

PEGGY SWEENEY ~ GUEST SPEAKER

- **Halifax Fire & Rescue**
Department Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada *following the USAir flight 111 disaster*
- **Women in the Fire Service Int'l Conference**
- **Walton County (FL) Fire-Rescue and Walton County Sheriff's Office**
- **Wisconsin Governor's Conference on Emergency Management and Homeland Security**
- **Lorain County (OH) Community College – Fire Science and Emergency Medical Services**
- **Women in Public Services Conference (VA)**
- **Ohio Fire Chiefs Conference**
- **International Conference of Police Chaplains**
- **Southern Alleghenies EMS Council**
Altoona & Somerset, PA *following the UA flight 93 9/11 disaster*
- **Kansas City Police Department**
- **Racine (WI) Correctional Institution**
- **State Firemen's and Fire Marshals' Association of Texas**
- **Albuquerque Peer Support Team Symposium**
- **Nebraska CISM Conference**



Peggy Sweeney is the founder and executive director of the Sweeney Alliance, a non-profit company that offers classes, resources and support services for coping with traumatic events and grief. Since 1997, Peggy has been an advocate for the physical health, safety, and emotional wellness of emergency response professionals and their families. She wrote the Grieving Behind the Badge course to address their needs, and has taught her program throughout the United States and in Canada. She is certified in both Bereavement Trauma and Emergency Crisis Response by the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress. Peggy has written numerous articles on post trauma and grief, and has hosted support groups for bereaved parents, spouses and teens.

No stranger to grief, Peggy is a bereaved mother, and has grieved the death of a much-loved family member following his suicide. With her expertise as a bereavement educator, combined with her experiences as a mortician, firefighter and EMT, she brings a unique and noteworthy presence to each and every situation.

“The Grieving Behind the Badge program is an informative and worthwhile seminar for first responders and their loved ones. It is difficult for a first responder to understand the effects of job and life stress. These challenges often lead to depression, anger, addiction, and PTSD. We don't want to accept that it is happening to us until it turns our lives upside down, drains our energy, changes who we are, and causes us to lose what and who we care about”.

Carl J. Mack, Fire Science Coordinator
Lorain County Community College, Elyria, OH



presented by



“Changing the way first responders cope with traumatic events and grief”

Grieving Behind the Badge

“Changing the way first responders cope with traumatic events and grief”

OUTLINE

Understanding Grief

- the grieving process
- how men and women grieve differently
- what we learned as a child

Healing Grief

- lessons learned on your journey
- what to avoid when grieving

Special Grief Considerations

- bereaved parents and grieving children
- mourning a death in your department
- coping with calls involving family and friends

Community Servant Grief

- comfort the family of a patient who has died
- cope with the death of a child patient
- Peggy’s Cove ~ the aftermath of an airline crash

Addiction and Post Traumatic Stress: A Partnership with Grief

- signs / symptoms of addiction
- indicators of post traumatic stress [PTS]
- the impact of addiction or PTS on grief
- find the right mental health clinician for you
- course of action for addiction / PTS

Surviving a Suicide ~ Let’s Talk about It

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

firefighters ❖ EMS ❖ public safety officers
911 dispatchers ❖ their families ❖ chaplains
mental health professionals ❖ ER Staff

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Following a distressing incident - the death of a child, a mass fatality, a line of duty death, or a suicide - some departments may provide a critical incident stress debriefing, or offer the assistance of a department chaplain. However, only a small number of departments offer educational programs that address grief as well as the mental and emotional challenges of the job. The Grieving Behind the Badge training was developed to bring attention to the physical, mental, and emotional struggles of first responders and serves as a benchmark for all other programs addressing grief and traumatic stress.

For more than 20 years, the Sweeney Alliance has been committed to teaching first responders the skills to deal with emotional and traumatic events, both professionally and personally. We deliver an interactive training program and provide resources that improve the quality of their lives.

Peggy Sweeney works with you to design a comprehensive course of instruction to meet your specific objectives. The Grieving Behind the Badge program is ideal for any size group, from a single department to a county-wide initiative.

CONTACT US

PEGGY SWEENEY

The Sweeney Alliance
sweeneyalliance.org

830.377.7389

peggy@sweeneyalliance.org
1601 Quinlan Creek Drive
Kerrville, TX 78028

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this workshop, the student should be able to...

- Define grief and state common causes
- Describe the grief process and the role childhood has on adult grief
- Explain coping skills and strategies to deal with grief issues
- Identify ways to support those who are bereaved
- Explain special considerations to help bereaved parents and children
- List traumatic events and grief scenarios relevant to emergency responders and their families
- Describe the correlation between grief, post-traumatic stress, addiction and suicide



“Peggy, thank you for taking the time to invest yourself in the lives of our first responders here in the Commonwealth of Virginia. You have a remarkable passion for your calling, and only eternity will reveal the number of people you have helped and the number of lives you have saved. You are truly a HERO!”

Chief Ed Elliott
Chesapeake (VA) Fire Department