

Deceased Riverview firefighter honoured

Recognition Capt. Charley Boomer's name will be added to Wall of Honour in Colorado Springs

TIMES & TRANSCRIPT

Deceased Riverview firefighter Capt. Charley Boomer will be honoured as part of a ceremony in the United States on Saturday.

Boomer will have his name added to Wall of Honour in Colorado Springs, Colo., as part of the International Association of Fire Fighters' annual Fallen Fire Fighter Memorial Ceremony. The event honours firefighters and paramedics from across North America who have died in the line of duty.

The honour was announced in a news release sent out by the Riverview Professional Firefighters on Monday.

Thousands of firefighters and family members are expected to attend the ceremony, held annually by the IAFF, which represents 300,000 full-time firefighters and paramedics across North America, including 22,000 in Canada. Riverview's professional firefighters are affiliated with the IAFF and its provincial arm, the Atlantic Provinces Professional Fire Fighters Association.

Boomer, who served as a Riverview firefighter for 29 years before retiring in 2004 at the rank of captain, died of kidney cancer in December 2013 at the age of 68. Because kidney cancer is considered an occupational hazard according to a 2009 amendment to the New Brunswick Workers Compensation Act, Boomer's passing was formally classified as a line-of-duty death.

Boomer's name is one of 168 that will be added to the IAFF Wall of Honour during the 28th annual ceremony this weekend. They are full-time firefighters who died as the result of fireground accidents or due to occupational diseases like cancer and heart disease that are linked to the toxic exposures firefighters experience during their course of their careers.

Studies show that firefighters experience certain cancers in greater numbers than other workers or the general public.

New Brunswick was the seventh province to enact so-called presumptive legislation to help ensure firefighters are fairly compensated for job-related illnesses. The legislation deems kidney, brain, bladder, ureter, lung, colorectal and testicular cancer to be occupational hazards for firefighters who have worked a specific number of years on the job, as well as leukemia, non-Hodgkins lymphoma and a heart injury occurring within 24 hours of service.

Two Riverview firefighters, Glenn Miller and Peter Trueman, will accompany Boomer's family to the Colorado event.