



# REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN FIRE FIGHTERS

by Scott Mellott, 15/A

## LIST OF LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH ANNIVERSARIES FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER:

**November 06, 1959 - Willis Neal McWhorter**  
Fire fighter, Station 30

**November 09, 1959 - D. H. "Jim" Chandler**  
Fire fighter, Station 19

**November 17, 1959 - Charles A. Jedlicka**  
Fire fighter, Station 30

**November 23, 1901 - Frank W. Medlenka**  
Driver, Station 8

## LIST OF FIRE FIGHTERS WHO HAVE RECENTLY DIED:

**CHARLES EDGAR GILLEY**  
served HFD 1956 to 1978. Died on October 24th 2004.

**ROY A. ELLIOTT**  
served HFD 1955 to 1976. Died on October 22nd 2004.

**BILLY JOE STASNY**  
served HFD 1959 to 1981. Died on September 19th 2004.

**LONNIE LEE KRUEGER**  
served HFD 1958 to 1979. Died on September 19th 2004.

**HAROLD EDWARD GILMORE**  
served HFD 1958 to 1982. Died on September 11th 2004.

*For more information visit my web site [www.houstonfirememorial.org](http://www.houstonfirememorial.org). Items include Houston's line-of-duty Fire Fighter deaths, and deceased retired Fire Fighters. For a current list of deceased Fire Fighters, click on: "Recent Houston Fire Fighter Deaths" from the site menu.*

For the last three years, I have been privileged to travel to New York City to represent our fire department in a 5k run/walk in honor of Stephen Siller, a fire fighter from Squad 1 located in Red Hook, Brooklyn. This fire fighter died at the World Trade Center while saving lives. He was off duty and went to help out anyway. He could have went about his business because he had already left the fire house before the American Airlines Flight 11 struck the North Tower at 8:46AM. However, he turned his vehicle around and headed for the World Trade Center and his untimely death. I heard one of his brothers answer the question why would he do this, by saying "that is just the way Stephen was."

I went to New York City in 2002 for the first time to participate

in this event mostly for myself. I had a personal goal to find something other than a FDNY line-of-duty section on my website to help me deal with this devastating loss of emergency workers and occupants of the world trade center.

I had actually passed on going to Colorado Springs to attend the ceremony that Jay Jahnke's name was place on the line-of-duty memorial wall. Jay died in the line of duty one month after Stephen. I felt that I was able to deal with Jay's death much better than the World Trade Center disaster.

When I arrived and participated in the event I knew I had done the right thing. The spirit of Stephen Siller's family was more than over whelming. This is a family that just a year before had suffered a great loss and was taking on the monumental task of organizing this major event. For the third year in a row the event was very successful. The proceeds go to a cause that Stephen was involved with in prior to his death. I have decided to do a profile on Stephen Siller in this column within the next several months and will give you many more details of his life and his family.

There are several things about this event that are very impressive. The 5k Run/Walk starts at the entrance of the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel and ends directly across the street from where the mighty World Trade Center once stood. Once inside the tunnel there are 343 FDNY Fire Fighters in dress uniform lining the tunnel with American Flags. This year, they added Fire Fighters from all over the country carrying banners with pictures of the faces of the 911 Fire Fighters.

The second part of this event is that every year Stephen Siller's wife, Sally, stands at the finish line greeting the participants as they complete the 5k. I personally can only imagine how emotionally difficult this would be for her. Sally has my utmost respect for her courage and dignity that she has displayed at this event year after year.

Attending this event is really helping me with coming to terms with the 911 tragedy. I had the pleasure of getting to know this great Siller family. In the last two times I have been there to do the "Tunnel to Towers" I have gotten to know this family and they are getting to know me. I am already looking forward to going again next September. *The Siller Family's display of courage has prompted me to look at them as my new heroes.*

★ ★ ★

## *The "Secret List"*

Don't forget to sign up for the "Secret List." This is an email newsletter from Chief Billy Goldfeder (no email junk, and he does not give out your address, I promise!) that will give you line-of-duty death information from around the country. The newsletter will also give you insight on many safety issues facing this country's fire service. Go to [www.firefighterclosecalls.com](http://www.firefighterclosecalls.com), the site's menu is on the left, click on "Secret List" and sign up.

## *Memorial web site: [www.houstonfirememorial.org](http://www.houstonfirememorial.org)*

This is my personal web site that is also the Houston Fire Department's official memorial site. It contains listing of Houston's line of duty Fire Fighters from when the department went paid in 1895 to 2004. I also list as many Houston Fire Fighters that can be found through research, that now are deceased. These are from 1895 to present. I also have, because of 911, all the Fire Fighters who died on September 11th and also FDNY's line-of-duty deaths from 1865 to 2004.