



NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS FOUNDATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: NFFF Media Line at 202-938-6260
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NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL WEEKEND WILL HONOR AND REMEMBER 144 FIREFIGHTERS *Six Ohio Fallen Firefighters Among the 144 Being Honored on May 6-7, 2023*

EMMITSBURG, Md. – The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF) will host the **42nd National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend** (Memorial Weekend) on May 6-7, 2023 in Emmitsburg, Maryland. This year's national tribute will honor 79 firefighters who died in the line of duty in 2022 and 65 firefighters who died in previous years.

Each firefighter's name will be inscribed on a bronze plaque and become a permanent part of the National Memorial in honor of their sacrifices. The honorees will include the following Ohio firefighters:

[Lieutenant Wayne Bingaman](#), age 60, of the Ripley Fire Department, died on 8/14/2022 due to complications of pancreatic cancer, deemed by the state of Ohio to be a line-of-duty death.

[Firefighter/Paramedic Tracy Leach](#), age 52, of the Kettering Fire Department, died on 12/24/2022, due to complications of metastatic breast cancer, deemed by the state of Ohio as a line-of-duty death.

[Lieutenant James Pero](#), age 63, of the Mentor Fire Department, died on 6/13/21 due to complications of glioblastoma, deemed by the state of Ohio to be a line-of-duty death.

[Lieutenant Ronald Reinhart](#), age 63, of the Defiance Fire and Rescue Division, died on 11/28/2020, due to complications of pancreatic cancer, deemed by the State of Ohio to be in the line of duty.

EMMITSBURG

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CROFTON

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[Firefighter Johnny Tetrick](#), age 51, of the Cleveland Division of Fire, responded to a motor vehicle collision on 11/19/22. While cleaning up debris from the accident, a vehicle drove around the emergency scene and struck Firefighter Tetrick. The driver of the vehicle that struck FF Tetrick initially fled the scene and was later arrested and charged with aggravated vehicular homicide and murder, among other charges.

[Lieutenant Philip Wigal](#), age 35, of the Town & Country Fire District, responded to the scene of a motor vehicle accident on 4/11/22. While at the scene a state trooper was performing an administrative inventory of the crash vehicle and Lt. Wigal was completing report documentation. While finishing these tasks, a southbound commercial vehicle struck the left rear of the fire apparatus, the patrol vehicle, and the vehicle involved in the initial crash. Lt. Wigal died at the scene.

Detailed information about the 144 firefighters being honored is included in the [2023 Roll of Honor](#).

Individual photographs of the 144 firefighters being honored are available in state folders here: <https://bit.ly/NFFF-ROH2023>.

EVENTS:

There are **two events open to the public** at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Park on the grounds of the National Emergency Training Center during Memorial Weekend.

- The **National Fallen Firefighters Candlelight Service** is on May 6 at 7:30 pm ET and will be hosted by Fire Captain Garon Mosby of the St. Louis Fire Department.
- The **National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service** is on May 7 at 10:00 am ET and will be hosted by journalist Hillary Howard.

There are also events during Memorial Weekend **provided exclusively for the families and fire departments** of honored firefighters. These include small group sessions and other activities throughout Friday and Saturday; they are open to the families and coworkers of newly honored and previously honored firefighters. The weekend is a time for sharing, healing, and commemorating each firefighter's commitment to public duty.

U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas is scheduled to address the thousands of attendees at the Memorial Service on Sunday, May 7. At the Memorial Service, the NFFF presents each family with an American flag that has flown over the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial and the U.S. Capitol, a badge, and a rose.

The NFFF will live stream both events on the NFFF's [website \(firehero.org\)](#), [YouTube channel](#), and [Facebook page](#).

LOCAL PARTICIPATION

Those not attending Memorial Weekend in person can also **pay tribute to this year's honored firefighters**. The public can participate in [Light the Night for Fallen Firefighters](#) (May 4 – 7) by lighting their homes, businesses, landmarks, or fire departments with red lights. Other ways to remember these firefighters include [Bells Across America](#), [Sound the Sirens](#), and by signing the virtual [Remembrance Banner](#).

In addition, the **American flag will be lowered to half-staff on all Federal buildings on Sunday, May 7**. The public is also encouraged to lower their American flags that day to recognize the men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Memorial Weekend is supported by individual and corporate donors, a grant from the **Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance** and in partnership with the **U.S. Fire Administration**, a component of the **Department of Homeland Security**.

SCHEDULE

Saturday, May 6, 2023

National Fallen Firefighters Candlelight Service

Time: 7:30 pm – 9:00 pm ET

Streaming begins at 7:00 pm ET

Sunday, May 7, 2023

National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service

Time: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm ET

Streaming begins at 9:30 am ET

LOCATION

National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Park
National Emergency Training Center (NETC)
16835 S. Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, MD 21727

PUBLIC ACCESS AND PARKING (New Location!)

Public parking for Memorial Weekend is at Liberty Mountain Resort (78 Country Club Trail, Fairfield, PA). Shuttles from Liberty Mountain Resort will begin at 3:30 pm on Saturday, May 6 for the Candlelight Service and at 7:30 am on Sunday, May 7 for the Memorial Service.

MEDIA INFORMATION

Members of the media who plan to attend Memorial Weekend must contact Donna Clark at dclark@firehero.org **in advance** to gain access to the National Emergency Training Center. She can also provide parking information for members of the media.

The NFFF will provide live satellite feeds courtesy of VISTA Worldlink, Comcast Beltway, and INTELSAT. Satellite coordinates for the live feed can be found at live.firehero.org. Images from the 2022 Memorial Weekend are [here](#).

Social Media: #FireHero2023

Website: weekend.firehero.org

AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEWS: Chief Siarnicki and Dr. Moore-Merrill

- **Chief Ron Siarnicki** (pronounced SAR-nick-ee) is the **NFFF Executive Director**. Chief Siarnicki retired as Fire Chief from the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department (MD) in 2001 to lead the NFFF. He is retiring from NFFF as of December 2023.
- **Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell** has served as **United States Fire Administrator** since October 2021. Urging all in the fire service to speak in one voice to protect firefighters *and* civilians, her recent initiatives toward a Fire Safe America have included the US Fire Administrator's Summit on Fire Prevention and Control and the National Fire Stop Tour.

Media contacts:

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- USFA: Evrim Bunn, evrim.bunn@fema.dhs.gov

ABOUT THE NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS FOUNDATION (NFFF)

The United States Congress created the NFFF to lead a nationwide effort to honor America's fallen firefighters. The mission is to honor America's fallen fire heroes; support their families, colleagues, and organizations; and work to reduce preventable firefighter death and injury. The National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Park includes the National Fallen Firefighters Monument, the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Chapel, a brick Walk of Honor, a September 11th memorial sculpture, and the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Bell of Remembrance. Information about the NFFF and the Memorial Park can be found [here](#).

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