



DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

TOM KRESS

CHRIS BOICE

TIM FREEMAN

Douglas County Courthouse, Room 217
1036 SE Douglas Avenue, Roseburg, Oregon 97470

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 29, 2026

Commissioners Honor Firefighters with a Proclamation Honoring Firefighter & Fallen Firefighter Week

(Douglas County, Ore.) Douglas County Commissioners Tom Kress, Chris Boice, and Tim Freeman issued a proclamation today at their Weekly Business Meeting calling upon all citizens of Douglas County to observe **April 26 – May 2, 2026**, as "**Firefighter Appreciation & Fallen Firefighter Memorial Week**" in Douglas County. The proclamation was presented by Commissioner Kress, on behalf of the Board and acknowledged that, "*We recognize that firefighters are dedicated public servants who place themselves in harm's way to protect the lives, property, and wellbeing of our communities. These brave men and women respond to emergencies with courage and professionalism, facing dangers such as fire, hazardous materials, medical crises, and natural disasters. Firefighters not only respond to emergencies but also work tirelessly to prevent them through education, training, community outreach, and fire safety programs. We recognize the physical, mental, and emotional demands of this honorable profession, and express deep gratitude for the commitment and sacrifice of every firefighter, past and present.*" A copy of the live video presentation can be found on the Douglas County Government Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/DouglasCountyGovernment> and our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/watch?v=MITPMEiNtsg&t=1489s.

This week the Commissioners celebrated **ALL** the men and women of Douglas County that have chosen to serve others in the firefighting profession, whether they are career, volunteer, wildland, or structural firefighters or chief officers, company officers, battalion chiefs, engineers, lieutenants, captains, fire marshals, public information officers, those cross-trained as EMTs and paramedics, or fire office personnel. Following the reading of the proclamation, Commissioner Kress asked to take a few minutes to honor our fallen firefighters.

"We also dedicate today to the memory of our fallen firefighters who selflessly gave their lives for our communities. We do this to honor them and make sure that they are never forgotten! We researched lists of fallen firefighters from local agencies, as well as from state and national archives. We were able to locate the names and respective agencies for 20 fallen firefighters from Douglas County dating back to 1951." – Commissioner Kress

Chief Rob Bullock from Central Douglas Fire & Rescue, Deputy Chief Scott Richardson from Central Douglas Fire & Rescue, Assistant Chief Dave Newquist from Roseburg Fire Department, and District Manager Pat Skrip from Douglas Forest Protective Association were invited to the podium to present the **Fireman's Prayer**, recite the names of our **20 fallen firefighters from Douglas County** and present the "**Last Alarm**" poem followed by a 200-year-old tradition of sounding a bell. Assistant Chief Newquist read the Fireman's Prayer, followed by an emotional reading of the 20 fallen firefighter's names, agencies and year of passing by Pat Skrip. This list sadly includes a new addition in 2025, Sutherlin Battalion Chief, Mike Merlino. As firefighter tradition notes, it is customary that the 'Last Alarm' be sounded for our firefighting brothers and sisters who paid the supreme sacrifice. For having selflessly given their lives for the good of their fellow man, their tasks completed, their duties well done, to signify, they are "returning to quarters. Chief Bullock recited the "**Last Alarm**" and Deputy Chief Richardson ceremoniously rang the bell five rings, three times each in honor of our local fallen firefighters. The "Last Alarm" was written by Jim Martinez. He was a long-time member of the [International Association of Fire Fighters](#). We would like to thank Chief Bullock, Deputy Chief Richardson, Assistant Chief Newquist, and District Manager Skrip for helping us honor our fallen fire heroes. Commissioner Kress asked for a moment of silence to remember our 20 fallen firefighters.

In memory of our Douglas County Fallen Firefighters:

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|------|
| Jerry Bain | Douglas Forest Protective Association | 1951 |
| Roy W. McFarland | Roseburg Fire Department, Roseburg | 1959 |
| John J. Richards | Douglas Forest Protective Association | 1961 |
| Richard Underhill | Douglas Forest Protective Association | 1979 |
| Elwin I. King | Fair Oaks Fire Department, Sutherlin | 1984 |
| Mark Giles | Douglas Forest Protective Association | 1987 |
| James Moore | Douglas Forest Protective Association | 1987 |
| Russell Brine | Elkton Rural Fire District, Elkton | 1987 |
| Julius C. Starr | USDA Forest Service, Roseburg Office | 1990 |
| Clark N. Gilkison | Fair Oaks Fire Department, Sutherlin | 1991 |
| Rob Johnson | Prineville Hot Shots (South Canyon Fire, Colorado) | 1994 |
| Paul E. Gibson | First Strike Environmental, Roseburg - ODF Contractor | 2003 |
| David Kelly Hammer | First Strike Environmental, Roseburg - ODF Contractor | 2003 |
| Jeffrey D. Hengel | First Strike Environmental, Roseburg - ODF Contractor | 2003 |
| Jesse D. James | First Strike Environmental, Roseburg - ODF Contractor | 2003 |
| Richard Burt Moore II | First Strike Environmental, Roseburg – ODF Contractor | 2003 |
| Leland 'David' Price Jr. | First Strike Environmental, Roseburg – ODF Contractor | 2003 |
| Mark Robert Ransdell | First Strike Environmental, Roseburg – ODF Contractor | 2003 |
| Ricardo M. Ruiz | First Strike Environmental, Roseburg – ODF Contractor | 2003 |
| Mike Merlino | Sutherlin Fire Department, Sutherlin | 2025 |

Commissioner Tim Freeman then presented **Firefighter Appreciation & Fallen Firefighter Week** proclamation certificates to firefighters and fire personnel from:

- Central Douglas Fire & Rescue: Chief Rob Bullock, Deputy Chief Scott Richardson, Ben Matthews, Jeff Cole, Lenny Coopride, and Shawn Roberts
- Winston-Dillard Fire District: Chief Rob Bullock
- North Douglas Fire & EMS: Deputy Chief Travis Terry and Deputy Chief E. Guisto
- Roseburg Fire Department: Assistant Chief Dave Newquist
- Fair Oaks Rural Fire District: Greg Mock, Dave Hopkins, Michael Wighton, Tom Yanitor
- Glide Rural Fire District: Chief Ted Damewood and Assistant Chief Chip Clough
- Douglas Forest Protective Association: District Manager Pat Skrip, Paul Rutter, Adam Sinkey and Ken Cannon
- Cow Creek Tribal Fire Management: Chief Monte Bryan, Brennen Pettibone, Kyle Reed, Nathan Lawrence, Austin Berry, Blain Olbaca, Kacey Benefiel, Azpyn Roberts, Tray Babikoff, Marshall Hasikell and Riley McCallister

Commissioner Kress then invited a few of our honored guests to come to the podium to speak about what fire serve means to them.

“Commissioners thank you for this and I want to recognize that I have been doing this for a while now and the amount of effort and things that I see firefighters run into to help other people is incredible. They sacrifice a lot – not always with their life, but time with their family, time with their friends and their free time. Being a firefighter is a lifestyle, not just a job. Everybody here gives everything they can to the people we serve. To be remembered and honored is like this is nice. I want to thank you and everyone here for the effort they put forth, be it paid, volunteer, wildland, structural or EMS,” - Chief Rob Bullock, Central Douglas Fire & Rescue.

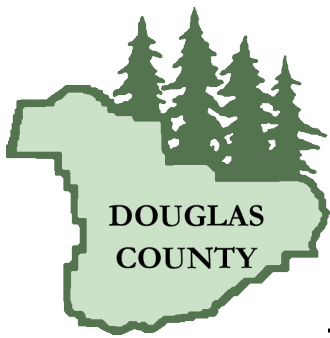
“Thank you Commissioners, it’s an honor to have you recognize Firefighters. At North Douglas we have dual paid and volunteer staff. Which is a privilege we don’t take lightly. It’s great to see the volunteer side of the organization and how much they contribute, not only for them, but how much their families support the time and effort they put in. We appreciate the honor given today for the sacrifices we make for our communities,” - Deputy Chief Travis Terry, North Douglas Fire & EMS.

“Thank you Commissioners for having us here. First and foremost, I want to thank the Fire Departments represented here. Cow Creek Tribal Fire Management started operations in 2023, and we have taken great strides to become a full capacity fire department in the last three years for our tribal community and the community at large. To build on what the other fire chiefs said, one of my favorites sayings by George Orwell is “Good people sleep peacefully at night only because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf.” I’ve always loved that saying, whether it was for law enforcement or fire service. I think it is important that we have people that wake up in the middle of the night to protect us while we sleep,” – Chief Monte Bryan, Cow Creek Tribal Fire Management.

Following the presentation and ceremony, Ken Cannon, Board Member with Douglas Forest Protective Association, was invited to the podium. *“Greetings Chair Kress and Commissioner Freeman. This is a little different from what you have heard today. It is our response to you, and all the support that you have provided to DFPA through the years. You are incredibly important to us. I am here to present a letter of thanks that has been signed by the entire DFPA Board of Directors, a certificate of recognition, and challenge coins for each of the Commissioners,”* stated Cannon. *“On behalf of the Board of Directors and the entire team at DFPA, I would like to extend our deepest gratitude to you for your unwavering support of our association. Your support to our association has been instrumental in helping us fulfill our mission of providing the highest level of service - to safeguard life, resources, and property through practical prevention and aggressive fire suppression. The partnership between Douglas County and DFPA is the cornerstone of our district’s success. Whether through collaborative emergency management or fiscal support, your leadership assures that we remain ready to protect the 1.6 million acres under our care, as we have done for 114 years. As a token of our appreciation and a symbol of this enduring partnership, the board would like to present each of you with a DFPA challenge coin. In the tradition of first responders these challenge coins represent more than just appreciation. They are symbols of honor, shared values, and recognition for the tireless service to those that have helped DFPA fulfill our mission and also to recognize your tireless service to our community.”*

In 2017, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation created [Light the Night for Fallen Firefighters](#), to recognize Fallen Firefighters. As a gesture of support and honor the Commissioners have asked that the exterior lights of the Douglas County Courthouse be turned **RED** from April 26 – May 2, 2026, as a tribute to the 20 fallen Douglas County firefighters, their families, and ALL fallen fire heroes across our great nation.

“Thank you all for being here today. It’s so very important to honor our fallen firefighters as we have done here today, but also equally important to show our appreciation for our firefighters that serve currently our communities. I’ve been fortunate enough to serve as an ex-officio member on the DFPA board. Which allows me to attend meetings and hear the reports of the work that they do - which is nothing short of amazing how they set goals for themselves and how often they achieve those goals. Also, when the county responds to a fire, one or more of our local fire agencies are already there and it is so reassuring to see you on all the ground and doing the amazing and remarkable work you do. And that happens not just during fire response, but for every emergency incident you respond to. Your acts of bravery, protection, and help are repeated every single day, day in and day out, throughout the county with all of our different fire agencies. You are incredible and innovative. Lastly, what sparked my reason to get into public service was a response. A number of years ago, the Roseburg Fire Department responded to a fire at my residence when I was out of town and saved my wife and children. I am so incredibly grateful for their response and life saving efforts. In times like that you realize what is truly important. Nothing else matters more than family. Thank you for all you do,” – Commissioner Freeman.



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This proclamation is a reminder to our citizens to take the time to thank our fire heroes, past and present, who, by their faithful and loyal devotion to their profession, have rendered immeasurable service to their communities.

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FIREFIGHTER APPRECIATION WEEK & FALLEN FIREFIGHTER MEMORIAL PROCLAMATION
DOUGLAS COUNTY, OREGON

APRIL 26 - MAY 2, 2026

LIGHT THE NIGHT FOR FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS
In Memory of our Fallen Fire Heroes

Jerry Bain, Roy W. McFarland, John J. Richards, Richard Underhill, Elwin I. King, Mark Giles, James Moore, Russell Brine, Julius C. Starr, Clark N. Gilkison, Rob Johnson, Paul E. Gibson, David Kelly Hammer, Jeffrey D. Hengel, Jesse D. James, Richard Burt Moore II, Leland 'David' Price Jr., Mark Robert Ransdell, Ricardo M. Ruiz, Mike Merlino

Douglas County Fire, Rescue & EMS Agencies

North Douglas Fire & EMS

Central Douglas Fire & Rescue

Cow Creek Tribal Fire Management

City of Roseburg Fire Department

Douglas Forest Protective Association

Fair Oaks Rural Fire District

Glide Rural Fire District

PROCLAMATION

Firefighter Appreciation & Fallen Firefighter Memorial Week in Douglas County - April 26 – May 2, 2026

WHEREAS, we are honored to recognize April 26 – May 2, 2026, as **Firefighter Appreciation & Fallen Firefighter Memorial Week** in Douglas County. This week we honor the duties, responsibilities, hazards, and sacrifices made by our fire service personnel including all career, volunteer, wildland, and structural firefighters; as well as chief officers, company officers, battalion chiefs, engineers, lieutenants, captains, fire marshals, public information officers, administrators, those that are cross-trained as EMTs and paramedics, and fire office personnel; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that this week we pay tribute to the **45th Annual National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend**, to honor the sacrifices made by our fallen fire heroes who perished while bravely fighting fires and protecting our communities, our forests, our livestock, our businesses, our homes and our natural resources. The tribute also allows our nation to remain faithful in the pledge made to the families of our fallen fire heroes that **"we will never forget"**; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that firefighters are dedicated public servants who place themselves in harm's way to protect the lives, property, and wellbeing of our communities; and

WHEREAS, these brave men and women respond to emergencies with courage and professionalism, facing dangers such as fire, hazardous materials, medical crises, and natural disasters; and

WHEREAS, firefighters not only respond to emergencies but also work tirelessly to prevent them through education, training, community outreach, and fire safety programs; and

WHEREAS, we recognize the physical, mental, and emotional demands of this honorable profession, and express deep gratitude for the commitment and sacrifice of every firefighter, past and present; and

WHEREAS, as of December 2025, the names of 182 Oregon firefighters who have died in the line of duty, dating back to 1881, are inscribed on the **Oregon Fallen Fire Fighters Memorial Wall**, including 19 from Douglas County. This June, another Douglas County firefighter will be honored on Oregon's Fallen Fire Fighters Memorial Wall, bringing the County's total to 20 fallen fire heroes; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation created **Light the Night for Fallen Firefighters** to recognize our fallen heroes. As a gesture of support and honor we have asked that the exterior lights of the Douglas County Courthouse be turned **RED** from April 26 – May 2, as a tribute to the 20 fallen Douglas County firefighters, their families, and ALL fallen fire heroes across our great nation; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting to dedicate a week to show appreciation for the heroism, dedication, and faithful service of firefighters who have rendered immeasurable service to the communities they serve; and

NOW, THEREFORE, we, the Douglas County Board of Commissioners, **Tom Kress, Chris Boice, and Tim Freeman** call upon all citizens of Douglas County to observe this week as **Firefighter Appreciation & Fallen Firefighter Memorial Week in Douglas County** and ask you to join us in honoring ALL our fire heroes, past and present.

DATED THIS 29th DAY OF APRIL 2026

Tom Kress
Commissioner Tom Kress, Chair

Chris Boice
Commissioner Chris Boice

Tim Freeman
Commissioner Tim Freeman