



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **PRESS RELEASE: Statement on the Passing of Richard 'Dick' Ziegler**

*Rochester, NY, June 28, 2020* - As we approach the anniversary of the deadliest airliner crash in local history, the Rochester Airport Firefighters Association, IAFF Local 1636 is saddened to announce the passing of Richard 'Dick' Ziegler. Dick is believed to be the last surviving responder to the Mohawk Airlines crash at KROC on July 2, 1963 where he was credited with saving at least a dozen lives.

Dick was one of several airport mechanics that were cross-trained as a firefighter to supplement the 'crash crew' before he transferred to Pure Waters, where he eventually retired. According to a statement from the Spencerport Fire District, Dick was in the company of his wife and children when he passed away yesterday morning at the age of 83. He was a Spencerport volunteer firefighter since 1962, serving in many roles throughout the years.

When the alarm sounded on that stormy July day in 1963, Dick was among the first who raced to the scene and immediately went to work. When he visited the Airport Fire Department in 2003 for a story on the crash, he described the intense heat from the fire and what he saw that afternoon 40 years prior. After making entry to the aircraft he rescued 12 people from the burning wreckage, grabbing hold of every person he saw and pulling them to the door. In conjunction with the other responders on the scene, his heroic actions that day undoubtedly kept the loss of life to a minimum.

We offer our condolences to the Ziegler family, and join them in mourning his loss.



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*For more information or interview requests, please contact President Paul Miller at (585) 943-9567 or email [webmaster@iaff1636.com](mailto:webmaster@iaff1636.com)*

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