



East Alton Fire Department Salutes Retired Firefighter Who Died Friday

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EAST ALTON - The East Alton Fire Department issued a salute today for a retired firefighter who died on Friday, Aug. 11, Mike Rhodes.

Mike was an East Alton firefighter for 13 years as a member of the department from 1983 to 1996. He also was asked to return as an advisor for a very successful explorer program.

The fire department has displayed black bunting at Station 1 in honor of Mike's loss.

Mike was married to Karen, and has one child, Chris Rhodes, who followed in his footsteps as a Bethalto firefighter and is also the operator of the Madison County Scanner page, so his love of scanner activities likely stemmed from his father's influence.

Chris said his dad left firefighting in 1996 when Chris was having some health issues and had to go to Children's Hospital in St. Louis once a week. He told the East Alton fire officials at that time he had to put his family first.

Chris was an athlete and said he never remembers his dad missing one of his soccer, basketball, baseball, or any of his sporting events.

"He loved to camp and swim," Chris said. "He loved to go to Branson and could float on his back in the pool for what seemed hours, so he really loved the water. His career as a first responder in East Alton meant a lot to him. A lot of people have offered stories about him since he died on Friday. He and Larry Ringering were best friends and had asked Dad to come back and start the Explorer program and it was very successful."

[Visit this link](#) for the full Mike Rhodes obituary information on Riverbender.com.