

FACING TOMORROW TOGETHER

National Fallen Firefighters Foundation
A Newsletter for Fire Service Survivors



THE ART OF REMEMBRANCE



Artist Ray Simon has been creating collectable military portraits for over 25 years, and his work is displayed at the Pentagon, White House, and the Capitol. He is

inspired by his deep devotion to the values of this country and the people who choose to serve.

When the War broke out in Iraq, Ray Simon decided to provide the family of each serviceman and servicewoman who died in the war with a framed painting bearing their loved one's photo and a name plate honoring their service. With sponsorship from Wilbert Funeral Services, Ray was able to keep this dream alive.

In 2004, Simon became part of the National Law Enforcement Memorial in Washington, DC, providing every family whose loved one has died in the line of duty with a beautifully framed painting called "Our Finest." In 2009, with new partnership and a new name, "Ray Simon Inc.," Ray and his designers created the new memorial painting for the



honored police officers entitled "Love, Honor, Duty, Sacrifice." This painting can be seen at www.eowpainting.com.

In 2010, Ray Simon Inc., had the honor and privilege to work with The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation for the first time. With support from Brown Funeral Homes, a Wilbert franchisee, Ray Simon, Inc. presented a beautiful framed print called "Hero" to the family of each firefighter being honored in Emmitsburg. Families were visibly moved as the artist personally presented them with a print that included a photo of their firefighter.

In 2011, Ray Simon Inc. would like to create a similar firefighting painting in honor of the 30-year anniversary of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service. This new painting will be dedicated to the lives and memories of our fallen heroes and their families. Ray Simon will always remember the true patriotism our nation's heroes bestow upon us with their bravery and sacrifice.

Families who have previously had a firefighter honored at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial can order prints directly from the artist. To view the 2010 firefighter print "Hero," to order a print, or for more information, please visit www.raysimoninc.com or call Shellie Metrovich at (330) 482-5819.



Ray Simon personally presented his print "Hero" to families during the 2010 Memorial Weekend.

LETTER FROM A FRIEND



uring the holiday season each year, it is always a huge challenge to find the right gifts for the senior staff at our fire department. Those are the folks that are closest to me and who are most responsible for our success as an organization. I'm always worried about finding just the right thing that sends just the right message. That is, a gift that lets the recipient know how much they are appreciated and valued and something that will also have value beyond the holiday season.

At home in recent years, my wife and I have started to give gifts to charities in the names of our family and friends who would normally get a gift. Through this experience, we learned that this type of gift seems to be appreciated much more than the normal 'stuff' that we receive.

As I set out on my shopping mission this year, I decided to explore this same approach in gift giving, and I found the perfect solution. The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation offers a variety of gift items, with the proceeds going to support the work of the NFFF. You can buy logo merchandise and memorial bricks for the Walk of Honor in Emmitsburg, but the gift I selected was more personal. The NFFF offers a program called "Friends of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation." For a minimum donation of \$25, you can become a "Friend." You receive a card, patch, pin, and, for the next year, the NFFF newsletter,

letting you know about the good work being done by the dedicated folks in Emmitsburg.

This holiday season, I made each of my senior staff a Friend of the NFFF. The NFFF staff provided me with the individual membership cards, patches, and pins so I could give them to each staff member with a note about the donation that was made in their name. Based on the feedback I've gotten, this gift has meant more than all of the "stuff" I've given over the years. They received something from me that shows that I care, and they will continue to be reminded about it throughout the year as they receive the newsletters and e-mail from the NFFF. More importantly, instead of receiving a gift that will only benefit them, they know that their gift will help the NFFF continue to provide benefits and services to the families of fallen firefighters throughout the coming year.

Please consider making someone a Friend of the NFFF during the season of giving. It's the perfect gift for a fire service colleague!

Chief Bill Metcalf

North County Fire Protection District, California
Treasurer, International Association of Fire Chiefs

To become a Friend of NFFF or for more information, contact Eileen Winston at: ewinston@firehero.org

MEET THE STAFF

BEVERLY DONLON, SURVIVOR PROGRAMS



everly Donlon joined the Foundation staff in 2002 and has worn many hats in her time with the NFFF. You may know Bev if you have worked with the *Taking Care of Our Own*® training

program, applied for a Foundation scholarship, participated in a golf tournament, or booked a room for the Memorial Weekend. Bev has recently taken on a greater role with the Foundation's Survivor Programs, including the annual Survivors Conference and the Memorial Weekend.

You may also remember her by a different name: Bev Walter. In July, she married Michael Donlon, a battalion fire chief with the District of Columbia Fire and EMS Department.

It is an honor to work for an organization where Taking Care of Our Own® is not just the title of a training course, but is truly what the Foundation believes in and does. Whether I'm working on scholarships, a fundraiser, the Memorial



Weekend, or the Survivors Conference, I can't imagine a more rewarding position. Working in an office where the compassion for the Foundation's mission is evident every day is truly a blessing.



FUNDRAISING FOR THE NFFF



articularly in these economically challenging times, we are grateful for our generous and devoted fundraisers. You never cease to amaze us with the creative and diverse ways in which you raise funds on behalf of the NFFF! Here are just a few unique recent fundraisers. If you are inspired by these stories and want to get more involved, please let us know!



HOLIDAY CONCERT

Internationally renowned musicians Donna Stoering (piano) and Erin Nolan (viola) presented a concert on December 4, 2010, at the beautiful Basilica of the National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Donations were collected to benefit both the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation and the National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton. The concert was part of a series called Notes for Nourishment, sponsored by the agency Listen for Life. All concerts in the series were free to the public, and free-will donations were collected at each event to benefit a variety of causes.



Erin Nolan and Donna Stoering

The music included a selection of classical compositions, as well as holiday selections and a carol sing-along. Many thanks to the musicians for providing this lovely holiday event that benefited both the local community and the Foundation.

Ms. Stoering and Ms. Nolan candidly shared their personal interest in the music they were playing and took the time to explain nuances of the pieces beforehand so that you could

picture in your mind's eye the musical painting that the composer was trying to portray.

Keith Potts, *community member*

To learn more, visit: www.listenforlife.org/ListenForLife_NotesForNourishment.html.

HAWAII FIRE CLASSIC 2010

The first annual Hawaii firefighters' softball tournament, held on Saturday, September 11, 2010, turned out to be a first class tournament. Team Fed Fire hosted nine teams from various branches of fire service throughout Hawaii in a 3-game, single elimination format. Over 150 firefighters participated in the one-day tournament, joined by their families and friends.

The event promoted fellowship amongst the different firefighting agencies in Hawaii, where attendees paid tribute to the FDNY 343 bravest fallen firefighters of September 11, 2001. Teams dedicated a moment of silence in honor and memory of them during the event's opening field muster. During the event, donations were collected to benefit the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation.



Winners of the first annual Hawaii firefighters' softball tournament

Everyone seemed to really enjoy themselves with the spirit of camaraderie. Congratulations to the champions, Honolulu Fire Battalion 4-3 and runners up, Fed Fire "B" Watch, and also to Homerun Derby champ Bud Sardinha and runner-up Dave Yoshida.

On behalf of Team Fed Fire, we would like to thank our sponsors and all the teams, coaches, players and their families for attending and really making our event a special day. A big mahalo to all the other volunteers who lent

a helping hand. Proceeds from the event will help Team Fed Fire make the journey to the 2011 World Police and Fire Games in New York City commemorating the 10th anniversary of 9-11.

continued on page 4



FUNDRAISING *continued from page 3*

WICKED HOT SAUCE!

By John Brown

I recently started a local hot sauce company, CHELSEA FIRE Hot Sauce, LLC, with my first brand being "CHELSEA FIRE Wicked. Hot. Sauce."

I live in a community where there were two devastating fires that nearly wiped out the community in the early and mid-1900s. Were it not for the dedication of its firefighters, the Great Chelsea Fires would have all but disbursed the citizens of Chelsea, Massachusetts.

I have several friends in Massachusetts who are firefighters, and our local firefighters are always raising funds for causes in our community. I did some research to see if there were any organizations who were dedicated to giving something back to firefighters.

During my research I found an article about The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. What better way to give back than to give to the families who lost a member of their family giving the ultimate sacrifice for their community?

During start-up of CHELSEA FIRE Hot Sauce, LLC, I negotiated with the NFFF to donate 30 cents of every



bottle I sell (5% of gross) to help families of fallen firefighters. NFFF has provided me a logo to proudly display on my label, as well as my website.

As a result of NFFF exposure, I've had sales of my product from as far as San Antonio, Texas, and Sacramento, California!!!

I'm attempting to reach out to local businesses in hopes that I can bring my product in wholesale and possibly have them carry my CHELSEA FIRE Wicked. Hot. Sauce., thus increasing my future quarterly donations to NFFF.

Want to learn more? Visit www.chelseafirehotsauce.com.

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY EVENT

The Washington University September 11th Memorial was designed to be both a memorial to honor the victims and a celebration of the importance of the American community. The event, held on September 11, 2010, featured speakers from both the faculty and the student body, as well as performances from individual students and groups. Our goal was that everyone who walked away from this event did so with a newfound sense of the importance



of community and the strength of the community here at Washington University.

As part of the event, donations were collected to benefit The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. The acts of unbelievable courage shown by the FDNY are exemplary of the courage shown by their colleagues across the country every single day. During and after the events of 9/11, the bravery displayed by the firefighters and police was a source of pride and strength for Americans all across the nation. This donation is our way of thanking those role models and supporting heroes like them.



In an effort to reduce paper waste and to keep expenses down, we would prefer to send information electronically when possible. Please make sure we have your most current e-mail address on file. Please send updates to: firehero@firehero.org



2011 SURVIVORS CONFERENCE



It's not too late to register for the 2011 Survivors Conference! The 6th annual conference will be held May 1-6, 2011, in San Antonio, Texas. It's a great time to meet up with friends old and new, attend some interesting workshops, and enjoy some down time in beautiful (warm!) San Antonio.

The conference is open to all survivors of firefighters who have been honored at the National Fallen Firefighters

Memorial in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Parents, spouses, siblings, adult children, and other family members have attended previous conferences. The conference is for adults only, and there is no cost to attend. With the help of generous sponsors, the Foundation is also able to cover lodging and some food and transportation costs.

Contact Bev Donlon at bdonlon@firehero.org or (301) 447-1603 to ask questions or request registration materials. We hope to see you in May!

2011 NFFF GOLF TOURNAMENTS



With snow on the ground, few of us here in Maryland are thinking about golf. However, for the NFFF Golf program staff and our local Tournament Coordinators, winter

is the time to both assess the previous year's events and begin planning for the upcoming 2011 season.

Looking back, 2010 was the seventh straight year of growth for the NFFF Golf program. Last year, a total of 36 Regional Tournaments were held in 22 states. While the final numbers for the year are not yet available, it is estimated that net proceeds will exceed \$285,000, which will be used to provide scholarships and other services to fire service survivors.

When this fundraising outreach began in 2004, it was a single event held in Fairfield, Pennsylvania. In the words of NFFF Golf National Coordinator Charlie Dickinson, "It's been amazing growing from one tournament with 150 golfers to this past year when more than 4,000 golfers participated. You couldn't write a better story—stout hearts of the fire service helping aching hearts of surviving families and loved ones!"

With the first event of 2011 just weeks away, Chief Dickinson is very optimistic about the upcoming season. He credits the success of the program to the strong support of local Tournament Coordinators, all of whom are volunteers. Most are active or retired firefighters, some are fire service survivors, and others are involved in businesses that serve the fire service community. The commitment of the Tournament Coordinators to the program also extends

to supporting each other's efforts. They share ideas and materials among themselves, play in each other's events, recruit new Coordinators to the program, and serve as mentors to new recruits.

"When golfers are teeing it up at a NFFF Golf tournament," says Chief Dickinson, "we at the Foundation know the extent of the effort that the local Golf Coordinators and their committees have put into hosting the event. For us, it is truly rewarding

to see the passion that these volunteers demonstrate in helping the surviving families of fallen firefighters. It is remarkable indeed!"

Some volunteers choose to serve behind the scenes by joining an organizing committee or working on the day of the Tournament. Others support the event by playing golf, becoming a sponsor, or attending the conclusion of the day's

the dinner held at activities. At many NFFF Golf Tournaments, the spouse, child, parent, or sibling of a fallen firefighter serves as a keynote speaker. In sharing the story of their personal journey after the loss of a loved one, survivors provide a very important local connection to the work of the Foundation. For the NFFF, each Golf Tournament is an opportunity to bring our mission and our message directly into the community.

To learn more about how you can become involved, please visit golf.firehero.org or e-mail golf@firehero.org.



SPARKLES

By Dayna Hilton

On October 26, 2010, I lost my best friend, Sparkles (the Fire Safety Dog). She was rescued from a home with 62 dogs and gained international attention with her fire safety efforts since being adopted in 2003. Sparkles loved being a part of the fire service. Best known for her red toenails and tail that never stopped wagging, Sparkles loved the fire service. It was as though she was born to be a fire safety educator; Sparkles found her calling in the fire service. She loved nothing more than being with children and demonstrating fire safety messages for her friends.

During her lifetime, Sparkles reached millions of children and their caregivers. She helped save the lives of seven children and two adults. Little Angelica Riggins, then age 5, shared this story with me after she lost her home to fire: “I was under the ‘cobers’ and the smoke came. I got down low and crawled, just like Sparkles told me to. I said, ‘Daddy, Daddy, you have to get down and crawl low just like Sparkles.’”

By this time, Angelica’s dad was disoriented due to the smoke, but he was able to follow Angelica out of the house. The firefighters later shared with me that the minute Angelica’s father

reached the threshold of the door, the house flashed over. Fortunately, they were able to get him out safely due to Angelica’s quick thinking. We were so very thankful that Angelica and her father were safe. Sparkles and I will continue to keep children like Angelica safe from fire.

The inspiration for Sparkles came to me when I was taking a public education class at the National Fire

Academy; therefore, the Academy will always hold a special place in my heart. To carry on Sparkles’ legacy and to support the work of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, we have worked with the NFFF to establish, “Sparkles’ Pathway” on the Walk of Honor® on the NFA campus. This special walkway will not only memorialize Sparkles and her tireless efforts to help keep children fire safe, but it will also serve as a reminder of the importance of fire safety to those who walk on the Pathway for many, many years to come.

Today, Sparkles’ work is being continued through her friends, Siren and

Tango. These two Dalmatians are stepping up to the plate for Sparkles, and looking forward to helping support the work of the NFFF.



Sparkles poses in front of the eternal flame at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial in Emmitsburg, MD

To learn more about Sparkles’ pathway, or to donate a brick in this special section, visit:

www.sparklesthefiresafetydog.com/sparklesmemorialpathway.html



MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

By Mary Bergjans, *Claims & Risk Services,*
Fireman's Fund Insurance Company



Recently, 160 Claims & Risk Services leaders met in St. Louis for their "2011 Build Grow Win" kick-off leadership meeting. Settled in and excited about what the meeting would bring, little did the attendees know that dinner on the first evening would include a heartfelt check presentation to the widow of a fallen St. Louis firefighter.

As Paul Stachura, head of Claims & Risk Services, spoke of our company purpose, he spoke vividly of our promise: "We started with a promise. We have a promise to keep."

A promise to our customers, our policyholders, our company, and to each other. He also emphasized our promise to our community. He described our Heritage ProgramSM and Bucket Brigade efforts and proudly cited we have awarded over \$27 million dollars since the Heritage ProgramSM began in 2004. Paul then introduced the fateful story of a dedicated St. Louis City firefighter who lost his life while meeting his promise to protect his community. On May 3, 2002, Robert Morrison and another firefighter died while battling a fire inside a building. They entered the building to ensure a third firefighter safely exited. Rob was 38 years old and had been with the department for 11 years. He left behind his wife, Laura Morrison, and two children, 11-year-old Matthew and 8-year-old Megan.

An investigation into the deaths showed that Rob died from smoke inhalation because his equipment failed.



From left: Howard Oldham, Recovery and Salvage Supervisor, Paul Stachura, head of Claims & Risks Services, Laura Morrison, and Kevin DeGarmo, Claims Director

Paul then invited Laura up to the front of the room and introduced her to the crowd. She tearfully accepted a check for \$2,566. Laura is a strong advocate for the importance of equipment safety, working closely with the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF), and she accepted the donation on behalf of the NFFF.

Laura has a long family history of firefighters. Her father, Chief John Brewer, had been with the department for 25 years before retiring. Laura's brother, Captain John Brewer, and her uncle, Chief Gerald Diefenbach, were also with the department at the time of Rob's death.

It gave us great pleasure, on behalf of all Fireman's Fund employees, to present Laura with the contribution. As you might imagine, there was not a dry eye in the room...many feeling very proud to be associated with a company that maintains a promise to the community.

9-11 MEMORIAL STAIR CLIMBS



In 2005, five Colorado firefighters met at a Denver high rise to climb 110 flights of stairs in memory of their FDNY brothers who were killed in the terrorist attacks of 9/11. As word spread about the Denver 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb, interest in the event surged. In 2008, participation was capped at 343, the number of FDNY firefighters who were killed on 9/11. The 2008 event also included a new remembrance component: each climber was assigned a badge, with the name and photograph of one of the fallen firefighters of 9/11.

The NFFF is proud to announce a series of NFFF-sponsored commemorative events to honor the supreme sacrifices made by firefighters on September 11, 2001. Some events are open to fire service personnel only, and

others are open to the general public. Each 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb and 9/11 Memorial Mountain Climb is not a race, but rather a time to remember and pay tribute to the 343 FDNY members who selflessly gave their lives so that others might live.

Registration fees from all of these events are designated by the NFFF to provide support for the surviving family members and coworkers of the New York City fallen firefighters. As an organization, the NFFF commends these firefighters who not only serve their communities every day, but have also developed ways to ensure that the sacrifices made by the FDNY firefighters on September 11, 2001, are not forgotten.

To find an event in your area, or to learn more about how to organize, sponsor, volunteer, donate, or participate in an event, please visit www.9-11stairclimb.com, or e-mail stairclimb@firehero.org.



SAVE THE DATE 2011!

March 24, 2011

Stop, Drop, Rock & Roll at FDIC
Indianapolis, IN

March 26, 2011

NASCAR Event to benefit NFFF
Auto Club Speedway -- Fontana, CA

April 1, 2011

*2011-2012 Scholarship Applications
must be postmarked and mailed*
www.firehero.org

April 6-7, 2011

CFSI Fire Caucus Dinner
Washington, DC
www.cfsi.org



May 1-6, 2011

Fire Service Survivors Conference
San Antonio, TX

July 23, 2011

NASCAR Event to benefit NFFF
Nashville Super Speedway -- Nashville, TN

October 2, 2011

NASCAR Event to Benefit NFFF
Dover International Speedway -- Dover, DE

October 14-16, 2011

*30th Annual National Fallen Firefighters
Memorial Weekend*
Emmitsburg, MD
weekend.firehero.org

For additional information on upcoming events, visit www.firehero.org.

This project was supported by Grant #2009-PS-DX-K016, 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, and the Office for Victims of Crime. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author(s) and do not represent the official position or policies of the United States Department of Justice.

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

