



Johnson County Fire Protection District

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Chief Larry W. Jennings
Assistant Chief Dee Bennett
Board President Mark Lenger
Board Vice President Aaron Collett
Board Member Scott Hackler
Secretary/Treasurer Mackenzie Schuette

NEWS RELEASE – Sunday, March 9, 2025

Additional Information Regarding Line of Duty Death

WARRENSBURG, MO – Johnson County Fire Protection District Captain Vernon Collett died in the line of duty while battling a natural cover fire Saturday, March 8, 2025. Captain Collett served out of the District's Station 6 located near Valley City.

At 1:45 PM the District was dispatched to a reported fast-moving half acre field fire in the 600 block of NE MM Highway in rural Johnson County. Captain Collett arrived and began extinguishing a fire line when he collapsed.

District personnel located Captain Collett and administered CPR and multiple shocks utilizing an AED. Johnson County Ambulance District and Lifelight Eagle responded and continued lifesaving efforts at the scene for nearly an hour but tragically were unable to revive him.

Fire Chief Larry Jennings expressed, "It is with profound sadness and a heavy heart that we mourn the loss of Captain Vernon Collett, who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to his community. His passing marks an immeasurable loss for our department, his family, and the entire community he so selflessly served. Today is a tragic day for our District and a somber reminder of the risks our firefighters face daily."

Captain Collett served the Johnson County Fire Protection District for 29 years, serving all 29 years assigned to the District's Station 6 and serving as a Captain since January 2011.

This is the first line of duty death in the history of the Johnson County Fire Protection District.

The Missouri Fire Service Funeral Assistance Team is on site with the District and is providing support to Captain Collett's family and the District. Funeral arrangements are pending and will be announced when available.

Monetary contributions for the benefit of the Collett family can be made out to the District and be delivered to District Headquarters at 122 W. Young Avenue, Warrensburg, MO 64093.

Additional information will be released when available.

<Photograph Included>

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For more information contact:

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