

Remembering



NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL WEEKEND

October 2 – 3, 2021

Emmitsburg, Maryland



The Fire Hero Family Flags

In October 2014, a special American Flag was presented to our Fire Hero Families by the National Honor Guard Commanders Association as a way of honoring the families of firefighters who have paid the supreme sacrifice to their community. The history, tradition, and meaning of the U.S. Flag parallel the significance of our culture and represent the core values of the American Fire Service.

As a sign of honor and respect, this flag was requested through the United States Congress in honor of our Fire Hero Families. The flag was flown over the U.S. Capitol on June 14 (Flag Day). The flag then traveled to Emmitsburg, Maryland, and was flown over the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial. The flag then went to Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia, The Wildland Firefighters Monument in Boise, Idaho, the IAFF Memorial in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and the Department of Defense Firefighters Memorial in San Angelo, Texas. These sites were selected as national representations of the agencies served by our fallen firefighters.

Since then, the Fire Hero Family Flag is on display in the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Chapel at the Foundation and present at the Fire Hero Family events throughout the year. For the first time, in 2021, a second Fire Hero Family Flag will be placed in service and posted at the family hotels during the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend.

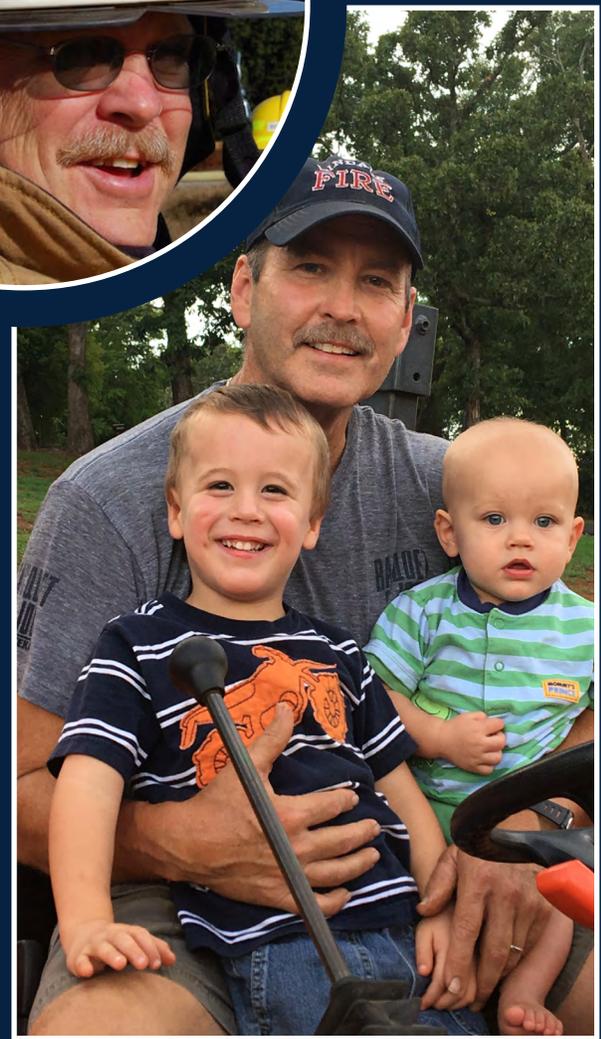
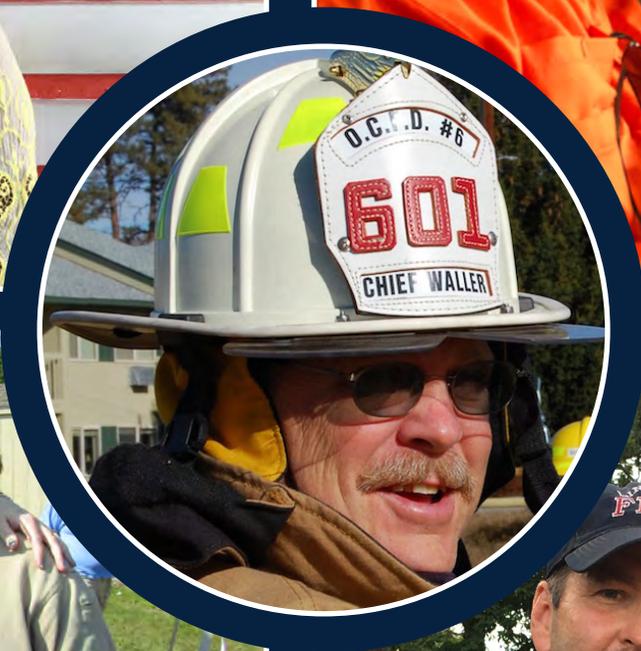
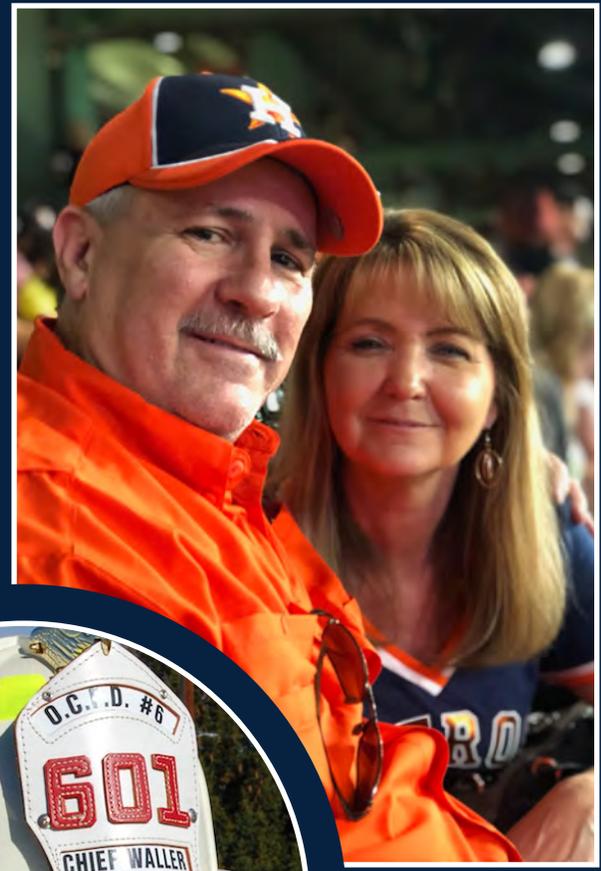
These special flags, dedicated to the Fire Hero Family community, represent the spirit of hope we receive from each other. The bond formed between the families of fallen firefighters and the community of honor guard members can only be described as special. We understand each other without speaking words; we know when a hug is needed without having to ask. We know and appreciate when to flip the switch from humor to seriousness, because we understand and respect each other. The U.S. Flag is a symbol of strength and unity, two characteristics families and honor guard members share. It's no surprise then, that the presentation of a dedicated U.S. Flag further joins these two communities together.



“What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead.”

– Nelson Mandela

*B*efore the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend, the Foundation asked families to submit information about their fallen firefighters for this Remembrance Book. If no information was received, the best information available to us for each firefighter was used. We regret any inadvertent errors or omissions. To view firefighter profiles online visit our website at: www.firehero.org





40th Annual National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend ★ October 2 - 3, 2021



October 3, 2021

Tell me about your firefighter.

These five words begin many of our conversations within our Fire Hero Family community. These firefighters are your children, siblings, spouses and partners, coworkers, and friends. To a grateful Nation, these firefighters are our heroes who gave their lives serving others in their communities and elsewhere. Although your loss and grief are unique, we join here today to collectively honor your firefighter and to ensure you that we will never forget your firefighter's life.

Today, your firefighters are recognized for not only how they gave their lives in service but also how they lived their lives. As you turn the pages of this Remembrance Book to find your firefighter's Profile of Honor, we know this profile only briefly introduces us to your firefighter. Perhaps it mentions their role in your family as the glue that held it together. Maybe it shows your firefighter's training accomplishments from rookie to fire chief. Or perhaps it talks about their favorite sports team and inside jokes only your family knows. In the future, at our Fire Hero Family gatherings, both virtual and in-person, we want to learn more about your firefighters and what they mean to you.

The United States Congress established the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation in 1992 to honor firefighters who die in the line of duty. Since then, our mission expanded to include supporting family members and coworkers of our honored firefighters and working to prevent firefighter injuries and fatalities. We thank our staff and volunteers for their work each day to support that mission. We thank our supporters whose donations, large and small, help to fund the services we provide across the nation to our Fire Hero Families and to firefighters.

As this weekend comes to a close and you return home, I pledge to you that the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation will steadfastly honor and remember your firefighter. Today's Memorial Service and this Remembrance Book are only the beginning of this promise. The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation is here for you to offer comfort, camaraderie, and a sense of community within the Fire Hero Family.

When I have the honor of personally meeting you today or in the future, I look forward to you telling me about your firefighter.

Sincerely yours,

Troy Markel
Chairman, Board of Directors

*J*onathan W. Burgess was born July 23, 1979, and raised on a small farm in south Alabama. Jonathan was taught about Jesus, work ethic, and being a good southern man at a young age.

Jonathan loved God, and he loved people. The life he lived so proudly is a true testament to that. He was constantly either talking with an old family friend at a local restaurant or to a stranger. He was the man who always, without question, would go the extra mile for anyone who needed his helping hand, regardless of the task. He was known to stop to help strangers on the roadside change a tire, eagerly pull over to assist with a vehicle accident prior to local first responders' arrival, and help the ones in his community with jumping vehicle batteries off.

Jonathan was a longtime member of a local, southern church where he would serve wherever needed. It was at this church that he married his wife and where he was laid to rest after his death on January 8, 2013.

Countless hours were spent with his father, Tommie, working on antique tractors, specifically John Deere tractors, restoring and showing them proudly. He loved his mother, Martha, more so than most any other human in the world. He was his sister, April's, protector and accepted this job with the utmost importance. His nieces, Kaylie, Anslie, Cuba, and Shayna, made his world spin around. He believed firmly in the foundation of family.

Jonathan married his wife, Carrie Lou, in November of 2010. They were married slightly over two years before he was called home to Heaven. To ask her, she was his purpose in life. To say they were completely smitten with each other would be an understatement. He loved her so well.

He joined Opp Fire Department in his small hometown as a volunteer in June of 1999. He later joined the department full-time as a career firefighter in January of 2006. He was born to be a firefighter and eagerly gave his entire heart to the community he served. One of his favorite aspects of his job was teaching the children of the community about fire safety. He was a big kid at heart with an even bigger heart. He also joined South Alabama Regional Airport Fire Department part-time, which he assisted in turning into a full-time career department. Jonathan was highly certified and trained within his career, constantly looking for opportunities to grow in knowledge and experience. At the time of his death, he was ranked as a captain with Opp Fire Department.

His legacy continues to live on through the ones who loved him and will continue forevermore. I carry your heart with me; I carry it in my heart.

Remembering



Jonathan W. Burgess

***South Alabama Regional Airport
Fire Department – Alabama***

Career Firefighter

January 8, 2013

Age 33



Remembering



Jared Wayne Echols

*Springville Fire & Rescue – Alabama
Career Firefighter/Paramedic*

June 17, 2019

Age 35



Jared Echols was a lifelong resident in the small town of Springville, Alabama. He was a graduate of Springville High School, playing football throughout his high school career. Following high school, he enrolled in college at Jefferson State Community College while working in the construction field. Jared continued working in construction after graduating from Jefferson State. In 2010, Jared married his wife, Melissa, and the couple welcomed their first daughter, Hailey, in 2013. Settling his new and growing family close to the home where he grew up, Jared began to explore a new career path rooted in his longstanding commitment to serving his community. Jared joined the Pleasant Hill Volunteer Fire Department, rising to the rank of assistant fire chief. He enrolled at Herzing University, earning a degree and paramedic certification in 2015.

In 2016, he began running his own construction company, specializing in custom doors. In 2017, Jared celebrated the birth of his second daughter, Mallory. He was also named 2017 Pleasant Hill Volunteer Fireman of the Year. Throughout the growth of his family and his business, Jared continued his fire service training, completing multiple training courses, including the Alabama Certified Volunteer Firefighter Course and Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations Course.

In January 2019, he was hired by the Springville Fire Department, where he was able to fulfill his desire to serve the community he had grown up in. His next and last training was the Fire Fighter Recruit Course, where he collapsed during a training exercise.

Jared truly had a servant's heart. He loved his family with all his heart, served the Lord fervently, and had a passion for helping others. He was a hard worker and always gave 110%. He was compassionate, loving, and the most dependable person. He left behind his grandparents, parents, brother, wife, two daughters, and five nieces/nephews. He will be forever missed by these loved ones and many more whose lives he touched.

Remembering

Michael Johnston lost his life in the line of duty when he lost control of the water tanker truck he was driving while answering a call for a brush fire on October 18, 2019. Michael Johnston was a volunteer firefighter with the Equality Volunteer Fire Department. He lost his life serving the residents of Coosa County.

Born March 31, 1974, in Tallassee, Alabama, Michael learned very early how hard work and dedication would pay off. Michael was a very hard worker, and in high school he was a star athlete in football. Michael never met a stranger and was liked by everyone in high school.

Michael left behind children and a wife he adored. Michael had three sons and two stepdaughters. He also had a niece that he loved and treated like his own daughter due to her mother passing away five years ago. Michael was a diesel mechanic by trade and very talented with his hands; he could build anything. Michael was a good, down to earth, simple man. He loved his family. Michael loved to cook and loved having family get togethers. Michael always tried to help anyone he could, and he died trying to help his community.



Michael W. Johnston

*Equality Volunteer
Fire Department – Alabama
Volunteer Firefighter*

October 18, 2019

Age 45



Remembering



Brenden Alexander Pierce

Palmerdale Fire District – Alabama

Career Firefighter

February 20, 2019

Age 21



*B*renden Alexander Pierce was a second-generation firefighter who was raised at a fire station. He began taking classes toward his dream as a senior in high school. He began volunteering for Allgood Volunteer Fire Department to do anything that was needed and remained until his death. He was a cadet in Blount County Fire & EMS Association's Junior Fire Academy, then graduated on to help teach others in the following years. He then began volunteering for Palmerdale Fire District and later became a paid firefighter for the district.

His dream was to follow in his father's footsteps as a fireman. His father, Allen Pierce, had held the position of chief at both Leeds Fire Department and Palmerdale Fire District. Brenden was quick to smile and help others. He adored his infant nephew, Michael Allen Heflin, and was a loving younger brother to his sister, Alyssa Pierce Heflin, and brother, Jacob Sherbert. He was always there for his family, which includes parents, Allen and Tammy Pierce; grandparents, Wesley and Joyce Walker; aunts and uncles, Tony Pierce, Jeanette and Bill Owens, Laural and Donald Berryhill, Karen and Charles Newman, LaDon and Marilyn Beasley, and Terry Beasley, and cousins, Emily Owens and Dale Berryhill. Since his death, a very special niece, Ava Grace Heflin, has been added. He would have adored her as well.

Brenden was preceded in death by his mother, Leisl Walker Pierce, and grandparents, Gail and Lucius (Bill) Pierce.

Brenden's death at age 21, as tragic as it was, proved to continue his legacy as a hero. Brenden's organs were donated, and numerous people gained a new lease on life due to his sacrifice. This is his legacy, John 15:13, *Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

Remembering

Roger was born November 12, 1953, in Ishpeming, Michigan, to Joyce and Joseph DeLongchamp. After graduating from Ishpeming High, he joined the Air Force in 1973 and was stationed in Illinois.

He was transferred to Alaska with his wife in 1978, where they had their two sons, Jonathon and Jesse. Roger transferred to the Air National Guard in 1983, where he achieved the rank of senior master sergeant. He retired in 1995 from military service but continued to serve as a civilian as part of the Air Force Emergency Readiness Team until he fully retired in 2012.

Roger enjoyed his retirement lifestyle for only a few years, joining the Willow-Caswell Fire Department in March 2017 as a driver-operator. During his service, Roger earned many achievements and awards, including Firefighter of the Quarter by Willow-Caswell Fire Department. Several of his fellow firefighters talked about how he was always eager to learn and teach others. They truly feel the loss in their firehouse and fire family.

In retirement and off-time, Roger loved spending time with his two boys, Jon and Jesse, their wives, and his grandkids, Ethan and Kaylee. He had a vast collection of Chevron cars at his Willow Cabin that he and Ethan would push around for hours. He loved to build and especially enjoyed building onto his cabins in Willow and Sterling, Alaska. When he wasn't building, he could be found singing karaoke at his cabin with family and friends while enjoying a cold one! Roger also enjoyed traveling the Lower 48 with friends on his motorcycles and riding with the Wind and Fire Motorcycle Club, where he served as treasurer in Alaska.

Roger is missed tremendously. His family and friends will never forget him, will never stop sharing their memories of him, and his boys will work hard to maintain and finish the projects he started. His grandchildren will always be reminded of how amazing their grandfather was and how much he loved them.

He is survived by his two sons and daughters-in-law, Jonathon and Shannon DeLongchamp and Jesse and Stevee DeLongchamp; his two grandchildren, Kaylee and Ethan DeLongchamp, of Anchorage; his sister, Sandra (Doug) Schoonover, of Huntington Beach, California; and his five brothers, David (Sherrie) DeLongchamp and Daryl DeLongchamp, of Ishpeming, Michigan, Jerry (Amanda) DeLongchamp, of Peoria, Arizona, Joseph (Deb) DeLongchamp, of Little Chute, Wisconsin, and Bob (Marsha) DeLongchamp, of Hemet, California; and many other family and friends.



Roger D. DeLongchamp

*Willow-Caswell
Fire Department – Alaska
Paid-On-Call Driver-Operator*

January 18, 2020

Age 66



Remembering

In the early morning of April 30, 2020, Captain Mike Tipoti and Captain Allen Velega were returning to the fire station after responding to a residential fire in Afono, when the apparatus they were in crashed at a sharp curve coming down a mountain road. Several other firefighters were also injured in this incident.

Captain Tipoti and Captain Velega both graduated in the Second Fire Academy and had served with the American Samoa Fire Bureau Division since 2012. They were remembered as hardworking and dedicated firefighters.



Allen L. Velega

*American Samoa Fire Bureau Division
of the Department of Public Safety –*

American Samoa

Career Captain

April 30, 2020

Age 50



Remembering



Tommy A. Arriaga

*Tempe Fire Medical
Rescue Department – Arizona*

Career Firefighter

March 6, 2020

Age 36



*T*ommy Arriaga died March 6, 2020, due to complications of cancer deemed by the State of Arizona to be in the line of duty.

Tommy began his career with the department in 2014. He served on the Hazardous Materials Response Team from 2016-2019. He was awarded the Tempe South Rotary Club Outstanding Firefighter and Employee of the Year award for his "dedication to improving the fire service, even while battling cancer."

Tommy served his community and fellow citizens with both pride and humility. He was remembered as committed and courageous, a hero to his family and fellow firefighters.



*B*rian John Beck Jr. passed away on May 19, 2019. In his 31 years of life, Brian John lived an amazing life of love, friendship, and service to others.

Born May 4, 1988, in Phoenix, Arizona, Brian was not only a third-generation Arizona native but also a third-generation Phoenix firefighter. Brian knew from the minute he could talk that he wanted to be a Phoenix firefighter; he never considered anything else. He was a member of Local 493.

He grew up in north Phoenix and attended Deer Valley High School, where he dominated the football field and took 4th in state as a heavyweight wrestler. Still, the most important thing he did there was meet the love of his life, his incredible wife, Sarah. Together their dreams came true when they welcomed their three beautiful children, Emery Olivia, Evie Sue, and Brian John Beck III.

Brian was quickly well liked by anyone who met him. He was known to always have a smile on his face and was kind to everyone he met. Brian was an avid outdoorsman who enjoyed spending time hunting and fishing with his many friends and family. He could often be found working on projects for others and spending good times around the firepit at his family cabin in Happy Jack, Arizona.

His legacy will live on through his greatest blessings, his children, as well as the many people he inspired through his genuine goodhearted nature. Brian will be greatly missed but will never be forgotten.

Remembering



Brian John Beck Jr.

*Phoenix Fire Department – Arizona
Career Firefighter*

May 19, 2019

Age 31



Remembering



Bryan "BJ" Boatman

Airwest Helicopters – Arizona

Contract Pilot

July 7, 2020

Age 37



*I*n July 2020, Bryan “BJ” Boatman, 37, lost his life in a helicopter crash while supporting ground crews fighting the wildland Polles Fire in Arizona.

BJ belonged in the sky. He grew up watching his dad fly helicopters, as well as serving with Glendale Fire Department in Arizona. He always admired his father’s dedication to the fire and aviation community.

As a young adult, BJ decided to follow in his father’s footsteps. He became a third-generation dual rated pilot. He flew many summers with both the United States Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management fighting wildland fires all over Arizona, Montana, Washington, Nevada, and Texas. BJ found much pride in his work and his service to his state and country.

In addition to his service to the community, BJ worked diligently for nearly 25 years alongside his parents to build their company, Airwest Helicopters, of Glendale, Arizona. He dreamed of expanding and continuing to provide support to the wildland fire fight.

BJ was a natural teacher and a mentor to many. He taught, supported, and encouraged young pilots as they found their place in the aviation industry, leaving behind a wonderful legacy as a pilot that no one will forget.

While he found his passion in the skies, when he was back on the ground, his passion was his wife, Elizabeth, and daughter, Claire. Together, the three were an adventurous family. They loved to travel, try new things, and learn about many cultures and people.

Bryan was an unstoppable force. He strived to experience everything the world had to offer. He had an unquenchable thirst for adventure and knowledge.

The hole left in our family and hearts will always yearn for him.

Remembering

Mark David “BO” Boulanger was far more than the title firefighter. Bo, as his friends affectionately called him, was an American Hero. Born February 9, 1961, in Rochester, New Hampshire, to Richard Henry and Anne Marie Boulanger, the family made their way west in search of the American Dream. Settling in Scottsdale, Arizona, Mark lived that American Dream growing up. Riding bulls and developing a devout passion for hunting, fishing, and all things outdoors, it was also where his character of quiet strength and strong integrity was formed.

Honor bound at a young age, Mark enlisted in the Army National Guard in 1981 and served six years. Shortly after the guard tour, Mark fell in love with firefighting and landed his first job with Sun Lakes Fire Department in Arizona. Career bound, he took every course and read every book to constantly stay ahead of the learning curve. He served as a firefighter, engineer, and captain with the City of Chandler from 1992 until his passing in 2018. During his tenure at Chandler he also volunteered for many special assignments, ranging from wildland firefighting to SWAT team paramedic with the Chandler Police Department. Bo always wanted to be where he could do the most good protecting his community and fellow firefighters. He preferred the city’s busiest stations, and Chandler Station 2 was his home for most of his career. Bo was honored as Fire Fighter of the Year for 2018.

If ever a man stood tall in character, it was Mark. Aside from the abbreviation of his last name as Bo, he was endeared the “Honey Badger” by his fellow firefighters. He showed a ferocious determination in all that he did. He took saving lives seriously, and that meant being the best that he could be. He trained hard and mentored numerous young firefighters. Public service was his life’s work. Even on his off time he enjoyed helping others, volunteering with the Salvation Army, Habitat for Humanity, and leading hunts with the Hunt of a Lifetime Foundation for children with terminal illnesses.

Mark fought a very difficult battle with lung cancer. His family, friends and firefighters stood by his side until the very end, as he would have done for each of them. Mark made an impact on every life he touched. He left behind countless friends, family, firefighters, and Susie, his wife of 22 years. He carried all the titles from husband to grandfather, brother to son, but most of all he carried the title American Hero.



Mark David “Bo” Boulanger

Chandler Fire Department – Arizona

Career Captain

September 16, 2018

Age 57



Remembering



Jacki Jean deHaro

Tucson Fire Department – Arizona

Career Captain

June 13, 2020

Age 58



Jacki passed away June 13, 2020, after a two-year long and courageous battle against occupational lung cancer. Jacki promoted through the ranks from firefighter to paramedic to captain. She was a phenomenal captain who took pride in serving the community and fulfilling her responsibilities to the department.

She grew up in a military family and served four years in the Air Force. Jacki received her associate degree from Pima College in 2018. Jacki is survived by her wife, Laura Baker; daughter, Jordan Baker; father, Keith deHaro; brother, Greg deHaro (Linda); niece, Sarah deHaro; and 96-year-old aunt, Phyllis Purrington.

Tucson Fire Department was a natural fit for Jacki's thrill of life, love for the outdoors, and service. She was full of life, love, and kindness. One crew member said, "I think Jacki really embraced what it means to be a public servant. No matter how trivial the call might have been, she approached the situation like it was her family that she was responding to and expected everyone on her crew to act accordingly. Jacki had no problems being a supervisor and letting you know when you weren't making the grade, so to speak. But she also didn't hold back giving you praise when you did a good job." Jacki received an Award of Service in 2016 for her work with Camp Fury and in 2017 for her Community Risk Reduction (CRR) work. She led her station and the department in the 2017 CRR Challenge to install the most smoke alarms. On the shoulders of Captain deHaro, Station 19 and her crew installed 22% of the department's overall total, winning the challenge. More importantly, she helped reconnect Station 19 and the Rita Ranch Community while making many homes safer.

Jacki had a vivacious personality and loved making people laugh. She lit up a room and knew how to bring life to the party. She made friends everywhere she went and left a footprint in many hearts; her beautiful soul will live on in those she touched. One of her favorite quotes was, "To thine own self be true." She helped others be true to themselves, just as she was. She excelled at instilling courage and confidence in young girls at Camp Fury. Jacki's "Camp Fury Rocks" will forever live on in our memories.

Her final assignment was at Station 19, "the Ranch." She loved her crew and took pride in leading them every C shift. Jacki did not want to go out this way, but her strength, courage, and perseverance was present each day during her battle. As she watches over her brothers and sisters, her words resonate – "Take Care of Each Other."

Captain deHaro—rest in peace; we will take it from here.

Remembering

*P*aul Clyde Hudson, of Buckeye, Arizona, died in a plane crash while dumping fire retardant from a C-130 Hercules tanker aircraft on an out-of-control wildland fire in the Snowy Monaro area of southern New South Wales, Australia. Captain Ian H. McBeth and Flight Engineer Rick A. DeMorgan Jr. also died in the crash.

Paul Hudson graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1999 and spent 20 years serving in the United States Marine Corps. He received many decorations during his career and retired as a lieutenant colonel in 2019. He held master's degrees in business administration and information technology management from the Naval Postgraduate School.



Paul C. Hudson

Coulson Aviation USA – Arizona

Contract First Officer

January 23, 2020

Age 42



Remembering



David W. Mathis

Phoenix Fire Department – Arizona

Career Firefighter

May 5, 2020

Age 66



David W. Mathis was a man of honor and integrity. He proudly served as a firefighter for the Phoenix Fire Department for 30 years. His career began back in 1978, when he entered the fire academy. The academy times were tough back then, he said, but he was always a determined fighter. He was in it to help others, and that is what David was always about.

David grew up on a farm in West Phoenix and was a native of the town. He was part of a very wonderful family. He had two loving parents and four siblings, besides many other family members. He was always helping his dad on the farm. As he grew older, he took on air conditioning as a side job, which definitely was needed in Phoenix. He continued this job while doing his firefighting career throughout 30 years. He also had many other side hobbies that kept him very busy. He was great at woodworking and was very well known for his green thumb as a gardener. David was never idle and always kept busy doing something. He was also a great firehouse cook at the stations!

David was an amazing husband and provider. He and his wife were inseparable and were always seen holding hands everywhere. They spent much of their time traveling when able. Cruising was their passion, and they were able to see quite a few places on the ships. David loved his family. His children and grandchildren were everything to him. He never missed an occasion or an event. He loved all the big family gatherings that included food, fun, and tons of love. He was all about his family and the blessings they provided.

David was a kind and gentle man and would do anything for anybody. If you called, he was there. To know him was truly to love him. Even when he was sick, he never thought about himself. It was others he cared about. That is why he wanted to become a firefighter, to help others. It's obvious that was his calling. He loved it and was born to do the job.

He is in our hearts forever, and God has truly gained another angel.

Remembering

Austin Michael Peck lost his battle with occupational contrived sinus cancer on August 31, 2019. As a young boy, he ran toward the sound of sirens and horns. As many young kids are drawn to ice cream trucks, Austin was drawn to fire trucks and to fire service.

Austin's first fire job was with Northwest Fire Wild Land District in 2003-2004. He then went to the City of Goodyear for 12 years. He absolutely loved the work and the crews, blaring sirens and horns to recruit the young and ambitious future public servants. Austin's fire legacy lives on in decontamination protocols and equipment.

His funeral procession had miles of fire trucks, ambulances, and police vehicles, including two helicopter escorts. The 25-mile procession to the Dubliner Bar, a firefighter's lair in Phoenix, was a brotherhood of over 2,000 people saying goodbye and honoring a true public servant. It was a day of worship, recognizing the loss of a hero, friend, mentor, brother, son, father, and husband. A celebration of a life of laughter and comedy. A natural Council of Dads to carry his legacy and watch over the well-being of his two strong young girls, Marley and Harper, and his childhood sweetheart of 18 years and wife of 12 years, Erin. His dedication and love for his wife and children is unsurpassed. His drive for excitement and adventure lives on in his children, as he leaves this world a better place. He was forever testing the edges of comedy and pranks. "There he was – Making everyone around him – Glad to be Alive."

Austin was 5'5" and an animal in strength and endurance. He was a top performer in his fire academy and would often go back on trials and events to encourage and press his classmates on. He was a dedicated team leader. He was driven to succeed, not only for himself but for those above or below him on a ladder and those in front or behind him in a flashover drill. Instructors would question him, because they were curious about his ability to collect dedicated followers and lead with song and dance. He was sincere, kind, gentle, strong, and simple. These are qualities the love of his life shared so deeply with him, and which he passed to his young daughters, who adored him.

There are stories upon stories and photographs—some quite unbelievable—that reveal Austin's personality, joy, tension, struggle, victory, tenderness, compassion, loyalty, and conviction. He packed a great deal into 35 years of life, and he left his mark on so very many souls. An angel of earth in heaven!



Austin Michael Peck

Goodyear Fire Department – Arizona

Career Engineer

August 31, 2019

Age 35



Remembering



Nikki Sullivan

*Mesa Fire Department – Arizona
Career Firefighter/EMT*

April 3, 2019

Age 45



Nichol Elaine “Nikki” Imm was born in Denver, Colorado, on February 24, 1974. It was the best birthday present her mother, Gail Imm, ever received. In 1980, the family—parents Nick and Gail and daughters, Adelle and Nikki, moved to Arizona. From a young age, Nikki was involved with competitive swimming and track and field. In junior high and high school, she won many awards. Unfortunately, a quad accident left Nikki with a severely fractured arm and ended her competitive athletic career.

Nikki began college at Yavapai Community College in Prescott, Arizona, before transferring to Arizona State University, where she received her bachelor’s degree. Throughout her college years, a burning desire to become a firefighter began to grow.

In 1999, Nikki began working for Southwest Ambulance and directing everything in her life towards getting hired as a firefighter. In August 2000, she was hired as one of the first three pre-recruits, a new position created by the Mesa Fire Department. During the next year, she helped develop the department SOPs for the pre-recruit position. In August 2001, she graduated from firefighter recruit academy and began her dream career as a Mesa firefighter.

Nikki’s friendship with Tim Sullivan, also a member of the Mesa Fire Department, grew over the years, and they were married in March 2007. In September 2012, they welcomed their daughter, Abigayle, into their lives.

In 2014, Nikki was given the crushing news that she had breast cancer. She battled cancer for five years, believing all along that somehow, she would beat it and God would deliver her a miracle. Nikki’s strength and courage through her battle with cancer will be a source of inspiration for her daughter and stepchildren, as well as all of her friends and family.

She was an amazing woman, and she will never be forgotten.

Remembering

*F*irefighter Ricky Telles was born in 1974 in Phoenix, Arizona. Hired for the Phoenix Fire Department Class of 2006-4, he served with the department for 12 years. He battled occupational esophageal cancer caused by cumulative exposures and was 44 years old when he died of the disease on January 17, 2019. He loved his job as a firefighter and always spoke so positively about the job.

Ricky enjoyed playing and watching sports, especially soccer.

Before getting hired, Ricky worked in the fire sprinkler business and with the Buckeye Arizona Fire Department. While on the job he was involved in many activities, and the one that was most special to him was the Arizona Burn Foundation and Burn Camp.

While on the job, he married Crystal McBratney and, at the time of his death, his three children were still quite young.

Ricky, as he was also known on the fire department, worked at Station 5, mostly on Engine 905, a “move up” truck assigned to downtown and then sent system-wide to wherever needed to cover fire stations that were overloaded or on campaign fires or complex calls.

Rick was given a line-of-duty death funeral service, and he takes his place at the Bell Tower of the Firefighters Cemetery section in Greenwood Memory Lawn in Phoenix.

Rick was very active with his family. He is survived by his wife, Crystal; daughters, Kailey, Harper, and Aubryn; sons, Keller and Clifford; two brothers and one stepbrother; three stepsisters; his father, Rick; his mother, Debbie; his stepmother, Deb; two granddaughters; and many nieces, nephews, cousins, aunts, and uncles.

He had an infectious smile and contagious laughter. He is greatly missed by so many.



Ricky Telles

Phoenix Fire Department – Arizona

Career Firefighter

January 17, 2019

Age 44



Remembering



David “Blake” Haynes

*M&M Air Services of
Beaumont, Inc. – Arkansas*

Seasonal Pilot

July 30, 2020

Age 62



David Blake Haynes, age 62, of Arkadelphia, Arkansas, passed away Thursday, July 30, 2020, from injuries sustained when two SEAT aircraft collided while making a formation drop on the Bishop Fire near Caliente, Nevada. He was described by one of his best friends as "not only the best of the best pilots but the best of the best human beings."

Blake was a well-acclaimed commercial pilot who had amassed over 30,000 hours of flight time, a near impossible number. He often joked that he lived in the cockpit of his airplane. Blake began his flying career after earning his private pilot license under the instruction of his father, Bill, who wanted to provide both of his sons something they could make a career out of. Once he obtained his commercial pilot license, he took a position as a crop duster for KP Flying Services out of Watson, Arkansas, and was featured on the front cover of Trade-A-Plane in February 2001.

Blake continued his career flying for Kalitta Air in Detroit, Michigan, and then returned to southeast Arkansas to run his own agriculture flying service out of Dumas. Blake's most recent commercial endeavor led him to M&M Flight Service in Beaumont, Texas, where for the past 25 years he flew spraying timber and fighting forest fires throughout the United States as a SEAT pilot. He was well known for his skill and accurate ability to put out a fire from above. People who have had the opportunity to watch Blake fly have said it was truly amazing. He could do things with a plane that most could not. His selfless and daring role as a SEAT pilot saved countless lives of firefighters on the ground.

Out of the 25 years he was employed by George Mitchell, George has said that Blake was not only his best pilot but one of the most loyal people he has ever come across, building a friendship of a lifetime. His goal in life was to always provide for his family and put others first.

Blake, you were always everyone's friend. When you walked in the room, the conversation never stopped. You always had a story to tell and always wanted to hear ours. Though your service kept you busy, the time we spent with you will never be forgotten. We will forever miss your booming voice, your jokes, and the inspiration you gave us all.

We love you.

Mom, Dad, Amanda, John, Hudson, Larry, Polly, Joseph, Paul, and Mark

Remembering

Eric Lee Morrison loved the adventure of life, his family and friends, and left a beautiful legacy to this world. Born May 3, 1977, Eric was an adorable brown-eyed, blonde-headed boy who always had a smile on his face, never met a stranger, and was adored by everyone. Referred to as “a gift from God” by his mom and dad, Eric valued friendships, played extreme sports, completed a bachelor’s in business administration, and started two successful businesses.

Eric joined the Fort Smith Fire Department in 2003, discovering his lifelong calling as a protector. Some would refer to Eric as the station’s favorite, a great cook, and the one who kept everything and everyone organized, making sure everyone was working hard and pulling their weight. His motto at work and at home was “Give 100%, no matter what, all the time.” Eric had a true brotherhood with his fellow firefighters. They loved each other, shared life events, and created countless memories. Eric served on thousands of calls during his service and was a true hero who saved countless lives. Eric excelled as a firefighter. He received the Commendation Medal with V Device for Rescue at a fire in 2010, the Certificate of Appreciation for FireTAC for physical fitness training in 2011, and the Achievement Medal for airpack technician in 2015.

Eric’s qualities of love and care were evident for his family, which was everything to him. Eric married the love of his life, Amy, in 2004, and in 2010 they welcomed a son, Henry, who instantly became their pride and joy. The family loved life, traveling, and enjoyed each moment of sharing life with family and friends. Eric was at his happiest when he was outdoors, especially with his family and close buddies. He loved being in the woods, hunting, fishing, cycling, and outdoor sports. Eric was an example of a Godly man who loved and provided for his family and served others.

Eric was diagnosed with Stage 4 pancreatic cancer in December 2017. During the next 23 months, Eric fought with unbelievable strength, courage, independence, and dignity with the prayers, love, and support of family, friends, medical staff, and strangers. Eric continued to work at the fire station until a month before his death. He never felt sorry for himself and had the attitude of “Every Day is a Good Day.” For all that knew Eric, he touched each life in a special way and made this world a better place. Eric will always live in our hearts. *Joshua 1:9.*



Eric L. Morrison

City of Fort Smith Fire Department –

Arkansas

Career Firefighter

November 21, 2019

Age 42



Remembering



Michael Wayne Watkins

*Northeast Lakeside
Fire Department – Arkansas
Volunteer Driver/Engineer
April 24, 2019
Age 75*



Michael Wayne Watkins was born on February 27, 1944, and was adopted by Virgil and Helen Watkins when he was six months old. Upon graduation, he married and was father to four children, Michael, Shelly, and twin daughters, Shawna and Sherry. On October 28, 1996, he married Danielle Saylor and became stepfather to her children, Penny and Brian. He was grandfather to seven grandchildren, Michael, Ashley, Kelsey, Christopher, Jeremy, Trinity, and Hunter. In 1986, he was named Father of the Year at his daughter Shawna's high school because of his tireless efforts to take her for her radiation treatments and for always staying up after his third shift job to take his children to the doctor or dentist and any extra-curricular activities. Mike was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather.

Early on in life he wanted to be a fireman, and he started volunteering as a teenager while still in high school. Through the years, he attained the rank of captain at the Talbott Volunteer Fire Department in rural Manito, Illinois. He was employed by Central Illinois Light Company doing mechanical maintenance until his retirement in 2004. In 2014, he and his wife, Danielle, moved to Mountain Home, Arkansas, and he continued his volunteer work with North East Lakeside Fire and Rescue as the tanker driver.

Mike loved fishing, shopping, camping, and computers. He started his own business repairing computers, making slideshows with music from pictures, and transferring videos and records and cassette tapes to DVDs and CDs. If his friends were having computer problems or wanted something transferred, he was always there to help them. He also was a greeter at church and volunteered with the Summer Feeding program providing food to families who otherwise might not have any.

On April 21, 2019 (Easter Sunday), Mike got a fire call. When he left home that afternoon, he said he would be home as soon as he could. The first one to arrive at the department after Mike was the assistant chief, who found him slumped over the steering wheel of the tanker. He did CPR and revived him. Mike died three days later on April 24, 2019. He will be forever missed by his wife, children, grandchildren, and his many friends.

*J*ason Andrew Cortez was born on September 16, 1978, in San Francisco to Gilbert and Sonia Cortez. A third-generation San Franciscan, he grew up in Potrero Hill. He attended Grace Cathedral School and Sacred Heart Cathedral Preparatory, where he loved to play basketball, before heading to St. Mary's College.

Jason was a huge Bay Area sports fan and loved watching San Francisco Giants baseball and Warriors basketball. He loved family time on Sundays and grew up watching the 49ers with his dad, a tradition he continued with his sons. He was extremely knowledgeable about local sports trivia and shared that with friends. Jason had many passions, including boxing, paddle boarding, Jiu-Jitsu, and anything physical that helped him stay prepared for his job.

Jason loved tradition and followed in his father's footsteps to become a firefighter. In 2007, he was in the first EMT class for the San Francisco Fire Department. In 2009, Jason advanced to paramedic on the ambulance and completed eight years there, serving the city he loved. In 2015, he was recognized for his service as a paramedic at the 62nd Gala Celebration and Awards dinner and received the Community Award. He was also recognized by the San Francisco Hispanic Lions Club. Jason was in the 118th Academy Class for the San Francisco Fire Department, achieving his dreams of becoming a firefighter paramedic.

He soon found a permanent home working at the busiest engine company in the United States, Station 3. He loved the tradition, the strong family bond of brotherhood that working at this station gave him. He took his job seriously and never stopped learning to better himself. He also took great pride in preparing good meals for his station, mastering recipes and cooking techniques and showing them off to his firehouse family. The days working at the fire station were sometimes long and tough, but he always had a big smile on his face and would end the day saying, "I love my job."

Jason and Pattie met in their early 20s and married in 2010 in Mexico. They soon started their family and had two beautiful sons, Jackson and Greyson. Jason lived for the time he spent with his family and enjoyed taking them on new adventures and creating new traditions. Jason lived by the model "Family is everything." He put his family above all else.

Jason was working at Station 3 on October 7, 2020, where he tragically lost his life in a training accident at the fire department training facility. Jason is terribly missed by all who knew and loved him.

Remembering



Jason Andrew Cortez

*San Francisco Fire Department –
California*

Career Firefighter/Paramedic

October 7, 2020

Age 42



Remembering



Ramon "Ray" Figueroa

Porterville Fire Department –

California

Career Captain

February 18, 2020

Age 35



*R*amon Clemente Figueroa was born with an adventurous and fighting spirit on January 3, 1985. He spent most of his childhood outdoors, bike riding, rollerblading, and playing with friends. He graduated from Delano High School in 2003.

The tragedies of 9/11 inspired him to dedicate his life to a career of first responding. In his words: "The morning of September 11, 2001, I was walking into weight training my junior year of high school. As we watched the events unfold, I felt every bone in my body at unrest. I knew then it was in me to become a first responder. The morning of September 17, 2007, I walked onto my first day as a full-time firefighter. I've always held myself to the bravery of those 343 firefighters that answered the call and made the ultimate sacrifice. I can only hope I become half the firefighter those were on that day."

In 2006, he began his career as a volunteer firefighter/EMT at Lindsay City Fire Department working under his father, the police and fire chief. In 2007, he was hired by Porterville City Fire Department, where he served for 13 years, continued his training and schooling, and was eventually promoted to captain. He responded to his last alarm at the Porterville Public Library fire on February 18, 2020.

"Ray" held associate degrees in wildland fire and fire technology, certification as a State Fire Marshal Arson Investigator II, and a Chief Officer Certificate. Ray was signed off by the State Fire Marshal office as a low angle rope rescue instructor and an instructor in all state arson courses. He was a fire academy instructor at Porterville College. Motivated to provide the best knowledge and skill for his crews, he dedicated his time to learning and mentoring. He valued the brotherhood of firefighters and vowed to never leave a brother behind, often citing the mantra, "The men, the mission, then me."

Ramon's greatest accomplishment was being Dad to Amelia and Phoenix, who were his pride and joy. He enjoyed frequent outings with them, Disneyland trips, and watching movies. He could also be found fishing, golfing, target shooting, powerlifting, snowboarding, and visiting friends and family. His faith in God and love for family were driving forces in his life.

In addition to his children, Ramon is survived by his father, Ramon Figueroa (Sylvia); mother, Anna Moreno (José); and siblings, Rosanna Natividad (Anthony), Angelica Sanchez (Fernando), Desiree Ortiz, and Zachariah Figueroa (Saidee). It is an honor that his name stands alongside the brave and heroic men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice and inspired him at a young age.

Remembering

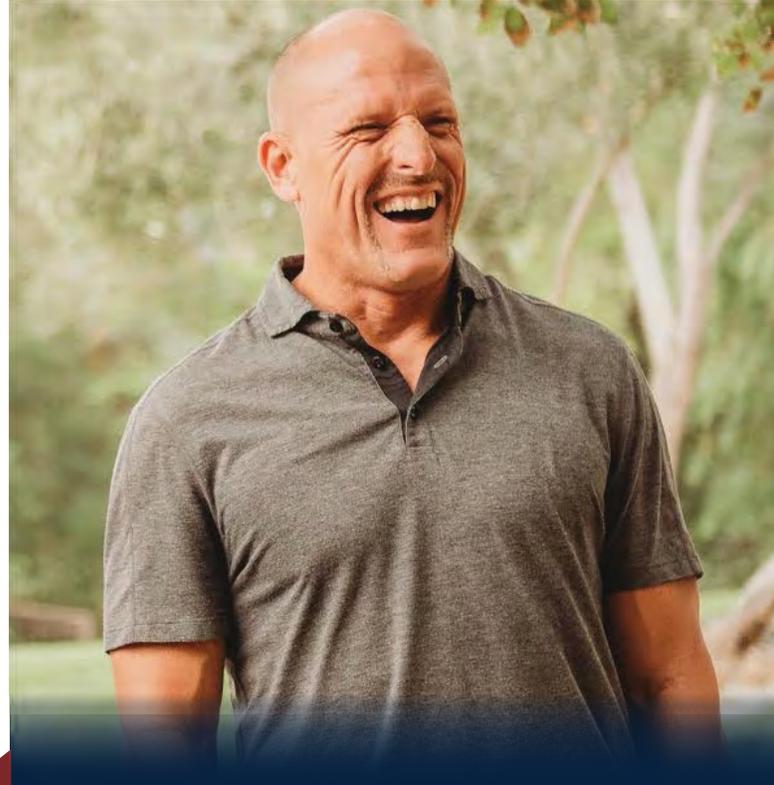
*F*irst and foremost, Mike was a man of love, faith, and integrity. God, family, and friends were the center of his life. Mike leaned on his strong faith in the Lord to help him through trying times and provide him a compass when navigating his busy family through life. When people met Mike, they knew they were in the presence of someone special. Simply put, he left you wanting to be a better person.

Mike was a devoted husband to his high school sweetheart, LeAnne. They would have been married for 25 years in the month of November following his death. He was a true girls' dad to his daughters, Mikena (age 21) and Rylee (age 17). He was everything to his three girls—a husband, father, mentor, best friend, protector, and hero. Above all, Mike's main focus was to always make sure his family was taken care of.

Mike's flight career started when he was 19 years old. He worked his way through numerous licenses and jobs as a civilian pilot to achieve his ultimate goal to one day fly for the Los Angeles County Fire Department. He was experienced, with over 30 years as a helicopter pilot, working various jobs from Air Medevac, Southern California Edison, wildland contract firefighting work, and finally Los Angeles County Fire in their Air Operations division. His dream was cut short on August 19, 2020, when he was fighting the Hills Fire in Fresno County, California. August 18, 2020, was the last goodbye hug he would give his family as he left that morning to work.

Mike was always the first to the start of a job and the last to leave. His work ethic was above and beyond. His strength and perseverance led him to be successful in every aspect of his life. He loved all outdoor sports and especially loved the sport of CrossFit, where he eventually would compete worldwide at the CrossFit Games and place 3rd in the world for his age division. He always gave credit for his achievements to others. He believed his success was from all the love and support he received from the ones that meant the most to him. But his family and friends knew it was his hard work, perseverance, and strength that gave him the win. CrossFit created a Hero workout named after him, "Fournier." This was a huge honor he received from his favorite sport, where he will be forever remembered.

Mike can never be replaced, but he would want each of us to carry on and to treat people the way he treated them, with respect, love, and kindness. #LOVELIKEMIKE



Michael John Fournier

*Guardian Helicopters, Inc. –
California*

Contract Helicopter Pilot

August 19, 2020

Age 52



Remembering



Peter A. Hein

*Inyo National Forest,
U.S. Forest Service – California
Big Pine Volunteer
Fire Department – California
Captain, Incident Command Support,
Engineer
August 11, 2020
Age 61*



*W*e lost a mighty, caring, and generous man on August 11, 2020. Until his untimely passing, he lived life to the fullest!

Born December 7, 1958, in San Anselmo, California, fourth child of Richard and Alice Hein, Peter Alan Hein grew up roaming Mt. Tamalpais. Peter relished hiking, fishing, and camping throughout northern California with family and on his own, especially the Sierra Nevada he grew to know so well. In high school, Peter took up cross country running and completed the grueling Dipsea Race. After graduating in 1977, he completed one year at College of Marin. The following summer he signed on with California Conservation Corps and discovered wildland firefighting. Although he never returned to college, his list of training courses completed filled pages as he sought increasing responsibility throughout his career.

Pete followed his brother to Mammoth Lakes, California, to fish, hike, and ski. Between seasonal stints with USFS, he worked in ski resort jobs, and in timber management in New Zealand from 1990 to 1992. Back in Mammoth, he met Debra Graham, with whom he had two sons. He loved nothing more than spending time with them outdoors. His return to California also launched fifteen years with USFS, rising to the rank of battalion chief. Switching employers to be nearer to his sons led to ten years with California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). He retired in 2018 as captain. He continued to volunteer with Big Pine VFD and served in Plans and Resources for USFS until his death while working the Stagecoach Fire.

Pete will be missed by all who knew him. He left a legacy of dedication to fire and wildland protection and indelible memories of stories and jokes he loved to share. His memory lives on through his sons, Trevor and Keenan; sisters, Lora (spouse Nora Carlson) and Kristi (spouse Casey Bazewick); and brother, Eric. Others who will miss him most include his special sidekick, Susan Olito, and loving friend, Claudia Zimmerley, and the boys' honorary uncle and aunt, Carlton and Gail Gasior. His neighbors in Big Pine lost their unofficial "Mayor Pete," who shared tools, garden produce, advice, and his rescued cat, Bobby. His lasting impact will also be felt by extended family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues, especially the enormous firefighting family who have honored him as one of their own.

In Pete's honor, please consider reaching out to someone with an act of kindness and generosity, something he regularly did for others. To grow a garden, you must first plant a seed, and Captain Pete Hein planted many.

*P*atrick was a man of honor, bravery, courage, and led his life with Christ. He died February 18, 2020, a month short of his 26th birthday.

Patrick's love of being a fireman came to life when Captain Fricke brought the fire engine to Grace Lutheran School. He got onto the fire truck, and from that moment on nothing would stop his dreams of becoming a fireman.

Patrick later attended Porterville Community College, at which he completed the Fire Academy and worked closer to his dreams of becoming a full-time firefighter. When it came to firefighting, he was relentless. He attended numerous trainings and received several certifications. He wanted to be the best he possibly could be to support his brothers.

In addition to being a dedicated firefighter, Patrick was a loving son, a protective little brother, a doting fiancé, and a loyal friend. He was a lover of all things sports and animals. If you let him, he would talk your ear off trying to defend his Chargers and Padres and tell you all about his baby pit bull, Lilo. Patrick's love of sports and competitive drive were instilled at a young age. He was an amazing athlete.

Some of Patrick's favorite memories were spent at Bass Lake with his family. He loved to be out on the water, showing off on his wakeboard and going on morning skis with his family. As he got older, his love for the water turned into a love for the fire service. Patrick loved being with the Porterville Fire Department and the camaraderie that came with being a part of such an amazing second family. He loved every single one of the people he worked with and would have done absolutely anything for them. Patrick's motto was "I got you." Patrick's love for his family was unmatched. He loved family dinners and his mom's apple crisp even more. He had a deep admiration for his older siblings, even though he liked to tease them, saying he was the favorite and best looking.

Patrick's vibrant personality, contagious laugh, and infectious smile ensured that no one was ever a stranger. He loved people, and people loved him. Patrick's impact on those around him and his community are a testament to the kind of person he was.

Patrick was an amazing human being full of compassion and a great sense of fairness. We will deeply treasure the time we shared with him, knowing that his spirit continues to reside with all of us.

Remembering



Patrick Lee Jones

*Porterville Fire Department –
California
Career Firefighter
February 18, 2020
Age 25*



Remembering



Yaroslav I. Katkov

**CAL FIRE,
California Department of Forestry
and Fire Protection – California
Career Firefighter**

July 29, 2019

Age 29



Yaroslav Igorevich Katkov died after suffering a heat-related emergency while on a training hike with his crew in San Diego County. Katkov was a seasonal firefighter with CAL FIRE and was assigned to Station 16 in the unincorporated area of De Luz, northwest of Fallbrook. He lived in Murrieta.

Katkov was born in Eastern Europe in 1990, and his family relocated to Toronto, Canada, in 1994. They later moved to San Diego County, California, where he attended Scripps Ranch High School. An accomplished athlete, he competed in football and wrestling and was recognized for his character and leadership. He graduated from San Diego State University with a bachelor's degree in business and finance and received his real estate license before he decided to become a firefighter.

He attended the Miramar College Fire Technology Program, where he impressed his instructors with his enthusiasm, dedication, and passion. He was just starting his firefighting career at the time of his death.

Katkov was described by his family and friends as brave, kindhearted, positive, and outgoing. He valued experience over material things and was always up for an adventure.

Katkov is survived by his father, Igor Katkov; his mother, Nadia Katkova; his brother, Sam Katkov; and his partner, Ashley Vallario.



Remembering

*D*aniel Joseph Laird went to be with the Lord on March 27, 2019, at the young age of 41. He sustained fatal injuries in a helicopter accident while supporting a routine burn in Sam Houston National Forest in Texas. Two other people were injured in this incident.

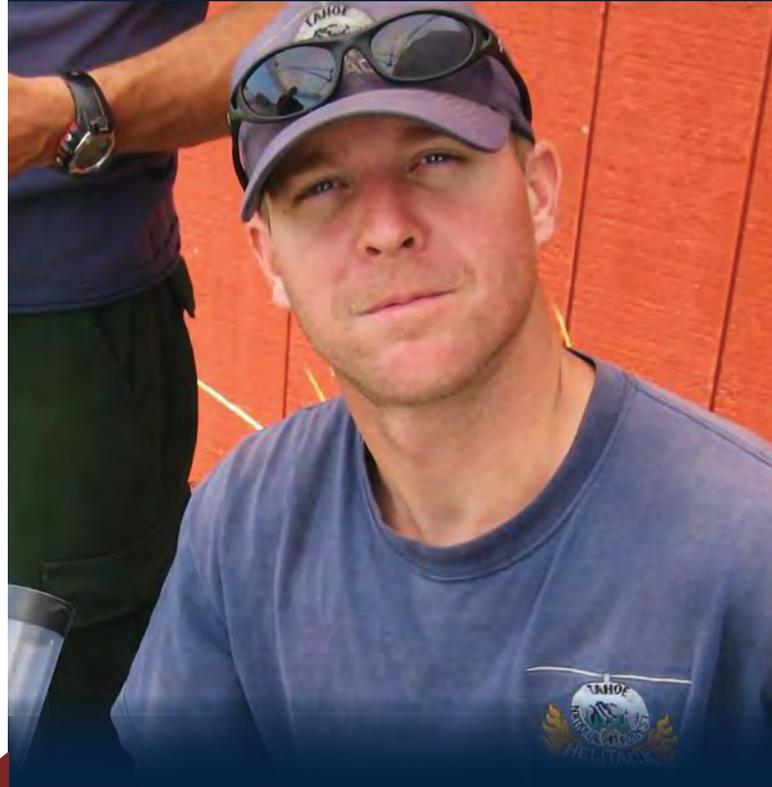
Born August 30, 1977, in Fremont Hospital, Yuba City, California, Daniel was the youngest of four siblings. He went to school at Grace Christian Academy, then on to Bridge Street School, and graduated from Yuba City High School in 1995.

Daniel knew early in life that he wanted to be a firefighter like his father and uncle. After high school, he began a 23-year career with the United States Forest Service, working his way up through the ranks to the position of helitack captain on the Tahoe National Forest.

Daniel was an avid fisherman, staunch supporter of the Sacramento Kings, competitive golfer, and Yuba City skateboarding icon. He is remembered as an amazing teacher, gentle and generous, a true problem solver with an infectious smile.

His family was always his greatest love and highest priority. Daniel was survived by his loving wife, Heather, who was his childhood sweetheart, and who sadly died just a year later in June 2020. He is survived by his daughter, Evain; father and mother, Richard and Rochelle Laird; brothers, Jeffery and Johnathan Laird; and grandparents, Chuck and Shirley Evans.

He was preceded in death by his paternal grandparents, Larry and Nelda Laird; maternal grandfather, Ronald Jenkins; sister, Angela Laird; and nephew, Gavyn Laird.



Daniel J. Laird
*USDA Forest Service,
Tahoe National Forest – California
Career Captain
March 27, 2019
Age 41*



Remembering



Charles E. Morton

*San Bernardino National Forest,
Big Bear Hotshots – California*

*Career Firefighter
September 17, 2020
Age 39*



Charles Morton, squad boss on the Big Bear Interagency Hotshot Crew, died during interagency fire suppression activities on the El Dorado Fire in the San Bernardino National Forest in California on September 17, 2020. He had been a firefighter for 18 years, 14 of those with the U.S. Forest Service.

He loved his work as a firefighter and spending time in the wilderness. He was remembered as a well-respected leader, hardworking, funny, and devoted, with a big heart.



Remembering

Don was a devoted Christian who loved God, his family, and life. Married for 40 years, he looked forward to spending his retirement with his best friend, lover, and soulmate, Sandy.

He was a positive role model to his children and was excited to teach his four-year-old son how to be a good man, ride a bike, surf, play hockey, and someday restore a '66 Chevelle together. He anticipated the day he would walk his two daughters down the aisle and give them away in hopes they and their spouses would together experience the same joy in their lives that he had. (2 Timothy 4:7-8)

Don was a strong believer in Jesus Christ. He did not push his faith onto others but showed it in how he lived his life. On his days off, he could be found studying his Bible every morning outside while the sun rose. Before leaving for his work shift, he would drop to his knees at the foot of the stairs and ask God for protection for his family. When Don realized he was not going to beat the illness that would take his life, he did what he always did—he thought of others. He asked for prayer from the Church prayer chain, not for him but rather for his family: “My cancer is back, and the prognosis is not good. Please pray for my wife to draw close to God for strength and guidance, and please pray for my two daughters to look toward the Lord as well.”

Fearless and up for any challenge, Don especially loved being on his surfboard in the ocean waiting for the perfect set or on the ice playing hockey.

Appointed to the LAFD on November 24, 1988, Don achieved certs in swift water and HAZMAT along the road to the rank of engineer. He received commendation for his involvement in the 1992 Los Angeles Riots, participated in both (2002 & 2005) Los Angeles Metrolink train crash USAR rescue operations, and firefighting/rescue efforts during the 2008 Sayre Fire. His prowess at the pump panel was second to none, but like everything else in life, he took it all in stride. Age and the stresses of being a first responder never turned the hair on the top of his head gray, but you couldn't say that about his mustache. And much to the chagrin of many an LAFD chief officer, Don let his mustache grow as long as it would!

Don Welcker, an honest man of integrity whose passions were faith and family, loved life, and he lived big. His passing has left a tremendous void in the hearts of all who knew and loved him. Although he is greatly missed, we gain comfort in knowing that he no longer suffers and is surfing the clouds of Heaven while waiting for us to join him.



Donald Christian Welcker

*Los Angeles City
Fire Department – California
Career Engineer*

July 1, 2019

Age 60



Remembering



Charles H. Albrandt

Poudre Fire Authority – Colorado

Career Captain

July 29, 2019

Age 67



Chuck was, in a word, eclectic. He studied chemistry and education. He read Heinlein and Asimov and Tolkien and J.K. Rowling. His music tastes ranged from Jethro Tull to Celine Dion to flamenco guitar. He loved ice cream and liverwurst and Brussels sprouts. He had a favorite dwarf (Grumpy) and dreamed of being reincarnated as a three-toed sloth. The first time he deep-fried a turkey, he wore coveralls and a welding shield. He completed his bachelor's degree in his 40s, but he could converse easily about philosophy, history, astronomy, and religion. He taught physics and hydraulics and EMS to firefighters and fly-tying to college students.

Chuck was a professional firefighter in Fort Collins, Colorado, for nearly 42 years. He retired as the longest-serving line officer in his department's history. Firefighting was part of his soul. En route to an emergency scene he would sing, "Here we come to save the day!" and play the Mighty Mouse theme on a tape player. But he approached leadership and command with absolute dedication and professional conscience. Chuck used to say, "At the fire station, it's a democracy. On the emergency scene, it's a benevolent dictatorship." Chuck was prepared, every day, to make the decisions necessary to ensure that everyone went home at night. It endeared him to those who had the privilege to work for him.

Most of all, he loved his family. When he wasn't at work, he was at home with his wife, Peggy, who in their 46 years of marriage endured the ups and downs of a spouse of the fire service, from the silly to the scary. He was always there to help with homework, and he carried a clipboard around the house in case he needed to fiddle with math or physics problems. Many a night he hosted a homework help session at the fire station's kitchen table. In his daughters' seven years of high school tennis, he missed two matches. He was always the first to show up with the full-sized conversion van loaded to the gills with food, blankets, umbrellas, chairs, and water, wearing one of his dozens of silly safari hats to protect his ears, burned in an elementary school fire when he was a rookie. Between matches, he treated blood blisters, dehydration, heat stroke, and twisted ankles.

Those who knew him and love him could write a book about Chuck's quirks and eccentricities, his decency, and his values. And that is not a bad way to leave one's mark on the world.

"I have loved the stars too fondly to be fearful of the night." – Sarah Williams

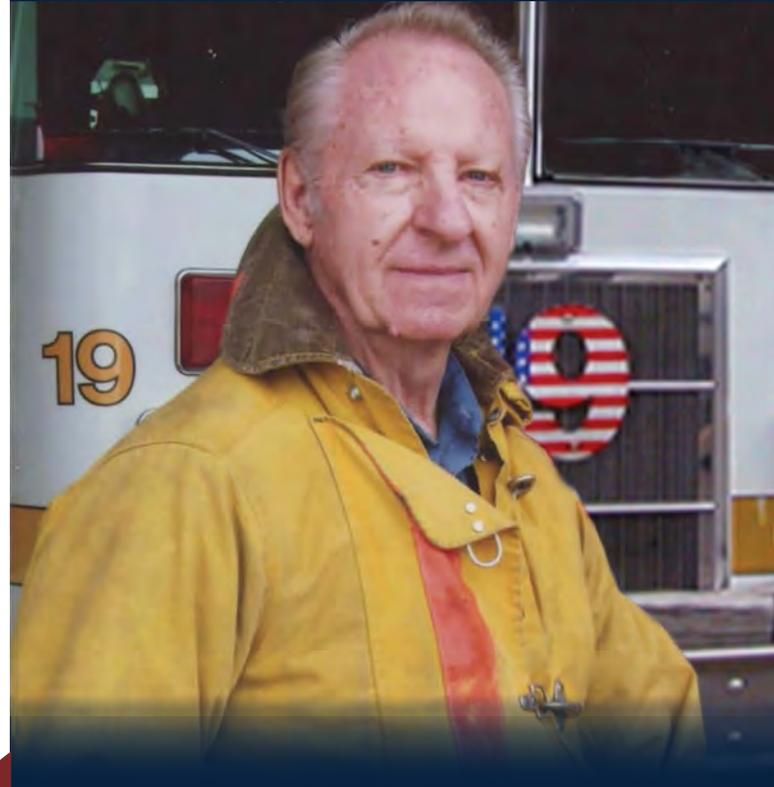
*G*eorge Martin Helfer had four true loves in his life: God, his adored wife of 63 years, Rosemarie, as well as his entire family, being a firefighter, and ping pong.

After high school, George spent two years active duty in the United States Army and an additional three years in the Army reserve before being honorably discharged and joining the Denver Fire Department. He described his career with Denver Fire as a firefighter and technician as “the best job that never seemed like a job” he ever had, and he loved every minute of it. He was a decorated hero for saving lives, a beloved coworker, and served his community with dignity and integrity. In his downtime, he proudly became one of the top ping pong players in competitions within the department. After his retirement, he continued his love of ping pong into his 80s and was honored as a gold medal winner one year in the Colorado Senior Olympic Games in doubles competition.

George was a lifelong Catholic and active in various parishes and volunteered within the Catholic Parochial School System and as a Knights of Columbus member. He also worked numerous side jobs to earn extra money as he and Rosemarie struggled (successfully!) to put all seven of their children through 12 years of Catholic school education. Along the way, George was an avid supporter of all of his children's and grandchildren's extracurricular activities, attending many sporting, theatrical, and musical events over six decades. A week prior to his death, though declining health confined him to the house, he adamantly wanted to attend a granddaughter's Christmas concert nearly three hours from his home but was just too weak. We were, however, thrilled that he accomplished the goal he set when he was diagnosed with his final job-related cancer—to ensure he lived long enough to see his two newest great-grandchildren arrive safely into this world. Felicity Theresa and Keelan George both arrived before he passed.

George will be remembered for his laughter, his kindness, his fierce love of and faith in God, his wife and family, and his steadfast friendship and concern for others right to the end. He will also be remembered as a role model for being a man of his word, as well as standing up for what is moral and right, lessons that he gently passed on to everyone around him. In his honor, he asked that he be remembered by passing on a word of encouragement, performing a random act of kindness, or simply bringing a smile of love in God's name into a world so in need of peace.

Remembering



George M. Helfer

Denver Fire Department – Colorado

Career Firefighter

December 21, 2019

Age 85



Remembering



Troy Steven Jackson

South Metro Fire Rescue – Colorado

Career Assistant Chief

December 16, 2019

Age 51



Troy Jackson was born into the firefighting family. His father, Paul, was a battalion chief for the same department Troy joined in 1990. He grew up knowing many of the firefighters he ended up serving with at South Metro Fire Rescue.

Troy knew from a very young age that being a firefighter was what he was meant to be. After turning 21 and proposing to his high school sweetheart, Lori, he passed his EMT class and tested for South Metro Fire Rescue, then Castlewood Fire Department. He was hired in March 1990 and began his career and his rise up the command ladder. He obtained his associate, bachelor's, and master's degrees. He rose through the ranks and ended his career as assistant chief of operations after being assistant chief of the training bureau. After almost 30 years at South Metro Fire Rescue, he stepped down to focus on his recovery from cancer.

Troy was survived by both parents, Donna and Paul Jackson. Troy was married to Lori for almost 30 years, and together they had two children. Covey (24) also married his high school sweetheart, Courtney (24), after both graduated from college in 2016. Carley (22) started her career in the Douglas County Sheriff's Department after graduating from college in 2019.

Troy battled adenoid cystic carcinoma, a rare job-related cancer. His initial diagnosis was in 2013. He chose to participate in many clinical trials in an attempt to advance the treatment options for others, all the while working full-time. He had multiple surgeries to battle the aggressive tumor growth, experienced over 170 radiation treatments, and survived several chemotherapy rounds. He was a warrior. He intended to beat this cancer, but as the cancer progressed, his focus shifted to attending the pinning of his daughter, Carley, with her sheriff's badge and college graduation. He was stubborn and successful; she was pinned on December 2, 2019, and graduated college December 13. Troy was admitted to the hospital on the 14th and passed in the early morning of December 16, 2019.

Troy was a man of God and wanted to pass that faith on to those that knew him. He did so in the way he carried himself, the way he lived his life, and how he approached death. He didn't want people to be angry in his passing but instead "ask themselves why he got to cut to the front of the line. After all, if heaven is as wonderful as we've been told, what did he do to deserve early admittance?"

He was our Superman, and we know we will be reunited again at the feet of our heavenly Father.

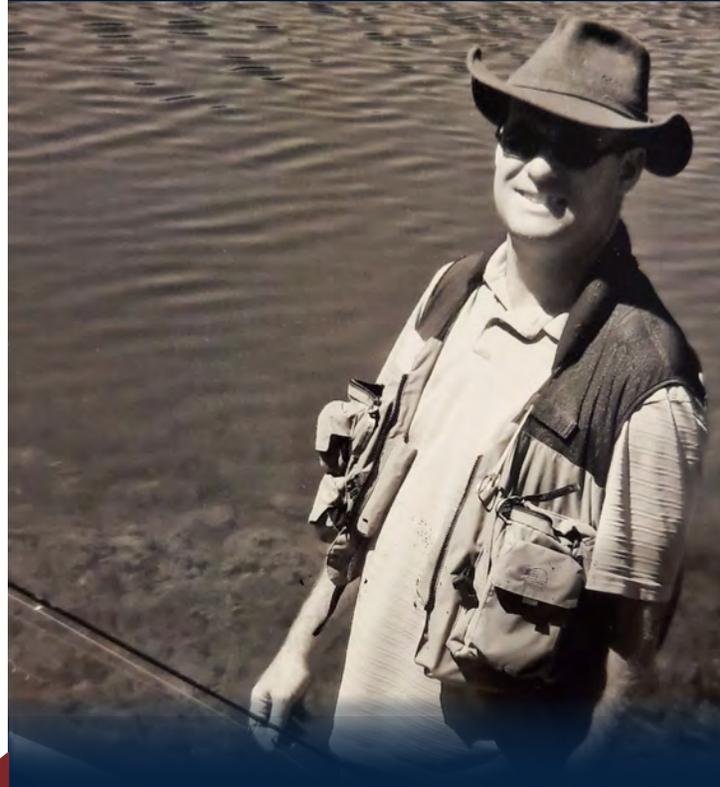
*K*enneth J. “Ken” Jones was born October 9, 1973, in Denver, Colorado, and passed to the other side on December 7, 2019, in Copper Mountain, Colorado.

Ken leaves behind his wife, Keri, his son, Parker, and his daughter, Kalee.

Ken started his fire career as a volunteer for Frederick Area Fire Protection in 1998. Ken continued his fire career by joining Lake Dillon Fire Rescue in 2000. In his free time, Ken enjoyed the outdoors and spent many hours riding his bike, hiking, camping, skiing/snowboarding, and fishing. Ken spent as much time as he could with his family.

Ken was a quiet, humble guy who was patient, accommodating, and very devoted to the people he loved. Ken was a helper and a servant. He lived life with purpose, whether it was in how he communicated with that dry sense of humor and intentional conversation, or how he made sure his family knew he loved and cared for them. As a brother in blue stated, “Everything that you can think of that compassionate humans would do for their friends, family, and colleagues—Ken was that to all of us.”

Remembering



Kenneth J.
“Ken” Jones
Summit Fire & EMS Authority –
Colorado
Career Firefighter
December 7, 2019
Age 46



Remembering



Dan Moran

West Metro Fire Protection District –

Colorado

Career Firefighter/Paramedic

February 7, 2020

Age 50



Dan Moran was an amazing husband, dad, son, brother, and friend to many. He was born into a wonderful, close-knit family and later went on to have his own. Dan was an amazing husband to Jenn, his wife of 24 years, and dad to their two daughters, Taylor (24) and Madyson (21). Absolutely nothing was more important to Dan than his girls. If not at the firehouse, he enjoyed attending all his daughters' activities. Anything his girls were involved in, he was involved in. Family was life to Dan.

Dan was a firefighter/paramedic with West Metro Fire Rescue for 18 years. He loved his career, every aspect of it—fighting fires, tending to a car accident or a patient with a health concern—he enjoyed it all. Any problem, whether considered big or small, he was there and treated it as big. He knew that, for whoever was involved, it was in fact big.

Unfortunately, a big day came for Dan. He was diagnosed with job-related leukemia in June 2017 and passed away in his home with family surrounding him on February 7, 2020. He fought a very tough battle for more than two-and-a-half years. During this time, Dan never complained and often said, "It could be worse." In true Dan style, he never stopped joking, was positive, stayed strong, and was very encouraging to others. Dan was an inspiration to all, including the nurses and doctors who treated him.

Along with being a firefighter, Dan also owned a screen-printing business. He enjoyed the challenge of assisting customers with creating artwork for shirt designs and was proud of his finished product. Dan often did work for schools in our area. He liked that, while working a business to earn extra money for his family, he was in turn helping the schools earn money, as he gave back a percentage of the profits to the school. He really liked meeting new people through this business and treasured many of those relationships. Interacting with people was part of who he was.

Traveling to Australia as a foreign exchange student as a senior in high school was a highlight of Dan's life. He lived in Sydney for six months with an amazing family. Friends were very special to Dan, and many of his closest friendships were the ones he created while abroad. Dan planned to take Jenn, Taylor, and Madyson to Australia. This had not yet happened, and now his three girls will be taking him to Australia.

Remembering

*T*im passed away January 19, 2020, while returning from a call. His career started in 1984 as a volunteer, and he became fire marshal in 1989 at age 26. He spent his whole life in Orange, Connecticut and gave back to the community greatly. Tim's passion was helping people, which he did for 30 years as fire marshal.

If you asked anyone in town about Tim Smith, they always had a story to tell. Whether he helped them stay up to code with their business, plowed snow off their driveway, or knew him as a close friend, they always had something great to say. You could walk into Tim's office, and he'd stop what he was doing to listen to what you had to say, with a smile on his face. Tim had a contagious laugh and could light up a whole room with his quirky jokes and comments. He was passionate about making the town safer. He was one of the first firefighters in the area to be certified and implement a drone program for the community. With this, the fire department was able to get a better view of different building structures and help neighboring communities that did not have this program. At the end of the day, there is nothing Tim loved more than riding in a firetruck and being able to help somebody in a time of need.

Tim was a dedicated and loving father. There is nothing Tim wouldn't do for his two daughters. He was constantly attending their sports games and hanging their artwork and pictures in his office. Anyone who had a conversation with Tim got to hear about his daughters. He was also a great friend. Tim made many great friends over his years as a firefighter and fisherman. He loved to talk tying flies in his free time and going out to Long Island Sound for some saltwater fishing. Tim and his buddies loved to travel all the way to Quebec for a quiet week on a lake full of fishing and fun times.

Tim was a talented, skilled woodworker. You could show him a picture of anything, and he would build it. He made many pieces of the furniture in his house. Friends often came by his office asking him to make pieces of furniture or toys for their children, and Tim agreed without hesitation.

Tim was just an amazing man. He was kind, dedicated, hardworking, and selfless. He was his daughters' hero, and gave back to the community beyond words. In the end, Tim paid the ultimate sacrifice for his community and passed doing something he loved. His memory and the way he touched those of the community will always be in the hearts of those who knew him.



Timothy P. Smith

*Orange, CT Fire Marshal's Office –
Connecticut*

Career Fire Marshal

January 19, 2020

Age 56



Remembering



James C. Woodman

*West Haven Fire Department –
Connecticut
Career Firefighter/Paramedic
March 29, 2019
Age 55*



James Clinton “Woody” Woodman was born on September 19, 1963, in Yakima, Washington, to James Nelson Woodman and Virginia Rae Carden. He joined his two sisters, Karen Lynne and Mary Diane. Jim died on March 29, 2019, at age 55, in the Center at Centennial, Colorado Springs, from long-term severe injuries that he incurred as a firefighter/paramedic with the West Haven Fire Department in Connecticut.

On October 5, 1999, Jim was in the back of a rescue truck administering first aid to a young injured girl being transported to Yale-New Haven Hospital, when another van failed to yield the right-of-way to an emergency vehicle and broadsided the rescue truck. He and the others in the van survived, but Jim suffered catastrophic injuries, including a traumatic brain injury, and was not expected to live more than a few years. In 2003, he was moved to be near family in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He lived there in two skilled nursing facilities that cared for him for the last sixteen years.

Jim wanted to be a fireman ever since he was a young boy. As he grew up, he wanted to help injured people, and he became a paramedic. Later, when the opportunity came to join the West Haven Fire Department, he jumped at the chance and successfully completed the state’s fire academy. He was injured on his second day with the fire department.

Jim was honored at the Connecticut Fallen Firefighter Memorial in October 2019. The West Haven Fire Department also dedicated a new firefighting boat in his name.

Jim is missed by his family, his friends, and the caregivers at the Center at Centennial. Despite his inability to speak, he blessed many people who met and took care of him over the years.

He is survived by his father, James; stepmother, Lynn; sisters, Karen Lynne (Kenneth) Van Riper and Mary Diane Woodman; brother, Mark Alan (Kristina) Woodman; nephews, Kyle Van Riper, Sam Woodman, Caleb Woodman, and Joseph Woodman; niece, Anna Woodman; and stepfather, Jim Allen.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Virginia Allen.

Remembering

Alex was a loving, gentle, humble man. He touched so many people by words or by deeds. He was always available to help family, friends, even friends of friends, whenever he got a call or text. No job was too small or too much for him to handle.

He loved his country. The National Anthem was his favorite song, and he would tear up whenever it played on the radio. He loves his job and wore his uniform with pride almost every day. When he wasn't on tour, you could almost always find him at the apparatus shop or the training academy, making sure every tool his brothers and sisters needed to do their job safely and effectively was in proper working order. His hard work earned him Firefighter of the Year for 2018, an honor that he thought so many other of his brothers and sisters were more deserving of than him. Did I mention he was humble?

He loved his families, all three of them—his, mine, and the men and women of DCFD. He never wanted children, but he treated mine as if they were his own, grandbabies included. The pain and heartbreak of his passing has left a huge hole in all of our hearts. It's not something that you ever get over, but slowly, gradually, we learn to accept that God needed him more than we did, and we learn to adapt to life without this amazing man.

He will forever be in our hearts and always thought of with the same deep, abiding love he showed everybody that was fortunate to know him. RIP, Big Cuz. You are missed terribly by all. We love you forever.



Alex D. Graham

*District of Columbia Fire and EMS
Department – District of Columbia*

Career Firefighter

October 27, 2019

Age 48



Remembering



Jeffrey Glenn Atkinson

Tallahassee Fire Department – Florida

Career Engineer

December 15, 2017

Age 43



Jeffrey Glenn Atkinson was the younger of two sons born to Diane and Rick Atkinson in Tallahassee on December 14, 1974. After graduating from Lincoln High School in 1993, Jeff attended Lively Fire Academy and joined the reserve program with the Tallahassee Fire Department in 1995. He was hired by Panama City Fire Department in 1997 and worked there until he was offered a full-time job with Tallahassee Fire Department in 1999.

Jeff was assigned to Tallahassee Fire Department's busiest house, Station 3. Here he earned a reputation as an aggressive, fearless, and knowledgeable firefighter, the kind of guy who "had your back" and who every officer wanted on their crew. In 2008, Jeff was promoted to fire engineer and excelled in this position. To quote a retired captain who recently passed away, "Jeff was the best damn driver I ever had, and I've had a lot of drivers." Jeff held this rank until his death in the early morning of December 15, 2017.

Jeff was proud of being part of Tallahassee Fire Department and genuinely cared about the people he served, but being a firefighter was just a small part of who he was. Since he was young, family and friends were a priority in his life. This priority grew into fierce devotion after the birth of his beautiful daughter, Austin, in July 2012. Late one night, Jeff told me that he never believed he could feel so proud at being a father or be so in love with someone as he was with Austin. Together with his wife, Nina, he raised the happiest, most loving and independent little girls you will ever meet. Jeff didn't use the word friend lightly. If you were a friend of Jeff's, you earned it, and you were a friend for life. His brother, Brian, is a lieutenant with Tallahassee Fire Department and is in part responsible for Jeff becoming the man he was. They were best friends on and off the job.

It depends who you ask, but to me one of Jeff's best attributes was his ability to be brutally honest 100% of the time; it didn't matter if you were a friend or a fire chief. If you didn't want to hear his thoughts on something, don't ask him. Most of the time you would hear his thoughts anyway, as he was known for being outspoken. You knew exactly where he stood on all issues.

Jeff's parents and family are so proud of the path he took and the direction he was headed in life. He was a solid guy. He was what more people should strive to be when it comes to being a father, husband, son, brother, friend, and firefighter. He touched so many lives and continues to do so today. Rest easy, brother. We got it from here.

Remembering

Barry was born in 1951 in Cleveland, Ohio. His father was a veteran of the Korean War, and his mother was a homemaker. He had a sister, Sandy, a brother, Glenn, and an identical twin brother, Bruce. The twins were each other's life blood, full of mischief and life. The family moved to Hollywood, Florida, where Barry and Bruce were swimmers in high school and graduated from S. Broward High in 1969. Barry put himself through Florida Atlantic University as a lifeguard on Hollywood Beach, eating lots of peanut butter and tuna fish.

He met his first wife, Judy, at Hollywood Beach, and they married just before Barry followed Bruce into active duty as an officer in the United States Marine Corps (USMC). Barry Lee Jr. was born in 1978. He is Barry's only child, and he loved his son fiercely. Barry continued his service in the Marine Corps reserves.

Barry was a police officer with Hollywood Police Department for 30 years. During that time, he served with SWAT, the dive team, and in the detective bureau, working arson and robbery. He was assigned to a special task force for one year with the FBI in Miami.

In 1989, Bruce and his crew were killed in action while on a training mission with USMC. Barry was never able to talk much about that. I'm quite sure it was like losing a limb.

I met Barry in 1991, and we married in 1993 and built a life together as a blended family, each with a son from a former marriage and lots of speed bumps along the way.

In 2004, Barry returned to active duty as Deputy Commanding Officer of Detainee Operations during Operation Iraqi Freedom. He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for exceptionally meritorious service. In 2005, he retired from 30 years in the Marine Corps as a full bird colonel.

He started a new chapter of his life and joined the Plantation Fire Department. True to form, he jumped in headfirst and never looked back. For 13 years, Barry responded to thousands of fire calls, working tirelessly to improve his knowledge and skills. He served as a lead instructor for Plantation, bringing discipline, team building skills, and the expectation of excellence. He was awarded the department's Top Responder for several years.

Every morning, Barry got up, loved on his dogs, kissed his wife, and put on his sneakers, which he wore from the moment he woke up to the moment he went to bed. Barry had true grit. He loved to tell stories. He was a devil dog to the core. He was funny, honest, solid, smart, and highly competitive. He had a heart of gold.



Barry L. Boulton Sr.

*Plantation Fire Department – Florida
Volunteer Lieutenant*

May 7, 2019

Age 67



Remembering



Dwain S. Bradshaw

*Escambia County
Fire Rescue – Florida*

Volunteer Assistant District Chief

November 6, 2019

Age 41



*D*wain Sterling Bradshaw of Pensacola, Florida, lost his life in the line of duty on November 6, 2019.

He was a career firefighter for NAS Pensacola, as well as a volunteer district fire chief at Escambia County Fire Rescue Station #1 in Bellview and the assistant district fire chief #2 in Beulah.

He was an Air Force veteran.

He enjoyed singing karaoke, spending time on his boat, fishing, and motorcycle rides with the Fire and Iron Motorcycle Club.

He was a loving husband, a devoted father, and a faithful friend to all who knew him. He loved his family and friends deeply.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Christine Bradshaw; two daughters, Baliegh Webb and Chloe Jordan; parents, Dwain and Kathy Bradshaw; grandparents, Robert and Joan Bradshaw and Jesse and Allie Margaret Stagner; sisters, Susan Pope, Becky Dunn, and Debbie Bradshaw; brother, Adam Bradshaw (Jessica); four nieces and five nephews; father and mother-in-law, Creighton and Mary Jordan; brother-in-law, Brandon Jordan (Michelle); sister-in-law, Olivia Jordan; and grandparents by marriage, Julius and Hilda Jordan and Betty Matheny, as well as many other family members and dear friends.

He was loved by many and will be greatly missed.



*O*n August 4, 2020, heaven welcomed another angel when firefighter Tony Christensen lost his month-long battle with Covid-19. A Naples Fire-Rescue firefighter for 22 years, Tony continued the family tradition, following in the firefighting footsteps of his father, Morton Christensen.

The list is endless when discussing the number of individuals whose lives Tony touched. The same themes always surface when his name is mentioned—caring, giving, compassionate, generous, soft-hearted. The word "no" was not in his vocabulary. If you needed a mentor, a hand up, or a listening ear, Tony was the one. Tony opened his heart to all in need.

His kindness did not extend to just those on two legs. He was an avid animal lover as well and was always first on scene when it came to saving a furry/feathered friend in distress.

No other profession could have better suited Tony. He not only exemplified the role of firefighter, but his dedication to the community knew no bounds. He left an indelible mark, not only on his firefighting family but on Naples as a whole.

Tony had a heart of gold which continues to shine brighter with each passing day. For those left behind, including his dedicated wife, Diane Phillips Christensen; his mother, Jetta; sisters, Lori and Lisa; stepchildren, Bobby and Joleen; grandchildren, nieces and nephews, his firefighting family, and all that knew and loved him, the loss is immeasurable. His spirit of generosity, family devotion, his deep infectious laugh and big bear hugs will remain in the hearts and minds of all who knew him. Tony's love has become a memory, but that memory has become a treasure.

Remembering



Anthony C. Christensen

City of Naples Fire-Rescue – Florida

Career Firefighter

August 4, 2020

Age 55



Remembering



Rick Allen DeMorgan Jr.

Coulson Aviation USA – Florida

Contract Flight Engineer

January 23, 2020

Age 43



Senior Master Sergeant Rick Allen DeMorgan Jr. was born on October 13, 1976, and was called home on January 23, 2020, while fighting bushfires in New South Wales, Australia.

Rick was born in Apple Valley, California, not far from Edwards Air Force Base and what was once George Air Force Base. As a young boy, Rick would frequent the area air shows with his father, Rick Sr., climbing in and out of as many aircraft as possible, always gathering as much information as he could from the airmen who flew them. Growing up, Rick knew without a doubt that he wanted to fly. Always reading books on military aircraft, he could give you any stat you asked for at any time. The ceiling in his bedroom was even filled with airplanes hung by fishing line.

Rick's sophomore year of high school, his family moved to Vancouver, Washington, where he would graduate from Portland Christian School in 1995 and join the Air Force, making his dream of flying come true. As an active-duty member of the United States Air Force, Rick served 24 years, 18 of which were as a C-130 flight engineer. Rick was a highly decorated aviator, serving 13 deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan and amassing over 4,000 flight hours, nearly 2,000 of which were in combat. He was set to retire on March 1, 2020, and was on terminal leave at the time of his death.

As Rick began looking at life outside the Air Force, he set his sights on aerial firefighting. When asked if that was what he wanted to do, his answer without hesitation was, "Yep! It was my first choice, and if I couldn't do it, I was going to look into being a hotshot." In November 2019, Rick was hired by Coulson Aviation, making another one of his dreams come true.

Rick lived a life of service, helping others and trying to make the world a safer place. Beneath the hard exterior he showed the world was a man with a kind soul, a big heart, and a robust, infectious sense of humor that those closest to him had the privilege of knowing. The only thing Rick loved more than flying are his two children, son Lucas, and daughter Logan, who meant the world to him.

Rick is survived by his children, Lucas and Logan, and their mother, Rebekah; his father Rick Sr.; mom, Linda; sister, Virginia; brother-in-law, Leo; and nephews, Alex and Max. Rick also leaves behind numerous friends and colleagues around the world whose lives have been enriched by having known him. He was a devoted father, son, brother, uncle, colleague, and friend who will forever be missed.

"To most the sky's the limit; to him, it was home."

Remembering

Scott Robert Neumann was born on February 3, 1967, in Loxahatchee, Florida, to Roger and Jan Neumann. He grew up on ten acres with his sisters, Tammy, Robin, and Missy. Many fond memories were made, and family stories were born. Scott was proud to be Florida born and raised. In time he became the ultimate storyteller, with his animated body gestures and boisterous voice. He was full of life and always up for an adventure. He enjoyed being outdoors, boating, four wheeling, camping, and diving, but most of all Scott loved spending time with his family and many friends. Though he played hard, he worked even harder. Sacrificing in the present in order to achieve dreams for the future was important to Scott.

The many painful experiences Scott had with fire growing up helped develop in him a healthy respect for fire. From burning the trash pile by igniting it with Mom's hairspray can to the blazing fire in the camper.

Scott was the embodiment of what it means to be a firefighter. If anyone was ever born for the job, Scott was that man. His love for helping people and extroverted man's man persona meant he lived to serve and enjoyed spending 24 hours with his crew. It was not a clear career choice he thought of as a child. After high school, Scott learned the electrical trade, which he would later use as a second career on his off days with the department. A friend convinced Scott to take the emergency medical technician program, and that led Scott down the career path of firefighting. After completing EMT and fire school, he began working for Brevard County Fire Department and, during this time, completed the paramedic program. Soon after, he met his future wife, Stephanie, and was hired on with Martin County Fire Department. It was a new chapter in his life. While becoming part of his new firefighting family, he started a family of his very own. From 2001-2005, Scott and Stephanie were blessed with three cherished children, Connor, Hayley, and Alicia. They were the pride and joy of his life.

Scott gave his all to everything he did. Early in his career, he competed in the Firefighter Combat Challenge and the Firemen's Olympics. He also obtained the Smoke Diver certificate, as well as HazMat certification. His energy, strength, and competitiveness were contagious. Scott touched so many hearts and meant so much to so many people. He will be forever loved and greatly missed. Posthumously, Scott was promoted to captain.



Scott Robert Neumann

Martin County Fire Rescue – Florida

Career Captain

September 26, 2019

Age 52



Remembering



Brian Stephen Smith

*St. George Island Volunteer Fire
Department – Florida
Volunteer Firefighter
August 25, 2020
Age 56*



*B*rian Stephen Smith died in the line of duty on August 25, 2020, while responding to a distressed family of swimmers off the coast of St. George Island in the Gulf of Mexico.

Brian was born in Stamford, Connecticut, to Ruby and Rodger “Steve” Smith. The family moved to Everett, Washington, where Brian graduated from Everett High School in 1981. He served with the Montabello Police Academy in California. In 1986, he moved to Arcadia, California, where he met his wife, Elizabeth Smith. Beth and Brian moved to Everett and had two children, Byren and Rachael. Brian had a passion for billiards, fixing anything that was broken, and playing with his dogs, Skye and Bad Bad “Leroy” Brown.

Brian was a volunteer firefighter and first responder for the St. George Island Volunteer Fire Department for over five years, since moving to the island for work. He turned his passion for fixing and tinkering into a fulfilling career as a property foreman.

Brian’s love language was acts of service. Since he was the neighborhood handyman, wherever he went, no favor ever went unanswered. Climbing on a roof to hang Christmas lights for someone who was afraid of heights, mounting a new TV for a friend, or driving to pick up a stranded neighbor was a normal weekend for Brian. He sacrificed and worked hard for his family and friends his whole life, all while making people laugh and smile. Beth always said she married him because, no matter what, he could make her laugh. Brian was always available for a call from his kids. He was just as happy to talk his daughter through a car crisis as he was to talk to his son about the game. Those phone calls and visits from his children meant the world to him. Brian taught his wife and kids how to play pool so they could play as a team, and no matter how busy everyone was, he could count on the family being together once a week.

Brian had a large heart and showed his love to his family and community through actions, so it was no surprise when he announced to his wife that he was joining the volunteer fire department. For over five years, Brian worked 6-7 days a week, responded to nearly every emergency call, and spent as much time as possible with his cherished mother, who lived an hour away. He boasted that he was the happiest he could be. He leaves his beloved wife of 33 years, Beth; his son, Byren, and daughter, Rachael; his mother, Ruby; and his brother, Russell. He was predeceased by his father and his siblings, Jaan Smith and Richard Bridges.

*J*ohn Kevin Cash was born August 31, 1976, in Atlanta, Georgia. He knew from a very young age that he was interested in the fire service. He grew up in and out of the firehouse, as his dad was a battalion chief for Clayton County Fire Department. He loved to take a ride in the battalion car with his dad or ride along on a call. He looked up to his dad and wanted to follow in his footsteps.

As Kevin got older, at age 14, he was excited to be part of the Clayton County Fire & Emergency Explorer Program. The program cemented his love of firefighting and his desire to make it a career. He then began the fire academy with Clayton County and became a volunteer for the City of Jonesboro. After a brief period of helping to take care of his sick mom, Kevin would go on to begin a full-time position with the City of McDonough. He was a dedicated firefighter/EMT at this department for 19 plus years. In August 2004, Kevin married his wife, Jana. Five years after being married, Kevin and Jana became a fire family of three when they welcomed their baby girl, Abby. When Abby was a toddler, Kevin and Jana decided that she would be a stay-at-home mom. With that decision, Kevin began working a second 24-hour shift at City of Roswell. Kevin was honored to be a member of this department for five plus years. He loved his family, and his ultimate desire was to provide for them. This second shift allowed him that opportunity.

First and foremost, he devoted his life to Jana and Abby. When he had time off, they loved going to the Smoky Mountains and Walt Disney World on family vacations. When at home, he enjoyed spending time playing games with Abby.

He committed his life to service through his beloved career of firefighting. Kevin passed in the line of duty at Roswell Fire on January 21, 2020. He is survived by his wife, Jana, and daughter, Abby. Jana and Abby continue Kevin's legacy by supporting their Roswell Fire family.

Remembering



John Kevin Cash

Roswell Fire Department – Georgia

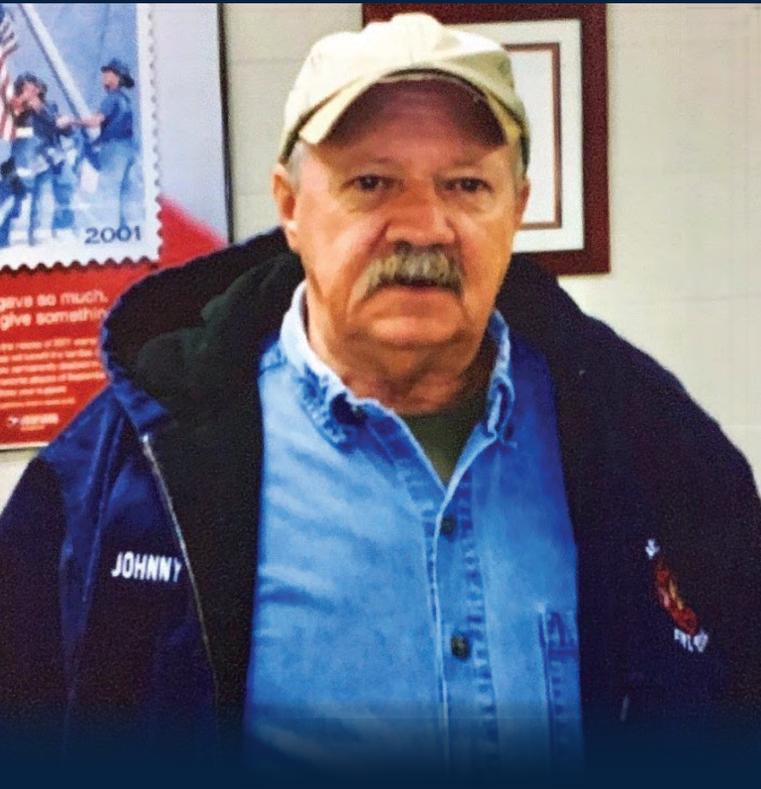
Paid-on-Call Firefighter/EMT

January 21, 2020

Age 43



Remembering



George Johnny Childs

Arcade Fire Department – Georgia

Volunteer Firefighter

December 5, 2019

Age 67



*B*orn in Commerce, Georgia, George Johnny Childs hailed from hardscrabble beginnings and appreciated all the simple joys life had to offer. From an early age, he knew that he would have to work for what he wanted. He counted himself as fortunate to have learned life lessons from his hardworking parents. They taught him and his three siblings to love and respect each other, as well as to love and serve their community.

Johnny began serving his community as a volunteer fireman in 1996, after seeing the joy and fulfillment his son, Robert, got from his service. This was the beginning of a lifelong bond of shared service between father and son. Johnny realized the love of a second family in his brotherhood of firefighters. He ended every evening by checking in with the station, usually while en route to his local Kroger grocery store. Every call ended in true Johnny style. "I love ya, man. Y'all be safe out there."

He was a devoted family man to his wife, Judy; his sons, Chris, Robert, and Jeff; his seven grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and, of course, his mom, Reba. He and Reba spent almost every evening rocking on her front porch, watching the birds. There were daily phone calls to his boys and grandkids, if only to see how their day was going or to share with them some funny event he had witnessed during his day. Without fail, he always, always, always made sure to tell them he loved them. When you were loved by Johnny Childs, he made sure you knew it. After losing his oldest son, Chris, in 1995, Johnny learned to hold his family close and cherish every minute with them.

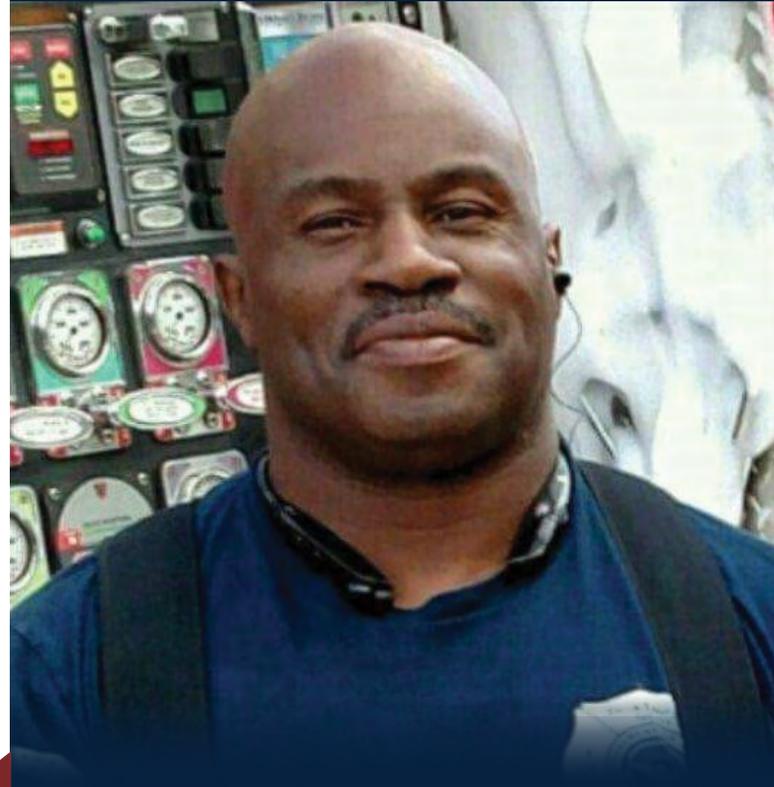
A simple man at heart, you always knew exactly where you stood with Johnny Childs. He stood for what he believed in and never wavered in his strength of character and steadfast loyalty. If he called you his friend, he meant it and would be there when you needed him. He never met a stranger. Johnny was the kind of man that would check on people, even if their encounter had been brief, just to make sure they were okay. There is a large hole left in this town that will never be filled. There will always be a place in our hearts for this simple man who loved and served with such sincerity and selflessness.

*G*regory Jackson became ill after responding to multiple emergency calls while on duty on April 14, 2018. He was hospitalized and died from cardiovascular causes on April 19, 2018.

He joined the United States Army as an infantryman in 1988 and served his country honorably for four years. He was assigned to the Directorate of Emergency Services, Fort Benning Fire Department, where he had served as a firefighter since 2004. His team received the Department of Defense Fire Department of the Year in 2011, 2014, and 2017.



Remembering



Gregory Jackson

Fort Benning Fire Department –

Georgia

Career Firefighter

April 19, 2018

Age 50



Remembering



Justin "JRo" Robinson

Haralson County Fire Department –

Georgia

Career Firefighter

July 21, 2020

Age 50



*J*Ro lived his life for firefighting! He has been called a firefighter's firefighter by all who knew him. He had a reputation of being a firefighter first.

As his father, I knew this to be true. He had a goodness to him. He was a good father to his daughter, Kaylee. He was a good son to his mother, Barbara, and to his father, Bill.

The number of friends we met at his memorial was truly overwhelming. I spoke at his memorial. Standing at the podium, I looked at the attendees--in the midst of COVID-19, over 500 firefighters, first responders, and police officers. His chief said if there was no COVID, there would have been over 1,000 in attendance.

I stood and looked at as many faces as I could. Some I knew, others I just met but remembered my son speaking about. As I stood there, looking at a sea of firefighters, I thought how loved, respected, and missed my son was.

JRo was a son, father, true friend, and teacher, at the training academy and on the job. He was a jokester; the stories of JRo will be told for a very long time. JRo had faults, as we all do, but what stands out is the man my son was.

In the 50 years my son lived, 34 of them involved firefighting. Justin "JRo" Robinson held his firefighting profession high and loved, loved, loved being a firefighter. His love propelled him into the firefighting profession just like a hand into a glove. A gloved hand reaching out to serve, to save. Twice, he helped bring new life into this world. The hand was his love, the glove was the firefighting profession and training that comes with that profession.

The highest honor I can pay my son is to share his last words. His last call was a car accident. He pulled on the scene, moved fast, pulled the Jaws of Life, and started to open the passenger's door. The EMT entered the vehicle, and JRo moved to the driver's door. He started to open it and yelled out, "I'm stuck!" Two EMTs behind him laid him down. A brother firefighter picked up the Jaws to open the door. My son's last words were, "I'm cutting the door." With those words, he finished his last call.

To his last breath, he remained a firefighter with no interest in himself or anything else. JRo's last thoughts were about being a firefighter. His love for firefighting is shown in what he said. The hand propelled by love, fitting into the glove, fulfilling the profession of firefighting.

JRo fulfilled what he loved the most with what he respected the most. He was a firefighter's firefighter to the end.

P.S. The passenger in the car lived. Not bad!

Remembering

Eric Tetsu Hayashi faithfully served his island community through the Hawaii Fire Department in the city of Hilo for 25 years. He served in various stations, with his last days of duty at the Laupahoehoe Fire Station as a fire equipment operator. Eric, affectionately known to many as “Buta,” took tremendous pride in his job as a firefighter. He was grateful to have been accepted into the department, truly loved his job, and found great satisfaction in helping others.

His greatest treasures were not in fame or fortune but in family and friends. He loved meeting and talking to anyone, using his innate ability to make friends wherever he went. Many friendships were lifelong, formed at a young age through school and sports, and his family grew even larger when his fellow firefighters became his “fire family.” The love, support, and compassion from family, friends, and the special brotherhood of his fire family has left an everlasting impression on his family. If friends and family could be counted as wealth, Eric was a millionaire many times over.

Eric lived life to the fullest and was always busy fulfilling his desires. He was an avid fisherman, hunter, and sportsman. His love of the ocean, whether on a boat or on the shore, took him on many exciting adventures. His love of rock hunting took him to many places in Hawaii and Canada, where he enjoyed the thrill of bagging a trophy bird, goat, wild boar, deer, sheep, or elk. His love of sports afforded him the pleasure of participating in Little League baseball during his youth and softball in his later years. His love of children led him to coach T-ball for many years, enabling him to repay the Lincoln Wreckers Athletic Club, the youth organization which enriched his love of baseball and taught him many life lessons. Eric loved to cook, allowing others to enjoy his culinary talent, especially his fellow firefighters. He loved posting pictures of his creations, leaving many drooling over his plated meals and trying to re-create his many dishes.

His sudden passing on August 8, 2020, at age 49, left everyone in disbelief with an aching heart. It is a small consolation that while on an emergency medical call, administering CPR to a patient, Eric passed doing what he loved most, helping others. We miss his infectious smile and laughter, as well as his trademark greeting—“What’s up?” He was eagerly looking forward to retiring in December and was excitedly planning the next phase of his life. Although he is no longer physically with us, we still feel his presence as the angel on our shoulder protecting us.



Eric Tetsu Hayashi

*Hawaii Fire Department – Hawaii
Career Fire Equipment Operator*

August 8, 2020

Age 49



Remembering



Eric R. Ellis

*Salmon Air Base, Salmon-Challis
National Forest – Idaho
Career Airbase Manager/Wildland
Firefighter
May 21, 2020
Age 46*



*A*fter experiencing arm numbness while completing mandated physical training on May 15, 2020, Eric Ellis was hospitalized. He died on May 21, 2020, from cardiovascular causes.

Eric served as the base manager for the Salmon Heli-Rappellers from 2010 until his death.

Survived by his wife and two young sons, he was remembered as a beloved husband, father, son, brother, and friend.



*B*randon Erickson was born January 4, 1977, in Bozeman, Montana. He graduated from West Jefferson High School in Terreton, Idaho. He and his wife, Bonni, were married September 17, 2005.

A gentle giant of quiet strength, deep compassion, and generous love, Brandon was a treasured son and brother, doting husband, remarkable father, and unwavering friend. Those who met him were intuitively drawn to his integrity and compassion. Brandon's life was defined by giving, family life, community service, overseas mission work, and a life of faith lived with a transparent heart. Brandon loved adventure, was an avid hunter, and enjoyed life thoroughly. Anyone who hung out with him could expect silly antics, teasing, and his boisterous belly laugh.

Brandon felt his life's calling was to be a firefighter. He began his career in 1997 as a volunteer with the Star Fire Department and went on to work as a wildland firefighter with the Idaho Department of Lands. He continued as a volunteer firefighter in Eagle and Star while working for Micron Technology.

Though Brandon loved being a volunteer, his deepest desire was to become a full-time firefighter. He took a leap of faith and quit his job at Micron to pursue his paramedic license. He was hired first as a paramedic with Ada County and soon after as a firefighter/paramedic with the Meridian Fire Department in February 2008. He was promoted to the position of EMS training captain with the Eagle Fire Department in April 2013.

Brandon was an inspiring EMS instructor; the impact on those he trained will be seen for years to come. Brandon was a lifelong learner and a quiet man of action. His ability to share God's grace with tenderness and candid sincerity were just part of what helped light any room he entered and make each person he met feel deeply valued. His humble strength and unflagging generosity made him an excellent paramedic and fireman.

Brandon went home to be with his Savior Jesus Christ on November 21, 2013, due to complications following back surgery. It was his second procedure since June 2012, when he was injured on a call while working with the Meridian Fire Department.

Brandon is missed by many, including his wife, Bonni Erickson; daughter, Meghan Jacobsen; son, Jack Erickson; mother, Linda Cope; stepmother, Peggy Erickson; brother and sister-in-law, Shawn and Erlonna Erickson (Taten, Ali, Tike); and stepbrother, CJ (Presley). Brandon was preceded in death by his father, Bob Erickson.

Remembering



Brandon D. Erickson

Meridian Fire Department – Idaho

Career Firefighter

November 21, 2013

Age 36



Remembering



Mario E. Araujo

*Chicago Fire Department – Illinois
Career Firefighter*

April 7, 2020

Age 49



Mario was born in El Salvador, and we migrated to the United States in 1973. We settled in Chicago, where I worked for Chicago Public Schools and sent Mario to Catholic schools. Mario graduated from St. Gregory High School and attended the Illinois Institute of Technology, working on a degree in computer technologies. In October 2001, he was called to become a Chicago firefighter, and he was a dedicated firefighter/EMT for over 19 years. Mario worked part-time at the Rosemont Police Department. His first assignment out of the Quinn Fire Academy was to Truck 25 in the 9th Battalion in the Rogers Park neighborhood of Chicago, where he stayed until his death on April 7, 2020.

Mario was single with a very charismatic personality. He had many friends and enjoyed time with them and his extended family and their children. Mario was always willing and able to lend a hand or financial support to his family and friends when they needed it. Mario and I shared a two-story apartment. He enjoyed traveling to El Salvador to reconnect with his cousins and cultivated many friendships through his visits. I miss my son every day and struggle with his loss to such a deadly virus.

Rogers Park is densely populated, in one of the most diverse areas of Chicago. It serves many ethnicities and people who face serious financial challenges. Mario and his company knew of the risk of exposures to COVID-19. This neighborhood was identified as having some of the highest numbers of COVID-positive patients in Chicago. Mario and his coworkers were exposed to the virus every shift they worked, and he contracted this virus early in the pandemic. Several members of this company also contracted this virus and were fortunate to recover. Mario loved his firehouse and his coworkers and would never transfer out to avoid this virus. He developed great relationships with his fellow firefighters and officers and believed that, as a firefighter, he made a difference in serving our city.

As Mario's mother, I am sad knowing that his life was cut short and did not give him enough time to fulfill his goals and dreams. I know that he loved being a firefighter and understood the sacrifices many firefighters and paramedics make to serve the citizens of Chicago. I grieve the loss of my son every day, and meeting his coworkers over this past year helped me recognize the important role Mario and all the emergency responders played in holding down the spread of this virus. Mario passed away during the early stages in the development of the vaccine and did not survive in time to receive the treatment to be saved.

Remembering

Robert "David" Reisinger was a RN (trauma/emergency medicine/critical care), EMT-P, a firefighter, and an EMS manager/educator for John H. Stroger Jr. Hospital of Cook County and the Chicago EMS System. He also worked part-time at the River Grove Fire Department in Illinois. His career was that of public service.

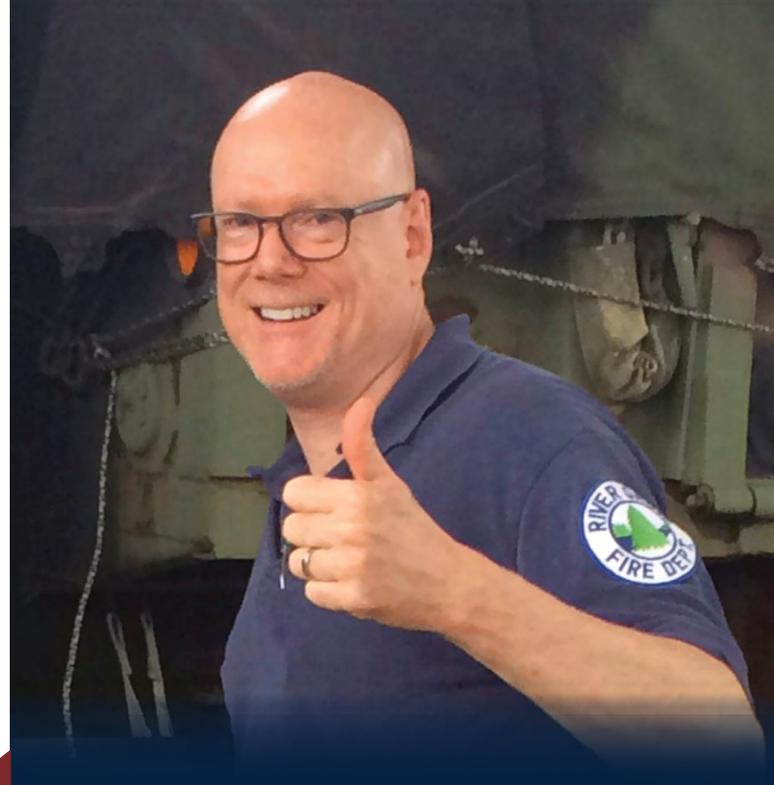
David was born in Louisville, Kentucky. Since childhood, he had a passion for cars and impressed his family with his uncanny knowledge, especially of emergency response vehicles. This segued to a love and pursuit of EMT and firefighter careers and then nursing.

David's work life was highlighted by stellar professionalism and work ethic. His infectious positivity earned him an esteemed reputation. He was known for reliability, collegiality, and intellect. He kept his composure in the most challenging situations. He provided seamless patient care from the first encounter to the emergency room. His achievements include leadership roles in EMS/nursing education and administration.

David practiced with compassion, patience, and humor, qualities that were part of his personality. Upon retiring from JHS/Chicago EMS System, he continued with his position at River Grove Fire Department (RGFD), his "work-home." He was a valued team member, mentor, and friend. When on firefighter duties, he never hesitated to assist the EMS crew. He would open the doors for them on their outgoing calls with a thumbs up or, "Have a fun run!" His mischievousness and quick wit would have his firehouse family laughing breathlessly.

One of David's joys was tasting all kinds of food. His favorite was sushi/sashimi. He said that in his next life he would be a bear and eat salmon (sashimi) with abandon. He was a social animal. A native Louisvillian, he loved to host an annual Derby Party in his Chicago home. There would be raffles with distinct prizes, signature Derby foods, and his favorite, quality bourbons. Good times were had by all!

A warm light that touched hearts, a smile and generous spirit that put all at ease, David gave his beloved husband 18 years of devotion until his last breath. Working at the beginning of the pandemic, he caught COVID on his last firehouse shift in March 2020. He recovered after a long month, during which he continued to work on COVID safety-related policies for RGFD. After recovering, he was eager to return to work and join the first responder heroes. Tragically, on April 29, the day of his scheduled return, he passed unexpectedly from a fatal COVID-related stroke. His loss will leave a void in the firefighter, EMS, and RN community of Illinois and in the heart of his loving husband.



Robert "David" Reisinger

*River Grove Fire Department – Illinois
Career Firefighter/Paramedic*

April 29, 2020

Age 57



Remembering



Jacob L. Ringering

*Godfrey Fire Protection District –
Illinois
Career Captain
March 5, 2019
Age 37*



Jacob L. Ringering lost his life in the line of duty on March 5, 2019. Jake and his crew responded to a working residential structure fire. While performing exterior fire suppression activities, he sustained fatal injuries in a partial structural collapse.

Born December 14, 1981, Jake grew up around the firehouse and enjoyed hunting, baseball and hockey. His genuine character formed many lasting friendships. Jake aspired to become a pilot, but after becoming a paid-on-call firefighter in 2001, he found his true calling. He eagerly pursued his dream, earning an associate degree in fire science. In 2005, Jake was hired with the East Alton Fire Department, where his father and grandfather had worked.

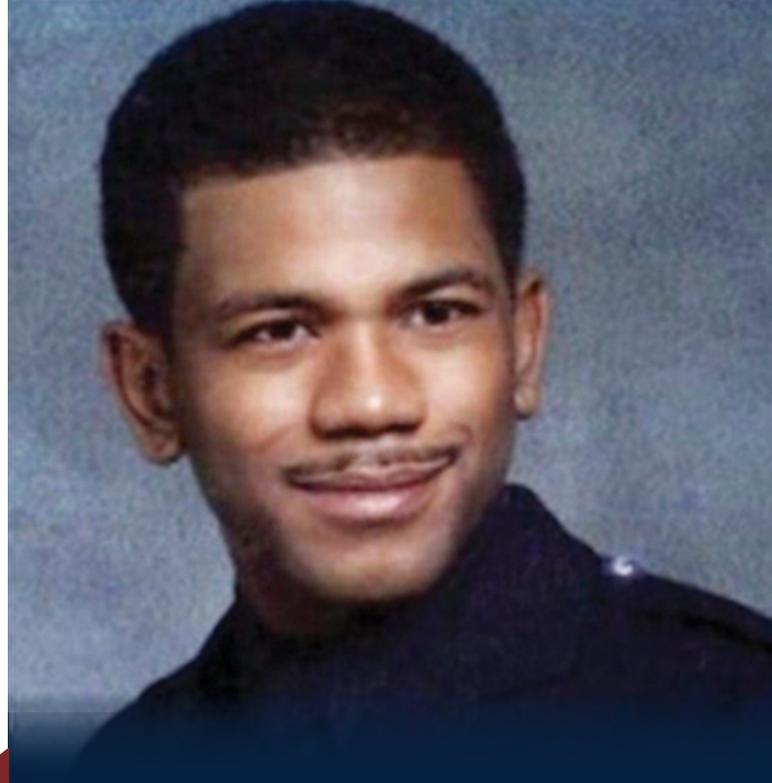
In 2010, Jake joined the Godfrey Fire Protection District, where he moved up the ranks to lieutenant and captain. He ranked first for assistant chief and would soon command his own shift. He earned Illinois Office of the State Fire Marshal certification in 17 areas and was an EMT. Jake served as technical rescue officer, respiratory protection officer, lead instructor, and president of Godfrey Firefighters Local 1692. He taught fire science at Lewis & Clark College and Max Fire Training. Jake's dedication impacted many lives, and countless individuals are alive today as a testament.

A natural leader and trusted mentor, Jake was respected in the fire service. He led by example in accountability, professionalism, knowledge, and compassion. He believed in physical fitness, quality training and continuing education. Phenomenal at anything hands on, especially ropes and knots, Jake's charisma made others want to learn about the job. Working alongside his younger brother, Jake's influence was an inspiration to many.

Jake was a humble man with a strong faith, a devoted husband and father. Jake married Allison in 2009 at St. Mary's Catholic Church. They welcomed two daughters, Nora and Elaina, and their son, Logan, completed their family. Jake's greatest joy was his children. He spent his days at home taking care of them, actively present in everything family related. The extraordinary love he gave during their cherished time together created an unbreakable bond in the hearts of his children, who adore their dad. Jake's loyalty instilled that family comes first; a model by which he lived.

Jake was an incredible person, firefighter, and family man. He is missed beyond words by his wife and children, family, friends, fire department family, and countless others whose lives he profoundly touched.

Remembering



Edward was hired into the Chicago Fire Department as a trainee in 1987 and served the City of Chicago as a firefighter and engineer for over 32 years. As a firefighter, he was assigned to busy companies including Aerial Tower 1, Engine 13, Engine 60, and finally at Midway Rescue. He was a member of the Chicago African American Firefighters and Paramedics League, a local chapter in the North Central Region of the International Association of Black Professional Firefighters. In addition, he attended the Conference North Central Region-International and African American Firefighter Leads. He attended and was most proud to be a graduate of the Carl Holmes Executive Development Institute (EDI). Edward also regularly loved to march with the firefighters and help to feed the community in the Bud Billiken parade.

He relished working as a firefighter and was the go-to person for everything. He was always willing to step up and help in any way he could. Everyone loved working with Edward. His smile and willingness to serve others would light up the room. After he would finish his shift, he would come home singing about the goodness of God.

Edward was a loving husband with unconditional devotion to his wife. His love was shown through his actions, compassion, and understanding. The laughter and joy they shared as they walked through life together for 29 years will forever be cherished.

Edward was a phenomenal father and husband. As a dad, he was dedicated to providing for his children. He made sure they felt loved and supported. Edward was very active in his children's education at Pershing Magnet School and St. Thomas the Apostle. He participated in the Parent-Teacher Association and volunteered as the basketball coach. He visited and continued to volunteer at the schools years after his children moved on to other educational endeavors. He was not only actively present in their lives but instilled in them the importance of having God at the center of your life. He taught his son and daughter how to be strong, caring, and dependent upon their Lord and Savior.

He cared about people and the community. He would truly do anything to help anybody in need. He exemplified for all of us the servanthood of Christ, and his life displayed how the Lord would want us to live and love one another. God called his dear child home on April 14, 2020, at the age of 55.

Edward will forever be missed by his wife, Nicol; daughter, Breonna (Jeremy); son, Edward II; six siblings, family, and many friends.

Edward L. Singleton

Chicago Fire Department – Illinois

Career Firefighter

April 14, 2020

Age 55



Remembering



Kody Michael Vanfossan

Christopher Fire Department – Illinois

Paid-on-Call Firefighter

May 5, 2019

Age 24



*K*ody Vanfossan died doing what he loved while battling a six-alarm commercial fire in Christopher, Illinois. Christopher Engine 201 was the first on scene, with a report of a squatter possibly being in the building. Kody and his father, a CFD captain, did a primary search of the first floor. After completing the search and knocking the fire down, they proceeded to the second floor. During this time, conditions deteriorated rapidly. His father decided it was time to get out. When they reached the landing, the stairway collapsed. They were trapped in the building, and his father put out a mayday. Mutual aid departments were able to locate and rescue his father within half an hour but were unable to locate Kody. After several attempts, Kody was located at the ledge of the landing, and his body was recovered four hours after the initial mayday call.

He was born in Carbondale to Brent and Mindy Vanfossan on November 15, 1994, and spent his whole life in his hometown. He was a third-generation volunteer firefighter, following in his father's and grandfather Vanfossan's footsteps. He joined the department as a cadet on November 15, 2010, and had nine years of service. From an early age, all he wanted to do is play football and become a firefighter. At age two, he had his own set of bunker gear and never missed an opportunity to go to the fire station. He was taught to roll hose at an early age and helped at the station after a fire.

He graduated from Christopher High School in 2013. He played football all four years and was like a brick house. He would stand up from the line and was unmovable. When it came to firefighting, he was like a bull in a china shop. He always knew what his job was without being told. He loved to train every chance he got. He always said, "Don't Train Until You Get It Right. Train Until You Can't Get It Wrong." Kody always had his orange BadAxx that he received for Christmas in 2016 with him when he was in bunker gear.

Kody was a stubborn, bullheaded kid, but he would help a complete stranger at any time, no questions asked. His kind heart and willingness to help others earned him countless friends in and out of the fire service. Kody had strong morals and always put others first. He was positive, funny, and selfless, with a unique sense of humor. He left a hole in the hearts of his parents; his brother, Garrett Vanfossan; his sister, Paige Vanfossan; and his son, Erik Vanfossan. He will be missed by countless loved ones whose lives he touched.

Remembering

Captain Leo Werner was someone who represented the best in Scales Mound. Leo was a man who showed respect and responsibility to his country, family, friends, and community. After serving two years with the United States Army and several years with the National Guard of Illinois, he led his community in many ways. After returning from the military, he quickly joined the Scales Mound Fire Department and became a firefighter and first responder. He served his fire department for 46 years and proudly served on the new truck committee for all three fire stations in his community.

He was a Boy Scout leader, served on community committees, and worked for Goodyear Tire Company for 30 years. Leo was an avid music lover, history buff, and showed passion and respect for firearms. After his retirement, he decided to become a truck driver for RT&T Trucking, which took him down many roads with many fond memories. Leo, once again, decided to try another form of community involvement, this time becoming a full-time school bus driver. He loved his school, the students, faculty, sporting events, and everything school related. He was known as "Papa Leo" to everyone.

Leo was honored by the organization Running for Heroes, which was an impressive recognition to his true character as a military man, firefighter, and community leader. Leo found great fulfillment in serving the fire department proudly, leading his fellow firefighters, and mentoring the new firefighters.

He leaves behind his wife, daughter, two sons who are also firefighters, a daughter-in-law, a son-in-law, four grandchildren, and a community of pride and friendship.



Leo W. Werner

Scales Mound

Fire Protection District – Illinois

Volunteer Captain

December 10, 2020

Age 67



Remembering



Matthew D. Bennett

*Indianapolis Fire Department –
Indiana
Career Engineer
November 14, 2020
Age 49*



*M*atthew David Bennett was born in Indianapolis, on December 23, 1970, to proud parents, Rosanne Banich Bennett and Sylvester Walter Bennett Jr. Matt's childhood dream was to become a fireman. One of his mother's fondest memories is when four-year-old Matt dialed 911 to report a fire in the neighborhood just to see the trucks race by en route to the imaginary fire. This resulted in a visit from the local sheriff to remind a tearful, repentant boy the importance of calling 911. As a teen, he joined the Explorer Scouting Program that allows youth to specialize in fire and rescue. His passion flourished as he was exposed to mentors and opportunities to explore the world of firefighting. Matt built lifelong friendships and continued to follow his dreams as a junior firefighter and cadet.

A 23-year veteran firefighter and dedicated public servant of 38 years, Matt became a Wayne Township reserve firefighter in 1982. In 1997, he was appointed to the Franklin Township Fire Department and later to the Indianapolis Fire Department when Franklin Township merged with Indianapolis Fire Department in 2010. Prior to his appointment, Matt was an Indianapolis Fire Department dispatcher and EMT. His years of service made him a well-respected, well-loved mentor and educator within the firefighting community.

In 2004, Matt welcomed his daughter, Samantha Rae, with her mother, Lee Ann Bennett. Samantha became the joy of his life, sharing daddy-daughter dances and a love of country music. Samantha loved when he sang along with the car radio, motorcycle rides, and visiting him at the firehouse, learning early her father's passion for firefighting.

When Matt was not fighting fires, he enjoyed riding his motorcycle. He was always ready to take his RV out and dreamed of traveling the country when he retired. Matt had a personality bigger than life and could be heard a mile away. He was often the planner for family functions and looked forward to the annual Fire Department Instructors Conference and St. Patrick's Day. He was always busy around the house, and household supplies were always available, as he loved to bulk shop. To maintain his figure, Matt enjoyed Diet Mountain Dew, gas station hot dogs, Qdoba, and Long's donuts. Known as "Grape Ape" by his friends and as a practical joker, Matt always found ways to have fun. Matt loved his family and friends and was a reliable presence in his community, always ready to help.

Matt is survived by his daughter, Samantha; his mother, Rosanne; sister, Jennifer Ann Bennett; brother, Jeffrey Alan Bennett (Jonalyn); nephews, DeAndre and Tyree; niece, Joie; grandchild, Grace Robinson; and his brothers and sisters of the Indianapolis Fire Department.

Remembering



Robert G. Cree

*Harrison Township Volunteer
Fire Department – Indiana
Volunteer Firefighter/EMT*

November 22, 2020

Age 72

Robert G. “Bob” Cree was born on September 17, 1948, in Logansport, Indiana, to R.G. and Gail Cree. He graduated from Pioneer High School in 1966 and attended Lincoln Christian College, where he met his wife, Catherine “Cathy” Blackhurst. Bob and Cathy were married on May 1, 1971, in Kenny, Illinois. After college, Bob entered the ministry and served churches in southern Illinois, Michigan, and Indiana for nearly five decades. When he returned to his hometown of Lucerne, Indiana, he began working for the United States Postal Service as a rural carrier, servicing the Lucerne and Twelve Mile areas for 33 years before his retirement.

For 43 years, Bob was a proud firefighter and EMT for the Harrison Township Volunteer Fire Department in Lucerne. He served as the department secretary and treasurer for a number of those years and was a member of the Indiana Volunteer Firefighters Association.

On the evening of November 22, 2020, Bob and members of the Harrison Township Volunteer Fire Department responded to a medical emergency. Just moments after returning home from the call, he collapsed from an apparent heart attack. The same emergency personnel Bob had responded with earlier, his dear friends, responded to his home and rendered aid. Despite their efforts, Bob went home to be with his Lord and Savior.

Bob and Cathy were married for nearly 50 years, building a life based on ministry, family, and service. Together, they raised two children, Robert (Julie) Cree of Remington, Indiana, and Carla (Corey) Gillespie of Brownsburg, Indiana. They were blessed with five grandchildren, Justin and Jordan Cree and Emalee, Mackenzie, and Owen Gillespie. Having grown up across the street from the fire department, Bob’s son, Robert, was a certified EMT before his high school graduation and is now a career firefighter/paramedic with the Valparaiso (Indiana) Fire Department.

Bob loved his community, and he did not know a stranger. Whether loving those he served in a local church, sharing life with families on his mail route, mentoring and encouraging his peers on the fire department, or just passing people he knew in the community, Bob lived out his life calling as a minister of grace and truth to those who needed encouragement or a helping hand. Bob will be deeply missed by his family, friends, and community, but we are so grateful for the legacy he has left for us to build upon.



Remembering



John Andrew Schoffstall

*Terre Haute Fire Department –
Indiana*

Career Firefighter/Paramedic

April 12, 2020

Age 41



John Schoffstall was a loving father, devoted husband, and instant friend to anyone who met him. He died on Easter Sunday, April 12, 2020. He is no longer physically present on Earth, but his memory is forever in our hearts.

John was a community staple. His passions were family, faith, and friends. John would help anyone in need. He was a coach in the Vigo County Youth Football League for his son and his teammates. John loved watching his boys grow and develop. He wasn't just their coach; he was their biggest fan.

John helped coach his daughter in softball. He loved watching her and her teammates grow into young women while learning teamwork. His softball girls knew that John might be hard on them, but if they needed anything, they could come to him and he would be there.

Family meant everything to John. If he was not at the firehouse, you would find him at one of his children's sporting events or doing something outdoors. He and his son started a small deer feed and food plot seed business to help support their hunting hobby. In fall 2019, John was able to finally harvest the buck of his dreams. For 6 ½ years, he watched this buck grow into a mature whitetail. This was one of the greatest hunting adventures he and his son had.

John had a passion for the fire service from his young adolescent years, as he watched his father as a firefighter with New Goshen Volunteer Fire and Rescue. John started in the fire service as a cadet. When he came of age, he became a volunteer firefighter with New Goshen Fire and Rescue and Sugar Creek Fire Department.

At age 21, he began his professional career in the fire service at Newport Chemical Depot. During his tenure there, he was given a 4-star General Coin. The General stated he had never seen a fire crew so professional during a landing of a helicopter transporting personnel.

In May 2009, after Newport Chemical closed, John began his career with Terre Haute City Fire Department as a firefighter/paramedic. He loved the career he chose and said it wasn't a job, because he loved going to the firehouse. When John talked about the fire service, you knew he had a true passion for helping people in their time of need.

John's giving legacy lives on through his wife, Jennifer; children, Jake and Jaidyn; parents, Rex and Trish; sister, Kim (Chris); nephews, Dalton and Garrett; and many family members and friends. We will always remember John's amazing laugh as it would fill up a room and everyone would smile.

Remembering

Donald “Don” Thelen built a log cabin in the country for his wife and children. He enjoyed working with his hands and finished the interior of the cabin alongside his stepfather. On their 15-acre property, he planted many trees that changed a property that used to be a bean field into a beautiful homestead with lots of wildlife. He loved nature and made sure there was plenty of space for the wild animals to roam on the property.

When the children were young, family vacations were spent mainly hiking the state parks and camping.

He was a devout member of St. Anne’s Church in Lafayette, always willing to help set up and take down after church events. They attended services every Sunday and holidays.

Don worked for the railroad and Zinn Kitchens before becoming a Lafayette firefighter, mainly attached to Station #3. He retired from the Lafayette Fire Department after 36 years of faithful service. He was known for his practical jokes at the fire stations and had many people he mentored and called friends. He liked to spend time at and was on the original board of directors of the Old Station #3 Museum, also known as the Historic Five Points Fire Station.

He enjoyed shooting, hiking, and camping. He was involved with the Boy Scouts of America and was an assistant Scoutmaster, helping to plan and attending the camping trips they went on every summer, even being a chaperone for the troop to Washington, DC, one year. Don lent a helping hand to his son on his Eagle Scout project. He was a member of the Lafayette Professional Firefighters Union, Local #472, and the National Rifle Association.

Don was always available at the drop of a hat to help a friend, family member, or any other person in need. He was a family man who always attended his children’s choir and band recitals, then later, their marching band performances and art exhibitions.

He was diagnosed with cancer after less than two years of retirement with his wife. He had planned lots of camping trips during retirement but was only able to enjoy two full summers. Above all, Don cherished the time spent with his wife, children, brother, and his dog, Bree.



Donald P. Thelen

Lafayette Fire Department – Indiana

Career Sergeant

July 31, 2020

Age 69



Remembering



Eric Hosette

Clinton Fire Department – Iowa

Career Lieutenant

January 5, 2019

Age 33



*L*ieutenant Eric M. Hosette, 33, of Charlotte, made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty on January 5, 2019.

Eric Michael Hosette was born on June 22, 1985, in Clinton, Iowa, the son of William and Gail (Grimm) Hosette. He was a 2003 graduate of Camanche High School and later attended the Trinity School of Nursing for paramedic certification.

Eric's lifelong dream was to be a firefighter, and he started as a volunteer with the Camanche Fire Department. He joined the Clinton Fire Department on September 17, 2006, and was promoted to lieutenant on August 25, 2017. At the time of his death, he was the fire chief of the Charlotte Fire Department.

Eric married Kellene "Kelly" Mohr on September 25, 2010, in Clinton. They have one daughter, Addalyn, who was the apple of his eye. He enjoyed working and restoring antique tractors and was a member of the Midwest Old Threshers.

Eric is survived by his wife, Kelly; his daughter, Addalyn; his parents, Bill and Gail Hosette; his brother, Todd (Casey) Hosette; his maternal grandmother, Arlene Grimm; his father and mother-in-law, Kenny and Shelly Mohr; his brother-in-law, Nick (Bree), nephew Reid; and many aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Eric was preceded in death by his paternal grandparents and maternal grandfather. Lieutenant Hosette will forever be remembered as a true hero who answered his final call doing what he loved to do and knew that his fellow firefighters would be ready to "take it from here."

*J*ohnny Ivison Jr., 23, of Leavenworth, Kansas, passed away on November 8, 2020, from injuries sustained in an automobile accident while running to a house fire in Easton, Kansas. Johnny was born in Leavenworth, Kansas, on January 18, 1997, to Naomi Guilford and Johnny Ivison Sr.

Johnny was raised in the Leavenworth area and attended Leavenworth and Easton High School. Johnny is survived by his loving wife, Tiffanee (Trexler) Ivison; his sons, Timothy and Caleb Ivison; his mother, Naomi Guilford, and stepfather, Earl Guilford; his father, Johnny Ivison Sr., and wife, Jennifer; his brother, Michael Ivison Sr.; sister, Meaghan Ivison; stepbrother, Andrew Snyder; grandparents, Robin Ivison and Sadie and Ron Blockburger; his in-laws, Sandy and Jerry Trexler; sister-in-law, Kristen Hutchens, and brother-in-law, Dustin Trexler; and extended family. Johnny is preceded in death by his uncle, Marvin Biddle; cousin, Joanie Nicks; and grandfather, Charles Ivison. Last Call service was on Sunday, November 15, 2020, at the Leavenworth County Fairgrounds.

Johnny was studying to become a certified firefighter for the Easton Township Fire Department. Johnny was employed by the State of Kansas working for the road crew. Johnny was always willing to lend a hand and help anybody in need. Johnny and his father got to run on one fire call together in Branson West, Missouri, on October 31, 2020, before he passed. He will always be known as a compassionate man that loved his family, country, and fire department. Johnny's passion was to go camping, fishing, and ride ATVs.

Johnny passed away doing what he loved and had a burning desire to make his community a better place for all.

Remembering



Johnny Deel Ivison Jr.

*Easton Township Fire Department –
Kansas*

Volunteer Firefighter

November 8, 2020

Age 23



Remembering



Michael Allen Wells

Lenexa Fire Department – Kansas

Career Lieutenant

September 14, 2019

Age 39



Michael Wells, 39, of Kansas City, Missouri, passed away September 14, 2019, after a courageous battle with esophageal cancer. Michael was born September 12, 1980, the son of Rod and Lori (Davis) Wells, the husband of Katie, and the father of Olivia, Johnny, and Caroline.

Michael attended North Kansas City High School and played football as a right guard at the University of Central Missouri, where he studied fire science. He joined the Lenexa Fire Department as a firefighter, an EMT, an inspector, an investigator, and several other specialized positions. He was promoted to the rank of lieutenant in 2016.

Michael was united in marriage to Katie Teson on July 6, 2007, and they had three beautiful children that he adored. Being a husband and father was the role he most cherished in his life. Michael was also an avid homebrewer and won awards in 38 different states. Michael was an active member of his parish, St. Therese Catholic Church, and a coach for his son's youth football team. He volunteered as an instructor of fire safety in elementary schools and was honored as a two-time participant in the 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb in Kansas City. He was also honored by the Kansas City Chiefs as the Hometown Hero in 2018.

Michael had wanted to be a firefighter since he was a little boy. As a first responder, he regularly encountered people on the worst days of their lives. Besides giving the necessary aid, he brought a measure of compassion and calm. His large stature belied his gentle nature. He had a true servant's heart and sought to uplift and protect anyone in need who crossed his path. He was known for his goodness, kindness, and selflessness. He was a friend to all and exemplified how to respect, encourage, and love one another.

Michael was diagnosed with Stage 4 esophageal cancer in October of 2018. Supported and uplifted by his community, he fought fiercely and courageously. His cancer-fighting motto was "Choose the Wrench," to show the physical and mental toughness with which he faced his greatest struggle. Even though he was in great pain and discomfort, he never complained about his suffering. His warm smile, positive attitude, and sense of humor were evident even on his most difficult days.

Michael was taken so early and will forever be our hero. He is greatly missed by his family, friends, and Lenexa Fire Department brothers.

Remembering

*D*ale Brown. How do you sum up the life of an exceptional man in just a few words? Dale Brown was not only a hero because he died in the line of duty; he was a hero because of the way he conducted his life.

Dale was born into a family of firefighters. His dad, brothers, uncle, and cousins were all a part of the fire service. Dale was well respected among his peers and was an excellent mentor and teacher. He had a particular talent when it came to technical rescue, water rescue, and confined space rescue. He was always anxious to learn more and to share that knowledge with others. He was a quiet, patient teacher.

Dale was an amazing husband who genuinely loved and cherished his wife, Jenny. They were so close and enjoyed being together. They traveled extensively, loved boating and being on the water. He was a loving son, a caring brother, and a doting uncle who was always there when it counted. His nieces and nephews called him "Uncle Brownie" and could always depend on him to "MacGuyver" anything that might need fixing. He was a loyal, trustworthy friend, and he never thought twice about helping someone in need.

Dale made friends everywhere he went, including during the time that he was fighting occupational cancer. He worked to help facilitate new legislation that might help other firefighters who may also be affected. Even during his illness, he joined the "My Brother's Burden" walk in support of his firefighter brothers and sisters affected by occupational cancers, where he became even more of an inspiration to many people. Though it was physically taxing, it was very important to him, and he never gave up.

Dale was a fighter. He battled his disease with grace and dignity, surrounded by those who loved him most, including his firefighter family. One of his treasured memories on his cancer journey was when he was in New York to see a specialist. He was unexpectedly invited to spend time with FDNY Rescue 1, a company that was changed by the events of September 11 at the World Trade Center. It was a very memorable and touching experience for him.

Dale was a man that lived in a manner that should be an example to us all. He had a motto that he lived by: Every day may not be good, but there is something good in every day. His pure heart was evident as soon as you met him, and his smile will live on forever in our hearts.



Dale A. Brown

*Covington Fire Department –
Kentucky*

Career Lieutenant

June 21, 2019

Age 55



Remembering



Johnnie W. Jessie

*Greensburg/Green County Volunteer
Fire Department – Kentucky
Volunteer Training Officer
March 21, 2019
Age 57*



Johnnie W. Jessie was born in Adair County on March 7, 1962. He departed this life on March 21, 2019. Johnnie was raised and lived his life in Green County. At age 12, he began working on a farm located in lower Gabe, Kentucky. He worked on this same farm until the time he became ill. Besides his love of farming, he knew at a young age that he wanted to become a firefighter. As a child, he placed a sticker of a fire truck in his home, and it is still there to this day.

As a young man, he worked with Summersville, Campbellsville, and Green County Volunteer Fire Departments. Later in life, he became the captain and training officer at Green County Fire and Rescue, Unit 41. He also worked in Fort Knox as a paramedic, where he retired and later became a paramedic for Green County EMS. Throughout his life, he was a dispatcher for Greensburg and Taylor County E911. In addition to these jobs, Johnnie worked as a bus driver for the Green County School Systems and was their training officer. Near the end of his life, Johnnie worked as a truck driver for Homestead Farms. Johnnie loved working and being involved in the community.

Johnnie received numerous awards during his career. He was named Firefighter of the Year for several years. The year before he passed, he was awarded Unit 41's Lifetime Achievement Award because of his dedication in the face of his battle with cancer.

He had made a profession of faith in Christ and was a member of the Greensburg Separate Baptist Church. He loved gospel music.

He is survived by his first wife and mother of his children, Rebecca Posey; his wife, Katty Judd Jessie; a son, Jeremy Jessie, and his girlfriend, Tara Hutcherson; a daughter and son-in-law, Beverly and Bobby Edwards; a stepson and his wife, Jeremy and Heather Edwards; three grandchildren, Hallie Jessie, Jaydon Jessie, and Kaylee Edwards; six step-grandchildren, Gage and Briley Edwards, Evelyn Edwards, Lexie and Taygen Hutcherson, and Nathaniel Clark; one brother, David Jessie; and a host of other relatives. Since Johnnie's passing, his brother, Robert Jessie, has joined him in Heaven.

Johnnie was a wonderful family man. He loved his family dearly, and they loved him. So many loved him like he was a member of their own family. When Johnnie passed, the entire community mourned. He touched so many lives and left a positive mark everywhere he went.

His family will never forget the love and support of Unit 41.

*J*ames Christopher "Chris" Settles, 54, of Stanley, Kentucky, died Friday, August 31, 2018. He was born on May 23, 1964, in Owensboro, Kentucky, to Jim and Patty Settles. Chris was a loving husband, father, and granddaddy who owned and operated a family farm, "Settles 3 Chick Farms," in Stanley, Kentucky.

He was a lifelong member of St. Peter of Alcantara Church in Stanley, a member of the Stanley Volunteer Fire Department for 34 years, a participant of the Philip Morris Agricultural Leadership Program, a previous board member of the National Farmers Organization, a previous board member for Owensboro Catholic Schools, a proud supporter of the Daviess County Cooperative Extension Service, and a member of the Owensboro Lions Club, where he was an avid supporter of the Soap Box Derby.

Chris is survived by his wife of 31 years, Sandy Settles; his children, Melissa Settles, Lauren Settles (Brian) Neltner, Kelsey Settles (Jordan) Pruden; and one grandchild, Ansley Rose Neltner.

Chris was an admirable member of the community and a hardworking husband and father who shared his passion for God, his family, community involvement, and agriculture in many ways. His favorite hobby was collecting model toy tractors. Chris always looked forward to circling his favorite toy tractors in magazines every year in anticipation for Christmas to come. We always think about Chris the most during the Christmas season and think back to how he made not only Christmas, but every day, a brighter, better day.

Remembering



James "Chris" Settles

***Stanley Volunteer
Fire Department – Kentucky***

Volunteer Firefighter

August 31, 2018

Age 54



Remembering



Joel Patrick Barnes

Berwick Fire Department – Maine

Career Captain

March 1, 2019

Age 32



Captain Joel Barnes was born in Portland, Maine, on November 17, 1986. Barnes was a graduate of Old Orchard Beach High School. In Berwick, where he had worked since 2016, he was a training officer and emergency medical service coordinator. He previously worked at South Berwick Rescue, York Ambulance, the Old Orchard Beach Fire Department, and as a firefighter/paramedic in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. He was a per diem firefighter in Acton, Maine. He attended the Southern Maine Community College Paramedicine and Fire Science program and trained at Saco Valley Fire Academy and Horry County Fire Department in South Carolina.

Joel was known for his wry wit. He enjoyed the outdoors, and some of his favorite activities were camping, hiking, mountain biking, and kayaking. He particularly enjoyed time spent on family land passed down from several generations on a pond in Maine. He also enjoyed taking road trips, both independently and with friends. His father will always fondly remember the trips they took to see Red Sox games at various stadiums. His mother will remember him as a dedicated and loving son who put his family first. He was a wonderful uncle to his nephew and niece. He was very creative in making up silly games to make his nephew laugh, and they bonded while watching Scooby Doo cartoons, as well as enjoying tours of the fire department. He had bought a home with community lake access, and he was enjoying making it his own.

Joel was the grandson of career firefighter Lieutenant Stanley Maleski of the Baltimore City Fire Department. Survivors include his mother, Margaret Barnes, of Old Orchard Beach; father, Michael Barnes, and wife, Deborah, of Old Orchard Beach; a sister, Kara Allaire, and husband, Daniel, of Dover, New Hampshire; and nephew and niece, Evan and Adrienne; as well as a number of aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Remembering

Captain Michael A. Bell was a 30-year veteran of Farmington Fire Rescue. On the fateful morning of September 16, 2019, he responded to a call and just minutes after arriving on scene, a devastating propane explosion occurred, taking his life.

Mike loved being a firefighter. He was a third-generation firefighter and was fortunate to have served alongside his father, Captain John “Jack” O. Bell and his brother, Chief Terry S. Bell, for many years. Mike began his firefighting career as a volunteer firefighter in Mexico, Maine. After moving back to his hometown of Farmington in 1989, he joined Farmington Fire Rescue and worked his way up through the ranks to captain.

Mike was a plumber by trade and had recently semi-retired from his plumbing business to spend more time with family. He enjoyed building things and home improvement projects, often receiving help from his family and firefighter family or assisting them with a project. Mike loved watching football (Go Patriots!) almost as much as he enjoyed watching his grandsons play basketball, soccer, flag football, and baseball. Mike loved to travel and treasured time spent with his wife, family, and friends on trips to St. Maarten, Canada, Disney World, and Rangeley. He took great pleasure in time spent outdoors, whether it be hiking, fishing, canoeing, visiting his 'grand horses,' or even mowing his lawn.

Mike took pride in helping people and was an active member of our close-knit community, serving on numerous planning boards and committees over the years. Mike was understated and unassuming in nature. He was a man of few words, but when he spoke you listened. He was well-respected and admired by those who knew him. You experienced his presence and were better for it in the end. Most importantly, you could always count on him, whether you were family, friend, or fellow firefighter.

Michael will be deeply missed by his wife, Diana; daughters, Michelle, Danielle, and Sara; sons-in-law, Michael and Shane; grandsons, Ryan, Garrett, Camden, and Brennan; siblings, Bonnie, John, Terry, and Ronnie; longtime family friend, Dale; and many other family members and friends. On the morning of September 16, as he walked out the door headed to his final call, Mike’s wife, Diana, said, “I love you. Be careful,” to which he replied, “Always.” His family and friends will always remember the sound of his voice, his piercing blue eyes, his folded-arm stance, the warmth of his hugs, and his quiet confidence that made those around him feel safe and protected. He was our hero, not because of how he died, but because of how he lived.



Michael A. Bell

Farmington Fire Rescue – Maine

Career Captain

September 16, 2019

Age 68



Remembering



Harold E. Moore II

Jackson Fire Department – Maine

Volunteer Lieutenant

April 28, 2020

Age 42



*H*arold E. “Ed” Moore II suffered a fatal heart attack after responding to a residential fire on April 28, 2020, with the Jackson Fire Department.

He graduated from Mt. View High School in 1996 and received a degree in diesel mechanics from Washington County Tech. He was employed by Bangor Truck & Trailer from 2002 until his death.

Serving with the fire department was his passion in life for 25 years. He joined as a junior firefighter in his teens and moved up the ranks to lieutenant.

Ed enjoyed hunting, fishing, woodcutting, and farming.

He was remembered as a jokester who loved helping people. He is missed by all who knew him.



*O*tis L. Isaacs Jr., 73, of North East, Maryland, passed away suddenly on December 29, 2019.

Otis was a very active member of the North East Fire Company in Cecil County up until the day of his death. He held several positions at the firehouse, which included president, chief, board of directors, chief engineer, assistant engineer, and delegate to the Maryland State Firemen's Association for many years. He was inducted into the Harford-Cecil Hall of Fame in 2003.

In the most recent days, if you walked into the firehouse you could see him behind the wheel of the fire trucks, helping to drive his brothers and sisters to calls, or underneath of the trucks, making sure they were all kept in safe and working order. He loved being the chief engineer and passed the tradition down to both of his sons.

In his spare time, he also enjoyed repairing lawn equipment for his friends and family and even strangers that turned into friends. Otis loved the time he spent at the firehouse with his two sons, teaching them everything he knew. Most of all, he loved each and every one of his family members and took great joy in his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Otis L. Isaacs Jr. is survived by his loving wife of 54 years, Dollie Isaacs; four children, Melissa Colvin (John), Robin McCann (John), Otis L. Isaacs III (Char), and Jeffrey Isaacs (Stephanie); two sisters, Virginia D' Avito (Carl), and Mary Johnson (Mack); 11 grandchildren, and 11 great-grandchildren.

Remembering



Otis L. Isaacs Jr.

North East Fire Company – Maryland

Volunteer Assistant Engineer

December 29, 2019

Age 73



Remembering



Michael R. "Pappy" Powers

*Libertytown Volunteer
Fire Department – Maryland
Volunteer Firefighter*

*June 25, 2019
Age 70*



*M*r. Michael R. Powers, 70, of Libertytown, passed away on Tuesday, June 25, 2019, in the line of duty while operating at an emergency incident scene.

He was the husband of Linda R. Powers, his wife of 47 years.

Born February 2, 1949, in Frederick, Maryland, he was the son of the late Lertie Robert Powers and Betty Jane Wineholt and stepfather Ernest Wineholt.

Mike served in the United States Army during the Vietnam War, and after his active duty he entered the Army Reserve with the 558th Signal Battalion, serving on their color guard.

Mike was a lifetime volunteer firefighter for over 50 years. He started his volunteer fire career at the Brunswick Volunteer Fire Company in the 1960s, then transferred to Carroll Manor Volunteer Fire Company in 1972. Mike moved to Libertytown in 1980 and began his career at the Libertytown Volunteer Fire Department, where he was still active. Mike was also a life member and on the board of directors at the Libertytown Volunteer Fire Department.

Mike was employed for 47 years with Montgomery County Board of Education and had plans to retire this year.

Above all else, Mike loved being with his family, especially spending time with his grandchildren. He enjoyed working outside, attending his grandchildren's sporting events, being a G-Pap to Gavin the last three months, bowling at the Pomona Grange Friday Night League, and hanging out with his coffee club friends at the firehouse.

In addition to his loving wife, he is survived by his two daughters, Shelly Beaton and husband, Brendan, of Frederick, and Tammy Ambrose and husband, Mike "Rocky," of Jefferson; a granddaughter, Megan "Snookums" Ford; three grandsons, Colby "Sport" and Blake "Champ" Ambrose and Timmy "Timbo" Beaton; a great-grandson, Gavin Redden; a sister, Patti Haller, and husband, James; his brother-in-law, Jim Roderuck, and wife, Deanna. He will also be remembered by his numerous nieces, nephews, other extended family members, numerous friends, and his special dog, Willow Mae.

Remembering

Lieutenant Jason J. Menard died in the line of duty on November 13, 2019, while searching for reported trapped residents during a three-alarm fire in his hometown of Worcester, Massachusetts. Lieutenant Menard was able to get his crew to safety, but he succumbed to his injuries, and we lost an amazing man. A loving husband, father, son, brother, uncle, and friend.

Jason loved the job and went to work each day with a smile on his face. Joining the Worcester Fire Department in October 2010 was a dream come true for him. Early in his fire service career, he spent time on Ladder 6, Engine 11, and finally on Engine 4, the city's busiest engine, his dream truck with his dream crew. He was hardworking, driven, and eager to learn and was known to ask to do drills. He was constantly looking for ways to better himself. All that carried over with him when he was promoted to lieutenant in October 2018 and assigned to Ladder 5. A true leader, he gave his crew 100% and even then always had training and drilling on his mind. He was never more excited than when a green shield was headed to his truck. Jason was a great teacher and would take all the time you needed to make sure you understood what he was teaching you. The passion he had for the job and the role he worked hard to achieve was demonstrated by his actions on every shift. "No days off," he'd say.

A true believer in family first, he could always be found in the front row, whether it was a dance recital, track meets, softball, or basketball games. He was a great firefighter but an even better dad and husband. Watching him be a dad was very special. He took the time to make each one of us feel just how loved we were. He loved spending time with the kids outside, biking, yard work, playing in the dirt. His favorite family trips were beach trips and camping trips. Jason knew how to make people laugh and had an incredible sense of humor. He was one of the most loyal and positive people you could ever meet. He cherished every moment he had with his family and friends.

Jason was taken from us far too soon and way too young. He is deeply missed each moment of every day. We will always remember his unforgettable laughter and that famous smirk of his. His memory will live on with his family and friends who loved him more than he could ever know. Especially his wife Tina, and their kids, Joshua, Hailee, and Morgan.

*Your life was a blessing, your memory a treasure,
you are loved beyond words and missed
beyond measure.*



Jason James Menard

*Worcester Fire Department –
Massachusetts
Career Lieutenant
November 13, 2019
Age 39*



Remembering



Thomas A. Nye Sr.

*Marion Fire Department –
Massachusetts
Volunteer Firefighter
February 27, 2019
Age 71*



Thomas A. Nye Sr. was born August 9, 1947, in New Bedford, Massachusetts, son of the late Ichabod and Florence (Parker) Nye. He lived in Marion for all his life and died unexpectedly on February 27, 2019, at age 71.

He was the husband of Patricia M. (Westgate) Nye, with whom he shared 53 years of marriage.

Tom served his country in the United States Army during the Vietnam War.

He served his community as a call firefighter for the Marion Fire Department for 45 years.

Tom lived a full, active, and proud life. He loved his family endlessly and adored his five grandchildren. He was a gentle soul who would have done anything for those he cared about.

He is survived by his wife, Patricia; two sons, Thomas Nye, Jr. and Andrew Nye (Gail); five grandchildren, Christopher, Hailey, Camryn, Lily, and Piper; and his great-granddaughter, Madison.



*M*ichael J. Buitendorp of New Era, Michigan, passed away unexpectedly while responding to a fire call for the Grant Township Fire Department on November 18, 2020.

Mike was born March 24, 1980, in Fremont, Michigan. His parents, David and Cindy (Dueling) Buitendorp, raised Mike in Fremont, where he loved riding his bike and hanging out with his friends. The one thing Mike always talked about, even as a little boy, was his dream of being a firefighter. It would be some years before that dream came true, but it was worth it to him.

Mike worked his early adult years as a truck driver until 2013, when he went to college and received a bachelor's degree in Information Technology (IT) from Baker College. He married Anna Jimison on January 11, 2014. Together, they had two beautiful boys, Redding and Andrew. They also shared two amazing children from previous relationships, Jasper and Isabel.

Mike was employed as the IT director for Shelby Public Schools for five years and served as the IT coordinator for the county for a short period before passing. Mike became a member of the Grant Township Fire Department on July 25, 2017, and later served with the Grant Township Rescue Squad.

Grant Township Fire and Rescue became Mike's second home! He was a very dedicated member and made sure he made every call possible. His team members could always count on him to be there, jumping in with both feet. He was so proud to be a firefighter, and he showed it every single day.

He is missed not only by his family, but also by his community.

Remembering



Michael J. Buitendorp

***Grant Township Fire Department –
Michigan
Volunteer Firefighter
November 18, 2020
Age 40***



Remembering



Joseph Todd Gallo

*Blissfield Township
Fire Department – Michigan
Paid-on-Call Captain
November 17, 2020
Age 34*



Joseph Todd Gallo was born February 23, 1986, in Jacksonville, North Carolina, to Todd and Michelle Gallo. Joe graduated from Blissfield High School in 2004. He was an Eagle Scout.

Joe always wanted to be a firefighter and, at age 16, bought his first vehicle, a 1961 Ward LaFrance fire truck.

He spent his career building a dedicated and ambitious reputation. Joe joined the Blissfield Township Fire Department in 2014. The fire department promoted him to captain in 2017. In 2018, the Madison Township Fire Department also hired Joe as a firefighter and EMT. He worked at least two shifts every week, while simultaneously serving as the fire captain for Blissfield Township.

“He was always ‘that guy,’ the one you knew you could count on,” Blissfield Township Fire Department Chief Dale Fruchey said.

“Joe had a passion for the fire service. He was probably one of the most passionate firefighters I’ve known in a long time,” Madison Township Fire Department Chief Ryan Rank said.

Joe died November 17, 2020, doing what he loved most, responding to a barn fire. Joe is survived by his parents, Todd and Michelle; brother, Zachary (Lauryn); nephew, Sawyer; and many family and friends.



Remembering

Sivad believed in getting the most out of life. Raised in a Christian household, he believed in the BIBLE: Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth. He believed in investing quality time with loved ones, and he loved serving and protecting others. His parents gave him a name to honor his heritage and foretell a future of significance. His first name is his mother Reada's maiden name, Davis, spelled backward. His middle name, Heshimu, is a Swahili word translating to respect, honor, or courage.

Following in the footsteps of his father, William, who served as a United States Army combat medic in Vietnam and 20 years with the Detroit Fire Department, Sivad became a firefighter, as did his younger brother, Jamal. Sivad earned a promotion to sergeant and numerous citations throughout his 26-year career, including the 2017 Detroit Public Safety Foundation's Above & Beyond Awards Medal of Valor.

Sivad was a public speaker, gifted artist, and loving father of two. He had a colossal heart for people, especially his daughters, Kyndall and Hayden, and his ex-wife, Suzette. His love for the City of Detroit nurtured his team spirit and commitment to the community, leading him to design fashions extolling its virtues. As a keynote, panelist, and member of Toastmasters International, Sivad spoke to youth groups, students, and adults. He appeared on stage and national radio with The Moth, a nonprofit group dedicated to the art and craft of storytelling. He also shared inspirational messages on T-shirt designs and YouTube. One of his mottos was "Bravely do or bravely die!"

On August 21, 2020, Sivad made the ultimate sacrifice to help rescue three girls from drowning, a heroic team effort with other civilians. The City of Detroit honored him with a memorial service, a new fireboat named for him, and a Spirit of Detroit Award. The Detroit Public Safety Foundation posthumously awarded Sivad its Above & Beyond Awards Purple Heart. The Trump administration sent a letter of condolence to his family from The White House, recognizing Sivad's "courage and selflessness" to protect and help others, representing "the best of America."

The week before Sivad's earthly departure, he and his daughters visited his sister Eboni's family in Georgia. A dual goal was to have her begin editing a short manuscript he had just completed while investing quality time. He often said, "This Instant Means Everything," a phrase he coined as an acronym for TIME. To honor his legacy, his sister posthumously published his book, *Becoming a Diamond: The Strongest, Most Valuable Version of You*.



Sivad H. Johnson

Detroit Fire Department – Michigan

Career Sergeant

August 22, 2020

Age 49



Remembering



Norman Edward Klenow

*East Tawas Fire Department –
Michigan*

Volunteer Firefighter

August 10, 2019

Age 78



Norman Edward Klenow was born on July 18, 1941, and raised in East Tawas, Michigan. His father and middle son, Douglas, were fellow firefighters.

Norman enlisted in the United States Navy in 1959, before his 18th birthday, and served for four years. He was a radio-man and served on an ammunition ship.

Norm was a member of the East Tawas Volunteer Fire Department for over 52 years, serving for many of those years as assistant chief.

Norm took advantage of all the fire training that was available. Starting around 1972, Norm took the 66-hour basic fireman training class. As the requirements changed and classes were added, Norm completed the 132-hour course and eventually the current Firefighter I and II classes. The first hazardous materials class was an awareness class taught by the sheriff's department. Later, Norm took State Certified Awareness and Operations Haz-Mat as the classes were developed. Norm was one of the first firefighters in the county to take an EMT class. Norm became a certified Medical First Responder and kept his license current by taking continuing education every year. He was very proficient in ladder truck operations and taught others on our ladder trucks. He took classes in wildfire operations and Operating in the Wildland/Urban Interface. These classes were taught by the United States Forest Service and Michigan DNR Fire Division. Norm helped with activities such as family fire picnics, car washes, teen dances, and pancake breakfasts. On the new fire truck just put into service, Norm was recognized "In Memory of Norm Klenow."

Norm was active in the Holy Family Catholic Church in East Tawas. He was an altar boy, served as usher and Eucharistic minister. He attended Catholic school through the eighth grade. Norm was a member of the Knights of Columbus and the Elks.

Norm managed the Clark Gas Station for over 40 years. He was a member of the East Tawas City Council and recently received recognition with a Certificate of Appreciation for 33 years serving on the East Tawas Park Board.

Norm and his wife, Barbara, were married for 55 years. They had three sons, David, Douglas (deceased), and Dennis. He enjoyed watching his boys play sports, boating, fishing, and camping. He had nine grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

He is missed!

Remembering

Benjamin (Ben) Lauren was “born for this.” He reminded everyone within shouting distance of that every time the tone of the pager called him to duty. Ben was a third-generation volunteer firefighter and grew up helping and participating at the Forsyth Township Fire Station located in Gwinn, Michigan, the center of Michigan’s Upper Peninsula.

Ben was a get-the-job-done kind of guy who, as a small boy, began doing the chores farm kids do. He loved the haying season where a day filled with work and laughter with cousins and family would undoubtedly turn into star-filled evenings of joyful chatter under the favorite maple tree of the family farm. Ben loved to laugh and goof around, but working was his play.

Ben’s interests were plentiful, but his premiere fascination was the volunteer fire department. He and his siblings were often “on-scene” in their car seats as little babes, watching their dad. Ben enjoyed the big trucks and the flashing lights. As he matured, his fascination became determination. He joined the fire department as a cadet at age 14, certified as a firefighter at age 18, and then became a captain at age 22. He was a man of moral integrity, passion, and a work ethic that was applauded within the community. Even as a young man, Ben was a leader. He was determined to learn and succeed and took pride in his work and actions. Ben was unwavering in his ability to enjoy each day and was always willing to help a friend or stranger. He would shrug off any praise stating, “It’s just what we do. Pass it on!” His strong Christian faith was easily displayed in his actions.

Ben’s long work hours didn’t bend his smile. He was known for the joy he brought into the room when he entered. Ben entertained himself and laughed the hardest at his own “dad” jokes. He was a lover of country music and used music and songs to bare his heart. Every song had a message he would use to share his feelings. He was a teaser, a joker, and a loyal friend. He was a go-getter that held a presence well beyond his young years. He had a contagious smile that drew babies to his arms and respect from his elders. Ben had a positive impact with everyone he interacted with.

Ben lived a life chock full of memories, but the unmade memories are the hardest to bear. Along with his community, fellow firefighters, friends, and close-knit family, Ben is grieved by his parents, Ron and Carla, and by his two siblings, Tori and Levi Lauren.



Benjamin K. “Ben” Lauren

*Forsyth Township
Fire Department – Michigan
Volunteer Captain*

*March 13, 2020
Age 23*



Remembering



Captain Joseph M. Liedel, who served with the Monroe Township Fire Department in Monroe, Michigan, for close to 30 years, died on Sunday, August 23, 2020, after falling ill on July 31, 2020, while responding to an emergency call.

Coming from a firefighting background, his father and his uncle retired after 30 years from the City of Monroe Fire Department.

In his youth, Joe was involved in the fire explorer training program through Monroe Township. When he came of age, he proudly joined the ranks as a firefighter. He selflessly responded to tens of thousands of incidents in Monroe County. Joe, along with other Monroe firefighters, traveled to New York City to assist at Ground Zero following the 9/11 terrorist attacks. He has served as a firefighter, lieutenant and, most recently, as captain. His achievements also included completion of Firefighter I and II, Fire Officer I and II, and Ice Water Rescue.

The brotherhood in the fire service can only be explained by a firefighter. It's a feeling you can't explain; it's in your heart and soul. It is a love of the job and the people who make it up. It has a direct impact on your blood family and your fire family. Joe was a firefighter for 28 years.

Thank you for your service, Captain Joseph M. Liedel.

Joseph Michael Liedel

*Monroe Charter Township
Fire Department – Michigan
Paid-on-Call Captain
August 23, 2020
Age 48*



*S*teven Splan was born on January 30, 1974, in Detroit, Michigan. He graduated from Troy High School, Class of 1992.

After high school, Steven joined the Troy Fire Department, Station 6, where he served until 2005. He then joined the Bloomfield Hills Department of Public Safety, where he served for 15 years. His robust career accomplishments included being promoted to sergeant and serving as the department's fire investigator.

Steven adored his family and friends; he was known for his love of people. Steven also had a passion for golf, wood-working, and music. He enjoyed home remodeling with his wife, Sara. He had four girls, Megan, Emily, Elizabeth, and Meredith.

He is also survived by his mother, Donna Conrad; his mother and father-in-law, Terence and Melinda Jenkinson; his sister, Stacy (Scott) Ritchie; his brother-in-law, Daniel (Renee) Jenkinson; and extended family. He was preceded in passing by his father, George Conrad.

Remembering



Steven A. Splan

*Bloomfield Hills Department of
Public Safety – Michigan*

Career Sergeant

August 2, 2020

Age 46



Remembering



Robert J. Stott Jr.

*Lovells Township
Fire Department – Michigan
Volunteer Assistant Chief
December 1, 2019
Age 56*



Robert was a family man with a surviving spouse, three adult children, and four grandchildren. He raised his family in the township of Lovells and could think of no better way than to join the fire department and dedicate himself to protecting the life and property in the Lovells Township that he loved.

Robert joined the Lovells Township Fire Department in 2002 and was certified by the Fire Fighters Training Council on June 26, 2003. Over the next 16 years, Robert went on to obtain his MFR License and was promoted to assistant chief. Robert was well liked by his fellow department members, as well as the Lovells community. He put forth a great effort to assure the department was well received in the Lovells community. During his tenure on the department, Robert rarely missed a meeting, training, or an alarm calling him to duty, regardless if the alarm was during work or in the middle of the night. Robert was routinely one of the first on scene and one of the last to leave. He loved the call to duty and his brothers and sisters of the service.

Robert enjoyed coordinating as many surrounding departments as he could to partake in the annual Lovells Bridge Walk Parade, coordinating the support for the Warbler's Hideaway annual 4th of July fireworks, and partaking in the delivery of Thanksgiving meals with our mini-pumper or rescue to community members less fortunate.

Robert J. Stott Jr. was a true firefighter in all respects: dedication, service, honor, courage, and valor.

He is missed by many.



Remembering

On September 15, 1962, the world was blessed with Franklin Delano Williams Jr. He was born in Detroit, Michigan, to Franklin Delano Williams Sr. and the late Del Jeannette Murphy. Franklin was a dedicated son, husband, brother, father, grandfather, and friend. He accepted Christ at an early age. He was a man of God, strong in his faith.

Franklin was educated in the Detroit Public School system, graduating from Denby High School in 1982. While at Denby, he was a football and track star and was voted Most Athletic Player. Franklin received a Brick Masonry Certification from Golightly Vocational School in Detroit. In 1988, he joined the Detroit Fire Department as a firefighter. Franklin nobly served, dedicated, inspired, and mentored new cadets while serving with the Detroit Fire Department and rose to the rank of captain. He always went above and beyond to get the job done. Everyone he came in contact with was impacted by him.

Franklin met his soulmate, Shanita Williams, on October 17, 2004, while she was tailgating and he was passing by on the fire engine. From their first date on October 24, 2004, they were inseparable. They married on May 8, 2010, and Shanita Williams became Shanita Williams-Williams.

Franklin had many leisure activities. He had a fond love for golfing and played on courses throughout Michigan and all over the world. He was an avid Detroit Lions fan who, along with his wife, proudly held season tickets. He was also a coach for many years with the Police Athletic League (P.A.L.), coaching for the Eastside Cowboys, the Detroit Dragons, and Crockett. He impacted the lives of his players in the same manner as he encouraged his new cadets. Franklin was Past Master of Redeemer Lodge 53. Franklin was an extraordinary cook and a jack-of-all-trades. If he didn't know how to fix it, he would do the research and learn how.

On April 8, 2020, Franklin left his earthly home and was received into his heavenly home. He leaves to cherish his memory, his loving wife, Shanita Williams; his father, Franklin Williams, Sr.; children, Carolyn Rivers (John), Ashley Williams, Franklin Williams III, Andre Johnson, Dorian Williams, Georgia McCaughan, and Jordyn Williams; five sisters; two brothers; grandchildren, Amir Williams, Robert Terry (RJ), Rylee Davenport, and Brayden Davenport; dog, Jack, and cat, Cuba Kitty; a host of nieces and nephews; in-laws; and his many brothers and sisters in the Detroit Fire Department and all first responders.



Franklin D. Williams Jr.

Detroit Fire Department – Michigan

Career Captain

April 8, 2020

Age 57



Remembering



Daryl "Taddy" Drusch

*Howard Lake Fire Department
and Ambulance – Minnesota*

Volunteer Chief

January 13, 2020

Age 49



Daryl "Taddy" Drusch was on the front line of helping others as a member of the Howard Lake Fire Department and Ambulance for 30 years. He was known as someone who was passionate about helping others. Tragically, Taddy died of a heart attack just hours after responding to an emergency call. He leaves behind his wife, Julie, and son, Taylor.

Taddy showed great dedication to the department throughout the years he served, even getting into trouble with his wife and son when he missed family events, arrived late, or when his pager woke them up in the middle of the night. Taddy participated in many department events, performed maintenance on the fire trucks, and served in many different roles including training officer, assistant chief, and as chief from 2014 until the day he died.

Many of the firemen looked up to him and went to him for answers and guidance. He always made sure that the jobs were done and done right. While he had a strong opinion about everything and he wasn't afraid to share it, he had a soft side when he knew people needed help. He was always willing to lend an ear or provide friendly advice, no matter how long it took. I remember several times after calls asking if he got lost on the way home, as we only lived three blocks from the station. Inevitably, he stayed late to mentor one of his fellow firemen.

A great leader and mentor to those in the fire service, he was also dedicated to the ambulance, day or night. The quality that always stood out was his ability to make children smile on ambulance runs; whether he had to help them or their parents, he had a way to put them at ease. His leadership, dedication, and knowledge will be greatly missed by those on Howard Lake Fire Department and Ambulance and the surrounding communities.

Taddy was a hard worker and self-sufficient. If he didn't know how to do something, he worked at it until he mastered it. In addition to the fire department, his passions were being his wife's best friend, coaching Taylor in sports and life, fishing, hunting, snowmobiling, four-wheeling, camping, and playing cards. A loving father and husband, Taddy looked forward to family vacations each year. The time away with Julie and Taylor was the time he enjoyed most in life. These are just a few of the activities that will be more difficult to continue without him, but we will, because we know that he will be with us. Taddy left a big hole in our hearts and will be missed but always remembered by his family, friends, and our community!

Remembering

*T*odd Lanthrip, who held the rank of captain in the Mathiston Volunteer Fire Department in Mathiston, Mississippi, departed this earth in the early morning hours of June 13, 2019. He suffered a heart attack following his return from responding to a vehicular accident. He was 53 years of age.

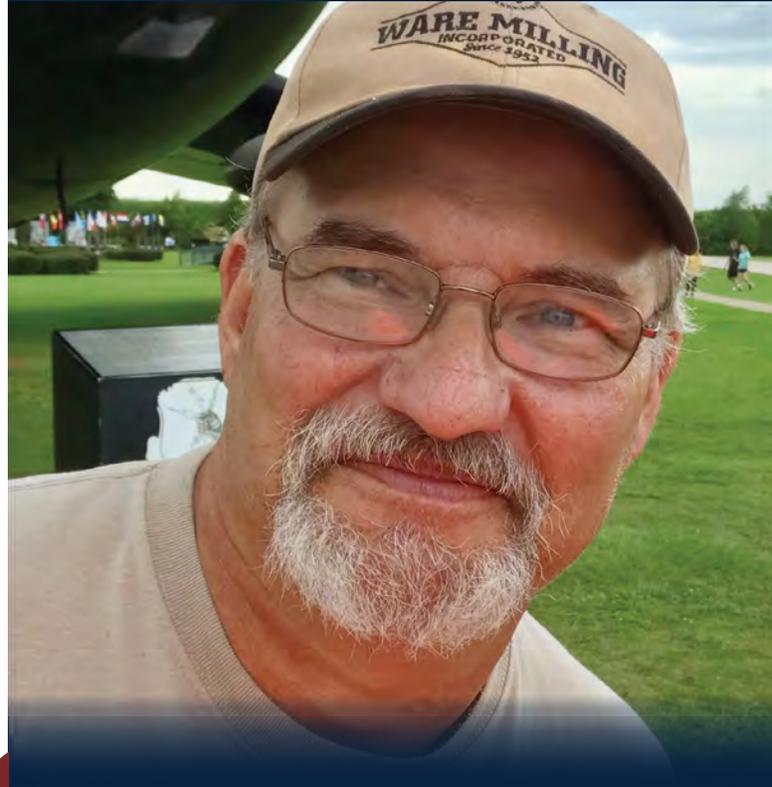
Todd was born on July 13, 1965, and was a lifetime resident of our area, receiving his education at Mathiston High School. At an early age, he felt the need to give back to his community and began serving in the Mathiston Volunteer Fire Department at the age of 22. A sincere, humble man without any pretense, he dedicated himself to learning his craft to the best of his ability and focused on serving those who needed assistance. He served on the department for a total of 31 years.

During his time on the Mathiston Volunteer Fire Department, he reached out to younger firemen and helped them hone their craft. Many expressed gratitude for his assistance, which he always offered with a servant-like heart. He offered positive encouragement and genuinely wished to see both his department and his community flourish. He was certified through the Mississippi State Fire Academy and a nationally registered E.M.R.

Todd was a man of many interests, but work was often his preference. Even though his duties were many and his time was limited, he also served as a member of the Reform Fire Department from 2003-2019. He was an outdoorsman at heart and enjoyed hunting, fishing, tending his cattle, and enjoying God's creation. A dedicated family man, Todd was the loving husband of his wife, Kristie, for 33 years, a devoted father to his son, Jonathan, and the proud grandfather of Kamdin and James.

Above all of this, however, was Todd's devotion to his faith. He served as both a deacon and Sunday school teacher at Blythe Creek Baptist Church in Choctaw County, Mississippi. His faith was genuine, and his life was an extension of the good works that are the fruit of faithfulness. He loved nothing more than telling others about his Lord and Savior.

Todd Lanthrip will be remembered as a man who led by example, not a showman....a man whose roots were sunk deep in our community and whose pride was loving those around him and serving them to the best of his ability. May he rest in peace.



Todd Lanthrip

*Mathiston Volunteer
Fire Department – Mississippi
Volunteer Captain*

June 13, 2019

Age 53



Remembering



Jerry Drew Bayton

*Kansas City Missouri
Fire Department – Missouri
Career Captain
August 23, 2019
Age 54*



Jerry Drew Bayton was a father, brother, and son. His friends described him as fun, positive, courageous, and persevering. He never gave up, even when faced with his toughest challenge—fighting multiple myeloma cancer. From 2012 to 2019, Jerry took on the challenge and fought head on. He was admired, loved, and cherished by his two sons, family, many friends, and community.

He grew up in Kansas City, Missouri, with his father, mother, sister, and brother. Through childhood he dedicated himself to sports and friends. He was a gifted musician at heart and worked hard mowing lawns to purchase his first drum set at age 12. He graduated from high school in 1983 and went on to walk on the Mizzou football team and play baseball at Indiana State University.

Throughout high school and college, Jerry continued perfecting his drumming technique and was asked to play for local Kansas City bands. In the late 1990s he joined Deege, a band from LA, where he participated in a song featured on the television show “Party of Five.” Jerry’s music career stayed with him until the end. In 2016, he formed the local Kansas City band Superstar Mafia. This band went on to headline one of Kansas City’s biggest philanthropies—Jazzoo—where Jerry Drew played the drums for the final time in July 2019.

Jerry became a firefighter in 1991 and was promoted to captain in 2008. The memories he made in his 25 years as a fireman were many. He would constantly tell stories of the tragedies and triumphs he and his firefighters experienced. He made the job sound fun and hilarious; all the while, those around him knew that he put his life on the line many times. He loved his fellow firefighters and always spoke very highly of them.

Although Jerry was an incredible musician and firefighter, his pride and joy was in being a father. In 1999, his first son, Taylor, was born and in 2002, he welcomed his second son, Brendan. Since the moment his boys came into the world, Jerry knew they were his number one priority and his reason for living. He taught them how to enjoy life, have fun, play sports, and even coached their Little League football teams to National Championships. He was never prouder of anything or anyone in his life, and his sons’ lives were the center of it all.

Everyone was drawn to Jerry’s smile, charm, energy, and sense of humor. Jerry lived life to the fullest, and his spirit will live on through his sons, his family, and the brave men and women in the Kansas City Fire Department. Jerry Drew Bayton was one of a kind.

Remembering

David F. Jameson Jr. of Independence, Missouri, died in the line of duty on May 7, 2020, at age 52. He was born on May 20, 1967, in Kansas City, Missouri, to father, David Jameson Sr., and mother, Billie Jean Williams. David served the City of Independence Fire Department for 23 years, considering it his honor to aid people in their time of need. Though his passing was a sudden loss to his friends and family, he is remembered with great affection by those who knew him.

Indeed, if you did know him, he could often be found watching one Marvel hero movie or another and working to get a laugh out of someone nearby. David had a way of making a home of whomever he was with, creating a space where they were cared for, safe, and appreciated just for who they were, whatever trial or triumph they were experiencing.

David was pragmatic and optimistic, always looking to the brighter side when things were toughest, firm in the faith that tomorrow could be a better day. He carried this light fastidiously, whether he was saving a community member from a dire fate or enjoying the company of lifelong friends. In his free time, David could also be found playing video games, enjoying the food from his favorite barbecue joint, spending time with his family, and doting on his partner and children.

He spent his life in service, not just to the City of Independence, but also in service of his family, making a way of life for them with steadfastness and determination people had come to expect.

David is survived by his nine children, Zharday Harris, David Jameson, Corey Jameson, Christian Jameson, Miranda Craig, Chelsea Jameson, Kaylee Jameson, Ki'Jana Jameson, and Ka-Zha Jameson; partner Rhona Rittscher; his mother, Billie Jean Williams; nine grandchildren; sisters, Rhonda Jameson and Ronchelle Jameson; brothers, Michael Jameson and Ronnell Jameson; aunts and uncles, Bessie L. Johnson, Bernice Simms, Arthelia Williams, Arthur E. Williams, Charles Williams; and grandmother, Dorothy L. Williams.

Each of them is graced with a unique piece of David's heart and a part of the story that is his life. It is with the knowledge that he lived his life with joy—a joy they now carry in his honor—that they lay him to rest.

Dearest David F. Jameson, you are loved and forever missed.



David F. Jameson Jr.

*Independence Fire Department –
Missouri
Career Firefighter
May 7, 2020
Age 52*



Remembering



Charles Hampton "Chuck" McCormick

*West Peculiar
Fire Protection District – Missouri
Career Firefighter/Paramedic*

*January 5, 2020
Age 30*



Charles "Chuck" McCormick was a loving husband, father, brother, son, and friend. He was a wonderful man of faith and devoted to Jesus Christ.

Family was everything to Chuck. His wife, Rachel; children, Kyler, Kaiden, and Kolten; his parents, Mark and Melanie; and his brothers, Warren and William, were his world. He was always there for them and tried his hardest to help when he could. He would do anything for his children.

Chuck loved music and wanted to become a musician. However, God had other plans for his life. He was blessed with his first child, Kyler, which sparked his journey to becoming a firefighter. Chuck had a passion for helping others and made the decision to go to school to become a paramedic. After going through clinicals, he found that he liked the fire department and decided to pursue that path once he graduated.

In 2014, his family moved to Georgia, and he began his career at Cherokee County Fire Department. After three years, they moved back to the Kansas City area, and he began working for the South Metro Fire Protection District. At the end of 2019, after working part-time, Chuck went to West Peculiar Fire Protection District full-time. Chuck also served in the National Guard for six years.

Even as a young boy, Chuck had a fearless, can-do attitude. He was never afraid to try new things and lived life to the fullest. He had an infectious positive attitude, and no matter the situation, he was smiling. He loved challenging the way people think and could argue his points with utter conviction. He was unapologetically himself a hundred percent of the time but could get along with anyone. He inspired and encouraged others to try new things and follow their dreams.

Chuck's favorite place was outdoors. The only time he wasn't outside was when he was sleeping. He loved getting his boys outside and going on short nature hikes or playing at the park with them. He loved animals and wanted to have his own little farm. He had goats, a pig, chickens, ducks, and enjoyed taking his boys out there to help feed or just run around with them. He also loved to tinker and was always trying to build, take apart, or learn a new skill. He wasn't always the most successful, but he never let it discourage him. He truly believed he could do anything and lived life as such.

Chuck was a wonderfully caring person and loved his family very much. Chuck is deeply missed by his family and friends and will forever be in the hearts of those that knew him.

Remembering

Chris grew up admiring his father, who served as a police officer for over 40 years. His respect for his dad gave him a strong foundation and inspired him to devote his life to service as a first responder. In 1991, at age 14, Chris started as a junior firefighter with Metro West Fire District. He joined the Eureka Fire Protection District as a volunteer and was promoted to full-time in 1998. In 2001, Chris started at Maryland Heights Fire District, where he served for 17 years as a firefighter/paramedic. Chris was a proud member of the IAFF Local 2665 and served his country with FEMA's Missouri Task Force 1 Urban Search and Rescue. He was deployed to New York City on 9/11 and responded to Hurricane Katrina.

He received the Medal of Valor and many other awards through his hard work, commitment, and passion for serving others. He loved to teach and share his experience with new recruits. He was an instinctive fireman, and his brothers said they would have followed him through the gates of hell.

He adored his precious baby girl, Tori, and proud son, CJ, and his happiest moments in life were his time with them. He loved fishing with Tori, even though she always caught more than him, and even when the fish did not bite. Sitting in the blind, hunting with CJ for his first deer or bird, was a father-son experience he cherished. Everyone he met heard how proud he was of CJ and Tori. They were the true love of his life!

Chris was the beloved son of Wayne Moore (Sandy) and Kathy Moore (Paul Thrapp), and brother of Candice Moore (Chad Province). He was planning to spend his life living out his dreams with his childhood sweetheart, Beth (Clugh) Bell, and her three children, RJ, Delaney, and Taylor.

Chris memorized all the words to almost every song and would belt it out any chance he got. He was a loyal friend and almost always had a smile (or smirk!) on his face. His favorite place to be was the beach, and he had plans to retire there someday. He could bring joy and laughter to any group of people. We remember countless good times, late nights, early mornings, tough calls, tough times, laughing and crying.

Chris was a trusting and loyal man. He brought goodness to suffering people and difficult situations. He genuinely loved life and gave his all for the good of others.

Chris has been greatly missed every day since his end of watch on June 8, 2019. His memory will be carried on by his children, friendships, stories, and by the strength of the community around us.



Christopher R. Moore

*Maryland Heights Fire
Protection District – Missouri
Career Firefighter/Paramedic*

June 8, 2019

Age 42



Remembering



Timothy “Travis” Owens was born on September 12, 1967, in St. Joseph, Missouri. Travis married the love of his life, Rachel McGinness, on September 26, 1997. He was a Class of 1985 Benton graduate. After graduation, he served four years active duty in the United States Army and 11 years in the United States Army Reserves.

Captain Owens retired from the St. Joseph Fire Department after 26 years of dedicated service. During his service he was a member of the St. Joseph Fire Department Honor Guard and a recipient of the St. Joseph Fire Department Lifesaving Award. He was a member of IAFF Local 77, serving as union steward and as president for the last few years he was involved. Travis was also an EMT and worked on the ambulance for 10 years.

Travis was a member of The Keys Christian Fellowship Church.

His survivors include his wife of 20 years, Rachel Owens; his son, Jacob McCollum; his daughters, Keely Bruckshaw and Baylor Owens; his granddaughter, Addisynn Estes; and extended family and friends.

His hobbies include coaching his children in basketball, baseball, softball, track and field, and football, as well as refereeing, traveling with his family, being a grandpa, and serving his community.

Travis Owens

City of St. Joseph Fire Department –

Missouri

Career Captain

March 28, 2019

Age 51



J. Allyn Reding was born into life as a firefighter. His father was one of the few that founded the Duenweg (Missouri) Volunteer Fire Department in 1960. Allyn loved serving his community and strived to better the Duenweg Volunteer Fire Department. Allyn worked as a junior firefighter beginning when he was 14 years old. He always wanted the best for the City of Duenweg and was involved in the planning, development, and construction of the new fire station in 1991.

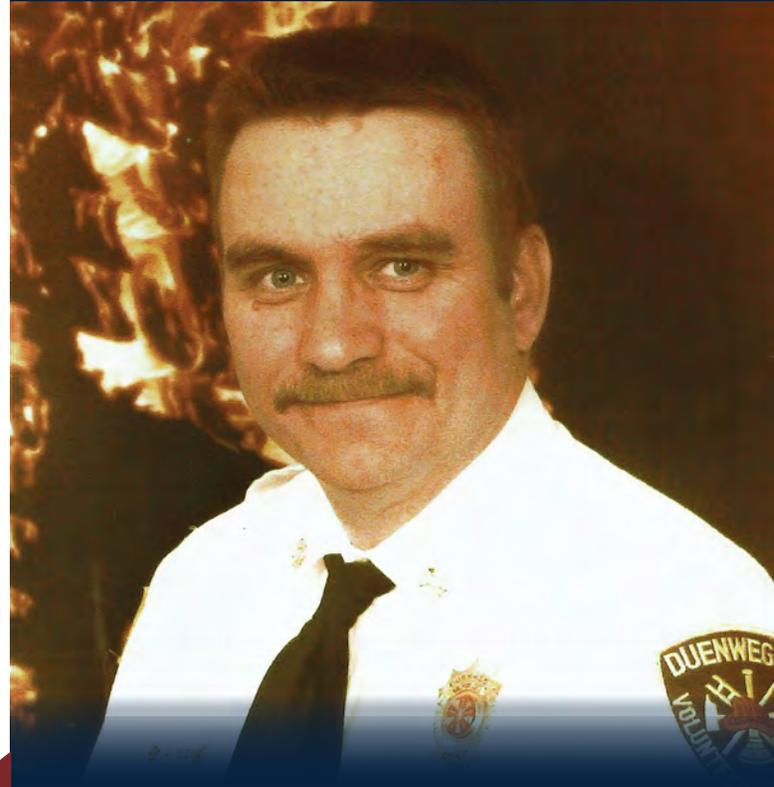
Allyn became chief of the fire department in 1998. He always had an open-door policy for anyone in the community and was there when anyone needed help. Many young men and women came through the doors in those 22 years. He spent many years training and teaching them to be the best that they could be. Allyn was always sad to see them move on, but he always wanted the best for them and their families.

Allyn was a quiet man until you got to know him. He loved his family, and his biggest pride and joy was his seven grandchildren. Fall was his favorite time of year. He loved to go deer hunting with his father, sons, grandchildren, and his best friend, Roger.

Allyn left behind his wife of 44 years, Mona; sons, Jason, and wife, Starr; Corey, and wife, Shelly; daughter, Stefanie, and husband, Gabe; and his seven grandchildren, Cole, Harris, Ryder, Emily, Kylie, Haylea, and Ayden. He is also survived by his parents, Jack and June; his brothers, Howard, and wife, Beverly; and Brent; and by his best friend, Roger.

Allyn may be gone, but his love of firefighting continues on with his two sons and his oldest grandson, Cole.

Remembering



J. Allyn Reding

*Duenweg Volunteer
Fire Department – Missouri
Volunteer Fire Chief*

July 5, 2019

Age 63



Remembering



Ronald W. Wehlage Jr.

*DeSoto Rural
Fire Protection District – Missouri
Career Lieutenant/Fire Marshal*

*June 30, 2020
Age 40*



Ron grew up in St. Louis, Missouri, where he went to school and attended St. Lucas United Church of Christ with his family. During that time, he was a member of the Boy Scouts of America and was proud to be an Eagle Scout. He was a 22+ year veteran firefighter and had been with the DeSoto Rural Fire Protection District for the past 18 years. At the time of his death, he was serving as the district lieutenant and fire marshal. Prior to his time at Desoto Rural, he served with North Jefferson County Ambulance District and was a volunteer member of the Hillsboro Fire Protection District.

Ron was passionate about fire prevention and education. He spent many of his years as a firefighter providing fire safety education to area schools and community members.

He was a member of the Firefighters Association of Missouri, the Jefferson County Firefighters and Fire Marshals Associations, the Professional Fire & Fraud Investigators Association, and the Ozark Firefighters Association.

Ron was a very talented carpenter. He had a degree in construction trade and enjoyed helping family and friends with building projects. Ron built the home his father lives in. In his spare time, Ron also enjoyed dirt track racing, camping, fishing, and boating.

Ron is survived by his father, Ronald W. Wehlage Sr., of Redbud, Illinois; two brothers, Kevin, and wife, Catherine Reese, of Arnold, Missouri, and Brian, and wife, Linda Reese, of Redbud, Illinois; several nieces and nephews, numerous other relatives, and many dear friends.

*O*n August 24, 2020, Tom gave his life in a helicopter crash while fighting fires in Oregon.

Anyone who knew Tom knew he was larger than life, both in stature (6' 10") and in everything he did. When God opened a door, he didn't walk; he ran.

Tom was born and raised in Bozeman, Montana. He attended Mount Ellis Elementary, Mount Ellis Academy, and then played basketball for the Bobcats at Montana State University. As a sophomore, Tom led the Big Sky Conference in blocked shots and the team in 3-point field goal percentage. He did this while missing half the conference games because, as a Seventh-day Adventist, Tom observed the Sabbath from sundown Friday until sundown Saturday. Through that entire time, he kept God by his side and let Him lead wherever he needed to go. Tom was big, but God is bigger.

Tom was easy to like, with his big smile and infectious laugh. It was not uncommon to see Tom on the phone working through an employee's personal life issue or talking to a new friend whom he met while working on his never-ending projects.

As a third-generation helicopter pilot, it aligned with his philosophy of being there for others. He took part in numerous search and rescue operations as well as countless hours to help on fires. His calm voice in the sky was always a welcome sound to anyone on the ground.

Even before all that, his family and friends were his world. His greatest accomplishment was being a father to his three beautiful children. His wife, Robyn, worked by his side for 18 years in every adventure he went on. His best friend was his father, who taught him to be the man that he was. For someone who didn't like to talk, Tom never shied away from being there for his friends who became his brothers.

Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for another. John 15:13

He is survived by his wife, Robyn; children, Cohen (11), Sawyer (9), and Makenna (7); parents, Mark and Pam Duffy; sister and brother-in-law, Ashley and David Bowen; brother and sister-in-law, Tyler and Jackie Duffy; grandfather, Jack Larrabee, and his wife, Cathy; and numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Remembering



Thomas Mark Duffy

*Central Copters, Inc. – Montana
Seasonal Helicopter Pilot*

August 24, 2020

Age 40



Remembering



Ian H. McBeth

Coulson Aviation USA – Montana

Contract Captain

January 23, 2020

Age 44



*I*an McBeth was a C-130 pilot with the Wyoming and Montana Air Guard, completing multiple firefighting missions across the United States and serving in the private sector fighting wildland fires.

Ian's childhood was quintessential (He would have hated that word, but it means the pure and essential essence of something.) of a small ranching community, fostering love of animals and reverence for hard work. A standout athlete at Wray High School in Wray, Colorado, Ian earned 11 varsity letters in football, wrestling, and track. He was a mainstay of the 1993 State Championship football team and a perennial placer in the state track meet at 1600 and 800 meters. Ian was known for his humor and hijinks and his toughness, determination, and skill, a theme repeated throughout his life.

At the University of Wyoming, Ian ran track, earning WAC Academic All-Conference. He earned several academic honors and graduated with a M.S. in Range Management. He was the main character in many adventures where he acquired the title "The Instigator," a nickname used throughout his life.

Ian's love of adventure and service to others led him to the military. Enlisting in the Wyoming Air Guard in 1996 as a construction specialist, he was later commissioned as a C-130 navigator and pilot. In his career, Ian completed multiple combat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. In 2013, he joined the Montana Air Guard, becoming a pivotal part of the 120th Airlift Wing's conversion from F-15 fighters to C-130s. A patient instructor who held his fellow airmen to his own high standards, he is remembered for his incredible competence as a pilot, teacher and evaluator, his unbounded humor, and a constant twinkle in his eye.

Ian's first passion in life was his family. He and Bowdie had three beautiful, clever, and adventurous children. Abigail, Calvin, and Ella were his pride and joy and loved joining their father on whatever scheme he cooked up, spending time skiing, hiking, camping, and kayaking. Ian dreamed up and executed family adventures with his parents, siblings, nieces, and nephews to the Black Hills, Fort Robinson State Park, Glacier National Park, the Delaware shore, and the Grand Canyon, to name a few. Uncle Ian was the main character in every trip's greatest adventure, whether it was an overwhelming success or epic failure.

Ian lost his life in New South Wales, Australia, doing what he loved—flying and helping others. Ian's death has reminded us of his passion for life, his service to others, and the dogged determination with which he faced any challenge.

Remembering

Donald Eugene “Donny” Lepper died from cardiovascular causes after responding to a grass fire on February 22, 2020, with the Indianola Volunteer Fire and Rescue Squad. He served with the department for 24 years.

After graduating from Republican Valley High School in 1993, Donny spent 25 years working for Lord’s of Indianola.

Active in his community, he assisted with the Old Settlers Parade and the annual Fourth of July fireworks display. He enjoyed playing pool and slow pitch softball.



Donald E. Lepper

Indianola Volunteer Fire and Rescue Squad – Nebraska Volunteer Firefighter/EMT

February 23, 2020

Age 46



Remembering



John Andrew Sing

***Boys Town Fire and Rescue –
Nebraska***

Volunteer Chief

November 11, 2019

Age 66



John Sing served as fire chief of the Boys Town Fire and Rescue for more than 40 years. The Village of Boys Town is on the outskirts of Omaha, Nebraska, where John was born and lived his entire life. He died at the Boys Town Fire & Rescue fire station after returning from a rescue call early in the morning of Veteran's Day 2019, just a few weeks short of his 67th birthday.

Lovingly known as "Chief," disaster, safety preparedness, and service to the community were in John's DNA. He was raised as a first responder, through his close relationship with his father, whose life was spent in various service roles, including as a volunteer with Boys Town Fire Brigade. In 1971, John began his own service career with Father Flanagan's Boys Home, where he worked for 48 years. He began his service in 1971 overseeing the Office of Civil Defense. He earned a degree as a Certified Safety Professional, and created the Office of Safety, adhering to the new OSHA standards. Alongside this work, he 'lit the fire' beneath the Boys Town Fire Brigade and built it into the Boys Town Fire and Rescue, serving Boys Town and the surrounding community.

As an officer of the Tri-Mutual Aid Fire Fighters Association, John worked closely with 28 fire and rescue departments in Nebraska and Iowa. He volunteered as a fire instructor for the State of Nebraska and actively organized the annual Tri-Mutual Aid Fire Fighters Association Training Day. John created the Boys Town Fire Cadet Youth Program, focusing on skill and career opportunities in fire services. He was tough, but fair, when it came to training. The legacy of his impact is in the numerous individuals who have gone on to become career firefighters, EMTs, officers, fire marshals, and military service personnel throughout the country.

John received numerous awards for his dedication, service, and for saving lives. Most of all, he was respected as a mentor to anyone who needed help. He was almost always the first responder on every fire and rescue call. On your worst day, he was there, and on your best day his smile and laugh were contagious. In John's presence, you felt safe.

At sunset, when we see a mass of rose and orange across the sky, we believe "Chief" is busy putting out fires and saving someone, somewhere. John is survived by his wife of 48 years, Sharon; his children, Jamie, and her husband, Todd; Jason, and his wife, Tymaree; and his seven grandchildren, Daniel, Colton, Caleb, Simone, Isabel, Iyla and Londyn.

Remembering

David Michael Lavoie was born in Laconia on November 17, 1966, the son of Theodore Thomas Donald and Charlotte Ann Patricia (Estelle Fisette) Lavoie. He died on November 9, 2019, due to a cardiac event, at age 52.

David grew up in Meredith and graduated from Inter-Lakes High School, Class of 1985.

He worked for many years at Ambrose Brothers Construction in Meredith as a truck driver and in the shop.

Since 2008, David had been an active member of the Campton-Thornton Fire Department Rescue, where he had recently been promoted to captain.

David had a passion for snowmobiling and enjoyed traveling to northern New Hampshire to ride the trails of northern New England and Canada. He also enjoyed auto racing and spent many years traveling throughout New England racing.

David is survived by his son, Evan R. Bleakney, and wife, Jennifer; his grandchildren, Hazel and Kolt Bleakney; his stepmother, Sherri (Sargent) Lavoie; his brother, Paul R. Lavoie, and sister, Valarie A. Greene; two nephews, Owen and Milo Greene; and by his aunts, uncles, and cousins. He was predeceased by his parents.



David M. Lavoie

*Campton-Thornton Fire Rescue
Department – New Hampshire*

Volunteer Captain

November 9, 2019

Age 52



Remembering



Darin James Sabine

***Newington Fire Department –
New Hampshire
Career Chief
September 7, 2019
Age 35***



*D*arin was more than a firefighter. Darin was an amazing father, husband, son, brother, and friend. He had a laugh that would echo in the room, a spark in his eye that was contagious, and a desire to help others that was undeniable. His path in life drew him to the fire service. As a young boy he rode his bike to the town's department to buy snacks from the vending machine in hopes that someone on duty would invite him in. It wasn't long until his mother drafted a handwritten note allowing him to spend time in the station at the age of 12. Soon after that, Darin became a Fire Explorer, attended the fire academy, and started as a call firefighter. He worked through the ranks of his town's fire department as a part-time firefighter, full-time firefighter, deputy chief, and ultimately ending his career as the youngest chief in New Hampshire.

When asked, Darin said his greatest accomplishment in life was being a father to his little girls. He kept a smile on everyone's face with his silly jokes, funny stories, and endless adventures. He adored his family. One of his fondest memories was of trips to the family camp in northern New Hampshire to snowmobile and four-wheel. He loved to cook, have gatherings, and make everyone laugh. Darin was the friend that everyone wanted. He always answered the late-night calls, helped move, ran people to the airport, or offered moral support and a good laugh.

Darin not only worked in a career helping others but exemplified that in his day-to-day life. He would help someone change a flat tire, reach out to a stranger who he knew was struggling, and started a toy drive for smaller areas of the state that struggled to secure toys during the holiday season. Darin found a way to collect and deliver toys so as many children as possible could have presents under their Christmas tree. Chief Sabine's Toys for Northern New Hampshire has lived on in his memory.

The loss of Darin influenced many people, most of all his wife and children, Jennifer, Sophia, and Maya; parents, sister and nephew, Brenda, Stephen, Laura, and Isaiah; as well as his aunts, uncles, cousins, and in-laws. Darin is missed dearly every day, but everyone affected by Darin's journey has tried to find the sparkle in every day. This was something that Darin and his family always said and continue to say. In the hardest of times and most difficult of days, there is a little sparkle somewhere. You just need to be open to looking for and finding it. Darin's memory lives on as a sparkle in the lives of anyone who knew him.

Remembering

Steve would tell people that he strived to live by the Golden Rule: Treat others how you would like to be treated. With his quick-to-joke personality and easy nature, you knew this to be true as soon as you met him. But what his friends and family also knew to be true was that he was a selfless mentor and natural leader.

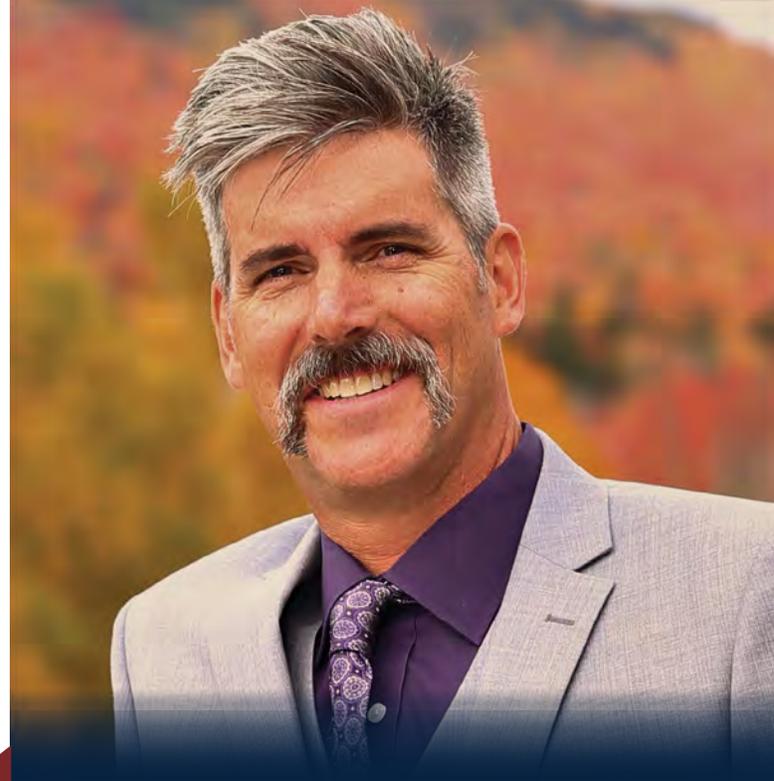
Steve was a long-standing resident of Goffstown, New Hampshire. He married the love of his life, Nancy, in 1989. They felt a great sense of community in Goffstown, and they chose to live and raise their sons, Kerry and Garrett, here. Steve, being the avid outdoorsman and sportsman, enjoyed teaching his sons everything he knew about fishing, hunting, archery, and sports. He loved coaching their baseball teams, cheering for them when they were playing football, and guiding them through life as they became men. He was so proud of all their accomplishments and the men that they were becoming.

Steve joined Goffstown Fire Department's call force in May 1985 and started his full-time firefighting career for Goffstown in February 1987. His retirement in May 2015 allowed him more time to enjoy his passions. As a member of the Goffstown Fish and Game Association, he was able to volunteer more at his club and to develop their archery course and archery league. Steve was able to spend more time on education and community projects. In 2020, Steve was recognized for his ten years of volunteer service to the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department Hunter Education Program.

In March of 2019, Steve was asked by Goffstown's Select Board to fill an interim fire chief position. He accepted the position because he never hesitated to help his community. He continued working for the department, both as interim deputy chief and training captain until the time of his death. Among helping with many advances throughout the Goffstown Fire Department, Steve was instrumental in the town's transition to 24/7 coverage.

Steve was able to positively affect many people in the Goffstown community and scores of firefighters in his lifetime. His family and friends know that the many small ripples he made in this large pond will continue when we strive to live by Steven's Golden Rule.

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader."
—John Quincy Adams



Steven W. Tower

Goffstown Fire Department –

New Hampshire

Career Captain

August 31, 2020

Age 54



Remembering

Joe Bianchi was very committed to North Arlington, New Jersey, a small community eight miles from the World Trade Center. He was born there, went to school there, played baseball on its first Little League team, and in high school lettered in football and track.

After a stint in the Army, Joe returned to North Arlington and attended Barber College in order to follow in the family trade. It was during this time that he met the love of his life, Catherine Furia. Joe and Catherine were married on September 26, 1965, and settled down to raise a family. They raised three children, Gina, Joseph, and Anthony, and became grandparents to seven grandchildren.

In time, Joe and Cathy opened the popular Pal Joey's Hair Salon in North Arlington, where Joe got to know many of the people in town. They were always willing to support any group or individual that needed help. Joe joined the service clubs UNICO, Rotary Club, and the Elks because of their work in the community.

Joe became a member of Hose Company 1 in December 1980. He served many years as company president and financial secretary. He went inactive in 2006 but remained a social member of the company.

Joe served as a member of the zoning board and planning board, eventually becoming president of the planning board. After going inactive from the fire department, he decided to run for town council in 2007 and was elected. He eventually ran for and was elected mayor of the town where he had spent his entire life.

On Thursday, September 13, 2001, Joe joined one of the relief crews that went to Ground Zero. The Borough of North Arlington Fire Department had been operating at the World Trade Center site since the morning of September 11, 2001, performing various tasks associated with rescue and recovery operations. Unfortunately, this would result in Joe's untimely death from multiple myeloma many years later on October 10, 2018.

Joe dearly loved and was devoted to his family, his community, and his neighbors. He was loved by many whose lives he touched and will be dearly missed by his family and his community.



Joseph P. Bianchi

*Borough of North Arlington Volunteer
Fire Department – New Jersey
Volunteer Firefighter*

October 10, 2018

Age 77



Born in Red Bank, New Jersey, Richard was a lifelong resident of Edison, New Jersey. He attended the Edison Public School System, graduating from John P. Stevens High School in 1982. Upon graduation, he began working for the International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 825.

He was known for his two great passions in life—his family and his brothers and sisters in the fire service. Richard dedicated 38 years of his life to the fire service in the Township of Edison. At eighteen, he became a volunteer firefighter with the Edison Volunteer Fire Company, No. 1-Menlo Park, and rose through the ranks to serve as chief. In 1992, he became a firefighter with the Edison Division of Fire and was serving as a captain at the time of his death. He was a member of the Edison Fire Officers, IAFF Local 2883. He was also part of New Jersey Task Force 1 and had certifications in arson investigation and as a fire marshal.

Richard received numerous lifesaving awards and unit citations recognizing his display of courage, skill, and initiative.

Richard never hesitated to rush into danger to help someone in need. He was a family man who mentored others in the fire department. He was a valued and respected member of the community, and his dedication and commitment to serving the public was a guiding light for so many. Richard loved spending time with his family, whether it be on vacation in LBI, going fishing, or watching his New York Giants and Mets. His family will never forget all his volunteer hours spent working the St. Matthew's Carnival, serving as a cub scout leader for many years, and as a coach with Edison Boys Baseball.

He was his kids' #1 fan, always supporting them by attending his sons' sports events and his daughter's dance recitals. His kids were his entire world, and he was extremely proud of each one of them.

Remembering



Richard P. Campbell

Edison Fire Department – New Jersey

Career Captain

April 16, 2020

Age 55



Remembering



David Clark

*Bay Head Fire Company – New Jersey
Volunteer Firefighter*

April 17, 2020

Age 47



*D*avid Clark died April 17, 2020, due to complications of COVID-19.

He worked as a truck driver, and his mechanical skills and knowledge were an asset to the fire department. He had also served the department as chief engineer and as safety officer.

He was remembered as a devoted father and a well-liked member of the department.



A lifelong resident of Somerville, New Jersey, George dedicated his life to his country, his community, and his family and friends.

George joined the military right after high school and served as a specialist in the United States Army from 1959-1962. After leaving the Army, George knew he still wanted to help others in need. It was that devotion to others that led him to becoming both a firefighter and a support system for veterans.

George was a life member of the Somerville Fire Department Engine Company #1 with 50 years of service. After holding various leadership positions within the fire department, George's proudest moment was when he became chief of the Somerville Fire Department in 1984, and then president in 2000. During this time, he would look out for the town he loved and protect his neighbors, his community, and his fellow firefighters.

He was a trustee of the Somerville Fire Department Relief Association for over 25 years, a life member of the New Jersey Firemen's Association, and a member of the Somerset County Chiefs' Association.

Outside of the fire company and associated activities, George was an active member in the American Legion Post 12 in Somerville. He valued being part of programs that would augment the work of the federal government, making a difference to veterans in their personal lives.

His desire to help and support expanded beyond the boundaries of his hometown. George was a member of the Fraternal Order of Eagles in Bridgewater, an honorary member of the South Bound Brook Fire Company, and he belonged to the Middlesex Elks Lodge and the Bound Brook Moose Lodge.

Above and beyond his community service, George still found time to be an involved and devoted family man, spending time with his wife, children, and grandchildren whenever possible. He enjoyed boating and fishing and could always be found fixing something around the house.

Taken tragically from this world on March 6, 2015, George is sadly missed by those that knew him and loved him, including his wife, Anita; his sons, George III, and his wife, Lisa, and Michael Warnesky, and his wife, Jessica; his daughters, Sharon Kavanaugh and Renee Twardzik and her husband, Jeff; his sister, Kathleen Kapp, and her husband, Robert; seven grandchildren, Rebecca, Kayla, Elizabeth, George IV, Tyler, Peyton, and Chase; and six nieces and nephews.

Remembering



George R. Kavanaugh Jr.

Somerville Fire Department –

New Jersey

Volunteer Firefighter

March 6, 2015

Age 75



Remembering



Timothy J. Kearney

*Jersey City Fire Department –
New Jersey
Career Deputy Chief
December 9, 2020
Age 70*



Timothy J. Kearney was born and raised in Jersey City. In November of 1972, he was appointed to the Jersey City Fire Department, where he joined his three older brothers. In 1988, Tim was presented with the Valor Award from the New Jersey State Firefighters Association, as well as the Fire Officer of the Year Award. As a firefighter for nearly four decades, Tim rose through the ranks of lieutenant, captain, battalion chief, and deputy chief. Tim loved his job and earned the respect of many of the men and women with whom he worked. He was also a contributor to Firehouse Magazine.

Tim and Gerry met when they were teenagers, fell in love, and married in 1972. Tim was the loving father of Timothy, Dennis, and John. A self-taught DIY'er, he left no room untouched in their first home, always trying to make their small house fit his big dream. Tim was a great dad and role model. He taught his sons life skills, in addition to coaching their Little League teams, leading their Boy Scout packs, and challenging them to a round of golf. He often worked two jobs to provide a comfortable life for them and to pay for their educations. Tim took pride in his sons' accomplishments, and his proudest moments were seeing the fine men they became, much to his unheralded credit.

Tim took up the bagpipes and joined the Hudson County Pipes and Drums and, later, the Friendly Sons of the Shillelagh bands. He enjoyed marching in the many St. Patrick's Day Parades held in New Jersey, but he also was excited to have marched in parades in Ireland, New York City, and Savannah. His saddest and worst times playing the bagpipes were for the many 9/11 memorials he attended.

Tim enjoyed vacations with his family, piling the kids into the station wagon for their road trips down the Jersey shore or the Carolinas, with his playlists mapped out for his journeys. He knew the words to every song and sang or whistled throughout the drive. Later, he and Gerry enjoyed their trips to Europe and his happy place, Costa Rica. He taught himself Spanish and loved practicing with the locals.

Tim was a loving grandfather to Lucy, Ellen, Wiley, Laura, and Mabel. He always conceded to one more story or one more toss in the pool. He'd throw a softball for hours, play on the floor constructing mini cities, and even let them polish his nails.

Tim leaves behind a vast hole that can only be filled with memories by those who loved him and with stories shared by the men and women of the Jersey City Fire Department.

*J*ohn Callan “Jack” Leming, 78, of Cape May Point, passed away suddenly on Monday, April 15, 2019. Born in Philadelphia and raised in Upper Darby, he graduated from Monsignor Bonner High School and received a bachelor's degree in business administration from St. Joseph's University.

Jack loved sports, including his Phillies and beloved Super Bowl Champion Eagles, and would often be seen cheering on his children and grandchildren from the sidelines. He played football, basketball, and baseball growing up. Jack was named to the first team Financial League all-star teams in both baseball and basketball. He was also honored to be drafted to play for the Dregger All-Stars Basketball Team, a semi-professional team that played games at Convention Hall prior to the Philadelphia Warriors games.

He was an Army veteran.

Jack spent most of his life enjoying his “happy place,” Cape May Point, New Jersey. It was truly his favorite place on earth and where he met his one true love, Eileen. In his early years, Jack guarded the Point beaches as a lifeguard and, more recently, served as a volunteer firefighter and treasurer to the Cape May Point Volunteer Fire Company No. 1.

Many days Jack would be found working in his prize-winning garden or in one of the flower beds around the Point. Jack was an avid fisherman and boater. He shared his love of the sea and boating with all his family, friends, fellow Pointers, and boaters in Florida. While in Florida, Jack proudly served as Commodore to the Burnt Store Isles Boat Club.

A true family man and friend to many, Jack is survived by his devoted wife of 52 years, Eileen (Fox); his three loving sons, John Jr. (Connie), Steven (Sue), and Patrick (Jennifer); his adoring grandchildren, Eric (Amanda), Ashley, Madison, Matthew, Sean, Jack, and Jude; his great-grandchild, Bryn; his brothers, Albert and Robert; his sister, Laura; many nieces and nephews; and many close and loyal friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, George Jr. and Catharine, and his brother, George III.

Remembering



John C. “Jack” Leming

*Cape May Point Volunteer
Fire Company – New Jersey
Volunteer Firefighter*

April 15, 2019

Age 78



Remembering



Edward J. Sisk III

**Elizabeth Fire Department –
New Jersey
Career Fire Chief
July 26, 2017
Age 60**



*N*í fhacaimid a leithéid arís, we won't see his equal again. Edward Joseph "Eddie" Sisk III took enormous pride in his family, his faith, his Irish heritage, and his service to others. He was a devoted husband to Helena, a dedicated father to Edward Joseph IV and his wife, Megan; Nicholas Dominick and his wife, Amy; and Erin Marie and her husband, Craig. He beams with pride as a heavenly grandfather to Elizabeth May, Patrick Finn, and Nils Edward, with two more on the way.

In 60 short years, Eddie led a full and accomplished life. He met the love of his life at age 15. They dated, married, raised a family, and continued to grow in love through their 37-year marriage. Eddie was a loyal brother, cherished brother-in-law, and proud uncle to 22 nieces and nephews.

Eddie had many passions and dedicated his life to his family, his community service, and the Elizabeth Fire Department (EFD). Eddie joined the Elizabeth Fire Department in 1980 as a 3rd-generation fireman; he ascended the ranks, making captain in 1989, appointed fire director in 1993, battalion chief in 1995, deputy chief in 2002, and chief of the department from 2003 until he retired in 2010.

In 2007, Eddie took immense pride in swearing in his sons, Eddie and Nick, as 4th-generation EFD firefighters, continuing a family honor and tradition. He was instrumental in coordinating the EFD's mutual aid response to New York City following the 9/11 attacks. Ed was a past president of Elizabeth IAFF Fire Officers Local 2040. Ed continued in his dedication to civil service as a contractor and subject matter expert for the New Jersey Civil Service Commission.

Eddie was dedicated to volunteerism in his community. He was a board member at Roselle Catholic High School (Class of 1975), running fundraisers and coaching girls' softball from 2003-2015 for the school. Ed was a dedicated parishioner to St. Genevieve's RC Church and an active member of the Knights of Columbus Council #253 and the 200 Club of Union County. Eddie volunteered with youth sports with St. Adalbert's, St. John the Apostle, North Elizabeth Little League, and Elmora Youth League.

Eddie found great joy in combining his Irish heritage with his desire to give back. He is a past president of The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick of Union County, a major organizer for the Roselle Catholic St. Patrick's Day Dance, and was named Union County St. Patrick's Day Parade's Distinguished Serviceman of the Year.

Eddie's family loved him more than they can articulate and miss him that much more. As a family, they move forward with compassion, patience, and understanding, just as Eddie would.

Remembering

*F*ire Apparatus Operator Jeff Stroble, 46, passed away on Sunday, July 21, 2019, at University Medical Center in Lubbock, Texas, from injuries sustained in a fireworks explosion.

On July 31, 1972, Jeff was born to Charles and Annie Stroble in Roswell, New Mexico. He graduated from Goddard High School.

On August 16, 2004, Jeff married his soulmate and partner for life, Reba. Together, they had three beautiful children, whom he adored. Jeff loved spending time with friends and family, and he always cooked to feed them, barbecuing and grilling his amazing steaks, ribs, and chicken.

Jeff was with the Roswell Fire Department for seventeen years, where he served as a fire apparatus operator. He was an honorable and strong man who strived for the best in every aspect of his life. Jeff was proud to serve his community as a fireman. He is remembered as a brave hero who never gave up.

Jeff loved the outdoors, traveling, camping, fishing, golf, bowling, and heavy metal music. He was a die-hard Cowboys fan. Jeff's favorite holiday was Independence Day (4th of July) and all the celebrations.

Jeff is survived by his loving wife, Reba Stroble; children: Kyle (Rebecca), Tyler, and Kadence; grandchildren, Jackson and Ava; parents, Charles and Annie Stroble; siblings, Anthony Stroble, Sarah (Warren) Aldrich, and Charity Lassiter; aunts and uncles, Mary Rogers, Maudie (Lenard) Mahan, Donald (Joan) Tyler, Nelda (Luis) Mendoza, Aubrey (Martha) Tyler, Gail Turner, and Scott (Diane) Stroble; nieces and nephews, Noah (Ashlyn) Stroble, Jonah Stroble, Noah Whitley, Kinzie Aldrich, and McKenna Aldrich; mother-in-law and father-in-law, Warren and Reba Aldrich; close friends, Ruben Becerra, Shawn Kennedy, Elvio Palma, and his Roswell Fire Department brothers and families; beloved dogs: Sir Chugs, Miley, Gabby; and many cousins and friends and extended family by marriage, who loved him dearly.

Jeff was preceded in death by his grandparents, Thurman and Goldie Tyler and Charles and Muriel Stroble; aunts and uncles, Jerry Stroble, Iona Ketchell, Earl Tyler, Harell Tyler, Tom Tyler, Lou Etta Hignight, and Callie Herring; special cousin, Sandy Kethcell; and many cousins and family members from marriage.

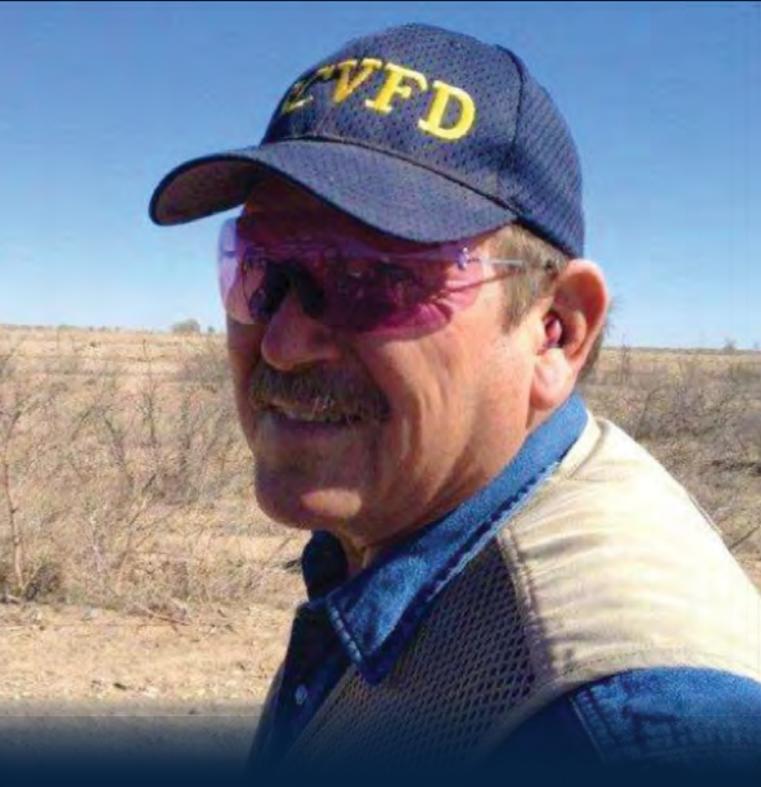
He was greatly loved and will be intensely missed, not only by his family and friends, but by all those blessed to have known him.



Jeffrey Stroble
*City of Roswell Fire Department –
New Mexico
Career Driver/Operator
July 21, 2019
Age 46*



Remembering



William C. White II

*Sun Country Volunteer
Fire Department – New Mexico
Volunteer Chief
July 2, 2019
Age 70*



*W*illiam Clinton “Casey” White II of Artesia, New Mexico, died July 2, 2019, at his beloved Sun Country Volunteer Fire Department in Artesia.

He graduated from Allen Military Academy in Bryan, Texas, and Texas Christian University. Following his service with the National Guard, he was employed for 33 years with Halliburton overseas in Norway, Scotland, Egypt, and Algeria. After retiring from Halliburton, he began his second career in firefighting, serving as a volunteer firefighter with the Sun Country Volunteer Fire Department and founding Pecos Valley Wildfire. He served his community with the fire department for over 25 years, ultimately leading the department as chief.

When he wasn’t at the fire department, you could find him at the Eddy County Shooting Range or shooting in tournaments around the country.

He was preceded in death by his parents, William Clinton White and Bettye Jo Brainard White.

He is survived by a daughter, Emily Ayliffe White Keatley; son-in-law, Edward Benton Keatley; and two grandsons, Arthur Theodore Keatley and Louis Benton Keatley, all of Kansas City, Missouri.

He was a loving father and grandfather and a dedicated servant of his community. He will be sorely missed by his family and friends.



Remembering

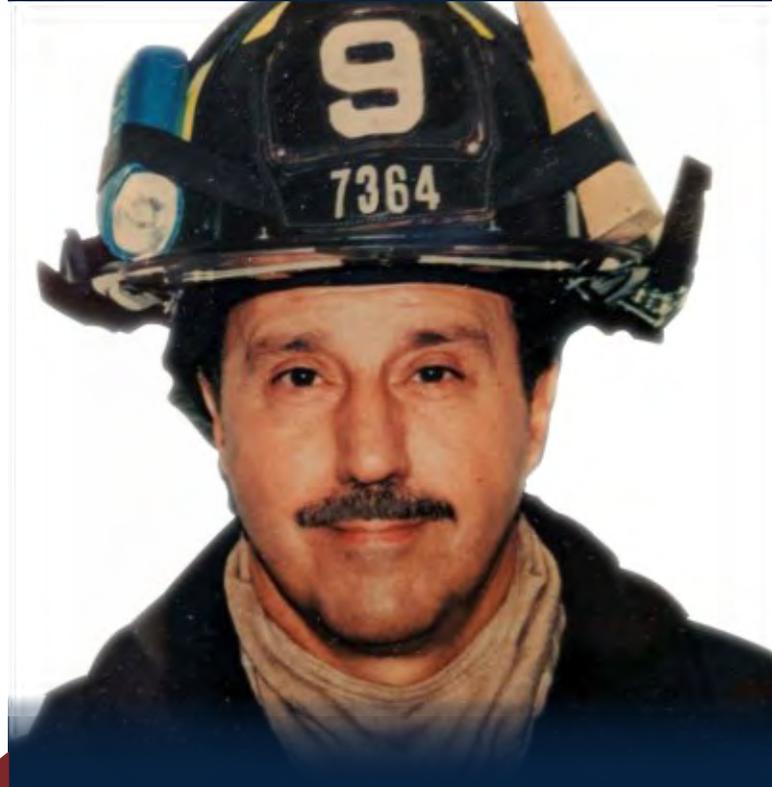
*A*nthony Alese died on June 7, 2009, from illness related to his response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center.

On September 11, 2001, Anthony responded from Engine 9 on Canal Street in Manhattan to the World Trade Center. When the Twin Towers collapsed, he was trapped in falling debris while running from the building and had to be dug out by others at the scene. He developed cancer related to his exposure during that incident.

So many firefighters attended his funeral to pay their respects. He was buried at St. John's Cemetery in Middle Village, Queens.

Anthony was survived by his nephew, Joseph Guiliano (wife Carolyn), and his great-nephew, Joseph Guiliano Jr.

Anthony was a great guy who helped everybody and was there for his family.



Anthony Alese

*Fire Department City of New York –
New York*

Career Firefighter

June 7, 2009

Age 62



Remembering



Jack Boyle passed away on August 24, 2019, at age 77, from severe lung damage from his time spent as a first responder at Ground Zero. He was the beloved husband of Dawn E. Boyle, loving father of Patrick and Caitlin Boyle.

Jack started his 30-year career with the Fire Department of New York as a member of Ladder 102/Engine 209 in Brooklyn. In 1978, he received the Holy Name Medal from the mayor's office for saving children from a fire. In 1979, he joined Rescue 1 in Manhattan, where he served until his retirement in 2002. He was recognized by the FDNY Holy Name Society as 2002 "Man of the Year" at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City.

Jack was a United States Army Paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne during the Vietnam War. He was a New York City Transit Police Officer and a charter member of the Transit Police Bagpipe Band.

Jack is missed every day!

Jack Boyle

Fire Department City of New York –

New York

Career Firefighter

August 24, 2019

Age 77



James P. "Jim" Brooks Jr. could always be found with a smile on his face, telling a funny story, making sarcastic jokes, and spreading laughter wherever he went. It is no wonder his Whitehall Volunteer Fire Company brothers and sisters wanted him around during both the good and the most difficult times. He had a way of making situations better most of the time. He was just as stubborn as he was funny, though, so when things needed to get done, they were done the way he thought they should be, which was usually right.

Like most young boys, Jim dreamed of being a fireman, but his true excitement for the fire department began when he joined the Fire Explorers at age 14. Excitement quickly became a passion of service when he officially joined the Whitehall Volunteer Fire Company. Throughout his 27 years of volunteer service, Jim made his way through the ranks and served his final call as the 2nd assistant chief. He was made a lifetime member of the department just prior to his accident in early 2020. He was a Class A Interior Firefighter who was always the "go-to guy" when the department or community needed him.

Jim's true loves were his rescue dogs, Jake (2009) and Chance. They quickly became as well known in the community as Jim was. Jake, his escape artist, was often delivered back home by a village police officer. Jake would sit upright in the backseat, so proud of himself and happy to see his "daddy." Jim's love for animals, especially those in need of rescue, led many others to adopt.

Jim was often surrounded by friends, kayaking, golfing, playing poker, or enjoying a social event. The crew of friends was never complete without his lifelong friend, Jeffrey Rice. If not with friends, Jim loved spending time with his parents, his older sister, Kathleen, and her son, Trevor. Jim and his mother, Maura Lafayette, were as close as a mother and son could be. Jim called her every morning with the greeting, "Just checking in." That is something she holds dear and misses every day. He and his father, James Sr., took long drives, often bringing their fishing poles along in case they found a good spot. His sister, Kathleen, misses their almost daily conversations. They shared the same sense of humor, and the laughs were always abundant, often causing their mother to roll her eyes as she laughed along. Jim's younger sister, Johnna, and her children, Brenna, Logan, and Autumn, share in missing him deeply.

The loss of Jim has left his family, friends, and community with a missing piece that can never be replaced. His family is beyond proud of the man he became. He was loved and respected by so many.

Remembering



James P. Brooks Jr.

*Whitehall Volunteer Fire Company –
New York*

Volunteer Second Assistant Fire Chief

September 18, 2020

Age 45



Remembering



Robert Hayden Bush

Homer Fire Department – New York

Volunteer Firefighter

October 19, 2019

Age 49



*R*obert H. Bush was a shy, private man, but his son, Nicolaas, was his biggest inspiration and motivation.

Rob, 49, was three months into working for the Homer Fire Department. Firefighter Bush became ill at a training session on a Saturday morning, October 19, 2019. Medical assistance was immediately initiated by members of the department, and he was transported to the local hospital, Guthrie Cortland Medical Center, where he was pronounced dead.

Rob is originally from Truxton, where he grew up until his family moved to Homer in his late teenage years. Rob volunteered, cooking for many chicken barbecues and church steak suppers. After 21 years of service, he became a board member for the Cortland County Junior Fair in 2017. He was a great help to his father, who has been fair manager since the early 1980s.

Rob's inspiration to join the department came from his son, who was a member of the Warner Fire Department in Onondaga County and was thinking about joining the Homer Fire Department. We believe that was his way of encouraging Nicolaas to stay the course and follow through, and in the process of doing that he really wanted to provide a service to the community. He loved helping people, especially the elderly. He also had a huge spot in his heart for his great niece, Josefene.

Homer Fire Chief Mahlon Irish said, although Rob was shy, he made it a point to come into the station as much as he could and talk to the firefighters. He was eager to learn, and he was doing whatever he could to better himself. Being a firefighter was something he wanted to do.

The father and son were so close, they even graduated from Tompkins Cortland Community College together in 2019, Rob with a degree in business, while his son, Nicolaas, got a degree in computer support. "That was one of his proudest moments," his mom said. "It's something that all of his family was proud of him for doing."

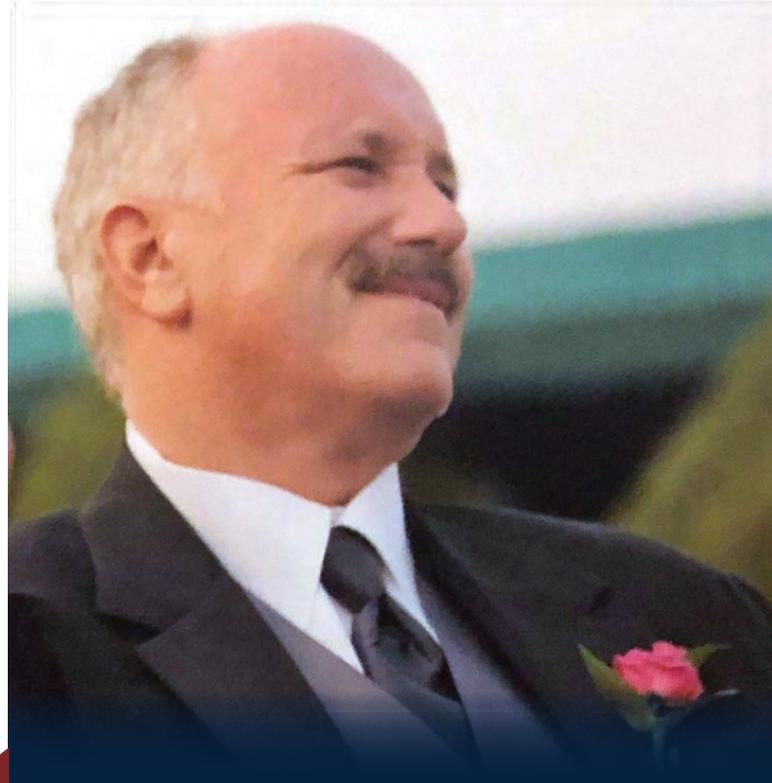
Robert Bush is survived by his son, Nicolaas, of Homer; parents, Martha and Dick Bush, of Homer; brother, Jeff, and wife, Luci Bush; his ex-wife, Kara Ptak; and several nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his brothers, Brian and Timothy Bush.

Remembering

*M*ichael A. Cardinale Sr., a veteran firefighter, collapsed at the fire station on December 18, 2019, after responding to a motor vehicle accident. He was a proud member of East Farmingdale Volunteer Fire Company, Inc., on Long Island for 25 years and was an active part of the technical rescue team.

He was the loving husband of Claire, devoted father of Michael (Anabel) and Matthew, cherished grandfather of Michael, Andrew, and Kelsea, and dear brother of Thomas (Barbara).

“Big Mike” always had a smile on his face, and he served his community with pride up until the day of his untimely passing. On the final day of his life, he answered several calls for help. He will never be forgotten. He will always be a lifetime member of the East Farmingdale Fire Company.



Michael A. Cardinale Sr.

*East Farmingdale Volunteer
Fire Company, Inc. – New York
Volunteer Firefighter*

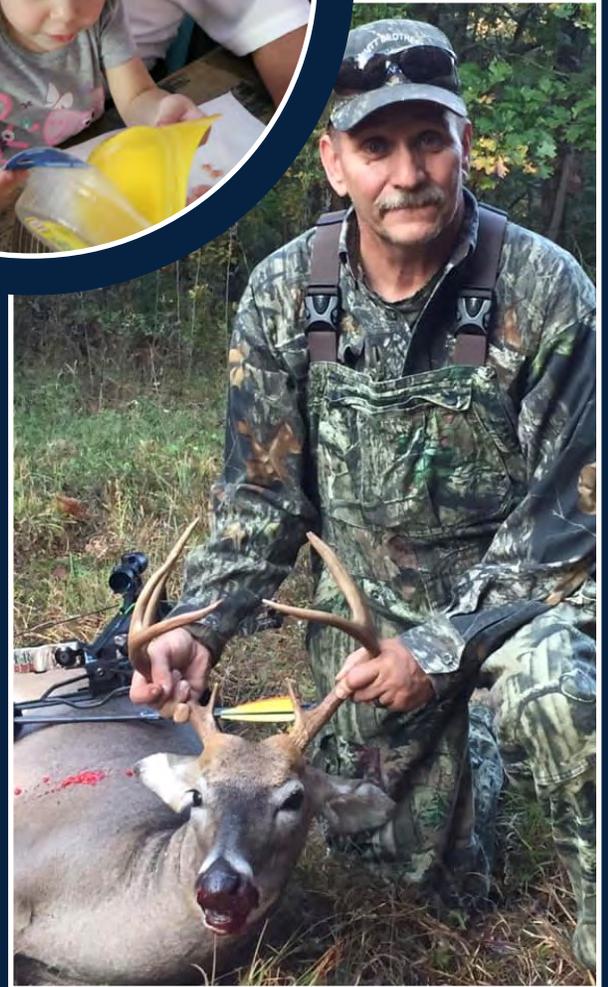
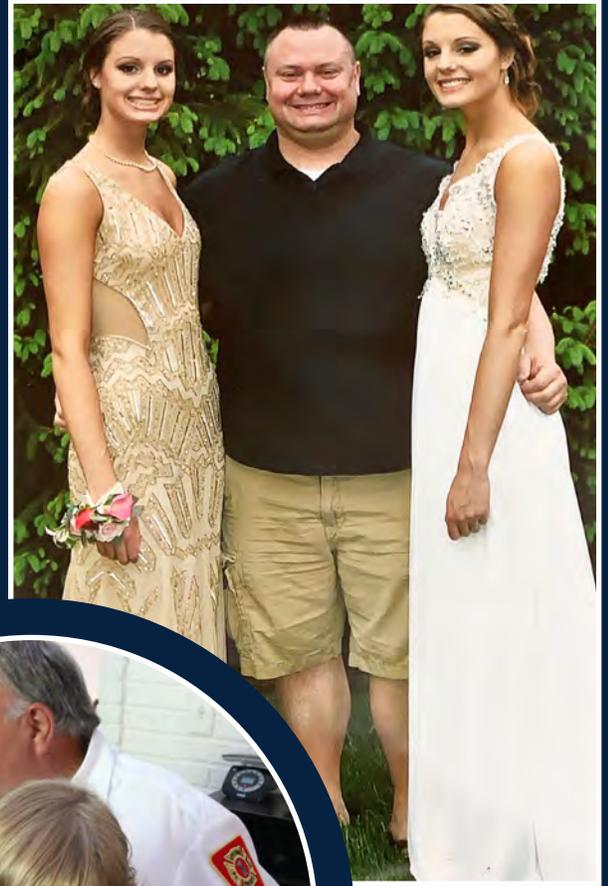
December 18, 2019

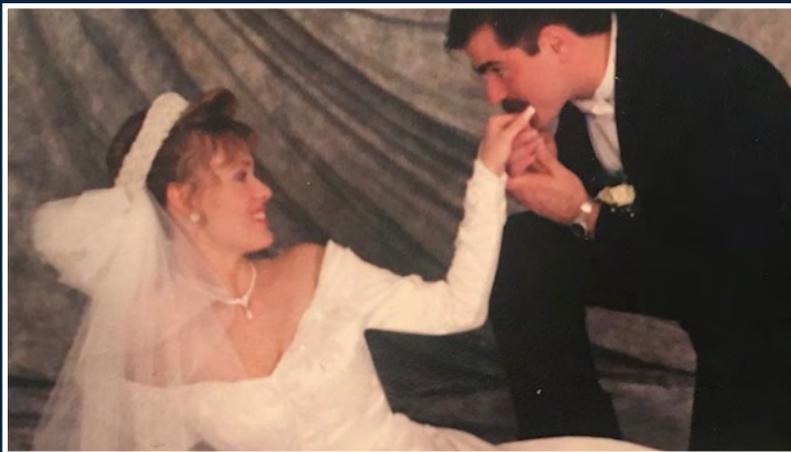
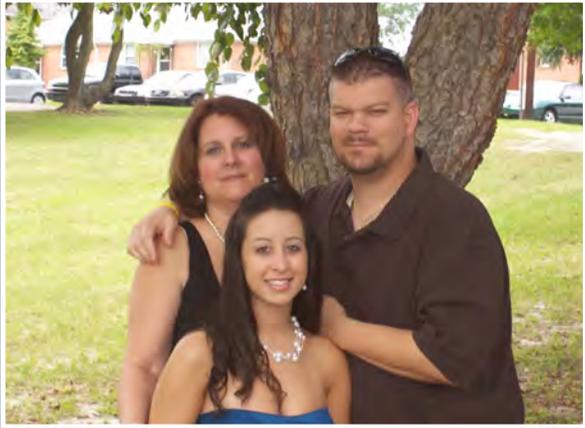
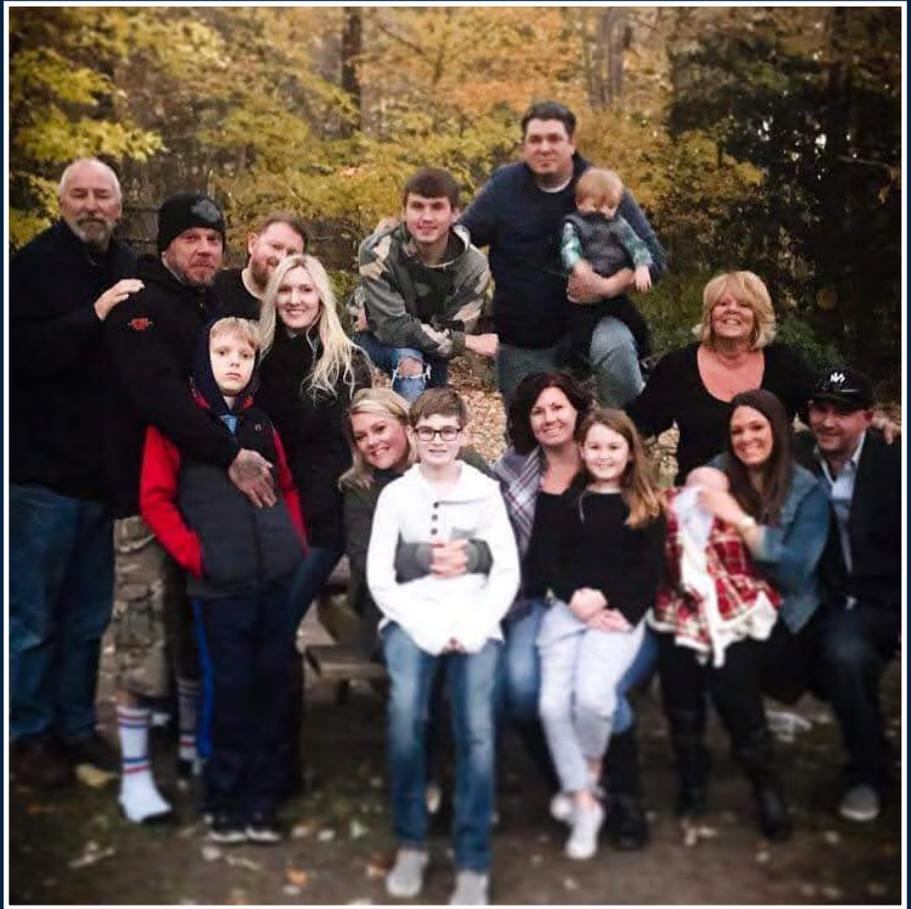
Age 63



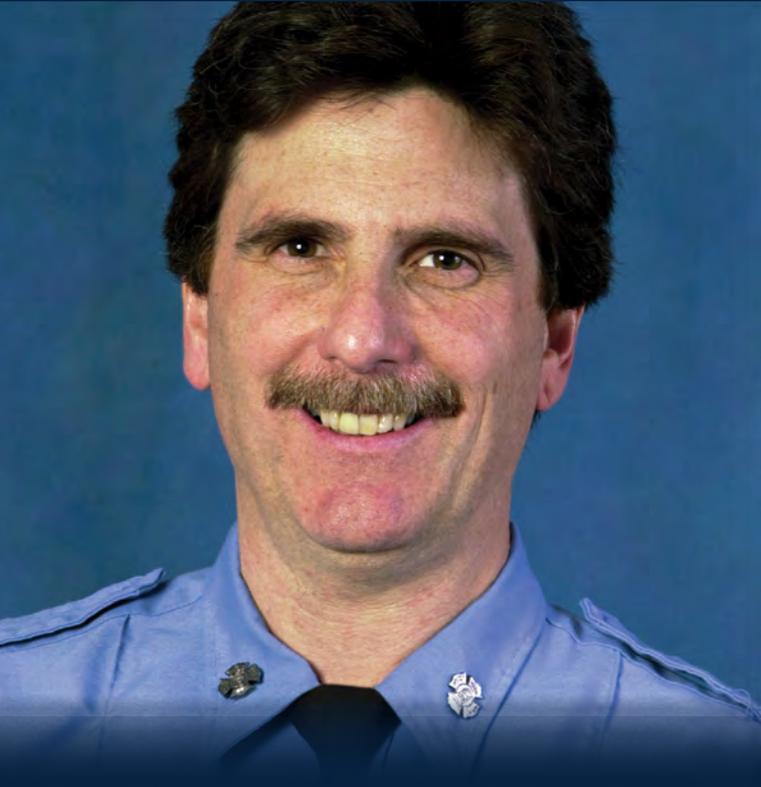








Remembering



Brian W. Casse

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
December 4, 2019
Age 63*



*R*etired FDNY Firefighter Brian W. Casse died of World Trade Center illness on December 4, 2019. A 24-year veteran, he retired out of Engine 294 in Jamaica and had also served with Engine 252.

He was the devoted husband of Susan J. (née Philbin), loving father to Genevieve and Julia, beloved brother to Steve (Cathy) and Bernadette Adams (Tom). He is also survived by many loving nieces and nephews.

Brian played in the FDNY firehouse to firehouse tournaments and was an avid golf player.



Remembering

*R*ob was a devoted husband and father who enjoyed being a family man. But the FDNY defined him and was truly his first love. After graduating from Brooklyn College in New York, he worked in banking and accounting but was not fulfilled until he took the FDNY exam and was appointed to the department in September 1981.

He loved the communities he served and relished the camaraderie of his fellow firefighters. His career on the FDNY began as a firefighter in Ladder 1 (Manhattan) and, after promotions, he became a lieutenant in Engine 225 (Queens), and finally, served as the captain in Engine 304 (Queens).

In 2010, Rob was placed on indefinite medical leave and forced to retire when his lungs were no longer strong enough to continue the demands of the job. Shortly thereafter, he settled in his beloved Longboat Key, Florida home, where he passed away peacefully on May 11, 2019.

Rob always found time to help others in his community and frequently volunteered to serve on or assist committees with various projects. He was the liaison between the community and the Longboat Key Fire Department when new hydrants needed to be installed. He was able to research and contribute valuable information assisting in this task. They relied on his background and knowledge of his almost 30 years with the FDNY.

Rob was recognized on numerous occasions by the FDNY for his service and bravery. He was most proud of being the recipient of The Emerald Society Medal during its Annual Medal Day Awards Ceremony in 2008, for his heroism and actions described as “selfless and without regard for personal safety.”

While Rob was devoted to his career with the FDNY, family time was always a priority. He loved to travel and, along with his wife, Nora, and his two children, Alli and Robby, there were always vacations to varied destinations, along with weekend adventures together. These family trips have become cherished memories of happy times together. Rob loved seeing the world and believed you should always have something to look forward to.

Rob had a wonderful sense of humor, was quick-witted, and helped to find levity in all situations. To all of his loved ones and friends he left behind, his legacy is laughter and a smile.



Robert E. Collis

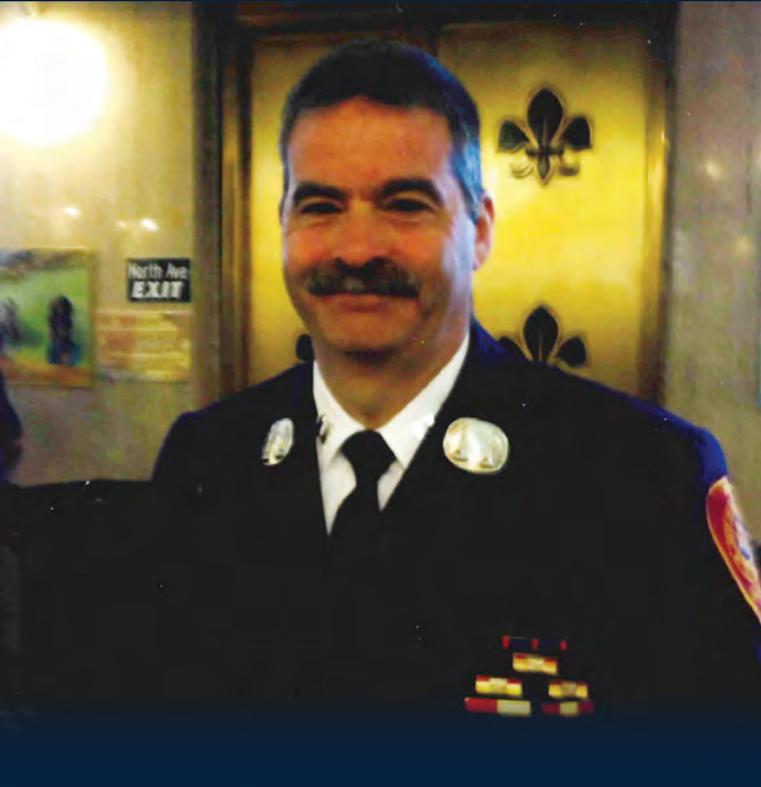
*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Captain*

May 11, 2019

Age 67



Remembering



Andrew J. DiMaggio

New Rochelle Fire Department –

New York

Career Captain

May 3, 2020

Age 57



*A*ndy was a true family man. He was the most caring husband to Eileen for almost 36 years and devoted father to his children, Jimmy (Madison), Christopher (Adriana), Michael, and Andrew, who predeceased him in 2017. There wasn't anything he wouldn't do for his family. They meant the world to him.

Andy would lend a hand to everyone around him. No matter the situation, he was only happy to help with a smile. He learned how to work with his hands at an early age through his roofing and siding business. He was skilled in many ways and had a tremendous work ethic. He used his extensive knowledge to help others. Whether it was fixing a car, solving a computer problem, helping neighbors, building a deck, helping with construction, or moving family, he was always there to lend a hand. He gave 100% to whatever situation he was facing. He was a jack-of-all-trades.

Andy joined the New Rochelle Fire Department in April 1989 and spent 31 years mastering his skills as a firefighter. He was always studying, learning, and achieving so that he could perform his job to the best of his ability. He was promoted to the rank of lieutenant in 2005 and rose to the rank of captain in 2012. His first assignment was to the training division as the training officer for the department.

As a training officer, his knowledge was invaluable. He found his calling and was a natural teacher. He was well known and admired throughout the county and state for his knowledge, skills, and teaching ability. He was certified as both a county and state fire instructor and held numerous instructor authorizations for a wide variety of topics. He trained hundreds of new recruits from all over the county at the Westchester County Career Chiefs Fire Academy. His most recent assignment was as the captain of Fire Station #1 in New Rochelle.

Andy truly made the world a better place. He had a heart of gold and a gift for helping others. He will be remembered by his warm smile and strong handshake. Andy left a huge hole in the hearts of his family, friends, and brothers.

Clifford R. DiMuro, 60, of West Babylon, New York, went home to be with the Lord on November 22, 2019, after a hard-fought battle with World Trade Center illness. DiMuro retired out of Ladder Company 137 in 2012, after almost 30 years of service.

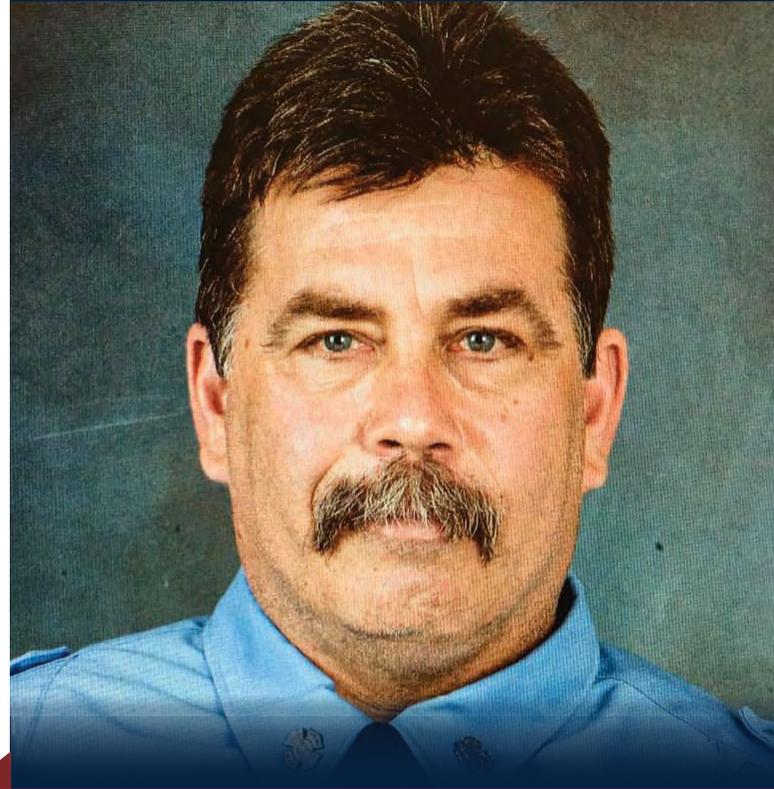
He was a loving husband to his wife, Donna, for 35 years and adored his two daughters, Hollie and Paige.

Clifford loved helping people, and it showed in many ways every time he went to work as a New York City (NYC) firefighter.

He spent his spare time reading and hanging out at the beach. He loved fishing, and even though he will be greatly missed, his friends and family hope he is catching the big one up in heaven. He also enjoyed spending time with his furry babies, RC, Milo, Bull, Sundance, Babbles, and Cat.

Clifford was a devoted family man and loyal friend to many.

Remembering



Clifford R. DiMuro

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
November 22, 2019
Age 60*



Remembering



John R. Elges

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
September 15, 2018
Age 60*



John was a born leader and was a highly respected firefighter. He received dozens of awards, including three for bravery, in his 24-year career in The Big House. He shared life lessons and wisdom and looked out for the younger members, never hesitating to take someone under his wing. He brought knowledge and experience to the volunteer Long Beach Fire Department, where he served as captain of Ladder 72 for 15 years. His brothers at FDNY referred to John as a fireman's fireman. Anyone lucky enough to know him loved him.

On September 12, 2001, John and the members of his firehouse bravely made their way to the pile to assist in recovery efforts after the 9/11 attacks. Even after John was diagnosed with cancer related to his service there, he said he wouldn't hesitate to do it again.

In 2015, John was diagnosed with tonsil cancer. He was determined to beat it, and his fight was nothing short of amazing. Despite his strength and courage, the cancer spread to his lungs. On September 11, 2018, the doctor told John the cancer had spread to his brain. Two days later, John had a seizure that put him on life support. Surrounded by his family and loved ones, we said goodbye to our beloved John.

John was the heart, soul, and strength of his family. Their loss was immeasurable. Nuala lost her best friend and the love of her life. Jessica, John, Tommy, and Kristyn lost their rock, their father, their friend. His grandchildren, Sean, Liam, Ashlynn, and Braden will forever keep the memories of Grandpa in their hearts. The younger grandchildren, Johnny, James, and Lily, never got to experience John's kindness, humor, and love. The kids and the grandkids were his life.

In 2009, John and Nuala retired to Lake Gaston, North Carolina. John loved his life at the lake, especially when the family came down. One of John's pleasures was cooking and entertaining. He even had a grill on the pontoon. He enjoyed lazy days cruising around on the boat, meeting up with friends on the lake, and quiet days at home working in their three-acre yard. He did everything he could to stop the deer from eating Nuala's flowers. John loved sitting on the deck with a cup of coffee. He found humor and meaning in everything he did. He was a talented carpenter, loved working in his garage, and wanted to travel the United States in his RV. One of his greatest honors was escorting pieces of the Twin Towers to numerous states, proudly riding his Harley with the Fire Riders, the FDNY motorcycle club.

John lived a full and happy life. His family was his greatest joy. He was a hero to his country and to his family as well.

Remembering

*R*etired FDNY Firefighter Roger Espinal of Engine Company 320 died of World Trade Center-related illness on Saturday, September 14, 2019, at age 42. In August 2018, he was diagnosed with glioblastoma, a brain tumor linked to his work at Ground Zero.

Roger and Miriam met at a grocery store in 2008 and married in 2013. Together they had a young son, Noah. The family lived in Glen Cove, New York, where a street has been named in Roger's honor.

Not one to sit still, Roger was always busy with some sort of project or playing with Noah. Even during his illness, while he was undergoing radiation, he ran a 5K to raise money for brain cancer patients.

He was the beloved husband of Miriam, loving father of Noah, dear son of Marie and the late Rogelio, and a devoted brother to Tanya, Amy and Marc.



Roger Espinal

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
September 14, 2019
Age 42*



Remembering



Richard G. Estreicher

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Lieutenant
November 11, 2019
Age 59*



*R*ichard—“Rich” to all his friends—lived his life by his creed, Semper Fidelis. He was the first person to offer help and volunteer and put the needs of others before his own. He was a loving husband to MaryAnn and a devoted father to Callie and Victoria.

He graduated from Wagner High School in June 1977 and served in the United States Marine Corps from January 1978 to January 1981. He completed boot camp at Camp Lejeune and was awarded Meritorious Unit Citation, Marksmanship Sharpshooter Badge, and Rifleman. He served in the Philippines, Guam, Camp Pendleton, and the South Pacific as a lance corporal and was honorably discharged. He was proud to serve his country and was a patriot. He was a lifetime member of the Marine Corps League #246 Staten Island.

He entered New York City civil service as a Department of Corrections officer, serving from April 1982 to April 1983. After working in corrections, Lieutenant Estreicher moved directly to the New York City Fire Department.

His lifetime dream was becoming a member of the FDNY, where he joined on June 1, 1983, and was assigned to Ladder 156 in Brooklyn, known as the “Highway.” In October 1989, he became a member of Rescue 5, an elite unit of the FDNY. Rescue 5 is a highly specialized unit whose firefighters received rigorous training. While there, he was cited for bravery four times. He was promoted to lieutenant in February 1997, serving in the 32nd Battalion, and then assigned to 41st Battalion, where he was the lieutenant at Engine 248, “The Heart of Flatbush.”

On September 11, 2001, Rich worked an overnight shift at Engine 250. He stuck around to have breakfast, when he saw a plane crash into the WTC on the news. Rich immediately got back in work mode. He gathered other firefighters that were off duty and took the spare rig into Manhattan. As he crossed the Brooklyn Bridge, he saw the second tower collapse. He reported to the FDNY post on Vesey and was ordered to lead a group of firefighters to search Building 5. While that building was burning, he heard someone yell at them to evacuate. He and his team quickly evacuated, and the building collapsed around them. Lieutenant Estreicher worked at the WTC until 2:00 am, when he came home to his family. He was assigned to the WTC 1st Task Force from October 2001 to April 2002.

Rich was a loving, kind man who will always be in our hearts and remembered for his bravery and sacrifice on September 11, 2001. Rich succumbed to his illness from the WTC on November 11, 2019, Veterans Day, two days before his 60th birthday. He is missed every second of every day.

Remembering

*H*ero is defined as "a person of distinguished courage or ability, admired for his or her brave deeds and noble qualities." While this definition encompasses the actions of the bravest and best of our world, it will never be enough to define the giant of a man my family lost.

Michael L. Feldman was born in 1957 to Carole and Jerry Feldman. Michael knew from an early age that he wanted to be a member of FDNY. Growing up, Michael loved driving fast cars and living life faster. He loved boating and fishing and was the life of any room he walked into. Michael always looked out for his friends and family. He was a loyal and fierce friend, the one you always wanted in your corner.

Michael was a volunteer firefighter for the Long Beach Fire Department for many years, and he was extremely talented in many other areas. His talents with computers led him to a successful career with the Department of Defense. He felt a deep pride and passion for serving his country, a country he felt gave him so much. While he would have been set for the rest of his life with such a fulfilling career, in 1989 he decided to chase his dream.

He started his career as a firefighter in Coney Island, New York, and so began a distinguished 16-year career. Michael took such pride in his work; he knew it was his calling and truly loved the job. He received multiple awards and acknowledgements for his outstanding performance over the years. Saving lives and supporting his fellow firefighters was so natural to Michael. It was that passion that made the events of September 11, 2001, even more painful for him. Like many other brave men and women, Mike spent countless hours, days, and weeks working at Ground Zero. We all knew it was painful for him emotionally, but it took a physical toll that we would never fully understand until years later in 2019, when he was diagnosed with 9/11 cancer.

It is so hard to put into words what he meant to his friends and his family, the void he has left in all our lives. Everyone who knew him knew beyond any doubt that you could depend on Mike to stand up and do whatever needed to be done. Among all his qualities, his spirit, sense of humor, energy, and approach to life is what will be instilled in the hearts of those who knew him and worked with him.

He left this world as a husband to Donna, father to Marisa and Danielle, grandfather to Lily and Nicholas, stepfather, and valued friend. We love him, we miss him, and we could not be prouder of this amazing man. Love you very muchly.



Michael L. Feldman

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
February 1, 2020
Age 62*



Remembering



Michael J. Field

*Valley Stream Volunteer
Fire Department – New York
Volunteer Firefighter/EMT*

April 8, 2020

Age 59



*M*ichael Field died on April 8, 2020, due to complications from COVID-19, after transporting a COVID-positive patient.

A 33-year member of the department, he joined in 1987 and had served as lieutenant, captain, and a warden on the department fire council. He also served for many years as the department's advisor to the Valley Stream Junior Fire Department.

He worked as an EMT with the Fire Department of New York for 15 years and was a first responder to the World Trade Center on 9/11. After his retirement from the FDNY, he worked for Incorporated Village of Valley Stream.

In addition to his fire service, he was a Cub Scout leader and Little League coach and helped organize the Nassau County Fire Riders' Christmas in June toy drive. He and his wife fostered cats awaiting adoption through a local agency.

The Firefighter-EMT Michael J. Field Memorial Bridge, over the Southern State Parkway on Long Island, was dedicated in his honor.

His sons have followed their father into service as first responders.

He was remembered as kind, dedicated, funny, and well loved by all.



Remembering

Donald Franz died on March 23, 2020, from emphysema related to his response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. A second-generation FDNY firefighter, he was stationed in Manhattan and loved his job and going to work every day. He was not the same after 9/11.

Donald was a quiet and caring person. Even when he was ill, he worried about his family before himself.

He is survived by his wife, Debra Franz, and his three daughters, Aimie, Francy, and Lisa Collazo.



Donald R. Franz

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Lieutenant*

March 23, 2020

Age 68



Remembering



Robert M. Gless

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
October 25, 2016
Age 67*



*F*irefighter Robert M. Gless died on October 25, 2016, from illness related to his response to the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. He served with the FDNY for 24 years, at Engine 224 and Engine 329.

He is survived by his wife, Martha. Together they enjoyed camping in the early years of their life together. Robert loved riding motorcycles. He also served his community in the Valley Stream Fire Department.

Robert is survived by his brother Frederick, a New York City firefighter, and his sister Mary Storch.



*D*ennis G. Heaney was born on August 9, 1949, in Brooklyn, New York. He was the middle child of seven. As a child and into his teens, he loved to play softball.

Dennis enlisted in the United States Marine Corps at age seventeen. He did his basic training at Parris Island, South Carolina, and then further training at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina. By age eighteen, he was serving twelve months of combat as a radio operator in Vietnam.

After returning from Vietnam, Dennis worked for a brief time in a lumberyard and as an iron worker before joining the New York City Fire Department. He was a proud member of FDNY for 25 years. He was stationed at Ladder Company 157 in Brooklyn. Dennis was a favorite chauffeur to many officers, and the other firemen in his house referred to him as "The King." He was a first responder on September 11th and lost many colleagues and friends on that historic day and in the years that followed from event-related illnesses.

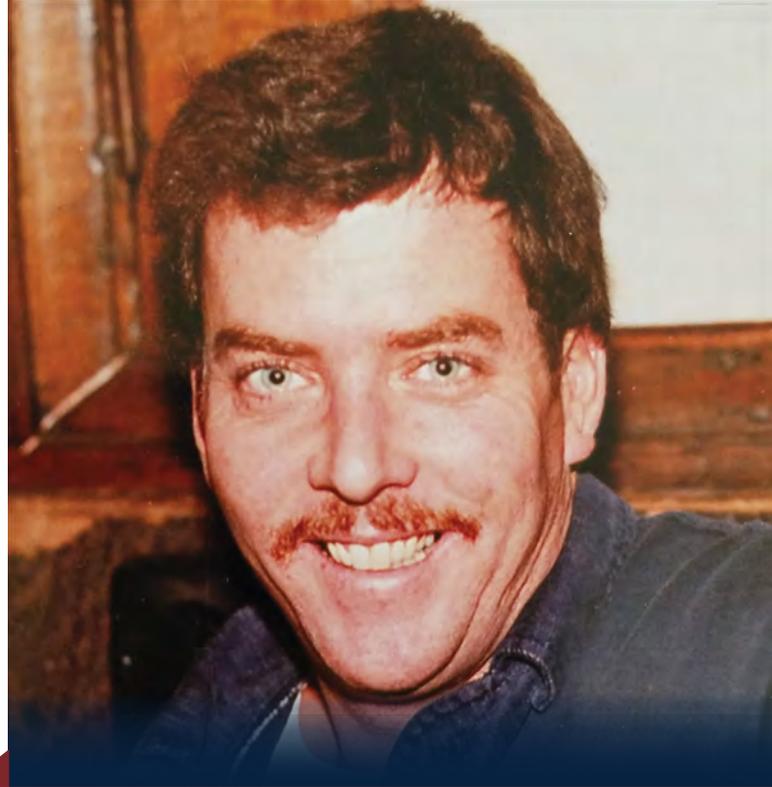
Dennis is survived by his beloved wife, Jean. Dennis and Jean had their wedding reception on a boat on beautiful Lake George, New York. Thirty years later the guests still talk about what a wonderful time they had at the wedding. Dennis enjoyed cooking and was the cook in the family. He prepared every Thanksgiving dinner for 35 years for all his in-laws.

Dennis had many nieces and nephews that adored him. He was the favorite family member that kept everyone laughing. He loved movies and could quote most lines from his favorite films. A few of his nieces and nephews called him Dr. Evil. He loved his family so much and really enjoyed entertaining them. He is greatly missed.

One thing that has to be mentioned is Dennis's love for his dog, Cookie. Cookie was adopted/rescued and came with a lot of health and behavior issues. After a few years, you would never know how damaged Cookie had been since Dennis spent so much time loving her. You would think Cookie was the greatest dog ever!

Dennis served his country and his city with quiet grace and dignity, without regard for his personal safety or comfort. He will never be forgotten and remains a source of pride for his wife, his brothers and sisters, his in-laws, and many nieces and nephews. He will always be Our Hero.

Remembering



Dennis G. Heaney

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
September 10, 2018
Age 69*



Remembering



Dale E. Jaynes

*Burdett Fire Department – New York
Volunteer Firefighter*

October 1, 2019

Age 72



Dale Jaynes was born, lived, and served in Schuyler County, New York all his life, except while attending The State University of New York Morrisville and the United States Navy (1967-1971), where he served in the Brown Water Navy in Vietnam. His temporary assignments in Vietnam were with Mobile Support Unit 2, deploying the various Special Operations Units, SEAL Teams, Special Forces, and Force Re-Con, which was most memorable to him. Because of this assignment, Dale received many awards and medals. He became a member of the Odessa American Legion Post 676 after his honorable discharge from active duty.

In April 1971, he joined the Burdett Fire Department, serving for 48 years and holding the offices of secretary, treasurer, lieutenant, captain, assistant chief, chief deputy, and chief. Dale was a member of Schuyler County Volunteer Ambulance and served as a paramedic for 22 years. In September 2000, he was appointed by resolution of the Schuyler County Legislature to the position of deputy fire coordinator, a position he held until his death.

In August 1973, Dale was appointed as a charter member of the Schuyler County Fire Investigation Unit by Emergency Management. Dale was still a member, holding the position of Chief Investigator, Pro-Board-Certified, Level Two, the highest level in New York.

In 1984, Dale joined the Boy Scouts of America to be in Scouting with his sons. As his sons advanced through the ranks, so did Dale, achieving the positions of assistant scoutmaster, assistant district commissioner, chapter advisor for Order of the Arrow, and finally the rank of Vigil Honor. In 1996, he was presented with a Bachelor of Commissioner Science, in 1997 achieved his degree as Master of Commissioner Science, and finally in 1998 received his Doctorate of Commissioner Science from the New York-Pennsylvania College of Commissioner Science. His crowning award was the joy he got while advising the young men as ceremony advisor in the Order of the Arrow TKaen DoD Lodge #30 BSA.

In 1998, Dale was appointed Hector Town Justice and graduated from Basic Judicial School at SUNY Canton. He continued to go to Judicial Schooling every year and served as Justice of Hector until his death. He was president of Union Cemetery of Hector in Burdett for over 10 years. Dale was a member of the Reynoldsville United Methodist Church, where he served for many years as church council chairman, as well as trustee chairman.

Among the titles that Dale has held, being called Papa or Grandpa was his most treasured.

Joe had a heart of gold and was always willing to help anyone who was in trouble, no matter who it was. He could be loud and funny or sometimes escape to a corner. At his firehouse, he was known as Joe-Lo. He was a prankster and a Yankees fan. He loved a good joke, and his sunny disposition drew others to him. But he was a complicated man who had lived through tough times.

Joe was drafted into the Army to serve in Vietnam during the worst years of the war. He served in the Tay Ninh Province and Chu Lai from 1966 to 1967 as a fire direction specialist for the 82nd Artillery, 196th Light Infantry Brigade. He received a Letter of Commendation for heroism defending his platoon from the Viet Cong when they were pinned down in an ambush. He received a Bronze Star with a "V" Device, a Purple Heart, and several other medals. But Joe never bragged about his Vietnam experiences. These medals and commendations were discovered after his death. In fact, his time in Vietnam was something that he rarely spoke of.

After his return from Vietnam, Joe started work in the FDNY. His firehouses were in some of the poorest and most densely populated areas of Brooklyn and Queens. He married, had two sons, and would often let one or the other accompany him on a night tour to the firehouse. He was a good cook at the firehouse, and his eventual weight gain testified to his love for the firehouse kitchen table. Like many firefighters, Joe worked different "side jobs."

Joe was a devoted and generous father to his children. A second marriage produced a daughter. He was a hands-on dad, taking her to Daddy & Me, dance class, Girl Scouts, etc. There was nothing that he wouldn't do for his children. During our marriage, after he retired, we visited Alaska, Mexico, and Hawaii. His big dream was to go to Italy, and on August 8, 2008, we renewed our vows cruising around Italy. At that time, Joe's health was not too problematic for travel. The impact of his work doing rescue and recovery at the 9/11 World Trade Center site eventually curtailed all further travel.

Joe was an avid reader, and we enjoyed doing crossword puzzles together. When the weather was good, Joe and I would sit in our yard and enjoy nature and the many improvements we had made. He was a wonderful husband who never forgot a birthday or an anniversary. He could always make me laugh, even when I got mad at him. I have many beautiful memories of our marriage, the love and life we shared, and how special he was as a person and as my best friend. We miss him every day since he passed on September 13, 2019.

Remembering



Joseph R. Losinno

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
September 13, 2019
Age 75*



Remembering



Richard A. Manetta

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
October 11, 2009
Age 44*



*R*ichard Manetta died on October 11, 2009, from an aggressive form of cancer related to his response to the September 11th terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center.

Richie was a 12-year veteran with the FDNY who served with Engine 276/Ladder 156/Battalion 33. He left his job as a plumber for the transit authority to join the fire department in 1996. He became a highly respected and dedicated firefighter who worked tirelessly on the rescue and recovery operation at Ground Zero.

Richie was a good-hearted person, a devout Catholic, and everything you could want in a firefighter and friend.

He is survived by his wife, Maria, and his son, Christian.



Remembering

*M*att McDevitt was a 31-year-old member of FDNY Ladder 135 who courageously battled a rare cancer called NUT carcinoma for two years. Matt and his amazing wife, Jackie, have both dedicated their lives to helping others, Matt as a firefighter and Jackie as a physician assistant. They have a three-year-old boy, James, and a beautiful baby girl, Mila, who just turned one in July 2020. Matt wanted nothing more in life than to be a father and a firefighter and went above and beyond in both roles. Matt was relentless, positive, and most of all a resilient fighter.

Matt's captain in the FDNY, Richard Blasi, states the following, "All the greatest words associated with great firemen belong to Matthew McDevitt. He was strong, motivated, confident, displayed integrity, and was steadfast and disciplined when the heat was on. Everyone knew beyond any doubt that you could depend on Matt to get the job done on any given tour, no matter the type of call. However, among all his qualities, his spirit, energy, and outlook on life is what will be instilled in the hearts of those who had the honor to work alongside him. Matthew's fight, as well as compassion, will be carried by each member of his firehouse for the remainder of their career, and his uplifting sense of character held sacred for a lifetime."



Matthew J. McDevitt

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
October 29 , 2019
Age 31*



Remembering



© LAURA YANES

Edward J. McDonagh Jr.

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York*

Career Lieutenant

November 12, 2017

Age 49



Edward Joseph McDonagh Jr., was born to Irish immigrants in Queens, New York. He was their only son and had three sisters. As a child he helped his father on construction sites and was an altar boy at church. Eddie loved playing sports. Baseball was a favorite of his. He was the father to five beautiful kids and husband to his wife, Kimberly.

After high school, Eddie joined the United States Marine Corps. He served in Desert Storm and after four years made his way back to New York.

Eddie joined the FDNY in 1996. He was first assigned to Engine Company 324 as a firefighter. September 11, 2001, found Eddie, as it did so many of his brothers, at the World Trade Center. He would work on the pile for the next several months, in addition to his normal tours at E-324. Eddie would stay at E-324 for 13 years before getting promoted to lieutenant. Eventually Eddie was assigned to Engine Company 37 in Harlem. They share the house with Ladder Company 40.

In April of 2014 he was diagnosed with 9/11-related cancer. He would fight like a warrior for the next three and a half years, finally succumbing to his disease on November 12, 2017, surrounded by his family and friends.



Remembering

*M*ichael T. McDonald, 64, of Leland, North Carolina, formerly of Farmingville and Glendale, New York, passed away on August 11, 2018, of lung cancer related to his efforts on 9/11 at the World Trade Center and the rescue and recovery operations thereafter. Born in Brooklyn on March 2, 1954, Michael graduated from Aviation High School, Long Island City, and spent his summers working as a lifeguard in Atlantic Beach, New York, and studying to be an electrician. He was appointed on March 5, 1984, to the New York City Fire Department (FDNY) and served for 28 years with Engine 259, Ladder 128, Battalion 45, until his retirement on May 31, 2012.

Humorous, fun-loving, and charismatic, Michael had a tremendous heart and positive outlook on life. His smile and laughter were perpetually ready. He never held grudges or uttered a bad word about anyone. Rather, he was quick to forgive, sought to make everyone happy, was always the first to offer help to his family, friends, coworkers, and acquaintances in need, never shying away from tough work or hefty responsibility. He doted upon his wife and daughter almost to a fault, but he knew making them happy made him happy. Michael enjoyed snow skiing, salt-water fishing, surfing, swimming, and going to the beach in general. He was an avid Beach Boys and classic rock fan. Michael is home with the Lord, but he will always be sorely missed by his family and friends.

Michael is survived by his beloved wife of 33 years, Diana; daughter, Alyssa (Timothy); and granddaughters, Aurora and Ailia. He is the loving son of Anne and the late Joseph McDonald; devoted brother to sisters Joanne (Kevin), Mary Beth (Robert), the late Kathleen, Eileen (Michael), Diane (John), and Maureen (Wayne). He is also survived by many aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews, nieces, and friends.



Michael T. McDonald

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
August 11, 2018
Age 64*



Remembering



Richard H. Meehan

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
January 1, 2019
Age 69*



*R*ichard grew up in Broad Channel, New York, and went to St. Virgilius School and Far Rockaway High School. He was a star running back for the Broad Channel Shamrocks and wore #44. He enlisted in the U.S. Army and proudly served his country in Korea.

He moved to Manhattan in his early 20s and lived on the Upper East Side for most of his adult life. He eventually met the love of his life, his wife Karen, on January 1, 1994, at 3 a.m., and they married in 1998.

Richard was a proud FDNY firefighter (Badge #3353) and worked at Ladder 3 in downtown Manhattan. His last night on the job was September 10, 2001. On the morning of September 11, he finished his shift and hopped in the shower at his firehouse when the other members of his house found out about the attacks on the World Trade Center. They all rushed down there, and Richard got out of the shower, put back on his gear, and rushed towards the buildings. As he approached, the buildings fell and knocked him backwards, dislocating his shoulder and causing other injuries. Despite the injuries, he went back to the firehouse to make sure someone was there to answer the phone when the wives and families of his brothers called. Sadly, all of the other 12 members of his house tragically passed away that day.

This, of course, devastated him, and in 2005 Rich and Karen moved out of NYC to Port Charlotte, Florida, where he lived until his passing, caused by complications from 9/11. He passed on January 1, 2019, at 3 p.m., 25 years to the day after meeting Karen.

*G*regorio Morales died from cancer related to his response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. He had a liver transplant in Houston, Texas. He was diagnosed with L4 cancer in January 2016 and was gone by July 30, 2016.

He worked on September 11, 2001 and at Ground Zero for 35 days. His assignment duties included identifying remains recovered from Ground Zero at the Medical Examiner's Office at Bellevue Hospital in Manhattan.

He served with the FDNY for 25 years and was promoted to fire marshal on August 1, 1993. He worked in the Special Investigation Unit. His professional accomplishments are so numerous, I can only name a few. Honors and medals from the FDNY included Basic Crime Scene Investigation, Advanced Origin, and Courtroom Methodology. For bravely pursuing and apprehending an armed felon while on duty without the benefit of a bulletproof vest or any form of communication, he received the Thomas A. Kenny Memorial Medal. He received the World Trade Center Medal for valor and dedication to helping his fellow firefighters.

During his career, he worked for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority as a New York City bus operator and for the United States Postal Service as letter carrier. He served in the United States Navy as a photographer 3rd class P.O. and was honorably discharged.

My husband was a kind and gentle soul who never brought his work home until September 11, 2001. He loved his work with FDNY; it gave him such pride. He never said no to helping neighbors, friends, and family. He was very active in church functions.

He is survived by his wife, Maria Morales, and his daughters, Sol Kristina Morales Rodriguez and Liza Morales.

He is buried at Fort Sam Houston Cemetery in San Antonio, Texas.

Remembering



Gregorio Morales

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Fire Marshal*

*July 30, 2016
Age 66*



Remembering



John Thomas Moran

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Lieutenant
June 21, 2019
Age 66*



John Moran was a devoted and proud father to his children, Kevin and Patricia, and a loving husband to his wife, Joyce. He cared deeply about his family, whether it was working hard so that his kids could have opportunities or supporting his parents as they grew older and needed his help in Flushing, Queens. John was a devout Catholic and aimed to embody the Christian teachings of loving his neighbor and giving to those in need.

John was born in County Galway, Ireland, on July 29, 1952, to James of Kiltimagh, County Mayo, and Jane Moran of County Roscommon. He immigrated, along with his parents and brother James, to the United States when he was four years old. They settled in Flushing, New York, where his sister Anne was born.

John married Joyce Conboy on September 23, 1983, and lived in Bellerose, Queens, where their two children were born, before moving to Granite Springs, New York, in 1991. John loved the wide-open spaces of Northern Westchester and took great pride in taking care of his property. When not golfing or spending time with his family, one of John's favorite things to do was run on wooded trails and carriage roads he would find in the area, including the Croton Aqueduct trail.

John was a proud 26-year veteran of the FDNY as a firefighter for Engine 68 and Ladder 49 in Highbridge, Bronx, and later as a lieutenant in Engine 90 and Ladder 41 in Morris Park, Bronx. John loved being a firefighter and took great pride in helping people and the brotherhood of the FDNY.

John passed away on June 21, 2019, after a courageous five-year battle with head and neck cancer that came as a result of his time working at Ground Zero in 9/11 search and rescue efforts. John is survived by his children Kevin and Patricia, wife Joyce, brother James and sister Anne, as well as numerous cousins, aunts, nieces, and nephews, both here in the United States and in Ireland and England. His laugh, jokes, kindness, and love are very missed by the many who love him.

Remembering

Captain John Moschella was born January 5, 1966, in Staten Island, to Marjorie and Salvatore Moschella. When he was two, John's family moved to Farmingdale, New York. Throughout childhood, John was a charismatic, larger than life, and outgoing soul. He was a proud 1984 graduate of Farmingdale High School, where he was respected, admired, and created lifelong friendships. He was the oldest of five in a close-knit Italian and Irish American family. As a child, he played baseball and hockey. John was a diehard Yankees, Rangers, and Giants fan for life. He played basketball in the FDNY League and hockey in Farmingdale, where his skill and sportsmanship were noted.

John considered joining the New York City Police Department like his father but thought a career in the New York City Fire Department would be more fitting. John started his career as a firefighter in Canarsie, Brooklyn Engine 257/Ladder 170, where he worked for 17 years. In Brooklyn, John met lifelong friends, created a lasting impact, and formed a love for the brotherhood of the FDNY. Known by friends as "Johnny Mush," he was promoted to lieutenant in 2007 to Engine 287 in Elmhurst, Queens. One of John's proudest days as a firefighter was April 24, 2014, when he was honored and promoted to captain of Engine 26 in Hell's Kitchen, Manhattan.

Captain Moschella loved being a firefighter. It was a calling and a passion especially in service to the communities he worked in. Fellow firefighters noted how, while a funny and great guy, he had an intense focus on doing the job right. John was a positive influence and remained calm no matter what the circumstance. The firefighters respected him and admired his work ethic and leadership. In his 27-year career, John took great pride in leading his firefighters well. Each person John touched remembers his kindness, positive spirit, friendship, and sacrifice as a hero.

A pivotal part of the rescue and recovery team on September 11, 2001, John unfortunately contracted 9/11 related cancer. He fought cancer like he lived his life, with courage and strength. Until the end when things were grim, John was positive and never gave up hope. Captain Moschella was a beloved son to Marjorie and Salvatore, big brother to Frank (Julie), Maria (Pete), James (Christine), and Matthew. A loving uncle and nephew, he leaves behind many cousins, friends, and FDNY brothers and sisters. Most importantly, John was a devoted husband to Nancy, who continues to keep John's legacy alive.



John S. Moschella

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York*

Career Captain

December 8, 2018

Age 52



Remembering



Dennis J. Moynihan

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Battalion Chief
March 21, 2020
Age 78*



*D*ennis was the product of a Catholic education. He attended St. Jean the Baptiste grammar school in New York City, which is where he learned to be kind, helpful, honest, and a good Christian.

As a child, he always admired firemen and visited the neighborhood firehouse. Through hard work, going to the gym getting fit, and studying, he passed the New York City Fire Department test and joined the FDNY at age 23. This was one of the happiest days of his life. He always said he loved going to work because the “guys” were great! Once again, he decided to study for years and after successfully navigating many tests, he rose to the rank of battalion chief. In 2001, he was planning on retiring after 35 years of service. The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Towers on 9/11 changed his plans. Due to the tremendous loss of many fantastic firefighters and his love of country and FDNY, he stayed on the job for three more years, spending long hours working on the recovery efforts at the World Trade Center site. Due to the dangerous conditions at the site, he contracted cancer, which was the cause of his death on March 21, 2020.

Dennis had many great days during his life, but some of his happiest were the births of his children. His children attended St. Paul Catholic School, and he donated his time to the school, painting the gym, refinishing the basketball floor, and helping to start the basketball program, which was one of his favorite sports to play and coach. When his daughter, Denise, became ill he devoted his time to taking care of her until her death. That was the saddest day in his life. Dennis was proud of his son, Michael, who stayed at his side until the end.

Dennis loved sports—football, softball, basketball, tennis, and most of all golf. He attended every FDNY chief golf tournament, and he would always come home laughing from every tournament, remarking about the great time he had spending with the other chiefs.

Dennis was an asset to the community, the FDNY, and especially his family and friends. His words of encouragement, wisdom, knowledge, and advice will be missed by all that knew him.

Remembering

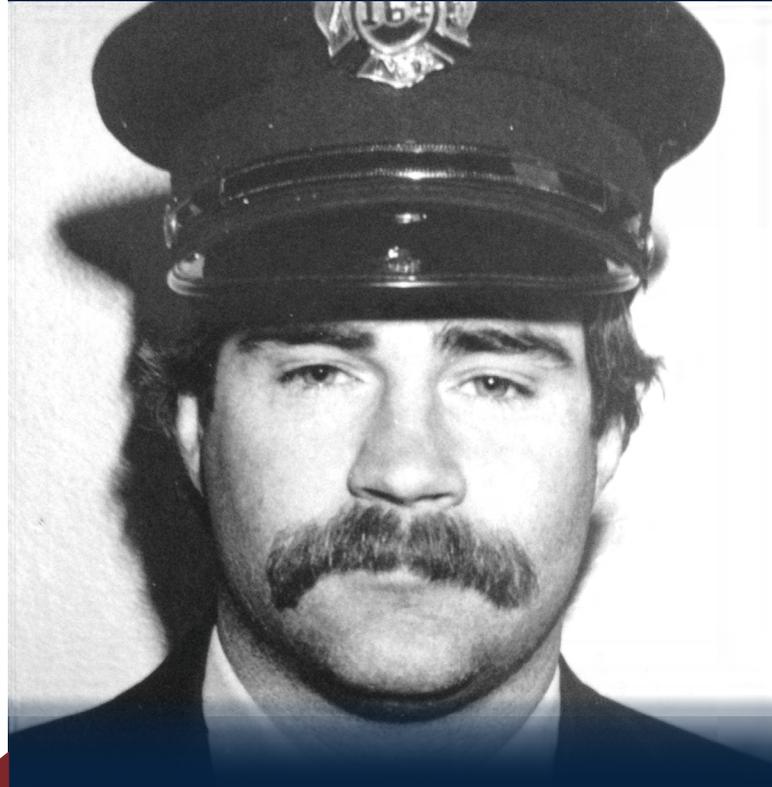
*T*imothy P. O'Neill, retired FDNY lieutenant, lost his battle with a 9/11-related cancer on April 2, 2019. An FDNY Administrative Line of Duty, World Trade Center funeral Mass was held in New York City and a funeral Mass was also held at St. Agnes Chapel in Naples, Florida.

Tim, or "Timmy," served 22 years with the New York City Fire Department before retiring in March 2003. He began his career at Ladder 119 in Brooklyn in 1981. He also served at Ladder 80 in Staten Island, where he was promoted to lieutenant. He then served at Ladder 5 in Greenwich Village until his retirement in 2003.

Tim was born and raised in the Sheepshead Bay neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York City. He received his BS, BA from Baruch College. He supported The Wounded Warrior Project and, after his retirement, volunteered as a docent at the Staten Island Zoo, with a specialty in meerkats. He was an animal lover. He coached South Shore Little League and Babe Ruth Baseball in Staten Island, NYC. He enjoyed playing golf, football, softball (and umpiring), tennis, bocce, boating, cooking, music, Scrabble, and trivia.

Tim was a loving and devoted husband, father, grandfather, brother, family member, and friend. He was a great guy to hang out with, and he fought cancer with tremendous strength and courage.

He is survived by his wife, Paula, and his brother, Billy O'Neill, and wife, Judy. He leaves behind three children, two stepchildren, and eight grandchildren: Kristen Nardoza and husband, Joseph, with their sons, James and Henry; Taryn McManus and her husband, William, with their daughter, Keira, and son, William; Thomas O'Neill and his wife, Amanda, with their daughters, Emery and Kinsley; stepdaughter, Lauren Zullo; stepson, Matthew Zullo, with his wife, Ania, with their son, Dominik, and daughter, Emily.



Timothy P. O'Neill

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Lieutenant*

*April 2, 2019
Age 60*



Remembering



Steven H. Pollard

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
January 6, 2019
Age 30*



Steven Pollard was born on April 6, 1988, in Brooklyn, New York. He grew up in the Marine Park section of Brooklyn and attended P.S. 207, where he would meet many of his lifelong friends. Steven's favorite sport was hockey, and he also loved fishing. Growing up, most of his time was spent playing roller hockey at Kings Bay and ice hockey for the New York Stars and for his high school team at St. Edmund Prep. After graduation, Steven went on to work for JetBlue Airways and Con Edison before joining the FDNY.

Steven was a big New York Rangers fan, as well as a New York Jets fan. Fitness was an important part of his daily routine and helped to prepare him for his goal of joining the FDNY, following in the footsteps of his father and his brother. In June 2017, he entered the fire academy, and after graduation he was assigned to Ladder 170 in Canarsie, Brooklyn.

Steven loved his job, and he was happy and proud to be a member of Canarsie's Bravest. His dedication to his job was apparent, always arriving early with a smile on his face for every tour. On January 6, 2019, his company responded to an accident on the Belt Parkway, and tragically Steven's life was cut short after a fall from the Mill Basin Bridge. He was 30 years old.

Steven was a quiet, humble guy and a loyal and trusted friend. He is sorely missed by his family and friends and all who had the pleasure of knowing and working with him.



Remembering

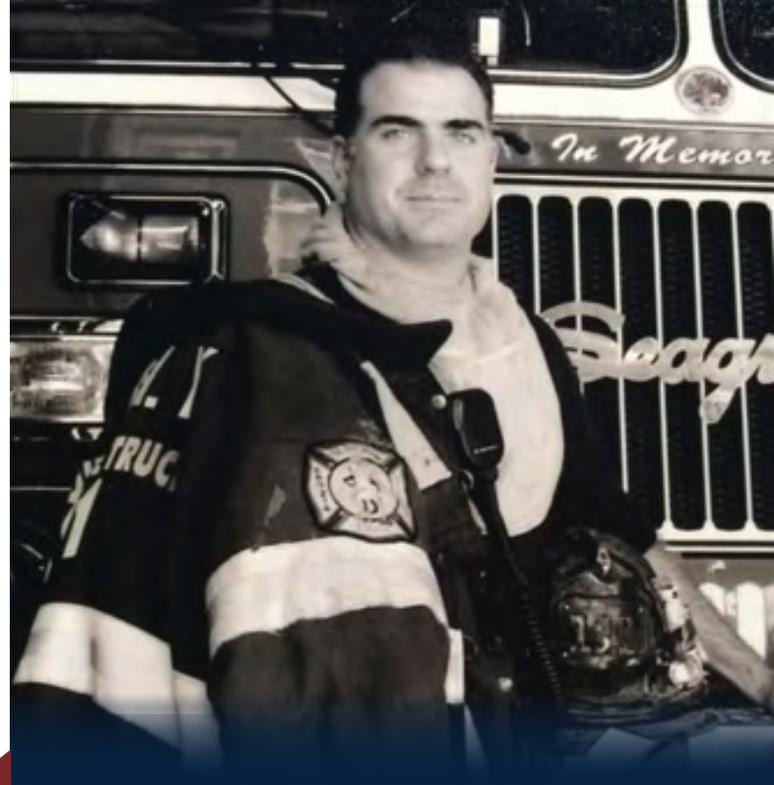
*M*arty was dedicated to helping others and serving his community. In 1987, he was sworn in to the NYC Police Department. His dream was to be an FDNY firefighter. Four years later his dream was realized when his FDNY list number was reached. Marty quickly submitted his transfer paperwork and was sworn in as a firefighter in 1991. He dutifully served for 17 years, becoming one of the senior men at L111 in Bedford Stuyvesant, New York.

On September 11, 2001, the United States was under attack. Marty was off duty and at home with his family when he learned of the attacks. Without hesitation, he said goodbye to his family and left to report for duty. No words spoken could change his mind. He arrived at the Twin Towers just after the first collapse. He soon learned that five members of his house were missing. Marty remained at the site, searching in hopes of rescue for five days before returning home to see his family. He left again the next day and continued to report to the site every day that he was not assigned to his firehouse. Unfortunately, the five members perished in the collapse.

Marty strongly believed in the brotherhood and was assigned to a firehouse, E214-L111, where fire department tradition was embedded. He was not going to stop until every firefighter was returned to their families. He continued his efforts through April 2002. Marty developed respiratory illnesses, including asthma, from the countless hours, days, and months that he spent at the site. On July 21, 2008, Marty went into respiratory failure and could not be saved. While his life ended much too soon, it is certain he would not have done anything different on September 11.

Marty had two great loves in his life, the FDNY and his family. He was a devoted husband to Judi and a dedicated father to Joe, Kevin, and Ryan. Marty always put his family first. In the community he became known as "Coach Marty." He happily coached all three of his sons in every sport they played (soccer, baseball, basketball, football, and lacrosse). He instilled his sense of fair play and hard work. Marty did more with his sons in the short time they had than many dads are able to in a lifetime. The foundation that was built is evident today in the kind of men each of his sons have grown into. Judi, Joe, Kevin, and Ryan keep his memory alive through scholarships and athletic programs.

Marty's passing left a hole in the hearts of his wife, Judi, and their three sons, Joe, Kevin, and Ryan. He is forever celebrated for all he has given to his family. Not a day passes that he is not thought of, spoken about, or missed.



Martin C. Simmons

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
July 21, 2008
Age 41*



Remembering



Brian J. Sullivan

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Lieutenant
August 10, 2019
Age 54*



Lieutenant Brian J. Sullivan was a member of the FDNY for 27 years, working in three houses over his career, Ladder 122, Squad 252, and Squad 41. Brian became a lieutenant as a way to further his contribution to the job and protecting the City of New York. He always was a leader in the firehouse, whether it was leading the men through a tough situation during a fire or leading them through a shop class on how to make something for their homes.

Brian was also a leader in his home life. Husband of 28 years to Irene and father to Nicole and Samantha, Brian always led them through life and gave them everything he could to make them happy. Brian loved his job, but even more so loved his family and friends. Brian grew up with two older brothers, John and Danny, and a younger sister, Cathy. Through his siblings, Brian became the fun uncle or “funcler” to 13 nieces and nephews. He was always able to light up the room with his bright smile and warm hugs and grabbed the attention of anyone in the room with his captivating stories of his younger years that left everyone laughing and smiling.

Brian also loved sports. Growing up, he was a Rangers, Giants, and Mets fan, and he remained true to his teams throughout his life, no matter how they may have played during a season. He loved taking his family to games and watching them at his homemade tiki bar at his house with friends and family around to cheer them on. Brian loved home improvements and making his house something his whole family could enjoy. His biggest and proudest project was his Tiki Bar outside by the pool. This was a place where everyone could gather during the summer and even through the fall to relax, unwind, laugh, and watch opening day baseball, football, or hockey.

Brian was many things during his time on earth, but most importantly he was kind, caring, compassionate, and loving to all. Through his job in the FDNY, Brian has made so many friends who have become like family to him and the girls, and he has also made himself a legacy that will live forever. Brian was always there to give advice on home projects, how to map out the perfect vacation, or even just to lend an ear to someone who needs to talk. Though he is no longer with us physically, his presence is larger than life itself and could never be taken away. In his home and at the firehouse, he is still always there to help everyone through a tough situation or to show he is there watching over us all.

Remembering

*R*ichard John “Ricky” Tanagretta, age 65, passed in the comfort of his home, surrounded by his family, on September 24, 2019. He passed as a result of injuries and illnesses sustained while operating at Manhattan Box 8087 on September 11, 2001, while working the “greatest job in the world” with the FDNY.

Born November 19, 1953, to parents Antonio Tanagretta and Mary Pullano, he was the youngest of four siblings.

He was married to the love of his life, Doreen Tanagretta (nee Merz), with whom he shared more than 40 years of life.

Richard worked as a FDNY Firefighter for 26 years. He was also an instructor for the New York State and Orange County Fire Academies, mentoring many generations of first responders. He was a past chief of the Pine Bush Volunteer Fire Department, where he was a member for 27 years, touching the lives of many.

In the little free time he had, you could find him welding gadgets in his garage or riding down the road on his fire engine red Harley Davidson, wind blowing in his handlebar mustache. He was a member of the New York City Fire Riders, who spent their free time supporting and helping others.

Richard was a loving son, husband, father, brother, grandfather, mentor, and friend. He is survived by his wife, Doreen Tanagretta; his four children, Anthony (partner Anna Schwartz), Michael (partner Patty Padilla), Lisa (wife Chelsea Tanagretta), and Christina (husband Kevin Gilmour); his four grandchildren, Mason, Aubrey, Julianna, and Alyssa; and his sisters, Maryann and Carol. He was predeceased by his brother, John.

He was remembered for his resilience and strength. We will all miss his humor, sarcasm, and love.



Richard J. Tanagretta

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
September 24, 2019
Age 65*



Remembering



Robert "Skippy" Tilearcio

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
October 25, 2017
Age 58*



*R*obert Tilearcio Sr. ("Skippy") always dreamed about being a fireman. He wore many hats and wore them all proudly, but he had that fire in his belly about being a fireman. He would eat, sleep, and breathe all things firehouse related. He was the commissar for many years and loved helping out. He loved to cook for everyone. And he was always looking for that next best recipe. He was quick to do a mutual or change vacation and always fundraised. Almost every day, someone rang that bell in his firehouse looking for that infectious smile or burst of laughter. They knew it was the best medicine for what ailed them.

Robert loved life, and life loved him. He often showed his talents on the comedy stage. His last time on stage was thirteen minutes after the stagehand was trying to get him off after seven minutes. But they knew it would be his last, so they let him continue. We almost didn't make it; we rushed him there after a very high dose of chemotherapy from Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. After that, he lost his ability to speak.

He gave the fight of his life to be around for all of us. He took many bus trips to lobby Congress on behalf of reauthorizing the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act for his fellow firemen before he knew he would one day need it himself. He was recognized at the AFL convention in 2016 for his tireless efforts on behalf of the responders, survivors, and victims of 9/11. We will never forget! On September 11, 2001, Robert raced from his firehouse to the towers searching for his fellow firemen and civilians. Our lives were forever changed. Robert was also recognized on FDNY Medal Day and many times in his community.

This past year my son carried on his legacy as an NYC firefighter with his badge number. I couldn't be prouder.

*R*ichard Tomlins Jr., 43, of Cold Spring, died February 15, 2018.

He was born February 12, 1975, in Cold Spring, the son of Donna Steltz (Clarke).

Richie was a lifelong jokester, a 25-year member of the Cold Spring Fire Company, a member of Local 137 of the International Union Operating Engineers, and an employee of the Putnam County Highway Department. He was an avid fan of the Yankees, Giants, and Notre Dame football.

Always entertaining, Richie never missed an opportunity to make a joke at the expense of himself or others, and he was the ultimate deliverer of one-liners. He was a proud father, loving and caring friend, companion, and relative who will be greatly missed but remembered every day.

He is survived by his daughter, Sophie Tomlins; his mother, Donna Steltz (Dave); his sister, Heather Browne (Kevin); and his brother, Matthew Steltz (Kerrie). He is also survived by his nieces and nephews, Matthew Richard Browne, Winter Steltz, Jax Steltz, and Carter Browne.

Richie was taken from us too soon. We think of him often and speak of him daily. We will always remember his bright smile and his laughter. His memory will live on forever with everyone who loved him.

Remembering



Richard E. Tomlins Jr.

*Cold Spring Fire Company –
New York*

Volunteer Firefighter

February 15, 2018

Age 43



Remembering



Joseph A. Walsh

*Fire Department
City of New York – New York
Career Firefighter
June 28, 2019
Age 65*



Joseph Arthur Walsh, 65, was born in New York, New York, to proud parents Alice and Joseph on December 15, 1953. He was the eldest of four children.

Joseph attended Catholic school at St. Ann's, the church in which he was an altar boy for many years. He graduated high school from Mount Saint Michael Academy. After graduation, he attended St. John's University, where he received an associate degree.

He and Rosemary (Baiocco) Walsh were married on August 1, 1982. Three children came from their union, Kelly, Kim, and Joseph.

Joseph served the Fire Department of New York with Ladder 32/Engine 62 in Bronx, New York. He retired from the FDNY after nearly 30 years of service. He was among the first responders during the tragic events of September 11, 2001, and his death was from illness related to his work at the World Trade Center.

He enjoyed spending time with his family and dogs, fishing, cooking, and sports. He was warm and quiet with a heart of gold.

Joe touched many lives and will be missed. He is survived by his loving wife, Rosie; his three children, Kelly, Kim, and Joseph; his son-in-law, Jeffrey; his mother, Alice; a sister and two brothers, Patricia, Thomas, and William; and a host of nieces and nephews, cousins, relatives, and friends. At the time of his death, his first grandchild was on the way.



Remembering

Bob was born on July 10, 1954, to Robert and Winona White in Massena, New York. He graduated from Potsdam Central School in 1974, where everyone knew him by the name "Bubba." He married his high school sweetheart, Trudy, on August 16, 1975. Bob died suddenly on December 5, 2019, while at a neighbor's working house fire.

Bob was a loving husband, father, grandfather, brother, and a dedicated volunteer firefighter. He was a member of the West Stockholm Fire Department for 40+ years, many of those as chief. His first year in the department he received Fireman of the Year, the first of many awards. To quote one of his brother firefighters who gave the eulogy, "Bob was a leader and role model that taught teamwork, respect, and safety. He always held a high standard where good enough just wasn't good enough. Bob always showed professionalism, pride, and compassion and made sure that his firefighters did the same. He always made sure to go to the first class for the new firefighters at the training center and always made a connection with them. He always wanted his firefighters to be well-prepared, trained, and safe. He was their mentor and friend, leaving his mark on many."

Bob worked at ALCOA in Massena, New York, starting after his high school graduation as a guard and retiring from there on the Emergency Response Team. Bob was also on the fire brigade at ALCOA and always made sure they had the right equipment and training and were always safe. Bob also sold fire equipment in St. Lawrence County, which included air pack servicing, and always made sure every department had the equipment they needed.

Bob enjoyed taking his sons to the fire station when they were younger, and they always knew all the truck numbers and names. Then when his grandchildren were old enough, they too went to the station and training center and learned the number and names of the trucks.

Bob was a loving and devoted family man and always made time for travel, concerts, and sporting events. He so loved his grandchildren and would always find fun things to do with them. He will always be in their hearts.

Bob is survived by his wife, Trudy; his two sons, Nicholas and his wife, Adrienne; Jason and his partner, Doug; grandchildren, Fletcher, Reagan, and Miles; and his firefighter brothers and sisters. "Dispatch, 48-1, I'm out." "Dispatch, Car 7, I'm out."



Robert E. White Jr.

West Stockholm Fire Department –

New York

Volunteer Chief

December 5, 2019

Age 65



Remembering



Michael D. Canada

*Bear Grass Fire and Rescue –
North Carolina
Volunteer Firefighter
June 23, 2020
Age 66*



*M*ike Canada was born to be of service to others. His happiest moments in life were when he was helping others in his community and spending time with family and friends.

Mike's career was with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service for 38 years. He was in wildlife refuge management and later in the law enforcement division as a federal wildlife zone officer. He also served during national disasters, such as providing security for the firefighters at numerous wildfires in California. He served during the Gulf Oil Spill and provided relief in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, along with several other hurricane relief efforts here on the East Coast.

During Mike's early career with the fish hatchery back in the late 1970s, he began volunteering for the local volunteer fire department at Providence Forge, Virginia. He genuinely enjoyed the comradery and brotherhood he shared with other members of a dedicated department. During this time, he and his wife, Donna, a nurse, received their initial EMT training together.

The last fire department that Mike served with, for 25 years, was Bear Grass Fire and Rescue in Bear Grass, North Carolina. It was here that he and his family put down roots in a small community of people who made them feel like family. Mike was known to have skills such as rappelling with ropes, understanding equipment, safety, and many other abilities that were beneficial to the department. Mike was known for his fun-loving personality and many times was the life of the annual Christmas party at the department. He enjoyed mentoring the young members. He was always so proud of "our fire department" and how they would readily go out into the community to help others with clean up after a hurricane or storm, search for a missing person, and many times help a family in need that was above and beyond their call of duty.

There really are not words to describe Mike's love of his family. He was married to his wife, Donna, for 44 happy years, and they had just celebrated their anniversary on the day of his death. Mike was a loving father to his son and daughter, their spouses, and his five grandsons. He spent most of his free time enjoying the outdoors, hunting, and fishing with his family, especially those grandsons. How they adored time with him! His family and friends dearly miss his dynamic presence in our lives. We will forever love and honor his memory and remember his service to others!

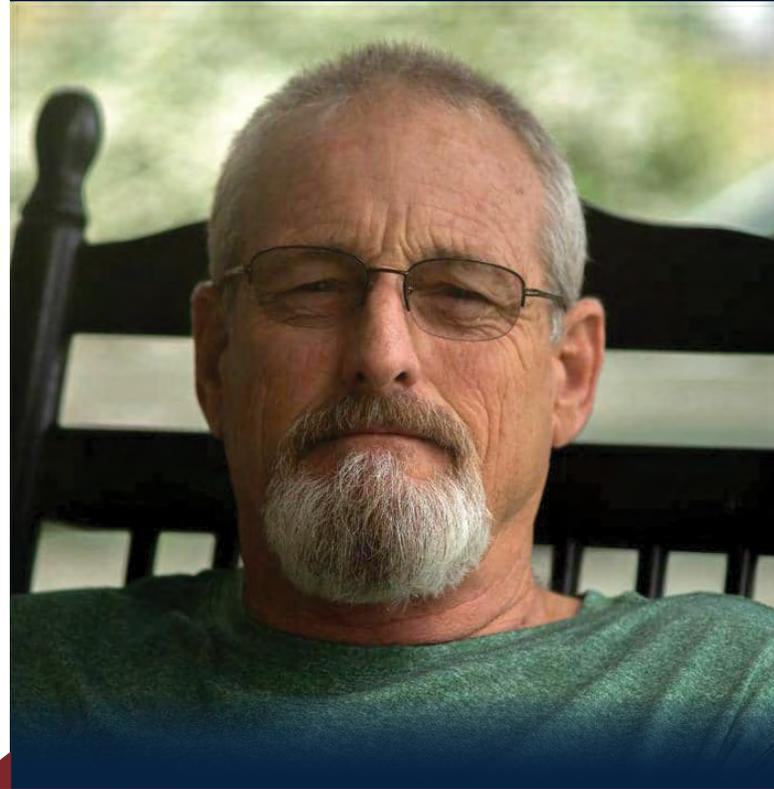
*O*n May 30, 2019, Dennis Michael Ebersole, age 59, passed away in his home in Kure Beach, just five months following a diagnosis of esophageal cancer. Dennis moved from California to Pleasure Island with his family in 1993. They ventured into the hospitality business with the purchase of The Palm Air Cottages in Kure Beach. Dennis served as a firefighter/captain for the Kure Beach Volunteer Fire Department for 15 years, both as a volunteer and as a full-time employee. He had a passion for photography, as well as collecting and restoring motorcycles.

Dennis had a heart for service. He was a master at seeing a need and fulfilling it. He never met a stranger and always had an uplifting word for anyone he came across.

Dennis is survived by his wife, Tammy; his son, James (wife Rachel); his daughter, Shelly; his brother, Ed (wife Kate); his nephew, John (wife Dorothy); and his unofficially adopted son, Cameran.

You can remember Dennis by living as he did. Do something nice for someone, share a smile, give a compliment, lend a helping hand, love with all your heart...

Remembering



Dennis M. Ebersole

*Kure Beach Volunteer
Fire Department – North Carolina*

Career Captain

May 30, 2019

Age 59



Remembering



Claud Messer

*Jonathan Creek Fire and Rescue –
North Carolina*

Volunteer Captain

September 20, 2019

Age 74



Claud Messer passed away on September 20, 2019. A native of Haywood County, North Carolina, he was a founding member of the Jonathan Creek Fire Department in 1986. He served as the chairman of the board of directors, and a captain within the department for more than 30 years. Known to the community as "Paw," he loved the outdoors and shared all things in life with his beloved wife, Judy. He enjoyed camping, horseback riding, and family gatherings. He was a man willing to help anyone in need.

Edward Hale once said, "I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do." Claud Messer lived to serve others and led by example. He was the kind of person that would put himself in harm's way before he would ask you to do the same. The traces of a life well lived are all over the Jonathan Creek community. He understood the power of putting others before himself. During the blizzard in 1993, he stayed on the road more than at home, digging his truck out for hours to see that he did everything he could to keep others warm. He never tired from getting up early to respond to help someone in need. When you live a life where you model service to others daily, it's hard for it not to be contagious. It had a significant impact on his oldest grandson's decision to join the military and become a Marine. It is also why his youngest grandson serves his community as a law enforcement officer.

He will be remembered as someone who did everything in his power to leave this world a little bit better than he found it. He discovered "the something" that he could do, and he did it every day. He put others before himself and served them with every ounce of energy he had. And, it was what he was doing in the final moments of his life on Friday, September 20. His unselfishness and his genuine compassion for others left its mark.

We were not prepared to say goodbye so suddenly. There were more lessons to learn. There were more "Thank-yous" and more "I love yous" that we missed saying. But we must carry on, because that is what he would have wanted. Fortunately, there is still a light to guide us from the example he set for us.

Remembering

David Wayne Page was born and raised in Durham, North Carolina. He was an avid motorcycle rider who loved being outdoors, where he enjoyed camping, hanging out with friends, and being on the water riding his boat at the lake and beach.

Wayne was someone you could always count on. He was willing to help anyone in need and was a very giving person. He never met a stranger and made friends with everyone he encountered.

In 2001, while hanging out with two of his friends, they all decided to tryout for the Durham Fire Department Academy. Wayne was the only one to complete the process. He was the oldest one in his academy to graduate at the age of 37.

Wayne was a certified EMT, firefighter, swift water rescue, and was a relief driver for the fire department. He really loved driving the fire truck, especially going lights and sirens.

He served with the Durham Fire Department for 16 years. After his diagnosis of esophageal cancer, he continued to work for as long as he could. He eventually had to medically retire on May 1, 2018, after his illness became too overwhelming to continue to work. Even after retiring, he continued to stop by the fire stations to see his fellow firefighters. Wayne was an only child, and he always considered them his brothers and sisters. They continue to give their love and support to his family.

After a courageous two-year battle, Wayne lost his life to cancer on December 18, 2018. Wayne will always be remembered for his loving heart, kind smile, sense of humor, and as someone who embraced life. He was always someone you could count on to be there. He will always be loved and missed by his wife, daughter, family, many friends, and the Durham Fire Department.



David Wayne Page

*Durham Fire Department –
North Carolina
Career Firefighter
December 18, 2018
Age 54*



Remembering



Karen "Skippy" Shuart

Asheville Fire Department –

North Carolina

Career Assistant Fire Marshal

January 31, 2019

Age 58



*K*aren was born in Bronx, New York, on February 16, 1960. She spent several years in Adelphi, Maryland, before moving to the mountains of North Carolina in the '80s, where she found home. She attended Warren Wilson College and earned a Bachelor of Science degree.

She began her career with the Asheville Fire Department in 1994 and served her community for 25 years. As a dedicated member, Karen moved through the ranks from firefighter to engineer to assistant fire marshal. She devoted her life to service and volunteered for many organizations, including Animal Compassion Network and Habitat for Humanity.

Karen's energy and passion for life were felt by all who knew her and those who crossed her path.

Karen lived her life to the fullest through her athletic and outdoorsy adventures, including biking, hiking, rafting, obstacle course races, and firefighter competitions. Her competitive drive and love for nature and the outdoors were paramount to her life.

Karen is survived by her mother, Adele Shuart; brother, Mark Shuart; and her fur babies, Nikko, Tink, Harley, and Izzy, all of Asheville, North Carolina.



Remembering

*D*akota Snavely's life was cut short due to a motor vehicle accident while responding to a water rescue in Stanly County on June 10, 2018, seven days shy of his 18th birthday. This occurred when a large commercial vehicle traveling in the opposite direction lost its load and overturned. Dakota was born June 17, 2000, to Jimmy Snavely and the late Laura Richardson. He was an avid baseball player from the age of four. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, and grilling out every evening with his father, Jimmy, and stepmom, Elizabeth. Dakota played on many baseball teams, including Parkwood High School as pitcher and catcher. When he was not playing baseball, he was learning about the fire service.

Dakota began volunteering at the age of 15 after watching his father train and respond to calls. He wanted to be just like his dad. Dakota was serious about his commitment to East Side and wanted to learn everything about the fire service. According to the fire chief, he was always asking questions. It was Dakota's dream to be a firefighter, one that he got to live out. He spent many hours training and helping his community. Dakota had a very giving spirit and would easily lay down his life for a friend. Like most teenagers, Dakota's life was documented on social media. His Facebook page, even at 17, showed he lived life to the fullest. Pictures and memories plastered his wall with accomplishments during his baseball career. Friends tagged him in Little League team photos and hunting trips during deer season. Every "check in" at the fire station confirmed his passion, whether it was official training or hanging out at the station with his friends to learn more about fighting a fire.

When it came time to sign up for the local firefighter competition during the annual July 4th celebration, he was there. The team practiced daily for their event, taking home 3rd place in the Blind Hose Drag. He was part of the team to help bring awareness to the Special Olympics during the Albemarle Correctional Institution 2017 Muscle Hustle Firetruck Pull and Chili Cook-off. In May 2019, Dakota was recognized as the 294th firefighter to die in the line of duty at the North Carolina Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service. Dakota's memory lives on through Facebook. Friends still post memories on his page, tagging him in the crazy things they have done and wishing him Happy Birthday in heaven. To know Dakota is to know that he loved life, his family and friends, and the fire service.



Dakota Snavely

*East Side Volunteer
Fire Department – North Carolina
Volunteer Firefighter*

June 10, 2018

Age 17



Remembering



W. Keith Tessinear

*Raleigh Fire Department –
North Carolina
Career Assistant Chief
August 29, 2019
Age 55*



W. Keith Tessinear died in the line of duty on August 29, 2019. Keith was a man of strong faith, who loved his family, friends, fellow firefighters, the fire service, and his community. He began his professional career with Raleigh Fire Department (RFD) in 1991. Keith excelled in all he did and rose to the rank of Assistant Chief of Training with RFD. A true public servant, Keith was a member of Raleigh Fire Department for over 28 years, where he was honored to serve in all four divisions (Operations, Training, Services, and Office of the Fire Marshal).

Commitment to family and the fire service showed through in all that Keith did. Keith was a man of integrity and a great example to others. He had a positive influence on those he met. He was kindhearted, compassionate, and had a balanced way of thinking about things. Keith was an amazing husband and father and was adored by his wife, Jessica, and daughter, Hannah.

Everyone who knew Keith knew that the fire department was his home away from home. He enjoyed everything fire service related and considered it an honor and a privilege to work daily with his firefighter family. Keith enjoyed spending time with family and friends. He was a great teacher and enjoyed learning, as well as helping others. Over the years while working at Raleigh Fire Department, Keith obtained a Master of Science, Executive Fire Service Leadership graduate degree, and completed the Executive Fire Officer Program with the United States Fire Administration's National Fire Academy. Keith's devotion to his wife, daughter, and the fire service are evident by his dedication to his family and community. Keith will forever be our hero, and his legacy will forever be remembered.

Keith was a loving, kind, and generous husband, father, firefighter, and friend. He selflessly worked to help others in any way he could. Keith was one of a kind. He always encouraged others to do their best. He was a wonderful provider and friend who showed his wife, daughter, and others how to be brave and courageous no matter the circumstances. Words cannot express how deeply Keith is missed by his wife, daughter, family, firefighter family, friends, and community.

*J*oe Tucker was a wonderful husband, father, grandfather, friend, neighbor, and firefighter. He loved his family very much and spent time with them as much as possible. Joe and his wife, Delaine, were together for over 40 years. They had a son, Brandon, and his wife, Cassie, and a daughter, April, and her husband, Julian. They also had a very special granddaughter, Addie. She was born only four months before Joe's death, but he loved her so very much!

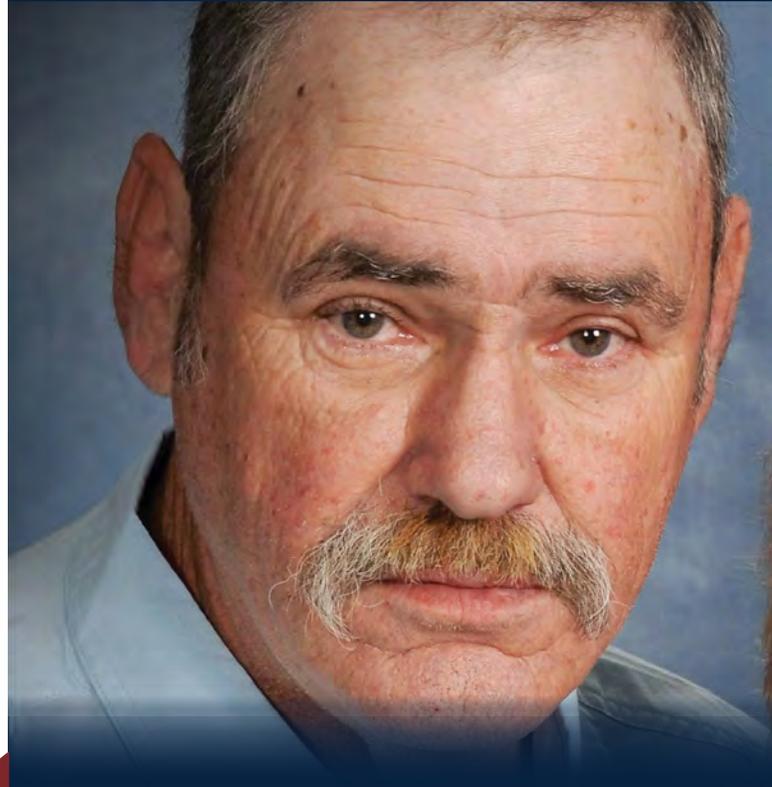
Joe loved the fire service from a young age. He started his volunteer fire service as a junior firefighter with Arrington Volunteer Fire Department in Dudley, North Carolina. Once Joe married Delaine, they moved to the Mar Mac Volunteer Fire Department district in Goldsboro, North Carolina, where Joe became a member. After some time, Joe moved his membership over to the Thoroughfare Volunteer Fire Department, also in Goldsboro, and he was at this department at the time of his death. Joe spent a total of 43 years as a volunteer firefighter. At the time of his death, he was the department's safety officer. He enjoyed helping, training, and encouraging the younger firefighters when they joined the fire department. He helped and supported the fire department fundraisers, such as their turkey shoots, car show, raffle tickets, food booth at the county fair, golf tournaments, cookbook sales, and picture sales.

Joe had many jobs over his lifetime, with a wealth of knowledge in many areas. He started out barning tobacco and helping neighbors with their crops. He worked at Kemp Furniture Company on the furniture line. He worked warehouse jobs at Smith Hardware Company and FleetPride, Inc., where he worked at the time of his death. He also spent time filling in with jobs at auto and tire businesses and farming in the area. Joe enjoyed working with his hands and doing yardwork.

Joe's main hobbies were hunting and fishing. He loved the quiet and stillness of the outdoors. He also enjoyed participating in his community by helping his children with their interests and other organizations. He helped with April's project as fire princess for our county, props and projects for adults and children's activities at church plays, musicals, dramas, and Bible School throughout the years. Joe went through the Boy Scouts program with his son, Brandon, all the way to Eagle Scout. Joe also enjoyed being a "Do-Dad" with April going through the Girl Scout Program. Joe was a "background" person; he did not want to be in the spotlight, but he was always there to help as needed in any way he could.

He was a loyal and dependable person.

Remembering



Joe J. Tucker Jr.

*Thoroughfare Volunteer
Fire Department –*

North Carolina

Volunteer Safety Officer

March 8, 2020

Age 62



Remembering



Donald J. Beauchene Jr.

Warren City Fire Department – Ohio

Career Lieutenant

November 17, 2020

Age 54



After contracting COVID-19 at work, Donald J. Beauchene Jr. passed away on November 17, 2020.

Don's relationship with God was the most important relationship in his life. He worked in several ministries. Don emceed at the local Relay for Life for over a decade and was a talented, self-taught drummer. After graduating high school, he traveled the country with New Life Drama Company, ministering to people through music and drama.

In Don's early 20s, he knew it was time to pursue his lifelong dream to become a firefighter. Over 26 years ago, he started his career with the Warren City Fire Department in Warren, Ohio. He was an exemplary leader. Don gave 100% every day he was at work. He was a true mentor to the new guys, as a great firefighter, but also in life. At Don's celebration of life, his son-in-law said that Don's shift never ended. When he left work, he served his wife, his family, and his community.

After 9/11, Don assisted with clean up in New York City and in Shanksville. He went to New Orleans with the Red Cross to help after Hurricane Katrina. Donnie went on several mission trips to Guatemala, Bogota, and served at the New York City and Pittsburgh Dream Centers.

Don and Michelle blended two families, including Don's two sons and Michelle's four daughters. Four years ago, after their biological children were adults, they decided to make a difference in four siblings' lives by giving them their forever home. Their story was featured on national news and *Good Morning America* in November 2018. Their family also includes five grandchildren.

Don and Michelle had a fairytale marriage. They truly lived life to the fullest. They loved to travel, ride their motorcycle, do home projects together, "glamp," and spend time with their family and friends. Every Sunday was "Pasta Sunday" at the Beauchenes'. If you were there, you would be part of making homemade pasta and singing Frank Sinatra songs. Holidays were also fun. They hosted family and friends for dinners and parties. Every holiday, Don and Michelle would buy groceries, turkeys, and hams to hand deliver to people in need in their community.

Don left a legacy in his children, his community, and his fellow firefighters. He led by example. After Don's passing, Michelle was presented with the Medal of Valor in honor of Don's exemplary performance, exceptional courage, extreme personal risk, and for being instrumental in saving lives.

Don will forever be deeply missed by all who knew him.

*J*im Glover grew up on a dairy farm, where he learned hard work and family values. He developed his positive attitude and service to others through his church, 4-H club, and FFA membership. After high school, he proudly served his country in the United States Marine Corps, serving three tours of duty in the Vietnam War, and was a Purple Heart recipient. When he returned home in 1969, he married his high school sweetheart and built his family home.

In May 1970, Jim joined the Newton Township Fire Department. The same year, he began his professional career as a federal firefighter at Newark Air Force Base, then transferred to Rickenbacker Air Force Base. Jim quickly advanced in his career through education and hard work to become the assistant chief by 1987. Jim's goal was to provide better EMS and fire services to his community. He was instrumental in establishing the Licking County Dive and Rescue Team, Licking County Honor Guard, and secured the first Air Evac medical helicopter in Licking County. He served 10 years as the Licking County Squad Coordinator, was a member of the Licking County Health Department board, and was a past president for the Licking County Firefighters' Association. During his career, he received three citations for sustained superior performance. He worked at Oceana Naval Air Station and retired as the assistant chief at DSCC in Columbus after 34 years of service. Following retirement, he continued serving as the chief at Newton Township Fire Department. Jim knew that education was the key to providing the best service to the public and keeping firefighters safe. His passion for firefighting and EMS led him to become a fire and EMS instructor in 1976. Jim's legacy and teaching lives on through the many students and fellow instructors he trained and worked with.

Jim's accomplishments were many, but at the core of his service was his faith in God. He tried to balance faith, family, and the fire service. He shared a special bond with the firefighters he served with, always encouraging them to be their best. Jim's compassion and willingness to always be ready to respond and help his community never stopped. His smile, firm handshake, and welcoming, friendly spirit were his trademark. He never knew a stranger and enjoyed telling stories about his life to all who would listen.

We take comfort in knowing he is in Heaven with his Lord and Savior, Jesus. Deeply missed by his wife, Nancy; daughter, Kathy (Harold); sons, John and Jacob; granddaughters, Katelynn, Amber, and Sierra; three great-grandsons; and brother, Donald (Linda).

Remembering



James H. Glover

Newton Township Fire Department –

Ohio

Career Chief

March 30, 2020

Age 70



Remembering



Jeffrey Alan Guernsey

*Washington Township
Fire Department – Ohio*

Career Lieutenant

December 3, 2020

Age 52



Jeff was known as the guy who would give you the shirt off his back and would always be there to help when someone was in need. He loved life, and it showed in the way he lived it. More than anything, he was a true family man. He passed away on December 3, 2020, after battling complications from COVID-19.

Jeff enrolled in the United States Navy right out of high school. His goal was to be a paramedic. He was stationed in Philadelphia working in the Naval Hospital. After serving four years in the Navy, he moved back home to Dayton, Ohio, and started his career as a firefighter. Washington Township Fire Department became his full-time home for 30 years. Jeff was a lieutenant and was in charge of the department's honor guard. He was also known as the class clown of the department.

Jeff was the guy that all his family and friends could count on when in need of help, ranging from home projects, moving, planning a vacation, or just lending an ear. He had the biggest heart of anyone we knew.

Jeff was in charge of the Washington Township Honor Guard and would always make arrangements for himself and his honor guard members to travel and pay their respects to their fallen brothers and sisters. This was very important to him.

Jeff's biggest passion outside of his career was most definitely his family. Erin (28), Matt (23), Alan (16), and Aidan (14) were the apples of his eye. Jenny, his wife of 17+ years, was his best friend, and they loved to travel all over, especially enjoying the Smoky Mountains, Las Vegas, and the Caribbean. His grandkids, Liam and Madison, had him wrapped around their finger! He was the best PopPop ever.

Jeff was very involved with Alan's wrestling and Aidan's martial arts tournaments. He was their biggest fan. He did whatever it took to make sure they got to attend tournaments all over the United States and that he was there to cheer them on.

Jeff's big heart and humor will be remembered, and his infectious laugh will live on forever. He truly was one of the good guys.

Joseph "Joe" Patterson, with 14 dedicated years to the fire service, answered his last call on June 24, 2018, while on duty with Paint Creek Joint EMS/Fire District.

Born on November 18, 1984, he was a loving husband, father, and son, devoted to his family. Joe is survived by his wife, Jennifer, and children, Ashleigh, Rebecca, and Adam. Joe had a passion for teaching and mentoring his fellow brothers and sisters in the fire service. He had just received his certifications for Fire/EMS Instructor. His smile, outgoing personality, and fun-loving antics are missed by all who had the honor of knowing Joe. His memory will continue to live on in the many lives he touched.

Joe was nominated Firefighter of the Year in 2005, at age 20. In an interview with the local newspaper, he was asked why he would risk so much for a job. His reply was simply, "Why not? When you take a job like this, in the back of your mind, bad and good things are going to happen. I just think, if I don't help, who will?"

Remembering



Joseph M. Patterson

*Paint Creek Joint EMS/Fire District –
Ohio*

Career Firefighter/EMT

June 24, 2018

Age 33



Remembering



Richard A. Petras

Cleveland Division of Fire – Ohio

Career Lieutenant

August 15, 2020

Age 51



*R*ich was a beloved husband, father, and son. His main goal in life was to care for others. He wasn't sure what his career would be, but he loved being a firefighter.

Before the fire department, Rich had many jobs. He then fell in love with his high school sweetheart, Jill. Rich was introduced to being a firefighter by Jill's father, Ed Gartland, who came from a long line of Cleveland firefighters. He listened to many stories Ed told. He grew to love the fire department and considered them family. Rich was known for being one of the best cooks in the Cleveland Fire Department. He taught many cadets how to cook and will be forever remembered for his many recipes.

Rich became a paramedic in 2011 and worked for Cleveland Clinic. He would joke with all the paramedics and took some of them under his wing. At first he taught his daughters about medicine, until they became nurses and began teaching him. Their favorite thing to do was to share stories and teach each other about new procedures during dinner.

Rich was a devoted husband to Jill and father to Amber and Ashley. He was a coach to many of his daughters' sports teams. Of course, they picked the only sport he didn't coach, which was volleyball. He not only cared for his family and community but for many animals as well. Rich even brought two stray dogs home from the firehouse to join the family.

Rich joined the fire department in February 1994. He was presented with many awards for lifesaving incidents. Some additional awards he received are the Florian Cross, the Whelen Everyday Champion presented by NASCAR Hall of Fame, and the Lifesaver Award. Rich was promoted to lieutenant a few months before he passed away. He quickly fell in love with the idea of teaching cadets to become firefighters. Unfortunately, he passed before being able to teach his first class.

Rich was a family man with a heart of gold. You would find him playing with his pets, grilling for his family, or playing music for a block party. Rich will be forever missed by many.

Remembering

*R*icky Lee Fulton was born July 31, 1962, in Norman, Oklahoma, to Kenneth and Frances (Holley) Fulton. Ricky grew up in the Lucille community near Chickasha, Oklahoma. He attended Ninnekah Public Schools and graduated from Amber-Pocasset High School. After graduation, he attended Spartan College of Aeronautics in Tulsa, Oklahoma, to become an airplane mechanic.

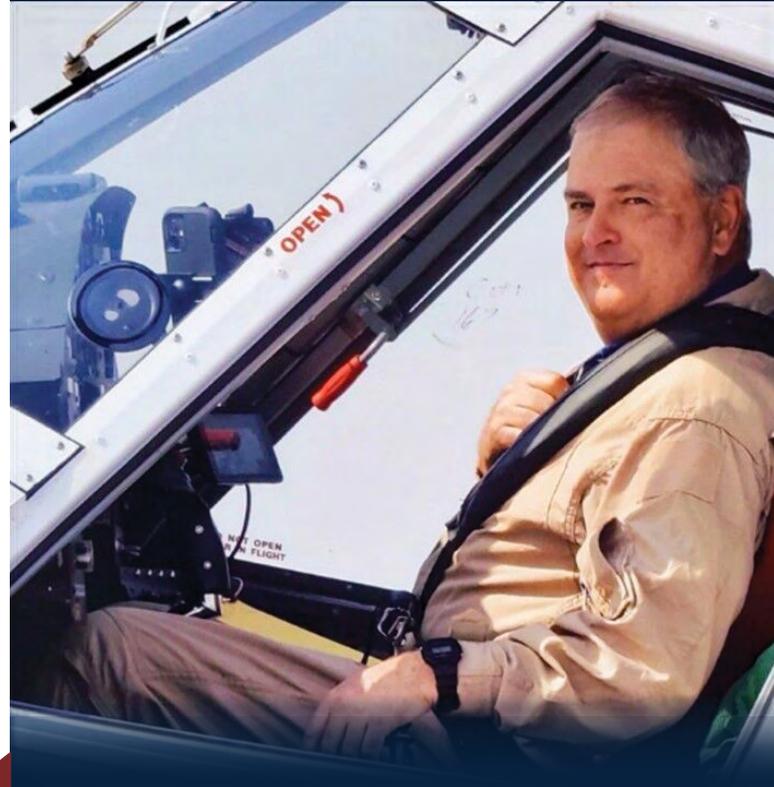
After receiving his pilot license, he flew crop dusters in Chickasha, Oklahoma; Ashland, Kansas; and Munday, Texas. He then went on to receive his helicopter license and worked in the Wichita, Kansas, area. He worked in Alaska for Tik-Chick Fishing Lodge as a bush pilot and for the Department of Defense in the country of Colombia. He also trained Colombian pilots in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

He came back to Alex, Oklahoma, to start his own business, Custom Air. Afterwards, he worked in Wichita Falls, Texas; the Illinois area; and Altus, Oklahoma, as a spray pilot. In April 2020, he began working in Sterling, Colorado, as a single engine air tanker pilot with Aero SEAT, Inc.

For many years, he flew family and friends over the Chickasha Festival of Lights.

Ricky was active in the Oklahoma Aerial Applicators Association, Oklahoma Pilots Association, and a member of the AOPA and EAA.

Ricky passed away on Tuesday, September 22, 2020, in Emmett, Idaho, while battling wildfires as an air tanker pilot.



Ricky Lee Fulton

*Aero S.E.A.T. Incorporated –
Oklahoma*

Contract Firefighter/Pilot

September 22, 2020

Age 58



Remembering



Jeffrey Scott White

Oklahoma City Fire Department –

Oklahoma

Career Lieutenant

December 26, 2017

Age 53



Jeffrey Scott White was born January 16, 1964, and passed December 26, 2017, at the age of 53. Jeff was a beloved husband, brother, son, uncle, and great-uncle.

He was a lieutenant for the Oklahoma City Fire Department and began his career as a rookie firefighter responding to the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Building. Jeff was proud to serve the citizens of Oklahoma City for the past 23 years, and he served them well. Jeff was a member of the fire department honor guard, critical incident stress management team, a hazardous materials technician, rescue diver, and a peer fitness trainer. In addition, Jeff was an emergency medical technician.

Jeff grew up in Moore, Oklahoma, graduating from Moore High School in 1983. He was an all-state swimmer during his high school career. He enjoyed water skiing, scuba diving, and traveling nationally and internationally with his family.

Jeff was preceded in death by his mother, Betty Ann White, who passed May 2, 2017.

Jeff is survived by his wife of 14 years, Cynthia, of Norman, Oklahoma; his father, Jerry, of Moore, Oklahoma; brothers, Mike and wife, Tina, of McLoud, Oklahoma, Bruce and wife, Jean, of Overland Park, Kansas; nephews, Josh, Jacob, and Casey; niece, Marcie; great nephews, Jax and Samuel; and great niece, Anabelle.



*F*irefighter Michael J. Bernstein passed away while serving the citizens of Philadelphia.

Born on October 6, 1972 and raised in northeast Philadelphia, Michael was blessed with loving parents and three little brothers, Robert, Danny, and Dave. He received his sacraments and education at St. Martin de Tours parish and school. He went on to Mercy Technical School and graduated in 1990, focusing on plumbing. He proudly stated that he never fixed a toilet or used any information the program offered him.

After high school, he served in the United States Navy, working as a chef on a nuclear submarine. For years, he used his naval culinary taste and skills to create meals for countless family parties. He would proudly tell anyone that his naval service taught him many things, but most importantly that Navy stood for "Never Again Volunteer Yourself."

The proudest moments of his life were just beginning when he was accepted to the Philadelphia Fire Academy. This watershed moment would define a man in his courage and loyalty. Michael received a letter of commendation in December 2009.

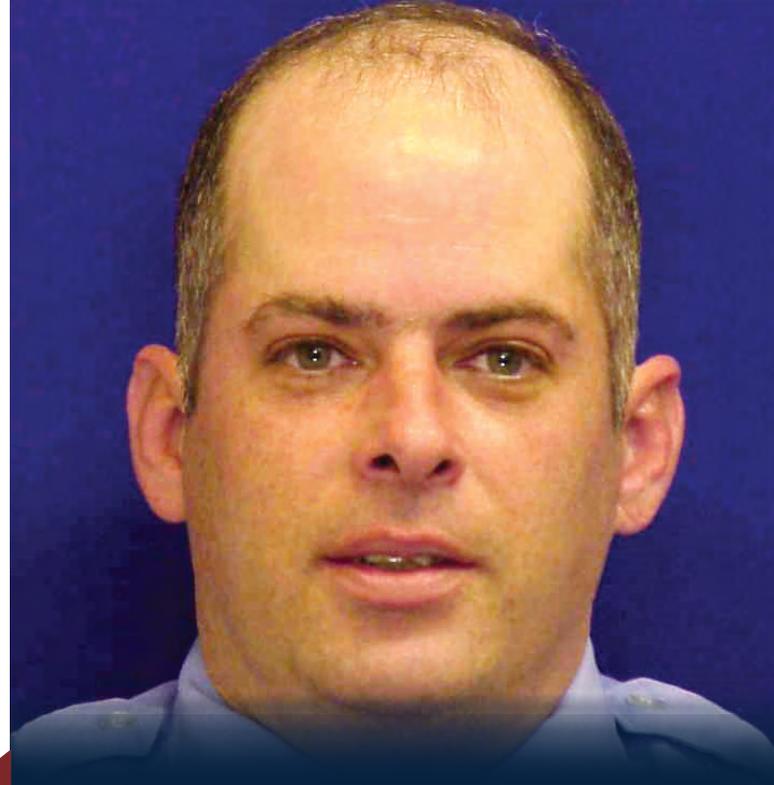
He met his future wife, Cathy, just before he began the academy, thus sparing her the difficult decision not to fall in love with a fireman. They married in 1999, and their family grew with the addition of Michael, Victoria, and Jacob. By 2004, Michael's house was filled with laughter, pizza, Mountain Dew, and all the diapers a man could desire.

Michael loved Philadelphia sports, taking a wager now and then on football, and losing the lottery weekly. He loved traveling to Florida, especially Disney World and the Phillies Spring Training. He loved Christmas and began shopping in August. Time with his son Michael in Nashville was one of his favorite trips. His love of Metallica and devotion to his daughter Victoria's One Direction was matched only by his enthusiasm for fashion: white Nikes, acid wash jeans, Hard Rock t-shirts, and Eagles or Flyers hat.

Michael is survived by his beloved wife, Catherine; his loving children, Michael, Victoria, and Jacob; his caring parents, Jerry and Dale Bernstein; his siblings, Robert (Susan), Daniel (John), and David (Jennifer); his in-laws, Richard and Anne Shay; his brothers-in-law, Richard Shay, Robert Shay (Nicole), and Michael Shay (Anita); sisters-in-law, Anne Martin (Dan) and Sandra Colfer (Michael); and many nieces and nephews.

Michael was loved as he loved—through his dedication to his family, his life as a firefighter, and his city.

Remembering



Michael J. Bernstein

Philadelphia Fire Department –

Pennsylvania

Career Firefighter

March 20, 2019

Age 46



Remembering



Willie J. Blakely

Erie Fire Department – Pennsylvania

Career Firefighter/EMT

October 25, 1982

Age 48



*W*illie Blakely suffered a seizure that resulted in a head injury while on scene at a structure fire with the Erie Fire Department on July 10, 1982. He died from complications of those injuries on October 25, 1982.

Willie joined the department in 1969 as Erie's first Black firefighter and EMT. At the time of his death, he was assigned to Squad 2 at Engine 8.

His fellow firefighters remembered Willie as someone who looked out for his teammates and did whatever he could to help people. Well-liked and easygoing, he had exceptional skills in calming and comforting patients in emergency situations.

He served with the United States Army during the Korean War. He was a member of Erie Firefighters Local 293.

Willie was a no-nonsense guy who did his best every day. He was a loving husband and father and a family man.



Remembering

David G. Closs Sr. was born on February 16, 1953, in Chester, Pennsylvania. As a youngster he could be found hanging around the firefighters at Viscose Fire Department in Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania. Eventually he became a junior firefighter. He joined the police force and was a police officer for 21 years with Kennett Square and Marcus Hook Police Departments. After being hurt on the job, he still wanted to help people. Some years later, he decided to become fire police. He worked his way up the ranks to become fire police lieutenant at Avis Fire Company #1 in Avis, Pennsylvania, which is where he was until he passed.

He was an active member of Grace Fellowship Church in Avis, Pennsylvania, where he loved helping with any job needed—from helping with the offering to taking attendance. He enjoyed hunting and being with his family. His calling seemed to be helping wherever he could. No matter what the call was, he was always there. He helped organize many different fundraisers and got things out into the community. Between the church and the fire department, he was always on the move.

Dave left behind his wife of 43 years, Cheryl; his three children, Valerie Foley (Vincent), David Closs Jr. (Mary), and Angela Bower (Kenneth); his five grandchildren, Gabrielle, Kaelynn, David III, Blaze, and Reece; three step-grandchildren, Coleen, Kaleb, and Luran; and two step great-grandchildren, Cora and Grae.

Dave was a loving husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, uncle, and friend. He is remembered by the members of Avis Fire Company #1 for his dedication, both on the fire and administration sides, serving dual roles. He lived a life devoted to helping his community.

Dave died doing what he loved, helping people. He is missed very much by his family, friends, and community.



David G. Closs Sr.

Avis Fire Company #1 – Pennsylvania

Volunteer Firefighter

August 23, 2020

Age 67



Remembering



Neil B. Cope

***North Belle Vernon Volunteer
Fire Department – Pennsylvania
Volunteer Lieutenant***

July 16, 2019

Age 46



Neil's community service spans decades. His love of community was unquestioned. He served 17 years, first as an EMT for Rostraver West Newton Emergency Services, Inc. and then as the dispatch supervisor. He joined Fayette City Volunteer Fire Company and became the safety officer. While serving with Fayette County, he received recognition from the Fayette County Firemen's Association for heroism at Dainty's Personal Care Home on September 13, 1999.

He was also a firefighter for Monessen Fire Department #1 for a short while. His love for the community of North Belle Vernon brought him to the North Belle Vernon Volunteer Fire Department. He joined for two years in 1993 and then came back in 2017, becoming 3rd lieutenant. In 2018, he became recording secretary and treasurer and received the President's Award, and in 2019 he became 1st lieutenant.

While busy with the North Belle VFD, he became the bingo chairman and was on the bingo finance committee and other boards and committees. If he was not working as a school bus driver for Belle Vernon Area School District, he was working on getting ready for that week's bingo. Neil was the bingo caller for the Roscoe, Collinsburg, and Washington Township Fire Departments. He also helped with the organization of the Bikers Helping Others Food Drive, which was renamed Bikers Helping Others Neil Cope Memorial Food Drive.

Neil was married to Kimberly Thomas Cope for 23 years. They have three children, Ryan Fiem and wife Charlotte, Brittany and husband John Morrison, and Caitlin Bean; and six grandchildren, Samantha, Sean, and Mackenzie Morrison and Izabella, Xavier, and Lilliana Bean. When it came to his grandchildren, he was "Poppy." He was involved with dance for Samantha, soccer for Mackenzie, and baseball for Sean. He enjoyed going to Texas to see Izabella, Xavier, and Lilliana and taking them to the pool, Sea World, Six Flags or just being silly with them. Neil is also survived by his parents, Michele Baron Cope and Brian Cope; his brother, Dan Cope, wife Nicole, and niece, Halley; and his sister, Christie Cope Thompson, and nephew, Aiden Thompson.

He loved his Pittsburgh Penguins, and when it came time for hockey season you would hear him say, "It's a hockey night in Pittsburgh!" He enjoyed going to the casino, battling a bar-top poker machine, or snagging some scratch-offs while enjoying a McDonald's large Coke and peanut M&Ms. Neil was a husband, father, Poppy, son, brother, friend, and firefighter.

*F*irefighter Franck became ill while operating at the scene of a motor vehicle accident on the afternoon of May 12, 2019. Firefighter Franck was attended to by fellow firefighters from the Willow Street Fire Company before being transported to the hospital by Lancaster EMS.

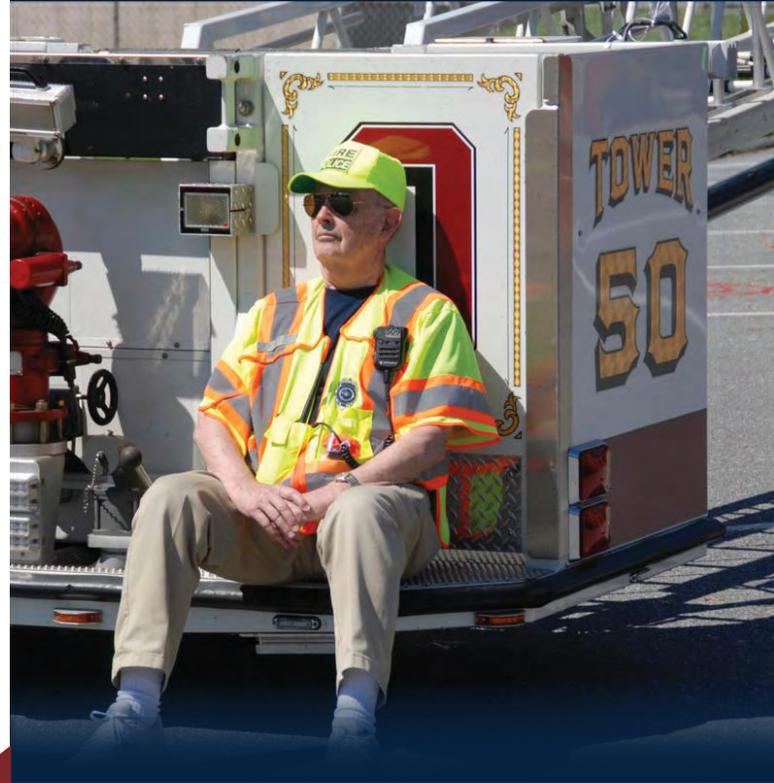
Firefighter Franck's life was dedicated to helping others. He joined the Willow Street Fire Company in 1985 and served in many administrative positions throughout his years there. Norm also served as an emergency medical technician with the Willow Street Fire Company Ambulance for several years.

Firefighter Franck is survived by his loving spouse, Marian.

After retiring, Norm and Marian moved to St. Michaels, Maryland, in 1999. Firefighter Franck joined the Saint Michaels Fire Department, where he played a vital role in the department for several years. He spearheaded several fundraising projects for the department throughout his years of service with the St. Michaels Fire Department.

Norm served over 35 years with both departments.

Remembering



William N. "Norm" Franck Jr.

*Willow Street Fire Company –
Pennsylvania
Volunteer Firefighter*

May 12, 2019

Age 81



Remembering



K. Robert Greiser

Perseverance Volunteer Fire Company

No. 1 – Pennsylvania

Volunteer Chief Engineer

December 20, 2019

Age 72



K. Robert “Bob” Greiser suddenly passed away in the line of duty serving with the Perseverance Volunteer Fire Company of Souderton on December 20, 2019. Bob was born in Sellersville, Pennsylvania, son of the late Kenneth and Eleanor (Erb) Greiser. He grew up in the Souderton area, graduating from Souderton High School as a member of the Class of 1965. Bob and his wife, Phyllis (Davies) Greiser, met in 1965 and married in June 1966, spending 53 happy years together. Following high school, Bob worked at several jobs until he became employed as a machinist at the AEL company, where he worked for 48 years until his retirement in 2015.

Bob was a dedicated lifetime member of the Perseverance Volunteer Fire Company of Souderton, serving for 46 years. Bob served as chief engineer, engineer, trustee, as well as serving on a multitude of committees. No matter what the situation, when the tones dropped, Bob was there. When Bob drove, he always got the truck there. You may not know when, but you knew it would be safe and sound when it arrived.

In addition to his 46 years of service with the Souderton Fire Company, in his retirement years Bob volunteered with Meals on Wheels. He loved delivering to the people he served. He would often take one of his grandchildren along and would spend time visiting and going out of his way to serve the people any way that he could, occasionally even running errands for them.

Bob enjoyed spending time restoring his two classic Corvettes and taking them to various car shows. He also enjoyed traveling, often going to various unique destinations. Bob was a member of Souderton Mennonite Church.

Most of all, Bob loved to spend time with his wife and family, especially his grandchildren. To them, he was a big teddy bear. He was a caring, devoted caretaker, doing whatever was needed of him. He was a patient man who was not intimidated by any situation. Bob had a dry sense of humor, and you could tell by the smirk on his face and the chuckle he would let out when he was joking with you.

In addition to his wife, Phyllis, he is survived by his children, K. James Greiser, and his wife, Melissa, of Souderton; Kevin Greiser of Souderton; and Michelle O’Rourke, and her husband, Russell, of Telford; five grandchildren, Ken, Joseph, Kyle, Emily, and Benjamin; and his brother, Jeff Greiser, and his wife, Margie, of Red Hill. He was preceded in death by a son, Keith A. Greiser; a brother, Steven L. Greiser; and a grandson, Aiden O’Rourke.

*J*erome was a fourth-generation firefighter and was raised across the street from Citizen's Fire Company #1 of Mt. Holly Springs, Pennsylvania, Cumberland County Station 36, of which his family were members. He loved watching the equipment anytime it was outside or whenever he was taken to the station by someone in his family. When he was old enough to cross the street by himself, he spent many hours there and joined as soon as he was of age to become a junior member. He served for 17 years and loved being a firefighter!

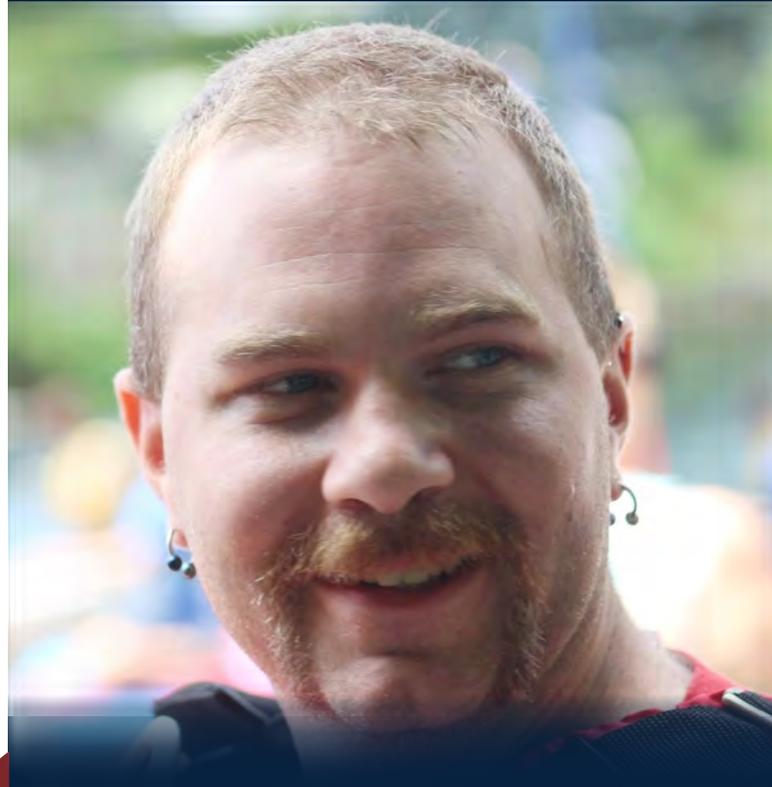
Jerome was a loving father to his daughter, Kayla, and his two sons, Wyatt and Zaden, and spent as much time with them as he could. He was an avid outdoorsman. He loved hunting and taking his children fishing. He was also a big fan of auto racing, especially of sprint cars on dirt tracks.

Jerome was a dispatcher for DHL Logistics in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and was well liked by everyone he worked with. He was a very giving person of his time and would help anyone who asked him, without ever asking for anything in return.

Jerome touched everyone that he helped and helped everyone that he touched without ever really knowing that he did it.

He will be sorely missed by everyone that knew him!

Remembering



Jerome Scott Guise

*Citizen's Fire Company #1 of
Mt. Holly Springs – Pennsylvania*

Volunteer Firefighter

March 9, 2020

Age 34



Remembering



Michael C. Malinowski Sr.

*Morton-Rutledge Volunteer Fire
Company Station 13 – Pennsylvania*

Volunteer Captain

December 3, 2019

Age 40



*M*ichael Christopher Malinowski died on December 3, 2019, after responding to a call for downed wires and trees the previous evening. Following the call, he reported to officers that he was feeling ill. At work the next morning, he had tightness in his chest and was taken to the hospital, where he died.

Mike was a 1997 graduate of Gloucester City Junior-Senior High School, where he played football, baseball, and ran track. In his teenage years, he began volunteering with the Gloucester City Fire Department, Pine Grove Station 52 and 54, and ended his tour as a captain in 2015.

Gloucester City Battalion Chief Pat Hagan said, "Michael was a dedicated volunteer firefighter for Gloucester City for 19 years. He gave his all to serving the residents of our community and our fire department."

Mike became captain of the Morton-Rutledge Volunteer Fire Company, Station 13, in 2019 and was on the board of directors. He did training and fundraising for the department, including horseshoe tournaments, spaghetti dinners, and an Aunt Mary Pat benefit. He loved the department more than anything else and would do anything for anyone who needed it. He enjoyed carpentry and helped fix up the crew room and the firefighter memorial at the fire company.

He was handy at home. He built chairs and a table for his patio and was always working on a project. Mike loved to cook and barbecue. He would cook for the crew and for his family, and for the last two summers he donated his time and grilling skills to the Knowlton Swim Club to raise money for the swim team. At Christmas, he enjoyed accompanying Santa around boroughs of Morton and Rutledge to visit the residents.

Mike was a Disney, Star Wars, and Marvel fanatic. He had seen every Marvel movie. His favorite character was the Punisher. Mike and his wife, Melissa, were married in 2015, then had a ceremony at Canada in EPCOT and a honeymoon at Disney World in April 2017.

Morton-Rutledge Fire Chief Don Holstein said, "You'd walk in and he was the guy who was always there. He was all about helping others, either in community or helping friends. If you needed someone to help you move, he was there, an outstanding individual. There wasn't anything you asked that he wouldn't get done."

He is survived by his wife, Melissa, and his five children, Bailey, Michael Jr., Matthew, Cooper, and Harper.

He was a dedicated fireman, always willing to lend a hand to friends, the fire department, and the community.

Edward "Gary" Minnick, 65, was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to Edward P. and Blanche A. (Bartley) Minnick on August 30, 1955.

Gary began his 30 plus years of service to the community with the Warminster Volunteer Ambulance Corps. He served as a firefighter with the Warminster Fire Company and then with the Colmar Volunteer Fire Company, until he could no longer handle the physical demands of fighting fires. Gary was still committed to serving the community any way he could, so he transferred to the Colmar Volunteer Fire Company's traffic division, where he rose to the rank of captain and served until his last call on October 1, 2020.

On November 11, 1995, Gary married Anna and became a stepfather to her three children, Christina, Michael, and Rebecca. He loved and was committed to all three as if they were his own.

Gary Minnick was many things: a loving husband, a stepfather, a grandfather, a great-grandfather, and a firefighter. His dedication to his community and family was strong and never faltered. Whether the fire alarm sounded, a family emergency occurred, or one of his grandchildren simply needed a ride to work, Gary never hesitated to answer the call.

Gary's love for fighting fires and serving the community was evident in the many stories he told to anyone willing to listen, about the incidents he and his crew responded to.

On October 1, 2020, the alarm sounded. Gary kissed his wife and said to her, "She was the best thing that ever happened to me." He left to answer the call, but Gary never made it to that call. He was found by one of his fellow firefighters, lying unresponsive next to his fire truck.

Edward "Gary" Minnick passed away doing what he loved and had dedicated his life to—being a firefighter.

Remembering



Edward "Gary" Minnick

*Colmar Volunteer Fire Company –
Pennsylvania
Volunteer Captain
October 1, 2020
Age 65*



Remembering



Edward L. Nulton

Kunkle Fire Company – Pennsylvania

Volunteer Firefighter

September 19, 2019

Age 62



Edward Lee Nulton Sr. of Beaumont, Pennsylvania, passed away peacefully on September 19, 2019, at Allied Hospice in Scranton.

Born July 30, 1956, he was the son of the late Claude and Jessie Derhammer Nulton.

Edward was employed by numerous places over his life-time, retiring from the Cornell Ironworks in Mountain Top. After his retirement, he enjoyed doing yard work, working on cars, and spending time with his grandchildren. He was a veteran volunteer fireman for 10 years at the Kunkle Fire Company and loved to help his community.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by several brothers and sisters.

Edward is survived by his best friend and soulmate of 36 years, the former Brenda A. Hoyt; sons, Edward Nulton Jr. and Jesse Nulton; daughter, LeeAnn Nulton Knoss, and her husband, Robert; grandchildren, Heidi, Olivia, Breanna, and Tucker; and several brothers, sisters, nieces, and nephews.



Remembering

*W*alter David “Walt” Wagaman lost his life on August 14, 2019, due to injuries sustained on August 2, 2019, while responding to an auto accident. Walt, Assistant Chief 27 of the Buchanan Valley Volunteer Fire Department in Adams County, Pennsylvania, was born on June 19, 1973, and grew up in “the valley.” He became a junior member at the age of 14 and rode his bike to respond until he was able to drive.

He was Assistant Chief 27 for ten years and loved being in the fire department. He was a leader, mentor, friend, brother, son, father, and husband. Always willing to do what was asked, he would go above and beyond. When duty called, he went.

At our events, he was head chicken cook, a.k.a. “Chicken Man.” He enjoyed being at events and helping out whenever help was needed. Everyone loved his chicken. He was always checking on everyone, making sure they were OK.

Courageous, thoughtful, selfless, caring, strong, and loving was who Walt was. How do you measure the sacrifices he made, to always be there and do for others in the manner he did? Walt had strong morals and always put others first, before himself.

Walt is survived by his wife, Vickie Wagaman, whom he was married to for 14 years. He is also survived by his parents, James and Crystal Arter; his daughter, Dezerea Whistler; and his son, Eric Staub. He enjoyed spending downtime with his family and his two nephews, Brayden and Jace. They were his heroes.

He will forever be missed by his wife, family, and friends, and the Buchanan Valley Volunteer Fire Department. His soul is in the valley and will forever remain there. He is our hero and is still saving lives through the Gift of Life program through organ donation. He will forever remain in our hearts, a hero's hero to many.



Walter David Wagaman

*Buchanan Valley Volunteer Fire
Department – Pennsylvania
Volunteer Assistant Chief*

August 14, 2019

Age 46



Remembering



Frank J. Sousa

Bristol Fire Department –

Rhode Island

Career Deputy Chief

August 27, 2015

Age 50



Frank was a dedicated firefighter who rose to the rank of deputy fire chief and was the town's fire marshal. He lost his life in a tragic car accident responding to his station, where his fellow brothers and sisters from the department bravely tried to save his life. He was very involved with different organizations within the fire department, including the welfare committee, rescue, fire police, and fundraising, to name a few. He was committed to his station, the Defiance Hose Company Engine 3 and 5, which he joined in 1993. In 2005, he ran a crew to bring the station back to its original format. He was very involved with the biannual clam boils and the firemen's muster, winning the water battle a few times over the years.

Frank was a true Bristolian. He was raised there and lived there most of his life, briefly moving away in his 20s, only to move back because he loved his town. While in high school, he got involved in carpentry and loved it. He started as a carpenter and continued in that field until becoming the fire marshal in 2009.

When he joined the fire department, he got involved with all aspects of the station. He was captain when his station turned 100 and proudly gave out awards and badges to all the station's personnel. Just before his death he applied for a grant to receive a Humvee to be used as the first forestry truck in Bristol. He dedicated a lot of time with various businesses to help him get the truck on the road. He was one of the instructors for the department. He enjoyed helping all the younger firefighters and watching them grow and was always there for them. He received many awards for his many accomplishments throughout the years.

His first love was always his family. He loved his son and his stepchildren. He loved visiting and playing with his grandchildren and was a great husband. We loved to travel together. For his 50th birthday, he wanted to go on a Disney cruise and go to Disney World. When we went, I was able to surprise him by having his close friend and his wife join us on the cruise. He was so surprised! Then, when we went to Disney World, our oldest grandchildren were able to join us. He went on every ride with them, and his favorite ride was Peter Pan. He was a lot like Peter Pan—a little boy in a man's body, always playful and with a big sense of humor.

The world and I lost a true hero. He was my rock, and he touched a lot of lives. He will always be missed.

Remembering

Angela “Nicole” Chadwick Harris, 45, passed away on Wednesday, May 22, 2019. Born in Guntersville, Alabama, she was the daughter of Larry Gene Chadwick and Elizabeth Ann Lang Bridgeman.

She received her bachelor’s degree from Auburn University and her master’s degree from Virginia Tech. She went to work at Fort Jackson as a wildlife biologist in 2007. One of the top woodpecker specialists in the country, she was especially known for her work to save the rare red-cockaded woodpecker. She was previously employed with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources.

Nicole was a member of the Wildlife Alumni of Auburn and the Auburn Alumni of South Carolina. She was well known in the southeast for her conservation work. She left the world better than she found it.

A nature lover from childhood on, she was remembered as “absolutely fearless” and dedicated to her work.

Nicole was strongly devoted to her children. No matter what your conversation was with her, it would always lead back to them. She left a huge impression of life on her family and friends that will forever be missed.

Surviving are her children, Christopher Dakota Bryant, James David Hawkins, and Andrew Asher Hawkins; her father, Larry Chadwick; her mother, Elizabeth Bridgeman; her sister, Kristie Chadwick; and her brother, Jason Chadwick.



Angela N. Chadwick- Hawkins

*U.S. Army, Fort Jackson –
South Carolina
Career Wildlife Biologist/Firefighter*

May 22, 2019

Age 45



Remembering



Coleman B. Loadholt Jr.

*Hampton County Fire Rescue –
South Carolina
Volunteer Captain
June 21, 2019
Age 51*



Coleman “Coley” Loadholt Jr. was a volunteer fire captain for Hampton County Fire Rescue and a career firefighter/EMT and senior officer for Jasper County Fire Rescue. He suffered a heart attack on June 17, 2019, while on duty at the Jasper County Fire Rescue Department, after responding to multiple calls with Hampton County Fire Rescue. He died at the Medical University of South Carolina Hospital in Charleston on June 21, 2019.

Captain Loadholt worked with Jasper County Fire Rescue for almost 14 years. He received the Life Saver Award in Jasper County and was named Firefighter of the Year and Officer of the Year in Brunson. He was a member of the South Carolina Firefighters Association.

He enjoyed riding motorcycles and was an excellent mechanic.



Remembering

*P*aul Edwin Quattlebaum Jr. was born October 13, 1972, to proud parents, Paul and Debbie Quattlebaum. They were excited to welcome their firstborn into the world. He was full of excitement from an early age to explore and make new discoveries in a new world. He quickly learned that Mom and Dad held a short leash. They would let him explore and find his way, always under a watchful eye.

He was an average student who found out that he enjoyed the outdoors more than school. His granddad would take him deer hunting in the low country of South Carolina. He quickly grew to love to hear the dogs run and enjoyed the excitement of the hunt. After trying college for two years, he decided to join the Marine Corps. His dad had fought with the Marines in Vietnam. Hearing his dad talk of the war, he decided that the Marines were his future. All was well until one night at the beach a car ran through a stop sign and crushed his left leg below the knee. He received a medical discharge after twelve plus months of recovery.

Searching for a way in life, he became friends with some firefighters, prompting him to become a volunteer with Lexington County Firefighters Association, which led to full-time in 2000. He convinced skeptical parents that he had made the right choice. At first, his mom and dad were disappointed, but they quickly learned that he had made the right career move. Like the Marines, firefighters are a unique brotherhood who proudly serve to keep people safe in a time of crisis. It is indeed an honorable profession.

It was at the fire station where he met Tanya, who became the mother of his son, Elijah Paul Quattlebaum. Paul Edwin was the proud father who loved his son more than anything. He taught Elijah to dream big and aim high. It was both their dream to own a log home in the mountains of Tennessee. He was anxiously looking forward to retirement to live out his dream with Elijah.

His life was taken on October 4, 2019, when he was struck and killed by a tractor-trailer while giving aid and assistance to a motor vehicle accident.

Paul Edwin loved family, and he loved God. All that knew him saw him as a kind and generous man. He ran a pool maintenance business that quickly became more than he wanted, but he continued to work hard to reach his goals in life.

Life is so empty for family and friends without his presence. He loved deeply and faithfully. Rest in Peace, my dear son. You will forever be missed here on this earth.



Paul Edwin Quattlebaum Jr.

Lexington County Fire Service –

South Carolina

Career Engineer

October 4, 2019

Age 46



Remembering



Dwain Franklin Hudson

Argyle Volunteer Fire Department –

South Dakota

Volunteer Firefighter

April 17, 2019

Age 73



*I*n 1972, Dwain was employed by the Florida Highway Patrol as a state trooper, where he continued his career until his retirement in 1998. He also was a volunteer firefighter at the Lacrosse Volunteer Fire Department during the 1990s.

Dwain was very active from 1992 to 2019 with Single Action Shooting Society (SASS), in which he was a life member and regulator. This is a family-oriented sport and one that is still shared by his wife and son, who are also members of SASS.

Dwain also had a five-year employment with the Department of Homeland Security from 2006 until 2011, where he was a firearms instructor in Artesia, New Mexico.

He remained very active throughout his retirement and loved to travel, hunt, and fish. An interesting story on the fishing, his very good buddy finally talked him into ice fishing, and he found—to his surprise—that he greatly enjoyed that new adventure. You see, he had a fear of going out on the ice, as previously in northwestern Montana, he fell through the ice while fishing and resolved to never, ever again ice fish. However, thank goodness for dear friends, they re-introduced him to the art of ice fishing, and all without incident.

Dwain joined the Argyle Volunteer Fire Department as a volunteer fireman in 2018 and, until his passing, enjoyed his time training and working with this great group of dedicated men and women.

Dwain was a very family-oriented man and very close to his parents, sisters, sons, and granddaughter. Memories of Dwain's life and times are so memorable, because through him all things were possible for me, Caffy L. Hudson, his wife of 50 years.

Jason Byrd lost his life while fighting a structure fire on February 18, 2019. He had just taken equipment up the ladder when he collapsed. His brothers and sisters in service immediately began life saving measures, while continuing fireground operations. The home was saved but unfortunately, he did not survive.

He started with the Hickory Withe Volunteer Fire Department in 2000. Over 19 years, he was promoted to lieutenant, captain, and eventually chief. He worked full-time at the local electric company as a network engineer and was respected by his peers. His family was his top priority, but his job as fire chief was his passion. He loved helping in the schools, teaching children not to be afraid of firefighters, changing out smoke detectors for people who needed help, and raising money for MDA Fill the Boot.

He was born in Memphis on August 27, 1976, to Patricia Yager and Johnny Byrd. His uncle and grandfather were in the fire service, and he was fascinated about helping his community. At age 14, he was involved in a serious ATV accident, which ignited his passion to give back to the community that helped rescue him. He graduated from Fayette Ware High School in 1994 and from Christian Brothers University with an electrical engineering degree.

He was an amazing husband to Jamie and an even better father to his children, Shelby and Jackson. Jamie and Jason had many years together in the fire service making memories and enjoying time with their fire family, a family like no other. The department was a family with him at the head of the table. This group was there for each other for weddings, funerals, and everything in between, and they continue to take care of each other and his family. Jason's hobbies included boating, hunting, riding ATVs, tailgating, and spending time with friends and family.

It speaks volumes to Jason's character that he worked full-time, completed the tasks of the volunteer fire chief, and helped anyone in need. He was selfless, caring, funny, and genius in many aspects. He is survived by his wife, Jamie Gray Byrd; his children, Shelby and Jackson Byrd; his mother, Patricia Yager Hale (Bruce); his father, Johnny Byrd (Bonnie Spears); and his sister, Jessica White (Marcus). He will always be missed by his family, his fire family, and countless other lives he touched. One thing everyone noticed was his incredible smile. It conveyed his character without him speaking a word—honest, kind, loving, and always ready to help his fellow man.

Remembering



Jason E. Byrd

Fayette County Fire Department –

Tennessee

Volunteer District Chief

February 18, 2019

Age 42



Remembering



John L. Blume

Dallas Fire-Rescue – Texas

Career Lieutenant

May 5, 2019

Age 58



John Blume would be the first to tell you that he had a hard time sitting still. As a child, you'd often find him outside, playing baseball or fishing with his brothers and neighborhood friends. That same inability to sit still, coupled with his natural curiosity, led to a wide range of knowledge over many diverse subjects. Though his first dream of becoming a professional baseball player didn't pan out, he ended up right where he was meant to be, developing and honing his passion as a firefighter with the Dallas Fire Department. He served over 34 years, nine of them as a paramedic, driving and caring for citizens in an ambulance, where he delivered no fewer than ten babies. Some of his fondest and most memorable moments with the fire department were the times where his training in CPR and other EMT medical skills resulted in saving several lives. Moving up the ranks, he ended his career as a lieutenant.

John had many interests outside the station: teacher, baseball coach, investor, woodworker, historian, Master Gardener, hunter, fisherman, outdoorsman, handyman, dog whisperer, chef, world traveler, PTA president, and Band Booster president. During the downtime at the fire station, he'd take some of these hobbies with him to indulge in his real passion for teaching and mentoring. He'd bring his homegrown vegetables to the station to teach others how to can, his tools to do group projects and fix things around the station, bringing in fish he'd caught to cook and share with his station family. When he wasn't "lecturing" the rookies about finance and saving for the future, he'd playfully get on their nerves by playing "Stump the Lieutenant."

John's death left his wife, Michelle (Micki), and his three sons, Jesse, Travis, and Alex, with lots of wonderful memories and broken hearts. While they all miss him every day, they are deeply grateful for the legacy of love that he left behind. His mother, Lois, also survives him, along with his brothers, Robert, Chris, and Matt, and sisters, Katy (Hurst), Karen (Thieme), and Jennifer.

No matter how you measure it, John Blume touched the lives of countless people, and the world is a better place for having had him in it.

Remembering



Lemuel "DJ" Bruce

Houston Fire Department – Texas

Career Arson Investigator

October 16, 2020

Age 44

Lemuel "DJ" Bruce was born in Houston on August 23, 1976. The son of Charlotte Taylor and Delray Bruce Sr., he grew up in north Houston, was a dedicated Boy Scout, and graduated from Klein Oak High School in 1995. DJ then enlisted in the United States Marine Corps, where he served honorably for five years and became one of the youngest Black Hawk helicopter crew chiefs in the history of the Corps. He later served in the Army National Guard.

DJ was an extraordinary husband, father, son, brother, professional colleague, and friend. His survivors include wife, Rachel; daughter, Sydney; son, Greyson; mother, Charlotte; father, Delray Sr., and stepmother, Esmelda; in-laws, Dan and Tina Taylor; in-law, Cindy Taylor; sisters, Danelle Shields (Shane) and Brande Rios (Marc); brother, Manny Zavala (Elda); and stepsister, Belinda Rendon (Bobby).

From scouting as a young man to the military and then the fire service and as an investigator, DJ committed early on to a life of service. Along the way, he constantly strived to improve himself and provide for his family, working many side jobs and obtaining a fire science engineering degree. He seemed to always be preparing for his next test. DJ's interests off the job were diverse—from wood working to beekeeping, bottling beer, high-end whiskey, and old-school country music. As many of DJ's friends have said, life was "Better with Bruce."

DJ's final job assignment as an arson investigator matched his inquisitive personality. He loved to learn, he was ambitious, and he wanted to right wrongs. His professional dedication was surpassed only by his commitment to his family. Throughout his 15-year marriage to Rachel, DJ made time every day for his family, no matter what his job and academic commitments required.

DJ was a proud member of the Houston Professional Fire Fighters Association (HPFFA), the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI), and Combined Law Enforcement Agencies of Texas (CLEAT).

The Bruce family offers gratitude for the continuing support of the Houston Fire Department Family, the Houston Professional Fire Fighters Association, and the Houston Fire Department Arson Unit.



Remembering



Bradley D. Burney

*Mesquite Fire Department –
Texas
Career Captain
June 18, 2018
Age 51*



*B*radley Burney was a man of faith who trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ at age 11. On June 18, 2018, his faith was made sight when he passed away unexpectedly. His life verse was Proverbs 27:1 *Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.* He lived his life accordingly.

Bradley was a devoted family man. He was married to his best friend, Joanna, whom he lovingly referred to as his "Bride" for almost 27 years. He was a proud father to his son, Jacob, and daughter, Shelby. He loved being a coach in their youth sports leagues. His favorite pastime was teaching them to hunt, and he was more excited than they were when they got a deer. Many Sunday evenings you could find him at "Burney family dinner," sitting at the head of the table eating, laughing, and visiting.

Growing up, Bradley excelled in sports. He played football, baseball, and track. He received invitations from two MLB teams to attend tryout camps. While in college ROTC, he was awarded the prestigious German Sports Badge after participating in a competition at Ft. Bliss. He graduated from Texas Christian University in 1992. He loved to travel, spend time with family, Christmas, Dr. Pepper, and watching his Horned Frogs play football. Bradley had an incredible mind for finances and enjoyed dabbling in the stock market. He was a member of Worth Baptist Church, where he was a leader in the AWANAS program for several years and had driven a bus to pick up senior citizens for church services.

Bradley began his career with the Mesquite Fire Department on March 29, 1993. He was promoted to captain on April 28, 2012. Because of his love for the job and his fire family, he never considered being a firefighter as "work." His fellow firefighters described him as a great leader and mentor who was not willing to ask anyone to do what he was not willing to do himself. He was passionate in doing the right thing and taught others to always be kind to people. Many described him as the calm during the chaos as he methodically sized up the scene of a call. Bradley was always conscientious of his crew's safety. He was steadfast in his beliefs, and everyone knew where he stood, as he treated everyone fairly and equally. At the station, Bradley kept his Bible on his bed and read it every evening.

Bradley received four Life Saving Awards during his career. He even performed the Heimlich on his brother-in-law and a fellow firefighter.

Bradley is missed by many, but his light still shines on in the lives he touched.

Jesus "Jesse" De La Rosa Jr., 55, passed away on Saturday, August 8, 2020. Jesse was born on May 22, 1965, to Jesus De La Rosa Sr. and Ester S. Gutierrez in Weslaco, Texas. Jesse grew up in Weslaco with four siblings, Elizabeth, Elsa, Elvia, and Jaime.

He thrived in football and was a proud Weslaco Panther, Class of 1983. Jesse married his high school sweetheart, Sylvia Molina, on July 27, 1985. They had two children, Sean and Jason.

In October of 1988, Jesse joined the Weslaco Fire Department, where he faithfully served as a first responder for the rest of his life. Firefighting was Jesse's full-time career and passion, but he also found time for several other part-time jobs, all service-oriented. He worked as a nurse's assistant for Knapp Medical Center and an emergency medical service responder for South Star, Border, Vida, Med-Care, and Guardian EMS Services.

Jesse was a history buff and loved watching historical documentaries. He also enjoyed fishing, sharpening and collecting knives, and collecting unique toys. His polished leather boots were his signature, and Jesse never left home without polished boots. He loved to travel, and he and Sylvia took priceless vacations together.

Jesse was a true hero. He was a great mentor to his friends, colleagues, and children. Jesse was a great provider, a devoted husband, and a father. His legacy of dedication and service to the Weslaco community will always be a part of this community.

Jesse is preceded in death by his father, Jesus De La Rosa Sr., and his brother, Jaime De La Rosa. He is survived by his mom, Ester De La Rosa; wife of thirty-five years, Sylvia; sons, Sean De La Rosa (Stephanie Uresti) and Jason De La Rosa (Patricia Maria Castaneda); grandchildren Skye Navi De La Rosa and Miguel Sebastian Torres; sisters, Elizabeth Gonzalez (Armando), Elsa Torres (Joel), and Elvia De La Rosa.

Remembering



Jesus "Jesse" De La Rosa Jr.

Weslaco Fire Department – Texas

Career Driver/Engineer

August 8, 2020

Age 55



Remembering



Clayton William Fenwick

Sugar Land Fire-EMS – Texas

Career Assistant Chief

September 13, 2019

Age 57



Clayton William “Clay” Fenwick was born to Garvis and Delores Fenwick on December 22, 1961, in Houston, Texas. Clay was a big brother to Renee, Finnie, and Jimmy. His family moved from Houston to Pearland, Texas, in 1973. Clay graduated from Pearland High School in 1980 and attended Texas A&M University. After a year at A&M, he returned home and went to work in the family business. He joined the Pearland Volunteer Fire Department in 1983 and was a member through 1994. While working full-time at the family business, Clay followed his passion and enrolled in Houston Community College Fire Training, attending night and weekend classes. He was a proud 1990 graduate.

In January 1991, Clay began his professional career with the Sugar Land Fire Department, where he held the positions of firefighter, driver, lieutenant, captain, battalion chief, and assistant chief. He served as interim fire chief from September 2008 to April 2009. Clay held an associate degree in fire protection technology and a bachelor’s degree in fire science. He was a graduate of the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy, where he looked forward to attending various classes each year. He attended every seminar, conference, or learning opportunity he could attend. He firmly believed in education and encouraged fellow firefighters to continue their education and further their knowledge.

Clay was passionate about his career, but his utmost passion was his family. He married the love of his life, Meledy, in 1987 and was the proud father of Malorie and Cayla. He was a dedicated son, husband, father, friend, and soon-to-be first-time grandfather to his “Little Chief,” Slade Clayton Gardner, born on National First Responder’s Day, October 28, 2019. Clay always sacrificed his wants for others. He could be described as selfless, compassionate, loyal, dedicated, humble, perfectionist, a man of integrity, and having the memory of an elephant.

Clay was diagnosed with Stage IV metastatic prostate cancer in March 2018. Throughout 18 months of rigorous treatment he always remained positive, never complaining. He was a “glass half full” person. Clay was a man of faith and would say, “Without hope and faith, you have nothing.” On September 13, 2019, Clayton William Fenwick, surrounded by family, friends, and coworkers, answered his last call and was called home to be with his Heavenly Father.

Clay, we were blessed with the gift of your love, loving you, and we’ll still be loving you!

*G*regory Paul Garza entered into rest on October 15, 2019, in San Antonio, Texas, doing what he loved to do. Born on April 21, 1970, in San Antonio, he was a member of the San Antonio Fire Department for 17 years and a part of the hazardous material response team. His lifelong dream after retirement was to teach firefighting classes at the local community college.

He spent hours researching firefighting training that would benefit his fellow firefighters. He loved to cook great meals for the fire shift on duty. One of the first to greet visitors for a firehouse tour, he was more than happy to explain the tools used in firefighting. He became a paramedic to help in those times the truck got to the scene before the paramedics arrived and he could begin to render aid. He would offer to work overtime during the holidays so firefighters with young children could spend the holidays with their families. The guys in the crew knew they could count on Greg to help them out.

Greg had a very giving and compassionate heart. He had a passion to save stray cats and had several cats that he rescued at home, one of which was handicapped. He befriended an elderly woman during firefighter block walks, because she told him she did not have any family to help her. He made a point to take her weekly for grocery shopping, lunch, or some other errand. He helped homeless people, buying the person lunch, shoes, or other needs. He helped neighbors and friends with random tasks and made time to go see sick friends and colleagues in the hospital. He was a great listener to his close friends.

He was a loving, kind, caring, and giving man. He was a wonderful and loving husband and a great son, brother, brother-in-law, and uncle. He had a passion for action figures, Hot Wheels, and Transformers. He was a great cook. He liked Leatherman multi-tools such as pocketknives and flashlights. He was one of a kind.

Gregory is survived by his wife, Sonia Evette Rodriguez Garza; parents, Joe O. and Bertha Garza; father-in-law, Donato G. Rodriguez; brothers, Joe A. Garza (Hope) and James A. Garza; nephews, Judge Anthony Rios and Joey E. Garza; brothers-in-law, Juan Antonio Rodriguez (Nubia) and Michael Rodriguez (Veronica); and nieces, Natalie Rodriguez, Megan Rodriguez, and Kaylin Rodriguez. Greg is also survived by numerous friends and countless others whose lives he touched. He was preceded in death by his mother-in-law, Gloria Nellie Rodriguez.

He will be greatly missed and never forgotten.

Remembering



Gregory P. Garza

San Antonio

Fire Department – Texas

Career Firefighter

October 15, 2019

Age 49



Remembering



Duncan Cameron Henderson

*Ringgold Volunteer
Fire Department – Texas
Volunteer Assistant Chief*

July 15, 2020

Age 65



Duncan was a respected individual of uncompromising dedication. A high degree of engagement and service to his community, profession, hobbies, friends, and family are evident in his absence. Duncan is remembered with respect as a father to Caren and Andrew, grandfather to Cambria and Reagan, and friend to all who greatly miss him. Duncan shared his time and talents far and wide throughout his life, touched the lives of many, and left this world a better place by being in it.

He was lost in service on July 15, 2020, while responding to serve his rural community. It was a tragedy for his family and community, as so much remained to be experienced and enjoyed. Duncan was a humble man of incredible strength and selflessness.

Duncan's service to Ringgold and surrounding communities started in 2015, resuming a long history of making a difference in his community. He quickly rose to the role of assistant chief in 2018. Duncan was a strong force in the evolution of the Ringgold Volunteer Fire Department (RVFD), the surrounding community, and his fellow firefighters. The "Tin Man" had an impact on all who had the pleasure to meet and work with him in Montague and Clay Counties.

Duncan regularly attended Red River Valley Wildland Fire Academy to increase his skills and capabilities. He proudly, yet humbly completed GPS & Mapping, S131 Firefighter Type 1, SCBA/PPE/Firefighter Safety Classes, and NFPA 1001 Standard. He represented the RVFD as a storm watcher and crime fighter, contributing a positive force for continuous improvement.

As assistant chief, he assisted in procuring new apparatus and equipment and establishing processes to advance the evolution of the department. Most notable was his effort to convert a Stewart-Stevenson Army truck to a wildland fire truck, "Duncan's Kitten." The housing and dedication of this apparatus was completed in memoriam after his death in the line of duty.

Before his involvement with the Ringgold Volunteer Fire Department, he served as an engineer with Minquas Fire Company #2 in Downingtown, Pennsylvania, and was an accomplished crash fire and rescue responder during his career in aviation. A private pilot for over 50 years, he was an accredited member of the American Association of Airport Executives, owner and operator of Henderson Field, president of Hand Feed Cattlemen's Association, leader of the "39 Gang," and an Eagle Scout.

Duncan leaves us with inspiration and a legacy that we hope to mimic in our own lives. He made the best of this.

Remembering

Steven P. Henderson lost his life on October 12, 2019, due to an accident that occurred while on a fire call with the Louise Volunteer Fire Department. He was born into a wonderful family on December 24, 1958. Steven grew up on a farm, with a great work ethic in farming and ranching.

After marriage to Lisa Vajdos in 1995, Steven committed to the community of Louise, devoting all his free time in bringing out the best of the small town to raise his two children in.

Steven would literally give the shirt off his back to anyone! He could always be found cooking for local fundraisers, churches, and other fire departments. He played a large part in assisting local families to qualify for free housing.

Steven was a member of the Louise Volunteer Fire Department for 26 years, loving every moment of it! During this time, he held various offices, including president. Over the years, he taught many of the new firemen how to be the best, be dedicated, and to love what you do! He earned "Fireman of the Year" with the Louise Volunteer Fire Department in 1994 and again in 2002.

Steven had a strong belief in God and gave his whole heart to his church. He co-chaired the annual picnic for many years and was a 1st degree member of the Knights of Columbus.

Steven achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. In addition, he served as a director with the Wharton County Youth Fair and past president and board member of the Louise Water Board. He was named the Louise-Hillje Chamber of Commerce "Citizen of The Year" in 2008. This recognition was a result of his dedication to his community and his willingness to always lend a helping hand to anyone in need.

Steven P. Henderson is missed dearly by his wife, Lisa; children, Koale and Kinsley; as well as his family, friends, and community. He was an amazing man!



Steven Paul Henderson

*Louise Volunteer
Fire Department – Texas
Volunteer Firefighter*

October 12, 2019

Age 60



Remembering



Eric Hill

Lubbock Fire Rescue – Texas

Career Lieutenant

January 11, 2020

Age 39



Lieutenant Eric Hill and his crew were working a vehicle accident on I-27 in Lubbock, Texas, when a truck traveling the opposite way lost control, crossing the median and striking and killing Lieutenant Hill, police officer Matt Reyna, and critically injuring fireman Matt Dawson.

Survivors include his three-year-old twin daughters, Kylee Brice and Kynlee Blaze; his parents, Mark and Susan Hill; sister, Randi Norris, and husband, Zach; and nephews, Tyson and James.

Lieutenant Hill started his career in Midland, Texas, where he served from September 2006 to August 2009. He served with Lubbock Fire Rescue from August 2009 until his death in January 2020. Eric loved being a fireman/paramedic and took his leadership role as lieutenant seriously by studying and asking many mentors how to be a good leader for his crew.

His greatest achievement, pride, and joy was being a wonderful dad to his little girls. Eric also loved the open range, where he spent a lot of time on horseback. He loved working with horses and cattle and enjoyed rodeo team roping.

Eric was known for giving 100% in anything he did. He was known for his firm handshake, his beautiful blue eyes, and being a loyal friend to others.



Remembering

Courageous, humble, knowledgeable, with a great sense of responsibility. These words are often used to describe a superhero. They also describe Captain Stephen Hill. He earned the nickname “Super Steve” when he first joined the Richardson Fire Department in 1999 because of his performance on the job and his love for superheroes.

Being a firefighter was Stephen’s core; he loved it. He was passionate about every aspect of the fire service, down to mopping the floors. His fellow firefighters were his brothers and sisters. The bond he had with them was powerful and unbreakable. Stephen obtained 17 certifications during his tenure at the Richardson Fire Department. He was awarded three lifesaving bars, was a member of the TxF2, and promoted to captain in 2013.

Stephen had a great sense of responsibility when it came to his crew and teaching at the Fire Academy. He loved to share his knowledge and passion for the fire service with probationary firefighters. His favorite classes to teach were forcible entry, fire tradition, and cancer prevention.

Stephen was a devoted husband of 17 years to Natalie and father to his children, Ellie and Jack. He was a loving son to Ron and Mary Hill and an amazing brother to Daniel and Patrick. He also dearly loved his in-laws, Mike and Tam Sandlin.

His family took priority. He loved playing with his kids, attending their sporting events, and having family dance parties and game and movie nights. He loved to make his family laugh with his quick wit and goofy sense of humor. Stephen was an artist, athlete, writer, and had the patience of a saint. A lover of all music, he believed music was medicine for the soul. Music was and still is constantly playing at the Hill Household.

A Follower of Christ, Stephen lived his life by example. His love for Christ carried through in the way he treated others. He loved unconditionally, passionately, and truly accepted you for your true self. He baptized both his children and shared Christ’s teachings with them. Stephen had a servant’s heart. He was helpful to anyone, no matter the circumstances or situation, and had a compassion to want to help them from the start.

Stephen was a natural warrior, full of integrity, gratitude, and hope. In his own words, Stephen had hope from the promises that Jesus made to him unconditionally, and everything that happens in life is ultimately for good. Stephen’s legacy is to live life to the fullest, love fiercely, be gracious, kind, and always do what is right. He made those who had the honor of knowing him better. Stephen will always be in our hearts.



Stephen R. Hill

*Richardson Fire Department –
Texas*

Career Captain

May 29, 2020

Age 42



Remembering



Captain Lee Holbert, 57, of Rowlett, Texas, passed away on September 13, 2020, in Plano, Texas, surrounded by his family and friends.

Lee was a Carrollton, Texas, native and a Newman Smith High School graduate. He graduated from North Texas State University with a degree in business and later graduated from Texas Woman's University with a Bachelor of Science in nursing. He was the only firefighter/paramedic with the Carrollton Fire Department who was a registered nurse.

Lee served with the Carrollton Fire Department for two months shy of 31 years. His service ranks include firefighter, sub apparatus operator, and apparatus operator. He was promoted to captain in 2007.

Lee was a collector of classic cars. He enjoyed his garden and spending time outdoors, particularly hunting and fishing in Creede, Colorado, and Port O'Connor, Texas.

Lee is survived by his wife, Lisa Holbert; sons, Andrew and Jacob Sanchez; daughter, Ava Sanchez; granddaughter, Kennedy Sanchez; mother, Jeannette Holbert; father, Eugene Holbert; sister, Kindall Dube, and her husband, Mike Dube; nephew, Drew Dube; niece, Jeanne Dube; and his loving fur babies, Sonny and Vince.

Lee Holbert

Carrollton Fire Rescue – Texas

Career Fire Captain

September 13, 2020

Age 57



Remembering

At the age of 58, when most grandmothers are spoiling their grandchildren and enjoying the rewards of a loving family, Diana Jones chose a different path. She began a new career as a volunteer firefighter/ EMT. Born in Oklahoma and raised in Houston, this widow moved to Cresson, Texas, to be near her four sons.

Over the next five years, she soaked up the training opportunities offered her. She became an EMT. She obtained multiple wildland firefighter certifications. She rose to the rank of engine boss and was working in that position for a contract firefighting company on the large August Complex wildfire in Tehama County, California, when at 4:20 PM on August 31, 2020, her fire truck was consumed by the wildfire, and she lost her life.

Her example of striving to learn, improve herself, and serve others left an enduring impression on members of the Cresson Volunteer Fire Department and on her community. Today, living a healthy life, is a gentleman in the community who suffered a cardiac arrest and was resuscitated by a team from the volunteer fire department that included Diana Jones.

Diana did not seek recognition, and no job that helped others was too menial for her to do. A local church provides a weekly lunch for area first responders. After attending once as a first responder, she continued to attend weekly, but not in her role as a first responder. She began cooking to help others at these weekly luncheons. The fire department purchased an adjacent building to use for training and department meetings. Diana chose to keep that facility spotless. Floors stayed waxed, toilets stayed clean, and the kitchen was always ready for the next firefighter meal.

The members of the Cresson Volunteer Fire Department voted unanimously to name the building Diana loved The Diana Jones Memorial Training Center to forever remind everyone of the example she set, always learning to better oneself to better serve others.



Diana Jones

KL Farms/Fire LLC (Oregon)

Cresson Volunteer Fire Department –

Texas

Seasonal Firefighter

August 31, 2020

Age 63



Remembering



Lloyd E. Moseley Jr.

*Dallas Fire-Rescue –
Texas*

Career Firefighter/Paramedic

April 14, 2019

Age 64



Lloyd E. Moseley Jr. was born in Dallas, Texas, on September 1, 1954, to Elizabeth and Lloyd Moseley Sr. He graduated from Bryan Adams High School in 1972 and went on to college at East Texas State.

Lloyd joined the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department on October 3, 1990. During his career, he served at several fire stations, with his longest assignments being at Station 18, Station 7, and Station 56. His final assignment was at Station 48 before he ultimately moved into Fire Dispatch.

Lloyd passed away on Sunday, April 14, 2019, after courageously battling acute T-cell lymphoblastic leukemia.

Lloyd had the ability to find God's grace in every situation he was faced with. He had a servant's heart and will be remembered as a man of God who loved to laugh and always wore a smile. When he was off duty, he loved fishing, camping, and being with his family.

Lloyd was preceded in death by his loving wife, Cheril, and his father, Lloyd Sr. He is survived by his mother, Liz; his sister, Ann; his two daughters, Kathleen and Amanda; his son-in-law, Karl; two grandkids that he cherished; as well as many nieces, nephews, and cousins he loved.



*L*ance Norwood passed away September 14, 2019. He was a remarkable man of faith and courage. Lance lived a life devoted to helping others, serving 35 years in the fire service.

Lance developed a passion for helping others early in life, which led him to volunteer for a local fire department at age 16. After graduating high school, he attended TEEEX Fire Academy. In 1985, he began his career with Mineral Wells Fire Department. He continued his education to obtain his EMT license and paramedic certification.

In September 1990, he joined College Station Fire Department (CSFD), where he served as a firefighter/paramedic most of his career. He attended TEEEX Police Academy in August of 2014 and graduated in December as a peace officer. He continued his career as a deputy fire marshal with CSFD, where he was involved in many high-profile fire investigations.

Lance was the type of firefighter/paramedic that any citizen would want to respond to their emergency. His passion was taking care of patients. Around the department, he loved being the center of attention and loved playing jokes on firefighters. He also had a sensitive side and, as a deputy fire marshal, was able to talk to and put residents at ease after a fire. He enjoyed serving, helping, and making a difference in his community as a public servant.

Lance was completely devoted to his family. He met his wife, Rose, when he was dispatched to a car accident. He pulled her out of the vehicle and knew right then that he had met the love of his life. The greatest day he experienced was when he married her. On that day, he truly became complete. Lance was caring, fun, and loving. He had a great sense of humor, an outgoing personality and, most of all, the ability to live life to the fullest.

Lance has two sons, Lance Jr. and Hunter. One highlight was getting to sail on the USS Ronald Reagan before Lance Jr. departed the Navy. Another proud moment was watching Hunter graduate from high school as an honor graduate; he is currently pursuing a career in nursing.

Lance's hobbies included classic cars, Harley Davidson motorcycles, hunting, watching football, camping at the river with his firemen friends, and refurbishing firearms. His favorite characters were Mickey Mouse and Batman.

Lance's life was cut short, but his family and friends hold on to the memories they have of him and relish the time spent with him. Everyone that knew him lost a part of themselves, but the moments that he gave them will live on forever in their hearts. He is greatly missed.

Remembering



Lance Allen Norwood

*College Station Fire Department –
Texas
Paid-on-call Deputy Fire Marshal
September 14, 2019
Age 53*



Remembering



Dennis E. Page Jr.

*Dallas Fire-Rescue – Texas
Career Lieutenant*

*July 25, 2018
Age 55*



Dennis “Denny” Page was born October 14, 1962, in Savannah, Georgia, but moved to Texas as soon as he could. From a young age, he made it a point to help those in need any way he could. This was fitting for a man who proudly served the citizens of Dallas for 33 years on the Dallas Fire Department.

While most others his age and tenure were planning for retirement, Denny decided it was time to study for the lieutenant's test. He was proud to promote to lieutenant in 2014. He had many plans and ideas for those who worked under his command, from additional training to sharpen their firefighting skills to working out to be in top physical condition. Even after 30 years, he loved his job and looked forward to serving the citizens of Dallas for years to come.

Denny had such a passion for life. He loved to learn and master anything and everything he set his mind to. He put 110% of himself into everything he did, from cooking to sewing to woodworking. When faced with a new skill or task, he would say, "I can do that," and would promptly seek out how-to videos, purchase the necessary materials, and conquer it. Everything he did was with love and a huge I-told-you-so grin.

Denny was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, friend, and mentor. You could always count on him to be your biggest cheerleader and to have your back with no questions asked and nothing desired in return.

Denny enjoyed multiple hobbies, especially those which required him to be outdoors. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, shooting guns, or just relaxing by the lake. He was always up for a friendly competition. He strived to be the best he could at whatever he set his mind to.

Denny brought so much joy not only to those who knew him but also to those he just met. He had the gift of gab and was able to strike up a conversation with anyone. He had a way of brightening up any room by just walking in and flashing his big smile.

Denny could overcome any obstacle put in his way until cancer threw him for a loop. Even while battling cancer, he continued to provide training to the Dallas Fire-Rescue through a YouTube video reminding of the importance of wearing protective gear at fire scenes.

Denny lost his courageous battle with cancer on July 25, 2018. He will forever be remembered for the silly happiness he brought into our lives. He was truly one of a kind and can never be replicated.

God did make firemen so police could have heroes.

Remembering

*F*rankie Partida Jr., 24, of Egypt, Texas, passed away on September 17, 2018, from injuries sustained in an automobile accident while returning home from firefighter training in El Campo. Frankie was born on February 6, 1994, in Wharton, Texas, to Stephanie Pena and Frank Partida Sr.

Frankie was raised in the Egypt area and attended Wharton and El Campo schools. He enjoyed spending time with his fellow firefighters and being a member of the Glen Flora Volunteer Fire Department.

Frankie was studying to become an electrician. He was very proud of the work that he did building a house for himself, his wife Rachel, and their small family. Frankie was always willing to lend a hand and help anybody in need. That's one reason he followed his father into firefighting. He will always be known as a compassionate man that loved his family and fire department.

Frankie is survived by his loving wife, Rachel Carswell Partida; his daughter, Zinnia Partida; his son, Frankie III, who was due in December 2018; mother, Stephanie Pena; father, Frank Partida Sr. and wife, Jennifer; sister, Kristin Ullrich, and husband, Mitchell; brothers, Christian Partida and Johnny Gonzales; grandparents, Jesse and Janie Pena and Josephine Gonzales; his best friend, Jonathan Moss; and his in-laws and extended family.



Frankie Partida Jr.

*Glen Flora Volunteer
Fire Department – Texas
Volunteer Firefighter
September 17, 2018
Age 24*



Remembering



Eduardo "Lurch" Ramirez

El Paso Fire Department – Texas
Career Fire Suppression Technician
April 21, 2020
Age 43



*F*ire Suppression Technician Eduardo Ramirez died in the line of duty on April 21, 2020. A lifelong El Pasoan, he was dedicated to serving his community. Affectionately known as “Lurch” by his fellow firefighters, he served with the El Paso Fire Department (EPFD) for 19 years and one day, finishing his career at Station 8 with the closest of brothers. He truly found a home in C Shift and became the best of friends with Lieutenant Roger Korte, whom he missed dearly, and Firefighter José Perez. Eddie had a personality to match his 6' 6" size. He would jokingly answer the phone, “Section 8. How may I help you?” and would say, “Pumper 8 for life!” Eddie was devoted to his profession, always ready to answer the call, and pushed others to strictly adhere to physical training on and off duty. When it came to being a firefighter, he knew his territory like the back of his hand and could recite any protocol verbatim.

Always one to shy away from accolades, Eddie’s achievements during his tenure with the EPFD included the Good Conduct Ribbon and the Emergency Mobilization Ribbon, for his efforts in helping displaced victims of Hurricane Katrina. He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor (the highest honor given, and the only one awarded in the history of the EPFD), the Purple Heart, and the Career Achievement Ribbon. His steadfastness and consummate professionalism will always be remembered.

Eddie was willing to lend a helping hand to anyone at any hour, and he proved it many times. He volunteered with the Special Olympics for nearly seven years; his favorite event was the Holiday Gift Wrapping.

The second of five siblings, Eddie was the biggest little brother ever and his sisters’ favorite to gossip with or give advice to. Eddie was constantly the center of attention and had this magnetism that attracted everyone to him. Though he had a tough-looking exterior due to his stature and numerous tattoos, he was truly a gentle giant. He was a jokester who always had the biggest grin and funny stories to share.

Once his sons were born, he was completely enamored and obsessed, spending every free moment with them. He spent countless hours wrestling, going to the park, building Lego sets, attending every field trip, and being the Classroom Dad.

Eddie is survived by his Wifey for Lifey, Vanessa; sons, Anthony and Daniel; parents; older brother; three younger sisters; extended family, including many nieces and nephews; and all his brothers and sisters from the EPFD. His memory lives on.

Remembering

*K*enneth Dale Stavinoha, a native Houstonian and a believer in Christ, passed away on September 21, 2019. Kenneth suffered a heart attack while performing his assigned duties at Station 27 and unfortunately did not survive, leaving his crew devastated.

Born in Houston on April 13, 1983, Kenneth graduated from Scarborough High School in 2002. Ken was an achiever, and though he did not have the opportunity to go to college, it did not stop him from reaching his goals. Obstacles in life shaped the person he grew up to be, a hardworking man of courage. Always eager to help others, one of Kenneth's many admirable qualities was his passion for fixing things, especially cars. This quality proved to be a blessing in his life when he later became a firefighter. Aside from his love for cars, Ken also enjoyed fishing, surfing, hunting, and racing, especially his Toyota Supra.

Ken worked for 16 years in the printing industry at Page International Communications, where he met his wife, Jessica, in 2005. Their compassionate love for each other helped them endure hardships. In 2016, Page International Communications closed its doors to employees due to financial difficulties, and Ken lost his job. It was a tough time, but Ken was determined and did not give up. Sacrifices were made so he could have a brighter professional future. It was at this point that Ken's mechanical knowledge paid off as he began his firefighting career.

After his many years devoted to printing, Ken pursued his new career as a firefighter with great effort. One of the notable sacrifices made to support this new endeavor was to sell his Toyota Supra, painful but necessary. Ken started Houston Community College's Basic Fire Fighter Academy and EMT in 2016. It was a rough course, but he made it through. Ken completed and passed all certification required to start his journey as a firefighter. He applied to the Houston Fire Department (HFD) and enrolled in the HFD Fire Academy in February 2018. His first HFD station was Station 19, where he met his first crew. After his probationary period, Ken was assigned to Station 27—A Shift.

Ken's strength, tall stature, and tough shell could have made you feel intimidated, but to all those who truly knew him, he will always be remembered as a kind, gentle giant with a good soul. His unwavering dedication to his job and his love to help others will always be a cherished memory of him. Ken left an empty space in the heart of his wife and countless others whose lives he touched.



Kenneth D. Stavinoha

Houston Fire Department – Texas

Career Firefighter

September 21, 2019

Age 36



Remembering



Randell E. Willmon

Dallas Fire-Rescue – Texas

Career Captain

March 15, 2018

Age 53



Captain Randell E. Willmon passed away on Thursday, March 15, 2018, at his home in Lindale, Texas. He was 53 years old. Randy was born in Seville, Spain, where he lived for a short while until his Air Force family eventually relocated to Texas. He graduated high school in Mesquite, Texas.

He later joined the Dallas Fire Department family, where he served for over 28 years, including 14 years as a paramedic. Not only was Randy a captain for the Dallas Fire Department, he also served as an officer for the Lindale Volunteer Fire Department for over nine years. He was on the wildland team and worked at a special ops station for swift water rescue. Captain Willmon epitomized what a firefighter should be.

He became an advocate for making safety changes and promoting awareness of occupational cancer. He helped make a video for Dallas Fire Department, which was shown to all Dallas Fire Department personnel and is shown to all rookies while in school. It was his hope that no other fireman would have to go through cancer again.

He was strong in his faith and a proud member of the Community Christian Fellowship Church of Lindale.

He was class personified. His faith and family were by far the two most important things to him. He was truly the complete package in every way. His priorities were in order. He led by example, stood his ground, and would tell you like it is. This man was a wise leader, sensitive but strong, considerate, honorable, thoughtful, with a great sense of humor. He could do anything. If you needed a house built, call Randy. If you needed to find a deal on something, call Randy. Advice, call Randy. He was truly admired and respected.

Randy loved his family with all his heart. He was so proud of his boys and daily told stories about them. They enjoyed hunting, fishing, hiking, skiing, and many other activities together. He lit up when he talked about his grandkids; they were his world, and he loved sharing stories and pictures of them every day. But most importantly, he loved his wife. Anytime he spoke of her you could just see how happy he was and, oh, how he looked forward to their nights out dancing.

Family members left to cherish his memory included his loving wife, two sons and daughters-in-law, his parents, a sister, a brother, sister-in-law, and three grandchildren.

He will be missed by his family, friends, Lindale Volunteer Fire Department, and Dallas Fire Department.

Remembering

Darrell was hired on October 31, 1996, by the Lynchburg Fire Department, where he served for 20 years. He began his firefighting career at the early age of 16 as a volunteer firefighter. Like many of us, it was during the early years as a volunteer where he began to understand the satisfaction that came from being a public servant. His commitment to community and service is what led him to the Lynchburg Fire Department and ultimately the rank of captain. As a 20-year veteran, Darrell had both the life experience and job skills necessary to be a positive role model, friend, and leader to the many people he encountered. This remained evident through his self-performance appraisal that was completed the spring before his untimely passing, where he documented his goal for the next three years was, "to continue to guide and provide the leadership to employees working under me to have a positive impact to their own career development and professional goals."

Darrell's biggest love was nature. His passion was deer and turkey hunting, which he started at a young age with his father and grandfather, a tradition he later carried to his son. Darrell was known for his commitment to his family, along with his steady and consistent work ethic throughout his career, no matter where he was assigned or what task he was given. He understood that the assignment didn't make the employee; what made an employee was the exposure to strong, knowledgeable colleagues and an environment that was structured and positive with collaboration amongst peers.

Darrell is survived by his wife, Kathy Hamlett; children, Craig and Lacy Hamlett; grandchild, Paislee Rena Hamlett; parents, Earnest and Linda Hamlett; sisters, Debra Staton (Barry) and Mandy Hamlett; brother, Rodney Hamlett (Tammy); father and mother-in-law, Jack and Becky Lacy; brother-in-law, David Cyrus (Gwen); and sister-in-law, Vickie Martin (Butch).



Darrell C. Hamlett

Lynchburg Fire Department – Virginia

Career Captain

October 4, 2016

Age 54



Remembering



Charles C. "Dog" Woods

*Adwolfe Volunteer Fire Department –
Virginia*

Volunteer Firefighter/EMT

September 23, 2020

Age 58



Charles and Missy were married for 35 years. He has two sons, Jimmy Sheets and Zackery Woods.

For as long as I've known him, he always wanted to be a firefighter. He joined Adwolfe Volunteer Fire Department in November 1986 as a Firefighter I and later served as an EMT and the vice president of the department. He was very passionate about devoting his extra time to his fire department. He was also a volunteer EMT for 25 years with Marion Volunteer Lifesaving Crew.

Charles did volunteer work with the Marion Little League when our son Zack was playing ball. He was also a coach and worked on the Little League board. Later, when Zack was a Boy Scout, Charles was a pack leader and helped Zack with his Eagle Scout project. Sponsored by the fire department, they put smoke detectors in homes in the community that needed them.

Charles was the type of person who never met a stranger. Whenever we would go somewhere, whether it was on vacation or just a day trip, if we happened to come upon a wreck, we would always stop to help. We would also visit fire departments—from Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, to Dade City, Florida. He liked to visit to see if they had any new equipment that might benefit his department when he returned home. He purchased T-shirts and collected challenge coins from other departments.

Charles was always there for his family and friends in any situation. All you had to do was call, and he'd be there. He never asked anyone for anything and didn't ask for credit for what he did. He received the Lifesaving Valor Award in December 2019 and didn't feel like he deserved it. He just said it's what he was trained to do.

In addition to his work as a volunteer firefighter/EMT, Charles did great carpentry work, from building Food Lion in Marion to working with Hayes Carpet laying floors for several years. After that, he was self-employed before starting to work as a maintenance man at Park Terrace Apartments in Marion, Virginia, for 16 years.

He was a very devoted father, husband, big brother, and friend. Even after his death, he was still giving by being an organ donor.

Remembering



Steven S. Bailie

*Kennewick Fire Department –
Washington*

Paid-on-call Firefighter

July 17, 2020

Age 68

Steve knew from a young age that he wanted to follow in the footsteps of his father, a career firefighter for the City of Pasco, Washington. After graduating from high school, Steve enlisted in the United States Air Force, where he served four years. When he completed his military service, he returned home and began working towards becoming a career firefighter. Steve started his fire career as a volunteer with Franklin County Fire District No. 3. In 1978, he was hired by the City of Kennewick, Washington. Steve was a dedicated second-generation firefighter who faithfully served his community and was deeply committed to providing his community with the highest quality service in everything he did. Steve was proud to be part of the first graduating paramedic class in southeastern Washington.

In 2000, once the kids were raised, he also started working on an incident management team, first as a supply unit leader then as a logistics section chief. His commitment to the incident management team brought him to various forest fires in the Northwest and numerous disasters and emergencies across the United States, including spending three weeks in New York City after 9/11 helping with the recovery efforts. During this time, he was exposed to what would eventually cause the rare blood cancer that later would take his life.

In 2011, Steve retired from the Kennewick Fire Department. In retirement, he continued to volunteer his time and expertise at many community events. He also continued to serve on the incident management team, which took him across the Pacific Northwest to manage major incidents. In 2018, he was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer directly connected to his service in New York following the terrorist attacks on 9/11. Steve fought a final two-year battle for his life, head on, with bravery. Despite the numerous ups and downs in his prognosis, Steve maintained a positive attitude throughout his illness.

Steve was passionate and devoted to his career as a firefighter. Before his death, he was asked if he would still have helped with the recovery efforts had he known he would become ill. Without hesitation, the answer was yes.

Those who knew Steve would describe him as a devoted husband, father, and friend. He adored both his children and was proud of all their accomplishments. His granddaughter, Madilynn, was the apple of his eye.

Steve will be greatly missed by those he left behind, including his wife, Kathleen; son, Bryan (Kristi); daughter, Laurie; granddaughter, Madilynn; sister, Jane; and the many other relatives and friends in his life.



Remembering



Alan Dean Basso

*Cowlitz County Fire District #5 –
Washington*

Volunteer Firefighter/EMT

November 27, 2020

Age 59



A towering pillar of his community. A teacher, firefighter, and friend to all who knew him. Alan Dean Basso, 'Big Al' to his friends and colleagues, was a quintessential small-town guy with a heart matched only by his larger-than-life personality.

Al graduated from his hometown high school and later Washington State University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in history. Al also earned an Associate of Applied Science in fire protection technology from Portland Community College, as well as EMT and paramedic certifications through the Washington State Department of Health.

Al and his family were a significant part of the fabric of their town, and his extraordinary dedication to community service will never be forgotten. He served as a substitute teacher for Kalama School District, a part-time county juvenile detention officer, and in numerous roles with local fire-fighting agencies.

Al's 36-year firefighting career included five years as a seasonal firefighter with the state Department of Natural Resources, one year with Washington State University, two years with Kalama Fire as a career firefighter, 21 years as a Kalama Fire volunteer/captain, and more than 21 years as a firefighter/lieutenant for the Longview Fire Department.

Al's integrity, humility, and sense of humor endeared him to generations of people. He was always authentically himself. He was the true embodiment of a public servant, as he often demonstrated through his career in the fire service, work with schools, and leadership as an elected official.

Al won a seat on the Port of Kalama's Board of Commissioners and garnered a long list of accomplishments for which he will be remembered. The development and construction of the new Port Office and Interpretive Center, McMenamins Kalama Harbor Lodge, and Haydu Park are among the highlights in his storied run at the Port of Kalama. Al's leadership helped create a remarkable period of growth that enhanced the City of Kalama's livability, an achievement he was incredibly proud of.

Al often volunteered his time in support of youth fundraisers, especially those involving his hometown Kalama Chinooks. Al was proud of his involvement with Operation Warm Coats for Kids. His passion for helping area kids was legendary and nearly equal to his love for the Washington State Cougars, his favorite team.

Al's greatest love was for his wife of 25 years, Vicky Basso, and their daughter, Brittany. Those who loved Al will grieve his loss every day but take comfort in knowing his legacy will live in their hearts forever.

*D*arrell had a deep love of his Savior, family, and community.

As a lifelong member of The Church of Jesus Christ, Darrell first learned to serve in his community through the LDS Scouting Program from 1960-1971. During that time, Darrell gained a great love and appreciation for his scout leaders and fellow scouts and made many lifelong friends too numerous to name. Later, as an adult, serving as an assistant to the scout leader, he helped prepare for and chaperone campouts, ensuring the safety of the scouts he would mentor and grew to love like sons.

Darrell loved his country and, in 1971, he enlisted and served honorably in the United States Marine Corps (USMC) for two years active duty and four years Ready Reserve Service for the USMC until 1977.

In 1973, Darrell continued to serve his community when he hired on with the Hanford Site Patrol at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, transferring to the Hanford Site Fire Department after a short time.

Darrell made many lifelong friends while serving as a firefighter/EMT and was grateful for the unity and camaraderie that he felt amongst his brothers and sisters on the Hanford Site Fire Department. Darrell loved to cook for his firefighter family and will ever be known as a legend, not only for his excellent cooking but also for the laughter he brought to the table. Darrell had a natural ability to tell stories and many life experiences that he freely shared during his years of service until his retirement in 2015.

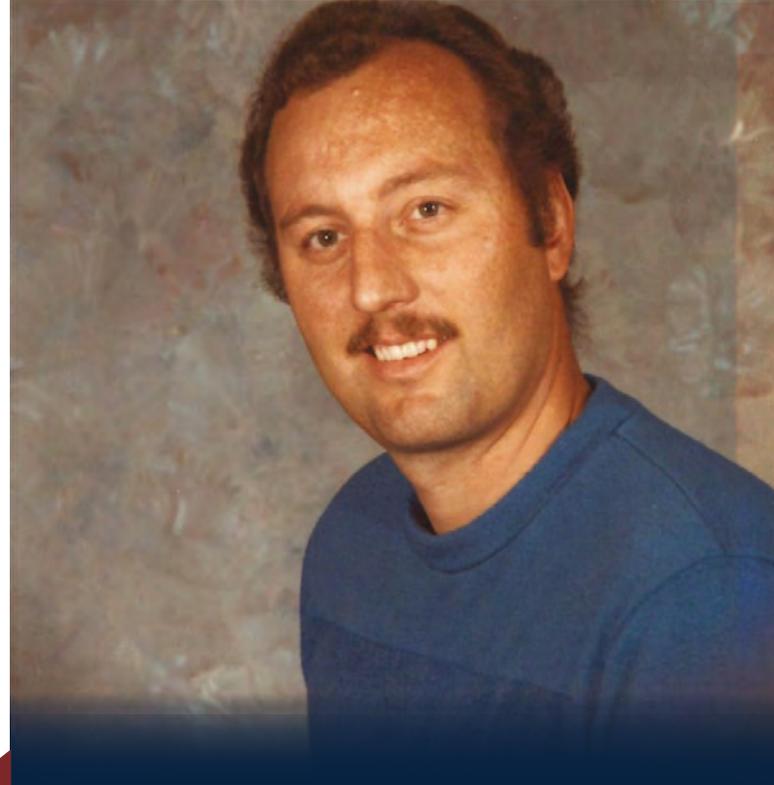
Darrell had a very tender heart in a hard candy shell. He was always more concerned for those around him than he was for himself. This made Darrell very proud of the fact that he served others his entire life, in some capacity, and in uniform since the age of eight.

Darrell was a loving provider. He married Linda in 1977, and together they were blessed to have five children. Darrell was so grateful to have a job that he could spend so much precious time with his family. He enjoyed camping, fishing, and backpacking with his family and friends. Darrell spent many years participating in and watching his kids and grandkids play in a variety of sports and activities.

Darrell is survived by his wife, Linda; his children, Sheri (Bryan), Conrad (Terra), Tommy (Corinna), David, and Nikita; and ten grandchildren. Darrell is also survived by two brothers and five sisters.

Darrell will be extremely missed by his family and his many friends.

Remembering



Darrell W. Dabling

*Hanford Fire Department –
Washington*

Career Firefighter/EMT

August 13, 2020

Age 68



Remembering



Christian D. Johnson

*Okanogon County Fire District 3 –
Washington
Volunteer Assistant Chief
October 2, 2019
Age 55*



Christian Johnson, 55, of Okanogon, Washington, passed away on Wednesday, October 2, 2019, from injuries sustained in the Spring Coulee Fire south of Okanogon on September 1, 2019.

Christian was born in 1963 in Salem, Oregon to James and Margaret Johnson. He grew up in Salem, graduating from South Salem High School in 1982. Christian began college at Oregon State University but felt he had a larger calling and joined the Army. Christian served from 1983-1986 in the 82nd Airborne Division, where he achieved the rank of sergeant. After being honorably discharged, Christian continued his duty by joining the Oregon Army National Guard. He then returned to college and graduated from Chemeketa Community College in Salem in 1988 with an A.A. in building inspection technology. Christian accepted a position as a building inspector in Washington for Okanogon County and later transferred as building official and permit administrator to the cities of Oroville, Tonasket, and Okanogon. He also transferred to the Washington National Guard where, along with his Charlie Company of the 1-161 Infantry Regiment, he deployed to Iraq from November 2003 to April 2005. Upon returning home, he retired from the National Guard after a total of 22 years of service. In Okanogon, Christian found another call to duty; in May of 1999, he joined the Okanogon Fire Department, where he served as the assistant fire chief.

Christian always lived life to the fullest and had many hobbies he was passionate about. To say he was a fanatic about fishing would be an understatement; there wasn't a lake in Okanogon County that he hadn't explored. He took to his family's most treasured pastime and it showed, as almost all his photos are of him and his family fishing. He loved the outdoors no matter the weather; literally the weather did not matter. He loved riding his Harley all over the country.

Christian is survived by his wife, Pam; his daughter, Sheena; his father, James M.; his brother, James W.; his sister, Jeannette; nephews, TJ, Steven, Alexander, and Cody; nieces, Brandi and Maddie; and countless extended family, fire family, and friends. His mother, Margaret, preceded him in death.

Christian is deeply missed as the kind of guy who selflessly gave himself to his family, his friends, his community, and his country. He also just had a lot of fun! One of Christian's mottos is, "People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

*D*ave was born on February 1, 1955, in Renton, Washington. His parents were Bill and Rose Lewis. His siblings are Karen Lyons (Terry) and Bill Lewis (Pat).

Dave attended school in Renton and graduated from Hazen High School. In 1982, he joined the Auburn Fire Department and served for almost 28 years, retiring in 2010.

David loved the outdoors. He enjoyed hiking and long walks with his wife, Pam, and spending time with his grandchildren. He had a passion for riding his Harley Davidson motorcycle and playing music on his many guitars. Dave loved reading his bible and attending church.

He is survived by his wife, Pam; his children, Julie Michaels (Brad), Stephanie Byxbe (Justin), and Matthew Lewis; his stepchildren, Ashley Lewis (Trustin), and Brandon Malidore (Amber); and 12 grandchildren.

Remembering



David L. Lewis

*Valley Regional Fire Authority –
Washington*

Career Firefighter

December 22, 2019

Age 64



Remembering



Philip Bryan Oldham

*Grays Harbor Fire District 2 –
Washington
Career Lieutenant
November 15, 2019
Age 52*



Philip started in the fire service volunteering for Tumwater, not long after high school, with a friend that dared him to volunteer with him. Philip fell in love with this career path and dedicated his life to it and the communities he served. He continued his education, became a paramedic, and started his professional fire career as a firefighter/paramedic in April 2004 in Grays Harbor. He was promoted to lieutenant in January 2015.

Philip was raised in a military family and had a great work ethic, due in part to his upbringing. He had enormous character and did the right thing even when no one was watching. His was honest, loving, and accepting of others no matter what the situation. He served in many capacities at the fire station, acting as the fire district's health and safety officer and implementing a self-contained breathing air program for the district. He oversaw the selection of SCBAs for four agencies, including his own, and was instrumental in securing the grant for their purchase. He also was a trained SCBA repair technician. He was passionate about keeping firefighters safe. Philip was also active in wildland firefighting in his state. He completed and was posthumously awarded his engine boss certification, a goal he had been working on for three years.

His other contributions to the fire service are more than can be listed. He was an EMS evaluator, instructor, emergency vehicle instructor, and served as the training officer for his fire district. Philip was very active in the union. He attended the annual Washington State Council of Fire Fighters convention, serving as chair and co-chair of the rules committee for more than ten years.

Philip was dedicated first to Jesus Christ, then to his family, and then to the fire service. Philip finally found the love of his life, Jennifer. They got married in 2009, and he adopted her daughter.

Philip lost his life after a five-month battle with a rare and aggressive form of leukemia. He was actively working in the fire service when he started showing symptoms. He fought courageously and never asked, "Why me?" He said that he knew the risks of being a firefighter. He loved helping people and could not see himself doing anything else.

A piece of our hearts went with him when he left this earth to be with his maker in heaven. He left behind his wife, Jennifer; son, Andrew; daughter, Noelle; mother, Jane; brother Greg (Brenda); and sister, Sheryl (Doug), plus many other family members and friends.

*D*arlene Gail Raffelson died December 17, 2020, from complications of cancer deemed by the State of Washington to be in the line of duty.

She started her fire service career in 1978 with the Ocasta Fire Department and then joined South Beach Ambulance as a volunteer EMT. She graduated from the paramedic program at Tacoma Community College and was hired in Westport. In 1999, she was hired by the Tumwater Fire Department, where she worked for many years as a firefighter/paramedic on Medic 5 in the city of Tumwater. She was promoted to paramedic lieutenant and served as the department training officer. She served as secretary-treasurer for Tumwater Fire Fighters IAFF Local 2409.

Darlene served her community well and was an example to others.

Remembering



Darlene G. Raffelson

*Tumwater Fire Department –
Washington*

Career Lieutenant

December 17, 2020

Age 65



Remembering



Kirk Dean Robinson

Bothell Fire Department – Washington

Career Lieutenant

October 4, 2019

Age 42



Lieutenant Kirk Dean Robinson, 42, served the Bothell Fire Department for 18½ years. From an early age, community service was a central focus of Kirk's life. Throughout high school and well into adulthood, he frequently went on missions to Mexico and built hundreds of houses for families in need.

Kirk's infectious personality and tireless work ethic quickly made him a favorite among his peers. He was a member of the technical rescue team, water rescue team, honor guard, and served as a CBT instructor. He assisted with the 9/11 response effort and, in 2005, deployed to Hurricane Katrina. Each year, Kirk participated in the Firefighter Stair Climb to raise funds for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. He was always the first to volunteer to help with any need of family, friends, the community, or the Bothell Fire Department.

Over his lifetime, Kirk touched countless lives. He was omnipresent in every community he was a part of and will forever be remembered for his compassion and relentless drive to make a difference for others.

Kirk is survived by his wife, Jessie Robinson; their two sons, Gavin and Levi; parents, Gary and Lori Robinson; brother, Clay Robinson; and several nephews and nieces.



Remembering

Scott Bernard Thomas of Stanwood, Washington, died while fighting wildland fire in southern Nevada as an airtanker pilot. Born July 11, 1956, to George and Juliette Thomas, Scott grew up in the hill and valley areas of San Francisco's East Bay and loved the land and its many creatures.

After graduating from Acalanes High School in Lafayette in the early 1970s, Scott traveled to the upper Midwest and later to the wild coast of northwest California, where he began to develop practical tradesman skills that would serve him, his friends, and clients well throughout his life. He moved to the Puget Sound area in Washington, met and married Joanne, and celebrated the birth of his first child, Nicole. Scott continued to develop his tradesman's skills while gaining skill, training, and experience in his great love of flying.

Scott became a respected and in-demand bush pilot in Alaska, serving the outlying fishing and hunting lodges. In other seasons, he commuted to the San Juan Islands and western Washington or visited family in California, piloting planes he had built from scratch or restored by hand. He built and flew specialty acrobatic and sport racing aircraft, became a flight instructor and an accredited air mechanic, and obtained a helicopter rating.

Through the years, he served in many contexts, flying tourists to explore the Florida Keys, moving air freight in the Pacific Northwest, and piloting planes to care for crops in California. Eventually, he served as a firefighting pilot throughout the American West and in Australia. Scott founded Thomas Air in Mongolia, pioneering the development of private, general aviation for a variety of needs, from tourism to natural resource mapping and protection. In 2012, he made aviation history by flying a single-engine plane 5,500 miles from the United States to Mongolia in two days.

An extraordinary pilot, multi-skilled craftsman, and loving father, he leaves behind daughters, Nicole Cothran and Jewel Leanne Thomas; sons, William Ivel Thomas and Scott Oso Thomas; and their mothers, Joanne, Addie, and Daka. He is also survived by his mother, Julie; brothers, Randy, Brian, and Stan; sister-in-law, Susan Berry; his Uncle Stan and Aunt Susan Hone; niece, Jennifer Castello, and family; and cousins on the Thomas and Hone sides.

Scott's life demonstrated an expansive appreciation of life's adventure and joy. He loved his family, supported his friends and community, respected and protected nature, and advocated fairness in governance and human relations. His example inspires us to realize these qualities in our own lives.



Scott Bernard Thomas

M&M Air Services of Beaumont, Inc. –

Washington

Seasonal Pilot

July 30, 2020

Age 64



Remembering



Don Waller

Okanogan County Fire District 6 –

Washington

Career Fire Chief

November 6, 2019

Age 65



*F*or more than 45 years, Don Waller devoted his life to firefighting in the Methow Valley, starting as a volunteer in high school and working to create a fire district of four stations with career firefighters that he led for many years. After a nine-month battle with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, Don died at his home in Winthrop, where he lived for most of his career, just a block from the fire station.

"Don lived and breathed firefighter," said Darold Brandenburg, who serves as a commissioner for the district and previously served as a volunteer firefighter. "He gave his entire life to it, not just the death, but the whole thing. I knew Don my entire life. I fought fires with him for 26 years. Don made more sacrifices than just about anyone I know in this town."

Don started his fire service career as a volunteer at the Winthrop station in 1972, when he was 17 and still in high school. At the time, fire protection was provided by four stations that operated independently of each other. Don became the assistant chief in Winthrop in 1976, the chief in 1981. He was a driving force to unite the four independent stations within the district into one entity, and he became the first full-time career employee of the district when he was hired as the fire chief in 2002. He later added an additional three paid staff, created a single operating fire department with four stations, and led the merger of the Winthrop Fire Department into Fire District 6, breaking more barriers down.

His son states, "From my earliest memories, the air raid siren would go off, and my dad would go running out of the house, and through the neighbor's, to the fire station a block away, jumping over the fence, until we removed it." As a longtime fire service veteran, past volunteer with Winthrop, and current fire chief, his son has a unique perspective when he says, "I am in awe looking back to see how much my father worked to create and cultivate a high school program, where kids as young as 16 were allowed to be full-fledged firefighters. It was a unique point in time, which has changed, but had a huge impact in the fire service all over Washington."

Seattle Fire Lieutenant Jay Garth Wheeler, 57, assigned to North Admiral's Station 29, passed away with honors on March 4, 2020. His death was due to metastatic pancreatic cancer after 22 years of exposure as a firefighter.

Jay faced his battle with courage and without complaint, surrounded by his wife, Valerie; children Molly, Patrick, and Daniel; parents, Garth and Roberta; siblings, Scott, Laurie, Sherry, and Craig; and family and friends who loved and cared for him deeply. His fire department brothers spent time with Jay and his family during his last days.

Jay earned a B.A. in history at the University of Washington. He began his public service in 1989, as an officer for the Seattle Police Department, showing compassion and respect for his community. Jay transferred to the Seattle Fire Department in 1997. During his career he served on Rescue 1, Ladders 5, 7, 9, and 11, Engines 36 and 38, and continuously at the Fire Alarm Center. Fire Chief Harold D. Scoggins commended Jay for his contributions to public service as a valued member of the Seattle Fire Department. Jay served the City of Seattle for 30 years.

While serving in the Fire Alarm Center, Firefighter Wheeler received a letter of commendation for directing the delivery of a baby by a first-time father over the phone. His steady-handed questions and sure responses put both parents at ease. The baby was found wrapped in a towel as instructed when Engine 39 and the medics arrived a few minutes later. In their thank you letter, the parents acknowledged Jay's efforts and "all the life-savers at Seattle's 911. You helped bring a precious gift of life into our lives. We will be forever grateful."

Jay had a lifelong love of water, from lifeguarding in his teens, as a member of the University of Washington rowing crew in college, as a search and rescue diver for SPD R1, and as a volunteer diver for the Seattle Aquarium. He found great happiness riding and maintaining BMW motorcycles. Riding gave Jay a belonging and connection to wherever he rode, a passion he shared with others, along with Valerie, riding side by side.

Jay loved history, was a Jeopardy master, and appreciated quality whiskey. His faith was quiet but sure. Hardest to contemplate in grief are his lost years as a grandfather, and the many years of companionship and travel he and his loved ones will not share.

Due to COVID restrictions, Jay was given a virtual line-of-duty death memorial service. In October 2020, he took his place at the Memorial to Fallen Firefighters in Occidental Park, in Seattle.

Remembering



Jay Garth Wheeler

*Seattle Fire Department –
Washington
Career Lieutenant
March 4, 2020
Age 57*



Remembering



Zachary S. Blankenship

*Montcalm Volunteer
Fire Department – West Virginia*

Volunteer Firefighter

March 15, 2020

Age 25



Zachary Blankenship suffered a stroke on March 5, 2020, after responding to a residential structure fire with the Montcalm Volunteer Fire Department. He died at Roanoke Memorial Hospital in Virginia on March 15, 2020.

Always willing to lend a hand to anyone in need, he served the fire department and the citizens of his community with pride, passion, and integrity.



Remembering

*M*ark was an extremely loyal and dedicated man to both his family and the fire service. He died on January 11, 2020, in a line-of-duty accident at age 51. Mark's fire service career began shortly after 9/11 when he joined Boys Town Fire Department in Boys Town, Nebraska. When asked why he wanted to be a firefighter, he stated that after the terror attacks, he wanted a way to give back to his community and be of service. In his almost 19 years in the fire service, he most certainly accomplished that goal.

Mark was recognized as Firefighter of the Year in 2004 and again in 2008 and promoted to captain with the Boys Town Fire Department in the summer of 2009. He moved to West Virginia in December 2015, becoming a member of the Spencer-Roane Volunteer Fire Department in January 2016 and the Clover-Roane Volunteer Fire Department in September 2017. He served as training officer at both West Virginia departments and held many certifications. He had just completed the exam for Fire Officer II the morning of his death and received a passing score the next day.

Mark was truly a self-made man. He paid his own way through college and, in 1996, discovered his passion, which was software. He taught himself to write code and, in 2010, married his two passions by creating a record-keeping software product for fire departments.

Mark took great pride in his accomplishments, yet he was never boastful. He had a true servant's heart. He once stopped to help an elderly man who had fallen in his yard while taking out the trash. That is the type of thing Mark did without hesitation. If you needed something done, you only had to ask Mark once and he did it. This unique quality was appreciated by those who knew him.

Mark was a Stephen King fan and read every novel the author published. Mark enjoyed music and was adamant that grunge killed the era of good music. He loved keeping up on current events and was a history buff. He was a whiz at computers and math. Mark could work a Rubik's Cube in seconds despite being colorblind! He loved hiking, especially in Colorado. Mark enjoyed making others laugh and had the ability to carry on entire conversations by speaking only in movie quotes.

Family and many friends who had known Mark for much of his life commented that in the months leading up to his death he seemed the happiest and more at peace than ever before. This was true. Mark departed this life on a high note and while in the act of serving others. This has provided much-needed comfort to his wife, Sarah; his son, Pierce; daughters, Leven and Genevieve; his mother, Deanna; and many other family and friends.



Mark Elliott Horwich

*Clover-Roane Volunteer
Fire Department – West Virginia
Volunteer Firefighter*

January 11, 2020

Age 51



Remembering



Russell K. Roberson Jr.

*laeger Volunteer Fire Department –
West Virginia
Volunteer Firefighter
June 21, 2020
Age 42*



On June 20, 2020, Russell Roberson Jr. responded to a residential fire with other members from the laeger Volunteer Fire Department, as well as several other departments. On June 21, 2020, firefighters responded to the same residence for a possible rekindle. After evacuating a homeowner from a second residence that started to burn, Firefighter Roberson suffered a medical emergency on scene and died while being transported to the hospital. The fire was later determined to be an arson fire set by another volunteer firefighter.

Russ had been a member of the laeger Volunteer Fire Department for 15 years. He enjoyed working outdoors.

He was remembered as a hero who provided outstanding service to his community.



*J*ames W. "Jimmy" Ward was an amazing man who is loved and missed by many. He had 30+ years in the fire service. In those years, he touched many lives, not only by doing his part as a fireman, but also as a leader in helping the younger firemen. He helped in training them and teaching them along the way. He had numerous certifications such as Firefighter I, II, and III, Arson Detection I and II, Principles of Building Construction Non-Combustible-Pilot, Emergency Railroad Incident (ERRI), and different levels of HAZMAT, just to name a few. He not only worked as a firefighter but was also an EMT-B, where he touched other lives as well. He loved helping others and used his time as a firefighter and EMT to show his love for community and those around him.

The one thing most people remember about him is the way he could make the saddest person laugh within just a few minutes of his presence. He had a way with making people laugh, and you couldn't help but laugh when he was around. He leaves behind a beautiful daughter who he loved more than anything or anyone. She was his world, and she definitely took after him in making people laugh. He would move mountains for her. She is following in his footsteps by becoming a firefighter herself. He would be beyond proud of her.

Even though he isn't physically here with us any longer, his love and spirit live on through the many memories of those he loved and who loved him. Little things that happen at home make us aware that he is still here with us always.

He started his career at the age of 14 and finished it at the young age of 49 when he passed in May of 2019. Had things been different, he would have been 50 in December of 2019. There will never be enough words, even if you combined all the languages together, to describe what kind of man and father he was. He was definitely one in a million. He will forever be loved and missed more than could ever be expressed.

Remembering



James W. "Jimmy" Ward

***City of Logan Fire Department –
West Virginia***

Paid-on-Call Firefighter

May 10, 2019

Age 49



Remembering



Logan Andrew Young

*West Virginia Air National Guard,
167th Airlift Wing –
West Virginia
Career Firefighter
December 27, 2020
Age 30*



*L*ogan Andrew Young lost his life in the line of duty while fighting an arson fire in the early morning hours of December 27, 2020.

To our hero: We love you. We miss you. You are forever in our hearts. Fallen but not forgotten. “A hero is someone who has given his life to something bigger than oneself.”

Logan was born in 1990 and grew up in Winchester, Virginia. He was the son of Steven B. Young and Beth A. Young, both of Winchester. Logan was a 2008 graduate of Millbrook High School. He was a member of the United States Air Force, which included serving in the Middle East. Logan was a firefighter and decorated staff sergeant with the 167th Airlift Wing of the West Virginia Air National Guard in Martinsburg. He exemplified being a devoted and selfless patriot that loved his country, community, family, and fellow man.

His decorations in the military include the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, Air Force Good Conduct Medal with 1 Oak Leaf Cluster, Air Reserve Forces Meritorious Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Air Force Overseas Ribbon Long with 1 Oak Leaf Cluster, Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon with Gold Border, Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon, Air Force Longevity Service, USAF NCO PME Graduate Ribbon, Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon (Rifle), and Air Force Training Ribbon.

Logan enjoyed playing soccer, basketball, fishing, and riding ATVs and his motorcycle. He had a great love for sneakers. Logan owned enough Nikes to wear a different pair every day of the year! He was also an avid Pittsburgh Steelers fan.

In addition to his parents, Logan is survived by his daughter, Leira Ann Young, who was born six months after his death; his fiancée, London Brown; his brother, Nathan Young, and wife, Daffne; his sister, Danielle Brosan, and husband, Mike; his fiancée’s daughter, Jesslyn Wolf; and many aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends.

#FOREVERYOUNG

Remembering

*M*itch was a 14-year veteran of the Appleton Fire Department (AFD) when he tragically lost his life in the line of duty. It started as a routine medical call at the city's transit center, when a man who had been revived after a drug overdose opened fire on police officers and firefighters who had just saved his life. Mitch died of a gunshot wound to the chest.

While Mitch had a passion for serving and helping those in need, his family was the most important thing in his life, and it was obvious to everyone who knew him. He was a loving son and brother. He was married to his high school sweetheart, Lindsey, for 12 years. His love for Lindsey was demonstrated daily, and they were best friends. He was a devoted and amazing father to his sons, Evan, Logan, and Ryan, who were nine, seven, and four at the time of his death. He loved spending time with his boys. On his days off, he was home with the boys and loved having that time with them when they were young. As they got older, he enjoyed coaching and watching his boys play in their many sports. He loved taking his family to Disney World every year, and we think he even had more fun than the boys!

Being in good shape was important to Mitch. He spent a lot of time running and exercising. Right before he went on his last call, he convinced the guys at the station to try to do 100 Man-Makers (Cross Fit exercise). They had completed 50 when the call came in. They are now referred to as "Mitch-Makers" within the department and with many people in the Appleton area.

In his free time, he loved to golf and watch Packer or Brewer games. Sunday afternoons at Lambeau Field was one of his favorite places to be! Go Pack Go!

During his career, Mitch spent eight years as a firefighter/inspector before returning to the line in January 2019 as a relief driver. He completed several trainings at the National Fire Academy for fire investigation and was a Certified Fire Investigation (CFI) Technician with the International Association of Arson Investigators. He was an active member of the Wisconsin Search and Rescue Task Force. Mitch held an associate degree in fire protection and was two classes away from earning a bachelor's degree in fire and emergency response management from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. Mitch was strong and confident in his career and built many great friendships and bonds with his AFD brothers. He was posthumously promoted to driver/engineer.

Mitch is missed every single day by his family, the fire department, and his friends. His legacy will live on forever within the community of Appleton.



Mitchell F. Lundgaard

Appleton Fire Department –

Wisconsin

Career Engineer

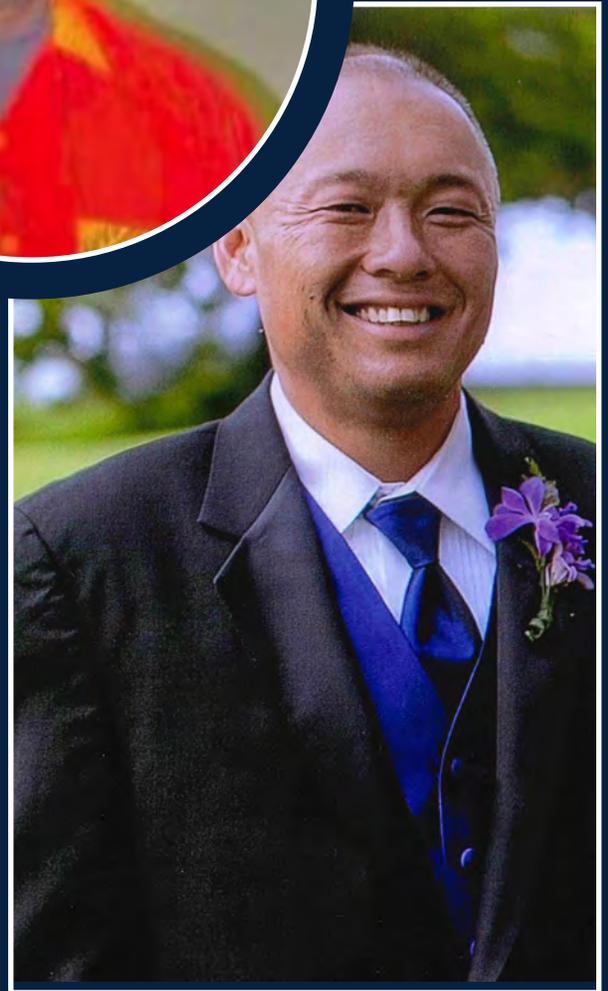
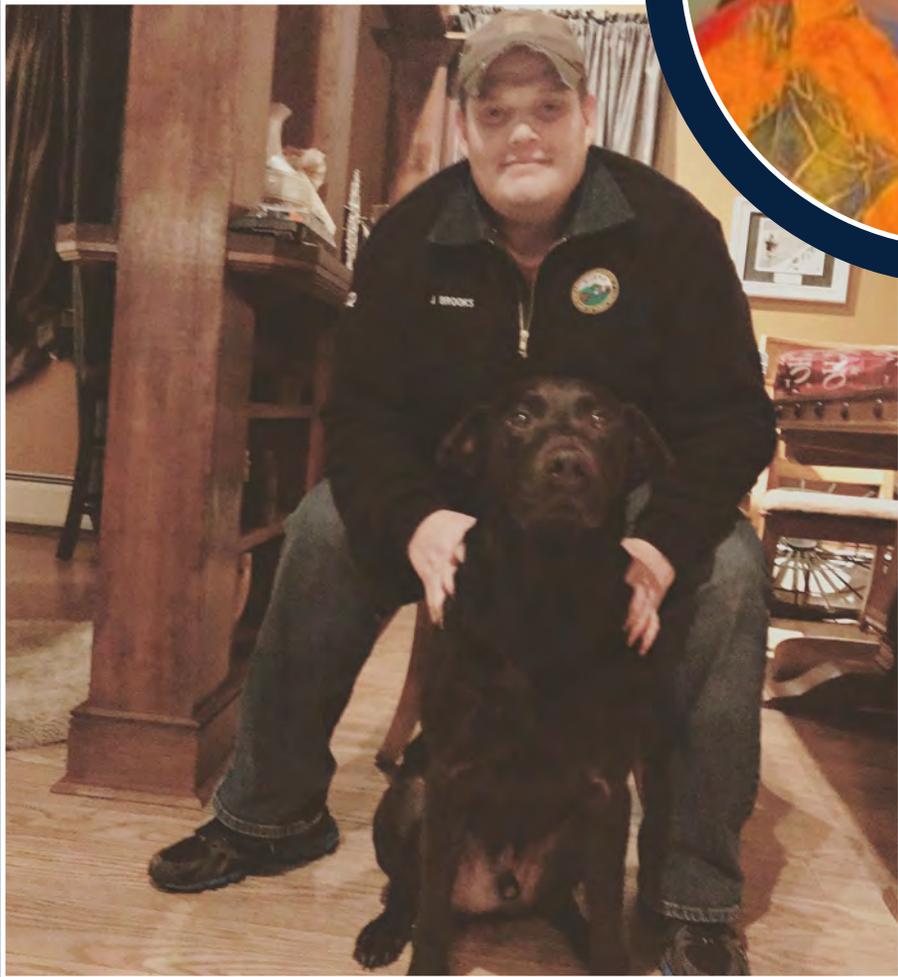
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40th Annual National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend ★ October 2 - 3, 2021





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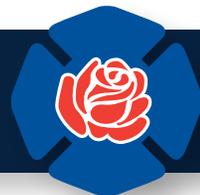
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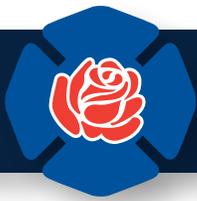
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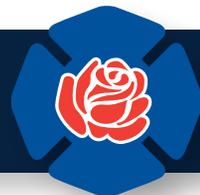
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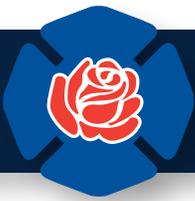
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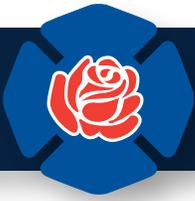


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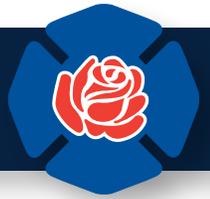
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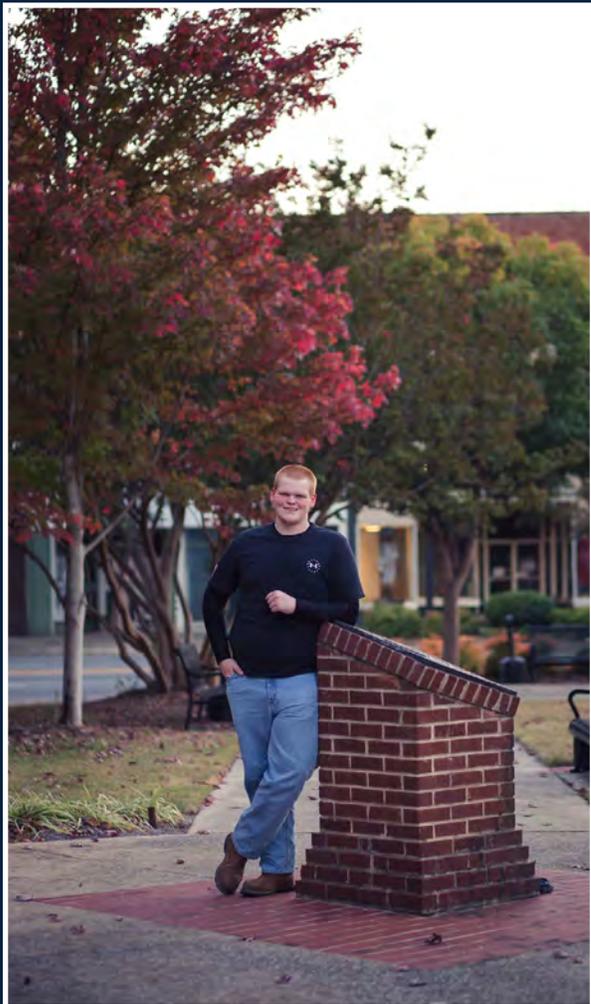
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*“Hope is being able to see that there is light
despite all of the darkness.”*

– Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu



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– Chief Ronald J. Siarnicki, Executive Director,
National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

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