

Erie County Fire Services "Wall of Honor"

Purpose: The Erie County Fire Services "Wall of Honor" is created to serve as public recognition honoring those members of Erie County's fire service who have demonstrated through their dedication, talents and sacrifice, values that promote fire service values.

Location: The "Wall of Honor" is located at the Erie County Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Services Training & Operations Center, 3359 Broadway Cheektowaga NY.

History: The Erie County Legislature passed a resolution dated April 1, 2004 establishing funding for the creation of a "Wall of Honor", honoring those career and volunteer firefighters in Erie County who have sacrificed so much protecting lives and property in Erie County.

The Erie County Legislature authorized Erie County Fire Advisory Board to receive and review nominations of career and volunteer firefighters in Erie County for inclusion on the "Wall of Honor" and to grant their induction and placement on the "Wall of Honor".

Funding: Original funding for the "Wall of Honor" was provided by Legislators Charles M. Swanick, Legislator Raymond K. Dusza, Legislator Jeanne Z. Chase, Legislator Timothy M. Wroblewski, Legislator Elise M. Cusack and Legislator Steven P. McCarville.

Intent: The "Wall of Honor" (By Erie County Legislature Resolution) Is to be located prominently at the Erie County Emergency Services Training and Operations Center in Cheektowaga, maintained by the Erie County Department of Emergency Services, serving as an appropriate memorial to those courageous individuals who have chosen to protect us from harm.

"Wall of Honor" Committee: The Erie County Fire Advisory Board in accordance with its revised By Laws dated April 2006, section, Committees: shall establish a standing "Wall of Honor Committee".

Duties of Standing Committee, shall be amended to include the "Wall of Honor" "Standing Committee" as follows:

- 1 – Receive and review letters of nomination for qualifying content
- 2 – Communicate with the nominating agency to satisfy questions regarding the "Wall of Honor" selection criteria and provide advice where needed to satisfy qualifying requirements as appropriate to support a weak or incomplete nominating letter.
- 3 – Report finding to the Fire Advisory Board and make a recommendation for full Fire Advisory Board action approving or disapproving the nominee's inclusion on the "Wall of Honor".

Nomination Process: A letter of nomination must be submitted to the Erie County Fire Advisory Board nominating a current or past member of the fire service in Erie County. This letter of nomination must be on the nominating agency's official stationary, and must include details in support of the nominee's inclusion on the "Wall of Honor". The letter of nomination must be received by the Erie County Fire Advisory Board no later than July thirty first (31) of the nomination year.

Nomination NOTE:

1 - The nominating agency must provide an agency contact and the nominee or the nominee's family contact information on a document separate of the letter of nomination.

2 - In-order to be considered for inclusion on the Erie County "Wall of Honor", all required documents must be received by the Erie County Fire Advisory Board no later than July thirty one (31) of the nomination year.

3 - The nomination process and selection criteria shall be published and posted in all appropriate venues and shared via all means available, i.e., Erie County Emergency Services. website, annual correspondence to fire service agencies in Erie County, posters designed to promote agency nominations and inclusions in fire agency and community social/informational/educational events.

Selection Criteria:

- Nominee is or has been a member of a career or volunteer fire department/company in Erie County
- Nominee has made a major contribution or has achieved significant accomplishments in the delivery of fire department services on a local, state and or national level
- Nominee has demonstrated superior dedication to fire services
- Nominee has demonstrated a significant positive community impact through fire suppression/prevention and or fire fighter education activities
- Fire fighters who lose their lives or are permanently disabled as a direct consequence to their duty to serve during on or off duty fire service activities
- **(Possible add on to make clear past intent to view 50 years of active service as satisfying "demonstrated superior dedication to the fire service")**

Note: Fifty (50) years is judged to have demonstrated superior dedication to the fire service.

(Note) Inclusion of a nominee on the "Wall of Honor" is solely dependent on content of the nominating letter supporting appropriate elements of the Selection Criteria.

Execution of inclusion process: The Erie County Fire Advisory Board shall establish a "Wall of Honor" committee responsible for receiving and reviewing letters of nomination for compliance with the Selection Criteria. All letters of nomination for the "Wall of Honor" shall be addressed to the Erie County Fire Advisory Board and read as correspondence at the next scheduled Fire Advisory Board meeting. The letters of nomination shall then be forwarded to the "Wall of Honor" Committee for review. The "Wall of Honor" Committee shall as a matter of process notify the agency's representative identified in the

nomination letter that the subject nomination is under review. In the event the original letter of nomination does not satisfy requirements as stated in the "Wall of Honor" selection criteria, an ongoing dialog between the "Wall of Honor" Committee and the agency representative is permissible. This dialog is intended to identify, issues of failure to satisfy the Wall of Honor Selection Criteria and provide support for the creation of a successful nomination letter if appropriate. The successful nomination letter will become an integral part of the "Wall of Honor" display.

Nomination Letter Content: (Written in the third person format and submitted on 8.5x11" portrait format)

Note: Letters of Nomination must be received by the Erie County Fire Advisory Board by July thirty one (31) of the year of nomination.

- Full legal name of the nominee
- Appropriate nickname of the nominee if inclusion is relevant to familiarization with the nominee
- Start and if appropriate the end of the nominee's years of service in the primary fire service agency
- Additional fire service agencies where the nominee has served if relevant to the nomination
- Detailed description of the nominee's service record, rank/title/positions/offices held and dates of service of each
- List memberships in fire service related organizations and offices held, if relevant to the nomination
- Detailed description of the nominee's contributions, impact and/or influence on emergency fire services and public safety
- Detailed description of the nominee's contributions to fire safety prevention/awareness directed to the public within the County of Erie and/or beyond if relevant to the nomination
- As may be needed to support claims of a nominee's contributions beyond their primary agency an explanation of relevant activity.
- A high-resolution photo of the nominee in uniform or dress attire
- A high-resolution photo of the nominee's primary fire agency's uniform patch/insignia

Description: The "Wall of Honor" is made up of three rows of vertical black steel Honor Plates outlined in silver trim, each inscribed with the name of an individual recognized as deserving this honor. The Honor Plates are aligned horizontally across the face of the wall, each standing off the wall, suspended by a ceramic block not visible when facing the plate.

Above the top row of Honor Plates are black raised letters in a serif font that read: "ERIE COUNTY WALL OF HONOR". Between the center row of Honor Plates are black raised letters in a serif font that read: "Dedicated to a higher purpose".

Each Honor Plate shall be arranged with:

- The Honoree's full legal name, centered horizontally across the top of the plate, in mixed capital letters. **Note: If appropriate a commonly used nick-name may be included**

- The Honoree’s last name arranged vertically in all capital letters with the first letter of the person’s last name centered just below the horizontal first name
- An image of the Honoree’s fire agency shall be affixed below the last name
- A black band, outlined in silver, applied at the bottom of the plate with a red strip through the center of the band shall signify that the individual died or was killed in the line of duty

Book of Honor: A book called “The Book of Honor” containing the nomination letters for those memorialized on the “Wall of Honor” shall be prominently positioned at the “Wall of Honor” for public view. The purpose of the Book of Honor is to provide a public record of the “Wall of Honor” inductees and their contributions to the fire service and community.

Execution of “Wall of Honor” Inclusion: The Fire Advisory Board Chair, shall notify the nominating agency’s contact and family contact in writing of their nominee’s acceptance for inclusion on the “Wall of Honor”. After approval, the Erie County Fire Advisory Board shall direct that the appropriate materials and services for affixing the agency nominee’s name and if provided, photo and or agency insignia on the next (in order) “Wall of Honor” blank plate. Honoree names shall be added to the blank Honor plates in a top-down, right to left order. The agency nomination letter shall be laminated and in alphabetical order inserted into the Book of Honor. Note: Any additional supporting documentation submitted by the agency making the nomination shall be archived and maintained by the Erie County Division of Fire Safety.

Induction Ceremony: New additions to the “Wall of Honor” shall be inducted in October during fire prevention week. The inductee’s agency/agencies and family shall be invited to attend a ceremony to be held at the “Wall of Honor” where the inductee’s plate or plates will be unveiled. The County Executive may present in-person or forward a proclamation recognizing the nominee’s inclusion on the “Wall of Honor” to the family/families. A copy of the County Executive’s proclamation shall be provided to the nominating agency for display at their facilities. A news agency release regarding the annual “Wall of Honor” induction shall be created and distributed to the Buffalo News, the nominee’s local community newspapers, the Erie County Volunteer Fire Fighter Newspaper and other firefighter publications, i.e., Firemen’s Association of the State of New York (FASNY) “The Volunteer Firefighter” magazine, New York State Association of Fire Chiefs (NYSAFC) “Sizeup” magazine.

Notification of a Declined Nomination: In the event the Fire Advisory Board “Wall of Honor” Committee finds that the agency nomination material does not meet the “Wall of Honor” selection criteria. The “Wall of Honor” Committee shall notify the Fire Advisory Board in writing, that based on material presented, the committee does not recommend inclusion of the subject nominee. Written documentation of the “Wall of Honor committee’s findings must contain a complete explanation of their findings. The Fire Advisory Board will consider the “Wall of Honor” committee’s recommendation and cause the Fire Advisory Board Chair to notify the nominating agency and family of the nominee in writing that as submitted the nomination material submitted does not meet the criteria for inclusion on the “Wall of Honor”. The written notification shall include a description of absent or inadequate material needed to support further consideration for inclusion of their nominee on the “Wall of Honor”. A copy of the letter declining placement on the “Wall of Honor” shall be maintained by the Erie County Division of Fire Safety as a “Wall of Honor” historic record. For possible reference and review.

References: Erie County Legislature resolution authorizing a "Wall of Honor April 1, 2004

County of Erie Fire Advisory Board correspondence dated April 27, 2007, Erie County Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Services - WALL OF HONOR Description and Selection document