

2000

Firefighter Carl Marine

Painesville Fire Department

24/7. You never know when the call will come. And on-duty or off-duty, most safety force workers who have raised their hand and sworn to their oath of office, will answer any time that call comes in. 24/7.

For Painesville Firefighter Carl Marine, that call came in on June 19, 2000, while he was off-duty, and bicycling into work. Near the intersection of routes 84 and 44, Marine came upon a serious accident involving a motorcycle and a tractor trailer. The motorcycle had caught fire on impact, and its rider was thrown a short distance.

Marine jumped into action, even though he had no equipment or protective clothing. The victim driver of the motorcycle was badly hurt, and his clothing were burning. Marine took charge of the scene and enlisted bystanders to help move the victim out of harm's way, while providing spine stabilization.

In a twist of fate, the victim turned out to be a fellow firefighter, Lieutenant Chris Bezzig of the Mentor Fire Department. Bezzeg was very seriously hurt and was flown to MetroHealth Medical Center.

Marine was nominated for the Jorge Medina Distinguished Service Award by Painesville Fire Chief Frank Whittaker. Whittaker wrote that Marine's actions prevented further injuries and probably saved a life. He stated that "Carl took action without the benefit of protective clothing, and knew the risks involved in his action. It is one thing to perform these actions while on-duty, that it what we are paid to do. It is another to perform them off-duty."

The award was given at a banquet on February 21, 2001, at Mentor Harbor Yachting Club. Former Cleveland Police Chief Edward P. Kovacic was the keynote speaker. Upon receiving his award, Marine modestly shared the credit with the bystanders who assisted him.

Marine completed his career in 2017, retiring from the Painesville Fire Department as a Lieutenant. He continues to impact his chosen profession by serving as an instructor in Emergency Medical Service at both Lakeland and Cuyahoga Community Colleges. He is also a member of the Wickliffe Board of Education.