



**THE BACKSTOPPERS LAUNCH MEMBERSHIP DRIVE  
IN CONJUNCTION WITH 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

*Drive Aims to Add Individual, Family Members*

ST. LOUIS, December 18, 2008 – The BackStoppers, a charitable organization dedicated to helping the families of St. Louis area police, firefighters and publicly-funded EMTs who died in the line of duty, recently announced a drive to increase individual and family memberships. The year-long campaign coincides with The BackStoppers' 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2009 and the David C. Pratt Challenge Campaign.

In 2008, The Backstoppers stepped in to provide support for eight families, including the families of six policemen and two firefighters. The tragic deaths in 2008 underscore the importance of keeping the organization properly funded. Since The

Backstoppers started in 1959 it has helped or is currently helping the families of 113 fallen heroes.

“For years The BackStoppers has been funded primarily from corporate and individual donations, events such as Guns and Hoses, charitable foundations and a relatively small but dedicated group of members,” said Chief Ron Battelle, executive director of The BackStoppers. “While The BackStoppers is a well-known charity in the area, the option to become a BackStopper, we’ve found, is not as well known. With this campaign we look to change that and expand our membership going forward.”

Adding incentive to the membership drive, funds generated through memberships will count toward the David C. Pratt Challenge Campaign. Mr. Pratt has generously offered to donate \$1,000,000 to The BackStoppers if the organization matches the funds over a three year period from its various funding sources.

To make it easy for individuals and families to become BackStoppers, the organization recently upgraded its website ([www.thebackstoppers.org](http://www.thebackstoppers.org)) to include an online membership payment option. The secured site takes most major credit cards. Individual memberships cost \$150 per year, and family memberships cost \$250 per year. Membership includes a complimentary dinner(s) at the annual member dinner party, held in March. Memberships are also available by mail. Contact The BackStoppers’ office at 314-692-0200 or visit the website for more details.

### **About The BackStoppers**

Started in 1959 by a group of St. Louis businessmen, The BackStoppers is a 501(c)3 charitable organization dedicated to providing needed support and financial assistance to the spouses and children of regional police officers, firefighters, publicly-funded paramedics and EMTs and volunteer fire protection personnel who lost their life performing their duty. The BackStoppers provides assistance in St. Louis city and eleven surrounding counties served by Missouri State Patrol Troop C, as well as five Illinois counties served by Illinois State Police District 11. For more information call 314-692-0200, or visit the website at [www.thebackstoppers.org](http://www.thebackstoppers.org).