

Off-Duty N.Y. FF Killed Rescuing Family

Wilson Firefighter Kenneth J.S. Martin went back into the blaze for his 7-year-old nephew.

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An active Wilson volunteer -- who tried to save other lives, but lost his own -- and a Newfane Elementary School second-grader were identified Monday as the two victims who lost their lives Saturday morning in a fast-moving trailer home fire.

Kenneth J.S. Martin, 28, of Young Street, and his nephew, Mark Hadsell III, 7, were among five people in the home on West Creek Road when the blaze started shortly before 5 a.m. The 7-year-old was the son of homeowner Tera L. Martin, 30, who was among those able to escape the fire. "This is all just so tragic -- just so, so sad," said School Superintendent Gary J. Pogorzelski. School district staff called every parent in the second-grade class Sunday. "Many of the parents are even more upset than the children," Pogorzelski said. "They all knew the family."

The community has talked about organizing fundraisers, he said, but for now, the plan is to help the Martins get through the immediate aftermath of the tragedy.

Kenneth Martin, owner of Martin's Lawn Care, was a community volunteer with Wilson No. 1 Fire Company, helping with the department's recent Friday night fish fries, and also was active with the Wilson Food Pantry and Community Bible Church in Cambria.

Those who knew Kenneth Martin called him a hero for giving his life to rescue other family members. In a report released Monday, the Niagara County Sheriff's Office said deputies arrived at the scene at 5 a.m. Saturday and found a large trail of blood from the main entrance out to the driveway.

Deputies said they found Tera Martin along with two children: Rick Wade, 10, the Martins' 10-year-old nephew, of Wilson, and Tera Martin's 3-year-old daughter, Haley Hadsell. Tera's other son, Andrew, was staying with friends Saturday.

Family members told friends that Kenneth Martin rescued Tera Martin and her daughter, as well as Rick, and died while trying to rescue his 7-year-old nephew. Rick told deputies he was in the bedroom where his uncle and cousin were later found dead.

Mercy Flight took Tera Martin and Rick to Buffalo hospitals. Tera was listed in serious but stable condition Monday night in Erie County Medical Center. Rick was released from Women & Children's Hospital on Monday.

Haley Hadsell appeared to be fine, according to deputies, who said she was taken to Women & Children's Hospital and released a short time later.

Niagara County Fire Coordinator James C. Volkosh said that due to the complete burnout" of the home, the investigation into the cause will be tough. Firefighters didn't see any working smoke detectors in the home.

In addition to his mother and siblings, Mark Hadsell is survived by his father, Mark K. II, of Newfane. Along with his sister, Tera, Kenneth Martin is survived by his parents, Frances and Kenneth Martin, and grandparents, Molly and Ronald Martin, all of Wilson.

A joint family memorial service for Hadsell and Martin will be at 11 a.m. Thursday in Hamilton & Clark Funeral Home, 270 Young St., Wilson.

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