

NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BELOVED ENNIS VOLUNTEER FIRE FIGHTER LIEUTENANT JODIE W. HARBERT, JR. TO BE LAID TO REST

ENNIS, Texas – Beloved Ennis Volunteer Fire Fighter Lieutenant Jodie W. Harbert, Jr. will be laid to rest with full Fire Department honors. Fire departments from cities across the State of Texas will participate in the funeral of Lieutenant Jodie W. Harbert, Jr. at 11:00 AM on Thursday, February 17, 2011, at Tabernacle Baptist Church, 1200 Country Club Road in Ennis, Texas. Lieutenant Harbert served the Ennis Fire Department with distinction as an active volunteer fire fighter for more than sixty-three (63) years. Lieutenant Harbert's tenure of service is believed to be among the longest in the State of Texas.

Ennis Fire Chief David Hopkins said, "There should be representatives from approximately 100 Emergency Service Organizations attending Jodie's Funeral Services. Participation of these organizations represents the heartfelt respect and sincere admiration of his peers. Jodie has always been the kindest person; serving God, his family, his friends, and all of the Citizens of Ennis and the surrounding area."

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Jodie W. Harbert, Jr. Information

This document contains background information for Jodie W. Harbert, Jr. The information and photographs may be used for publication.

Schedule:

Visitation - Wed Feb 16th 6pm-8pm Bethlehem Church 606 Loggins Ennis

Funeral - Thurs Feb 17th 11:00am Tabernacle Church 1200 Country Club Ennis

Interment - Carver Memorial Park. Just east of I-45 on Malloy Bridge Rd, Ferris Tx

The public is invited... including Fire Departments, emergency service organizations and all friends.

The funeral will take place at Tabernacle Baptist Church, a large church capable of accommodating all who will attend and there is adequate parking for Fire Equipment, etc.



In Lieu of Flowers... the family has requested Donations in Jodie's name to:

Texas Line of Duty Death Response Team Caring for Texas Heroes, Their Families, and Their Departments



<http://www.texasfallenhero.org>

Phone/FAX: 281-996-8149 Cell: 832-647-6770

Email: wendy@firechaplains.org

Mail: PO Box 925 Friendswood, TX 77546

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Distinguished Fireman for the Ennis Fire Department Jodie Harbert Jr.

Funeral services for Mr. Jodie Harbert Jr. are pending with Ray-Thomas Funeral Home.

May 28 ,2008 Ennis Daily News Article

Local firefighter deserves thanks

Ever since the tragedy of Sept. 11, 2001, Americans have shown a renewed appreciation for this nation's firefighters and the dangerous work they do.

That certainly holds true here in Ennis, where our firefighters are considered local heroes, though their efforts often go unheralded. Each day they answer the call to protect local lives and property, often at risk to themselves.

In yesterday's edition of the Ennis Daily News we highlighted the service of one hero in particular who serves as an example of loyalty and dedication. Jodie Harbert Jr. has served with the Ennis Fire Department since 1946 and we think he deserves all of the accolades we could possibly give him.

Sixty-two years is a long time for one person to devote to such an important and often dangerous endeavor. Yet Harbert has been there through thick and thin as our community has undergone many changes and challenges. His steadfast service is an example that others should be proud to follow.

In addition to his current role as Volunteer Lieutenant with the EFD, Harbert also serves his church, gives friends rides into town and checks on elderly friends who aren't as mobile as he is. He truly has a giving spirit.

Harbert was recently named Firefighter of the Year by the North Texas Firefighters Association and we are proud to see him receive this important recognition.

Now he has the opportunity to be named State Firefighter of the Year, but regardless of whether or not he receives that title, it will not alter the impact he has had or the inspiration he provides to this community. He has earned our respect and undying gratitude.

We ask our readers to join us in thanking Harbert for his dedication and the fine example he has set. We are truly blessed to have had him devote so much of himself to serving the people of Ennis.

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Jodie Harbert Jr. has served EFD for 62 years

Local firefighting hero, on the job since 1946, may retire this year

After 62 years, firefighter Jodie Harbert Jr. is still on the job. He's helped quell countless emergencies over seven decades, and saved many lives, but the Ennis hero may soon be hanging up his hat and his fire-hose.

Recently named Fire Fighter of the Year by the North Texas Fire Fighters Association, Harbert joined the Ennis Fire Department in 1946.

Now serving as Volunteer Lieutenant. Harbert has seen many changes over the years of his service to Ennis and though he said he's enjoyed the work, he thinks it might be time to take a little rest.

"I've been thinking about doing this for the last year," Harbert said. "It's certainly changed a lot."

Harbert is a much-needed supporting cast member on the local fire scene, helping with equipment pumps, performing rehabilitation for department personnel, changing and refilling air cylinders, directing traffic, retrieving tools and running errands.

Harbert's presence is also an emotional asset to the department.

"To me he is just like having a father around," Fire Chief David Hopkins said. "He really is like a second father. And to the guys, they really respect him. He knows the city. He virtually knows every fire that has occurred in the city."

Harbert is an inspiration to the Ennis firefighters and an aide on the scene.

"I just like doing it," Harbert said of his current volunteering duties.

"It's a way to help out the community."

Volunteering with the fire department isn't the only way Harbert helps out Ennis. He is active in his church, gives friends rides into town and checks on elderly friends who aren't as mobile as he is.

Harbert was raised in Ennis and attended Ennis Colored High School.

He was married to Edwina, who passed away approximately five years ago.

He has a son named Jodie Harbert III.

Harbert has the opportunity to win the prestigious honor of State Fire Fighter of the Year at the annual firefighter's convention scheduled for June in Beaumont.

"I'm very excited about that," Harbert said. "It's a great honor."

Harbert named 2008 Fire Fighter of the Year

Recently firefighters from across North Texas met in Ennis for their annual spring district meeting. Among highlights was the selection of Fire Fighter of the Year. For 2008, one of Ennis's oldest and longest serving volunteers was honored.

Volunteer Lt. Jodie Harbert Jr. joined the Ennis Fire Department in 1946 and has been serving the citizens of Ennis ever since.

"In this day and age, when volunteers are waning, it is nice to see somebody who is so dedicated to helping others," a department spokesman told the Ennis Daily News.

Though Harbert is over 80 years old, he's still active in the department. No longer able to perform the strenuous activities of a line firefighter he hasn't let this deter him from participation, graciously assuming responsibilities in a support role.

Harbert said he takes pride in his knowledge of operating all fire department apparatus and is always excited to learn about any new piece of equipment acquired.

He is able to handle pumps on all of Ennis' equipment, an asset to the department because it allows fellow firefighters to assume other roles.

Additional tasks Harbert normally performs for the local department are Rehab, changing and refilling air cylinders, directing traffic, retrieving tools, and running errands for additional small equipment and food.

Over his more than 60 years of service to the Ennis Fire Department, Harbert has served as mentor to both career and volunteer members.

Coworkers said he's always been willing to share the knowledge he's gathered about firefighting throughout his seven decades of hands-on experience. Fellow firefighters admitted Harbert not only has an arsenal of stories about the Ennis Fire Department, but also of larger departments in Dallas. His friends in the department said he has been a constant inspiration to young people over the years, several of whom have gone on to become career firefighters.

Outside the firehouse, Harbert remains active in the community, from helping out at his church to lending neighbors a ride to town to regularly checking on elderly friends.

The Ennis Fire Department confirmed that Harbert has an opportunity to win the prestigious honor of State Fire Fighter of the Year during the profession's annual state convention to be held in early June in Beaumont.

Obituary

On March 12, 1925, in Denison, Texas Jodie, Sr. and Julia Mayes gave birth to a baby boy and named him Jodie W. Harbert, Jr. The family moved to Ennis and there he began to grow and find his purpose. As a young child he would hear the sirens and ride his bike to fires and wanted to help. After graduating from Ennis High School, he attended Prairie View A&M University. When he returned home he found his purpose in life and that was becoming a firefighter. He went to work at Ennis Business Forms in Ennis, but when the alarms sounded he would leave Ennis Business Forms to go to the call to help.

Jodie expressed many times that firefighting was not a job, but a calling and once bitten, it was in your blood for life. He remained at Ennis Business Forms for 44 years but remained an active firefighter for more than 60 years. He started and ended his career at the Ennis Fire Department and was a lifelong member of EFD but his passion to help others would drive him to support other fire departments anytime they were in need.

He kept his bunker gear in his vehicle at all times to be ready to respond wherever the call may be. Jodie could be seen helping in the community whether it was directing traffic at funerals, providing as escort, mowing grass at the local cemeteries, or vacant lots to make his community a nicer place to call home. Mr. Harbert received many awards for his community service and he enjoyed everyone including his most cherished, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Ennis Fire Department in 1996 for more than 50 years of service. As he got older he was not able to give as much as he had, but remained tuned in to what was going on in his community with his scanner and radios set to hear every call and what was going on at the scene.

Jodie's wife, Edwinna E. Harbert, a pillar in the community, preceded him in death in 2000. He is survived by his son Jodie Harbert, III and daughter in law Denise Harbert of Flower Mound and a host of friends. As well as every firefighter he ever met or worked with he considered part of his family.