

# Firefighters Mourn The Death Of One Of Their Own

## From Wilkes Record Staff Reports



There have been images of North Wilkesboro Fire Department patches on social media with a black band with a center red stripe adorning the patch.

It is a memorial to North Wilkesboro Firefighter Daniel Long.

Much talk has circulated through Wilkes County as to what took this young fireman's life. It will likely be a few days before we know, according to officials.

The following is a post on the North Wilkesboro Fire Department's Facebook page:

"By now most people have heard about the passing of North Wilkesboro Firefighter Daniel Long. As with all tragedies there are untold ripple effects that touch so many other friends, friends of friends as well as other families and we ask you to keep all of these people in your thoughts and prayers in the coming days, weeks and months.

"Daniel Long, affectionately known as 'Fridge' by anyone in the Fire or EMS services, joined the North Wilkesboro Fire Department as a Junior Firefighter in 2018. Over the past several years we've had the honor of watching Fridge grow, learn, and exhibit a passion for helping the citizens of North Wilkesboro that went

on to transcend the city limits and out into the communities of Millers Creek and Ronda and the town of Wilkesboro where he also worked part-time.

"If you were lucky enough to have known Fridge you knew at some point you were going to find yourself laughing as his personality had that impact on people. The ever present smirk and shenanigans were often what was needed after a call, at lunch or dinner after meetings and training or during periods of downtime between calls.

"Unfortunately, we will all laugh a little less in the days and weeks ahead as we each mourn and remember the friend and colleague that we've lost in our own way. But as is common in the fire service the memories of Fridge will turn into stories that will be shared while sitting around the station and those of us who knew him will laugh again as other firefighters who were never fortunate enough to have known him learn about a firefighter that left us too soon but left memories in our hearts and minds.

"For everyone whether it is family or friends or all of us in Fire / EMS / Law Enforcement it is OK to be sad. It is OK to be confused. It is OK to be mad and scream out for answers of "why". What is NOT OK is to keep your emotions bottled up and feel that you have to be a big strong emotionless individual. Talk to SOMEONE whether it is by attending the Critical Incident Stress Debriefing, or talking to other members of your department, your spouse, loved ones, friends or your preacher. But DO NOT go through this thinking you are all alone because just like at an emergency scene we are all in this TOGETHER and we are ALL here to support EACH OTHER.

"Rest easy Fridge ... we'll take it from here ..."