

# Bill Martin



William "Bill" Martin was born on November 30, 1950. He grew up in Erlanger and attended Erlanger Lloyd High School. Bill married his wife Diane in 1970 and they have enjoyed 42 years of marital bliss. At least that's what Bill says. The Martins have two children, a son John and a daughter Michelle. They have been blessed with four wonderful grand children Zach, Lainey, Jack and Lola.

At the age of 21, Bill joined the Erlanger Fire Department as a volunteer member in June of 1971. From 1971-1978 Bill served as a volunteer firefighter, apparatus operator and EMT. In January 1979 Bill Martin was hired as a paid fire inspector, making him the first career employee for the Erlanger Fire Dept. Bill was promoted to Captain by the Erlanger Fire Department and later served as Volunteer Assistant Fire Chief until 1991 when he was hired as the first career fire chief of the Point Pleasant Fire District. In June of 1992 Bill became the first career fire chief of the Erlanger Fire Department. Bill remained chief of Erlanger until 2004, when he retired to become Chief of the Hebron Fire Protection District. After serving as Hebron's chief for seven years, Bill decided that he had spent enough time as the "Man in Charge" and was looking for a less stressful position in the fire service. Bill's idea of less stress is that he currently is volunteering for Erlanger Fire Department, he is serving as volunteer Assistant Chief with the Point Pleasant Fire District and is working part-time for the Crescent Springs Fire Department.

In February, 1989 Bill Martin was appointed to the position of Kentucky State Fire Marshal by then governor Wallace Wilkinson. Bill served as state fire marshal until 1991, when a change in the governor's office led to a change in the state fire marshal's office. During his term as fire marshal, Bill implemented several improvements in what had been a largely political office.

Fire Marshal Martin was instrumental in fostering cooperation between the Kentucky Fire Service and the Fire Marshal's office, something that was rarely the case prior to his appointment. He implemented a statewide public education effort and a statewide Fire Prevention Code. Bill also implemented a statewide inspector certification process.

Bill and wife Diane have attended nearly all of the KFA conferences since 1976. In 1996 Bill replaced Bob Becker of Ft. Wright Fire Dept as Vice President of the KFA representing Northern Kentucky. Bill served as Vice President into his third term, until his appointment as State Fire Marshal required that he step down as Vice President, turning the reigns over to his good friend Sylvan Smith. He remained active in the KFA and served as co-host of the 1990 KFA Conference in Erlanger and again in 2004 in Hebron. He served on several KFA committees including the Public Education Committee where he served as chairman and promoted a new era of fire safety education throughout the state. He served on the Scholarship Committee at its inception, was a member of the Finance and Audit Committee and was the KFA representative on the Kentucky Board of Housing and Building Construction.

Bill has held several other important positions for the KFA including Chairman of the EMS committee for several years.

Bill Martin prides himself as a mentor in the fire service. He has guided several young fire chiefs during his career. I (Joe Stambush) consider Bill Martin one of my most influential mentors. Bill was instrumental in helping to formulate my dedication and commitment to promoting public fire education across the commonwealth.

Despite his seemingly endless dedication to the fire service, Bill has also been active in other areas as well. He served on the Advisory Board of the Erlanger/Elsmere United Christian Volunteers for two terms. He is Treasurer of the church council at Hebron Lutheran Church. Diane is the Chairperson of the Inter-Faith Hospitality Network at their church and despite the fact that it sounds cliché, Bill and Diane even serve on a group that provides free meals to the homeless.

Bill Martin has received several accolades during his life. He is a member of the Erlanger Lloyd Alumni Hall of Fame, having been inducted in 1998. He was named Firefighter of the Year in 1986 by the Greater Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce. In 2003 Bill was named a "Chief Officer Designee" by the Center for Public Safety Excellence and has retained that designation since. He was recognized as the Chief Officer of the year by the Northern Kentucky Firefighters Association and in 2010 was designated as the Fire Chief of the Year by the Northern Kentucky Area Development District.

Tonight we are proud to add one more award to Bill's list of accomplishments, perhaps his most significant. Tonight we will induct J. William "Bill" Martin into the 2012 class of the Kentucky Firefighters Association Hall of Fame. Bill may be short in stature but his contributions to the KFA stand tall and make his selection an easy and obvious one.

Presenting the award to Bill Martin is longtime KFA secretary and 2009 KFA Hall of Fame inductee Dave Jansing and Bill's long-time friend and the son of KFA Hall of Famer Sylvan Smith, Mr. Bruce Smith.