

Fire Department mourns loss of volunteer fighter



By Mike Pickford

It has been a week of mourning for members of the Orangeville Fire Department (OFD) following the death of one of their own ? long-time volunteer firefighter Owen Sheardown.

The five-year department veteran passed away on Feb. 26 surrounded by friends and family following a short battle with cancer. Flags at all municipal facilities were lowered to half-mast last week in commemoration of Mr. Sheardown's years of ?excellent? service. Tributes flooding in on social media, with the OFD leading the way in remembering ?brother Owen?.

?Owen's passion for the fire service was evident from day one. He made our department stronger by striving every day to make himself and others around him better,? the post reads. ?He was passionate in every aspect of the fire service, from public education, training and suppression. He had a very driven physical and mental work ethic, and met every expectation with the same hard working effort and drive.?

A celebration of Owen's life was held last Saturday (March 3) at the In Memoriam Life Celebration Centre in Mono, with more than 100 gathering to pay their respects.

Mr. Sheardown leaves his three children, Makayla, Evander and Logan, their mother Ilike, his partner Brooke and stepchildren Addison and Carly. He died two days after his 42nd birthday.

?Owen epitomized the true meaning of giving 110 percent. He was relentless in his pursuit of knowledge and training, and enjoyed sharing his knowledge with others. Owen was always eager to give his time for community events to provide public education and awareness of the fire service,? the OFD posts states.

?Although we are at such a great loss with Owen's passing, we can take comfort in knowing we are a better department because of Owen's contributions and efforts ? his imprint will be felt by every member of our department for many years to come,? the post concludes.

Donations in Owen's memory can be made to the Orangeville Volunteer Firefighters Association for a special piece of equipment to be purchased in his honour.