



THE NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS FOUNDATION



2006 Annual Report

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ABOUT THE NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS FOUNDATION

The U. S. Congress created the non-profit National Fallen Firefighters Foundation in 1992 with the mission to honor fallen firefighters and to assist their survivors in the rebuilding of their lives. The Foundation has developed many programs to fulfill this mandate.

The Foundation is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization, located in Emmitsburg, Maryland, and registered as a corporation in the State of Maryland. Donations from individuals, organizations, corporations, and foundations fund many of the Foundation's programs. A grant from the Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance and a September 11 recovery grant from the American Red Cross Liberty Disaster Relief Fund support programs for survivors and coworkers of firefighters killed in the line of duty.

Immediately after a firefighter dies in the line of duty, the Foundation provides survivors with a place to turn. Families and chiefs receive emotional support through peer support networks. Spouses and children of fallen firefighters are eligible for scholarship assistance for education and job training.

The *Taking Care of Our Own*® training program is offered nationwide to senior fire officers, chaplains and Honor Guard commanders to provide guidance on how to prepare for line-of-duty deaths and establish pre-incident programs and procedures. An extensive Web site provides information on state and Federal benefits and resources, as well as immediate access to critical information on what to do after a line-of-duty death.

At the beginning of National Fire Prevention Week in October, the Foundation sponsors the official national tribute to career and volunteer firefighters who died in the line of duty during the previous year. Thousands attend the weekend activities held at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. The Weekend features special programs for survivors and coworkers

along with moving public ceremonies. The Foundation partners with the U.S. Fire Administration to sponsor many of the National Memorial Weekend activities.

Since 1996, the Foundation has assisted immediate survivors of fallen fire heroes with their lodging and meals during the Weekend. This allows family members to participate in weekend activities, including sessions led by experienced grief counselors and the public tributes. Since 2002, the Foundation has provided transportation for immediate family members also.

In 2004 the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation hosted the first ever Firefighter Life Safety Summit to examine the increasing numbers of firefighter line-of-duty deaths that are occurring in America each year. As a result of that summit, 16 firefighter life safety initiatives were identified as a part of the NFFF's National program to prevent firefighter deaths. The program entitled "Everyone Goes Home" is being implemented throughout the country as a part of the core mission of the Foundation in cooperation with the United States Fire Administration to affect a 25% reduction in firefighter deaths over the next 5 years and a 50 reduction in ten. This program is one of the most critical learning experiences any fire service member can participate in.

In 2006, the Foundation sponsored the first ever annual Fire Service Survivors Conference in Washington, DC. The conference was attended by 35 survivors of fallen firefighters from across the country. Workshops on grief, financial management, stress management, and the Fire Service Support Network were offered to the attendees.

A Board of Directors and an Advisory Committee guide the Foundation's activities. Members represent the private sector, fire and emergency services, fire service survivors, and government. All have demonstrated a strong commitment to fire safety.

FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

- Sponsored the first annual Fire Service Survivors Conference in Washington, DC
- Sent Foundation newsletters sent to 6,000 survivors and fire service members
- Prepared and sent four issues of *The Journey* featuring stories by survivors — each issue went to 2,600 survivors
- Provided a Survivors Benefits Assistance Handbook and resource kit
- Fulfilled 50 requests from survivors in 29 states for a total of 775 grief brochures
- Expanded Fire Service Survivors Network
 - 227 members in 39 states
 - Members made 104 direct family contacts; 65 members sent 1,568 Remembrance cards
- Survivors participated in Conferences as part of Foundation's Speakers Bureau

WORLD TRADE CENTER FIRE SERVICE SURVIVORS SUPPORT

- Sponsored *The Link* newsletter sent to 960 households of FDNY survivors
- Coordinated financial management counseling for survivors
- Provided financial management program for young people, Investing Pays Off
- Sponsored Kids Connections events for 389 children of FDNY firefighters who died on 9/11
- Sponsored Big Brothers/Big Sisters mentoring program for the children of FDNY firefighters who died on 9/11

SCHOLARSHIPS

- Awarded scholarships for 84 spouses, children, and stepchildren from 28 states
- Partnered with Motorola Foundation, NASFM, MasterGuard, & ICMA to provide \$219,680 in scholarships
- Established a NFFF Scholarship Alumni Association for survivors who have received scholarships and completed their education



Scholarship Recipients, Helen King, wife of fallen firefighter Larry King, Sr. (TN-1998) and Jessica Seaburg, daughter of Kevin Seaburg (NY-1997) at the annual Fire Service Survivors Conference.

FIRE SERVICE SURVIVORS CONFERENCE

- The First Annual Fire Service Survivors Conference was held in Washington, DC. Survivors attended workshops on: the Foundation's Speakers Bureau, Parenting the Grieving Child, Parents Connection, the Fire Service Survivors Network, Financial Management, and Stress Management. It was an opportunity for survivors to make and renew friendships that had been made while volunteering at Memorial Weekends.

FIRE SERVICE PROGRAMS

LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH PREVENTION PROGRAM

- Implemented 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives program to reduce firefighter line-of-duty deaths
 - Held two mini-summits on “Emergency Vehicles and Roadway Safety” and “Firefighter Health, Wellness and Fitness”
 - Identified over 40 state advocates as grass roots effort to get the message out across the country.
 - Developed program team to prepare “White Papers” on each of the 16 Initiatives.
 - Developed and produced training video related to Health, Wellness, and Fitness which will be distributed to U.S. fire departments and fire stations.
 - Established Seal of Excellence Awards program - tiered award program which recognizes level of support by individuals, organizations, and fire departments.
 - Presented Seal of Excellence Awards at major trade shows – Fire Department Instructors Conference, Firehouse Expo, Harrisburg Fire Expo, Firemen’s Association State of New York, and Fire Rescue International.
- Continued Everyone Goes Home program to promote fire service awareness:
 - Developed and mailed Firefighter Life Safety Resource Kit to 30,000 fire departments nationwide. After the initial mailing, received and fulfilled 1,930 requests from municipal, industrial, and military fire departments, training agencies, and public libraries for the Firefighter Life Safety Resource Kit.
 - Updated www.everyonegoeshome.com
 - Sent monthly e-bulletins to more than 29,000
 - Developed posters
- The Courage to Be Safe program has been successfully developed and introduced in New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, North Dakota, California, Oregon, and Michigan.

FIRE SERVICE SUPPORT

- Delivered 16 Taking Care of Our Own trainings in 13 states, which provides guidance for fire departments in dealing with a line of duty death.
 - 470 fire service officers attended
- Fulfilled over 200 requests for Resource Guides & LODD SOP’s for fire departments in 29 states
- Developed a merged Taking Care of Our Own with the Courage to Be Safe firefighter safety program.
 - Program has been presented in Kentucky and Texas.
- E-mailed bulletins providing training updates and information
- Developed and trained Local Assistance State Teams in 10 states to assist fire departments and survivors after a line-of-duty death
- Expanded Chief-to-Chief Network to provide professional and personal support

PUBLIC AWARENESS

- Developed a new design and navigational structure to improve usability of the www.firehero.org website for our audience.
 - The names listed in the online Roll of Honor Database were verified.
 - Profiles and Memory Wall Messages were archived for each firefighter, and original photos were re-formatted for use on the new website.
- Transferred the 16 existing domain names that the Foundation owns to a new manager account set up and managed by the Foundation.
 - Renewed SSL Certificate with Verisign which provides a secure server to process online store transactions.
- EveryoneGoesHome.com was redeveloped and moved to a new host provider. Existing content was re-organized and a new navigational structure was developed to enhance usability of the site.
 - Additional features were added including newsletter sign-up feature (housed off-site on the original site), online certificate program for the Courage to be Safe and Train-the-Trainer program, an interactive map for State Advocate contact information, and Monthly Safety Message (on the Homepage).
 - Through the website, an additional 1,223 users have opted-in to receive the online monthly newsletter.
- Developed NYCFireFamilyConnections.com (FDNY Counseling Services Unit Website)
 - The website will be a resource for FDNY families that have experienced a firefighter line-of-duty death. They will be able to find information about CSU, their programs and services, information on upcoming events, chat on a secure message board with other FDNY survivors, and read archives of The LINK Newsletter.
- Staffed Foundation booths at 10 major fire service conferences
- Delivered presentations at major fire service conferences
 - Survivors represented the Foundation at Memorial Services in three states



The Sea of Blue was a wonderful idea. It made us so proud that our husband and father was part of something he loved so much—being a fireman.

It was truly an honor to attend and have our firefighter recognized in such a meaningful way. You covered everything, and we have some beautiful memories to cherish. God bless you, and thank you again from the bottom of our broken hearts.

2006 NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL WEEKEND

2006 NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL WEEKEND (CONTINUED)

Each October, a grateful nation honors its fallen fire heroes during the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend. Rich in fire service tradition, the weekend celebrates the lives of these brave men and women and their dedication to their communities.


The Memorial Weekend provided both private and public events held on the campus of the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Through private donations, the Foundation provided lodging and meals for immediate survivors and assisted with travel expenses. A total of 159 fire service personnel from 35 states and the District of Columbia volunteered to serve as family escorts and assisted with weekend activities. Hundreds of Honor Guard members participated in a show of respect to their fallen comrades and their families.

More than 6,500 people attended the 2006 Memorial Service that honored the 100 firefighters who died in the line of duty in 2005, and 7 firefighters who died in previous years.

The 100 firefighters who died in 2005 included:

- 60 volunteer firefighters
- 36 career firefighters
- 4 contract firefighters

The fallen firefighters ranged in age from 18 to 76. Wildland fires, controlled burns, and aircraft training/certification for wildland fire protection accounted for 10 of the fatalities. New York suffered the most line-of-duty deaths with 16. Texas was second with 9 fatalities. California had 8 fatalities, and Pennsylvania had 7.



There are no words or ways for me or my family to relay the emotions we felt during the Memorial Weekend. We were touched, proud, reverent, and grateful in ways I cannot explain.

2006 NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL WEEKEND (CONTINUED)

A special Congressional Reception for Returning Survivors was held on Thursday evening to honor those survivors who returned to assist with the Memorial Weekend activities. A member of the Foundation's Board of Directors who lost his firefighter father delivered the Keynote address during the Reception.

On Friday, October 6, 2006, firefighters from the Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, Maryland, areas met families arriving at airports and train stations and transported them to hotels in Frederick. Returning survivors greeted first-time families, helped them register for the Weekend, and answered questions about what to expect. As fire service clowns entertained children of all ages, families wrote tributes on a large Remembering banner and received Weekend keepsakes. The younger children decorated luminary bags for use in the Candlelight Service, and older children created memory boxes. Families of firefighters honored in previous years also wrote tributes on a Remembering banner for returning survivors.

On Saturday morning, the families were transported to the National Fire Academy campus where they viewed the arrival of more than 300 fire service motorcycle riders who participated in the annual Red Helmets ride. The ride culminated in a ceremony and wreath-laying in honor of the fallen firefighters and their families at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial.

That afternoon, survivors met in 25 small group sessions facilitated by experienced grief counselors. The sessions, with survivors grouped according to their relationship to the firefighter, enabled them to spend time in a safe and healing environment. The survivors were grouped by spouses, fathers, mothers, adult siblings, teenagers, children by age ranges, and extended family. Special sessions were held for chiefs and coworkers from departments of fallen firefighters.

During the afternoon, many families toured the historic campus and visited the Walk of Honor. Returning survivors helped families locate the bricks placed in the Walk of Honor for their firefighters and make etchings of the inscriptions on the bricks.

A Chapel Vigil on Saturday afternoon gave families an opportunity to light a candle and place a rose in a Maltese Cross vase in honor of their firefighters.

In the evening, family members and their fire service escorts gathered for the Family Dinner. Families and friends then attended a Candlelight Service held in the Basilica of the Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. The beautiful service featured musical and video tributes. Families lit candles which were placed in the luminary bags that had been decorated by the children.

The Weekend culminated with Sunday's National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service. As each firefighter's name was read, family members came forward to accept an American flag flown over the U.S. Capitol and the National Fallen Firefighters Monument and a special commemorative badge. The ceremony concluded at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial with the unveiling of a plaque listing the names of the honored fallen firefighters. Plaques now bear the names of 3,050 firefighters who have died in the line of duty since 1981.

The Honorable Paul Sarbanes delivered the keynote address. He recognized the dedication and commitment of the Nation's fire service during the 25th Annual Memorial Service.

Families and firefighters returned home with the knowledge that a grateful nation will always remember the contributions their loved ones made for the safety and welfare of their communities.

NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL PARK

In 1990, Congress designated the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial as the Nation's official monument to all firefighters who die in the line of duty. Plaques around the monument bear the names of firefighters who have died in the line of duty since 1981, the year the monument was built. The monument grounds are also the site of the annual National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service.

The Foundation completed work to expand the official national monument site in Emmitsburg, Maryland. A stone wall was erected encircling the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial, and an iron Maltese Cross railing was placed on the historic stone wall that encloses two sides of the Park site. Space for the plaques with the firefighters names had run out, and the new stone wall now provides space for future plaques. Future plans include an addition to the park which will honor firefighters who died prior to 1981, when the Memorial was established. When completed, this will be the first permanent National Park honoring all firefighters. The Park includes the newly renovated National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Chapel and the official National Monument.

NATIONAL MEMORIAL PARK

- Completed multi-year restoration of National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Chapel
 - Sanctuary was refurbished with fresh paint and new carpeting
 - Ceiling frescoes were restored, and stained glass windows were repaired.
 - Office space for the Foundation staff was renovated
- Added bricks to the Walk of Honor, for a total of 5,925 inscribed bricks

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