

TDOT UNVEILS MEMORIAL FOR HIGHWAY WORKERS

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SMITH COUNTY -- Until Wednesday, the names of the 106 Tennessee Department of Transportation workers who have been killed building the state highway system were listed only in state paperwork. Now they are etched in stone.



Pictured: At right, Greg Duncan, TDOT maintenance director, reads the names of the 106 Tennessee Department of Transportation workers killed in the line of duty that were honored yesterday during a ceremony at the Smith County Welcome Center. Several family members attended on

behalf of their loved ones, placing a rose at the site of the granite memorial. From left, TDOT Commissioner Gerald Nicely; Martha Fish, sister of the late Robert Fish; Goldine Young mother-in-law of the late Michael Farley; Paul Degges, TDOT chief engineer; Ann Farley, mother; Scott Farley, brother; and Sarah Farley, daughter of the late Michale Farley; and Jimmy McNeece, father of the late Jay McNeece and TDOT Region 3 safety director.

Yesterday morning, TDOT Commissioner Gerald Nicely and family members of highway workers killed in the line of duty unveiled a large black granite monument at the Interstate 40 Welcome Center in Smith County in honor of all the TDOT employees who lost their lives while building the state's transportation system. The names on the list begin in 1948 when worker fatalities were first documented.

Twenty-five of those names commemorate workers killed in TDOT's district 2, which includes Putnam and other Upper Cumberland counties.

"We are grateful for the service and dedication of these 106 state employees who made the ultimate sacrifice for the good of our state," said Gov. Phil Bredesen. "This memorial serves as a permanent testament to their contributions to the state transportation system and is a reminder of the dangers all highway workers face each time they step onto the job."

The unveiling was attended by several family members of employees killed in the line of duty including current TDOT employee Jimmy McNeece whose 22-year old son Jay was killed while working as part of a survey crew near Springfield. Martha Fish spoke to the crowd about her brother, Robert Fish, who was killed while picking up tire scraps on State Route 100 in Whiteville.

Both men had taken all necessary safety precautions when they were hit and killed by a motorist.

No TDOT workers have been killed on the job since the crash that took Robert Fish's life in 2005.

"This occasion should serve as a reminder that we must be vigilant in adhering to safety rules and promoting work zone awareness so that we never have to add another name to this memorial," Nicely said, standing with the family members and with a highway crew from the Smith County TDOT facility.

Following the unveiling of the new memorial, TDOT Maintenance Director Greg Duncan read the names

of all 106 TDOT employees memorialized on the stone.

A plaque documenting the date of the official unveiling ceremony will be placed into the foot of the memorial to commemorate yesterday's event.

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THE FALLEN:

More than 106 highway workers have been killed in the line of duty since 1948, including 25 in Region 2, which includes Putnam, Clay, Pickett, Fentress, Overton, deKalb, White and Cumberland counties, among others.

The names of those workers, including their date of death, are listed alphabetically below:

Thurman Anderson, 12-02-1968
Harold J. Austin, 06-06-1975
Ronald K. Brown, 09-07-1988
Rudolph A. Brown, 04-06-1966
Eldy Byford, 2 08-02-1960
Johnnie J. Cain, 05-11-1977
Harvey L. Condra, 2 10-29-1969
Norris Cope Jr., 07-07-1983
G. G. Cortner, 10-16-1991
James E. garner, 02-22-1972
George Grave, 01-10-1956
Paul Herron, 10-18-2000
Jesse W. Jackson, 08-07-1979
James E. Lyons, 10-17-1977
L. R. Masengil, 05-28-1980
Floyd H. Miller, 08-01-1971
E. W. Moore, 01-09-1958
Robert S. Neese, 09-15-1964
Robert J. Pendergrass, 06-02-1992
Charles J. Pursley, 04-27-1956
James R. Russell, 03-02-1977
James E. Williams, 06-11-1968

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