

Lt. Marvin Strohman

Nominated by Lisa Strohman-Schutz

For more than 20 years my dad, Marvin Strohman, served the community as a member of the Marshfield Fire Department. That service abruptly ended when he suffered a fatal heart attack while extinguishing a chimney fire at the Clinique Lounge, 501 South Central Avenue, on January 4, 1981. While one of the saddest days ever faced by my family and the Marshfield Fire and Rescue Department, Dad died doing what he loved, for the city he loved, and with the men that he called family. He truly is a hero to me and the city he left behind.



Born in Marshfield on February 15, 1930, Dad attended local schools and graduated with the Class of 1948 from Marshfield Senior High School. While still a high school student, he enlisted in the National Guard, serving in the B “Baker” Battery, Field Artillery Battalion of the 32nd Division until his discharge in 1955.

Four years later, on August 4, 1959, he joined the Marshfield Fire Department. As a new member of the department, he served a six month probation period, during which time he studied, trained and tested for the fireman position. Completing this period and passing required tests, he earned the rank of second class fireman. During the next six months, he went through further training, took and successfully completed another test, and was promoted to a first class fireman. He was promoted to lieutenant at the end of October 1972, becoming responsible for first line supervision of firefighters on his assigned shifts responding to fire alarms, rescue operations or emergency medical assistance calls. He held this rank until his death.

When the fire department started operating the city’s ambulance service in April 1964, Dad was one of the first firemen to serve as an ambulance attendant. Up until that time, ambulance services had been provided by local funeral homes. The department’s first ambulance was purchased from the Rembs Funeral Home and another was leased from Hansen Funeral Home.

A fireman’s work schedule is usually full, but when Dad started at the department, firemen filled their spare time by repairing toys, bicycles, tricycles, wagons, scooters and the like that were distributed to area youngsters by the Elks Club a few days before Christmas. For many years firemen converted an area of the station into Santa’s branch workshop as the holidays approached.

The City of Marshfield acknowledged Dad's ultimate sacrifice in 1992 with the dedication of Strohman Park, 630 South Central Avenue. Marshfield firefighters have since held their annual Firefighters Memorial Service at the Park. The event honors nineteen deceased area firefighters as well as Marvin Strohman, the city's only firefighter to die in the line of duty.

During one of these services, then president of the Marshfield Fire and Police Commission, Tom Lenard, said, "I've come to realize that firefighters are a different breed of person, for it is their job to risk their lives to make sure ours are sustained. While firefighters sometimes lose the battle, and sometimes their own lives, we as families [and a community] can all be proud of what they stand for and commit to when they put on their uniforms."

Marvin Strohman was a dedicated, compassionate, and trusted firefighter. Personally, my dad was a devoted father and husband, a real family man, and my hero.