



**Johnson County Fire Protection District**  
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## **NEWS RELEASE – Sunday, October 5, 2025**

### **Johnson County Fire Protection District Captain Vernon Collett Honored at Missouri Firefighters Memorial**

WARRENSBURG, MO – This weekend, Captain Vernon Collett of the Johnson County Fire Protection District was honored alongside nine other Missouri firefighters who lost their lives in the line of duty at the annual Missouri Fire Fighters Memorial ceremonies in Kingdom City.

Events began Saturday evening with a candlelight service and continued Sunday morning with a formal memorial service at the Missouri Fire Fighters Memorial. In addition to the 10 firefighters being honored who died in the line of duty, 94 others who have passed away were also recognized.

Captain Collett, who died in the line of duty on March 8, 2025, while battling a natural cover fire, was a 29-year veteran of the District and the first line of duty death in its history. He served out of the District's Station 6 near Valley City serving as a Captain since 2011. His name has now been permanently inscribed on the Wall of Honor at the Memorial, which commemorates all Missouri firefighters who have given their lives in service.

The memorial service included proclamations from Missouri Governor Mike Kehoe, the solemn sounds of pipes and drums, the ringing of the bell, Taps, and presentations to family members of the fallen. Chief Russell Hobbs of the Tri-County Fire Protection District in Richland, MO, delivered remarks. Chief Hobbs, who lost his father, Chief Rick Hobbs, in a 2021 line of duty death, spoke on the legacy and sacrifice of Missouri's firefighters.

The Missouri Fire Fighters Memorial in Kingdom City serves as the state's official tribute to Missouri firefighters who have made the ultimate sacrifice. Each October, the Fire Fighters Memorial Foundation hosts the annual candlelight and memorial services, providing time for families, colleagues, and communities across Missouri to honor and remember those who served with courage and dedication.

"Captain Collett's name is forever etched on the Wall of Honor, standing as a reminder of his commitment and sacrifice," said Johnson County Fire Protection District Chief Larry Jennings. "His service and legacy will continue to inspire our district and our community."

For more information on the service, visit [www.mofirememorial-museum.org](http://www.mofirememorial-museum.org).

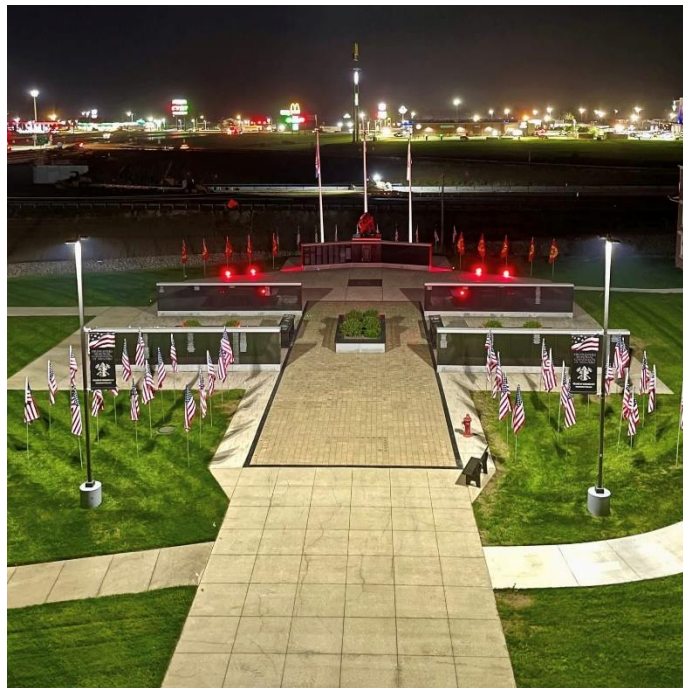
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For more information contact:

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Missouri Fire Fighters Memorial October 4, 2025 (PHOTO Sharon Jennings)



Missouri Fire Fighters Memorial October 4, 2025 (PHOTO Missouri Fire Fighters Memorial)



At the Wall of Honor, Captain Collett's turnout gear is displayed with other firefighters' gear in remembrance of those who made the ultimate sacrifice. (PHOTO Gail Hagans-Reynolds)

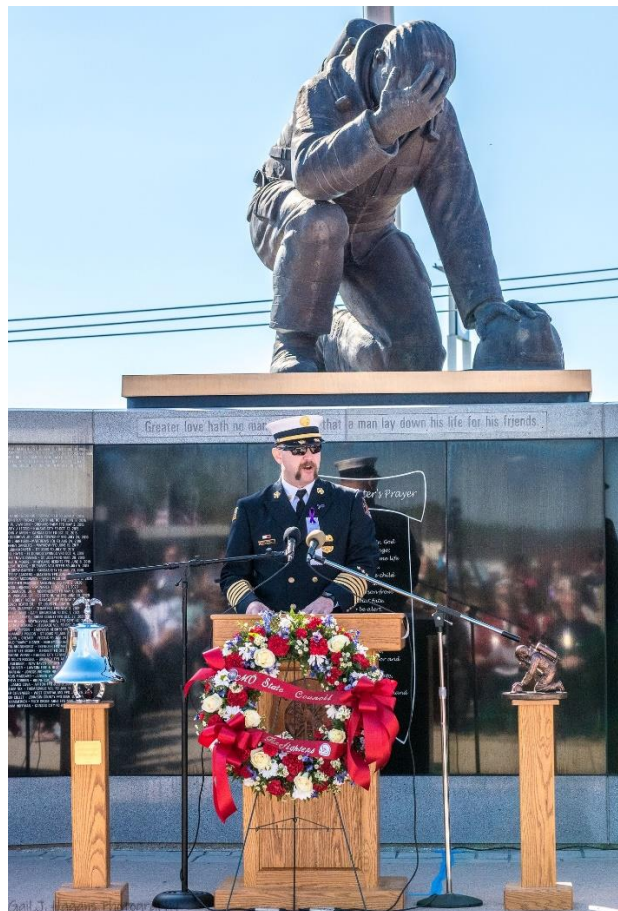


JCFPD Captain Joe Jennings (seen in background) presents Captain Collett's helmet at the Wall of Honor. (PHOTO Gail Hagans-Reynolds)





Captain Collett's family receives a memorial statue and the Governor's proclamation from Missouri Director of Public Safety Mark James, State Fire Marshal Tim Bean, and Memorial Chairman Keith Smith. (PHOTO Gail Hagans-Reynolds)



Chief Russell Hobbs, Tri-County FPD, gives the keynote address at the memorial service in Kingdom City. (PHOTO Gail Hagans-Reynolds)