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Contact: Ted Berger (217)299-3561

Galesburg Firefighter to Receive State Valor Award Early

*Captain Derek W. Perry to receive one of the State’s highest honors before National Guard deployment*

GALESBURG - Representatives of the Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal and the Illinois Fire Fighter Medal of Honor Committee will visit the Galesburg Fire Department to award Captain Derek W. Perry with the State of Illinois Firefighter Medal of Valor. The award presentation will be presented to Captain Perry in advance of the State Firefighter Memorial and Medal of Honor Ceremony scheduled for May 10th due to Captain Perry’s upcoming National Guard unit deployment.

On the evening of June 29, 2011, Captain Derek W. Perry of the Galesburg Fire Department responded to a residential fire within his district. Through heavy smoke he searched the upstairs of the residence, finding an adult victim and saving her life. Because he clearly demonstrated courage and dedication in the face of danger, Captain Perry is slated to receive the Medal of Valor at the Firefighter’s Medal of Honor Ceremony in Springfield on May 10th.

“It is my honor to award Captain Perry with the Medal of Valor”, said State Fire Marshal Larry Matkaitis. “Not only is Captain Perry a hero for saving a life during his firefighting career, he will also be putting his life on the line to serve our country.”

The State of Illinois Firefighter Medal of Honor Annual Award program was established by Public Act 86-1230. The award program seeks to recognize firefighters who have been killed or seriously injured in the line of duty and those who have displayed exceptional bravery or heroism while performing their duties as a firefighter. The Medal of Valor Award is specifically given by the State of Illinois to a firefighter for an act of heroism or bravery that clearly demonstrated courage and dedication in the face of danger while in the performance of duty.

A total of 24 fire personnel from across the state will be honored this year at the Medal of Honor Ceremony in Springfield on May 10th. The ceremony will begin in the State Capitol Complex area with the presentation of colors and the invocation at the Illinois Fallen Firefighters Memorial, followed by the awards ceremony at the Prairie Capital Convention Center. State firefighter personnel as well as the public are welcome to attend. For more information on the event, please visit http://www.sfm.illinois.gov/.

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