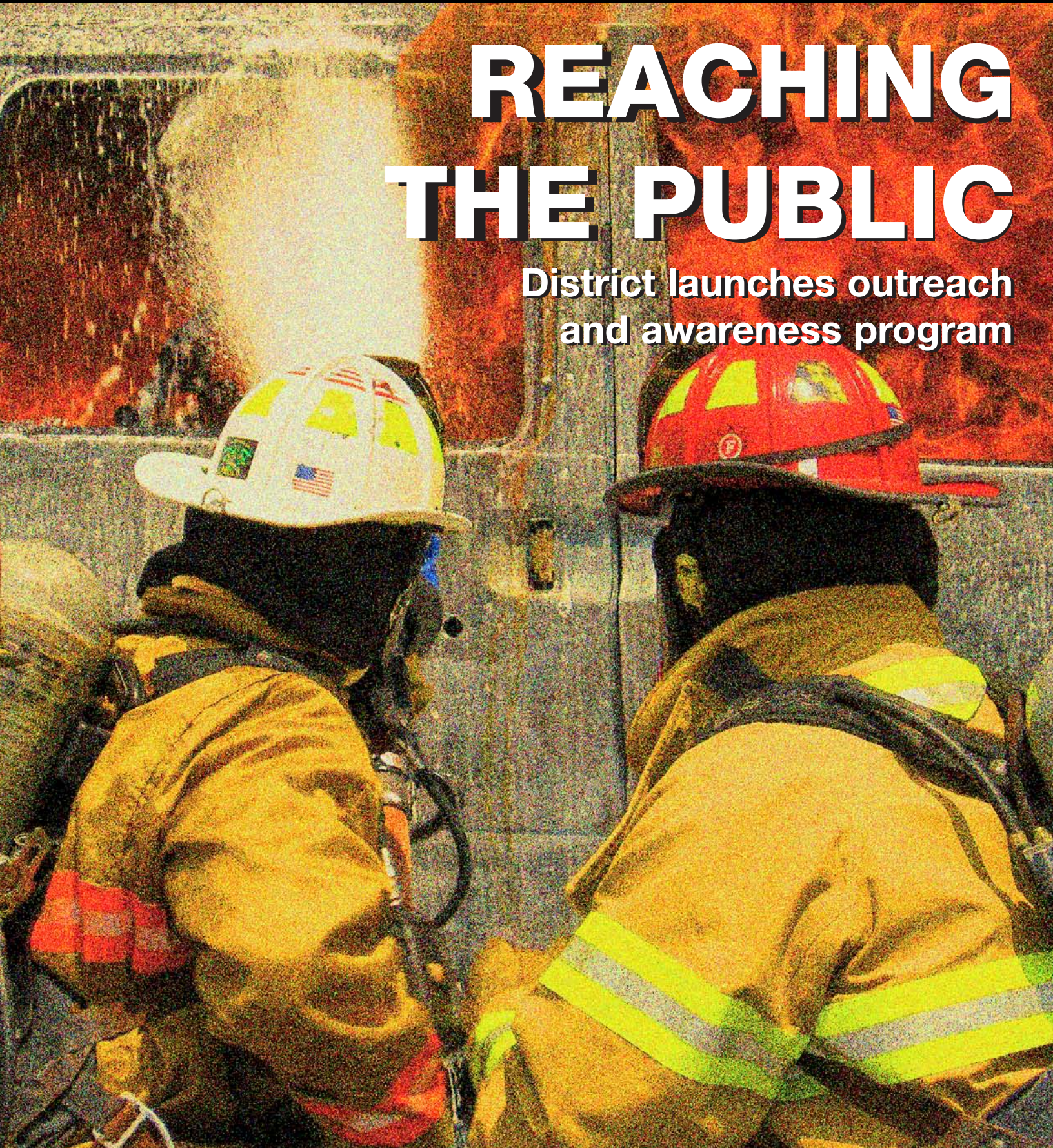




# REACHING THE PUBLIC

District launches outreach  
and awareness program



## STEVE LOHAN / CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

### To Bonita Springs residents

Thank you in advance for taking a few minutes to learn about your local fire district. As a 25+ year resident of Bonita Springs, I have seen many changes to our community. Over the course of time we have grown from a sleepy community to a city of over 45,000 year-round residents plus many seasonal residents and visitors. During this period your fire district has grown from a small volunteer department into a highly skilled top rated organization that ranks in the top 3% of departments. Many thousands of hours of training and dedication by the employees of the District have built an organization that you can be proud of and have peace of mind that no matter what the emergency, we will be there within minutes 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

During this difficult economic time your Board of Commissioners are constantly finding ways to cut costs without sacrificing service. Pay freezes, higher employee contributions to retirement and health care and a 2-tiered system for new hires are just a few examples that have been put in place in the last year. We are in the process of applying for an emergency transport permit as we answer all medical calls already and can provide a continuity of care from initial treatment, to delivery at the hospital. We are working with our state legislators to ease unfunded liability requirements. Our fire prevention and education departments are highly trained professionals that strive to make our community safe.

I encourage each of you to visit your local station or invite a representative from the department to visit your community to answer questions or familiarize yourself with your department.

Respectfully,  
 Steve Lohan  
 Chairman Bonita Springs Fire Control and Rescue District



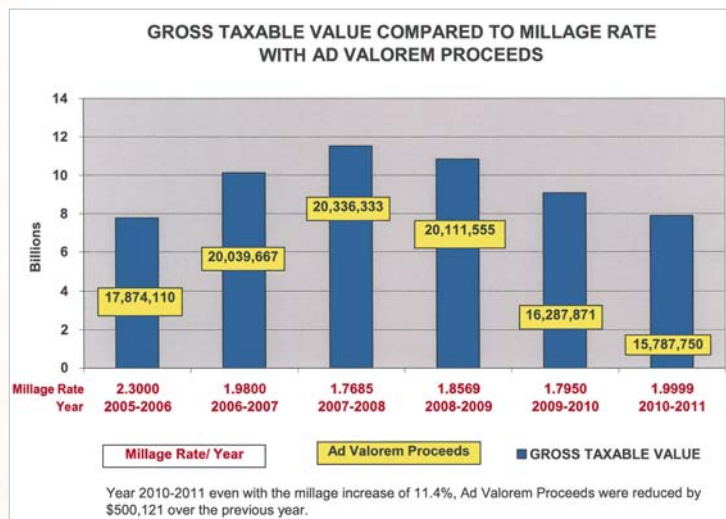
## P. H. KINSEY, JR. / FIRE CHIEF

Public service has been in the news these days and most of the news is negative. The Bonita Springs Fire Control and Rescue District, with the full cooperation and support of Local 3444, has made significant strides in reducing costs while sustaining a high level of service to the citizens and visitors of the District; these initiatives should be viewed as very positive from any perspective.

Since 2007, the taxable property value for the District has gone from \$11.5 billion to \$7.8 billion as of July 2010. This decline has resulted in a loss of about thirty-one percent over a four year period; the most significant devaluation occurred in fiscal year 2008-2009 (16%).

By comparing the taxable value with the millage rate and the ad valorem proceeds received, it is apparent that these three variables are interrelated and that a

millage increase does not necessarily equate to an increase in revenue. This is evidenced in the following graph. Comparing fiscal years 2006-2007 with 2010-2011, reveals that there is about a \$4.2 million decrease in revenue with a slightly higher millage rate for the latter.



The District has seen a very modest decline in call volume over the past two years. There are a number of suppositions that have been attached to this decline; however, the most likely scenario is that the call volume has reached a temporary plateau but is expected to rise proportionally as the communities population grows.

In 2007, the District developed a short-term strategic plan for staff reductions in anticipation of potential budgetary shortfalls as the result of legislative actions regarding Florida property tax reform. As a part of this plan, the District offered early retirement incentives to qualified employees. This objective has proven to be highly successful. Between the incentives and normal attrition, the District has reduced staffing by twelve (12) percent of the overall workforce. This initiative has saved an estimated \$5.5 million to date.

It is important to point out that most of the following initiatives would not have been possible without the cooperation of the Bonita Springs Professional Firefighters Local 3444. Many adjustments are subject to collective bargaining. The Local and administration have worked closely together to achieve substantial changes that will improve efficiencies now and in the future. These modifications are as follows:

- > Pension modifications; the first year savings are approximately \$130,000 and are expected to increase annually

- > All employees contribute seven percent of their annual salary to pension costs

- > A share plan has been created that freezes the pension; there will be no future improvements to the plan

- > There is now a tiered pension plan for new employees; this plan offers less than what the Florida Retirement System currently offers

- > The District and the Local have established a voluntary employee beneficiary association, retirement insurance trust fund that will relieve the District of almost all other post employment benefit liabilities. This initiative is expected to save approximately \$300,000 when it is fully operational in 2013

- > All employees took a two percent reduction in annual salary; this money is contributed to the VEBA annually

- > The District and the Local are currently negotiating a tiered collective bargaining agreement adjusting a number of articles that will reduce future employee costs

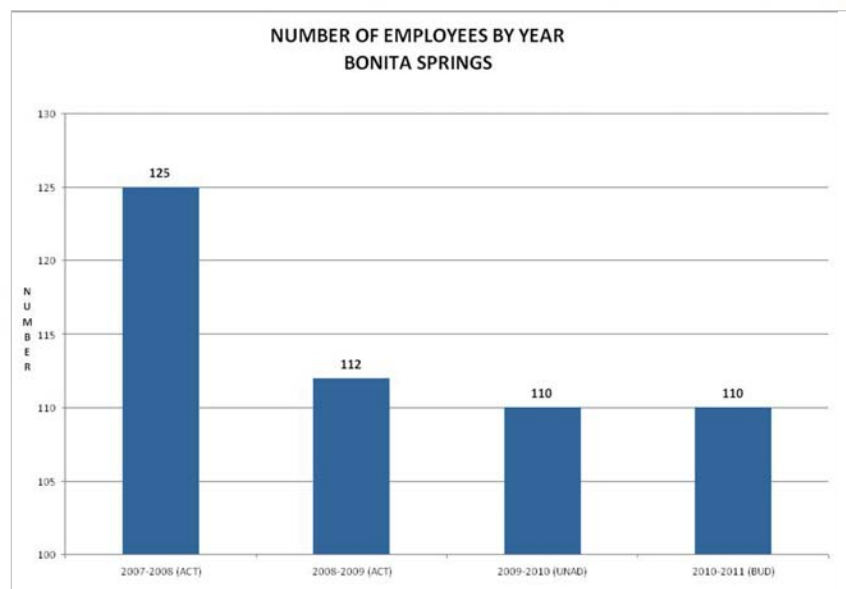
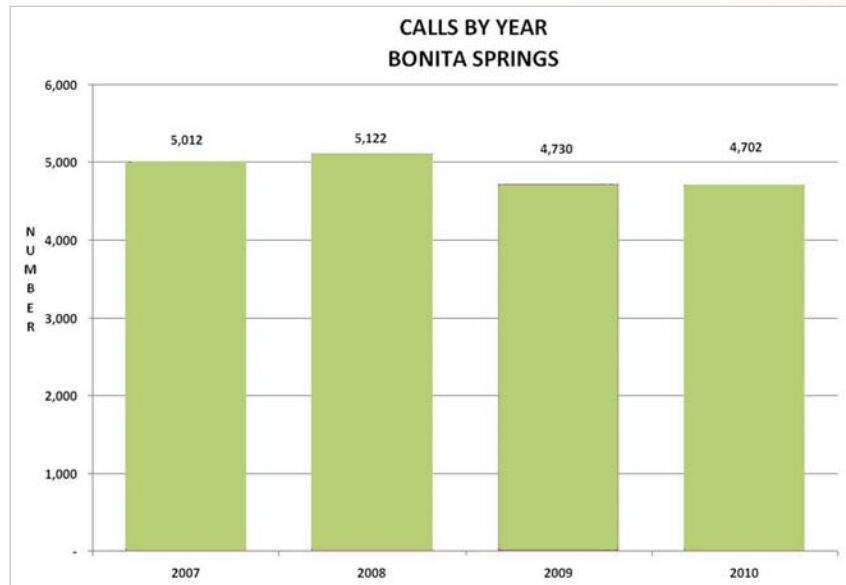
- > The District has taken over preventative maintenance and minor repairs of apparatus and equipment in house that has resulted in nearly a forty-two percent reduction in cost

These are just some of the cost containment initiatives that the District has implemented. We are constantly striving to provide our citizens a first rate service at an affordable cost.

Respectfully,

P.H. Kinsey, Jr.

Fire Chief Bonita Springs Fire Control and Rescue District



**Hello from your Professional Firefighters,**

I would like to take a few minutes of your time to explain how your firefighters have contributed to the community of Bonita Springs. After becoming a recognized labor organization in 1992, we have solely sponsored the 4th of July Parade making it one of the many festive traditions of Bonita Springs. Over the years, we have enjoyed participating in many community events such as Paint Your Heart Out, Relay For Life, and chili cook-off competitions, just to name a few.



MDA is one of our largest annual events. Over the years, we have collected and donated more than \$150,000. This is something that our residents can be proud of and your firefighters take pride in coordinating. Every dime that is collected for MDA stays here in southwest Florida to assist those who have been affected by Muscular Dystrophy.

In 2003, we were the first in southwest Florida to have a firefighters' calendar. All of the proceeds from the calendar sales go to local charities. We have donated more than \$65,000 to these charities with the majority of the money going to the Bonita Springs Assistance Office. In 2004, we began using some of the calendar proceeds to provide scholarships to a selected male and female student from an area high school in the amount of \$1,000 each.

In 2008, the Local elected to decline a two percent wage increase. With the help of the District, the Local has initiated a retirement health insurance fund. Our goal was to help reduce the District's insurance costs for retirees. We have also agreed to extend the contract for three years. By doing so, we have eliminated the possibility of any wage adjustment for a total of five years. The Local has continually worked with the District to control the costs of medical insurance and pension expenses.

The Local takes pride in being part of a work force of highly trained and skilled firefighters because we believe you deserve only the best. If you have any questions or would like more information, go to [www.bonitafire.org](http://www.bonitafire.org) and select the Local 3444 tab. "Firefighters still make house calls."



Respectfully,  
President Greg DeWitt  
Bonita Springs Professional Firefighters' Local 3444

**THE DISTRICT SUPPORTS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The Bonita Springs Fire District has taken an active part in helping to improve the local economy. In September 2010, the Board of Fire Commissioners approved and signed a memorandum of understanding between the City of Bonita Springs, Bonita Springs Utilities and the Fire District that would help to coordinate permitting processes between the agencies.

The District is a charter participant and non-voting member of the Board of Directors of the Bonita Springs Economic Development Council.

The Bonita Springs Economic Development Council was incorporated in the state of Florida on February 14, 2011. The group has raised more than \$33,000 to date, in support of a well crafted program of work. This work initiates support for existing businesses while ultimately striving to diversify the economic base of the community and region. For more information go to [www.BonitaSpringsChamber.com](http://www.BonitaSpringsChamber.com).



## TIMOTHY FERNANDEZ / FIRE MARSHAL

Get to know the talented and skilled individuals of the Bonita Springs Fire Control and Rescue District.

- > Fire Marshal Timothy Fernandez
- > Native Floridian; born in Fort Myers
- > Single parent of two
- > 34 years in the fire service

### Education

- > A.S. Fire Science Technology, Edison College
- > A.S. of Applied Science Fire Science, Columbia Southern University

### Positions Held

- > Volunteer Firefighter
- > Firefighter/EMT
- > Driver Engineer
- > Acting Lieutenant
- > Fire Inspector
- > Safety Officer
- > Assistant Fire Marshal
- > Fire Marshal

### Certifications

- > Firefighter I & II
- > Fire Inspector I & II
- > Fire Officer I
- > Fire Instructor I

### Awards

- > Fire Prevention Employee of the Year - 2000, 2003 and 2004
- > Officer of the Year - 2008



*Simply the* **BEST**

Since taking the position of Fire Marshal, Timothy Fernandez has reorganized the department to inspect close to 4,200 occupancies in a 12-month period. Fire Prevention now does concurrent plan reviews for any issued permits for the city of Bonita Springs, Lee County, and Estero Fire Rescue. In addition, Bonita Springs Fire Prevention is now a permitting agency for fire protection systems and hazards in the city of Bonita Springs. He attributes the significant transition to his hardworking staff.

## JEFF CHITWOOD / FIRE CHAPLAIN, CERT MEMBER

The CERT Program provides education about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact Bonita Springs and trains citizens in basic disaster response skills. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can be called upon to assist others following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members take a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community. We would like to introduce you to an individual who is truly committed to making a difference in Bonita Springs.

- > Married for 30 years with two daughters.

### Education

- > Bachelor of Arts from Lincoln Christian College - 1980
- > Master of Divinity Degree in New Testament Theology with a minor in Counseling - 1987
- > CERT member since January of 2011

### Positions Held

- > Associate Minister - South Shores Christian Church, Decatur, IL - 1978 - 1982
- > Youth Minister - South Side Christian Church, Springfield, IL - 1982-1995
- > Sr. Minister - South Side Christian Church, Springfield, IL - 1996 - 2010
- > Sr. Minister - Anchor Christian Church, Bonita Springs, FL - May 2010 - present

In addition to his ministry at Anchor Christian Church, Chaplain Chitwood has volunteered his time and energy to serve as a CERT member and as the first Fire Chaplain for the Bonita Springs Fire District.



**CERT**  
Community Emergency Response Team

## FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Bonita Springs Fire Control and Rescue District is dedicated to preventing drownings and has developed Water Safety Packets. The packet includes numerous safety tips and most importantly, a Designated Water Watcher tag designed to remove any doubt as to who is responsible for watching the children swim. The clip-on badge also has quick tips about what to do if a child is unresponsive in a pool. The packet includes a water safety survey, a babysitter's checklist intended for parents and sitters to review together, and information on local swim lessons and safety products that can be purchased. These packets are available at any Bonita Springs Fire Station, City Hall and Chamber of Commerce. Please pick up yours today and review these quick tips for preventing drownings.

### PROTECT YOUR CHILD FROM DROWNING



“Each year, nationally, more than 1,000 children, ages 14 and younger drown. Children ages four and younger represent almost 60 percent of these deaths.

For every child that drowns, an additional four more are hospitalized for near-drowning. 15 percent of children admitted for near-drowning, die in the hospital.”

*National Injury Prevention Center*

### BY THE NUMBERS

# 77%

Of pool injuries occurred in less than two minutes

# 50%

Of the child victims of pool injuries were last seen inside



Of the children who survive,

# 5-20%

suffer severe and permanent disability



### LAYERS OF PROTECTION

It is impossible to monitor every moment of a child's life. Avoid tragedy by making your home safer, and by being prepared for accidents if they do happen in spite of precautions.

To prevent drowning use layers of protection:

- > Constant adult supervision
- > Install alarms on gates, windows and doors that lead to pool
- > Keep rescue equipment such as a life-ring buoy and hooked rescue pole near-by
- > Keep anything holding more than an inch of water out of harms way
- > Close and lock toilet lids
- > Empty inflatable or plastic children's pools and buckets that are holding liquid
- > Fence the perimeter of in-ground pools
- > Never leave young children unattended in the tub or at the pool
- > Enroll children in swimming classes and water safety courses
- > Learn infant and child CPR. Early performance of CPR and immediate activation of 911 can greatly improve chances of survival
- > Last, have a phone at the pool/water area to call 911

Bonita Springs Fire Control and Rescue District offers over 30 educational programs to the public. This is an example of just one of our popular programs. To view a complete list go to [www.bonitafire.org](http://www.bonitafire.org). For more information on our programs or to make an appointment to participate in a fire and life safety class, please contact your public educator at (239) 949-6228.

## FIRE PREVENTION LIFE SAFETY PARTNERSHIP AWARD / 2010

The businesses and individuals listed, have received the Fire Prevention Life Safety Partnership Award:

- > Walgreens on Bonita Beach Road
- > Bonita Springs Insurance Agency
- > BB&T Bank on Old 41 Road
- > Jason Mandell at Citrus Park Buildings
- > James Walker at Springs Plaza
- > Sarah Carlin at Puesta Del Sol Condominiums
- > Ron Kolbe at St. Mary's Episcopal Church
- > Lee County Sheriff's Office at Springs Plaza Sub-Station
- > Spanish Wells Country Club
- > Todd and Spanish Wells Maintenance Building
- > Family Dentistry of Bonita Springs
- > Family Health Centers of Southwest Florida

This award is given by the Fire Prevention Division to businesses that have shown a great attempt to promote safety in the workplace. Congratulations to these hard-working businesses and individuals and thank you for making Bonita Springs a safer place to live, visit and work.

More of our Fire Prevention Award recipients for 2010 will be listed throughout the year. If you would like more information about how to become eligible to receive this award, call (239) 949-6211.

## FIRE RESCUE CREW OF THE YEAR 2010

- > Firefighter Nicholas Araica
- > Firefighter Terry Bonnell
- > Lieutenant Steven Bunn
- > Firefighter Jason Burgess
- > Firefighter Juvert Calero
- > Firefighter Jared Carey
- > Firefighter Andy Chicas
- > Firefighter Robert Day
- > Public Educator Nicole Hornberger
- > Firefighter Jonathan Hernandez
- > Firefighter Zachary Lindgren
- > Firefighter Daniel Platas
- > Firefighter Allan Seruchar
- > Deputy Chief Shane Sibert
- > Firefighter Mark Simon
- > Battalion Chief Todd Taylor
- > Firefighter James Zamora



The firefighters and officers on this fire scene assisted to accomplish an immense feat on June 20, 2009. The life of a severely burned woman was saved. Upon arrival crews found a single story residential structure with heavy smoke showing from the front of the residence. Crews were informed that the residence was occupied and operations were conducted to rescue the patient. While inside, crews found the patient unconscious and lying on her back near the kitchen. The crew immediately extricated the patient from the residence and returned to continue fire suppression operations. Every person on a fire scene assists to improve the efficiency and outcome. Thank you to each of you for all your hard work and dedication.