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Firefighters pay tribute; widow receives casket flag

By **Liam Migdail-Smith**
Reading Eagle

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Hundreds of firefighters, law enforcement officers and onlookers gathered at Spring Township Fire Department on Wednesday afternoon to pay their respects and say their final goodbyes to slain Berks County Deputy Sheriff Kyle D. Pagerly.

The solemn ceremony - the last stop in the public portion of Pagerly's memorial services - paid tribute to Pagerly's dedication as a Spring Township firefighter.

Pagerly, a graduate of Wilson High School, was fatally shot June 29 while serving a warrant in Albany Township.

The service began with the arrival of the procession.

Deputy sheriffs then carried Pagerly's flag-draped casket from the hearse. After a prayer, officers honored Pagerly with a 21-gun salute and played taps.

Deputies folded the flag and presented it to Pagerly's widow, Alecia, who sobbed.

Township firefighters then draped the department's flag over the casket and carried it into the back of a firetruck.

Firefighters and law enforcement officers saluted as the casket was driven away.

It was the final honor for a man who had dedicated his life to service as a deputy sheriff, volunteer firefighter and Army veteran.

"We're good at pulling this together," Deputy Fire Chief Mark Hostetter said. "But when it's your own, it's a little challenging emotionally."

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Hostetter knew Pagerly since he was a child.

"He was the kind of guy if you needed help moving or you needed help building something, Kyle would be there," he said.

The service drew firefighters from across Berks County and beyond.

Some spoke of the brotherhood shared by all firefighters. Others had worked with Pagerly or knew him personally.

"Just by being around him was like being around a big brother," said Western Berks firefighter Tyler Krick, who said Pagerly was a friend of his sister's growing up. "He just pulls people toward him - his personality."

Community members lined the streets around the fire station as the procession arrived.

"He did a lot for our community and he was a true hero," said Spring Township resident Kristin Moyer.

Moyer, who watched the ceremony from a grassy area along the side of the road, said she was encouraged by the turnout from community members.

"I feel that it's important for the family to know that they have a strong support system in the community and they can lean on us at this time," she said.

Contact Liam Migdail-Smith: 610-371-5022 or lsmith@readingeagle.com.

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