

FIRE LINES


The California Fire Foundation - assisting families of fallen firefighters, firefighters and the communities they protect.

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MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

ON SATURDAY, JULY 30, friends, family and loved ones gathered to remember those we have lost in the line of duty. This year marked the 20th Anniversary of the California Firefighters Memorial, and for the first time in almost three years, the California Firefighters Memorial was held in person at the SAFE Credit Union Convention Center in Sacramento, followed by an evening recessional to the Memorial Wall in Capitol Park.

The Memorial Wall serves as a permanent reminder of the heroism of the firefighter profession and is a place that families can visit and remember for generations to come.

Firefighter/Paramedic Andy Valenta lost his battle with job-related cancer on April 25, 2021. His wife, Caylie, their daughters, and his brothers and sisters from Vista Fire Department made the journey from Southern California to honor Andy.

“Being a firefighter was absolutely his calling in life – he thrived in the brotherhood; his department was his family to him,” said Caylie Valenta. “To see his name permanently engraved in the Capital of California is incredible, something that our girls can always come back to and see and tell people that



20TH ANNIVERSARY
CALIFORNIA FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL
2002 - 2022

their daddy’s name is in the Capital forever. It’s really special, and he absolutely deserves it. I’m so thankful that the Foundation has created it to honor him and every other firefighter for their sacrifice.”

Among those honored in this year’s ceremony include Max Fortuna, who was killed in the line of

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MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR



Brian K. Rice
Chair
California Fire Foundation

Dear Friends,

As President of California Professional Firefighters and Chair of the California Fire Foundation, I was honored to welcome family and friends of the fallen to this year's California Firefighters Memorial Ceremony, our annual tribute to the men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our state.

On Saturday, July 30, we came together in person for the first time in nearly three years to pay tribute to the men and women who

put their lives on the line every day. We recognized 82 fallen brothers and sisters whose names have been added to the sad list of those who have died in the line of duty. Whether they were lost in the flash of a catastrophe or the slow curse of a job-related disease, every one of the 82 individuals we honored risked it all for each one of us.

Few have so squarely faced the risks during these years of trial as our California firefighters. From the outset of the pandemic, firefighters put their health on the line to respond and treat the sick.

When our state was once again gripped by record-shattering and catastrophic wildfires, firefighters from every agency put their bodies in the path of this terror.

These events serve to remind us again that when a firefighter puts on turnouts and heads out to a call, there is always the chance that he or she will not return. This ceremony also reminds us that for every fallen hero, there is a family who has also paid the price – a price that we can never forget.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the California

Firefighters Memorial in Sacramento's Capitol Park. Etched into the polished limestone wall at the Memorial are the names of more than 1,400 firefighters who have given their lives in the line of duty since California became a state, including those 82 we recognized at this year's ceremony.

I am proud that we could once again gather to honor their sacrifice, comfort their loved ones, and salute the determination and commitment of those who fight on every day in service to their state and community.

Brian K. Rice



COVER STORY CONTINUED



Max Fortuna's son, Joshua, receiving the flag.



Rachael Davis sang the National Anthem.



Caylie Valenta receiving a flag in memory of her husband Andy Valenta.

duty in January 2022. His son was presented with the flag, and over 50 of Max's brothers and sisters from the Stockton Fire Department came to honor their friend. "Max paid the ultimate sacrifice. When we go on calls, that is the last thing we think of," said Mario Gardea, President of the Stockton Professional Firefighters.

Karin Carpenter's father's name was engraved on the wall in 2016. Patrick Lee Carpenter was a Battalion Chief for CAL FIRE, known then as CDF, and passed away in

1988 due to job-related cancer. "Being a dad was the most important thing to my dad, but the firefighter in him was next," said Karin, a Fire Prevention Officer for Sacramento Fire Department. Karin attends the Memorial most years in support of the other families attending the ceremony for the first time.

"I am incredibly fortunate to work for the City of Sacramento, so it's right here in my backyard. I've

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COVER STORY CONTINUED

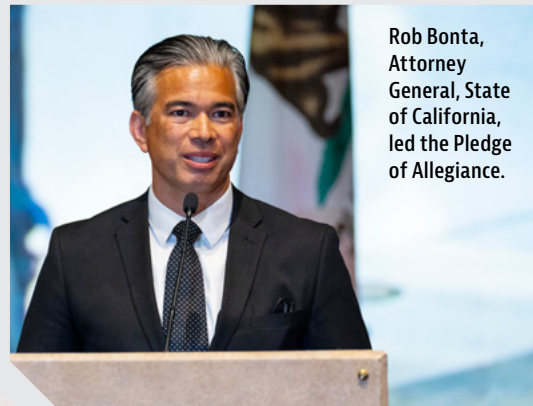
taken multiple friends, different firefighters who have never been to the Memorial, and walked with them and shown them names on the wall. I got to share my dad's story over and over again. It's an amazing, beautiful spot. I think it is just really important to see it, experience it, and support those families that are here for the first time, reflect on what I have been through, and appreciate the sacrifice," said Karin.

This year, 82 names were added to the sacred space to join the brothers and sisters who made the ultimate sacrifice since 1850 when California became a state.

"As Firefighters, we assume we are going to come home the next day, and sometimes we don't," said Rick Martinez, Executive Director, California Fire Foundation. "We continue to honor and preserve it because it's not only a legacy but also a piece of every one of us."



Nathan Liu performed at the Ceremony. Nathan Liu and The Harker School have generously donated to the Foundation.



Rob Bonta, Attorney General, State of California, led the Pledge of Allegiance.



Honorable Eleni Kounalakis, Lt. Governor, State of California, addressing Memorial attendees.



THE LIGHT REMAINS

As part of the tributes for this year's California Firefighters Memorial, the First Partner of California, Jennifer Siebel Newsom, hosted a Surviving Spouses Reception at the Governor's Mansion where loved ones of the fallen could share memories and remember together.



"Seeing his name on the Memorial Wall was difficult; it was emotional. I don't want him on that wall, but the fact that he will be on there forever is an incredible honor. It is incredibly special that he's here forever. It's not a place I want him to be, I'd rather he be home with us, but it's a very special sacred place."

- Caylie Valenta
Spouse of fallen firefighter, Andy Valenta



"The Memorial is here all the time... it's a place people can go, reflect, be there on their own in their own time; they can spend their time there and just really appreciate it."

- Karin Carpenter, daughter of fallen firefighter

TO BE REMEMBERED, ALWAYS

AS WE REFLECT on this year's California Firefighters Memorial, the stark reality is that more names will need to be added to the wall year after year. The California Fire Foundation is resolute in its commitment to past, present, and future California firefighters to ensure there will always be a place on the wall for those we lose in the line of duty and a place for their loved ones to remember those who gave their lives to protect their fellow Californians.

The California Firefighter's Memorial is much more than a physical space, and Daniel A. Terry, a member of the Board of Directors of the California Fire Foundation and President Emeritus, California Professional Firefight-

ers, understands its immense significance. "Every time I come here, it's powerful because I see new names, different names, people I've known for many, many years, and it never loses that. I hope that the family members can walk away from seeing the name and know that the wall, it's theirs and it's theirs to bring their children to, their grandchildren to, and it'll be there forever for them."

The California Firefighters Memorial's inception over two decades ago was possible due to over \$2 million in privately raised funds, mostly from firefighters themselves, for its construction and maintenance. Daniel A. Terry was the driving force behind the

inception of the Memorial Wall. Because of his vision and drive, the California Firefighters Memorial has a home on the beautiful grounds of Capitol Park.

As the California Fire Foundation plans to expand the current Memorial Wall, funds will again be needed to ensure that all we lose in the line of duty will be honored in this most solemn tribute. For this, there is a need to rely on the generosity of individuals and organizations that join us in our belief that the legacy of our fallen brothers and sisters can never be forgotten.



For more information on the Memorial Wall expansion and ways to donate, visit: cafirefoundation.org/programs/california-firefighters-memorial/memorial-expansion



"Unfortunately, there will be more names being added as time goes on. It is important to expand it, so future people have the opportunity to be honored the way we've honored those in the past."

- Nancy Galvin, Partner of fallen firefighter



"When I first became involved with this memorial project, I had a great appreciation for it, but I had no idea of the impact."

- Rick Martinez, Executive Director, California Fire Foundation



"We absolutely need to expand that wall to continue memorializing every firefighter that passes away in this state because, unfortunately, there will be more - that is the nature of the job. My husband grew up in California - this is his state. His name is engraved in the place where he spent his entire life - that is where he belongs, really, so I love the fact there is this Memorial here in California to honor all the firefighters. They deserve so much recognition and so much honor. I absolutely support expanding the wall."

- Caylie Valenta, spouse of fallen firefighter



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On behalf of our Board of Directors and the California Fire Foundation staff, thank you for supporting the California Fire Foundation - we are truly grateful.

Brian K. Rice
Chair, California Fire Foundation
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President, California Professional Firefighters

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