

# Anderson firefighter Brent Holland loses battle with cancer

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The Herald Bulletin

Feb 4, 2020

ANDERSON — Anderson firefighter Brent Holland will be honored by members of the department following his death Monday.

Holland, 47, served with the Anderson Fire Department for 22 years. He is survived by his wife of 20 years, Tonya, and his two sons, Jesse and Shane.

Anderson Fire Chief Dave Cravens said there were numerous members of the department at the hospital on Monday night.

Holland's body was escorted to the Rozelle-Johnson Funeral Service with a police car procession and several Anderson Fire Department vehicles.

"We're treating it as a line of duty death because he was battling cancer," Cravens said Tuesday. "There will be a firefighter with him the entire time until his burial."

*(Editor's note: Cravens clarified Tuesday that Holland's death is being treated as an "on-duty" death, not as a "line-of-duty" death.)*

Holland was elected to an at-large seat on the Madison County Council in 2016 and despite his illness attended most of the council meetings.

He was elected president of the County Council in January and was a candidate for reelection in the May primary.

"I worked with him on the truck," Cravens said. "He was a good prankster and we developed a special bond.

"No matter what happened on the department we never let it get into the way of our friendship."

Cravens described Holland as courageous and good-natured.

"He will be dearly missed," he said.

Councilman Anthony Emery said what he will remember about Holland was his positive attitude through his illness.

"He always had a smile on his face and said he was going to beat it," Emery said.

Emery said the two men became good friends during their years together on the County Council.

"He had the biggest heart," he said. "No one ever said anything bad about him."

Emery said Holland showed his commitment to the County Council and his caring about the community by attending the council meetings during his illness.

In December, hundreds of first responders and local residents surprised Holland and his family by singing Christmas carols with live reindeer at his Anderson home.

Russ Willis, chairman of the Madison County Republican Party, said there will be a caucus sometime in February to elect someone to complete Holland's term on the County Council.

"Brent was a true servant leader as a firefighter, county councilman and friend," Willis said. "He had an open mind and calm demeanor on issues before the council and listened to varied opinions to make the best decisions.

"I was amazed at his constant positive attitude during his illness, which was a roller coaster of bad test results, better reports and the unknown," he said. "He told me that 'I can't just give in to this, I will fight with all I've got.' And fight he did."

There are numerous posts on Facebook with people commenting on Holland's service to the community and his friendship with so many county residents.

The funeral is scheduled at noon Saturday at Bethany Christian Church, 1920 N. Rangeline Road. Visitation is Friday from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Rozelle-Johnson Funeral Service and one hour prior to the services at the church.

[https://www.heraldbulletin.com/news/anderson-firefighter-brent-holland-loses-battle-with-cancer/article\\_41a62cb6-4757-11ea-918a-9f1b688a30a1.html?fbclid=IwAR03ABg0cHD22u4hoMQlWlkzi9tDYW9tpdhI1si5ldkw0RDT-NdgAa3ze0](https://www.heraldbulletin.com/news/anderson-firefighter-brent-holland-loses-battle-with-cancer/article_41a62cb6-4757-11ea-918a-9f1b688a30a1.html?fbclid=IwAR03ABg0cHD22u4hoMQlWlkzi9tDYW9tpdhI1si5ldkw0RDT-NdgAa3ze0)