

# Bryant Stiles



Bryant Stiles was born on December 5, 1956. He grew up in Calhoun, Kentucky. While attending Kentucky Wesleyan College he met his future wife Cherie. The two dated through college and were married in February 1979. They purchased a home one block from where Bryant grew up and they still live there today. Like Bryant, Cherie is also in the life saving business but in a different manner than firefighting. Cherie worked for 30 years with the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Families where she specialized in child abuse protection and investigations. Her tireless efforts prevented many innocent children from neglect and abuse.

In December 1973 at age 17, a high school friend asked Bryant to attend fire training with him. Bryant attended and was immediately hooked. Thus began the long and illustrious fire service career of Bryant Stiles. By 1980 he had become his department's training officer and a certified EMT. In October 1990, Bryant Stiles was offered a position as the Area Three Fire Rescue Training Director. With the blessing of his wife he gave up a higher paying job to pursue a dream of working in the fire service. By January 2000, Bryant had become the chief of the McClean County Central Fire District. While fire chief, Bryant led an effort to embrace the IFSAC accredited certification process with many members of his department being certified to the Firefighter I and Firefighter II levels. During his tenure, all five of McClean County's fire departments received new pumpers to replace their worn out fleet. In 2002 McClean County Central District was recognized by the Kentucky Ambulance Providers Association as the Kentucky EMS Provider of the Year. Bryant held the position of fire chief until 2005.

From 1990 to 2005 Bryant Stiles was part of a team working closely with the fire commission and the Green River Firefighter Association to bring training advancements statewide. It is interesting to note that the first statewide project that Bryant was involved in was the Inspector Detector Program that began under the guidance of fellow Hall Of Fame Inductee Bill Martin, while he was State Fire Marshal. While Bryant served as Curriculum Chair for State Fire Rescue Training, a degree program for the Kentucky fire service began in 2000 and continues today with many firefighters working toward their fire service degrees. In 2005, Bryant was offered a position as Division Director for Homeland Security Exercise Division. This required him to give up his position as fire chief and spend many days working in Versailles but he accepted the challenge and in February of 2008 also accepted the position of Division Director with State Fire Rescue Training. Bryant Stiles has always actively pursued advancements in training for Kentucky firefighters. He is a fixture each year at the Green River Officers School in his familiar green blazer working tirelessly to ensure that it remains one of the premier training schools in the state.

During his years in the fire service Bryant Stiles has taken an active role in the Kentucky Firefighters Association. He has served on numerous committees and for the past twenty years has been one of the KFA's two directors along with fellow Hall of Famer Ken Knipper on

the National Volunteer Fire Council. He has worked tirelessly with the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program and currently serves on the Criteria Development Committee for the AFG.

In 1997, Bryant was elected Treasurer of the Kentucky Firefighters Association, replacing a legend in 2003 KFA Hall of Fame inductee Wayne Watts.

During Bryant's six years as Treasurer the association developed a funding stream, a budget system, an accounting system with financial and cost controls and by 2003 had built reserve funds exceeding \$92,000. During his term the KFA completed fundraising for the Kentucky Firefighters Memorial in Frankfort. As Treasurer he signed the largest check in KFA history to pay for the Memorial at a cost of over \$173,000. Since leaving the Treasurer position Bryant has served on the KFA Finance Committee and continues to help guide the finances of the association.

As you can conclude from this long list of activities and accomplishments, Bryant Stiles dedication to the fire service doesn't leave much time for anything else. Bryant credits his family for having the patience and understanding to accept his many hours away from home. Whenever possible he cherishes time spent with his wife and their two children, Christin and Hannah. Hannah is beginning her third year at the University of Kentucky. Like her father Christin attended and graduated from Kentucky Wesleyan College. She is married to Thomas Bown, a firefighter with Livermore Fire Department. In October, 2010 Cherie and Bryant were blessed with their first grandchild, Clay Thomas. As often happens, Bryant was in Emmitsburg, Maryland on a project for the NVFC and missed the birth.

Whether it is the Green River Officers School, our State Fire School, the National Volunteer Fire council or the Kentucky Firefighters Association annual conference, Bryant Stiles can be found working behind the scenes making certain that everything goes as planned. Bryant has always been satisfied with the success of the project over personal accolades for himself. Bryant states that one of his proudest moments in the fire service took place in 2003 when he was chosen to present Wayne Watts Hall of Fame Award to his family.

Tonight that proud moment is about to be eclipsed. Tonight Bryant Stiles will be forced out of the shadows and into the spotlight as he is inducted into the 2012 class of the Kentucky Firefighters Association Hall of Fame. Presenting this honor to Bryant is his long-time friends and fellow KFA Hall of Fame members, Mr. Mark Luckett, Mr. Ronnie Day, and Mr. Charlie Shaw.