



VIRGINIA PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS

February 10, 2026

To: All Virginia Professional Fire Fighter Presidents

Attached is a nomination form for the 2026 Ray Via Award. The Ray Via Award has been a tribute and memorial to the memory of this man since 1983.

Prior to each Convention, the Awards Committee asks each local to evaluate their members and choose a member they feel is deserving of this great honor. The basic criteria for a nominee should not be based solely on his or her heroic actions, but on the qualities and values that were important to Ray Via. A nominee should be active not only in his local, but also in the community and take interest in political matters. The committee will also consider other activities that promote a positive image.

If you would like to nominate one of the members of your local, please fill out the enclosed nomination form and return it to:

Michael Hanks
455 Hidden Country Lane
Hardy, VA 24101

Nominations will be accepted until **April 30, 2026**. All forms should be completely filled out and your local seal affixed. Incomplete nominations will not be considered and in the event the committee cannot agree on a winner, the committee will present the nominations to the President of the Virginia Professional Fire Fighters for a decision. **Please also keep in mind this award is to be a surprise to the recipient if possible.** If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at 540-580-4265

Sincerely,

Michael W. Hanks
Chairman, Ray Via Award