

Everyone knew Jeff as the man with an unbeatable sense of humor. He was a kind and fun-loving boy who grew up in Hillsborough, North Carolina. He loved to fish, hunt, and roam the countryside with his family and dogs.

At 16, Jeff's life took a sudden change. On September 11, 2001, Jeff decided to make a commitment of service to the country that he loved. He chose to be a firefighter. Even before he could drive, Jeff joined the Orange Rural Fire Department as a junior volunteer, with Mom shuttling him to calls and training. He attended the fire academy just after graduating high school and was hired by Orange Rural as a full-time firefighter on August 4, 2003.

He served the community he loved for 15 more years, advancing quickly through the ranks, finally becoming the assistant chief. He achieved certification as Firefighter I & II, firefighter instructor, EMT, technical rescue technician, trench rescue technician, and structural collapse technician. He was also an instructor for confined space rescue, swift water rescue, rope rescue, and hazardous materials. Over the years, Jeff received Firefighter of the Year, Officer of the Year, and the Benjamin Franklin Award for outstanding service.

Orange Rural Fire Department Chief Jeff Cabe said, "Jeff started our department as a junior firefighter. From the beginning, with his compassion and dedication to training and advancing those around him, he made the fire service better. He could talk with anyone and had a way of reaching those who weren't sure if the fire service was the right choice for them. For some he confirmed their fears, for others he gave them the confidence to know they were in the right place. I started out teaching Jeff to become a firefighter, but soon after he began teaching me how to be a better chief. His compassion, dedication, and sense of humor made him a pleasure to work with, but more importantly it made him a friend."

On August 4, 2012, Jeff made another commitment that became the best of his life. He married his wife, Christa. Together, they had one son, Miller Newton Jake Holden, in 2018, and he was their greatest joy.

Jeff died soon after returning to the station following a successful trench rescue on August 13, 2018. He was 32. He is survived by his wife, Christa Miller Holden; son, Miller Newton Jake Holden; parents, Kathy and Newton Holden; in-laws, Tina and Vern Miller; sister and brother-in-law, April and Garry Washington; nieces, Ava and Lucy Washington; along with many other kinfolk and friends.

Remembering



Jeffrey Newton Holden

*Orange Rural Fire
Department – North Carolina
Career Assistant Chief*

August 13, 2018

Age 32

