



Van Buren Charter Township

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bruce VanGemert earns William G. Gage Award for Fire Service Excellence



All those who had the honor of knowing Lieutenant William “Bill” G. Gage personally loved him and knew how much he loved serving on the Van Buren Township Fire Department.

The Gage family shared, “The William G. Gage Award for Fire Service Excellence is one of the greatest recognitions of Bill’s efforts that he could have ever expected or dreamed. Our family would like to thank the Board of Trustees, the Fire Department and the Van Buren Township community for this honor in memory of his efforts. Bill would be so excited when someone he trained or coached thanked him for his help and support. These simple words of ‘thank you’ did not outweigh the times he held a life in his hands at the scene of an accident or gave comfort to someone in distress.”

The William G. Gage Memorial Award for Fire Service Excellence was created to acknowledge fellow Van Buren Township Fire Department personnel who share Bill’s

- Distinct pattern of service in this community
- Effort to always go above and beyond the call of duty

- Character that exemplifies the phrase, “Commitment to Excellence” and the virtues of professionalism and dedication
- Desire to continuously improve himself, and
- His dedication to make the community a better place to work and play

Fire Department staff nominated fellow co-workers for this award, and a panel of judges determined the most deserving individual based upon nomination letters submitted detailing nominees’ accomplishments, traits, and skills that match Bill’s commitments.

Lieutenant Bruce VanGemert was selected for this honorary award. Nominations mentioned VanGemert’s commitment to be first to offer his time to help outside his normal duties and calls for service.

One submission stated, “In addition to his duties, Bruce initiates training programs, including HazMat and wellness/fitness programs. Any time there is a public event and he is available, Bruce is there. He also exhibits the utmost professionalism, and his engaging and social demeanor keeps those in even the most stressful situations calm and confident. Bruce continuously strives to educate himself on several aspects of fire service, and he attempts to attend as many classes as possible to better himself and his abilities.”

Fire Chief Besson, in acknowledging VanGemert for his new Lieutenant position and this distinct award stated, “Throughout the years, I have had the pleasure of seeing you grow, both personally and professionally, and I have no doubt that you will serve our department with the highest regard. Congratulations. May God give you the wisdom to lead others and to keep them safe.”

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