Colorado & Wyoming Border

oudre Fire Authority vehicles met the eam and its escorts at the border of plorado for the drive back to Fort Collins undreds of people in Wyoming and plorado lined the path back, ushering in the beam and its guardians with forgettable displays of support and pride. Such was the case throughout the entire trip, with thousands of people eaving their homes, places of work and even farms to stand by the roadside, merican flags in hand.

"I don't know the magnetic force behind (the beam), besides the story but to see it in person ... people were just in awe of it," said PFA's Doug Lee, a member of the beam team. "It's almost like a religious artifact to some people. They don't know how to treat it."



ibbon, Nebraska 🗕

Denver⁷

Fort Collin



The beam and its guardians made a total of 75 stops on their journey across America before arriving O 24, 2015, at Poudre Fire Authority Station 4, 1945 W. Drake Road hroughout the roughly 1,800-mile ourney, the beam and its guardian were escorted by hundreds of emergency response and veterans ranizations; the group was only without an escort for about 20 miles

That evening, hundreds of member of the public and emergency responders turned out at Station 4 for a ceremony to unveil the I-beam. guarded by its journey companions Bryan Hanson, Len Lindholm, Jin Durkin and Doug Lee





100





station, the beam's guardians were of duty. reeted by 100 to 150 people – seem-

ulling off the highway and into a gas that had lost a firefighter in the line

y everyone who lived in town. Vol- Across Nebraska, people and emer-Inteer firefighters in uniform stood on gency agencies escorted the beam and one side; the townspeople stood oppo- its guardians. At one point, a helicopter site, and the beam was parked be- flew right alongside the group and, as veen them. Together, they reflected was the case throughout the journey on the sacrifice the beam represents – fire apparatus and personnel lined nething that hit home for the town bridge overpasses along highways.



Chicago



Chicago, Illinois -

"The escorts were incredible, from the time we left the firehouse (Queens, N.Y.)," Jim Durkin, one of the beam's guardians, said. "They closed Route 80 in Chicago, in rush hour, for us. ... We went zipping through there like the Blues Brothers."

He added: "America is alive and well on Route 80 in Chicago." The Fort Collins team was escorted by people representing countless emergency service agencies, as well as those with the Patriot Guard Riders and American Veterans.



"Every time we stopped, w were swarmed by hundreds of people that wanted to touch it," Hanson told the crowd, as quoted in The Fort Collins Coloradoan. "They wanted to thank us. They hugged us. We told them every time, 'This is yours. This is not just ours.' Bu all the love they shared with us on the way back was extremely erwheiming.

"Our journey was a story book. It only lasted three days," Hanson said. "but it's one that will last forever."

GUARDIANS OF THE STEEL

The following members of Poudre Fire Authority were part of the World Trade Center beam's journey across the United States:









Doug Lee



Dan Santillanes

Len Lindholn Bryan Hanson

Jim Durkin

Jim Salisbury

ontributions to this project: Tom DeMint; Rick Vander Velde; Hayley Spurrier; and Patrick Love. These members of the organization, and others, made other significant of

On the morning of Oct. 22, 2015 nembers of the Patriot Guard escorte the beam team from State College, i nnsylvania, to the Ohio border and across the entire state. Once they assed Toledo, the beam and its guardians were greeted by Ohio State roopers, the Toledo Fire Department and numerous others.



George Washington Bridge (between Manhattan, N.Y. and New Jersey) 🗕

After receiving the steel Oct. 21, the then crossed the George Washington eam made its way that same day to a Bridge into New Jersey, escorted by mony at New York Fire Ladder 158 station in Queens, N.Y. patrol and fire vehicles. In a show of Dozens upon dozens of firefighters and respect, as if yielding to a funeral ommunity members gathered to pay 🔰 procession, buses motored out of the 🚺 their respects amid the music of the way, and cars pulled onto curbs to ational Anthem.

The World Trade Center beam team guards.

more than 100 off-duty firefighters on Intment's Engine 311 Hook and motorcycles, members of the state clear the way for the beam and its



Poudre Fire Authority's Kevin Housley and Dan Santillanes, also representatives of the Colorado chapter of the Terry irrell Firefighters Fund, along with the beam's trip guardians (Bryan Hanson n Lindholm, Jim Durkin and Doug Lee), took ownership of the 5-foot-long 059-pound I-beam at John F. Kennedy to connect some dots. International Airport the morning of Oct

Kevin Housley



"To see that chunk of steel that we got ... for us, it was a pretty impactful time," said Housley, remembering the moment when he realized that one small beam was part of a massive attack on American soil.

"It was a once-in a lifetime opportunity



MEMORIAL

BEAM TRANSFORMATION

In a chemical reaction, a substance changes at Thanks to hundreds of hours of work by PFA a molecular or ionic level. The process transcends the physical, as one thing becomes Firefighters Fund and State of New York's Port something else.

In a way, that's what happened with a singular piece of steel, pulled from the twisted wreckage which abuts Spring Park in Midtown of the World Trade Center walls and delivered Fort Collins. home to Fort Collins on Oct. 24, 2015.

The 5-foot-long, 3,059-pound piece of metal was, at one time, just a rust-colored I-beam one of the countless parts of the World Trade Center's towering skeleton torn asunder by two planes.

However, it was transformed, becoming imbued with the grief and love of the th of people who bore witness to its roughly 1,800-mile, four-day journey, from a non-descript New York Port Authority warehouse to Poudre Fire Authority Station 4 on West Drake Road.

"When the beam really became more than a beam was in front of that (New York Fire Department) firehouse (in Queens, N.Y.)," PFA Chief Tom DeMint said, reflecting back to ceremony that took place early on in the beam's journey, at NYFD's Engine 311 Hook and Ladder 158 station in Queens.

"It's not about us (the PFA firefighters who brought the beam back to Fort Collins)," said Jim Durkin, a Poudre Fire Authority fire inspector and one the beam's guardians along the journey. "It's about what this represents." The 343 firefighters who ran toward danger, perishing in their efforts to save people trapped in the towers. It's about the emergency medical technicians and law enforcement officers who perished and the nearly 3,000 other people who died that fateful day.

"It's about the sacrifice," Chief DeMint echoed. It is that sacrifice, those people, the beam's guardians want people to "Never Forget."

staff members, as well as the Terry Farrell Authority, the firefighters' desire can become reality through construction of a future, permanent 9/11 memorial at PFA's Station 3,

There, firefighters can forever watch over this American symbol – of sacrifice, of resiliency and defiance. And there, members of the public can contemplate and honor its meaning.

HEARTFELT THANKS

Poudre Fire Authority is forever grateful to the following organizations and people for their contributions of time and money, making it possible to bring the World Trade Center beam home to Fort Collins. Countless people were involved in the beam's journey; not all are listed here, but all are deeply appreciated.

Special thanks, goes to: The Patton Township Fire Department, in State College, Pennsylvania; e South Bend Fire Department, in South nd, Indiana; and Lincoln Fire Rescue in Lincoln, Nebraska, for the overwhelming receptions in each community, as well as their donations of time, space within their firehouses and guardianship over the beam.

- Art Preservation Center, in Long Island, New York
- Columbine Management Services, Inc.
- Dellenbach Motors
- Duke Thompson, Business Equipment Services
- Ed Rupert, chair of the Poudre Valley Fire Protection District board - Karatbars Inc.
- Legacy Tractor Sales
- New York Fire Department
- New York Port Authority
- Signs by Tomorrow
- Schrader Oil
- Terry Farrell Firefighters Fund
- Walker Manufacturing
- World Trade Center Beam Committee