was overrun by fast moving flames and perished.

Cory was known for his dedication, incredible work ethic, and passion for the job. He was highly respected by all his co-workers, and he helped mentor and inspire all who crossed his path. Cory's wife, Ashley, with their two girls by her side, has created the Iverson Foundation for Active Awareness (IFAA) in his memory to help continue his impact on the world.



Remembering



William A. Jaros

*USDA Forest Service, Six Rivers
National Forest – California
Career Fire Engine Operator*

July 8, 2017

Age: 38



*W*illiam Anthony “Bill” Jaros was born January 20, 1979, to Ana Maria Ramires Jaros Bailey and the late William Jaros. He grew up in Del Norte County, California. Bill was a U.S. Air Force veteran who served as a security specialist in the law enforcement branch. He deployed three times to the Middle East and received numerous medals, ribbons, and citations for his service. After his military service, he attended College of Oceaneering in Wilmington, California, to become a certified underwater welder.

He became a dive team leader with Del Norte County Search and Rescue and later became a seasonal firefighter with the USDA Forest Service. At the time of his death, he was a fire engine operator for the USDA Forest Service, where he had served for twelve years.

William A. Jaros was participating in a required conditioning hike when he became ill and collapsed. He received immediate medical treatment from fellow crew members but died at the scene.

He was survived by his mother and stepfather, Ana Maria and Harold Bailey.

Bill had a big heart and loved helping people. He was remembered as a jokester, a kind co-worker and a beloved friend.



*B*rian D. Massey's career as a firefighter began in 1990 with the Taft City Fire Department, where he served as the department was absorbed by the Kern County Fire Department in 2007. Known for his job expertise, smile, and skills in the firehouse kitchen, Brian was well regarded by those with whom he worked.

When Brian was away from the station, he enjoyed spending time with his kids and grandkids. Brian was a pitcher for the baseball team at West High School, as well as Biola University, and was hired by the Los Angeles Angels to throw in batting practice sessions before he joined the Taft Fire Department.

Brian passed away in May 2017 after suffering from a significant medical event following a 48-hour shift.

Brian is survived by his three children, Brooke, BreAnna, and Brandon.



Remembering



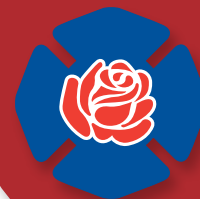
Brian D. Massey

***Kern County Fire Department –
California***

Career Fire Engineer

May 20, 2017

Age: 56



Remembering



Garrett Angel "Taco" Paiz

**CAL FIRE – California
Contract Firefighter/Driver**

October 16, 2017

Age: 38



Garrett Angel "Taco" Paiz was born on June 1, 1979, to Judi and Armando Paiz, in Indio, California, and has a brother, Carlos, and a sister, Cinthia. Garrett was 100% Native American-- $\frac{3}{4}$ Apache and $\frac{1}{4}$ Yaqui. He passed away on October 16, 2017, in a water tender truck accident on the Oakville Grade in Oakville, California, while fighting the Nuns Fire.

At age eight, Garrett began his passion for Civil War re-enactments. He wasn't allowed to shoot until he was 14, but he did travel to every shoot and Nationals to meet up with God parents, Bess and Bobby Riggs; God brother, Patrick Morgan; and God sisters, Shannon Stevens and Erin Loftin. At age 14, he joined 1st Texas Infantry and was on the musket and carbine teams, along with Battery B Cannon team 4th US Artillery, until about age 30.

In 1997, he graduated from Coachella Valley High School in California, where he was involved in the FFA program. He had a Grand Champion Charolais Steer, a Grand Champion Black Angus Steer, and some pigs that were reserve Grand Champions in his junior and senior years.

Garrett had a love for horses. Pepper, Dude, and Ziggy were his favorite and best quarter horses. He roped a little and helped on some farms working cattle in Arkansas.

On October 17, 2000, his daughter, Terri Ann, was born.

At the end of 2009, he began a truck driving career and soon started his own trucking company. Native Express Trucking was something he took great pride in. On August 26, 2011, he met his wife, Bobbie Dea Paiz, at the Iowa 80 Truck Stop in Walcott, Iowa. They were married on January 9, 2016, and he gained a stepdaughter, Bridget Black, and stepsons, Brian and Brandon Loehn. Before long, Garrett and Bobbie began team driving.

Garrett had been a volunteer firefighter (structure and wildland) in California and Arkansas, and firefighting was his ultimate passion. When 19 Granite Mountain Hotshots lost their lives in 2013, it pushed him to follow his lifelong dream of being a firefighter. He joined the Greenfield R-IV Rural Volunteer Fire Department in Greenfield, Missouri, and by the 2015 fire season he was ready. He went to Oregon to fight wildland fires in 2015 and continued traveling each year to do so. In 2016, Garrett and Bobbie moved to Noel, Missouri, where they joined the City of Noel Volunteer Fire Department as firefighters and first responders.

Garrett was a spirited man who had a knack for making everyone laugh no matter the situation and will be sorely missed.

*B*attalion Chief Terry Smerdel passed away peacefully on September 10, 2017, while on duty at San Francisco Fire Department's Station 2.

Born in San Francisco in 1958, Terry lived every day of his life with an infectious joy. His life was centered around what he could do for other people, and generosity and kindness will forever be synonymous with his name.

When he entered the fire department, following in his father and brother's footsteps, he embarked on a 26-year journey of service. He spent the majority of his career at Station 17, then as captain of Truck 2 in Chinatown, and lastly at Station 15. Terry was recently promoted to battalion chief.

Terry was also the successful business owner of Green Carpet Landscaping and Maintenance. Known for his integrity, Terry always kept his word.

His faith shined brightly each week at St. Robert's Parish. His memory lives on through each prayer he led and through each confirmation class he taught in such personal and touching ways.

Terry has always been an active and energetic soul. He especially loved fishing and hunting with his friends, a loyal pack who returned year after year with the promise of cigars and a good time. Terry spent his winters sitting in his waders in duck blinds right next to his brother and best friend, Tony. Speaking of siblings, Terry also had a wonderful relationship with his sister, Cathy, and they shared the same spirit of adventure.

All of the communities that Terry touched only begin to illustrate his boundless love. His family was the center of his universe. Cyndy Smerdel is the woman that turned a bad boy into a loving husband, and their unconditional love built a trust only few ever experience. He was her Disneyland, her happiest place on earth. Danica, Terry's first born, was his pride and joy. He protected her with his whole heart and left this world knowing she is in the very best of hands with a family of her own—her husband, Vince, and Terry's grandson, Christian. Jack, Terry's son, was far more than a son to him. Jack was his best friend. Jack married the love of his life, Christine, in February of this year.

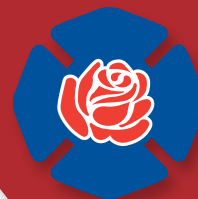
It's clear that Terry was taken far too soon. However, we move forward knowing how aware he was of every single blessing in his life. He left this world the happiest he had ever been, which is fitting since he made all our days brighter, all our smiles wider, and all our lives just that much happier.

Remembering



**Terry W.
Smerdel**

**San Francisco
Fire Department – California
Career Battalion Chief
September 10, 2017
Age: 59**



Remembering



Brent Michael Witham

**USDA Forest Service, San
Bernardino National Forest,
Vista Grande Interagency
Hotshot Crew – California
Career Firefighter**

August 2, 2017

Age: 29



Brent Witham died in the line of duty on August 2, 2017, when he was struck by a falling tree while fighting the Lolo Peak fire in the Lolo National Forest in Montana.

Brent was born on July 9, 1988, in Redlands, California, to Mark Witham and Donna Giordano. He was a member of the Vista Grande Hotshot crew based in the San Bernardino National Forest, California. Hotshot crews are firefighters trained specifically for wildfire suppression. Brent loved the challenges of being part of this elite group of firefighters. He looked forward to going to work every day and worked hard to be a good role model, leader, and firefighter.

Brent will be remembered as a skillful, courageous, and compassionate firefighter who was willing to do whatever it took to help others. Brent touched many lives with his great sense of humor, his compassion for the less fortunate, his way of turning people's weaknesses into strength, and his overall love for life.

Brent loved his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, his family, his firefighter brothers and sisters, and his friends. He was a son, a brother, a cousin, a nephew, a friend to many, and a proud wildland firefighter. Brent is deeply missed by all who knew and loved him.

Life Verse:

*I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in
Me will live, even though they die, yet they will live.*

(John 11:25)



*F*irefighter Kelly Wong was 29 years old and worked for the Los Angeles City Fire Department.

In 1997, when he was eight years old, he moved to California with his mother, Anne. Kelly grew up in Upland and graduated from Upland High School. He attended college at Mt. SAC. He got his associates degree in fire technology and graduated with academic honors. He was commended by the college's fire technology program for his efforts in volunteering in the community. He received his Bachelor of Science from Columbia Southern University with a concentration in fire systems.

Kelly knew from high school that he wanted to dedicate his life to firefighting. He worked for the Forest Service on Engine 21 in 2009 and 2010. In 2011 and 2013 he worked on Chuchupate Helitack. In 2012, he worked for the Bureau of Land Management, Elko District, as a Ruby Mountain Hotshot. In 2014, Kelly worked for CAL Fire in Riverside at Station 1. Firefighting was his passion.

He graduated as a LAFD firefighter on August 20, 2015, Drill Tower 40, Class 14-2. He was awarded Top Academic Recruit of his graduating class. He was an avid outdoorsman, traveler, studier, and was obtaining his Fixed Wing Private Pilot rating from Universal Air Academy at Brackett Field Airport in La Verne. He had a deep love for aviation and all things to do with flying.

On August 22, 2016, he and his wife, Danielle, welcomed their son, Colton. Colton was just nine months old when Kelly passed. Kelly enjoyed being a father. He wanted Colton to be a cub scout, and he talked about being the troop leader.

He always had a smile on his face and enjoyed helping others. He knew how to solve problems quickly and efficiently. He was very smart and yet always wanted to learn more. He was a loving husband and a great dad.

Remembering



Kelly Ka Lai Wong

Los Angeles Fire Department –

California

Career Firefighter

June 5, 2017

Age: 29



Remembering



Steven R. Terry

**Hernando County
Fire Rescue – Florida
Career Firefighter/Paramedic**

October 16, 2017

Age: 53



A Florida native, Steve grew up in Tampa and graduated from Hillsborough High School in 1982. He enlisted in the Army, served with the 25th Infantry Division as a medic, and was awarded the expert field medical badge. After his enlistment, he pursued a career in EMS and was hired as a firefighter/EMT for Pasco County in 1993, becoming a paramedic a few years later. In mid-2001, he transferred to Spring Hill Fire Rescue, which later became Hernando County Fire Rescue.

After the tragic events of 9/11, Steve believed the right thing to do was to reenlist in the military as a Florida National Guard soldier as a medic with the 3/116th Field Artillery Battalion in Plant City, Florida. With that unit, Steve deployed to Iraq in 2005-2006, where he was awarded the Combat Action Badge. For his dedication and support of the Field Artillery unit, Steve was honored to receive the Saint Barbara's medal. He continued to serve with the National Guard upon returning from deployment, served with the Florida Medical Detachment at Camp Blanding and, just before his death, was promoted to first sergeant of a Blackhawk Unit, 1st Battalion 111th Aviation Regiment at Cecil Field, Florida. This was his ultimate goal and a very proud moment in his military career. He served his country proudly for over 21 years while continuing to serve his community as a firefighter/paramedic for 24 years. He led by example. He died at the top of his game.

Service was Steve's personality. He felt privileged to volunteer as camp dean for WonderBook Bible Camp for many years, as well as a committee member and artist for Operation Helping Hand, a military charity in Tampa Bay. Steve never met a stranger. He was outgoing, funny, and a bit bull-headed, never looking for a fight but never hesitating to stand up for what he believed in, whether it was defending or protecting his faith, his family, his brother and sister firefighters, or his soldiers. Steve was someone you would want in your corner.

Steve's free time was spent playing bass guitar, going to comic conventions, drinking his favorite craft beer, watching movies, collecting Volkswagen Beetles, and practicing at the gun range. He loved to travel, especially to the mountains, where he dreamed of retiring someday. Steve was an amazing husband, father, opa, son, brother, and friend. He was a brother firefighter and an American soldier. My lover, my soulmate, my best friend. Steve is my hero.

My soul will ache every day until we're together again. Until then, I know your soul is shining, you are face-to-face with our Lord, and Heaven is a better place with you in it.

*J*ohn lived life as an example to all those around him. Honesty, fairness, leadership, and a quick sense of humor were only some of the qualities that made him the man anyone wanted to follow. During his 25 years at the Whitfield County Fire Department, he always strove to better his department, as well as those around him. This is evident in the young group of firemen who came up under him that now will continue his legacy.

He was constantly pushing those around him to not accept their current situation, but always strive to be a better version of themselves. This legacy will be continued through the college scholarship fund that Whitfield County has set up in his name. This scholarship will be awarded to children of other fallen firefighters to help with education costs.

John learned much of his leadership and mentoring skills while serving our country in the United States Marine Corps. During his six years in the service, he rose to the rank of staff sergeant in the recon battalion, where he achieved scholastic notoriety by being first in his class. He learned to mentor young men while working as a dive instructor at Coronado Island, where he instructed other marines and sailors.

John never quite lost that marine instructor mentality, as most of his rookie firefighters could attest to. While performing his duties as the rookie instructor he was strict, but always maintained a fairness that nobody could question. He expected nothing less than the absolute best from all his cadets, including his own son. Those cadets now carry on his legacy of not only saving lives, but also being up-standing citizens in the community.

John was paged out to a lady giving birth. At the time, the department only had one full-time person per station. The rest of the department was volunteers. When he arrived on the scene, there was a lady in a very tiny bathroom delivering twins. He delivered the twins by himself, and one wasn't breathing. He performed CPR and got the baby breathing. He received "Firefighter of the Year" that year.

Not only did he give his time to his department, he also sacrificed much of his time for his family. John is survived by his wife, Genesis; sons, John and Jacob; daughter, Olivia; and grandchildren, Victoria, William, Katherine, and John Chester VI. While John left us all too soon, he will always be remembered through the works he did, as well as all of the lives he touched in his 56 years with us.

Remembering

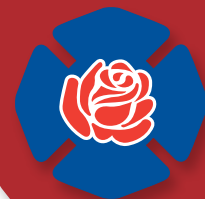


John Chester IV

***Whitfield County
Fire Department – Georgia
Career Battalion Chief***

May 18, 2017

Age: 56



Remembering



Michael Scot Norton

**Coweta County Fire Rescue
Department – Georgia
Career Lieutenant/Paramedic**

March 2, 2017

Age: 38



*M*ichael Scot Norton was born in Newnan, Georgia, on May 25, 1978, to Eddie and Myra Norton. He graduated from East Coweta High School in 1996. He and his wife, Brittany, were married on June 28, 2008.

Lieutenant Michael Norton was a 17-year veteran with the Coweta County Fire Rescue Department. He began his career on February 7, 2000. Michael demonstrated excellent leadership qualities throughout his career and always taught others the knowledge he had obtained. Michael instructed several recruit classes and encouraged others to participate in any activity that was taking place. Michael participated in special operations and was assigned to the busiest truck company in the department. In 2010, Michael was awarded Fire Fighter of the Year for Coweta County for his dedication and service to the citizens of Coweta County. He was well known in the department for his positive attitude and dependability.

In his time away from the fire department, Michael loved working at his garage door business, golfing, and vacationing at the beach with his family. He was known for his kind ways, humble personality, positive attitude, and a smile that could light up any room. Michael was also known for his many “one liners,” including, “one time,” “how good is that gonna be?” and “I love y’all!”

Of all the positive things Michael was known for, he was best known for the love he had for his family and friends. He was a true family man, and nothing changed his life more than the birth of his first daughter, Braelynn, on March 21, 2013. When Michael’s wife, Brittany, was 31 weeks pregnant, she had major complications. She began having seizures while he was driving her to her doctor’s appointment. Braelynn Norton was born that day via emergency c-section. Doctors said that his quick thinking, calm composure, and medical knowledge had not only probably saved his wife’s life, but his unborn daughter’s life as well. He became a hero to so many that day.

Michael truly was the most amazing father from the moment his daughter was born. Anyone that came in contact with him and Braelynn could see the mutual love between them. “Daddy” was the title he cherished most in the world and the job that he wouldn’t let himself fail at. Just two weeks prior to his death, Michael and Brittany found out that they were expecting. He was beyond excited and hoped for another little “Daddy’s girl.” On September 15, 2017, Michael’s second daughter, Lainey Michael Norton, arrived. Both of his little girls will forever carry on his kind heart, and he will never be forgotten.

Remembering

*D*arrell Plank was a dedicated husband, father, and volunteer firefighter. He was only 29 years old when he suffered traumatic brain injuries after being struck in the head by the end of a fire hose while on scene at a structure fire in Macon County, Georgia. He passed away three days later.

Darrell served with multiple fire departments as a volunteer and was usually one of the first to arrive on scene at calls. He was named Firefighter of the Year four times at the Montezuma Fire Department with which he served. He was also a member of the Macon County Fire Rescue team that competed in the Georgia State Firefighters Competition. His team won every division of the competition in 2016. He poured his heart into serving the community, and he had firefighting in his blood.

Darrell left behind a wife and five young children. He was a dedicated family man who loved taking time to take his children hunting and fishing. He was also a well-loved Little League baseball coach and coached his son's team. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, and sports. He was an active church member and didn't hesitate to talk to people about his Christian faith. He was a very friendly, outgoing man who had many friends and didn't meet a stranger.

Darrell is survived by his wife, Suzanna, and five children, Landon, Julianne, Savannah, Jasmine, and Twila. Darrell's contagious laugh and smile are greatly missed by all his family, friends, and the small town of Montezuma.



Darrell L. Plank

*Macon County Fire Rescue –
Georgia*

Volunteer Firefighter

May 23, 2017

Age: 29



Remembering



Michel Lance "Thorny" Thorne

*City of Grovetown Fire
Department – Georgia*

Career Firefighter

November 19, 2016

Age: 45



*M*ichel Lance Thorne, aka Thorny, was born May 28, 1971. Michel began his fire service career as a volunteer firefighter with Leah Fire Department, then Martinez Fire and Rescue. He made his home at Grovetown Department of Public Safety as a driver while still volunteering as a firefighter at Martinez Fire and Rescue, where he never missed a day of work in 13 years.

Michel demonstrated a career of integrity, honor, courage, service above self, and a genuine love for mankind. Above all was his love for his wife, Allison, and his "Mini Me," his precious daughter, MaryAnn. There wasn't a night at the station that he didn't speak of or tell stories of events at home. He was very proud of his family, and he made sure everyone knew it.

Michel had a servant's heart, and within his heart was a love of life and love of laughter. Every encounter with him left your spirits lifted and side hurting from laughter. Had he not been a fireman, he could have been a stand-up comedian. His smile and his laugh were just a little bit bigger than everyone else's. He was a well-known member of Clowns of America International, where he attended parades, visited children's hospitals, and appeared at festivals and other community events as Klutzy the Clown. He also dressed as Sparky The Fire Dog. His yearly impersonation of Jolly Old Saint Nick (Santa) may have stood out more, as he never left a holiday event without speaking to every single child. That's the type of person he was, a servant full of love, joy, and happiness.

If you can judge a man by the effect that he has on other people, you see the fruits of his labor. His presence is so large that his absence becomes profound.

We are all better because we knew Michel. He was a true hero in every sense of the word.

*J*ohn Michael “Mike” Cummins was born on September 15, 1970, in Danville, Illinois, to John and Cindy (Dudley) Cummins. He had one sister, Molly Carter. Mike married Cindy Cummins on June 21, 2003, in Hindsboro. They have three children, Angela (Derrick) Hall, Jacob (Rachel) Sanders, and Brittany (Macon) Warfel, and seven grandchildren, Brayden, Dekota, Jared, Beau, Jaxton, Makynze, and Maddox. Survivors also include stepmom, Marlene Cummins; niece, Baylee Carter; and many aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Mike enjoyed fishing, shooting, and family time. He took every opportunity to call the kids and grandkids and head out for some fishing. That is probably the thing that we miss the most since he’s been gone—sitting on our favorite abandoned bridge, a family pond, or Homer Lake, fishing and enjoying having family around.

Mike was a kind, gentle man. He always tried to be the most caring and compassionate person possible. His caring and the joy of knowing that he could make a difference when people needed help are what led him to the Kickapoo Firehouse to talk to the fire chief when he was 19. Mike was instantly ready to commit to serving the community as a volunteer firefighter after that meeting.

From training to the worst fire that he ever fought, Mike gave his heart and soul to the local volunteer departments that he served. Mike and I were looking for a place to rent in 2014 when we saw a “for rent” sign in Homer, Illinois. Mike called the number as we were leaving town. The owner was available to meet us at a home that he had available. We actually followed the fire chief’s truck into the drive. I don’t think he even saw the house, just the truck and the chief. We moved in a week later, and not long after that, Mike was a member of Homer’s Department. He loved the training, the house burns, and other activities that Homer provides for their volunteers. He went to every meeting, training, and call that he was able to attend, even turning around while on the way to a family outing because of a working fire and following a tornado into town so we could help with anything we could. Whatever it took, he wanted to be here to help.

One of his favorite things was the boot drive; he was a master at getting people to donate for muscular dystrophy. He was so good at it that he was usually given the task to take the boot around at the yearly golf outing. Last year on his birthday his department held a boot drive in Mike’s honor!

Remembering

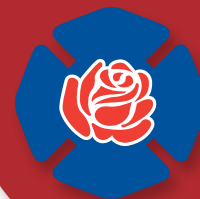


John Michael “Mike” Cummins

***Homer Fire Protection
District – Illinois
Volunteer Firefighter***

February 8, 2017

Age: 46



Remembering



Lawrence Matthews Jr.

*Village of Dolton
Fire Department – Illinois
Career Firefighter
June 10, 2017
Age: 35*



*F*irefighter Lawrence Matthews Jr., a devoted husband and loving father of five, made the ultimate sacrifice on June 10, 2017, while performing a job he loved—fighting a fire.

On June 2, 2007, Lawrence was given a second chance at life when he became a heart transplant recipient at the University of Chicago Hospital, where he met his future wife. Two years later, he became a firefighter on his birthday, September 9, 2009. Lawrence was a mentally strong person and always went after what he wanted. In his own words, "I was blessed with a new heart and a new life. I wanted to help save someone else's life; I wanted to become a firefighter."

The University of Chicago thought Lawrence's story was worth sharing; in 2015, he had his own commercial air on television in Illinois for an entire year! Lawrence's handsome face was plastered on billboards throughout the city of Chicago and surrounding cities on the expressways. His story was in magazines, the Chicago Tribune, and even the Wall Street Journal. He was quite the celebrity that year. He had a wonderful story to tell and inspire others.

Lawrence was passionate about life and helping others. He served as the public safety education officer for the Village of Dolton. He dressed up as Sparky for the younger children and played Santa Claus during the holidays both for Dolton and his children's schools. He spent many successful seasons coaching Little League baseball and basketball, seasons that his children and wife will never forget. He was always the parent on the sidelines coaching volleyball and football, pushing the children harder than they thought they could go.

Lawrence enjoyed watching and playing sports, cooking, and spending quality time with his loved ones. While some of that quality time was spent cleaning and doing yard work, they were still lessons his children will hold on to forever. Lawrence dabbled in acting and was an extra on Chicago Fire in several episodes. He was ambitious and successful at whatever he tried.

Lawrence was determined that he could help others find the courage to better their lives, and in many cases he did. He was a great friend to many, a mentor and well-rounded family man. His strength and endurance have become an inspiration for many. Lawrence will always be remembered for his generous heart, his faith, jovial personality, and optimistic perspective on life. He will always be remembered as the "Iron Man" and our hero forever. We love and miss him tremendously.

*C*aptain Eric J. Balliet made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty on September 27, 2017.

Eric J. Balliet was born May 19, 1976, to Gail and Deborah Balliet. He married Alicia Zimmerman on October 28, 2006. Eric and Alicia had a set of twins, Alyssa and Lucas, eight years of age.

Eric grew up around the Washington Township Volunteer Fire Department north of Fort Wayne, Indiana, where his grandfather, father, and three uncles were all active members. Eric joined Washington Township Volunteer Fire Department and became a paramedic at age eighteen.

Eric went on to work for Three Rivers Ambulance Authority for three years. When Eric was 22 years old, he became a Fort Wayne firefighter. Through his career, he was on the dive team and was an arson investigator. Eric was the first in his class to promote. He would have been promoted to battalion chief in February 2018 and was posthumously promoted at his funeral.

Along with Eric's first love of being a firefighter, he was an eighteen-year veteran of the Allen County Indiana Sheriff's Reserve, where he was a captain in the traffic division at the time of his passing. Eric became a deputy coroner in August of 2006 and a paid part-time deputy coroner in July of 2009. He was still active with the coroner's office.

In August of 2000, Eric started donating time to the Great Lakes Burn Camp, where he was still active as dean of campers.

Eric and Alicia were members of the Pathway Community Church. Eric loved his family, God, and his fellow firefighters and police officers. Eric would light up a room when he walked in the door.

He was kind, generous, quick-witted, and would go out of his way to help anybody, on duty and off.

He is deeply missed by his wife, Alicia Balliet; his daughter, Alyssa Balliet; his son, Lucas Balliet; his father, Gail Balliet; his stepmother, Elaine Balliet; his mother, Deborah Armento; his stepfather, Tommy Armento; his brother, Aaron Balliet; his stepsister, Tina Willis; and numerous extended family members, friends, and co-workers.

Remembering



Eric J. Balliet

Fort Wayne

Fire Department – Indiana

Career Battalion Chief

September 27, 2017

Age: 41



Remembering



Jeffery A. Blackmer

*Hamilton Township Volunteer
Fire Company – Indiana
Volunteer Firefighter*

December 20, 2017

Age: 42



Jeffery Blackmer of Albany, Indiana, made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty on Wednesday, December 20, 2017, after returning from a structure fire. Jeff was born to the late Joseph M. Blackmer and the late Shirley J. Harter. He is survived by his two children, Nicholas J. Blackmer and Kellie M. Blackmer; his grandmother, Geneva P. White; six siblings; and several nieces and nephews.

Jeffery Blackmer began his firefighting career in Wisconsin with the Helenville Fire Department, where he obtained certifications from the State of Wisconsin. After returning to Delaware County, Jeff joined the Hamilton Township Volunteer Fire Company, where he served as a firefighter for nearly a year. On December 20, 2017, Jeff passed away upon returning to the station after bravely fighting a large barn fire. Jeff was a vital part in the daily operations and a friend to all the firefighters. He will be greatly missed by the men and women of Hamilton Township. Firefighter Blackmer was posthumously awarded 2017 Firefighter of the Year.

When Jeff was in fourth grade, he had a grand mal seizure. He was later diagnosed with a seizure disorder, which had a huge impact on his desire to become a firefighter. He realized the importance of first responders because he had been personally touched by them. He knew it was their initial care that saved his life. Jeff graduated from high school, earned a degree in firefighting, and pursued his lifelong dream. He overcame many obstacles to realize his dream of being a firefighter. He refused to give up, and his persistence paid off.

Jeff was a kid at heart and selfless to the core. He would give strangers the shirt off his back if they needed it and in the next breath he would try to make them laugh. He loved life. He loved his family. He loved firefighting. For Jeff, that was everything. That was what he wanted in life, and he made his dreams come true.

No matter how long you knew Jeff—whether you were his best friend since junior high, his sibling, a fellow fireman, or a homeless man on the street—he loved you with his whole heart for exactly who you were, at the exact moment he knew you. He took us all and loved us deeply, with all our flaws and imperfections. He didn't love us **DESPITE** our imperfections, but he loved our flaws **JUST** as much.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. – John 15:13

Remembering

Scott Alan Compton, 55, was born on November 4, 1962, in Marion, Indiana, the son of Charles "Leland" and Sylvia "Colleen" (Kirkpatrick) Compton. He passed away on November 11, 2017, after helping fight a three-alarm business fire alongside his brothers from Greenfield Fire Territory throughout the night before.

Scott was a volunteer firefighter and EMT with the Greenfield Fire Territory for over 17 years, and he was an estimator for State Farm Insurance in Fort Wayne and Indianapolis for over 25 years. He held the position of volunteer lieutenant from 2003-2016. At the Greenfield Fire Territory's award banquet in 2001, he received the Rookie of the Year Award, and in 2016, he received the Volunteer Firefighter of the Year Award. At the 2018 awards banquet, he was posthumously awarded the Cy Herod Award, which is given to a member of the department for years of exemplary service to the community and to the Greenfield Fire Territory.

He was a member of Brandywine Community Church and was a road captain with the Fire and Iron Motorcycle Club. Scott enjoyed participating in benefit rides and attending car shows and antique tractor shows. He loved spending time with his family, camping, boating, riding his motorcycle, and being outdoors.

Scott was proud to serve on the fire department and considered it a great honor. He was always willing to lend a helping hand and completed every task with a positive attitude, both on duty and in his personal life. Anyone who knew Scott would agree that he had a heart of gold and was a man of integrity. His Harley, camper, and vehicles brought him great joy, but it was always clear that the love he had for his family and his friends was the center of his life. He was a loving father, grandfather, son, brother, uncle, and friend.

Scott is missed greatly by his girlfriend, Anna Davis-Wickliff, of Greenfield, Indiana; daughters, Brittany (Bryan) Rutledge of Greenfield, Indiana, and Kelcey (Max) Engling of Arlington, Virginia; his four older siblings, Cheryl (Richard) McCracken of Longview, Texas, Charla Flynn and Renee Reed of Carmel, Indiana, and Doug (Connie) Compton of Fairmount, Indiana; his grandchildren, Braydon Rutledge, Bryson Rutledge, Lyvia Engling, and Miles Engling; and many nieces and nephews.

We will never forget Scott's service to his community and his smile that made this world a better place.



Scott A. Compton

*Greenfield Fire Territory –
Indiana*

Part-Time Firefighter

November 11, 2017

Age: 55



Remembering



David M. Jatczak

**Lake Station Volunteer Fire
Department – Indiana
Volunteer Lieutenant**

June 1, 2017

Age: 57



David Michael Jatczak was born November 27, 1958, to the late Frances and John Jatczak. David married Brenda on September 20, 1997. He was the love of my life, and I was his. We had almost 20 years of wonderful married life. We did not have children of our own, but he became a stepfather of four, a grandfather of fourteen and, within the last nine years, a great-grandfather to two more wonderful little ones. David was an amazing man. Our get-togethers with family were always special. He loved cooking and doing magic tricks for the kids, always leaving them wondering, “How did he do that?”

Dave had a love of the fire service unmatched by many. He graduated from the University of Maryland, becoming a fire protection engineer. While he was there, he was on the Greenbelt Volunteer Fire Department and the College Park Volunteer Fire Department. After graduation, he returned home to Merrillville Fire Department and Ainsworth Fire Department in northwest Indiana.

The year after we were married we moved to Indianapolis, where he became assistant chief at IUPUI. We returned to Lake Station, Indiana, in 1997. He became a lieutenant and trainer for the Lake Station Volunteer Fire Department, where he served for nine years. David continued his education and fire protection up until the day of his death. He was going for Firefighter III the week of his passing. David was well-loved and respected for his knowledge of the fire service. He was also well-trained in technical rescue, HAZMAT, and so much more in 38 years of fire service.

David was a beloved husband, son, brother, uncle, stepfather, grandfather, and great-grandfather. He had a great love for his fellow man. He was a kind and gentle soul, always willing to help in any way he could. One of our fondest memories of Dave was when he was introduced to his fellow man. His standard greeting, said with great respect, was, “Very glad to meet you, sir.”

David will be missed always by his wife, Brenda Jatczak, all other family members, friends, and co-workers. The loss of David has been great and affects so many. It’s hard to cover all he accomplished in such a short life. Dave, we have wonderful memories of you. You will be in our hearts forever. Your great love helps to carry us through until we meet again.

Remembering

*K*endall James Murphy was born May 10, 1990, to Dwayne and Katrina (Lengacher) Murphy. He was welcomed home by his sister, Kelsie (Murphy) Miller, and grandparents, Bert and Barbara Lengacher and Steve and Jean Murphy.

Kendall graduated from Barr-Reeve High School in Montgomery, Indiana, in 2009. He received varsity letters in tennis, basketball, and baseball. He graduated from the University of Southern Indiana with a degree in sports management and minor in accounting. He was an insurance agent for German American. Kendall coached the freshmen boys' basketball team at Barr-Reeve from 2013-2017 and was taking over the 5th grade boys' program for the 2017-18 season. His love for young children was evident in his daily life. He cherished his two nieces, Emma and Halle Miller. Any chance he got, he was playing hide-n-seek or beauty salon with them. His nephew, Micah Kendall, was born five months after his untimely death.

Kendall was a selfless man of God who loved spending time with family and friends. He had a true servant's heart and captivating personality that would light up any room. His wittiness would make anyone laugh and have him making friends in no time. He didn't know a stranger.

November 10, 2017, a day that will forever be etched in our hearts, started as any day would. That evening, a call came in for an accident less than a mile from his house. Of course, Kendall responded as normal. He was exiting his vehicle when another responding firefighter drove up on the scene and hit Kendall, killing him instantly. Kendall started with the Montgomery Volunteer Fire Department in June 2016, following his father and grandfather's footsteps, giving the Murphy family three generations of active firefighters.

Kendall is deeply missed by his many cousins, extended family, friends, and co-workers. No one misses him more than his fiancée, Jessica Padgett. They were to be married September 29, 2018.

The Barr-Reeve community has been very supportive in starting The Viking Promise-Kendall Murphy Scholarship. It gives \$100 to each incoming kindergarten student that has or starts a 529 college savings plan. His niece, Emma, was the first recipient of this scholarship. Kendall was passionate about having no college debt. To help fund the scholarship, Jessica and his best friends have started an annual golf scramble and 5K. Kendall's legacy will forever live in Barr-Reeve students.



Kendall J. Murphy

**Montgomery Volunteer
Fire Department – Indiana
Volunteer Firefighter**

November 10, 2017

Age: 27



Remembering



Steven P. Buser

Ames Fire Department – Iowa

Career Firefighter

March 17, 2017

Age: 51



Steven P. Buser was born July 31, 1965, in Iowa City, Iowa, to Bob and Bonnie Buser. He was the eighth of their nine children. Steve grew up in Nichols, Iowa, where he met his future wife, Angie. Steve and Angie were married in 1993. In 1998, Braxton Lynn Buser, the light of Steve's life, was born.

Steve started his career as a volunteer for the Lone Tree Volunteer Fire Department. He was then hired by the Ames Fire Department in November 1999 as a firefighter/EMT. He was also a certified CPR and defibrillator instructor. Steve worked in all three Ames fire stations and, on his days off, he taught CPR for the Iowa DOT, as well as various businesses.

There was rarely an experience that Steve wasn't up for, but his favorite things included camping with family and friends, building signature campfires, Geocaching through the 99 Iowa counties, and biking in every season. He rode RAGBRAI seven times with his best friend, Scott Mills, usually sporting a kilt and a fire helmet. He had a knack for fixing anything—a process fondly known as “Busering”—and he was happy to share his skills with anyone in exchange for a nice cold beer.

Steve had three very favorites: his wife, Angie; his daughter, Braxton; and his dog, Uli. He was a devoted husband and father. There wasn't anything he wouldn't do for his girls.

Steve died suddenly on Friday, March 17, 2017, at Fire Station 2. He had just finished a 24-hour shift and was working out at the station's gym.

Steve was loved by his family, friends, and fire family. He is greatly missed.

*T*homas Patrick McBride, of Pendleton, Kentucky, died on August 24, 2017, while participating in search and rescue training with the Campbellsburg Fire Department.

A firefighter for fourteen years, he served with three different departments. He was remembered as a valuable team member, a problem solver, hardworking, passionate, and intelligent.

He was a member of St. Louis Bertrand Catholic Church.

He was survived by his two children, Lori Ann McBride and Jordan Patrick McBride; his loving parents, Thomas and Patricia McBride; and his grandson, Elijah Paul McBride.

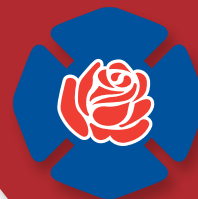


Remembering



**Thomas P.
McBride**

***Campbellsburg
Fire and Rescue – Kentucky
Volunteer Firefighter
August 24, 2017
Age: 60***



Remembering



Ronda S. Varnado

*Washington Parish
Fire District 2 – Louisiana
Volunteer Firefighter*

*July 6, 2017
Age: 54*



*F*irefighter Ronda Sylvest Varnado was driving a fully-loaded 3000-gallon tanker en route to a house fire when the truck left the roadway and struck an embankment. The tank came loose and crashed into the cab, causing her instant death. She was 54 years old.

Ronda was a retired nurse who logged more than her share of life-saving heroics as an ER nurse working with various accident victims. She cared deeply for people and refused to give up on her patients, sometimes even after the doctors had stopped their efforts. In 2012, she brought her tenacity and drive to her new purpose in life as an emergency responder with Washington Parish Fire Protection District, where her brother is the fire chief. Her philosophy was, "If you can't go all in, maybe you shouldn't go at all."

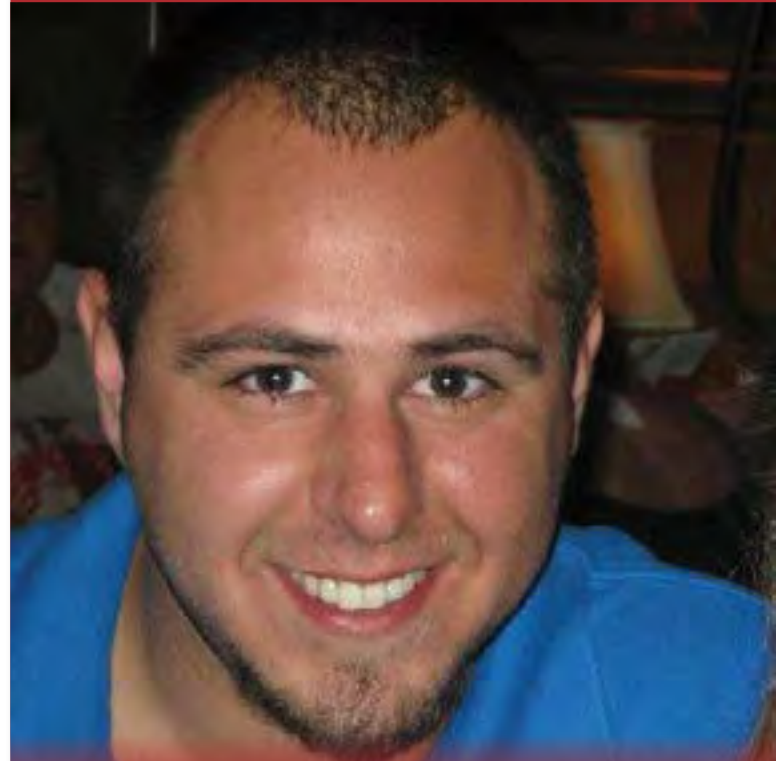
Her dedication was more than just a philosophy. Ronda maintained a training attendance record near 100% and was known to leave a buggy full of groceries in the check-out line to respond to a call. She even left her mother in the doctor's office on one occasion. In 2016, when our department fielded a total of 186 calls, she made 185 of them! The only call she missed was because she was in the hospital herself for a few days.

A lifelong resident of Franklinton, Louisiana, Ronda was an active member of Victory Baptist Church. She left behind her husband, Harold; two grown sons, Jacob and Jared; her parents, Lawrence and Nell Sylvest; one sister, Kathy Sylvest; and a brother, Larry Sylvest.

At the time of her tragic accident, the fire department had just begun work on a new 5,600 square foot fire station designed to house six fire apparatus, as well as classroom and operational space. The governing board of the district saw fit to name the new station the Ronda Sylvest Varnado Memorial Station as a tribute to her dedication and service. In addition, the Washington Parish Council, the governing body of the local parish, created the Ronda Sylvest Varnado Memorial Award, intended to be presented to any individual who somehow goes well above and beyond in the scope of their emergency/law enforcement duties. Ronda was named as the first recipient of the award.

While she is terribly missed, the legacy she has left behind is a continued source of inspiration and pride.

Remembering



Sander Benjamin Cohen

*Office of the Maryland State
Fire Marshal – Maryland
Career Deputy Chief
State Fire Marshal*

December 8, 2017

Age: 33



Captain Sander Cohen of the Rockville Volunteer Fire Department was driving south on Interstate 270 on December 8, 2017, when he saw a disabled vehicle in the left lane along the busy highway. He was on his way to assist with snow removal at Dulles International Airport and then help the next day with Fantasy Flight, a program that offers children with serious diseases the opportunity to "visit" Santa Claus at the North Pole.

It was not out of character for him to help wherever he could.

Captain Cohen stopped to help the disabled vehicle and motorist. While waiting for additional assistance to arrive, Captain Cohen and the motorist were struck by an oncoming car and killed.

Captain Cohen's unselfish service is legendary, and his legacy will live on.

Motivated by the call to serve others early in life, Captain Cohen joined the Rockville Volunteer Fire Department at the age of 19. In his first year as a volunteer, he helped three residents escape from the second floor of a burning building. He was awarded a Citation of Bravery for his life-saving actions at that apartment on December 22, 2003.

Captain Cohen was committed to his volunteer service at the Rockville Volunteer Fire Department and frequently covered shifts for other members. He served as a shift officer and as a member of the Board of Directors. He had been an active member of the department for 14 years.

Captain Cohen's love of the fire service and his experience as a volunteer led him to his career in fire investigations. At the time of his death he was a nine-year veteran of the Office of the Maryland State Fire Marshal where he held the rank of deputy chief fire marshal and was regional commander of the Northeast Regional Office.

*Deputy Chief Fire Marshal Cohen
was also a member of the Rockville
Volunteer Fire Department.*

*He was posthumously
promoted to Captain.*

Remembering



Charles "Rick" Gentilcore

**Montgomery County Fire and
Rescue Services – Maryland
Career Firefighter**

*April 7, 2017
Age: 52*



*R*ick Gentilcore was a master firefighter in Montgomery County, Maryland. He served in the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service for 23 years—12 years as a volunteer and 11 as a career firefighter. Rick achieved his boyhood dream of becoming a firefighter through his determination and work ethic. Each shift, he embodied his core value of hard work, inspiring others around him to give it everything they had, be it throwing a ladder or cleaning the engine bay.

Rick began working at a young age with his father at a local newspaper and then for his uncle's restaurants. He had a career at the Washington Post and the Wall Street Journal as a mailer while he volunteered as a firefighter in three Maryland counties: Montgomery, Prince George's, and Anne Arundel. The boyhood dream became a reality when he graduated from Fire and Rescue Recruit Class 26 on March 10, 2006.

While in MCFRS, he served at Stations 10, 19, and 2. In 2016, Rick was stationed at Burtonsville Volunteer Fire Department, Station 15. Burtonsville was where he began volunteering in 1994 and was his home-away-from-home. It was in this station that he passed away on April 7, 2017.

Rick was born on June 6, 1964, the third child of Anthony P. Gentilcore, Jr. and Carol Gentilcore. He grew up in Wheaton, Maryland, with his siblings, Anthony, Nancy, Mary, and Betty. Rick graduated from Northwood High School in 1983 as a standout defensive end on the football team.

Rick met his wife, Virginia, in 1985. They were married on May 28, 1988. His son, Todd, was born on July 16, 1988.

In 1991, Rick made a renewed commitment to his Christian faith that sustained him for the rest of his days. He was an active member of his church, and he forged such strong relationships that many there considered him family.

Over the last 10 years, Rick fostered a passion for golf. He played morning and night at the Bowie Golf and Country Club. Even at the golf course, Rick's work ethic got the best of him. He began working there part-time on the grounds in exchange for playing whenever he wanted for free.

Rick loved to travel to warm destinations with his wife and son. He particularly enjoyed southern California, where he was able to spend time with his nephews, Michael and Jack. His favorite destination was the Florida Keys, which was the last vacation with his family during Christmas 2016.

Rick is survived by his wife and son, a host of fire service brothers and sisters, friends, and family.

Remembering

Christopher Allen Staley was born October 17, 1988, to Brenda and Kenny Staley Sr. in La Plata, Maryland. He had one brother, the late Kenny Staley Jr., 24, who passed away on March 9, 2011. He has a sister, Tiffany Marie; stepbrothers, Kyle and Eddie Hughes; stepsisters, Chelsie Hughes, Stephanie Peorotta, and Jennifer Staley; and several nieces and nephews.

He enjoyed being a member of the Cobb Island Volunteer Fire Department and EMS and often was the first to sign up whenever there was a parade or other company function. He achieved several response awards.

On August 6, 2011, Christopher was at Wicomico Shores Yacht Club pier when a fellow jumped off to go swimming. He became in trouble, and Christopher jumped in to save him. Both were in trouble and did not resurface. Cobb Island fire boat responded mutual aid and assisted several other units already on the scene. Eventually, Charles County Dive Team sonar picked up the two together, and they were recovered by Cobb Island Fire Boat 6.



Christopher Allen Staley

Cobb Island Volunteer Fire Department & EMS – Maryland Volunteer Firefighter

*August 6, 2011
Age: 22*



Remembering



Stephen P. Frye

**Montgomery Fire Department –
Massachusetts
Volunteer Fire Chief**

December 6, 2017

Age: 59



On December 6, 2017, Chief Stephen P. Frye lost his life while battling a house fire in Montgomery, Massachusetts. Chief Frye had 25 years of service with the Montgomery Fire Department, becoming deputy fire chief in 1997 and fire chief in 1999. On that fateful night, the small volunteer fire department was called to respond to a chimney fire which quickly turned into a structure fire. Under Chief Frye's command, the firefighters did what they were trained to do. Mutual aid was called in from surrounding towns while the engines' tanks were effectively extinguishing the fire as the flames dwindled. Then the hoses went limp; they were out of water.

Fighting alongside Chief Frye were his son, Matt, and friend, Deputy Fire Chief Chris Galipeau. Deputy Chief Galipeau recalls, "Now, our stress levels spike and Steve is commanding, prepping us for the first nearby fire department to arrive with water. As I back our neighboring fire department to our portable folding tank to give us much needed water, I see Steve ... holding a section of hose in each arm, head down, feet churning, dirt kicking off his boots as he does the strongman competition to bring more hose sections to the rear of the house. A couple minutes later, I hear someone yelling, 'Firefighter down!'"

Steve grew up in Chicopee, Massachusetts, and received a bachelor's degree from American International College. He married his love and best friend, Laurie, in 1985. They had two children, Karlyn and Matthew. In 1992, the Fries bought land in Montgomery and began building their house. In addition to being a firefighter, Steve was a carpenter, journeyman electrician, EMT, ski patroller, grill master, had his CDL, and much more. He was passionate about learning new things and helping others.

One Christmas, Steve had 45 people coming for dinner. He spent days getting the house decorated and preparing seating for everyone. He was up at 6:00 am making stuffing and putting the turkey in the roaster. Then it started to snow hard. Steve went out to shovel and salt so the guests would be safe. Finally, it was time to eat. As Steve was raising his fork to his mouth, the tone went off. A neighbor had slipped and broken her hip. Chief Frye was off. By the time he came home, the guests were leaving, and Steve had missed the day. He thought nothing of it. This is what he did.

Chief Frye never wanted to be a hero. The community, town, fire department, countless friends, and his large family lost Steve that Tuesday night because he was doing what he always did. Taking care and putting others first—anyone who needed him.

Remembering

Anthony J. “Tony” Spano, 47, of Ludlow, Massachusetts, collapsed and died while exercising shortly after his 24-hour shift ended on March 30, 2017. He had responded to multiple emergency calls during the shift prior to his death.

Anthony was born on May 17, 1969, in Springfield, Massachusetts, and was the son of Stephen Spano of Chicopee and the late Sandra (Gosselin) Demers.

He was a City of Chicopee firefighter and EMT for fourteen years and was most recently assigned to Station 5 in Wilimansett.

Anthony enjoyed running, working out, and going to the beach at Misquamicut, Rhode Island. He completed several marathons.

He was survived by his son, Anthony Joseph Spano; his father, Stephen Spano; two sisters, Cheryl A. Spano, and Robin M. Mikulski and her husband, Steven; his former wife, Charlene (Laventure) Spano; and several nieces and nephews.

Tony was remembered as “a true guardian angel” who helped others in need.



Anthony J. Spano

*Chicopee Fire Department –
Massachusetts
Career Firefighter
March 30, 2017
Age: 47*



Remembering



Joseph A. Toscano

***Watertown Fire Department –
Massachusetts
Career Firefighter
March 17, 2017
Age: 54***



Joseph Toscano, 54, died unexpectedly on March 17, 2017, doing what he loved—fighting a fire. Joe was on the Watertown Fire Department for 20 years and could be found in the kitchen cooking for his group when he wasn't aiding the deputy chief, fighting a fire, or participating in training with his fellow firefighters.

Joe's other love was his family. He was married for 25 years to Maureen and was a very involved father to their children, Alyssa, Patrick, Mary Cate, William, and Michael. He was a master craftsman who built his own home, where he made family time a priority. Joe was kind, generous, and humble. He enjoyed life to its fullest. Joe was a loyal friend to many who knew him as "Joey T."

Joe's legacy will live on in his children and all those whose lives he touched.

Those we love don't go away,
They walk beside us every day.
Unseen, unheard, but always near,
Still loved, still missed and very dear.



*K*evin Vance Ramsey was born on August 28, 1966, in Detroit, Michigan, to Betty and Hiram Ramsey.

Kevin graduated from Detroit's Finney High School. He worked for Kroger for ten years. He began his public service career working for Royal Oak Township and Highland Park as a firefighter, then became an emergency medical technician for Detroit. He joined the Detroit Fire Department on July 19, 1999.

Kevin had a love of refurbishing vintage Schwinn bicycles and collecting generators and old radios. He could fix anything. His amazing sense of humor kept everyone laughing, even at the worst of times. No one was exempt from his quick wit, yet he was never cruel or afraid to poke fun at himself.

He loved spending time at his property up north, along with his mother, who he cared for during her battle with Alzheimer's. Kevin was the kind of son that every mother dreams of. He never lost sight of the important things in life and was mindful to be the man that would make his family proud.

Kevin loved the history of his city and loved serving and protecting it. Although he was a humble man, he beamed with pride when talking about being a squad man at his beloved Squad 3.

Kevin died in the line of duty on July 29, 2017. He suffered a heart attack after fighting two commercial building fires. He will forever be remembered for making the ultimate sacrifice while serving the city of Detroit.

Kevin is survived by his wife, Amy; stepchildren, Albert and Amanda; sister, Kim; and the brothers and sisters of his large Detroit fire family.

Remembering



Kevin V. Ramsey

***Detroit Fire Department –
Michigan***

Career Firefighter

July 29, 2017

Age: 50



Remembering



Terry M. Raymond

*Summerfield Township
Volunteer Fire Department –
Michigan
Volunteer Firefighter
August 15, 2016
Age: 55*



*T*erry was born to Al and Theresa Raymond in 1961 in Monroe, Michigan. He was one of seven children. He married Tammie in 1982. They had two girls, Leah and Samantha, and three grandchildren, Alexandria, Gage, and Terrie. He never had the joy of meeting Terrie, as she was born eight months after his passing. In 2007, they moved to Tammie's small home town of Petersburg, Michigan, where her family has four generations of firefighters.

Prior to moving to Petersburg, Terry was always listening to his scanner and reading the local news to stay current on what was going on in the community. He was always interested in the fire department and always wanted to belong. Moving to Petersburg gave him that opportunity. Within a year of moving, Terry joined the volunteer fire department and quickly completed his firefighting and first responder training.

Terry was always using his vacation time to do things for the department. Whether taking a fire truck to the local school to teach the kids about what to do if they are in a fire, taking a truck to the county fair, or just helping to keep the trucks and hall clean, he was there. It was a common occurrence for Terry to call off work because there was a call and there were not enough firemen in town to answer the call.

When Terry wasn't working, he was spending time with his grandchildren. He was a regular on Saturday mornings at McDonald's, reading his paper and watching his granddaughter play. He also enjoyed going to the movies and watching the many police shows on TV. Aside from his family, Terry's joy was helping those in need.

Terry knew he was well liked by everyone, but he never really knew how well loved he was. Terry passed of a fatal heart attack after a fire call. He is deeply missed by his wife, Tammie Pirolli; his daughters, Leah Raymond and Samantha Raymond; his grandchildren; his mother, Theresa Raymond; his brothers, Phil, Nick, and Pat; his sisters, Chris, Holly and Wendy; and all of our extended family and friends.

Remembering

*R*on Savage, FOX 2 WJBK-TV Detroit news anchor, firefighter/EMT, and resident of Milford, passed away February 25, 2017, during a training exercise with the Milford Fire Department where he served.

An EMMY Award-winning journalist, Ron co-anchored FOX 2 News Weekends. He produced and reported Michigan's Most Wanted segments, highlighting crimes that needed to be solved. Police say more than 1,000 dangerous fugitives have been arrested because of his work assisting Michigan law enforcement agencies. Ron was more than a friendly face you saw on TV; he was dedicated to helping people. Ron was a firefighter and EMT with a combined 25 years of service with fire departments across the country. Ron was a decorated firefighter who earned two citations for outstanding performance above and beyond the call of duty. He was an active member of St. Mary Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Church, where he was proud to serve as a lector. He was a champion for others through his volunteer work with Crime Stoppers, the Autism Society of Michigan, MADD, the American Lung Association, the Humane Society, Easter Seals, SIDS Organization, and the Salvation Army.

Always upbeat and relentlessly positive, Ron gave life his all. He was a dedicated, fair, and compassionate journalist, a brave public servant, and a man of great integrity. Ron was funny, had a booming, contagious laugh, and was extremely caring. He was a big camping and outdoor enthusiast, hunter, hiker, runner, amazing cook, and a master of Bar-B-Que smoked ribs.

Most importantly, Ron loved his family. He was devoted to his wife, Mitzi Savage, and a proud father to their beloved son, Ronnie Savage. Ron took off time from work for only one thing, his son Ronnie's sporting events where he was ever present. He and Ronnie enjoyed hunting together and attending Detroit sporting events.

Ron was a beloved son, brother, uncle, nephew, cousin, friend, mentor, and hero. He is deeply missed by his brothers and sisters, Pat (Savage) Murphy, Elizabeth Savage, Tom Savage, and Dave Savage, as well as numerous extended family members, friends, and co-workers. He was preceded in death by his parents, Frank and Clara Savage.

In every facet of his life Ron was humble. He didn't just live a good life, he lived several all packed into one, and we are all richer for having known him. We love and miss you, Ron, with all our hearts!

*A life well lived is a precious gift
of hope and strength and grace,
for someone who has made our world
a brighter, better place.*



Ron Savage

*Milford Fire Department –
Michigan*

Volunteer Firefighter/EMT

February 25, 2017

Age: 63



Remembering



Edward A. Switalski

**Comstock Township
Department of Fire & Rescue –
Michigan
Career Fire Chief
June 14, 2017
Age: 55**



Comstock Township Fire Chief Edward Anthony Switalski was born on October 29, 1961, in Hinsdale, Illinois, son of Edward and Rita (Lloyd) Switalski Sr. He was the youngest of five children and was adored by all of his brothers and sister. At age 30, Ed married the love of his life, Holly, and together they built a beautiful life together with their two daughters, Alison and Emily.

As a young boy, Ed knew he was going to be a firefighter and dedicate his life to the fire service. He would often be found playing at the local fire station, trying to help out however he could. When he turned 18, he began his career at Pleasantview Fire District in the southwest suburbs of Chicago where he worked for 34 years. He was involved in many facets of the fire service, including HAZMAT, instructor, and TRT. In June 2013, he moved to Michigan with his wife to become the Comstock Township fire chief. Both of his daughters attended Western Michigan University, and he was excited for this new career opportunity and to be closer to his girls. He soon became WMU's biggest fan and attended more sporting events than both of his daughters combined.

Ed was involved in numerous organizations and served as chairman of the congregation at Peace Lutheran Church in Illinois. He went on four different mission trips with a group of high schoolers to help lead by example in the name of Christ. After his move to Michigan he became a member of Zion Lutheran Church.

To say Ed was a huge Chicago Cubs fan would be an understatement. He was thrilled to see them win the 2016 World Series and be able to partake in the victory parade. When he wasn't working, he could often be found on his boat fishing or relaxing.

Ed made many people smile and was never afraid to strike up a conversation with a stranger. He was always kind, humble, and left behind an incredible legacy. He will be missed but never forgotten.

Ed gave the ultimate sacrifice when he was struck and killed on I-94 while on a call. He was preceded in death by his parents and two brothers, Michael and Ralph Switalski. He is survived and missed deeply by his wife and daughters; a brother, Daniel (Nancy) Switalski; a sister, Nora DePaola; a sister-in-law, Joy Voykovich; and many nieces and nephews.

*J*effrey A Vollmer, age 40, passed away in December of 2017. He was a member of the Mayer Fire Department and served as an EMT and captain. He also took on the role of mentor to new members. He continually strove to better himself and his department by pursuit of education and training. He was quick to offer aid to those in need, making lasting impacts on those he helped, as well as their families. Jeff also made sure his fellow brothers were supported after difficult calls. He proudly served his community.

Jeff was husband to Emily and a loving, joyful father to their two daughters, Anika and Kennedy. He worked hard to make himself better and to provide for his family. He was a trained construction journeyman, spending many years in carpentry, but had also owned and operated his own business in the insurance industry. Emily misses his friendship, and the girls miss daddy being here to play with them.

Jeff had many interests and excelled at them all—hunting, woodworking, photography, playing the guitar—but fishing was his hobby of passion. He especially enjoyed pursuing the elusive muskie and spent many hours on the lake.

Jeff had an easy way of getting along with everyone, sharing his time and talents, and being generous in all ways. Ready, always, with an easy smile, he will be greatly missed by many.

His family recognizes the sacrifice that both firemen and families make when the choice to serve is made. Jeff will live on in the hearts of his family and in the way the future firemen and women answer "the call" to serve and carry hope to those waiting in need.

Remembering



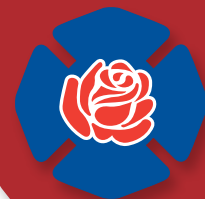
Jeffrey A. Vollmer

***Mayer Fire and Rescue
Department – Minnesota***

Volunteer Captain

December 19, 2017

Age: 40



Remembering



Clinton Alvin Beasley

*Sumrall Volunteer Fire
Department – Mississippi
Volunteer Deputy Chief*

March 15, 2017

Age: 80



Alvin Beasley was a dedicated Sumrall volunteer fireman for 47 years. He served as chief for 15 years, from 1971 - 1986, and was serving as deputy chief at the time of his death in the line of duty, on March 15, 2017. Alvin was a tireless worker to improve the insurance rating for his town and improve fire safety and coordination for the surrounding area. He was a mentor for many firefighters.

He was an active and dedicated member of First Baptist Church Sumrall. Alvin was the longest continuous member of First Baptist Church. He served many years as deacon and continued to advise deacons on decisions of the church. He was serving on the church history committee, where he helped maintain records of church events, decisions, and milestones. He also helped coordinate emergency preparedness at the church. In this capacity, he helped plan evacuation routes, shelter areas during severe weather, and care and evacuation of sick or injured attendees.

Alvin worked for Movie Star Lingerie, Inc. for over forty years, most of those years as a plant manager. After his retirement, he drove a school bus for the Lamar County School District at the Oak Grove Schools. He was a very active member of the Sumrall Lions Club for 52 years, where he served as club president several times and was the program chair at the time of his death. As part of the Lions Club, he was known for his ability to coordinate the annual Fourth of July Parade, which led to him being in charge of coordinating the annual town Christmas Parade. Alvin was a charter member of the Sumrall Sportsman's Club, where he served as president and, most recently, as treasurer. Alvin was a board member for the Town of Sumrall Zoning Committee.

He was selected Citizen of the Year for the town of Sumrall by the Sumrall Development Foundation on May 7, 2016.

Alvin was a devoted husband for 52 years to his wife, Barbara. He cared for her for the ten years she had Alzheimer's. She passed away from complications from Alzheimer's on July 5, 2016, 8½ months before he was struck and killed.

Alvin had one daughter, Lora Beasley. She was the apple of her father's eye, and she felt the same way about him.

Alvin was preceded in death by one daughter, Terri Alva Beasley; four brothers, Oben, Ethridge, Johnny, and Charles Orville; and his parents, C. O. and Maggie Beasley. He is survived by three sisters-in-law, nine nieces and nephews, and hundreds of friends.

Chief Billy Matthews II, 71, of Bassfield made the ultimate sacrifice on February 14, 2017, during a routine grass fire.

Billy was a volunteer fire chief for the Town of Bassfield for nine years. He was well known in the community for being the first person to arrive on scene where assistance was needed. Matthews never met a stranger and treated every person he met with respect. He spent time at the local schools educating the kids on fire safety and checking all fire safety equipment to make sure everything was up to par. He volunteered his time to help the Jefferson Davis County Police Department any time assistance was needed. Chief Matthews or "Mr. Bill" graciously gave himself to all the people of the community, whether it was putting out a fire, assisting another fire department, putting together fundraisers, getting someone gas, unlocking cars, or helping a person seeking help find their way to get the medical attention they needed.

His fire department looked at him as a father figure, and each one of the young men and women in his department and in the small town would stop by his office for the occasional Mr. Bill Advice. He enjoyed spending time with his family, cooking out with his department members, or pulling an ultimate joke on one of the employees of the town. He was patiently waiting on the arrival of his first granddaughter, Aryia Haze Matthews, who will be blessed with many, many humble and funny stories of her Paw Paw.

Because of his service to the community, he will forever be remembered as the town of Bassfield's fire chief. We will all know he took his last breath and final call doing what he loved to do.

He is survived by his wife of 22 years, Liz Ann Matthews; son, Grant Tyler Matthews, and wife, Brandie Matthews; daughter, Amanda Surla; and a host of other family and friends.

We all miss him tremendously, but we feel blessed to have loved and served beside him for the years we had with him. He would want everyone to continue his legacy and help others with an open mind and big heart.

Remembering



Billy W. Matthews II

*Bassfield Volunteer Fire
Department – Mississippi
Volunteer Fire Chief*

February 14, 2017

Age: 71



Remembering



Loretta A. “Lorrie” Sykes

*Sumrall Volunteer Fire
Department – Mississippi
Volunteer Firefighter*

March 15, 2017

Age: 53



*L*oretta A. “Lorrie” Sykes was born February 21, 1964. She dedicated her life to service and died serving others on March 15, 2017. She was a mother of two and a grandmother of ten.

Lorrie was a core part of the community and loved helping others. She showed the same love to the community that she shared with her family. She would go out of her way to make people feel better, often giving away handmade crocheted items. She loved seeing people smile and always felt the need to help.

At an early age she started her service to the community with mission work through her high school. She had a number of hobbies, including motorcycles, and she had training as a mechanic. She also enjoyed crochet and music. She played clarinet in the band for her high school and loved to teach her grandkids how to play.

She had a number of certificates from training that she received through the fire department.

She was loved dearly and is missed every day. She was a simple woman who loved riding the back roads and listening to music, mostly country and gospel. She would put on an Elvis CD and sing her heart out.

Her favorite thing to recite was Psalm 23; it inspired her, and she loved to share that inspiration with others.



*J*ohn was born March 24, 1958, to Verdi and Lucille Kemper, and had six sisters and five brothers. At age five, John, along with several of his younger siblings, were placed in foster care. Although his foster family wanted to adopt him, John wanted to keep his last name in hopes that his family would try to locate him. John was 44 years old when he was reunited with all but one of his siblings.

John met his wife, Terry, through their church when they were teenagers, and they were married shortly after high school. They shared the next 37 years together. They loved to take family vacations in search of “brown signs” (historic sites, points of interest) in each state.

John was the proud father of Jennifer. As Jenn was growing up, John used every opportunity as a teaching moment to ensure that daddy’s little girl had the confidence that she could do anything she set her mind to.

John was equally proud of his two grandsons, Austin and Ethan. To them, he was known as PawPaw Fireman. John filled many roles in the boys’ lives. He was the PawPaw who played ball with them, the PawPaw who went to every school and sports activity the boys were involved in, the PawPaw who taught Austin how to drive and showed him how to shave, the PawPaw who worked with Ethan on his pitching, the PawPaw who made sure that no matter what he was doing, the boys were by his side.

John’s passion was muscle cars. Over the years he restored numerous Mustangs and later Buicks. John was well known in the Buick community and had many friends across the country. He loved talking cars with his buddies.

An exceptional self-taught carpenter, John could fix anything and made sure that Jenn or the boys worked with him so they would learn how things worked and how to fix things.

John’s true passion was what he referred to as his dream job—to be a fireman. At age 35, he decided it was time to pursue his dream. He began his career with the St. Louis Fire Department in 1993 and was promoted to captain in 2008. He proudly served the city just shy of his 25th anniversary.

John was a selfless man with a soft heart (especially for stray dogs!). He never met a stranger and could carry on a conversation with anyone. He retained his little boy wittiness and, for a big brute of a guy, had a giggle that would make anyone laugh. When asked how he was doing John would say, “I’m loving life and living the dream.”

Remembering



John Kemper

St. Louis Fire Department –

Missouri

Career Captain

July 12, 2017

Age: 59



Remembering



Jeffery Mason Sanders

*Mayview Fire Protection
District – Missouri
Volunteer Firefighter
June 19, 2017
Age: 55*



Jeffery Mason Sanders lived in Mayview, Missouri, all his life with generations of family. He was born on March 31, 1962, to Ella and Samuel Sanders. Jeff had two siblings, Eleanor Lockhart and John Sanders. He graduated from Odessa High School in 1980 with honors.

He was a self-employed farmer, worked for the Mayview Special Road District, and was a Mayview firefighter. He was a member of the Mayview Lions Club, where he served as vice president, president, and on many committees. He was involved with Fortyville 4-H, Odessa FFA, and was always involved with his community.

On June 19, 1984, he asked Connie Howerton to marry him. They were married on August 5 that same year at Zion UCC in Mayview. On September 4, 1985, their daughter, Samantha, joined the family. Ten years later, on July 5, 1995, God blessed them with a son, Tyler. After 13 years of dating David Burroughs, Sammi was escorted down the aisle by Jeff on May 17, 2013, when she and David were married. On March 3, 2015, Jeff saw his first grandchild, Samuel Mason Burroughs, who became the light in Jeff's world.

In winter 1985, a fire occurred at Jeff's home. Everyone was okay, and the damage was minor, but thoughts of what could have happened sparked Jeff and his best friend, Roger Vorwark (LODD, Odessa Fire Protection, March 14, 2009), to join the Mayview firefighters the next week. Jeff served in every way he could for 32 years. He served as Mayview Fire Board president for many years. He was involved in building the new fire station. One of the things he enjoyed most was training new firefighters.

On June 19, 2017, 33 years to the day after he asked Connie to marry him, Jeff was finishing up a fire call when a tragic accident caused a chain of events that ended Jeff's time with us on earth. Thankfully, the young firefighter with him, though badly injured, survived and is healthy today. Jeff would not have wanted it any other way.

Jeff was a quiet, strong man with a giving heart. He had a sixth sense for showing up just when someone needed help. We continue to hear stories of people he helped in their time of need that he never spoke of to anyone. He had a strong faith in God and always believed God would take care of us. A young friend of Jeff's, in trying to sum up what Jeff meant to his community, said, "He was loved by all."

Remembering

Steven Michael Bomba was born on November 13, 1990, in Dorchester, Massachusetts. He was the son of Stephen C. and Christine Ann (Hogan) Bomba and passed away on Friday, August 19, 2016, at the age of 25. Steven was a resident of Lincoln, New Hampshire, at the time of his passing. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on August 24 at St. Joseph Church in Lincoln, New Hampshire.

He was a 2009 graduate of Lin-Wood High School and then attended Lakes Region Community College in Laco-nia, New Hampshire, majoring in fire science.

Captain Steven M. Bomba was a valued member of the Lincoln Fire Department for over six years. Steven joined the Explorers at age 17, with his interest in the fire service.

Steve's interests were not limited to the town of Lincoln. He was also a member of the Campton/Thornton Fire Department, Lin-wood Ambulance Service, Speedway Safety Services, and was a full-time dispatcher for Grafton County. Whenever there was something that needed to be done, you could count on Steve. Steve was passionate about training the members of the Lincoln Fire Department and was the catalyst in transitioning the department into a forward-thinking, progressive department. A lot of what Steve accomplished and projects that he had not yet finished are now in the hands of the entire department. The members have vowed to complete and expand on them, because we know that is what he would want us to do.

Steven had strong family values. He was a communicant of St. Joseph Church in Lincoln, New Hampshire. He enjoyed football, baseball, and wrestling, taking his siblings to Red Sox games, and always doing things with his family in the few hours left after giving back to the community.

Steven will be deeply missed by his family: father, Stephen Sr.; mother, Christine; brothers, Anthony, Vincent, Joseph, and Philip; sister, Jennifer; maternal grandfather, Francis Hogan; and several aunts, uncles, and cousins.

He was a dedicated public servant, brave and committed to his work. He is remembered for his big heart, for always putting his family first, and for helping those in need.



Steven M. Bomba

***Lincoln Fire Department –
New Hampshire***

Paid on Call Captain

August 19, 2016

Age: 25



Remembering



Edward James Frenenski

Stanhope Hose Company #1 –

New Jersey

Volunteer Firefighter

October 23, 2017

Age: 31



Edward Frenenski was a proud member of Stanhope Hose Co. No. 1. He was dedicated to the fire service his entire life. Eddie passed away as a result of a medical emergency that occurred on October 23, 2017, while training at the Sussex County Fire Academy. He was 31 years old and known to his friends and fellow firefighters as “Bear.”

As an active member of the fire department he participated in all events, both firematic and social. Eddie faithfully attended Monday night work drills and monthly department meetings. He always looked forward to participating in training classes at the fire academy to increase his knowledge and skills. Eddie was also a life member of the Sussex County Firefighters’ Association.

He regularly attended annual events that the department participated in, such as Stanhope Day, the annual Santa Run, and the town Halloween parade. He enjoyed visiting local schools during Fire Prevention Week to give fire prevention classes and equipment demonstrations. He stopped by the firehouse every Friday night after work to play darts with his friends.

Eddie is the son of Donna and Edward Frenenski and a life-long resident of Stanhope, New Jersey. He has a younger brother, Andrew, from Austin, Texas. His father is an ex-chief and remains an active member of Stanhope Hose Company No. 1. His mother is a past president of the ladies’ auxiliary.

Eddie was a fan of the New York Yankees and the Miami Dolphins. He was an avid follower of the WWE and attended several Wrestlemania events.

Remembering



William F. Gerace

***Gibbsboro Fire Company
No. 1, Inc. – New Jersey
Volunteer Firefighter***

April 28, 2017

Age: 54



Firefighter William F. “Bill” Gerace was a 10-year veteran of the Gibbsboro Fire Company #1. During his time with the Gibbsboro Fire Company, Bill was honored by the Camden County Fire Chiefs and Firemen’s Association in 2007 with the James E. Sylvester Award. This award is presented for academic achievement at the Camden County Fire Academy to recognize the cadet who achieves the highest grade point average during Basic Firefighter One training. Bill was also presented with the President’s Award for his exceptional commitment and service to the fire company during 2009. In 2011, for his dedication and commitment to community service and for exceeding the requirements expected of his position and showing a distinct pattern of professional achievement, Bill was awarded Firefighter of the Year by the Gibbsboro Fire Company. Posthumously, he was awarded The Bravest by the Camden County Firemen’s Association and Camden County Fire Chiefs and Fire Officers Association. He also received the Public Safety Purple Heart Award from the Camden County Hero Scholarship Fund.

Firefighter Gerace will be remembered for his ability to connect with children during fire prevention. He is especially remembered for his annual fire prevention presentation with the 4-year-old Pre-K class at the Gibbsboro Elementary school with his special puppet, “Chief Sylvester McMonkey McBean.” The children of Gibbsboro fondly called him Fireman Bill. Bill was always willing to help out, no matter whether it was an emergency, public assist, or fire company fundraiser. Bill made a point to visit other fire stations with his son during family vacations.

Firefighter Gerace took part in the annual live burn at the Camden County Fire Academy on April 10, 2017. During this training exercise, Firefighter Gerace suffered a spiral fracture of the right fibula. On April 28, Firefighter Gerace was showing signs of respiratory difficulty. Upon the arrival of emergency personnel, Firefighter Gerace stopped breathing and went into cardiac arrest. Firefighter Gerace was transported to a local hospital where the medical team was unable to revive him and pronounced him deceased. An autopsy was performed and indicated he suffered a pulmonary embolism that was determined to be a complication of the initial fracture and the recovery process.

William F. Gerace was born on October 18, 1962, to Anthony J. Sr. and Rosalie A. Gerace. He is survived by his wife of 14 years, Barbara A. Shelton-Gerace; son, Cameron, and daughter, Jessica Gerace; along with his brothers, Tony, Ted, and Joe.

Remembering



Frank Matagrano

New Milford Fire Department –

New Jersey

Volunteer Firefighter

December 23, 2017

Age: 75



*F*rank Matagrano was born and raised in New York City, but made his home in New Milford, New Jersey. He was a beloved husband, father, and grandfather, a loyal friend, and a dedicated volunteer in his community. A life member of New Milford Fire Company #1, Frank was an active and dedicated firefighter. He suffered a heart attack responding to his last call.

Over his decades of service, Frank served the fire company as an engineer and trustee who received the Firefighter of the Year Award in 1998, a Unit Citation in 1991, and a Distinguished Volunteer Service Award in 1993.

Frank was also an accomplished artist, photographer, blacksmith, and woodworker.

He will be forever missed.



*J*ohn was raised on the family's ranch 17 miles from Nara Visa, New Mexico. He was always a very hard worker, whether it was building fence, branding, working cattle, or studying to further himself so he could reach his dream of owning his own ranch one day.

He received his bachelor's degree from New Mexico State University while being on the rodeo team riding bareback horses. He received his master's degree from Texas A&M and then his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree in 1971 from Colorado State University. While going to college he worked at a number of jobs, including being a lab assistant, to pay his way all on his own.

John always had a love of animals, especially horses. His career began at Golden Animal Hospital. Then he moved to Arapaho Animal Clinic owned by Dr. Farrow, a close friend. Eventually, he was offered a position at the State of Colorado Racing Commission as a track vet and worked his way up to being chief veterinarian for the State of Colorado. When he retired, he bought the family ranch he grew up on.

After moving back to New Mexico, he worked with his brother helping with the embryo transfer program and whatever else needed to be done. John was a very unassuming person who studied the Bible in detail and was a true believer. He strongly believed in self-discipline and that planning plus hard work would eventually equal success. He believed that treating everyone with honesty and respect was essential and, most importantly, success was not success if you have to deceive, lie, steal, or cheat.

He greatly enjoyed seeing and visiting with his many friends from his days of "rodeoing" and working at the vet clinics in the Denver area and the race track. He seldom missed watching the rodeos and bull riding on TV. He was involved with many local activities such as the cemetery association, community center and volunteer fire department.

Remembering



Johnny C. Cammack

Nara Visa Fire Department –

New Mexico

Volunteer Firefighter

June 22, 2017

Age: 74



Remembering



Ronald D. Biller

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Lieutenant
September 18, 2016
Age: 77*



*R*onald Dean Biller, 77, died on September 18, 2016, from illness related to his response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center.

He was born in 1939 on Staten Island to Robert Crawford Biller and Evelyn Ruth Biller. He graduated from Tottenville High School in 1956 and enlisted in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve while attending college.

In 1963, he married Margaret Mornan; they celebrated their 53rd anniversary on September 14, 2016.

He worked at Anaconda-Jurden as a draftsman and at Sears before being hired by the FDNY in 1967. With the FDNY, he worked in Manhattan (Engine 28/Ladder 11), Brooklyn (Engine 282/Ladder 148), and Staten Island (Engine 151/Ladder 76) as a firefighter and fire marshal. After a 35-year career, he retired as a lieutenant in 2002 while assigned to Engine 151. He worked at the World Trade Center after the terrorist attack in 1993 and again after the 9/11 attacks.

He served in the U.S. Coast Guard for 36 years and achieved the rank of commander. In 1997, he received his bachelor's degree from John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY, graduating magna cum laude.

He was a member of South Baptist Church of Tottenville.

He is deeply missed by his family, friends, and all who knew him.



Remembering

Volunteer Firefighter David E. Carr, 62, of Winthrop, New York, made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty on November 17, 2017, after returning home from fighting a large industrial fire throughout the night.

David was the epitome of a volunteer, belonging to multiple organizations throughout the community for over 30 years. Born June 10, 1955, the son of Elwood and Audrey (Starks) Carr, David was a 1973 graduate of St. Lawrence Central School. David was united in marriage on May 4, 1974, with his high school sweetheart, Lisa Rufa.

David was a longtime member of the Brasher-Winthrop Volunteer Fire Department and the Tri-Town Volunteer Rescue Squad. When help was needed, David responded. It didn't matter if it was a local problem or if it was an emergency elsewhere in New York. He was past fire chief of the Winthrop Volunteer Fire Department and maintained an active membership after the merger between Brasher and Winthrop in 1998 that formed the current Brasher-Winthrop Volunteer Fire Department. David was a pump operator, tower operator, truck driver, and tanker driver. For 17 years, he was a member of the Tri-Town Volunteer Rescue Squad, where he served as chief for four years.

Throughout this time, David received many awards and official recognitions. In 2016, he was recognized for his commitment in responding to the most calls. He was a first responder, as well as an EMT for seven years. Whether it was the fire department or the rescue squad, David could be counted on for being a trusted mentor and friend. There were many trainings which David had already completed, but would take again to help a younger firefighter get through. He always had a kind word and a smile for everyone.

Most importantly, throughout David's time as a volunteer, he was a friend, always there when needed.



David E. Carr

*Brasher-Winthrop Volunteer
Fire Department – New York
Volunteer Firefighter/Operator*

November 4, 2017

Age: 62



Remembering



Virginia A. Culkin-Spinelli

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
December 19, 2011
Age: 57*



*R*etired New York City firefighter Virginia Culkin-Spinelli, of St. Augustine, Florida, formerly of Point Lookout, New York, died December 19, 2011, after a year-long battle with cancer related to her response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center.

Virginia, known to friends and family as “Ginny Ann,” was one of the first female firefighters to work for the FDNY. She joined the department in 1982 and worked for Engine Company 226 in Brooklyn and Engine Company 329 in Queens. She retired in 2002 after a 20-year career.

After her retirement, she and her husband moved to St. Augustine, Florida, a community she had visited for many years.

She is remembered for her toughness and bravery, her big smile, and her love of animals.

She was survived by her loving husband, Vincent "Vinny" Spinelli; daughter and son-in-law, Shannon Culkin and Sean Llewellyn; brother and sister-in-law, William and Helen Magale; and her grandson, Liam Llewellyn.



*G*eorge D. Eysser was born in the Bronx on August 27, 1939. His father, Herbert, was a member of the New York Fire Patrol, and his godfather was a fireman. George's interest in the fire department started early in life when he and his brother, Herbert, "buffed" and rode with local fire companies.

George enlisted in the United States Navy in 1958 and was honorably discharged from the reserves in 1964. He was appointed to the FDNY in 1962, which marked the start of his 40-year career. He was first assigned to Ladder 25 on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. Six months later he transferred to 4 Truck in the heart of Midtown, later worked in the Safety Battalion, and finally Ladder 105 in Brooklyn.

In 1974, he was promoted to lieutenant and assigned to Ladder 124, "the Tonka Truck," in Bushwick, Brooklyn, where he spent the height of the FDNY "war years." He was promoted to captain in 1983 and served as the captain of Ladder 6 in Chinatown, where he was the company commander for 10 years. He was promoted to battalion chief in 1994, served as the chief of Marine Operations, and was eventually assigned to Battalion 35 in Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

In May 2001, Battalion Chief George Eysser had a medical emergency while operating at a 2nd alarm fire. He narrowly survived that incident, but it would mean the end of his career. He submitted his retirement papers in June 2001, but the events of 9/11 stopped that process. He returned to Marine Operations and spent months helping with the rescue and recovery efforts at Ground Zero. He also spent countless hours escorting families via fireboat to the World Trade Center site.

George dedicated his life to the New York City Fire Department and the people it served. He came to work focused on what was important to the job—the people. He trained members and passed along his knowledge and experience. He spoke of the traditions of the job and how important they are. A renowned historian of the FDNY, he studied and passed along the department's history. George did his part to leave the job better than he found it, and he never forgot how important it was to take care of his people and the families. He retired in summer 2002. Unfortunately, he became ill with a 9/11 related cancer and passed away on June 13, 2015.

He is survived by his wife of 46 years, Elaine; his son, FDNY Battalion Chief Christopher Eysser (Patty); his daughter, Laura Marich (Tom); and his grandchildren, Matthew, Brooke, Alyse, and Ryan.

Remembering



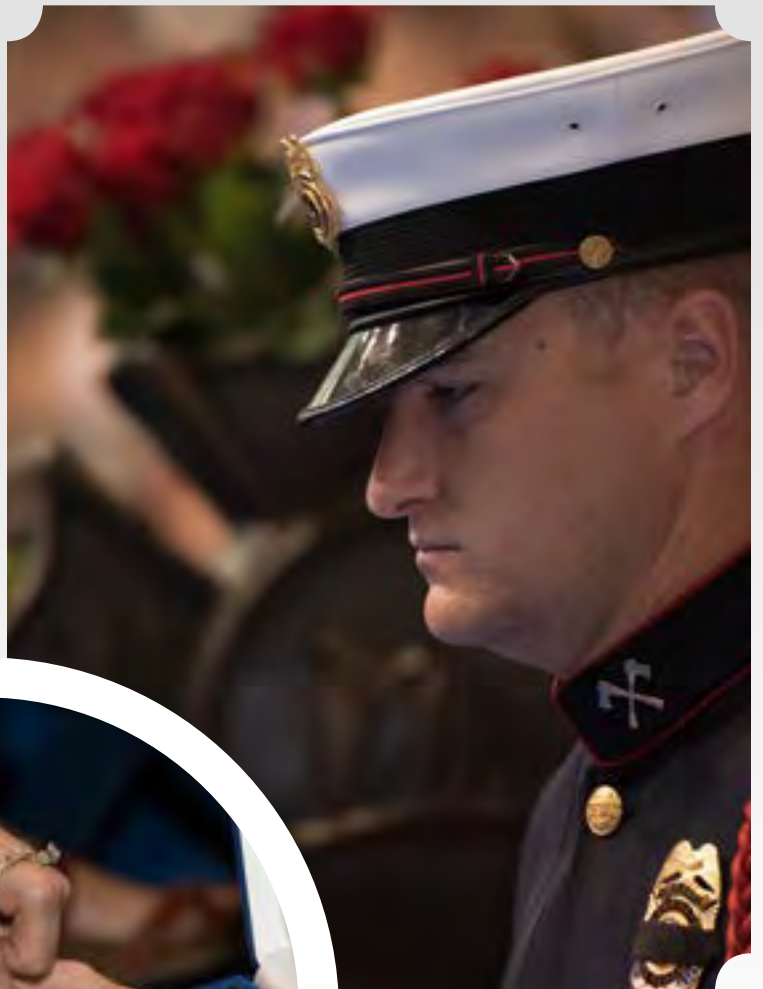
George D. Eysser

***Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Battalion Chief***

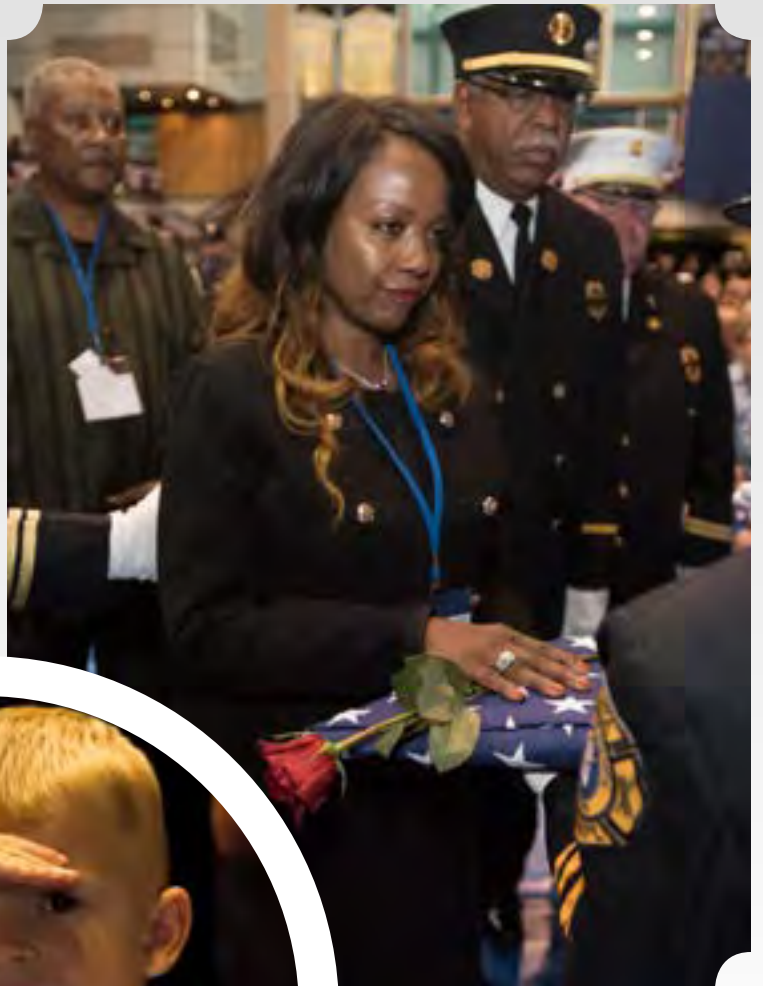
June 13, 2015

Age: 75





37th Annual National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend ★ October 6 - 7, 2018



37th Annual National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend ★ October 6 - 7, 2018

Remembering



Robert A. “Fitchie” Fitch

*East Herkimer
Fire Department – New York
Volunteer Firefighter/
Safety Officer
November 28, 2017
Age: 60*



*R*obert A. Fitch, known by many of his friends and acquaintances as "Fitchie," was born January 17, 1957, and was a lifelong resident of Herkimer, New York. He died November 28, 2017. He was a member of the East Herkimer Volunteer Fire Department, where he served as a safety officer.

Bob was a graduate of Herkimer High School, class of 1975. He was employed as a custodian for the Herkimer Central School District until his retirement in 2012.

He enjoyed camping and attending stock car races.

Bob was very active in the New Life Church. He was also a major contributor and participant in Habitat for Humanity, acting as the construction chairman, helping to build and rehabilitate several homes over the years. He was also involved in numerous community activities and functions representing Habitat, including pulling the Habitat float in parades and helping put on the annual fundraising breakfast.

Bob was known as a jack-of-all-trades, and there was very little he could not do. He was always ready, willing, and able to come to the rescue and lend a helping hand. His knowledge and expertise were second only to his great personality, as he could make anyone laugh. When asked how he was, Bob's response was always "simply marvelous." Bob was kind-hearted and respectful, always concerned for others and putting the needs of his loved ones first.

Robert is deeply missed by Deborah, his wife of 36 years; daughter, Stephanie; granddaughters, Aubry and Breanne; as well as his mother-in-law, Sharon; brothers, sister, niece, and nephew.

You left us beautiful memories; your love is still our guide and, although we cannot see you, you are always at our side.

*W*illiam "Billy" Gormley was born on May 25, 1964, in Brooklyn, New York, where he lived for the first 40 years of his life. He was happily married to his wife, Lizanne, for 27 years, and together they raised their daughter, Bridget, and their triplet sons, William Jr., Raymond, and Kevin.

After high school and in the wake of Desert Storm, Billy joined the United States Marine Corps. Upon his return, he continued to serve his country and community when he joined the FDNY in 1988. He spent the majority of his career at Ladder Company 174 in East Flatbush, Brooklyn, until his retirement.

Billy always said that he had the greatest job in the world. His brother firefighters were an extension of his family. For him, he was never really off the job. Even on his days off he would follow local fire companies to a job. Billy was always the first to step up, to help, to be there. He knew his brothers needed him, and he was always there for them. Retirement was bittersweet for Billy, but he always remained close to the job, firehouse, and his brothers.

Billy and his family moved to Vermont, where he bought an old farmhouse; using his carpentry skills, he turned it into a beautiful home for his family. He participated in local politics and helped coach his sons' football team for six years, helping lead them to a state championship.

On September 11, 2001, and throughout the following months, Billy helped in the rescue and recovery efforts at Ground Zero. The devastation of the attacks left him, as well as his fellow first responders, with physical and emotional scars that never healed. The consequences of his time at Ground Zero would ultimately end his life far too early. Despite this, Billy would have done it all over again. He was a man of integrity, sacrificing his health and life to help others.

Ask anyone who knew Billy, and they will all tell you that he was a selfless and consistent man. He never had any complaints and was always happy to see you. Billy always made those he was with feel comfortable and welcome, treating everyone like an old friend. Despite his untimely passing, Billy's memory is kept alive by his kind spirit, wisdom, and the impression he left on everyone lucky enough to know him.

Billy is deeply missed by his wife, Lizanne; his daughter, Bridget; his sons, Billy Jr., Raymond, and Kevin; his sisters, Dorothy, Katherine, and Maureen; his brother, James; his extended family that includes 26 nieces and nephews; and his countless friends.

Remembering



**William J.
Gormley**

***Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter***

June 14, 2017

Age: 53



Remembering



John R. Graziano Sr.

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York*

Career Captain

March 13, 2015

Age: 63



Captain John R. Graziano was larger than life. He was devoted to his family, friends, and career. My father was our hero growing up. He showed us how to love and respect those around us and how to handle and deal with the situations that can arise through life. He taught us loyalty and devotion to our family. He was a shoulder to cry on, an ear to listen, and a voice of reason.

In February 1982, he received the call from the FDNY. From the day he stepped foot in the academy to the day he retired, he was in love and devoted to the department. At the start of his career he was assigned to Ladder 172/Engine 330 in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn. He was promoted to the rank of lieutenant in October 1995 and assigned to Ladder 132/Engine 280 in downtown Brooklyn, where one of his toughest challenges as a supervisor occurred on 9/11/2001. He had been out with an injury that summer and was due in for the night tour. However, that morning when the Towers were hit, he responded. He knew his brothers would need him, no matter the cost. For months, he spent day in and day out searching for civilians and fellow firefighters lost or missing at Ground Zero.

For years, after the tragedy of 9/11, he was a family liaison for seven families of brother firefighters who were lost in Ladder 132/Engine 280 and gave his all to help these families cope with their loss. He was promoted to captain in July 2002 and assigned to Ladder 78/Engine 155 in Staten Island. In October 2003, when the Staten Island Ferry crashed into a concrete pier, he ran the search and rescue operation where 11 people were killed and 165 were injured. In 2008, he made the toughest decision he ever had to. After 26 years, he decided to hang up the gear and start a new chapter in his life. For five years, he lived life to the fullest.

In July 2013, he took on his toughest battle yet, after being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer from the toxins at Ground Zero. He fought for 22 months. In March 2015, he was able to don his uniform one more time for his son's graduation from the NYPD Emergency Service Unit Specialized Training School.

He passed later that week, but his strength, heart, and dedication and love to family and friends kept him here to see that happen. He will forever be our hero, father, and best friend. He will never be forgotten; we will never forget.

*W*alter E. Hauser was born on January 25, 1949, in Rochester, New York, to Elizabeth and Walter Hauser.

He served as an MP in the U.S. Army. In his younger years, he worked for the U.S. Coast Guard and at the Pentagon.

Walter was a City of Rochester firefighter and a former Fireman of the Year recipient. He was injured in the McCurdy's department store fire in February 1981, while rescuing fellow firefighters from the blaze. Exposed to toxic fumes, he suffered severe damage to his lungs and eventually endured a heart and lung transplant and cancer. He was a fireman's fireman, dedicated to the job and modest about his heroic actions.

He was an outdoorsman and enjoyed collecting and lecturing about American Indian artifacts.

He was survived by his wife, Kathy (Verrone) Hauser; son, Chad Hauser; sister, Sandy (John) Gaylord; stepson, Eric Eisenhauer; grandchildren, Alexandra, Jeffery, and Miranda; great-grandson, Bobby; and many lifelong friends.

Walter is remembered as a smart and friendly person.

Remembering



Walter E. Hauser

***Rochester Fire Department –
New York***

Career Firefighter

July 2, 2011

Age: 62



Remembering



Daniel Heglund

Fire Department City of New

York – New York

Career Firefighter

September 22, 2014

Age: 58



*D*aniel Heglund was born on September 23, 1955. His parents were devoted to the Salvation Army and inspired Dan's altruistic tendencies. Growing up in Centerport, New York, Dan joined the volunteer fire department and was dedicated to helping his community. Dan married Arlene in August 1986 and was blessed with the birth of his daughter, Amanda, in November 1987 and son, Sam, in July 1990. In 1993, the family moved to Rocky Point, New York, where Dan joined the volunteer fire department. Amanda and Sam brightened Dan's life, and he adored them.

Dan became a NYC firefighter in September 1982 and was detailed to Engine 75, later transferring to Ladder 33. E75 and L33 were both housed on Jerome Avenue in the Bronx, affectionately referred to as "the Animal House." In 1993, Dan transferred to Rescue 4 in Queens. During his time in both houses, he experienced great camaraderie and achieved his goal of making a difference in peoples' lives. He received a chest full of metals but never talked about them, attempting to spare his family the worry of how dangerous his job was. They knew and always worried, especially on September 11, 2001.

On that day, Dan was working light duty at Rescue 3, having been injured at a previous fire. He finished his tour and was heading home when he received a call from Arlene telling him a plane crashed into the World Trade Center's North Tower. Dan turned around and headed to Special Operations Command, where he jumped into a van with other responding firefighters and raced to the scene. The South Tower came down while they were en route, and the North Tower came down just as they arrived. As they ran to the towers, all they saw were piles of burning, twisted, smoking mounts and flattened fire and rescue rigs.

Dan began searching for survivors, which soon became a recovery mission that lasted eight months, and Dan spent every tour digging. Leave no man behind is the firefighters' creed, and during those long months they lived by it. All the firefighters on duty from Rescue 3 that Dan left that morning perished, as well as all his brothers on duty from Rescue 4.

Dan was diagnosed with World Trade Center related cancer in October 2012. He suffered for two years, fighting to live. He died peacefully at home in the arms of Arlene, Amanda, and Sam. Dan was a proud firefighter. He helped everyone in need, on and off duty. He saved lives. Dan is missed every minute of every day.

Remembering

*R*onald William Hinkle, of Liberty, New York, died on October 17, 2017, several hours after responding to assist at the scene of a motor vehicle accident.

Born on July 10, 1946, in Brooklyn, New York, he was the son of the late George W. Hinkle and Florence Schlagel.

Ronald proudly served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1963 to 1967 during the Vietnam War. He married the love of his life, Bridget, on July 1, 1965. He worked his way up to district superintendent for the New York City Department of Sanitation.

He volunteered with the Loch Sheldrake Fire Department for 18 years.

He was a member of the VFW, American Legion, Elks Club, and Fire Police.

He enjoyed the simple things in life—smoking cigars, eating a hot dog, watching TV, and cooking. Being in the kitchen was a real passion for him; he liked feeding people.

Ronald lived life by his own set of rules, and everyone loved him for it. He had a unique sense of humor and was larger than life. He was there for anyone who needed him.

He was a loving husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather and friend. He was survived by his wife of 52 years, Bridget Hinkle; his children, Brian Hinkle (Jackie), Kenneth Hinkle, Michael Hinkle, and Sharon Depew (Ralph); grandchildren, James, Sarah, Jonathan, Kayla, Kenneth Jr., Jenna, Kassandra, Ashley, Jessica, Ralphie, Hannah, Veronica, Tabitha and Victoria; ten great-grandchildren; his brother, Gary Hinkle; and his canine companions, Corky, Trouble, and Callie. He was predeceased by his grandson, Zachary.

He is deeply missed and fondly remembered.



Ronald W. Hinkle

*Loch Sheldrake
Fire Department – New York
Volunteer Firefighter*

October 17, 2017

Age: 71



Remembering



David L. Jahnes

*Nyack Fire Department –
New York*

Volunteer Firefighter

December 18, 2017

Age: 58



David Lloyd Jahnes was born May 26, 1959, in Teaneck, New Jersey. He responded to his last call too soon on December 18, 2017. He was a loving son, brother, husband, father, and grandfather. For most of his adult life, he lived in Nyack, New York, where, in 2001, he became a volunteer firefighter. His interest in being a firefighter started at a young age. His father was a volunteer firefighter, and whenever he would hear a fire horn blow in town he would immediately run to listen to the fire scanner. If fire trucks drove past the house, he would run out to watch them.

David was a dedicated fireman. He was there to respond, day or night, when the fire alarm would sound. He took a very active part in the Nyack Fire Department, becoming a member of Nyack Fire Patrol in 2001. He served in the line officers ranks and served as captain from 2008 to 2011. Thereafter, he served as the engineer for the fire apparatus and the marine unit. In 2015, he was instrumental in moving forward to secure a new fireboat. He began by designing the new 34-foot Metalcraft fire/rescue boat from bow to stern. He spent countless hours thinking of anything and everything it would need. In June 2018, a boat dedication ceremony was held to name the fire vessel in his honor: the FF David L. Jahnes.

David had a passion for the sea. He loved anything involving it. He owned several boats over the years, and his dream was to retire and live on his sailboat. The Hudson River in New York was his backyard. He knew it like the back of his hand. Some of his best times were spent on the water with family and friends.

David was the true meaning of a friend. He was always willing to lend a hand and never expected anything in return. His kindness and generosity were endless. David had a passion for life, a wonderful sense of humor, and he loved to make others laugh. Beyond all, he was a wonderful father and grandfather. David managed to sustain a very close relationship with his family despite living thousands of miles apart.

He is in our hearts, always, and is truly missed by all.

When I hear about a hero, and all the great things they have done, it reminds me of my father. He is the greatest one!

*I*n the 24 hours before he died at age 80, Ex-Assistant Chief Richard Kaplan of the Jericho Fire Department responded to four emergencies.

For more than 50 years, Ex-Chief Kaplan responded to calls at all hours of the day and night to assist his neighbors. He was a firefighter, a leader, and a mentor. To the men and women of the Jericho Fire Department, particularly his Trident Engine Company #3, his loss is unimaginable. Ex-Chief Kaplan twice ran up the ranks of lieutenant and captain, from 1969-1973 and from 1989-1991. He served as assistant chief from 1973-1978 and as fire commissioner from 1981-1988.

“The fire service was the biggest part of his life,” his son David said. “That was what he did when he wasn’t working. No golf or anything like that. It was fire and family, his kids and grandchildren.” He answered more alarms than any other firefighter in the history of the Jericho Fire Department, receiving one award after another for “Most Alarms” answered annually. He drove the fire truck and the ambulance and was a card-carrying EMT. He was “Steady Eddie.”

Born in Manhattan on September 30, 1936, he graduated from William Howard Taft High School in the Bronx in 1953. He attended the University of Illinois, then transferred to New York University, where he received a bachelor’s degree in business administration in 1958. He met his future wife, Judy Kromash, in 1960, at the advertising agency where they both worked. The couple moved to Jericho in 1965, and he joined the Jericho Fire Department the next year.

During his years in the department, he responded to emergencies large and small, including the Avianca flight that crashed into a hillside in Cove Neck in 1990, killing 73 of the 158 people aboard. His son recalled the time his father was at the scene of a circus truck that struck an overpass, which allowed some of the animals to escape. As a reporter asked about reports of snakes on the loose, he slid a radio antenna up the man’s pant leg.

He retired from the financial services industry 19 years ago and loved to travel. He and Judy enjoyed cruising on a regular basis and gambling in Las Vegas and Atlantic City.

Ex-Chief Kaplan is survived by his wife and three sons, Michael Kaplan of South Huntington; David Kaplan of Melville, chief of the Melville Fire Department; and Robert Kaplan of Syosset, a past chief of the Jericho and Syosset Fire Departments.

Remembering



Richard Kaplan

***Jericho Fire Department –
New York***

Volunteer Firefighter/EMT

January 23, 2017

Age: 80



Remembering



James J. Lanza

Fire Department

City of New York – New York

Career Firefighter

April 6, 2017

Age: 71



*F*irefighter James “Jimmy” Lanza devoted his life of service to his country and community for over 50 years. He served in the U.S. Navy during Vietnam and was a member of a crew of flying AWACs. After his military service, Jimmy served as a FDNY firefighter for 28 years with Engine 53/ Ladder 43 in East Harlem, as part of “El Barrio’s Bravest.” During his tenure with the FDNY, Jimmy spent hundreds of hours at the World Trade Center with his fellow FDNY comrades during the search and recovery mission.

He traveled with members of the FDNY to New Orleans to assist in the rescue, search, and recovery mission in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. He served on the board of the FDNY Fire Family Transport Foundation and devoted a lot of time to charities such as Wounded Warriors. Jimmy traveled on multiple occasions to D.C. to visit veterans in military hospitals and assisted in many sponsored events for Wounded Warriors and their families. He volunteered with the Red Cross and was certified in many areas to participate in Red Cross activities when devastations occurred within the country. Jimmy was known as the “Overbearing Good Samaritan” because he helped everyone, everywhere. His family believed Jimmy was truly a gift from God. It was an honor to have him in the family. When not in service to others, he was an avid skier and scuba diver. Jimmy succumbed to 9/11-related brain cancer on April 6, 2017.

Jimmy, a lifetime Woodside, Queens resident, was president of the Boulevard Gardens Co-Op for over 15 years. In this capacity, he reached out to the local police precinct, the local community board, and NYC Co-Op Board to voice concerns and initiate recommendations to improve his community. As the longest standing president of his co-op, Jimmy was instrumental in the fight to bring fair assessment of property values of co-ops in NYC. At the end of his tenure, the co-op had greatly improved their financial condition, and Jimmy introduced many enhancements to improve the safety and daily lives of his co-op’s residents.

A lifetime member of the American Legion, Jimmy served as commander of Post 1836 in Boulevard Gardens. He helped to bring recognition of the service of veterans to the community and visited many schools around Memorial Day and Veteran’s Day.

James “Jimmy” Lanza’s devotion to his community, his city, and his country is beyond reproach, and he is commended for his lifetime efforts. His contributions are in keeping with the highest tradition of service to the country and reflect great credit upon himself, his community, his city and his country.

Remembering

Firefighter Brian Malloy, Badge #3472, joined the FDNY on October 7, 1985, and began his career at "Bowery U" on Great Jones Street in Lower Manhattan, Engine 33/Ladder 9. He was there until 1993, when he transferred to Cougar Country on Castleton Avenue on Staten Island, Engine 157/Ladder 80. He served just over 22 years on the job, retiring on October 22, 2007.

Brian helped the rescue and recovery efforts for nearly four months at Ground Zero after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. He was always known as someone who put others before himself. If someone needed help, he would be there in an instant. He sacrificed himself and time with his family to help others in that time of need and made the ultimate sacrifice on March 28, 2011, due to health-related issues brought on by the conditions at Ground Zero.

He is survived by his wife, Bonnie; his two sons, Christopher and Matthew; his new grandson, Jack Brian; his sisters, MaryEllen, Maureen, Eileen, and Dierdre; his brother, James; and his countless nieces and nephews.



Brian C. Malloy

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York*

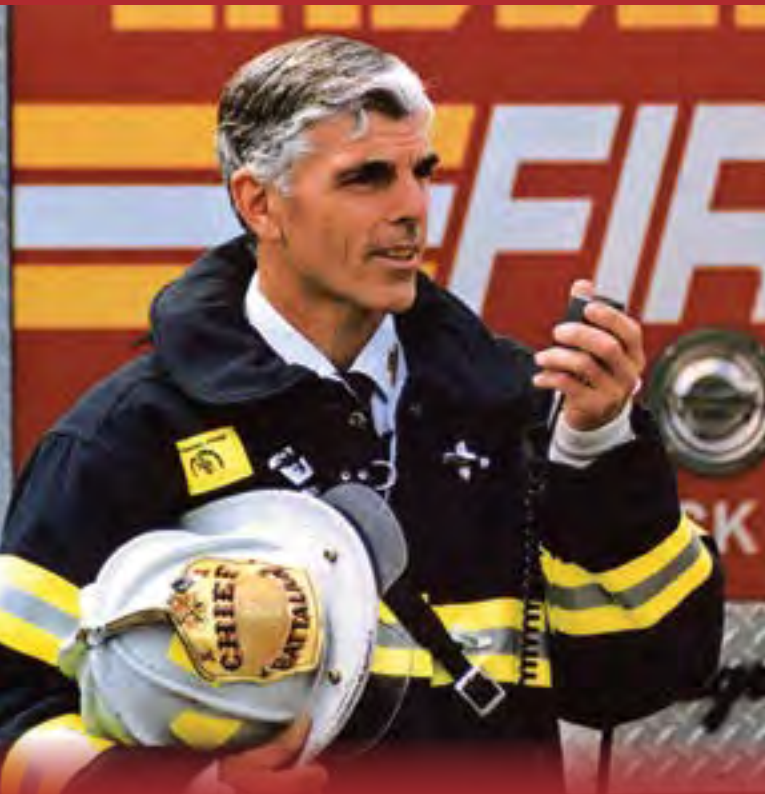
Career Firefighter

March 28, 2011

Age: 52



Remembering



Richard E. McGuire

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Battalion Chief*

December 9, 2012

Age: 65



*B*attalion Chief Richard McGuire joined the FDNY in 1968 and served the City of New York for 33 years. He was first appointed to Engine 214 in Brooklyn, New York. Following his promotion to lieutenant he served in Ladder 108 and Ladder 20. Dick had been an athlete all of his life and as a captain he was able to fully incorporate his love for a fit and healthy lifestyle into his FDNY career. He became the training coordinator at the Fire Academy on Randall's Island, New York, and supervised the department's fitness unit. Whether he was training new recruits or rehabbing injured firefighters, he participated actively in every event. If they ran, he ran. If they lifted weights, he lifted weights. When one of the young probies complained that they were too old for such strenuous activity, Dick reminded them that they were all being carefully monitored and that he was older than all of them. As a battalion chief he commanded multiple fire companies in Queens, New York, and was responsible for their safety, training, and administration.

During his leisure time, Dick was an avid runner. He competed in marathons, decathlons, and escarpment trial races. He represented the FDNY in the World Police and Fire Games in California and the Northeast Combat Challenge in New England. Dick loved football. He was an active member of the Bravest Football Club and competed yearly in the hotly contested Finest vs Bravest game (police vs. firefighters) for the city championship. He coached amateur football leagues, teaching young athletes the safety aspects of the game while emphasizing the need to always play fairly and win or lose gracefully. Dick devoted time to the New York Firefighters Burn Center and was active in many supportive projects and fundraising.

Dick took tremendous pride in being a member of the FDNY family. He fully acknowledged both the privilege and obligation that came with the oath he took in 1968. He was not on duty on September 11, 2001. Like most of his colleagues, he raced into the city. Thankfully he survived that horrible day and came home to his family. Many of our friends did not. Sadly, on December 9, 2012, he succumbed to the aftereffects of his exposure at Ground Zero. We are grateful for the extra years we had. Dick is loved and missed by his wife, Maureen; his sons and daughters-in-law, Rich and Jen, Joe and Traci; his daughter, Carol; and his six grandchildren, Richie, Patty, Liam, Tommy, Casey, and Shannon.

Remembering

*M*artin J. McHale, or “Woody” as he was called by his friends, joined the New York City Fire Department (FDNY) in 1989. He worked in Brooklyn's Engine 252, which later became Squad 252, and was promoted to fire marshal in 1999.

Aside from his cherished wife, Hope, and sons, Matthew John and Ryan Damien, Woody's job was his life. Fiercely devoted to the FDNY, he personified all that it symbolizes: bravery, dedication, and public service. He genuinely loved his work and brought his heart and soul to the department, its brotherhood, and the city he served. He was our protector—and the public's—in every sense of the word.

He was the proud recipient of numerous medals and awards throughout his career, including a B Medal in 1995, unit citations in 2005 and 2006, and a posthumously awarded Deputy Commissioner Christine R. Godek Medal in 2013. In October 2014, a playground was dedicated in his honor in Fort Totten, New York, across from Citywide North Command, where he last worked.

He was a man of strong character and integrity both on and off duty and displayed his innate leadership abilities in everything he did. When tragedy struck his beloved city on 9/11, he was off duty but arrived before the towers collapsed to be of service to his community and colleagues. He then spent weeks at the site during the rescue and recovery periods. In happier times, Woody played on the FDNY football team “The Bravest Football Club” for two decades and was captain for twelve of those years.

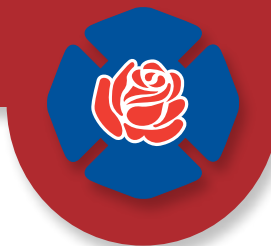
Woody was a man larger than life, filled with the infectious energy, passion, and enthusiasm of a boy and the love, kindness, and concern for others of a rare and remarkable man. He was loved by all that knew him and, at over six feet tall, was often referred to as a “gentle giant.” Woody was extremely proud of his Irish and Italian heritage and was a very patriotic man who deeply loved this country. His passions included football, cooking, and working out daily, and he loved sharing these interests with those in his life, whether it was cooking for fellow firefighters and family or going to the gym with friends.

Woody had a genuine love for life and is greatly missed by his family. He is survived by his wife, Hope (Gottlieb) McHale; twin sons, Matthew John and Ryan Damien; mother, Catherine McHale; and brother, James McHale.



Martin “Woody” McHale

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Fire Marshal
December 24, 2012
Age: 50*



Remembering



Robert E. Newman

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
February 9, 2017
Age: 70*



*R*obert Newman died on February 9, 2017, from lung cancer related to his response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center.

As a young man, he was drafted into the U.S. Army and served for a year in the Vietnam War. He was awarded a Purple Heart. He met his future wife, Claire, shortly after he returned home from Vietnam.

He was hired by the FDNY in 1968 and retired after a 39-year career. He served all of those years with Ladder 18 on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. He loved his firehouse and the camaraderie he shared with his “second family.” He and his fellow firefighters responded to the World Trade Center site after the first plane hit on September 11, 2001, and they were there when the Twin Towers fell.

He was survived by his wife, Claire; his sons, Bobby and Michael; and his sister, Kathleen Smith.



Remembering

*M*ichael R. O'Hanlon was born on November 1, 1957, in the Bronx to Con and Ann O'Hanlon. Mike married Maggie (nee Loftus), the love of his life, on September 27, 1981. They shared over 36 loving years together. They moved to Cortlandt Manor and raised three children, Katherine, Michael Jr., and Martin, with the same values and traditions they experienced.

Mike attended schools in the Bronx and Yonkers, graduated from Mount St. Michael Academy in the Bronx, and attended Iona College. He joined the Fire Department of New York in 1982 and was fiercely proud to be part of the FDNY, which he called the "greatest job on Earth." He was assigned to the "House on the Hill," E68/L49 in the High-bridge section of the Bronx. He and his fellow firefighters participated extensively in the rescue and recovery effort at Ground Zero after the collapse of the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001.

Mike was a member of the FDNY Emerald Society and Holy Name Society. He marched with the FDNY in numerous St. Patrick's Day parades. He was honored to represent the FDNY as grand marshal of the 2002 Missoula, Montana, AOH St. Patrick's Day parade, the first held after the 9/11 attacks. In 2012, Mike received an Outstanding Service Award from Bronx Community Board 4 for his dedicated service to the people of New York.

Mike and Maggie enjoyed family vacations to Ireland and Long Beach Island and hosted many family gatherings at their home. Keeping their family close-knit was important to them. Mike always had a smile on his face, a big welcome for all he would meet. He was fiercely proud of his Irish heritage. Mike had the great honor of being grand marshal of the 2017 Peekskill St. Patrick's Day parade. He was a proud member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians Division 18, where he was named Man of the Year in 2016. Mike was an accomplished traditional button accordion player and loved to entertain his family and friends with Irish tunes. When Mike's daughter, Katherine, married Brett Schlosser on Oct. 22, 2016, Mike and Kate showed off their Irish dancing talents in the best father-daughter dance of all time!

Mike retired in 2013 after a distinguished 30-year career, though he was fond of reminding everyone that you never really retire from the FDNY. On August 28, 2017, Mike passed away from a 9/11 cancer. He is deeply missed by his family, including numerous relatives both here and in Ireland, his extended FDNY family, and many friends who were always inspired by his courage, kindness, generous spirit and loving heart.



Michael R. O'Hanlon

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter*

June 14, 2017

Age: 59



Remembering



Joseph "Toolie" O'Toole

Fire Department

City of New York – New York

Career Firefighter

December 12, 2016

Age: 61



Joseph "Toolie" O'Toole, Ladder 41, Bronx, New York, passed on December 12, 2016, after a long, courageous battle with cancer related to his response after the 9/11 Terror Attacks on the World Trade Center.

Toolie was born and raised in Bronx, New York. He married the love of his life, Christine ("Edith," as he always called her) in 1979. They shared 38 loving years together and were blessed with three children, Jeannette, Betty (Chris), and Brian (Kristina). He was lovingly known as "Poppy" to his grandchildren, Milo, Charlie, Sadie, Angelina, Lucas, and Izabel. Toolie was the most selfless, loving, caring man, the ultimate family man.

And what better fit for the ultimate family man than being one of New York's Bravest, a brotherhood that would last a lifetime and beyond. During his 20 years as a fireman, he was assigned to Ladder 41/Engine 90 in "da Bronx." His childlike playfulness made him one of the most loved brothers in the firehouse. Whether he was doing little projects in the house or playing jokes on the guys, he always managed to bring a smile to everyone's face.

Toolie was truly one of a kind. He always put others first and himself last. He never asked for anything but gave everything, especially during his time down at Ground Zero for the cleanup. He worked on the pile endlessly for the full nine months until the last day they closed the site, only coming home occasionally for a few hours to see his family.

Toolie was an amazing man who always made you feel special, no matter who you were. Toolie is missed every second of every day and will never be forgotten, as he lives in all of our hearts. Toolie will always be one of New York's Bravest.

He is survived by his wife, Christine ("Edith"); children, Jeannette, Betty (Chris), Brian (Kristina); and grandchildren, Milo, Charlie, Sadie, Angelina, Lucas, and Izabel.

*R*ay Pfeifer was a FDNY firefighter from 1987-2014 and a responder on September 11, 2001. He was assigned to Engine 40/Ladder 35 in Manhattan.

Ray was married to Caryn. His son, Terence, also works for FDNY and is assigned to Bronx Engine Company 79. His daughter, Taylor, works with individuals with autism.

Ray grew up in Levittown, New York, and moved to Hicksville in 1989. He was at the World Trade Center after the buildings collapsed and worked there for months afterwards. In 2009, he was diagnosed with renal carcinoma with metastases to bones, lungs, and brain, a result of exposure to toxins while working at Ground Zero.

Ray was an advocate for the World Trade Center Health Program, 9/11 Health Care Bill/Zadroga Extension Bill with John Feal of the Feal Good Foundation, retired FDNY firefighter Kenny Specht, actor Jon Stewart, Congressman Peter King, and Senator Kristin Gillibrand. He traveled to Washington, DC, and New York City on many occasions to rally and try to educate senators and congress members on the need for the extension of this health care bill.

Ray Pfeifer passed away while in hospice care in Roslyn, New York, on May 28, 2017. A FDNY Family Assistance Van was donated in his name in April 2017.

The Ray Pfeifer Foundation raises money and donations for all 9/11 responders in need of medical equipment which is not covered by their insurance.

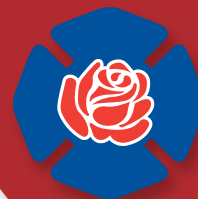


Remembering



Raymond J. Pfeifer

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
May 28, 2017
Age: 59*



Remembering



Steven Sorger

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Lieutenant*

March 11, 2017

Age: 62



*S*teven Sorger died on March 11, 2017, from complications of lung and heart disease related to his response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center.

As an FDNY lieutenant, he spent months working at Ground Zero. He retired a year later due to medical issues.

A street in North Bellmore, where he was a longtime resident, has been renamed in his honor.

He was a beloved brother, both to his family and the fire service, and a kind friend and neighbor.

*Brothers share a special bond,
Like blood, brotherhood,
It's thicker than water.
Friends may come and go,
And relationships may drift apart,
But brothers are forever.
Though the sun may rise in the east,
And set in the west,
We will still be brothers.
Though the seasons may change,
Spring, summer, fall and winter;
We will still be brothers.
What God has ordained,
No man can change,
Brothers are forever.*

- Alex Romero



Remembering

*L*awrence John Sullivan was born on June 17, 1959, to Aileen Jones and the late Lawrence J. Sullivan Sr. He was born and raised in Staten Island, where he met his wife, Virginia, during their senior year of high school. The two married in August 1980, sharing over 32 years together, and were blessed with five children, Larry, Robert, Erin, James, and Kathleen.

Larry worked as a dock builder with Dock Builders and Divers Local 1456 for several years before joining the FDNY in 1989. He first worked at Ladder 166, before spending his last 17 years assigned to Rescue 5. He was the company's senior chauffeur, a childhood dream fulfilled.

On September 11, 2001, Rescue 5 lost eleven of its members, leaving a huge void in the firehouse. Larry stepped in as the company's union delegate, a position he held with high regard. He dedicated his time to caring for the families who were left behind, as well as preserving the memory of his fallen brothers.

Larry was a larger than life figure, loved and respected by all who knew him. He was physically imposing, quick witted, and loud, yet also gentle and kind. He had a smile that could light up the room and a sense of humor that could make your stomach ache from laughing so hard. He was always there for everyone, whether it was his family, his community, or his firehouse.

Being the son of an Army veteran, Larry was a proud American. Hosting Wounded Warriors annually at the firehouse was an event he loved. "The job" and family were Larry's biggest passions, and the two were greatly connected. Larry taught his family the importance of sticking together and, in return, they were always there to show him how proud they were.

Outside of the fire department, Larry loved camping with his family, watching the Yankees, a cold beer, and spending time with his German Shepherd. He was a simple man who enjoyed the little things. He loved his wife dearly, and when he became ill from his time spent at Ground Zero, he told family and friends that his wife proved her wedding vows "in sickness and in health" time and time again.

Larry left a huge impact on everyone who knew him. There is no shortage of Sully stories. Those who knew him were left with a lifetime of memories and jokes to keep them laughing. His legacy will live on forever through his family and in the fire department community.

He is survived by his wife, their five children, and three grandchildren who will learn of their hero grandfather.



Lawrence J. Sullivan

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York*

Career Firefighter

August 20, 2012

Age: 53



Remembering



Charles S. Szoke

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
December 1, 2014
Age: 44*



*F*irefighter Charles S. Szoke was born August 27, 1970, to Charles and Carmela Szoke of Wantagh, New York. He passed away December 1, 2014, from 9/11-related illness. Charles was a dedicated man to his family, friends, and the brothers of the FDNY, Engine 34/ Ladder 21, Hell's Kitchen. He graduated from St. Dominic's High School of Oyster Bay, New York, and from St. John's University in Queens, New York.

Charles was always there when you needed him. He was a caring person on and off the job. Charles had tremendous faith and attended Catholic mass every Sunday. His motto was, "You have to stay strong and, instead of complaining, do more praying."

Charles was genuine, kind, funny, and lived a simple way of life. He enjoyed spending time with his family and friends. He knew how to be silly like a kid, make you laugh, and was always supportive. Charles had put his personal life on hold to take care of our parents, who were suffering from illnesses.

Charles loved music, especially the band Rush, and he attended many concerts with his brother. He enjoyed cooking, eating, traveling, fishing, carpentry, and spending time with his family. He also volunteered at a local dog shelter.

Over the past few years we lost our parents, Charles and Carmela Szoke. Charles is survived by his two sisters, brother, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, and two nieces.

Charles was an awesome brother, uncle, and friend. Chuck, we miss you each and every day. There's not a day that goes by that we don't think of you. We always look for the signs that you are around. XO.

Remembering



William N. Tolley

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter*

*April 20, 2017
Age: 42*



*F*irefighter William “Billy” Tolley was born on July 19, 1974, and tragically died on April 20, 2017, after falling to his death from the roof of a five-story building. Billy was appointed to the FDNY on September 14, 2003, spending his career as a member of Ladder 135. Before he was able to join the FDNY, Billy was a volunteer firefighter with the Hicksville Fire Department, Rescue 8, attaining the rank of lieutenant. In 2011, he joined the Bethpage Fire Department and was assigned to Ladder Company 3.

Billy was very passionate about his family, firefighting, drumming, and traveling. As tragic as it was that his life was cut short, he was able to achieve all of his passions. He also loved donating to various charities, mostly giving to veterans and children.

Billy met his wife, Marie, while working for FedEx, as he delivered packages to her office in 2000, and not too long after meeting they started dating. They married in the Bahamas in 2008 and had their daughter, Isabella, in 2009. As a family, they loved the beach, road trips, amusement parks, and ice cream.

Billy was an amazing drummer and was in a death metal band, “Internal Bleeding,” which formed in 1991 and released their debut album, *Voracious Contempt*, in 1995. His tours took him all over the world.

On September 16, 2017, a street renaming ceremony was held at the intersection of Acme and Crestline Avenues in Bethpage, a short distance from where the Tolley family lives. Also approved was a street renaming near Billy’s firehouse, Ladder 135, that is scheduled for September 26, 2018.

Billy will be remembered as a loving father and dedicated firefighter. He is survived by his wife, Marie, and 8-year-old daughter, Isabella; his mother, Marie DeCillis, and stepfather, Frank DeCillis; his father, Bob Tolley, and stepmother, Marian Tolley; and his brother, Bobby, and sister-in-law, Amy. He will be extremely missed by his entire family and his lifelong friends and will always be remembered by the amazing memories each one has and for his infectious smile.

Remembering



William E. “Woody” Woodlon

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter*

August 20, 2016

Age: 66



William E. Woodlon, “Woody” to all who knew him, was born in New York City to the late Ellsworth “Pete” and Willie Woodlon on April 13, 1950. The fourth of seven children, Woody was raised on the Lower East Side and educated in the New York City public school system. After graduation, he attended the City College of New York, where he met his future wife. On September 10, 1977, Woody and Barbara were united in holy matrimony.

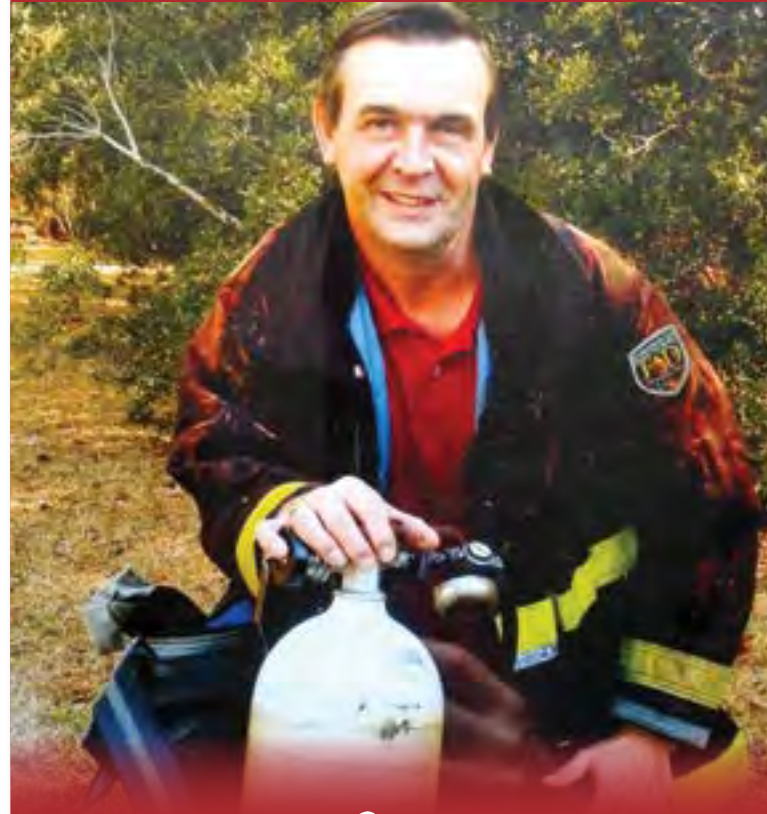
As a young adult, Woody volunteered at the Boys Brotherhood of Republic, where he counseled and coached community kids and enriched them with his knowledge of the game he loved, basketball. Woody was known for his deep voice, boisterous personality, his basketball skills, and community outreach. He played in many tournaments, won many awards and trophies, and taught his granddaughter, Cinnamon, the dynamics of the game.

Woody worked with the New York City Board of Education as a custodial handyman and later as a stationary fireman at Joan of Arc High School. In 1982, he pursued his lifelong dream to become a firefighter with the New York City Fire Department, starting his career with Engine 39/Ladder 16, “The Giant,” on Manhattan’s Upper East Side. He was an active member of the Vulcan Society. He ended his career with Engine 21, “The Club,” in Midtown Manhattan. Being a first responder during 2001 search and rescue took a toll on Woody; he completed his 21 years of service by retiring in 2002.

Fondly regarded as “the mayor” of his neighborhood, Woody provided the youth in El Barrio with opportunities to express their sportsmanship skills in the game of basketball. Throughout his life, many people utilized his knowledge, skills, and connections as a community liaison. The Community Partners and Community Council of the 25th Precinct officially recognized Woody for his outstanding service, dedication, and commitment for enriching his community and providing a powerful example for the youth. Through his bravery and dedication to the East Harlem community and New York City as a whole, he touched many lives and walked amongst the best of men.

Woody’s life came to a peaceful close while surrounded by family and loved ones. He leaves to cherish his memories his wife of 39 years, Barbara; his children, Monique, Tachelle, and Candice; his grandchildren, Precious, Gregory, Kaiya, Grant, Cinnamon, Sienna, Storm, and Blaze; and many extended family members and dear friends. All of his family and friends that he cherished were supportive until the end, they were the unconditional loves of his life.

Remembering



Rufus E. Brinson Jr.

***Reelsboro Volunteer Fire
Department – North Carolina
Volunteer Firefighter***

June 6, 2008

Age: 49



Chief Rufus Brinson was born at his family home in Reelsboro, North Carolina, on July 19, 1957. He graduated from Pamlico County High School in Bayboro, North Carolina, and went on to graduate from the University of Mount Olive, North Carolina. Brinson began his firefighting career with the Reelsboro Volunteer Fire Department in 1976. He served the department for nearly 32 years and was promoted to chief in 1987. Brinson served in many capacities within the department, including engine, truck, and rescue companies. He was certified as a hazmat technician and in various technical rescue disciplines.

He was the coordinator and training officer for fire safety classes at Pamlico County Community College (PCCC), where he was well-respected by his students, peers, and fellow firefighters. Following his death, PCCC renamed their Fireman's Association training center the Rufus Brinson Jr. Training Ground.

When duty called, Brinson never flinched, as he faced the danger and uncertainty that was ahead. An admired public servant, his commitment to public service extended beyond the fire department. He gave unselfishly, and this was exemplified by his organ donation, so others could enjoy life as he did. He was a beloved and dedicated man with uncompromising principles. He was quite a jokester; he enjoyed laughing and making others laugh. He was eager to assist anyone at any time, always willing to put others before himself. He is dearly missed by his family, friends, and fellow firefighters.

Brinson was an honest, dedicated, and loving family man. He leaves behind his wife, Anna J. Brinson; his mother, Hazel L. Brinson; and his sister, Nancy White. Brinson was a faithful member and deacon at Reelsboro Christian Church. In addition to firefighting and teaching, he was a member of the Masons. Rufus enjoyed farming, golfing, riding his Gold Wing, fishing, reading, and spending time with his family.

In loving memory of Rufus, his home fire station and firefighting brothers from the Reelsboro Volunteer Fire Department dedicated a flag pole and a service plaque. A lighthouse with a beacon was built and donated to his home fire station in his memory by local artists Mr. and Mrs. Luis Alberto Suarez. This beacon is a symbol to show his brother and sister firefighters how to find their way back home safely.

The memory of Rufus and what he did for his family, friends, and the community he loved so dearly will live forever in our hearts.

Remembering



Jason Keith Hensley

**Triple Community Fire
Department – North Carolina
Volunteer Firefighter**

October 9, 2017

Age: 40



Jason Keith Hensley was born to Nelson and Cornelia Talent Hensley on April 25, 1977, and grew up in Connelly Springs, North Carolina. He was a good student and graduated from East Burke High School in 1995.

Jason was always inquisitive. He was never happy just knowing something worked. Whatever it was, he was determined to dismantle it to see its guts. Jason was not satisfied until he figured out how to make it work faster, be louder, or do something it was never intended for. His other love as a child was playing matchbox cars in the dirt basement of the house where he was raised. He and the neighborhood kids used anything they could find to build a city complete with roads, tunnels, buildings, and bridges.

Jason eventually discovered he could combine his curiosity about how things worked and his love of anything on wheels. Working on bicycles quickly grew into go-carts and motorcycles and eventually into cars and trucks. He knew from an early age that he would make his living as a mechanic.

Jason and Lydia Rayburn were married in 1997. Zackary was born that year, followed by Jordan in 2001. Jason was proud of his family and devoted his life to making sure they had everything they needed.

As the boys grew and began playing T-ball, soccer, and racing dirt bikes, Jason coached their teams. He loved all those kids. He taxied them around for games and practice, let them stay at his house, fed them when they were hungry, and made sure they knew they were loved. Jordan and Zack were his heart and soul, but all those young'uns he coached were "his kids."

Jason joined the Triple Community Fire Department on March 28, 2017. He devoted his time to running calls, attending meetings and trainings, helping work on trucks at the station, and going to classes. From April-October 2017, Jason put in 235 hours of training and responded to 92 fire calls. On October 9, 2017, he answered his final call. While responding to a tree across a highway Jason was struck and killed by an impaired driver. He was dedicated and passionate about the fire service, and we were honored to serve our community alongside him.

Jason was a prankster with a slightly warped and quirky sense of humor. His hands were callused and scarred from 20+ years turning wrenches and hard work. His touch was firm but warm. He spent his time doing what was needed. Sometimes he would fuss and cuss as he went out the door to do it, but he would get it done.

Remembering

Donald "Reid" Key II, 31, of Whispering Pines, North Carolina, passed away on December 27, 2016, at UNC Hospitals in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Reid was born in Pinehurst, North Carolina, to the late Donald Reid Key and Darlene Parker Key, on March 11, 1985.

Reid married the love of his life, Carrie, on September 15, 2007. They shared a special bond and had a love between them that was contagious. Reid's most proud and memorable moments were the days he and his wife welcomed their two children into this world. Jackson Reid Key was born on July 18, 2010, and Kinsington Marie Key was born on December 11, 2013. From the very start, they knew Reid was going to be not only a wonderful dad to these two children, but also an amazing role model for years to come.

Reid and his family attended New Home Baptist Church in Vass, North Carolina, where he served as a deacon and was serving as the worship director at the time of his passing. Reid dedicated his life to the Lord and enjoyed worshipping Him through music and song.

One of Reid's life's passions was serving his community as a lieutenant on the Whispering Pines Fire Rescue Department. Reid joined the department as a volunteer in August 2013. Within several months, he was certified as an emergency medical driver and quickly established himself as one of the most reliable, active, and dependent volunteers. Reid obtained his North Carolina Firefighter I and II certification through the Office of the State Fire Marshal in September 2016. Reid's commitment and actions were recognized on several occasions. In 2014, he was recognized by the department as Firefighter of the Year. In April 2015, Reid and a team of firefighters were recognized by the Village of Whispering Pines, as well as the county commissioners, for responding to a cardiac arrest which resulted in a CPR save. Two weeks prior to Reid's passing, he reached one of the goals he had set before himself when he was promoted to lieutenant on December 10, 2016. Although Reid's tenure as a lieutenant was brief, his work ethic, dedication, and passion for his department and his community touched many, and his contributions will never be forgotten.

Reid also served his community as a youth baseball and basketball coach, where his leadership skills, love, and dedication touched the lives of many children.

Reid was a wonderful son, brother, and friend and, above all, a dedicated and loving husband and father. He will forever hold a special place in the hearts of those who were blessed to know him.



Donald "Reid" Key II

***Whispering Pines Fire Rescue
Department – North Carolina***

Volunteer Lieutenant

December 27, 2016

Age: 31



Remembering



Eric Durean Lacewell

**Wilmington Fire Department –
North Carolina
Career Captain
November 4, 2014
Age: 51**



Eric D. Lacewell was born on October 21, 1963, in Bladen County, North Carolina. Eric met Sheila Faison in 1986, and they dated for over a year while he was starting his dream job as a firefighter with the Wilmington Fire Department in 1987. In 1988, Eric asked Sheila to marry him. They raised four children in Delco, North Carolina, Tekina (oldest), Kiyanda & Kiyentl (twins), and Eric Jr. (youngest), who are all doing well.

Eric worked his way up the ranks from engineer to captain. Eric was a family man who enjoyed family vacations, family reunions, and get togethers. Eric enjoyed helping the community of East Arcadia, North Carolina, where he grew up, and his current community in which he lived. Eric became president of the Delco community, helping with different events such as parades and raffles.

Eric was a God-fearing man who loved the Lord and was not afraid to show it. He served on the usher board of his home church, Graham's Chapel. If you ever did him wrong, he wouldn't hold that against you. He was a calm, friendly, easygoing man who never met a stranger. That man loved to talk and would talk like he knew you for years. His co-workers would often call him "Smiley," because he would always have this huge smile on his face. If there was anything going on in the community, he was there to lend a helping hand. His favorite saying was "OH YEAH."

Eric served as president to the Wilmington chapter of the Professional Black Firefighters Association and participated in their different functions in different states. He was head of United Way in Wilmington, North Carolina, and often participated in their chili cookoffs to raise money. He loved to cook and was good at it. He worked with the youth for Street Safe and spoke at schools, educating them on fire safety, as well as checking smoke detectors for the elderly in the community. He received many awards for his hard work and dedication to the Wilmington Fire Department.

On March 31, 2011, at 2 a.m., Mrs. Lacewell received a call from the fire department that Captain Lacewell had fallen and was found on the kitchen floor at the firehouse. That fall ended his dream job as a fireman. He became quadriplegic and passed away on November 4, 2014, due to complications of his condition.

To know Eric was to love him, and we miss him dearly.

Remembering

For more than 50 years, James “Jim” Benken exemplified the role of firefighter in Wyoming, Ohio. Jim joined the department in 1966 as one of the first members of the newly formed cadet class, and he was also a member of the first paramedic class. During his fire and EMS career, Jim held many positions and was promoted to chief at age 33. He held the rank of district chief at his passing.

He served while pursuing a full-time teaching career in Indian Hill until his retirement in 2002. Jim’s favorite pastimes were fishing and talking about the weather.

Jim was a quiet man but would do anything to help someone in need. His passions were fire, EMS, and teaching youth—teaching high school students the ways of navigating business and entrepreneurship, giving tours of the firehouse to local boys and girls, showing the workings of the trucks and equipment at local events, and most of all training new cadets, paramedics, and firefighters.

Over the years, he took part in flying with some of the first medic helicopters in our area, went to hazmat training for two weeks, and worked with the Critical Incident Debriefing Team in Ohio. Jim was named 1988 Citizen of the Year in Wyoming, 2010 Firefighter of the Year, and over the years received multiple unit citations.

District Chief Jim Benken passed away on April 14, 2017, from a heart attack after returning home from a shift where he responded to an emergency call. Jim is survived by his wife, Mary; his son, Chris, a Cincinnati firefighter and paramedic, and wife, April; his daughter Cindy, a physical therapist at University of Cincinnati Medical Center, and husband, Bradford Rodgers; and four grandchildren, Ainsley, Rowan, Madison, and Kellen. In addition, he is survived by three brothers, Bob (BJ), George (Angie), and Don (Laurie), and their families.

His daughter put it best in her eulogy: “Dad was not a talkative man at times, but you knew he was present. He was a loving father to me and Chris, loving husband of nearly 46 years to my mom, and servant to all he met along the way. He dedicated his life to selfless service to everyone, and I can see it in the outpouring of love we have felt from family, friends, co-workers, and former students who have reached out to us the past few days. He leaves a legacy that will always be felt in my heart and in the hearts of all those many people that he served with and whom he served.”

Jim touched many lives over his 65 years, and his death will be felt by many for years.



James “Jim” Benken

*City of Wyoming
Fire and EMS – Ohio
Part-time Paid Paramedic/
District Chief
April 14, 2017
Age: 65*



Remembering



David Owen Lemponen

***Austinburg Volunteer Fire
Department – Ohio
Volunteer Firefighter***

***April 28, 2017
Age: 83***



David Owen Lemponen made the ultimate sacrifice on April 28, 2017, when he was struck by a vehicle while assisting emergency personnel by directing traffic at an auto accident. David was a firefighter with Austinburg Volunteer Fire Department for 60 years, including 18 years as chief. He was an arson investigator, fire and first aid instructor, and belonged to the Ashtabula County Fire Chiefs Association and the Ashtabula County Firefighter Association.

David overcame many obstacles during his childhood. Due to a fall his mother suffered during pregnancy, a doctor didn't believe he would survive birth. He proved the doctor wrong by being born in December 1933 with no knee caps and a broken hip. Over the years, doctors formed knee caps from the bones in his feet. One leg stopped growing, and he had surgery where the doctor accidentally cut the tendon in the knee. He could no longer bend his leg and used a lift in his shoe. He wore leg braces from birth through high school, but nothing could slow him down. He loved baseball and was able to pitch a "no hitter" for his high school.

David loved to golf. He always said, "It never rains on the golf course." He made his own clubs and traveled to other states to play. His passion for humor and playing pranks would set the stage for a believable story to the end before he would smile or a twinkle in his eye would give him away. Then he would laugh, a wonderful sound that made all those around him happy. He was a member of the Masonic Lodge, Grotto, and the Elks Lodge.

David loved his family. He spent hours going to his granddaughter's events, playing golf with his son, or trading stories of service calls with his daughter, who also serves on an EMS department. Every Friday he had dinner out with his wife and friends. It was common to see his son or daughter with him on the scene of a call. One memorable call involved a cow falling into a well. David arrived, thought a moment, and said, "Cows float." The fire department filled the well with water and floated the cow out with no injuries.

He is deeply missed by his wife, Linda Lemponen; a daughter, Lisa Lemponen-Plotz; a son, Eric Lemponen; two granddaughters, Katarina Plotz and Morgan Lemponen; two brothers, Donald and Phillip Lemponen; and a countless number of extended family, friends, and colleagues.

Remembering

*M*ike Russell was genuine. A rare breed these days. He was a wonderful, caring, giving man, and a very ornery, hard-headed cowboy. Horses were an important part of Mike's life. He thoroughly enjoyed training, riding, and competing with his animals. In the last few years he rode mostly for enjoyment, but still loved the challenge of training a young horse.

Mike was seldom seen without one of his good cow dogs at his side while out checking his cattle. His last several years were spent raising registered Murray Grey cattle. Mike was very proud of the breed; he enjoyed spending time with them and raising good breeding stock. He was known to brag about his cattle to anyone who would listen, and in doing so he helped to increase interest and shared knowledge about the Murray Grey breed. Mike seemed to have an affinity with animals of all kinds, but he always found the Murray Greys to be gentle, easy to handle, and very good mothers.

Mike was one of a kind, and unfortunately they just don't make 'em like him anymore. He was extremely knowledgeable, dependable, and helpful. He was a welder and backhoe operator for the majority of his adult life. In recent years, Mike managed the Delaware Rural Water District #11 and volunteered as a firefighter in the community of Leach, Oklahoma.

Mike was a true jack of all trades, as evidenced by the fact that we never found anything he couldn't do!! He often referred to his many "repairs" as his "Russell Riggin'!" Although throughout the years, many of us have fussed about his numerous "repairs!"

Mike was a very creative and passionate person, always on the go and willing to help anyone he ever met. And he never met a stranger.

A young man who worked alongside Mike said this of him, "I've worked with a lot of people and none finer than him. I wish I had known him longer. Anyone that met him will miss him." Truer words have never been spoken about Mike Russell.



Michael Dale "Mike" Russell

*Leach Volunteer Fire
Department – Oklahoma
Volunteer Firefighter*

February 22, 2017

Age: 68



Remembering



Trenton M. Johnson

Grayback Forestry, Inc. –

Oregon

Contract Firefighter

July 19, 2017

Age: 19



Scholar, athlete, beyond that, Trenton was a friend to everyone he encountered. Wise beyond his years, Trenton was a good person. Children flocked to him because he could create silly and clever games that entertained those younger than him. People older than him flocked to him because he was mature and wise enough to foster excellent conversation at any level. People his age looked to him as a reliable friend and leader.

Trenton had a quick-witted sense of humor. He could casually throw a comment into a conversation that would pass by until you had a chance to think about it and realize how hilarious or deep the veiled statement truly was. Calm and calming in any situation, he had a level head when most would not. He could assess complex circumstances quickly and say the right things at the right time with the right tone or react appropriately for the situation.

Trenton's interest in lacrosse was sparked after visiting his cousins. From his beginnings on the Missoula Elite lacrosse team, he always had a lacrosse stick in his hand. He went on to be a First Team all-state long stick middy and a team captain, an honor given by his peers. He thoroughly enjoyed his time on the field and the friends he made through his sporting career. Trenton was also a varsity cross country runner. What he did not have in natural talent, he well made up for in commitment and determination. He was regarded by everyone as a team player and brought everyone up on the field and in everyday life with his encouraging and constructive attitude.

He worked a couple seasons on a landscaping crew and quickly advanced to a crew boss with his work ethic, leadership skills, and attention to detail.

As an Honor Society member and student at Hellgate High School, Trenton excelled at the sciences and math. He would study on his own and enjoyed doing well. He had completed his freshman year at the Montana State University studying engineering.

He was new to, but thoroughly enjoyed, his adventure as a wildland firefighter. He talked with his sister, also a wildland firefighter, about it constantly. They were in communication every day, and he was her best friend. They took terrific care of each other; they always had.

He will certainly be missed but will also certainly be remembered.

Remembering

Donald L. “Sarge” Brenner Jr. was the chief engineer of the Speedwell Engine and Hose Fire Company. Donald was born September 1, 1949, and died January 4, 2017, doing what he loved, being a firefighter.

He was the loving husband of 48 years to his wife, Nancy, with whom he shared four children and six grandchildren who better knew him as “Papa.”

Donald served in the U.S. Army as a staff sergeant, serving with the 25th Infantry Division in Vietnam and Cambodia. He was wounded twice in Vietnam and was awarded the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal-Army, and the Purple Heart. Upon his discharge, he was a drill sergeant training soldiers.

His hobbies included hunting and going to his hunting (beer) camp, bowling, camping, and dirt track racing. He served on a pit crew for over 20 years.

More than anything, Donald loved being a firefighter, and he served in that capacity for 36 years. He was always on duty and ready to respond, rain or shine, night or day. He loved training and taking the junior firefighters under his wing. He always saw the best in everyone. He made each and every one feel important. Over the years he held many positions, but loved being the chief engineer and president of Speedwell Engine and Hose Company.

Many nights he would sit on his front porch, and the next thing you knew many of the firefighters would be sitting with him into the wee hours of the night.

Donald would do anything for anyone. If you needed a meal, a drink, or just an ear to listen, he was your man.

Donald was a beloved father, husband, grandfather, brother, mentor, friend, and role model. The only word to describe him is “HERO.”

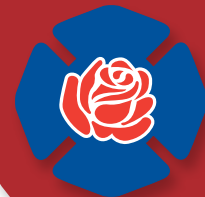


Donald L. “Sarge” Brenner Jr.

*Speedwell Engine and Hose
Company – Pennsylvania
Volunteer Chief Engineer*

January 4, 2017

Age: 67



Remembering



Dennis H. DeVoe

*Harrisburg Bureau of Fire –
Pennsylvania
Career Lieutenant
March 11, 2017
Age: 45*



Dennis H. DeVoe wanted to be a firefighter since he was young. On March 11, 1996, he joined the 14th Fire Academy at Harrisburg Area Community College. Exactly 21 years later, on March 11, 2017, he made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. During the years in between, Denny served as both a fireman (1996-2006) and a lieutenant (2006-2017) in the Harrisburg Bureau of Fire. He served for many years at Squad 8, “the Squad,” which was most definitely one of his favorite places to be. His badge number was and still is 401. It was retired in October 2017. Denny will forever be 401.

In addition to serving as a career firefighter, Denny also volunteered his time at several local fire stations in and around his hometown. He served as a mentor to young individuals who had the same dream he did—to become a fireman. Denny was also a member of the Pennsylvania Urban Search and Rescue, a state fire instructor at Harrisburg Area Community College and taught at the York County Fire School.

Denny was a well-respected fireman and officer. He loved his job and was always ready for the next call. He was known for his dedication to and passion for the job. He often helped with trainings and loved sharing his expertise with the new guys on the job. He was always willing to go above and beyond for anyone who crossed his path, on and off the job. Denny didn’t think twice about stopping to help a stranded motorist or helping a perfect stranger in an emergency situation.

Although firefighting was Denny’s passion in life, his family always came first. He loved nothing more than spending time with his family. He loved taking his wife Amy and his kids (Carson, Aliza, Emma, and Jake) on vacations. They often went camping and to the beach. He loved to take them skiing, snowboarding, four-wheeling, boating, tubing, and fishing. Date nights with Amy were always special to Denny, too. Life was always an adventure with Denny. He loved to spend time outdoors. One of his biggest accomplishments was climbing Mt. Charleston with some fellow firefighter friends.

Denny is deeply missed by his wife and children, as well as his mother and stepfather, his brother and sister-in-law, and a large extended family. Denny brought joy and laughter into everyone’s lives. He touched more people’s lives in his 45 years than most people do in a lifetime. His kind heart is what will be remembered most. Denny’s legacy will live on forever.

*J*ohn Thomas Moran Sr., born June 21, 1946, in Shamokin, Pennsylvania, and residing in Collegeville, Pennsylvania, died suddenly on August 29, 2017, at the age of 71.

John T. Moran Sr., an active volunteer with the Perkiomen Township Fire Company, had faithfully served his community for more than 53 years. He held various ranks with the organization including firefighter, assistant engineer, assistant chief, and fire chief. Chief Moran served in the capacity of fire chief for 20 years before retiring and serving as the township fire marshal. He received several awards and citations over his fire service career, including the "Firefighter of the Year" award from his volunteer organization.

Chief Moran was an avid outdoorsman and enjoyed hunting and fishing when time permitted. He also enjoyed mechanics and classic cars. He regularly attended classic car shows and would often enter his classic 1970 Chevrolet El Camino for consideration.

He was the loving husband of his wife, Geraldine Moran, for 49 faithful years. Chief Moran raised three children who all have followed in his footsteps. His daughter, a full-time paramedic and deputy chief of EMS for her EMS squad, resides in Pennsylvania. His eldest son, a volunteer fire chief (retired) and current battalion chief, also resides in Pennsylvania, and his youngest son, a battalion chief, resides in Virginia.

Chief Moran was an Army veteran. He served in the military during the Vietnam conflict and was stationed in Fort Collins, Colorado.

Above all, Chief Moran was dedicated to his family and the community. Chief Moran worked full-time as the Road Master for the town he lived in for more than 25 years. He raised his three children in the fire station and ensured they understood the meaning of "service to others." Chief Moran was a quiet, gentle soul with a heart shared by his family and his community. In his last 24-hours of service, Chief Moran responded to two incidents and a training exercise before passing in the early hours of August 29th. He leaves behind a legacy in the fire service and the community, which many will emulate for years to come.

Remembering

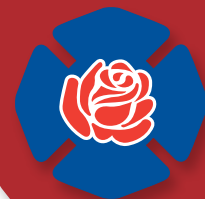


John T. Moran Sr.

***Perkiomen Township Fire
Company #1 – Pennsylvania
Volunteer Assistant Engineer***

August 29, 2017

Age: 71



Remembering



James H. Yiengst

**Keystone Hook & Ladder
Company #1 – Pennsylvania
Volunteer Firefighter/Driver**

April 1, 2017

Age: 72



James H. “Pud” Yiengst was born July 7, 1944, to Eugene W. and Bernetha M. Yiengst. Jim was married to Rita A. Kurtz Yiengst who passed away in 2003. He was survived by a daughter, Michelle H., wife of Daniel J. Poplaski, and a son, Michael J. Sr., husband of Devon M. Yiengst. He was blessed with four grandchildren, Joseph E. Poplaski, Andrew J. Poplaski, Michael J. Yiengst Jr., and Aaron D. Yiengst. He was a 1962 graduate of Myerstown High School. He worked for Bayer Corporation as a machinist and retired after 40 years.

Jim joined the Keystone Hook and Ladder Company No. 1 of Myerstown on August 1, 1961. He served the Keystone for 55 years. For a combined total of 32 years, he held the position of recording secretary and assistant recording secretary. Jim also served in the positions of assistant engineer and president. He was co-chairman of the Keystone’s 100th Anniversary Celebration, the 1978 Lebanon County Convention, and the Keystone’s 125th, and served on committees for the 1980 New Station Dedication, the Lebanon County Convention in 2000, and the 2017 Lebanon County Convention Committee. He participated in the planning and purchase of several pieces of Keystone apparatus, 1986 Chevy/ShaaK Supply, 1992 LTI/Mack Engine, 2005 New Lexington/Mack Rescue, 2005 purchase of the 1992 Pierce Arial, and the 2009 4-Guys Wagon. Jim was named the 20th Life Member of the Keystone in 1994.

He was also a member of other fire-related organizations: a 40-year member of PA Pump Primers, the Lebanon County Firefighters Association, Fireman’s Association of Pennsylvania, Gooseneckers Society of the State Association, SPAAMFFA, National Fire Museum Harrisburg, Schuylkill County Historic Fire Museum, and the Reading Area Fire Museum.

Jim collected fire memorabilia and had a flair for antique fire apparatus. He was the owner of the former Keystone 1958 Chevy Rescue truck and 1963 Mack Rescue that served the Croton Fire Patrol in Croton-on-Hudson, New York. He previously owned a 1958 Mack “B” Model Engine that saw service with the Grantley Fire Company, Spring Garden Township, York County, Pennsylvania.

On Friday evening, March 31, 2017, Jim responded with the Keystone to an accident call, where he became ill. He passed away on Saturday morning, April 1, 2017, at the Wellspan Good Samaritan Hospital in Lebanon, Pennsylvania. On Saturday, April 8, 2017, Jim took his last ride to his final resting place on his 1958 Chevy Rescue Truck. Jim touched the hearts of so many and will be forever missed.

Remembering

*D*arryl Wayne Frost, 48, was born December 26, 1965, to the late Billy Joe and the late Brenda Seay Frost of Duncan, South Carolina. Darryl went to be with the Lord on November 20, 2014.

Darryl joined the Town of Duncan Fire Department on February 11, 1986, at the age of 21. He served this department as a volunteer for 28 years. Darryl served the fire service along with his father, brother (fire chief), and two nephews. His dedication to the community was endless. Darryl has reminded us that his greatest accomplishment was serving those in the community and those in their time of need. Darryl never met a stranger and was always willing to lend a helping hand to all. It was often said "he would give you the shirt off his back."

Darryl's countless hours in training and responding to incidents was not all he dedicated himself to. Darryl was incredible in helping with the homeless around the town and county in which he lived. While for some it may be a temporary situation, living without a place to call home is not an ideal situation for anyone. Darryl was always making an effort to make a difference for these people. Whether it was buying tarps for shelters or buying clothing and food, his generosity and continued support was always noted. This truly defines the meaning of community service to all.

Darryl is survived by two brothers, Mike Frost and wife Terry, and Chief Barry Frost and wife Lori; two nephews, Creighton and Jon Michael; four nieces, Courtney, Erin, Rebekah, and Cassidy; three great-nephews, Rylan, Chance, and Paxton; and one great-niece, Caleigh.

Darryl was a son, uncle, brother, and friend to many in our area. He will be extremely missed, but we are blessed to have had him for 48 years and know this because of his love and support for our family and community. Darryl would want us all to continue helping others in need and always put others first.

Do to others as you would have them do to you
– Luke 6:31



Darryl Wayne Frost

*Town of Duncan Fire
Department – South Carolina
Volunteer Firefighter
November 20, 2014
Age: 48*



Remembering



Donald F. Manger

*Presho Fire Department –
South Dakota
Volunteer Fire Chief
October 14, 2017
Age: 54*



Donald “Donny” Fred Manger was born on August 20, 1963, to Don and Sony (Marlow) Manger. He married the love of his life, Sheila (Slominski) Manger, on November 7, 1986. He was the proud father of Brandon, Katelyn, and Madison.

Donny joined the local volunteer fire department when he turned 18 and worked for them for the rest of his life. He dedicated 36 years of service and was fire chief for over 20 of those years. Donny was a true hero and angel, saving many lives through his passion for Presho Fire and Rescue.

Donny enjoyed the outdoors with his family. He loved teaching them how to hunt, fish, and make the “proper” campfire. He was a loving, kind, and compassionate father and husband. He loved attending his kids’ sporting events and supporting them in any way he could.

Donny passed away in the line of duty as Presho fire chief on October 14, 2017, at the age of 54 years. Gratefully sharing his life are their children, Brandon, Katelyn, Madison; his father and mother, Don and Sony; sister, Katherine Reuman; brother, Bill Manger, and family; brother, Steve Manger, and family; and many family and friends.

Donny will always be remembered for his dedication and countless hours spent for Presho Fire Department. He is greatly missed throughout the entire community.



Remembering



Steve Kelly Hunt

*Pleasant View
Fire Department – Tennessee
Volunteer Firefighter*

*May 6, 1984
Age: 26*



Steve Kelly Hunt was born September 18, 1957, to Harry William Hunt and Mildred Christine Hunt (née Kelly). He was their firstborn and only son.

Steve was raised on the family farm where Angus cattle, hogs, chickens, corn, hay, soybeans, and tobacco were grown. He was active in 4-H and FFA.

Steve graduated in 1975 from Cheatham County Central High and matriculated at Austin Peay State University, graduating from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, with a degree in agriculture mechanization. He was a member of the Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity.

Upon returning to Pleasant View, he partnered with his father on the family farm.

Steve served as a firefighter for the Pleasant View Volunteer Fire Department from 1979 until his untimely death on May 6, 1984.

While serving as a firefighter, Steve also served on the boards of both the Pleasant View Volunteer Fire Department and the Cheatham County Firefighters' Association.

Firefighting was a family affair; his uncle, Lauren Hunt, was a founding member of the department, and Lauren's sons, Max and Don, also served in the department.

Steve was a firefighter who had been trained in structural fire fighting. He enjoyed serving the community in which he lived. Steve was faithful in responding to calls, no matter what the call was. If there was a project to be done, he was there to help. In 1983, he was one of a few firefighters to help construct a new modern tanker for the fire department. It was the fire department's first water tanker with a dump valve.

Each Christmas, Steve helped the fire department with the Buddy paper sale to help raise money for needy families in the community. He helped deliver fruit trays and food baskets to those in need each Christmas. The Buddy Paper Edition was dedicated to his memory in December 16, 1984.

Steve Kelly Hunt gave a lot of his time to the Pleasant View Fire Department and the Pleasant View community. He is greatly missed.

Remembering



Daryl Dene Barber

*Brazoria Fire Department –
Texas*

Volunteer Captain

December 13, 2017

Age: 56



Captain Daryl Barber, or “Dene” to those who knew and loved him, had always had a heart of service. He was 56 years old at the time of his passing. Dene grew up around the fire station as a child because his father and brothers were in fire service for many years. He often spoke about the Sunday dinners at the fire station because his dad had to be there, and his whole family would gather around the table there and enjoy a meal. He had wonderful memories of this as an adult.

When he grew up and got married, he decided to go into the National Guard to serve his country. He did this for several years and enjoyed the comradery of being with his fellow soldiers and being in the medic field. Again, serving those around him.

After his time in the National Guard, he again decided to serve others by becoming a police officer in Lake Charles, Louisiana, where he worked for approximately 10 years. He loved this work and always wanted to be the one who made a difference, working with area children by coaching baseball and softball while his children were young.

When he decided it was time to come home to Texas, he got into the Industrial world and worked for a contractor at BASF for over 11 years. It was during his time here that he decided to get back into the fire service.

When he moved to Brazoria, Texas, he joined the volunteer fire department, and he had many new brothers and family through this time. He worked closely with and loved all of the time he spent with the other firefighters in this small community. He was a firefighter with Brazoria Volunteer Fire Department for 7 ½ years. He could always be counted on to help with anything the fire department was involved in.

He passed on his legacy of service to his children. His oldest son became a career soldier in the U.S. Army, and his two other boys also served in the army and navy. His daughter became a nurse practitioner, serving her community, as well.

He was a wonderful husband, father, papaw, and friend. If you knew him, you loved him. He touched so many people in so many ways. There will never be another one. He was one of a kind, with a heart as big as Texas, and a love for everyone around him in the same way.

He will never be forgotten, as he is in the hearts of so many. He is a hero and will always be a hero.

*S*cott Patrick Deem died on May 18, 2017, from injuries sustained when he was trapped in a structural collapse during a four-alarm shopping center fire. Several other firefighters were injured in this fire.

Scott graduated from Southwest High School, Class of 2004, and knew in his heart that he wanted to be a firefighter. He was a proud six-year veteran of the San Antonio Fire Department.

He was a loving, caring, and considerate man. Scott loved to play football, cross fit competition, paddleball, basketball, and was a great bowler. He was a passionate SPURS and Dallas Cowboys fan.

He was a beloved husband, father, son, and friend. He was survived by his high school sweetheart and first love, Jennifer M. Deem; their children, Dakota M. Deem, Tyler P. Deem, and Aubrey Deem; his mother, Susan Deem, and stepfather, Roy Hernandez; brothers, Michael Hernandez, Bradley Hernandez, Roy Hernandez Jr., and Chris Hernandez; his mother-in-law, Linda Martinez Guel; extended family; and many wonderful friends.

He was remembered as a dedicated and courageous firefighter, a hard worker, and a great family man.

Remembering

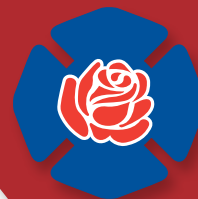


Scott P. Deem

*San Antonio
Fire Department – Texas
Career Firefighter*

May 18, 2017

Age: 31



Remembering



William "Iron Bill" Dowling

*Houston Fire Department –
Texas*

Career Captain

March 7, 2017

Age: 43



*W*illiam Ross "Iron Bill" Dowling was born to Rick and Mary Dowling in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in 1973. He had three siblings, Joseph, John, and Mary. From the time he was born, he fought to find his place in this world. His younger years were a struggle, but he always had the support of his family to guide him in the right direction.

Searching for his purpose, he met the woman who would change his life forever. On September 25, 1993, while home on boot leave from his new-found career in the United States Marine Corps, he married his beautiful bride, Jacki. The Dowling family established their roots, and 3 amazing children followed—two boys and one girl. Forrest, Faith, and Foster were his pride and joy.

After serving four years in the Marine Corps, he began to search for a career that fulfilled his desire to serve others. He placed an article from the Houston Fire Department in his Bible and prayed he would get the job. In October 2000, his prayers were answered, and he graduated from the Houston Fire Academy. Thirteen years later, and never missing a promotion, he was made captain. He absolutely loved his job as a firefighter, almost as much as he loved being a devoted husband and father.

His time here on this earth was cut short, but he lost his life doing what he loved, fighting fires. He left behind many friends and loved ones who adored him and miss him dearly.

Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful...enter into the joy of your master.

– Matthew 25:23

Remembering

Shane Michael Hennessey, a loving son, father, devoted husband, and compassionate brother, died peacefully at the young age of 34, on September 9, 2015, at his residence in Schertz, Texas, after a lengthy battle with a work-related injury.

Born February 5, 1981, in Tampa, Florida, Shane resided in numerous places before his family set roots in Wesley Chapel, Florida. Shane's joy was always in helping others. As a young child he helped raise Seeing Eye dogs for the blind. As a youth he did mission work and volunteered with local organizations. Shane attended Alert Academy in 2000 and studied to be an EMT, as well as receiving 20 hours of flight training and a SCUBA diver certification. Shane was a part of Marine Corps Firefighter Crash Crew 374-ARFF. He served honorably, including a deployment to Iraq in 2003, and earned numerous awards. He earned his associate degree from Copper Mountain College and received his CDL license.

After his discharge in 2006, Shane began a new journey as a Department of Defense firefighter. His fire stations included Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center in Twentynine Palms, California; Naval Air Station in Kingsville, Texas; Veteran Affairs Fire Station in Helena, Montana; and Ft. Sam Houston Fire Department in San Antonio, Texas, where he was employed at the time of his death. Throughout his career Shane received numerous awards, including Civilian of the Quarter, Firefighter of the Quarter, several monetary excellence awards, and a paid reward trip to attend the National Fire Chiefs convention in Chicago, Illinois, accompanying his station fire chief. He unselfishly volunteered numerous times to represent his fire station as Sparky the Dog or to act as a tour guide during public relations events. For a short time, Shane was also a volunteer firefighter in Kingsville, Texas.

Shane will be dearly missed and remembered for so many things. He had a love for the outdoors, a deep passion for his wife and five beautiful children, and a genuine desire to serve His Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. Shane's final written words were:

"I am (despite my circumstances) still at peace even in the worst of situations. My Proclamation to the World is that while here on this earth, if you want your life to mean anything it has to have meaning through Christ Jesus. When He is able to rule your life you have such a peace because your troubles and daily battles are no longer your problem. You can now relinquish them into the hands of the living God Christ Jesus."

1 Corinthians 15:54-55, 57-58 KJV



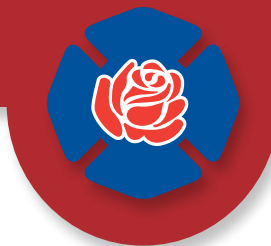
Shane Michael Hennessey

***United States Air Force,
Joint Base San Antonio Fire
Emergency Services – Texas***

Career Firefighter

September 9, 2015

Age: 34



Remembering



Jarrell Bradford Hinkie II

*Silsbee Volunteer Fire
Department – Texas
Volunteer Assistant Fire Chief*

*August 2, 2017
Age: 61*



Jay Hinkie was born July 11, 1956, in Texas to Betty and J.B. Hinkie. Jay worked at South Hampton Refinery for 43 years and was a firefighter for the Silsbee Volunteer Fire Department for 26 years.

Jay is survived by his wife, Rhonda, and their three adult children, Brad Hinkie, and fiancée, Cherish; Todd Hinkie, and wife, Erecka; Hillary Mike, and husband, Jason; grandchildren, Carmin and Daelan Hinkie, and another grandchild on the way. Jay is also survived by his mother, Betty; siblings, Marsha Dubois, and husband, Steve; twin sister, Kay Wright, and husband, Bill; Dwayne Hinkie, and wife, Arlene; Patrick Hinkie; and many nieces, nephews, and extended family. He was preceded in death by his father.

Jay Hinkie was a loving son, husband, father, grandfather, uncle, friend, leader, and a well-respected pillar of his community. For several years, he taught survival skills to youngsters at his local church, and later he taught fire safety at many of the local schools in Silsbee. He would always lead by example to be fair, honest, and always caring for others. He wanted us to learn from our mistakes and be better people because of them. He was an avid hunter and fisherman, and he always loved to take his family and friends on little adventures. Jay loved to tell jokes, make people laugh, and would always be the guy that would go out of his way to help others from all walks of life.

Jay is deeply missed by his family, friends, and community.

My Hero

*You held my hand
When I was small*

*You caught me when I fell
You're the hero of my childhood
And my later years as well*

*And every time I think of you
My heart still fills with pride
Though I'll always miss you Dad
I know you're by my side*

*In laughter and in Sorrow
In sunshine and through rain
I know you're watching over me
Until we meet again*

– author unknown

Remembering

Charles Edward "Charlie" Patterson was born June 22, 1957, to E.W. and Margaret Patterson in Morgan City, Louisiana. Charles worked as an oilfield backhoe operator for Gibbins, Inc., the family-owned business in Bowie, Texas, for 40 years. He was a volunteer fireman for several rural fire departments in the Bowie area for many years. He worked with his future brother-in-law at Gibbins, which is how he met Connie, his wife of 36 years.

Charles loved to raise cattle and garden, and he was an avid outdoorsman who enjoyed hunting and fishing. He was a good man, a born leader, the kind of guy you meet one time and remember his name. People were drawn to him and could easily talk and relate to him. Above all else, Charles was a proud family man who took good care of his family.

Like so many fellow firefighters, he lived and died with a passion to help others. Charles is survived by his wife, Connie Patterson, and his daughter, Bethany Patterson, of Bowie, Texas, and a large extended family. He will be remembered and forever missed with love and appreciation for his years as a devoted husband and father and for his service to the community.



Charles Edward Patterson

*Bowie Rural
Fire Department – Texas
Volunteer Firefighter
December 7, 2017
Age: 60*



Remembering



Roger D. Johns

*Eagle Rock Volunteer
Fire & Rescue – Virginia
Volunteer Firefighter*

May 19, 2017

Age: 63



*R*oger Dale Johns died on May 19, 2017, when he was struck by fire apparatus while serving as a spotter at the scene of a motor vehicle accident.

Roger was a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps, a volunteer with the Eagle Rock Fire and Rescue Squad, and an organ donor.

He was preceded in death by his father, Charles “Lindy” Johns. He is survived by his wife, Missy Johns; mother, Marie Johns; daughter, Missy Doss; sons, Christopher Johns, Cullen Johns, and Adam Johns; stepchildren, Carri, Corey, and Chad Sparks; numerous grandchildren; sister and brother-in-law, Debbie and David Williams; brother and sister-in-law, Darryl and Tina Johns; and former wife, Amy Sartin.

He was remembered as a giving man who served his country, community, and other people.



Remembering

*R*obert was born in Hudson, New York, on February 16, 1967, to Robert Sr. and Shirley Spinner and was joined by his younger brother, Russell. Robert graduated from Ihabod Crane High School in 1985 and right away joined the Navy. While in the Navy, he learned how to work on and build engines for the Northrop Grumman EA-6B Prowler. He served in Guam and Naval Air Station Whidbey. While at Whidbey, he met his wife, Tammy Farris, and they were married on August 13, 1991. Together they have two children, Austin and Emma.

Robert loved spending time with his family, riding ATVs at Oak Harbor Motor Cross, and attending car and truck meets with his children. He enjoyed customizing his many different trucks, but his favorite was his current Chevy. He was a mentor to many young people in the firefighting and car and truck show community.

After his honorable discharge from the Navy, Fire Chief Robert Spinner began his 28-year firefighting career by first volunteering at North Whidbey Cornet Bay Fire Station in 1989, then was hired as a federal firefighter serving at NAS Whidbey Island. He transferred to Arizona's Tonopah Valley Fire Department, then on to Rock Hill Fire Department in South Carolina, eventually returning to Central Whidbey Fire and Rescue in Coupeville, Washington. Robert then served with Rural Metro Fire Department in Scottsdale, Arizona, before serving his last six years at Lynden Fire Department, where he became chief just three months prior to his passing.

City of Lynden Fire Chief Robert Charles Spinner Jr., while on duty, passed away on Friday, July 14, 2017, at the age of 50. He was known for his loyalty to his family and fire department, his integrity and honesty, and his ability to motivate and inspire others in his love of firefighting.

Robert is survived by his wife, Tammy, of 26 years, and his children, Austin and Emma. He is truly missed and will be remembered in the fire community for many years.



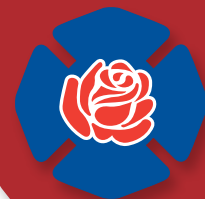
Robert C. Spinner

*Lynden Fire Department –
Washington*

Career Fire Chief

July 14, 2017

Age: 50



Remembering



Photo Courtesy of Don Blegen

Terry Shafer

Spring Valley Fire Department –

Wisconsin

Volunteer Firefighter

February 25, 2017

Age: 62



*T*errance “Terry” Edward Shafer was born April 23, 1954. He died of a heart attack on February 25, 2017, hours after responding to a call.

Terry grew up on a dairy farm in rural Spring Valley, Wisconsin. He was the second of nine children born to Ivan and Catherine Delores Shafer. Terry graduated from Spring Valley High School with the class of 1972. After graduation, he worked construction while attending school at night to become a master electrician. In 1977, he founded Shafer Electric, grew the business to two locations and several employees, and more recently had downsized.

He enjoyed the challenges of various projects and always strived to learn new things, but his passion was helping others. His electrical and construction knowledge provided opportunities to help many people with many projects, but he found his calling with the fire service. He joined the Spring Valley Fire Department in 1979 and was elected chief in 1986. After 30 years as chief, he decided to step down at the end of 2016. He was looking forward to staying an active firefighter and first responder and continuing to serve in various roles with the department, but was ready to hand over the white helmet.

Family was very important to Terry, as was his community. The various community projects he was involved in extended far beyond the fire department. Terry is known and remembered for his dedication to helping others. His last contribution to others was the donation of his eyes and tissue through the Lions Eye Bank and Lifesource.

Terry was united in marriage to Marsha Erickson on August 7, 1976. Their marriage was blessed with three children, Chad, Kari, and Todd, but later dissolved. The special person in Terry’s life for the past 22 years was Sue Gregg.

Terry was preceded in death by his parents and his brother-in-law, Scott Hoffman.

Terry is survived by his children, Chad (Stacy) Shafer, Kari (Jeff) Chaffin, and Todd (Leah) Shafer; grandchildren, Chase and Brayden Shafer, Alexander Chaffin, and Faith, Trent and Kamryn Shafer; former wife, Marsha Shafer; siblings, Tim (Mary) Shafer, Tony (Marsha) Shafer, Tom (Bonnie) Shafer, Julie Hoffman, Jane (Bruce) Erickson, Jackie (Barry) Garfield, Jeff (Shelly) Shafer, and Joe (Amy) Shafer; Sue Gregg and her children, Jason Gregg, Curt (Tammy) Gregg, and Tracy (Jason) Lynum; their children, Braden, Jack, and Liam Gregg, and Kayla, Connor, and Carson Lynum; many nieces, nephews, cousins, friends; and his brothers and sisters in the fire service.

Remembering



Paul W. Murdoch

***Greybull Volunteer Fire
Department – Wyoming
Volunteer Fire Chief***

February 16, 2017

Age: 53

*P*aul always knew he wanted to be a firefighter. His dad and uncle served on a volunteer fire department, and his dad served for 25 years as fire chief. For his 5th birthday, Paul was given a fire truck that held water, so he would go out in the backyard and start little fires so he could practice putting them out. When he was 21, he was elected to the Greybull Volunteer Fire Department. In 1997, he was promoted to fire chief, a position he held until his death. In addition to serving on the fire department, he was also an EMT on the local ambulance and was owner of his own business, Murdoch Oil Inc.

Whether in the workplace, at the scene of a fire, or on ambulance calls, he was a man who stood tall. With his 6' 7" inch frame, it was true not only in stature but also in the way he was regarded by his peers and those who knew him best. If there was one quality about Paul that stood out above all the rest, it might have been his ability to lead. He was well respected and had total loyalty from his employees. He had a gift for assessing a situation with the fire department or ambulance and seeing immediately the path that needed to be taken. While Paul was serving as fire chief, the Greybull Fire Department built a new fire hall and upgraded virtually all of its vehicles and equipment.

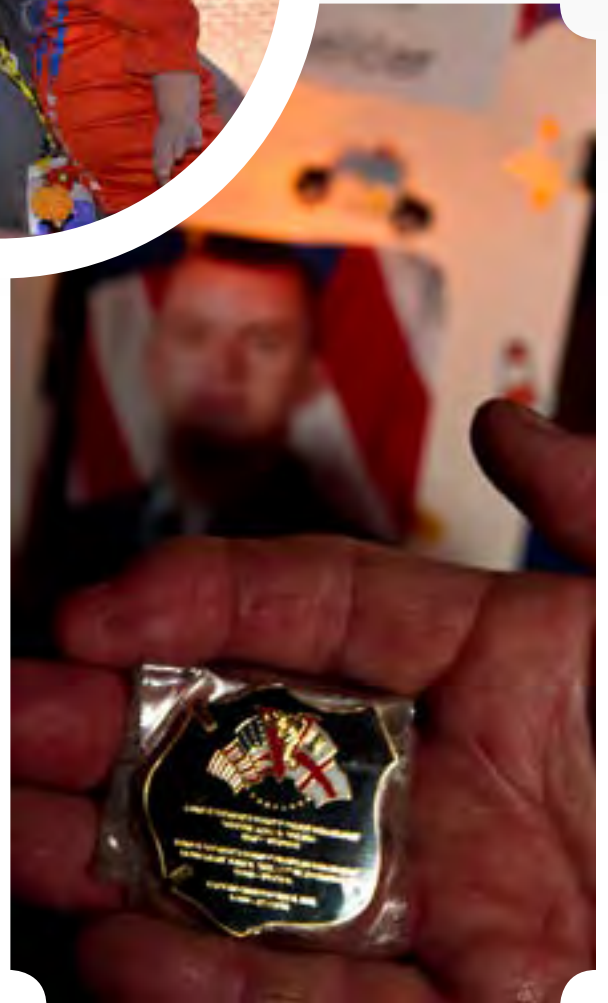
He was very involved with the Elks Club and could be found on many Friday nights cooking dinners with his buddies for functions. He never strived to be the center of attention, but he always was. He served as a director on the local bank board. Paul had a zest for life and enjoyed traveling, old cars, snowmobiling, and parties at his man cave, always surrounded by the many friends he had in his life.

He was very happily married to his wife, Claudine, for almost 30 years and was extremely proud of his two sons, Preston and Nicholas. Both boys have gone on to follow in his footsteps with the business and in their role on the fire department and as EMTs.





37th Annual National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend ★ October 6 - 7, 2018



37th Annual National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend ★ October 6 - 7, 2018



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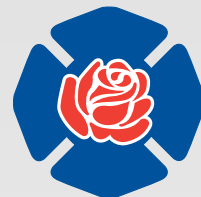
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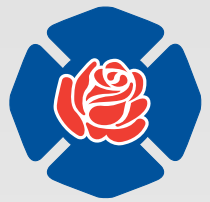
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Paramedic Services of Illinois, Inc.
Superior Ambulance Service, Inc.*

9th Annual Geneva National Fallen Firefighters
Foundation Golf Tournament

9th Annual Greater Cincinnati Regional
National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Golf Fundraiser
*1-800 BoardUp
Cincigolf.com
Gold Star Chili, Inc.
Heidelberg Distributing
LaRosa's Pizza
Monarch Beverage Company
Rising Star Casino & Resort*

10th Annual SEPA Regional Fallen Firefighters Foundation
Memorial Golf Outing
*Local 22 - Philadelphia Fire and Paramedic Union
Police and Fire Federal Credit Union
SimplexGrinnel
Sprinkler Fitters – NFSA PRN JER DEL
VCI*

10th Annual St. John's Professional Firefighters Local 3883
National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Golf Outing

11th Annual Central Ohio Fallen Firefighters Golf Tournament

11th Annual National Fallen Firefighters Golf
Tournament Hosted by Raleigh Fire Department
*Davis Kane Architects, PA
Holland Grill*

11th Annual Rochester, New York
National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Golf Tournament
*Bill Gray's Restaurants
Firemen's Association of the State of New York
Monroe Ambulance
Spencerport Volunteer Firemen's Association, Inc.*

FASNY 4th Annual Fallen Firefighters Golf Tournament

The 10th Wasatch Front and 14th Annual National Fallen
Firefighters Foundation Memorial Golf Tournament
*Alpine Cleaning & Restoration Specialist
Graham Fire Apparatus and Rosenbauer
Utah Disaster Kleenup*

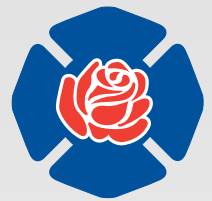
Inaugural Upstate Fallen Firefighters Foundation Golf Charity

Jermaine Frye Memorial Golf Tournament

Never Forgotten Colorado
National Fallen Firefighters Golf Tournament
North Suburban Medical Center

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2017 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

Green Bay Metro Fire Department

Pierce Manufacturing, Inc., an Oshkosh Corporation Company

6th Annual 9/11 Memorial Hill Climb - Fallbrook, CA

Fallbrook Firefighters Association

Alabama Remembers 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

Binghamton Fire 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

Black Hawk 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

Ameristar Casino Resort Spa Black Hawk

City of Black Hawk Colorado

Capital City Fire Rescue 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb at Juneau, AK

Charlotte Firefighters 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.

Chattanooga 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

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Tennessee Fire Equipment

Clayton 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

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World Wide Technology, Inc.

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SS ChaD Express

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FDIC 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

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Imperial Valley 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

J.P. Taravella High School 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

Kalamazoo 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

Knoxville 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

Servpro

Lancaster 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

Lancaster Baseball Club, LLC

Maine 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

LiftMaster

Misawa Air Base Japan 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

Missouri State Fire Marshal 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

Nashville 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

National Capital Region 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb/5K Walk Hosted by Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department

Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center



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National Stair Climb for Fallen Firefighters

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Nebraska 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

New Hampshire 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

North Dakota 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb
Knife River

NYSAFC Fire 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

Ocean City Memorial Stair Climb

Panama City Beach 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

Pelican Products and Baltimore City 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb
Pelican Products, Inc.

Philadelphia 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb and 5K Walk

Richmond 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb
*Jenkins Restoration
Mission BBQ*

Roanoke 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb
*Roanoke Fire Fighters Association Local 1132
Walmart Roanoke*

Rochester 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb and 5K Walk

Salt River 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

San Diego 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb
San Diego Fireman's Relief Association

Southwest Louisiana 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

Springfield Area 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb
LiftMaster

Tri-Cities 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb
*Holston Valley Medical Center
LiftMaster*

VCOS 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

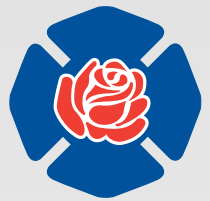
West Virginia 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

Wildwood City Fire Department 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

Yellow Springs 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb at Antioch College
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Miami Township Fire-Rescue
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...and hundreds of others who have helped in so many ways.

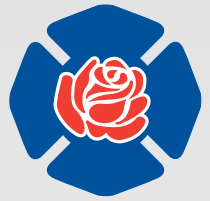
Special thanks to the members of the fire service who assisted and served as family escorts and the honor guard units that participated in the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend.

Special thanks to our fire hero family members who return each year to bring comfort and hope to new families during the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend.

37th Annual National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend ★ October 6 - 7, 2018

NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS FOUNDATION

★ Staff & Contractors Who Support Families and Co-Workers ★



A special thank you to the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation staff and contractors who work tirelessly throughout the year to assist and support the families and co-workers of fallen firefighters.

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We would also like to recognize and thank all of the fire service members who serve as advocates for the Everyone Goes Home® program, as members of the Local Assistance State Teams, and as volunteers for the Hal Bruno Camps for Children of Fallen Firefighters.

“The life given us, by nature is short; but the memory of a well-spent life is eternal.”

– Marcus Tullius Cicero



“Remember that you are surrounded today by other people who are walking their own path through grief. As you leave this service, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation – and this community of Fire Hero Families – will be walking with you.”

– Chief Dennis Compton, Chairman, National Fallen Firefighters Foundation



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