

The *For Survivors of Fallen Firefighters* Journey

DECEMBER 2004 ISSUE 6

A PROUD GRANDMOTHER WRITES

Helen Thomas, of Ravenswood, West Virginia, wrote to us recently about her grandson, Jason, a Foundation scholarship recipient.

It was Sunday June 17, 1990, Fathers' Day. How heartbreaking it was for an 11-year-old boy, and for his mother, who had to tell him that his father had gone to work that day and would never be coming home. Peter Baltic, 34, died while trying to rescue a fellow



worker that had been overcome by carbon monoxide. This left Jason's mother to raise him and his 7-year-old sister, Stacy, alone.

Jason could not wait until he was old enough to follow in his father's footsteps. He became a junior member of the Silvertown Volunteer Fire Department and worked at part-time jobs until he graduated from high school. After graduation he enrolled in college and received a two-year degree in Criminal Justice from West Virginia University.

After becoming a full member of the fire department, it wasn't long until Jason was known as Captain Baltic,

the same title that his father had. He was employed by Dill's Fire & Safety Equipment and tested and repaired SCBAs all over the state. This kept him in contact with all the fire departments, and he always came home with lots of good ideas for his own department. Through an online course, he received

another two-year degree in Fire Science. This gave him the qualifications he needed to apply for an Assistant Fire Marshal position.

Jason started to work for the State of West Virginia in March 2004 in inspection and licensing. He is a certified State Fire Instructor and trains his department as well as others. Jason is in the process of developing a training center for the fire department, which will have a live burn building, so he can give the practical training to go with the computer classes. He hopes to advance to the arson division some day but is very happy where he is now.

Jason's dream is to become chief of his department and continue to do all of the things his father wanted to do and was not able to accomplish. As his grandmother and grandfather, we are very proud of him and his accomplishments at the age of 25. He now has a job as Assistant Fire Marshal that he loves, and is able to volunteer every day to improve the community he lives in. It is wonderful that the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation was able to help him with a scholarship to finish his fire science degree.

Peter Baltic was a member of the fire brigade at Ravenswood Aluminum Company Security &



Fire Protection and a captain in the Silvertown Volunteer Fire Department. His daughter, Stacy, is also a Foundation scholarship winner majoring in Business Technology at West Virginia University, so grandma Helen has many reasons to be proud!

AHOY MATES!

Please join me and other survivors of fallen firefighters on a 7-day cruise to the exotic Western Caribbean—Belize, Isla Roatan, Grand Cayman, and Cozumel. We will set sail from Miami on July 24, 2005, on Carnival Cruise Lines Carnival Valor. The Carnival Valor will make its maiden voyage December 19, 2004, and its theme is heroes and heroics.

- Cathy DeFlumere
Wife of "Foxy" DeFlumere, 1996

Interior	\$963.03 per person
Ocean View	\$1113.03 per person
Balcony	\$1263.03 per person

These rates include cruise and port taxes only. Airfare and bus transfers are not included.

For more information, contact Carolyn at:

Infinity Global Travel

Toll free: (877) 448-5151

(410) 756-4450

carolyn@infinityglobaltravel.com

INVESTING PAYS OFF

In partnership with Merrill Lynch, the Foundation is offering a financial program for youth called *Investing Pays Off*. It provides a basic education in personal finance, entrepreneurship, career choices, and leadership development and includes practical tips and techniques which make learning interesting and fun. The program offers materials geared for ages 5-8, 9-13 and 14-18.

Go to www.ml.com/philanthropy. Click on *Investing Pays Off* on the left side. Then click on Resources & Tools, and choose an age group. If you don't have access to a computer, we can send the workbooks to you. If have questions or need assistance using the program, we can put you in touch with a Merrill Lynch volunteer. Contact Linda Hurley at (301) 447-7693 or lhurley@firehero.org.

WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING

The Compassionate Friends (TCF), a national nonprofit self-help organization that offers support to bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings, invites survivors of fallen firefighters to take part in its annual Worldwide Candle Lighting. By lighting a candle for one hour at 7 p.m. on December 12, you will join thousands worldwide in honoring the memories of children—of any age—who have died too soon. Many communities will hold candlelight services, so check to see if there is an event scheduled in your area. For more information, contact TCF at (877) 969-0010 or visit www.compassionatefriends.org.

We Want to Hear From You: How Loss Affects Children

In upcoming issues of *The Journey*, we want to feature stories about how the loss of a loved one affects children and teenagers.

If you were under age 18 when your firefighter died and are willing to share your story, please contact the Foundation. Tell us about your loved one, your memories, or how the death has affected you. What would you tell other young people who have just lost a loved one? You can also send original drawings. If you

are under age 18 now, please include a signed note from your parent or guardian giving us permission to print your story.

We would also like to hear from adults about how the death of your firefighter affected the children in your family, including young children who are not able to tell their own stories. Please include funny and uplifting stories, as well as insights that might help others who are struggling with their loss.



The Journey • National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

P.O. Drawer 498, Emmitsburg, MD 21727

(301) 447-1365

firehero@firehero.org