



First Responders/ Local Heroes Recognition

Instructions for Valleys

The First Responders/Local Heroes fall campaign is to honor both members of our fraternity that work in these fields: Police, Fire, EMS, and Medical Professions, and should also be used to honor those in our communities that are not members of the Masonic Fraternity to possibly introduce non-Masons to Freemasonry.

The Program Outline attached should be followed, HOWEVER, it can be tailored to the program of each Valley. The program is a guide, not a rule!

A Keynote speaker should be one of the main draws for the Valleys. The Keynote speaker should be chosen from Valley/Masonic membership, an outside source, such as local Police, Fire, EMS, Medical, and lastly if this is not achievable, a First Responders/Local Heroes Speaker's Bureau has been established for the Valley to choose from. The Speaker's Bureau are all Scottish Rite Members who have submitted their availability to speak on behalf of their professions.

Challenge Coins available for purchase from Supreme Council should be presented to every First Responder that is a member of the Fraternity, as well as any outside guest from the various fields.

This program is meant to memorialize the 20th Anniversary of the 9/11/01 attacks on our country AND honor those that have worked to keep our families safe during the Covid-19 Pandemic. It will be up to each Valley to choose a date during the fall of 2021 into the winter of 2022 to put on such program. It can be done on a meeting night or additional date; it is completely up to the Valleys.

This should additionally be an open event, with families invited!



First Responders/Local Heroes Recognition

Program Outline

1. Call To Order/Opening Declaration
2. Invocation
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Official Welcoming of All Present
5. Recognize First Responders/Local Heroes by asking them to stand
6. CIC/Presiding Officer(s) Reading of the First Responders Word Document (A Valley can divide up the sections by having the CIC, TPM, SP, MWM read each profession. For those One, Two, Or Three body Valleys, they can divide the reading up amongst the officers)
7. Recognize First Responders/Local Heroes Families (ask to stand)
8. Introduce Keynote Speaker
9. Presentation of Challenge Coins to First Responders/Local Heroes
10. Closing



First Responders/Local Heroes Recognition Event Program

Commander-in-Chief (or presiding officer)

Brethren (and guests), we have set aside this month to recognize those who give of their time and service to our communities. Those members of Police Forces, Fire Companies, Emergency Medical Services, The Medical Field, all Local Heroes, who place themselves at risk whenever they respond to a call. They may be our friends, neighbors, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, mothers, or fathers, but whoever they are when we need them most they are there. It is safe to say in these current times, that many times, our “local heroes” are often overlooked. If you ask them, they will tell you they “are just doing their job”. In extraordinary times, they are extraordinary people. We, the members of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite, are honored just to say “Thank You”. These professions are often ones that are taken for granted. Let us look into the origins of these organizations to give us some better insight as to what and why they do what they do.

Fire Fighter (to be read by a presiding officer/member chosen)

Firefighting equipment can be traced back to ancient Egypt where evidence of a water pump was discovered. The first record of any type of organized firefighting was found in Rome, under the rule of Augustus.

In Europe organized firefighting was not developed upon until the 17th century. After the great fire of London in 1666, insurance companies formed private fire brigades to protect their client’s property. These brigades would only fight fires at the properties that were insured by the company they represented, and those properties were identified by insurance marks. A key breakthrough in firefighting came in the 17th century with the first fire engines.

In 1736 Benjamin Franklin established the Union Fire Company in Philadelphia. George Washington was also a firefighter in Alexandria, Virginia for Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Company and in 1774 he bought a new fire engine and gave it to the town, which was its first. The United States did not have government run fire departments until around the Civil War. Prior to that private fire brigades would compete with one another to be the first to respond as the insurance companies would pay those who would fight the fire on their client's property. There were no full-time paid firefighter in America until 1850 and on April 1st, 1853 Cincinnati Ohio became the first professional fire department made up of 100% full time paid employees. The first known woman of record as a firefighter is Molly Williams, who had been a slave in New York.

The majority of calls received by fire companies today are for emergency or medical reasons. For this reason, firefighters receive extensive training on how to handle hazardous materials or dangerous goods. They are instructed on how to handle emergencies such as earthquakes, plane crashes, and violent storms. They also handle incidents which require extractions from building collapses, cave-ins, and auto wrecks. For these reasons they must carry a variety of equipment to handle any type of emergency they encounter. Many city companies are organized by the type of apparatus they have, such as engine companies, ladder companies, and squad and rescue.

Emergency Medical Technician (to be read by a presiding officer/member chosen)

Rural volunteer companies usually have apparatus suitable for the area and may also have ambulance and EMT personal associated with the company. EMT personnel are highly trained to respond to emergency situations and all are trained in basic life support. They are the first line of defense in prehospital care. The EMT program began in the early 70's as part of the "Alexandria Plan" from Alexandria Hospital in Virginia, the hospital seeing a need for 24/7-year-round emergency care. The first EMT's worked as Emergency Care Technicians in the Alexandria Hospital Emergency Room. Individual states set their own standards for EMT certification and may have 3 levels, basic, intermediate, and Paramedic. The Paramedic has the highest level of training, up to 1000 hours or more of classroom instruction and patient contact requirements, and may be permitted to start IV's, administer medication, and monitor cardiac responses to name a few responsibilities. These brave men and women who serve in these professions deserve and need our support.

Police Officer (to be read by a presiding officer/member chosen)

Police forces also have their origins traceable back to early Asia and Europe. Ancient China had a system in which prefects were appointed to oversee jurisdictions. This system would also allow for female prefects. In ancient Rome 14 wards, or districts, were created under Augustus in which the “Vigiles” acted as a police force and as previously noted they were also the firemen and watchmen for the city. Spain had also formed “brotherhoods” among the towns and peasantry to police the towns and roads against robber knights.

In France a “Marshalcy” or a type of military police, can be traced back to the 12th century. Their first police force in the modern sense was created by King Louis XIV in 1667 to police the city of Paris, which was then the largest city in Europe. On March 12, 1829, a government decree created the first uniformed police in France, which some claim were the first uniformed policemen in the world.

In England in 1737 King George II began paying some London watchmen with tax monies, beginning the shift from private funding to government control. On September 29, 1829, the Metropolitan Police Act was passed by Parliament allowing Sir Robert Peel to found the London Metropolitan Police as a preventative to urban crime and disorder. This force became a model for the police forces in many countries. These officers were often referred to as “Bobbies” after Sir Robert (Bobby) Peel.

In the United States early policing was provided by elected sheriffs and local militias. The U.S. Marshalls service was established in 1789, the U.S. Parks Police in 1791, and the U.S. Mint Police in 1792. The first city police service was established in Philadelphia in 1751. The U.S. Secret Service was founded in 1865 and was for some time the main investigative body for the federal government. The FBI was founded and put into service on July 26, 1908. After the Civil War policing became more paramilitary with the increase use of uniforms and military ranks.

In today’s society there are many varied forms of police services within departments. The uniformed officers perform duties which require immediate recognition as someone in authority, such as traffic control, stopping and detaining motorists, civil unrest, and crime response. Detectives usually wear plain clothes and have different divisions within the department to specialize in the investigation of crimes such as theft, homicide, and the enforcement of controlled substances,

to name a few. Today's officers are normally armed with a side arm but have a variety of non-lethal equipment for their use, such as tasers and pepper sprays. Most larger departments also employ specially selected personnel who are trained in Special Weapons And Tactics, as well as a wide variety of specialty units & training. It is interesting to note that there are over 900,000 sworn law enforcement officers now serving in the United States.

Medical Field (to be read by a presiding officer/member chosen)

Medicine is the science and practice of establishing the diagnosis, prognosis, treatment and prevention of disease. Medicine encompasses a variety of health care practices evolved to maintain and restore health by the prevention of treatment of illness. Contemporary medicine applies biomedical research, genetics and medical technology to diagnose, treat and prevent injury and disease whether it be by, traditional medical practices but additionally including therapies as diverse as psychotherapy, medical devices, biologics and many many others. We know that the practice of medicine has been around for thousands of years, during which it was known as an art, frequently having connections to the religious and philosophical beliefs of that local culture. Today we have many fields of medicine, all known under the umbrella of medical science. The medical field is composed of many components. Doctors, Nurses, Physicians Assistants, Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Therapists, too many to mention each one. But since the birth of modern science, they have been there for us all too often. The roles of these in this field, have been more important than ever, all too often risking exposure to dangerous diseases while trying to keep each of us safe. Their sacrifices are great, but as always extremely rewarding to look after their patients.

Commander-in-Chief or Presiding Officer

Let us take a moment to stand, and observe a moment of silence to honor all of these brave people, who have made the ultimate sacrifice in losing their lives, while in performance of their duties, to keep us safe. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man/woman lay down their life for a friend"

As we can see these organizations have a deep history and have made remarkable strides and improvements in their professions and those men and women who have chosen these vocations are proud to serve. We all understand the sacrifice the members of our armed services make for our country but let us not forget the sacrifices and service our first responders make for our communities. For this

reason, we set aside this month to remember and honor our hometown heroes and thank them for their dedication and service.

Resources: Wikipedia-Police, Firefighting and EMT