

CHRISTMAS HONORS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. - Family Time

Please respect this time to allow the families of our heroes to lay wreaths on their loved one's headstone(s).

11:00 a.m. – Ceremony at the Pavilion

11:30 a.m. – Laying of the Wreaths

Immediately following the ceremony, attendees will be asked to lay wreaths on all remaining headstones.

- Please do not start to lay wreaths until the ceremony is complete.
- One wreath per headstone unless both spouses are veterans.
- Lean the wreath on the front of the headstone.
Please do not wrap it on top.

Save the Date

Wreath Pick Up and Storage

Friday, January 5, 2024

Fort Smith Convention Center Hall C at 9:00AM

You can donate online at

ChristmasHonors.org

or by mailing a check to:

Christmas Honors
PO Box 10696
Fort Smith, AR 72917

Christmas Honors is a 501c3 tax deductible organization.

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CONTRIBUTING SPONSORS

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Things to Do in Fort Smith

EVENT VOLUNTEERS

Alma High School NJROTC
American Legion Auxiliary
First Lutheran School
Fort Smith Chorale
Fort Smith EMS
Fort Smith Fire Department
Fort Smith Parks & Recreation
Fort Smith Police Department
Fort Smith Police Department
Public Safety Cadet Unit #2688
Fort Smith Public Schools

Fort Smith Roundtable/Golden
Knights and Jewels
Fort Smith Street Department
(A Team)
Greenwood High School JROTC
Northside High School JROTC
River Valley Marine Corps League
Sebastian County
Sheriff's Department
Southside High School JROTC

Christmas Honors

2023 CEREMONY



SATURDAY, DEC. 2ND
FORT SMITH NATIONAL CEMETERY
11:00 AM AT THE PAVILION

GUEST SPEAKER - CHIEF DANNY BAKER

Chief Danny Baker is a 26-year veteran of law enforcement, having served with various municipalities and sheriff's departments in Oklahoma before beginning his career with the Fort Smith Police Department in July 2001. Chief Baker also served 8 years in the United States Army Reserve and Oklahoma Army National Guard as a Military Police Officer while attending college. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, OK.



During his tenure with the Fort Smith PD, Chief Baker has served in a multitude of roles, which have included: Patrol, Field Training Officer, SWAT, Detective, Vice/Narcotics Supervisor, Special Operations Captain, Deputy Chief of Patrol and Interim Chief. Accomplishments during his tenure as Chief have included the implementation of the first true co-response Crisis Intervention unit (CIU) in the state, a pre-arrest diversion program for non-violent, misdemeanor offenders, and the creation of a Vulnerable Persons Database to aid in the quick recovery of lost/missing people. Under his leadership, the Fort Smith Police Department has significantly reduced the incarceration rate in Fort Smith while continuing to effectively control crime.

At a time when police agencies across the nation are struggling to hire and retain quality police officers, Chief Baker has been able to achieve and maintain a fully-staffed police department. In 2022 he secured an almost 24%, across-the-board pay raise for all sworn officers except himself, achieving the highest one-time pay increase in Fort Smith history. He currently serves on the following state and local boards: Arkansas State 911 Board (2nd term), Hamilton Center for Child Advocacy, Fort Smith Health Advisory Council, the Fort Smith Museum of History (Vice President), and the Christmas Honors program. He was selected as the 2022 Outstanding Chief of Police by the Arkansas Fraternal Order of Police and received the 2023 Community Service Award from the Fort Smith Roundtable. He is a Life Member of the Sebastian County NAACP and active in the church.

He and his wife Becky have been married 28 years, raising four children of their own and adopting a fifth from foster care in November 2019. Chief Baker views his position with the department and the community as a ministry of service to others.

PROGRAM

<i>Vocal Prelude "Carol of the Bells"</i>	Members of Fort Smith Chorale <i>Under the Direction of William Cromer</i>
<i>Welcome</i>	Natalie Hubble <i>Director of Fort Smith National Cemetery</i>
<i>Presentation of Colors</i>	Honor Guard <i>Fort Smith Police Department</i>
<i>National Anthem</i>	Gabrielle Gore <i>Nashville Recording Artist</i>
<i>Invocation</i>	Gary Baxter <i>City of Mulberry Mayor and United States Air Force Veteran</i>
<i>Welcome</i>	The Honorable Mayor George B. McGill <i>City of Fort Smith Mayor and United States Army Veteran</i>
<i>Wreath Ceremony</i>	Philip H. Merry, Jr. <i>Chairman, Christmas Honors Northside High School JROTC Grizzly Battalion Fort Smith Fire Department</i>

Keith Greene - *United States Army Veteran*
 Arthur Pruitt - *United States Navy Sr. Chief Ret.*
 Mark Allen - *United States Air Force M Sgt. Ret.
Administrator, Sebastian County*
 Chuck Nardi - *United States Marine Corps M Sgt. Ret.
Commander, American Legion Post 31*
 Zac Phillips - *United States Coast Guard Petty Officer First Class*
 Larry Todd - *United States Navy CDR. Ret.
Representing United States Merchant Marines*
 Robert Rego - *United States Air Force Maj. Gen. Ret.
United States Space Force*
 Justin Legris - *AR Army National Guard, 1st Lt.
Representing all branches, POW/MIA*
 Christmas Honors Volunteer Hall of Fame - Earl R. Massey Jr.
*United States Army, Lt. Colonel, Ret.
Former Commander JROTC Grizzly Battalion*

PROGRAM (cont'd)

<i>Guest Speaker Introduction</i>	Philip H. Merry, Jr. <i>Chairman, Christmas Honors</i>
<i>Guest Speaker</i>	Danny Baker <i>United States Army Veteran Police Chief, City of Fort Smith, Arkansas</i>
<i>Choral Selection "America the Beautiful"</i>	Members of Fort Smith Chorale <i>Under the Direction of William Cromer</i>
<i>Benediction</i>	Gary Baxter <i>City of Mulberry Mayor and United States Air Force Veteran</i>
<i>Closing Remarks</i>	Philip H. Merry Jr. <i>Chairman, Christmas Honors</i>
<i>Ceremonial Rifle Salute</i>	River Valley Marine Corps League <i>Detachment #1248</i>
<i>Taps</i>	Justin & Claude Legris
<i>Retiring of the Colors</i>	Honor Guard Fort Smith Police Department
<i>Laying of the Wreaths</i>	Fort Smith Fire Fighters and Pipe and Drum Corp

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