

Memorandum

TO: DISTRICT CHAIRMEN

FROM: Tina Wiseley, Administrative Assistant

RE: Martin A. Werner Firefighter of the Year Award

DATE: November 17, 2017

Each District Chairman will receive a 3-ring binder that is to be used to submit their respective District Winner's application to Department for final Department-level judging. Each binder contains a copy of the rules and information regarding the award.

Each District is responsible for establishing a deadline for District judging. The Districts are to submit their winner's application to Department on or before the Department deadline **June 1, 2018**. It is important that as District Chairman, you establish your District deadline in conjunction with your District Commander. You must also establish a judging committee and transfer the winner's application into the 3-ring binder provided.

NO DISTRICT APPLICATIONS CAN BE ACCEPTED IN ANY FORM OTHER THAN THE 3-RING BINDERS ISSUED BY DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS.

If at any time you have questions concerning the procedures relating to the Fire Fighter of the Year Award, please contact me at twiseley@indianalegion.org or (317) 630-1300; or Committee Chairman Nicholas Nicholoff at (260) 623-6288. We wish each of you much success and look forward to your entries in this year's program.

Thank you.

cc: District Commanders

The American Legion Department of Indiana

Martin A. Werner

Firefighter of the Year Award

Background

A firefighter Award Committee was established at the Indiana Department of The American Legion in July of 1977. The Committee was created to establish an award for the outstanding Firefighter in the State of Indiana.

The Firefighter Committee was formed at the request of Cedar Lake Post 261. Their membership stated, in a resolution, that “a firefighter lays his life on the line every time he answers a call and should be recognized as a dedicated individual thinking only of the safety of others.”

The primary purpose of a fireman is to fight fires and to save lives. A fireman also performs other duties, such as helping in all disaster situations and performing emergency medical assistance. Firefighting remains a most hazardous occupation. It is because of all the duties a firefighter is called upon to perform that Cedar Lake Post 261 recommended they be recognized.

The Department started presenting the awards in 1978. In 1988, a resolution to the Department Convention hereafter named the award the Martin A. Werner Firefighter Award. Werner was a former firefighter and member of Cedar Lake Post 261, and was instrumental in setting up the Firefighter Award Program. Werner died shortly before the 1988 Convention.

Through such a program the Legion can play a part in seeing that outstanding firefighters are recognized for their achievements. Members of The American Legion have risked great personal danger for their country and fellow man, just as firefighters do daily. By recognizing the men and women of the firefighting profession, we can hope to continue to have dedicated firefighters. Firefighters dedicated not only to their country and community, but to the important job they do.

Credentials

The Martin A. Werner Firefighter Award is given each year to a full-time, part-time, or volunteer firefighter. The winner, in the opinion of the judges, must have proven himself professionally, demonstrated the finest qualities of a good firefighter, and promoted the firefighting profession. The winner need not be a veteran or a member of The American Legion.

Selection and Judging

The selection for the Firefighter Award begins at the local post level. Each Legion Post in the state can name a fireman for their candidate for Firefighter of the Year.

The Local posts determine the manner in which each winner will be selected. After a local winner has been named, the firefighter will then be considered for the District Firefighter of the Year.

Each Legion District has its own criteria for selecting its winner, but usually follows the guidelines set down for the state contest. After the District selection process is complete, the District Firefighter Chairman assists the candidate in preparing an official scrapbook, which is judged at the State level. This scrapbook serves as the judging panel's only contact with the candidate, and the quality of the scrapbook's content is the sole basis for the judges' decision.

The American Legion

Martin A. Werner

Firefighter of the Year Award

1. Each post shall select a Chairman whose responsibility will be to provide the District Committee with a suitable and qualified nominee for the award.
2. Each Post shall be made available an official entry form by the Department. This form will be the only method acceptable for Posts to certify the name and accompanying documentation to the District Chairman.
3. Each District Commander shall appoint a Committee of not less than three or more than five members whose responsibility shall be to judge all applications and select one winner who shall represent that District in Department competition.
4. Each District Chairman shall set his/her own deadline for determining the District winner. However, all District winners shall be certified at Department Headquarters **no later than June 1, 2018.**
5. Each District winner shall be presented an appropriate plaque during prescribed ceremonies at the Department Convention.
6. Each Post sponsoring a District winner shall be presented an inscribed citation during the ceremonies at the Department Convention.
7. The name of the winner of the Martin A. Werner Award shall be announced from the podium during ceremonies at the Department Convention.
8. The winner of the Department Award shall be the guest of the Department Convention Corporation at the Department Convention where minimum benefits shall include lodging for a minimum of one day. Other candidates are the responsibility of their District and/or Post.
9. A nominee for this Award must be a living, active, full-time or volunteer Firefighter affiliated with a firefighter agency located within the State of Indiana.
10. A posthumous award is acceptable only if the nominee's death has occurred within the dates in which the award is being presented.
11. No District or Department winner may be certified for consideration of Firefighter of the Year for successive years.
12. Membership in The American Legion shall not be a requirement or consideration in qualifying any nominee for this award.
13. The nomination for this Award of any member who sits on this Committee shall not jeopardize that member's position on this Committee. The nominee shall enjoy the same privileges and responsibilities as all other members.
14. Entry forms provided by the Department shall be used as the sole instrument of certifying a nominee and shall not be used as a basis of accumulating points toward determining winners. Final judgment shall be made from the documenting materials appearing on the **18 pages** in the album.
15. The nominee or post submitting the entry must make a copy of the entry prior to its submission. The Department winner will not be returned, but rather, will be sent to the National Organization for judging. **The winning Department submission will not be returned to the Department, to the Post, nor to the Participant.**

The American Legion
Martin A. Werner
Firefighter of the Year Award

Official Entry Form

Name of Nominee: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ County: _____
(with area code)

Age of Nominee: _____

Recommended By: _____

Post Number: _____ District Number: _____

How long have you been engaged as a Firefighter? _____

Present Position: (i.e. Private, Corporal, Lt., Captain, etc.)

(Please give name of City, Town, and/or County in which you serve)

List of previous firefighting experience:

(If more space is needed attach separate piece of paper)

Submit a biographical sketch, on a separate piece of paper, of the Firefighter nominated, including education, family, church affiliation (if any), social organizations, or other data suitable for the construction of a speech necessary in the performance of presenting the winner's award.

OVER

What makes this candidate an outstanding firefighter?

(If more space is required please attach separate paper)

Has this firefighter's superior been informed of this recommendation?

Yes _____

No _____

...if so, does he concur in the recommendation?

Yes _____

No _____

If the answer to the above question is "YES" please attach a letter of recommendation from the superior officer.

Each Post winner shall have his/her entry data submitted to the District in a 3-ring binder, which should include the following: (1) a completed application form, (2) a 5 x 7 photograph of the nominee, and (3) a maximum of **18 one-sided pages 8 ½ x 11** bond paper of service documentation. The first six or seven pages should contain the individual's service narrative. The additional pages may include supporting citations and other documentation to include press articles. Only one copy of the application binder needs to be submitted. The following documentation should be included:

- a. Application form- Complete the attached application form and use it as the cover page of the application. This cover page shall not count as part of the maximum 18 pages of service documentation.
- b. 5 x 7 official photograph of the nominee.
- c. Service narrative and supporting documentation- The goal of the Law and Order Committee is to select a well-rounded firefighter who has exceeded, above and beyond, the duty requirements of his or her position and who exemplifies the virtues of professionalism and dedication and has demonstrated a distinct pattern of community service to his/her community, state, or nation; and also has proven his/her personal dedication to community security and protection. The firefighter officer must be recommended by his/her Commanding Officer or Supervisor for this award, and, if selected for this award, will be available for its presentation at the Department Convention. Specific acts of community service, heroism, and meritorious performance recognized by his/her firefighter agency should be included and documented. To assist Districts in their selections, judging guidelines at the Department level will be based on the following criteria, and maximum percentage points will be allocated as follows:

- I. Community Service.....35 points
- II. Professional Career.....40 points
- III. Heroism.....20 points
- IV. Letters of recognition, news clippings, and other substantiating documentation.....5 points

- d. Community Service- Outstanding service to the community, state, or nation by the firefighter, in both on and off-duty activities, should be explained for the past year and may include previous years. Cite, for example, awards and/or supporting letters from city or county commissioners, letters from state officials, and letters from The American Legion Department or Posts, or from citizens attesting to and commending the firefighter for his/her community service contributions. Remember, one of the major aims of the award program is to select a well-rounded firefighter officer who has demonstrated a distinct pattern of community service, above and beyond assigned duty requirements.
- e. Citations for community service, heroism, and meritorious performance of duty should be explained for the past year and may include previous years. Include citations and any supporting letters from the officer’s chain of command, as well as other documentation from city, county, and/or state authorities and American Legion officials, citizens, or civic groups as further evidence of community service, heroism, and meritorious performance of duty by the officer.
- f. Include a copy of the nominee’s state or federal certification as a firefighter as well as copies of pertinent training and education certificates as appropriate.
- g. The District which submits the winning nominee will be notified at the Department Convention as the Department winner is announced.
- h. Remember to let the nominee know what The American Legion Department Firefighter of the Year Award is, and receive assurance from the officer’s chain of command that if the nominee is selected as the winner, that he/she will be available for the award presentation at the Department Convention. If the winning firefighter is a uniformed firefighter, then he/she is requested to appear in full uniform at the Department Convention at the time of presentation. Non-uniformed winners would be expected to appear in appropriate business attire.

Attach a small photo of the person nominated.

This recommendation is submitted by: _____

From Post: _____, Department of Indiana, Located in the _____ District

Please have the following people sign where indicated:

Post Commander: _____

Commander Name (printed): _____

Post Adjutant: _____

Adjutants Name (printed): _____

Post Firefighter Chairman: _____

Post Firefighter Chairman Name (printed): _____

**INDIANA AMERICAN LEGION
2017-2018
FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR AWARD**

DISTRICT # _____ Candidate's Name _____

- A. Community Service (35 points) _____
- B. Professional Career (40 points) _____
- C. Heroism (20 points) _____
- D. Letters of recognition, news clippings, etc. (5 points) _____

TOTAL POINTS _____

_____ Judge's Initials

The American Legion

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Firefighter of the Year Award

To be completed by the District Commander, District Adjutant, and Law Officer Chairman

DISTRICT WINNER CERTIFICATION FORM

We, the undersigned, do certify that the individual outlined on this form is the winner in the _____ District of the Firefighter of the Year Award.

District Commander: _____

District Adjutant: _____

District Firefighter Chairman: _____

DEPARTMENT WINNER CERTIFICATION FORM

This is to certify that _____ is the winner of The American Legion Department of Indiana Firefighter of the Year Award.

*Chairman,
Law & Order/Firefighter Committee:* _____

*Attest:
Chairman, Firefighter Committee:* _____

The American Legion



Martin A. Werner Firefighter of the Year Award 2017-2018

- Section I Community Service..... (35 points)
- Section II Professional Career..... (40 points)
- Section III Heroism..... (20 points)
- Section IV Letter of Recognition, news
clippings, and other substantiating
documentation..... (5 points)