

HELP US stay in touch.
Please remember to notify us at firehero@firehero.org
when you have a change of mailing or e-mail address!

National Fallen Firefighters Foundation
Post Office Drawer 498
Emmitsburg, MD 21727
(301) 447-1365 • (301) 447-1645 Fax
www.firehero.org
e-mail: firehero@firehero.org



Save The Date!

December 10, 2014, 4:30 pm
Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony
Emmitsburg, Maryland
<http://firehero.org/>

June 28-July 1, 2015
Survivors Conference
Annapolis, Maryland
<http://firehero.org/resources/families/conference/>

For additional information about upcoming events, please visit www.firehero.org.

This project was supported by Grant No. 2012-PS-DX-0001, awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the SMART Office. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice..

FACING TOMORROW TOGETHER

National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

A Newsletter for Fire Service Survivors



Congressional Flag Presentation Ceremony

For the first time, the nation's annual tribute to our fallen firefighters began against the backdrop of the United States Capitol. On Wednesday, September 10 at 2:00 pm, leaders of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus presented 107 American flags flown over the U.S. Capitol to the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF). These flags will be given to surviving family members at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service on October 12th in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

During the event, fire caucus leaders delivered brief remarks to honor the sacrifices made by our fallen heroes. A fire service honor guard conducted a flag-folding ceremony, and the flags were placed into special cases and carried to

an awaiting fire engine. Two columns of firefighters lined the procession from the Capitol to the engine to honor the flags and pay their respects to their fallen colleagues. A motorcade escorted the flags to the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Chapel, where they were held until the National Memorial Service.

"Congress created the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation to honor those who died in the line of duty and provide support to their survivors," explained Bill Webb, Executive Director of Congressional Fire Services Institute (CFSI) and Vice Chair of the NFFF Board of Directors. "This ceremony allows a formal and respectful transfer of the flags from Congress to Emmitsburg and ultimately to the families of our fallen heroes." ■

Remembering

Ted Hall (2009-CA)

Sent by his sister, Lori Rae Barrios

August 30 was the five-year anniversary of my brother, Ted's, line-of-duty death. We celebrated his life with the most amazing visit with his family and Rose Foti, mother of Robert Foti (2001-NY), who died in the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center. Ted's wife, Kathy, and I had the pleasure of assisting Rose while she cooked her famous meatballs for Station 7 here in Tucson for the guys and their families, serving about 50 people. It was a day of love, laughter, and family.

Kathy and I then joined Rose, and Renee Elkins, wife of Daniel Elkins (2004-CA), in Colorado Springs to help Rose cook at the IAFF Memorial. Rose is truly a great gift! ■



Kathy, Lori, and Rose

Brandon Little (2012-PA)

Sent by the Little family—Keith, Nancy, Shawn, Courtney, and Brandon's dog, Hershey

On August 9, 2014, our family held the 3rd annual Brandon Little Memorial/Fallen Firefighter Night at the Lincoln Speedway in Abbottstown, Pennsylvania, in honor of our fallen hero, Brandon Little. It is a race of sprint cars and other race cars on a dirt track across from our house. They race there weekly on Saturday nights, so on a warm summer evening we have chosen this venue to honor our son, brother, and friend. It is a joint venture that wouldn't happen without the support and funding of so many friends we have met since Brandon's untimely departure from this world. The race is our way of keeping him alive, and we can't and won't stop doing that.

In this year's race, there were three cars decorated to honor Brandon, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, and all fallen firefighters. We had a bagpiper and a moment of silence to honor all firefighters in York and Adams Counties since the early 1900s. We also did a blessing of the helmets, which was awesome. We made and sold t-shirts to raise money, and all proceeds go to the



Helmet Blessing

Foundation. It is our way of saying thanks for all you have done for our family and others who have lost a loved one.

Our main objective for this event is to honor firefighters and to get the public to do the same, honoring not just the fallen, but all firefighters and EMS everywhere. They definitely do not get enough help and recognition. Brandon served without expecting anything in return. My dream—with the help of Brandon and our friends—is to recognize their service. Based on the response we have gotten, I think that is starting to happen.

Brandon told us every day, "Be strong." We use these words of strength and encouragement daily. ■





Annual Tree Lighting Service In Memory of Fallen Firefighters

National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Chapel

The annual Tree Lighting Service at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Chapel in Emmitsburg, Maryland, will be held on Wednesday, December 10, 2014, at 4:30 p.m. Trees in the chapel will display ornaments made by survivors in honor of their fallen firefighters. The decorated trees will remain in the chapel into the New Year.

Survivors are invited to attend the Tree Lighting. If you would like to attend, please RSVP to Judi Whitlow at jwhitlow@firehero.org or 301-447-7913. We must have your names on a list to access the National Emergency Training Center campus where the chapel is located.

If you would like to send in an ornament, please send it to:

NFFF

Attn: Judi Whitlow

P.O. Drawer 498

Emmitsburg, MD 21727

PSOB Corner



BJA
Bureau of Justice Assistance
U.S. Department of Justice

Enacted in
1976, the
Public Safety
Officers'

Benefits (PSOB) Programs are a unique partnership effort of the PSOB Office, Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), U.S. Department of Justice and local, state, and federal public safety agencies and national organizations, such as the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, to provide death, disability, and education benefits to those eligible for the Programs.

Toll-free: 1-888-744-6513



In coordination with the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, on September 17, 2014, staff of the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) Office spent the morning learning about the "real world" of the Fire Service at the Prince George's County Fire / EMS Department in Largo, Maryland. Meeting with Fire Chief Marc Bashoor, Deputy Fire Chief Benjamin Barksdale, and Station Commander Captain Charles Waggoner, the PSOB Office was given an in-depth view of diverse fire apparatus and equipment, as well as provided vital information regarding various aspects of calls for service and other key responsibilities of firefighters at any given moment. The ultimate goal of this opportunity: to allow the PSOB Office to experience a greater understanding of the Fire Service that, in turn, provides insight for PSOB cases filed on behalf of America's fallen firefighters and their families." ■

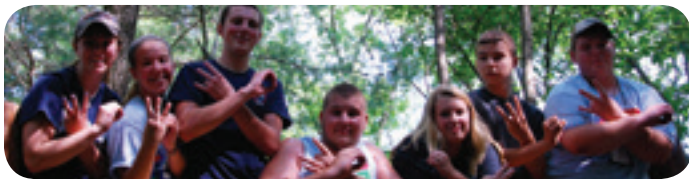




Nicholas Smith
Firefighter/Paramedic, Missouri

I was a first time volunteer at Hal Bruno Camp in Missouri this year. I am a firefighter/paramedic and father of two children with two on the way. Volunteering seemed like a valuable opportunity for me to find another way to assist a community in need. As a father and a firefighter I knew that I would have an experience that would go beyond just being there for somebody else, but I didn't realize just how much I would be affected by the camp. From the first training I realized that I may be in for more than I bargained for emotionally. Hearing some of the stories and seeing some of the videos of previous camps really opened my eyes to what to expect.

The camp had a profound effect on my view of the strength that exists within these children, but also the void that is left when a parent is taken from them, no matter what age they are or how long ago it was. The camp made me want to be a better firefighter, husband, and father on a daily basis. I couldn't wait to get home to hug and kiss my wife and children. Life is short, and tomorrow is not promised. Especially to those who put their life on the line every day.



Dixie Blatt
Camp Nurse, Missouri

I was one of the camp nurses and was AMAZED at things I saw, heard, and observed through body language. To say these young people are resilient is a definite understatement!

I saw kids who really weren't sure they wanted to be there enjoy themselves and decide this was not such a bad place to be after all!

I saw kids who have been to camp before help those who were new to camp (including the volunteers) see how much FUN they could have!

I saw men and women, who I see on a pretty regular basis, open up in ways I have never seen before. My respect level for all the Big Buddies, especially those who were experiencing camp for the first time, has grown immensely!!

The camaraderie between the counselors, the "Bigs," the "Littles," and the rest of the volunteers was fun to watch and be part of.

The Memorial Service is something I will never forget! It was fun, yet heart-wrenching at the same time.

THANK-YOU for allowing me to be but a tiny part of this INCREDIBLE weekend!

2014 Hal Bruno Camps for C



The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation held two These camps balance fun, silly activities with more the far-reaching effects of losing a parent. For some age who have experienced something similar.

The "little kids' camp," for children ages 4-6 and in Orlando, Florida, in June. Through a partnership with Comfort in August at Camp Wyman in Eureka, Missouri.

This year, 39 children attended a Hal Bruno Camp, and 50+ vo Hal Bruno Camp is open to surviving children and stepchildren to be honored at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial in Em camp. In addition, the NFFF has been able to assist with travel ex guardians.

In an effort to help foster a continuing bond between the fire se sponsored special sessions of the Comfort Zone Camp training sp trainings in Clayton, Missouri, so that members of the local fire s Missouri. To date, we have held three such trainings and trained o

We have seen camp change the lives of children who have lost a unsure and unhappy and leave with confidence and huge smiles o down the days until next year's camp begins, anxious to reconnect support them.

Camp also has a profound effect on the volunteers who work w volunteers about their time in "the camp bubble." ■

Devin Marshall
Firefighter, Missouri

We big buddies were told to take a day for ourselves the following going in, "This camp can't be that tough. Why would I need a day fo weekend camp as scheduled. Monday morning comes along, and as I and continue my life as a firefighter, I realize I'm in a mental fog. I'm Why can't I shake this feeling? I am having trouble just remembering firehouse. Why is it that all I'm thinking about are the kids and their I have done more, should I have done more for my little buddy? Wh be, and how can I help?

I am a father of two and a full-time firefighter, and I have never fe firefighter than after this weekend. Hats off to the National Fallen Fi second to none in my book for what you do for these children!!

Children of Fallen Firefighters



o weekend camps for children of fallen firefighters this summer. serious work developing problem solving skills and dealing with , it was their first opportunity to connect with other people their

l their surviving parents, was held at the CoCoKey Water Resort t Zone Camp, the Foundation held a camp for children ages 7-17

olunteers were involved in making that happen.

a of firefighters who have been honored or are officially approved mitsburg, Maryland. There is no charge for children to attend penses and provide lodging for campers and their parents or

ervice and survivors of fallen firefighters, the Foundation has ecifically for members of the fire service. This year we held ervice could volunteer their time during the summer camp in ver a hundred volunteers.

parent in the line of duty. Each year, we see campers who arrive n their faces. We also have many return campers, who count with their camp friends and the adult volunteers who help

with these amazing children. Here are a few reflections from

Monday after camp. I told myself or myself?" I proceed to the 'm getting up to drive to work a not physically tired, but mentally. y where the coffee cups are in the stories from the weekend? Could en will the next NFFF/CZC camp

It greater joy to call myself a firefighters Foundation. You guys are



Wendy Norman *Firefighter/EMT, Florida*

I have been involved with the Memorial Weekend since 9/11 when it was held in Washington, D.C. I took classes that Hal Bruno was speaking at and loved the fact he wanted to have a camp for fallen firefighters' kids to go and share their stories and be KIDS. Why wouldn't I go to camp? I love it!

Does one ever get over the grief of losing a loved one so suddenly? I like what I heard last year from another Big-- "We may not take away your grief, or it may never go away completely, but I am HAPPY to be here to help you through it today." Resilience—the kids have been through more than I can imagine, some so young they only have the stories told to them by friends, family, and other firefighters. These kids are stronger in their faith and love for family than a lot of people I know. I loved saying it again this year as I left camp: "I love looking up to my LITTLE."

I am a better person for knowing these people through camp and the Memorial Weekend. I know I have touched and made a difference in the survivors of our fallen firefighters, both big and small. I wish I never had to meet them because of a loss, but on the other hand I'm happy to be a part of their lives now when they need a shoulder and someone to talk to that GETS IT.



Chad Hoefle *Fire Chief, Illinois*

If I had to talk about camp, I would tell anyone who was able to listen—even if they were not willing. HA! I feel so strongly that these kids truly change lives every day. These kids have changed my life and have inspired me to (I hope!) change the lives of those who report to me and the people that I love. I look at my own life differently, as well as the way I conduct myself as a fire chief. WE MUST ALWAYS REMEMBER. We must always learn and talk about those who are no longer with us.

These kids tell a great story of survival. The show must go on and, as I always say, "You are not a hero because you gave your life. We are heroes the day we sign up to do this job." From there on, we are doing just that—our job. There are dangers, but if we live each day to make sure our brothers and sisters come home, that is doing our job the right way.

Because of Comfort Zone Camp, my life will never be the same. I can say that without hesitation. My Buddy WILL forever be a part of my life, and his father will forever be a teacher to me and the people that cross my path in the fire service. That's how his name will live on with me.



2014-2015 Foundation Sarbanes Scholarship Awards

Congratulations to the 78 deserving recipients of NFFF Sarbanes Scholarships for the 2014-2015 academic year. This year's recipients range in age from 18 to 53 and come from 31 different states. We wish you well in your studies and the dreams you are pursuing.

Many thanks to the Motorola Foundation, whose generous support helped us award scholarships totaling over \$200,000 for this academic year.

We are grateful to our scholarship partners, who awarded additional scholarships to fire service survivors:

- ICMA-RC awarded \$15,000 to 15 recipients
- Global Health & Safety awarded two \$2,000 scholarships and two \$3,000 scholarships
- NASFM awarded \$1,000 scholarships to 10 recipients
- The College Board has made a pledge of \$50,000 towards the scholarships to be distributed over the course of 5 years

Since the NFFF scholarship program was created in 1997, the NFFF and its partners have awarded over \$3,000,000 in scholarships to survivors of America's fallen firefighters.



"It is a great honor to me that you have awarded me these scholarships, which provided me the opportunity to attend the University of Kansas, to join the Alpha Gamma, Delta sorority, to see and explore new things, and in May, to graduate."

Morgan Cox
Daughter of Anthony Cox
(2007-KS)
University of Kansas
Major: Psychology

"Thank you for selecting me as a recipient of the Paul Sarbanes Scholarship! I am honored, and I know my dad would be proud of me! I am looking forward to my sophomore year. Being in the School of Nursing, I am excited about my coursework, and I look forward to my summer classes in Spain for my Spanish minor!"



Chloe McHugh
Daughter of Dennis McHugh
(2001-NY)
Villanova University
Major: Nursing

"My father passed away five years ago in the line of duty, but I was blessed with 15 years of his love and guidance that, without a doubt, continues to shape who I am as well as my college and career path... Our family is deeply grateful for all the care and support extended to us from the NFFF. Not only in helping to honor my father's legacy, but also in the kindness and support you've shown to our family."



Shane Clough
Son of Charles "Buck" Clough
(2009-Maryland)
Stevenson University
Major: Criminal Justice ■

2014 Flag Detail

In August, members of the Memorial Weekend Honor Guard gathered at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial to raise the flags which will be presented to families during the National Memorial Service in October. This special detail included two teams who will have firefighters honored in October—three members from Prescott, Arizona, and three members from Bedford, New Hampshire. The rest of the team included departments from Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia.



PHOTO BY CLAUDIA GARNER

Two members of the team, Claudia Garner and Earl Lincoln, documented this labor of love and honor in a short video, which is available on YouTube.

To watch the story behind the flying and folding of the flags, visit: <http://youtu.be/zga3G-1LJcc> or search YouTube for 2014 Flag Detail. ■

Farewell

In recent months, staff members Pat Stonaker, Eileen Collins, and Crystal Mort have left the Foundation. We thank them for their dedicated service and wish them well in their future endeavors. ■



Another Swinging Year of NFFF Golf: Chicagoland Golf Tournament Sets New NFFF Record

In his six years as Coordinator of the Chicagoland Golf Tournament, Jim Larsen has always run events that emphasize the “fun” in “fundraiser.” However, this year he had his eyes on an ambitious goal—to set a new fundraising record for a National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Golf Tournament. And this event, held on July 18 at Glendale Lakes Golf Club, accomplished precisely that, generating a whopping \$43,000+ profit.

And how exactly did Chief Larsen create such an event? **By focusing on the Foundation’s mission.** Since 2009, Larsen has strived to develop a strong team of volunteers who truly understand what the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation is all about, and in return they have been able to ignite the same passion in both golfers and sponsors. “Our team at Chicagoland is filled with people who believe in a calling higher than themselves and are constantly helping out different causes in our communities. I am so proud of this group and their many talents... they truly “get it” and share my passion to serve others,” says Larsen. “I am a better person for knowing them, having the honor to volunteer beside them, and the luckiest NFFF Golf Tournament coordinator to have them on my team!”

All NFFF Golf Tournaments are staffed and coordinated by local volunteers. Each winter, NFFF Golf Coordinators get together in Emmitsburg to collaborate, sharing ideas and reinvigorating their passion for the cause. When Michael Damron, coordinator of the NFFF’s Central California Golf Tournament, first attended the NFFF’s National Golf Coordinators’ Meeting in 2013, he had low expectations. “I must admit, for the life of me I did not understand the reason the NFFF would fly people back to Emmitsburg, house and feed them to explain what needs to be done at a golf tournament.” says Damron. “But I left there knowing this event is much more than just a golf outing. It’s no longer about playing golf—it is about supporting families and helping them get through a very hard place in life.”

To strengthen that connection, he soon reached out to Marci and Steve VanderGriend, whose son Zachary died in the line of duty in 2011. They are integral in providing direction to the event’s steering committee, and work closely with Damron to maintain the event’s focus on survivors. Last year they asked local survivors to submit a bio of their hero to post out on the golf course. This was such a great success that they decided to spread the word about their event to others across the survivor community. This year they will have over 50 bios of fallen firefighters posted on

the course and will honor all of these families by hosting a dinner for survivors the night before, enabling committee members, top sponsors, and families to meet before the tournament.

Other NFFF Golf Coordinators are either family survivors or have experienced the loss of a fellow firefighter.

Caren Stewart’s volunteer department in Moulton, Alabama, lost two firefighters in a building collapse in 2006. When she attended the Memorial Weekend in 2007, her passion for the NFFF was ignited, and in 2013 she volunteered to coordinate her first golf tournament.

While a small event by national standards, this tournament has galvanized both the local and state survivor communities behind it. Stewart stresses that “every survivor in the state of Alabama and elsewhere should feel that this is their tournament.” This year, 25 survivors golfed or volunteered at her event. She sums up her motivation for coordinating the tournament by saying, “We cannot repay the kindness that people showed us when Lloyd and Dusty were killed, but we can pay it forward.”

Retired Pittsburgh Fire Chief and NFFF National Golf Coordinator Charlie Dickinson, accompanied by his wife Lily, traveled on his own to more than half of these tournaments. He notes, in his own indomitable style, “The connecting fire hose that runs through all of these events is the goodwill, intent, and effort of the coordinators and staff, and their focus on the survivors. They ensure that every person who attends one of these events leaves knowing that we remember their loved ones, and we will never forget. We embrace the families of our fallen firefighters.”

Larsen concurs. “I coordinate the Chicagoland Tournament because I believe that in some small way I am holding true to the proud traditions of the American fire service...taking care of others and service to others above self. It gives me great personal and professional satisfaction to know that our efforts are truly helping our beloved survivors who have suffered through the loss of their loved one...and that they know and feel that we (the members of the fire service) truly have not forgotten them.”

Are you interested in becoming part of the NFFF Golf Tournament program? We welcome survivors to participate in our events at any level—golf, come for dinner, volunteer, or even coordinate a tournament in your own community. For more information, please go to <http://www.firehero.org/events/golf-outings/> or contact Tricia Sanborn Hurlbutt at (410) 353-0216 or golf@firehero.org. ■



Marci and Steve VanderGriend

