

# BONITA CREEK ESTATES TO HONOR SIX FIREFIGHTERS WITH MEMORIAL DEDICATION AFTER 1990 DUDE FIRE TRAGEDY

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The community of Bonita Creek Estates is set to honor the memory of six fallen firefighters with a memorial dedication ceremony on August 17. These first responders tragically lost their lives while courageously battling the Dude Fire in 1990.

Mike Lynch, a resident of the community, is scheduled to facilitate the event beginning at 10:30 a.m., according to information released by the [U.S. Forest Service](#).

Bobbi Scopa, a retired firefighter who fought the Dude Fire, along with survivors from the fatal blaze, is confirmed to speak at the service.

To actively engage in remembering those who made the ultimate sacrifice, representatives from the Forest Service, Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management, Scott Briggs Co-Executive Director of Sano Unda Foundation (SUF) a non-profit helping first responders with mental wellness and the Wildland Fire Foundation (WFF) a non profit dedicated to the families of fallen firefighters are also set to share remarks.

Following the ceremony, attendees can participate in a barbecue fundraiser, with proceeds benefiting SUF and WFF.

The Dude Fire, ignited by a dry lightning storm in the Tonto National Forest's Payson Ranger District on June 25, 1990, became one of the most devastating fires in Arizona history, consuming over 24,000 acres and annihilating 63 homes.

Among the heroic lives claimed by the blaze were five inmates and one prison supervisor from the Arizona State Prison Complex-Perryville.

This tragic event is further marked by the five additional firefighters from the Perryville crew who sustained injuries during the calamitous fire.

To commemorate this historical event, the residents of Bonita Creek Estates, initially created a modest memorial featuring six crosses displaying the fallen firefighters' names.

The upgraded memorial now boasts etched metal portraits provided by SUF and a tribute board designed to preserve the original plaques provided by members of the memorial committee.

A new storyboard that delineates the timeline of the fire, supplemented with photographs by former Arizona Republic photojournalist Tom Story, has also been introduced provided by WFF.

According to Mike Lynch, "Seeing the completion of this memorial restoration has been uplifting and it has brought our community together." Lynch conveyed to the [U.S. Forest Service](#) the community's gratitude and added, "We also hope that this memorial will help educate the public about firefighters and their role in protecting our land and communities."

For those unable to attend, the service will be documented by Scott Briggs film director and Co-Executive Director of Sano Unda Foundation for historical preservation. For further details on the dedication ceremony, interested parties can contact Mike Lynch via the provided email at [ifuflynch@gmail.com](mailto:ifuflynch@gmail.com), while media inquiries can be directed to Susan Blake at [susan.blake@usda.gov](mailto:susan.blake@usda.gov).