

AZ Insider: 3 Expectant Fathers Among Fallen Yarnell Firefighters

Written by Written by Kathy Shayna Shocket

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Kathy Shayna Shocket has the inside scoop on the stories that make headlines.

As the healing continues, the \$1 million heartfelt donations for the 100 Club are unprecedented.

As the healing continues for the 19 firefighters killed in the out of control wildfire in Yarnell, Arizona, so does the outpouring of help for the victims' families. Donations for the 100 Club, earmarked for the Survivor's Fund in memory of the 19 fallen firefighters, have now totaled over one million dollars. The 100 Club of Arizona has been on the front-lines of the Yarnell tragedy since day one of this horrific catastrophe.

Within 24 hours, **Sharon Knutson-Felix**, the 100 Club's executive director responded with the organization's standard line of duty assistance of \$15,000 per family and **Sharon** and her staff continue to work tirelessly with family liaisons, assessing the families' needs for financial assistance.

The money raised through the 100 Club Survivor's Fund is helping the firefighters' survivors with such monetary needs as transportation expenses for the funerals. In the case of one of the fallen fighter's brother who's serving in the military in Iraq, it helped with his travel costs to attend his brother's funeral. Other financial needs addressed have been expenses for the Memorial Service and the individual funerals, lodging for family members and assistance to help keep honor guards with the 19 firefighters until they were laid to rest.



(Sharon Knutson Felix at memorial in Prescott)

In addition, the 100 Club of Arizona will help with the future needs of all of the victims' children, including some uncovered maternity costs. Three of the fallen firefighters were expectant fathers. Among them are firefighter **Sean Misner**, 26, who is survived by his wife **Amanda Misner**. **Amanda** is seven months pregnant, with a son to be named **Jaxon Herbert Misner**. Also, fallen firefighter and Marine Corps veteran **Billy Warneke**, 25, is survived by his wife, **Roxanne Warneke** who is expecting their first child in December.

The 100 Club of Arizona is the non-profit which has been there since 1968 for the families of the public safety officers and firefighters who are injured or killed in the line of duty. **Sharon Knutson Felix's** staff is small, but has a BIG reach and a loyal number of volunteers. .



(Sean Misner, Amanda Misner)

The over one million dollars worth of heartfelt donations have come from individuals and small businesses as well as major corporations. And multiple fundraisers hosted by Arizona businesses and hundreds of events, including a dog wash are helping to increase the 100 Club's Survivor Fund's coffers.

The public has also reached out through the wonderful efforts of two Phoenix television stations through live phone banks. **ABC15** raised \$121,000 and **KPHO's** pledges totaled \$70,000.

"For this small community, it is like a Ground Zero, losing one-fifth of their fire department. Taking care of the fallen firefighter's families assures the firefighters left behind, the 100 Club will be there for them and their loved ones," says Sharon Knutson-Felix. "The 100 Club stands behind the families of the men and women who stand behind the badge. That includes the fallen and the active duty. The emotional support offered immediately and in the future will help restore these 19 families and their fellow firefighters. "

She adds that she's thankful there are other nonprofits receiving equal or more support to assist in various ways including direct donations for the families. "The 100 Club lists different ways to direct one's support on its website. I feel a sense of relief as 17 of the fallen have been laid to rest and am proud of the support the 100 Club has provided, but I know the real work and needs are just beginning."

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For donations or more information, the 100 Club has set up a memorial page. www.100club.org

Honoring, mourning and supporting.

