

**Twiford Funeral Homes, LLC and Albemarle Crematorium, Elizabeth City, North Carolina**  
*Twiford Funeral Homes, LLC, Manteo, North Carolina*

Chief William C. Pritchard

William Carroll "Billy" Pritchard dedicated his professional life to the Elizabeth City Fire Department, where he served honorably as the Fire Chief for many years. In his personal life, "Billy" was a devoted member of an Elizabeth City church and a passionate figure at a local racetrack, working in the pits and on cars, or cooking in the concession stand. When he died February 18, 2025, at the age of 71, Twiford Funeral Homes, L.L.C. was honored to provide his family and the residents of Northeastern, North Carolina with a service of remembrance. When a long-term and such a beloved member of the community dies, the importance of gathering to honor that life becomes enormously evident.

While Twiford Funeral Homes, L.L.C. has done thousands of services of every conceivable type, this event was extra special. In the over 90 years we have been in business, few services have required this level of preparation. Three ministers memorialized Chief Pritchard, the Elizabeth City Fire Department folded and presented a fire flag to his family, two fire trucks were present at the church, and hundreds attended the service.

The planning, organization and co-ordination involved in making this service happen was immense. Though Jerome Rust was the Funeral Director for this family, our founder's grandson, JJ Twiford, was extremely involved with the service. Twiford Funeral Homes, LLC strives to have a member of the Twiford family present at every service, as it is felt to be appropriate for all the families we serve to have the personal attention of the owners and/or their children.

Once the date, time and location for the service were decided, the real work began. Jerome Rust and "JJ" Twiford made dozens of phone calls each, to co-ordinate a host of details. Making sure the church where the service was to be held was going to be big enough to accommodate the expected crowd was a very important first step. Several meetings with Fire Department personnel were required: to co-ordinate their presence at the service with their firetrucks, for them to practice folding the flag and the presentation speech, and to practice their pallbearer duties. It was also necessary to determine when and where the firetrucks were going to be set up in the parking lot of the funeral home for the visitation, and at the church for the service as well. For the flags hanging from the ladder trucks to display properly without blocking anything important was an interesting exercise in adjusting angles.

The three ministers who led the service accommodated each other, the guests and family, and the funeral home staff in their plans for the service. Specific speakers were asked to participate and to keep their remarks brief as a courtesy, as nobody in the family thought opening the floor was a good idea! The family selected specific songs to be played during the service which were special to "Billy" and musicians were asked to play. Arranging the number of flowers which were present, both at the funeral home for the visitation, and at the church for the service itself, took the strategic planning of a military campaign.

Twiford Funeral Homes, LLC organized all these details, and many more to provide the family of Chief Pritchard, and the community, the chance to honor and remember this important and valued resident of Northeastern NC.