Family, Friends, First Responders, Pay Their Farewell To Beloved Late South Roxana Fire Chief Todd Werner

by Chris Rhodes, Reporter
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SOUTH ROXANA – Family, friends, first responders, and the community bid farewell to the late South Roxana Fire Department Chief Todd Werner Friday and Saturday at a visitation and funeral procession from Roxana Church of the Nazarene to Wanda Cemetery.

South Roxana City Administrator/Police Chief Bob Coles said 217 first responders performed the walk-through for Chief Werner on Friday evening at the Roxana Church of the Nazarene. Fire and police agencies from all over the region escorted the fire chief to his final resting place on Saturday at Wanda Cemetery. Citizens also lined the route from the church to the cemetery to pay their final respects to the late Chief Werner and his family.

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Through the entire route to the cemetery, banners lined the way put in place by the Bethalto Fire Department members and First Baptist Church of Bethalto.

Werner recently suffered a massive heart attack and died while visiting his mother in Wood River.

Coles was the emcee of events. Brighton Fire Chief Todd Bowman, former Wood River Fire Chief now Edwardsville Deputy Chief Brendan McKee, and Captain Colin Holder of the South Roxana Fire Department provided thoughts about Chief Werner and his family. Ed Allsman also performed ceremonies during the tribute. ARCH Air Medical Services did a flyover tribute to Fire Chief Werner and his family.

“The walk-through was phenomenal,” Coles said. “We reached out to people in town and asked them to line the streets with citizens and they did, it was a tremendous crowd. The procession stopped by the South Roxana Fire Station one final time and paused to pay respects to the chief. We received a massive response from fire departments nationwide paying their respects. All of it makes us realize how special Todd was.”

Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.