

Another year, another important Hero Thrill Show

In 1954, 10 firefighters died from injuries they suffered in an Oct. 28 chemical explosion at Berg Laboratories in North Philadelphia. An 11th firefighter was permanently disabled in the blast and perished four years later.

The explosion injured at least 25 firefighters and police officers. As a result of that tragedy, which still ranks as one of the worst individual disasters in the history of Philadelphia's police and fire departments, City Council established the Survivors Fund at the urging of the city's police and fire commissioners.

Under its original guidelines, the fund was to provide \$10,000 to the families of firefighters and police officers killed in the line of duty, along with scholarships for all of their dependent children.

That year, the inaugural Hero Thrill Show was held to raise money for the Survivors Fund.

Today, the annual Hero Thrill Show continues to generate much-needed funding for the families of slain police and firefighters. Now operated independently from the Survivors Fund, the Hero Thrill Show has raised more than \$1.5 million since 2006.

Tickets are now available for this year's show, scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 24, outside the Wells Fargo Center at Broad Street and Pattison Avenue in South Philadelphia. The rain date will be Oct. 1.

Actor Burt Young, of *Rocky* fame, has signed on as



JENNY SWIGODA / TIMES PHOTO

Motorcycles are in a line for a kickoff rally held last week at 18th and Market streets to promote this year's Hero Thrill Show on Sept. 24.

grand marshal. The Philadelphia Highway Patrol Motorcycle Drill Team will again be the featured attraction. Other demonstrators will include the police aviation unit, bomb squad, crime scene investigation, Explorers, marine unit, firearms instructors,

Police Academy and SWAT.

Tickets cost \$10 each and are tax-deductible. They are available at police stations and firehouses in the city and at FOP Lodge 5, 1336 Spring Garden St., and IAFF Local 22, 415 N. Fifth St. ••