



Charles Edward Kerns

March 31, 1942 - August 8, 2018

Charles (Bake) Edward Kerns, 76, of Pall Mall, TN, formerly of Winchester, VA, was called to Heaven Wednesday, August 8, 2018.

He was born March 31, 1942, in Winchester, the son of Russell Irving and Alma Perry Kerns.

He was married to Georgia Anna Coffelt Kerns, the Love of his Life, for 53 years until her passing on February 27, 2017.

Charles received his Life's Calling to the Fire and Rescue Service at the age of 13 with the Shawnee Volunteer Fire Department. He held many responsibilities within the station, excelling to the rank of Fire Chief. He was extremely proud of the station's many achievements. In 1974, he was employed by the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, serving the McLean and Chantilly VA. area. While serving in Fairfax from 1978-1997, he attained the rank of Station Officer. His achievements include the Silver Medal Public Safety Valor Award and a Lifetime Membership to Fairfax City Volunteer Fire and Rescue. He continuing his faithful stewardship to his calling, as a member of the Winchester Rescue Squad, which later became the Millwood Fire and Rescue Department.

Additionally, he served our country for 29 years. He was in the Stonewall Brigade, 116th Infantry Division of the Army National Guard as a Medical Specialist. He also served with the Martinsburg Air National Guard as an Assistant Fire Chief of Operations retiring at the rank of Master Sergeant.

Following his "Retirement", Charlie moved his family to Pall Mall, TN. He volunteered with the Fentress County Fire Department and Government. for 20 years. He served as a Fire Instructor at the Tennessee Fire Service and Codes Academy, and was a lead instructor for the State of Tennessee and the surrounding counties of Fentress. He served at the rank of Captain of Pall Mall Volunteer Fire Department. He lead efforts to provide over 2 million dollars worth of fire equipment, apparatus, and training for Fentress and surrounding counties. Charlie was recognized by a House Resolution for these actions by the State of Tennessee House of Representatives and Governor. Charlie, who was forever humble, would always reply, "I did not do this; The Lord let us do this".

Charlie will be dearly missed. His unshakable leadership and unselfishness to help,

protect, and provide for others will forever remain with us.

He is survived by his sons, Russell "Tater" Kerns, and Brandon Kerns; his daughters, Kristle Kerns and Pamela Baker; sisters, Alma "Sis" Gaunt, and Maxine "Mackie" Kerns; eight grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and many nieces, nephews and cousins; as well as, his "Brothers" Charles Brown, Terry Braithwaite and members of the Fire and Rescue Brotherhood, and his four-legged pals, Turdypye and Grumman.

A service will be 11:00 a.m. Thursday in Shawnee Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department 2210 Valor Drive Winchester officiated by Reverend Jeff Barbour.

Burial will be in Macedonia Cemetery, White Post.

Casket Bearers will be Jay Bailey, Robbie Bailey, Tyree Cather, Scott Miller, J.D. Tomblin, Chase Kerns, and Russell Kerns.

Honorary Bearers are Charlie Brown and Terry Braithwaite.

Friends will be received Wednesday from 6-9:00 p.m. in the fire station.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Firefighter Cancer Support Network at: www.FSN.net

Following the burial, a reception will be held at Shawnee Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department.

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG **15**. 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM (ET)

Shawnee Fire & Rescue
2210 Valor Drive
Winchester, VA 22601

Service

AUG **16**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Shawnee Fire & Rescue
2210 Valor Drive
Winchester, VA 22601

Committal

AUG **16** (ET)

Macedonia United Methodist Church
1941 Macedonia Church Road
White Post, VA 22663

Reception

AUG **16** (ET)

Shawnee Fire & Rescue
2210 Valor Drive
Winchester, VA 22601

Tribute Wall

MP

“ The first time I met Charlie was at the fall Winchester Fire School when I was 14 or 15 (1975 or 1976). This was my first time entering a burning building and Charlie was the instructor with our crew, I was the second or third person on the line. We advanced the line just inside the doorway of the room where the fire was burning. In his, as always, calm voice, Charlie talked to us about what was happening with the fire, how we would attack the fire and what would happen after the water was applied, etc. Before we moved forward, he asked if we had any questions and if we were all good to go. My department was using the red Fire-Ball rubber coated gloves, the sweat on my hands was heating up rapidly, I told Charlie my hands were getting really hot and I remember like it was yesterday him saying, "well young man, move up here to the nozzle and we'll crack open the nozzle just a little and flow water across your gloves to cool them down." I moved up, we did just what Charlie said, my hands cooled down, as this was happening, I thought, this is the coolest guy alive! I moved back to my position on the line, we moved forward to attack the fire and everything happened just as Charlie has described. That day and that specific interaction with Charlie Kerns solidified what I wanted to do; be a career firefighter. Ironically, 25 years later, the Captain on Engine 3 on B Shift in Fairfax City was Charlie Kerns and I was the Captain on Engine 34 on B Shift in Fairfax County (Oakton). That kid who was taken into his first burning building by Charlie Kerns was now running calls with him on an almost daily basis. Thank you Charlie Kerns!

Milton Painter

Milton Painter - August 19, 2018 at 04:38 PM

MD

“ Charlie was old school cool. He taught aggressive fireground strategies and tactics.....a forgotten mantra of get busy and get home. He had an unforgettable smile that resembled a smirk. He was always very engaging in conversation.....cool thing is; he never talked down to anyone, was very respectful (even when a boot up the backside was indicated). I always liked how he'd call everyone "young man", too. RIP Charlie. You made a positive impact on my career and influenced my conduct inside and outside a fire station. I might add, you raised a pretty good son who shares some of your strong traits.

Mark Duvall

Mark Duvall - August 14, 2018 at 02:41 PM

JS

“ I met Charlie when I joined Millwood Station in 99, I looked up to him and only being 16 at the time I loved the stories and the wisdom he shared. I remember coming to the firehouse and seeing fire trucks in the back parking lot bound for Tennessee and him telling me what little they had which made me thankful for everything we had. Charlie was gifted not just in ways of the fire service but ways of life and I honestly believe Charlie had forgotten more about firefighting then what I will ever know but I do take the knowledge he shared and the childhood memories he gave me. My thoughts and prayers are with his family. Rest easy my friend... James M. Sager

James Sager - August 14, 2018 at 08:19 AM

RW

“ I can still remember the first time I met Charlie. I was a young kid of 15 years old walking by Shawnee fire company on my way to play basketball at Robinson school when Charlie ask me to help them pack hose on the fire truck. That was the start of long friendship that lasted for over 40 years. Charlie loved life and the people he met along the way, he always wanted to help who ever he could when ever he could. I can only hope that the wisdom that he shared in his teaching over the years will still make a difference on peoples lives now that he has passed. Charlie was always the same person no matter who was around, he never tried to be some one else, just Charlie. I will truly miss you, a great friend and a true brother in life, Robert Whitacre

Robert Whitacre - August 14, 2018 at 07:30 AM



“ Peaceful Wishes was purchased for the family of Charles Edward Kerns.



August 13, 2018 at 09:21 PM

LI

“ Bake as daddy called him “Bacon” will be missed an thought of often. His love for daddy an stories he told of him an pictures he shared will always be remembered. Peace be with you Bacon
Your cousin Linda

Linda - August 13, 2018 at 08:38 PM



“ Floor Plant for Sympathy was purchased for the family of Charles Edward Kerns.



August 13, 2018 at 07:37 PM

JH

“ Charlie was my supervisor when I made Sergeant in the Fairfax City Fire Department from 1986 - 1992. He was an mentor, incredible firefighter and a caring human being.

Charlie always looked for the good in people and strived to ensure that every shift member was considered an important part of the team. I will miss his smile, his swill and gukka dishes he served the shift members so many times over the years. And don't forget the grape jelly ON EVERYTHING!!! R.I.P. Charlie, your work here on earth is done.....keep an eye on the rest of us First Family members from Fairfax City FD...sooner than later we all will be joining you...save us a place at the table..

Joel Hendelman, Battalion Chief (Ret)

Joel Hendelman - August 13, 2018 at 06:43 PM

PH

“ Charlie was totally dedicated to the fire service and did much to help Fentress County while he lived here. He was the go to person for apparatus problems. He also had a bit of magic in him in writing and getting grants for equipment. He will be missed.

phil - August 13, 2018 at 01:33 PM

RS

“ Rodney Snapp lit a candle in memory of Charles Edward Kerns



Rodney Snapp - August 13, 2018 at 09:13 AM

TL

“ I meet Charles and his precious wife 8 years ago when I moved to Jamestown TN. I cut their hair and they became more family than clients. Charles and his wife kept a check on me after my daughter passed away. He will be greatly missed! Prayers for his family .. Tonia,Shadow and Rowdie Lowe...

tonia lowe - August 12, 2018 at 07:08 PM

GB

I met Charlie and his family about 38 years ago give or take. He ran on the rescue squad in Winchester with my parents. I remember he would always try to help get all the departments around the area free equipment that Fairfax was not using anymore and to help train members on the latest technology of firefighting. He was a inspiration to a lot of men and women in the fire and rescue service. He will be missed. My thoughts are with his family and all that knew him.

Greg Bradford - August 13, 2018 at 05:48 PM