

HOT TOPICS



Volume 10, Issue 10 City of Delray Beach Fire-Rescue Department February 2011



Mission Statement

The Delray Beach Fire-Rescue Department is resolved to provide the highest quality of emergency services to residents and visitors of our community; effectively mitigating all types of incidents threatening life or property; educating the public in specific aspects of health and safety to assure a superior quality of life.



Congratulations to *Lt. Siciliano* on his promotion to Special Operations Lt.



All the best to Driver Engineer Omar Torres on his promotion.

Congratulations



Happy Valentines' Day

Vision Statement

“Our vision is to provide Fire-Rescue, Emergency Medical and Special Operations Services at the highest level of excellence, professionalism, and commitment to the community. Proud of our past and embracing our future, the members of Delray Beach Fire-Rescue will work as an effective and integrated team, dedicated to continuous improvement and maintaining a positive environment. The Department will be a model to others and the pride of the community”.

SAVE THE DATE!
6TH Annual SPIRIT Barbeque
 April 8, 2011
 11am-2pm
 Old School Square Gymnasium
 Additional information to follow.

-Prizes- -Music- -Games-
 -Food- -Baking Contest-




A seafood option will be available.

“Preparing for the worst.....Delivering the best”



Lt. Pamela Garcia's Retirement Gathering and Farewell Speech

I've known for quite some time now that this day would come... what a bitter /sweet day it is. I thought I would take a few moments to look back over my journey into the fire service and share some of my memories with you.

I have often wondered if my journey really started back in 1956 (I'll let you do the math!!!) This picture is of a hydrant in my home town in Sterling Illinois. My mom told me many years ago that she backed into this hydrant and ripped the bumper and fender off of our family vehicle. She then proceeded to tell me that she was nine months pregnant with me when it happened!!



Being a firefighter was surely not something I had dreamed of becoming as a little girl. Back then it was almost unheard of a woman to be in this typed of profession. But I did know at the age of about four that I wanted to be a lifeguard. I remember looking up and admiring the lifeguards as they sat in their lifeguard chairs. I knew someday that I too would be wearing a whistle around my neck, have a nice dark tan and would have zinc oxide on my nose. How cool would that be to really save some one's life?

If you fast forward to the age of about nine I remember playing in the front yard one day when my attention was quickly diverted to the busy street that was only one house

away. I heard a loud crash which was followed by the screeching of tires, the twisting of metal and breaking of glass. As I ran to the corner AI was the most horrific site of my life. There was a car that was unrecognizable, upside down and half wrapped around a telephone pole. The sounds of someone screaming for help were wounds that I would never forget. As I stood there looking at this crumple vehicle I saw a women attempting to crawl out of the car through a broken window. I had never heard a grown person scream and cry like that before. I couldn't tell what she looked like cause her face was covered in blood. I didn't know what she looked like cause her face was covered in blood. I didn't know what shock was back then but I think I was in it!! It seemed like forever before I could hear the sirens in the distance. I wondered why nobody else was trying to help this woman... maybe they didn't know what to do either. I watched as they pulled the lady from the car and laid her on the stretcher. They loaded her into the back of the station wagon style ambulance and off they went. I never heard what the outcome was with the lady or whether there were more people inside that vehicle that could have been injured or even killed. But what I do remember is that from that day on I was scared to death of ambulances! During the middle of the night if I heard a siren in the distance I would go crawl in bed with my parents and tell them I didn't feel well. I had that sick feeling in my stomach knowing that someone else was injure and I didn't like it. I never wanted to see anything like that ever again.

At the age of 11 my dream was coming true... I became a Jr. lifeguard!! I learned about drowning, mouth to mouth resuscitation and about first aid. At the age of 15 I had my first job as a lifeguard at the same lake I went to as a little girl. After I graduated from college I moved to Ft. Lauderdale and became the aquatics and program director at the YMCA. By that time I was an instructor in first aid and CPR. I was till intrigued at how the body functioned and decide to further my knowledge by enrolling in EMT school followed by paramedic school.. I started working with local ambulance company. That was 30 years ago!!! How ironic that now I would be the one who would be blowing that siren scaring other little kids to death!! Back then getting a real job as a paramedic meant becoming a firefighter and working for a fire dept. I had enjoyed my role as a paramedic and decided to enroll in the fire academy. I had no idea what to expect. I knew I was entering a male dominating profession, but I was up for the challenge. I felt as though I was in good physical condition and was taught my parents at a young age that you can do whatever you want if you put your mind to it and work hard. When I graduated from the academy I was immediately hired by Delray Beach. I didn't know it the time but I was to be the first female hired here. I didn't want any special treatment, only an opportunity to put all of my skills and training to work.

I accepted the job and hoped that I could prove to the dept. that they had hired the right person. You see... I wasn't that scared horrified little girl anymore. I had trained on what to do if someone became sick or injured. There were some guys who were very skeptical, but that was ok that was to be expected. They didn't know what to expect of me and I didn't know what to expect of them or the job in general. I received the Firefighter of The Year Award after my first year here. Not because I had done anything heroic, but because the Chief and the administration felt as though they had made the right decision by brining a female on board and that I had exceeded all of their expectations.

Now almost 28 years later I can honestly say that I am proud to have been a Delray Beach Firefighter/Paramedic. I believe I upheld my end of the deal by protecting property and saving lives to the citizens and visitors of this great All-American City. I figured it out that we work 120 shifts per year, minus a few sick, vacation or kelly days, add on a few overtime shifts or swaps and that comes out to about 110 shifts per year. If I ran an average of only 5 calls per shift times 30 years then I would have responded to over 16,000 calls over my entire career.

I've treated gsw and stabbings, heart attacks and strokes, seizures and diabetic emergencies. I treated fractures and sprains, controlled the bleeding, picked up those who had fallen and couldn't get up, treated those who were lonely or depressed and those who were alcoholics or drug abusers. I've delivered babies and treated those who were choking and those who just weren't feeling well.

I've been to accidents that involved planes, trains and automobiles, busses, boat and bicycles, motorcycles, skateboards and rollerblades.

I've protected houses and businesses from fire, kept people safe during and after hurricanes, and major storms. I've protected people form broken gas lines, hazardous materials and downed power lines. I've extricate people who were trapped in elevators and helped rescue pets in time of need.

I always had a hard time responding to those calls where someone felt as though the only way to deal with their problems was to take their own life. I've been on self inflicted gunshot wounds, hangings and overdoes. I remember being on the dive team and recovering a males body who jumped into the intercostals. He didn't know how to swim. We found out later he had just been served with divorce papers. The worst were those who felt as though stepping out in front of a semi or a train would solve all of their problems and keep them from facing another day on this earth. It was always such a helpless feeling knowing that all the training or equipment in the world would have saved these people.

Two of the hardest calls I ever responded to involved kids. One was a little two and half year old who ran out into the street and was struck by a van. As we pulled up on scene I could see her motionless body lying in the road. WE stated treating her and rushed her off to the hospital I couldn't help but notice e that her mother was pregnant. She was so hysterical that I called for another rescue truck to come and assist her since I was focused on the child. I was in the room at the hospital when the Dr. informed the mother hat her little didn't make it. The doctor allowed her to hold her child one last time and at that point I had to leave the room... it was too much for me to handle. That mother buried one child and gave birth to another a few days later. I couldn't imagine what that would have been like for that mother.

The other call involved two young teenagers in a car. One group of friends in another card had managed to beat the train across the track. This car with the two teenagers didn't make it. They were both killed instantly. It was bad enough seeing their bodies and having to remove them from the vehicle, but the worst part was when the boy's mother arrived on scene. The first carload of kids had seen the accident had Stopped at a payphone to call the boy's mother. As the mother arrived on scene she came running up to me. She was screaming five words I will never forget... "TELL ME IT'S NOT BRIAN, TELL ME IT'S NOT BRIAN." For the first time in my life I was speechless. I don't remember learning in paramedic school how to react to a situation like that. All I could do was hold her as she looked at the yellow blanket that was covering her son's body. Nothing out of my mouth would have made the situation any better. Sometimes silence is golden.

Lt. Garcia's Farewell Speech

One of the things that I am most proud of is the time I spent attempting to keep firefighters and police officers safe while responding to any type of water emergency. I was a member of the dive team for many years and taught dive rescue classes throughout the US.

People look up to us as Heroes. Even though that is very flattering, to us we are just doing our job. There are two special Heroes in my life... they don't wear bunker gear and they never run into a burning building, they are my parents. They are my biggest supporters and were so proud of all of my accomplishments.. When I would go home to visit they would introduce me to their friends and the first thing out of their mouth was "She's a firefighter and a paramedic!" I knew if I ever needed advice or a second opinion that they were only a phone call away. I have learned from their maturity, experience and their wisdom. I strive to be the parent to my daughter Taylor that my parents were to me. My dad flew down from Illinois to celebrate this day with me. It's not often that a parent sees their child retire. We are celebrating my dad's 84th birthday this weekend. So to my dad I say I love you and I thank you for all that you have done for me over the years.



This is a picture of my mother. She was a beautiful woman both inside and out. Unfortunately my mother was taken from us almost 10 years ago. I have dealt with death and those who are dying for 30 years... but losing my mother was the hardest of them all.

But I know she is in a better place and that she is here with us today. She has a smile on her face and is giving me a big thumbs up!! I know that someday I will find that superman and wonder woman costume in my parent's closet for they truly are my Super Heroes!!

I want to thank my nephew Josh from Illinois and Kyle from California who flew in to celebrate this day with me.

And last but not least I want to thank my daughter Taylor for all the support she has given me. Many of you have watched her grow up, and she's still growing!! Taylor was almost 3 when the tragic events of Sept. 11 occurred. As she sat next to me on the couch watching TV, I had a hard time explaining to her what had just happened. She watched the twin towers collapse. She saw firefighters walking around in a daze... some of them injure and bleeding. She saw police officers running for their lives. We all know now what happened and she knows that 343 firefighters lost their lives along with numerous other police officers and

first responders. She learned at a very young age that there are bad people the world and that firefighting is a very dangerous job. When Taylor was 4 I took her to go see the movie Ladder 49. It was a firefighter movie and I thought she could see what mommy did at work. Little did I know that at the end of the movie a firefighter dies after being trapped inside a burning building. As we watched them load the firefighters casket onto the back of the fire truck. I looked over and saw that she was ready to burst out crying. As the movie ended a couple of my friends and I did all we could to reassure her that nothing like that was going to happen to mommy. I told her we all take care of each other and that safety is our top priority. But deep down I knew that she realized what I did and that anything at anytime could take her mommy away.

Taylor knew that fire fighters work 365 days out of the year and that sometimes mommy had to work on a holiday or a special event. But for the most part many of you stepped up to the plate and worked for me so that I could share some of those times with her. Whether it was to chaperone on school field trip or attend one of her sporting events you were there to help make it happen, thank you for that and for keeping me safe and allowing me to go home after each and every shift. I couldn't think of a better group of role models for Taylor to have been around while she was growing up than all of you. Taylor... you are a beautiful young lady with a heart of gold. You have a gift of always putting others first and your caring ways and willingness to help anyone in any situation will surely pay off in your future endeavors. I love you and look forward to our future time together.

I want to thank all the volunteers who spend countless hours doing odds and ends and keeping our equipment in working order. Thanks to the secretaries who have always been there when I needed them.

Thanks to all the Chiefs who have worked hard to make this dept. what it is today. I will put Delray Beach Fire Rescue up against any other dept. any day of the week. We have state of the art equipment, vehicles and stations. Our training program is designed to keep us all safe. I will always be proud to say that I worked for the City of Delray Beach.

I am not going to say good bye, but I will say... Thanks For the Memoires... I love you all and pray for your safety as you continue to protect and serve the citizens and visitors of Delray Beach.

Thank you... Lt. Pam Garcia 01/27/2011

**Mike Twigger, Acting Asst. Chief Administration
S.O.G.**


This month I am addressing the 'Requests for Incident Information' S.O.G. located in Volume I, Chapter 1, Section 3.

If you receive a telephone call or a request in person from someone requesting information concerning a medical response, what do you do? The answer to this question is provided in the department's S.O.G. 'Requests for Incident Information' Volume I, Chapter 1, Section 3. If the person is not the patient, City Attorney or an Investigating Delray Beach Police Officer than you will need to refer them to the department's Administrative Office or City Attorney's office for them to determine their ability to get the information.

Due to the sensitivity of information provided in a patient care report the determination of who should be allowed to view that information is not a decision made without legal consultation. So do not put yourself in a bad position by releasing information to someone who legally should not have had access to it in the first place. Please review this S.O.G as well as all Fire Department S.O.G.s on the 'S' Drive –Shared - Standard Operations Guidelines. Information is power.



**Delray Beach Fire-Rescue Department
Administrative Policies**

Volume: I	Administrative Practices
Chapter: 1	General
Section: 3	Requests for Incident Information
Date: 12/10/09	David C. James, Fire-Rescue Chief 

- 1.01 **PURPOSE:**
To establish a policy that addresses requests for incident information.
- 1.02 **POLICY:**
Delray Beach Fire-Rescue personnel will answer requests for incident information by adhering to the following procedure.
- 1.03 **AUTHORITY:**
The authority vested in the Fire-Rescue Chief by Florida Statute 166.021; Section 1.02 and 4.04 of the City of Delray Beach Charter; and Section 32.01, 32.21 and 33.20 of the City of Delray Beach Code of Ordinances.
- 1.04 **RESPONSIBILITY:**
It is the responsibility of the Administrative Officer to review and update this policy.
- 1.05 **PROCEDURE:**
 - A. Any personnel questioned by an attorney or an investigator, other than the Delray Beach Police Department, concerning the information contained on a rescue report, will refer that person to the Administrative Office of the Fire-Rescue Department or to the City Attorney's Office.
 - B. All EMS report information is considered confidential. It is part of a medical record and cannot be released to an attorney or an investigator without a medical release authorized by the patient or by a court subpoena.
 - C. All Medical report information can be released to the City Attorney, the Delray Beach Police Department, or to the patient with proper ID.
- 1.06 **REVOCATION:**
Delray Beach Fire-Rescue Department Policies Volume I, Chapter 1; Section 3; Implemented November 4, 1992; Revised December 10, 2009.
- 1.07 **REVISION:** All Sections

The Pension Corner
February 2011
By Lt. Joe Liguori

Here are some updates regarding your pension:

*The City Commission had requested a workshop meeting with the Board's actuary and investment advisor for Tuesday, February 8th. The overall result was positive, with the commissioners acknowledging the hard work and the passion that the trustees exert in exercising their fiduciary responsibilities. The actuary told them that our board was one of the most educated and progressive boards he deals with in the state. The message presented was the fund is healthy, fairly well-funded and exhibiting higher than expected returns last two years and a good forecast for that to continue this year.

*The police overtime issue has been settled, but yet to be implemented. We are awaiting additional information requested by the PD's trustees. The COLA sustainability study has been completed and will be presented at the next meeting, Wednesday, February 16th, @ 1PM.

*As a result of an appeal to the Board by retired chief Bill Adams regarding his certification pay, an additional 18 retired personnel became eligible for back certification pay, of which, 15 will be receiving a benefit adjustment and a lump sum retroactive benefit. This was an unexpected result of the settlement of the certification lawsuit initiated in 2004. This issue has actually been in dispute since 1993.

*Here's a shout out to our recent retirees: Lt. Pamela Garcia and DE John Hansen. We wish them much happiness and good health and good luck in their future endeavors.

*City-appointed trustee Mel Sacharow, a six year veteran, will be leaving the Board after the March meeting, as he has moved out of the city and his term is expiring. Good luck, Mel, and a hearty thank you from all the plan members for your dedicated service to the Board. We also would like to welcome Police Chief Tony Strianese as the newest trustee on the Board. He has replaced Asst. Police Chief Ralph Phillips.

*The current members of the Board:

Lt. Joe Liguori, Chairmen
Sgt. Brady Myers, PD, Vice Chairman
Mel Sacharow, appointee, Secretary
DE Justin Caruso
BC Greg Giaccone
Lt. John Palermo, PD
Chief Tony Strianese, PD
Doug Smith, Asst. City Manager
Adam Frankel, City Commissioner

Staff:

Anne Woods, Administrator
Karen Schell, City Pension Coordinator
Stephen Cypen, Attorney, Cypen & Cypen
Mike Welker, Investment Consultant, The Bogdahn Group
Brad Heinrichs, Actuary, Foster & Foster.
Malena Walinski, Acting finance Director.



Support Services Staff News
By: *Cecelia Shade, Administrative Officer*

“Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any one thing.” ~Abraham Lincoln

EMS BILLING UPDATE! As we continue to work through the glitches, we are happy to report the receipt of payments from the new billing system. Things are moving rather slowly, but we are encouraged that the process will improve with time. Our billers are excited about how things are going and to see the fruits of their labor is even more rewarding. Your continued support is vital to reaching the goals established for a successful in-house EMS billing system. On behalf of our staff, we thank you in advance for your support.

BUDGET! We have begun in-house preparations for a great budget year. Staff has been asked to review their areas of responsibilities and to begin compiling their budgets through review of our department goals, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Also, by reviewing those areas we can cut, yet maintain the level of service we provide to our citizens.



CHIEF JAMES UPDATE! We were fortunate enough to have Chief James in attendance at our senior staff strategic planning day at the Delray Beach Library on Thursday, February 3rd. He is recovering very well. He is optimistic about his prognosis and is looking forward to returning to the department very soon. Please join me in extending words of encouragement and wishes for good health and prosperity as he continues the journey to recover.

HAPPY 30th! Desiree celebrated her 30th birthday on Saturday, February 5th in style. She and a few of her closest friends and acquaintances took a party bus out on the town. A great time was had by all in attendance. Happy Birthday, Desiree!





Haz-mat training



Personal Protective Equipment By Ed Crelin, Division Chief

The Safety Division in the Bureau of Fire Standards and Training at the State Fire College in Ocala recently began a state wide campaign regarding personal protective equipment called "Wear the Gear/Wear it Right". Recently the Delray Beach Fire Rescue Department conducted a Personal Protective Gear inspection. Overall the inspection revealed some minor tears and Velcro closure issues, in addition some battery issues in personal flashlights and voice amps. The Training and Safety Division has been working to repair and or replace all items that have been identified on the recent inspection forms, as a reminder if you have a piece of equipment in need of repair or replacement you should contact your station officer. The Training and Safety Division has also been retrofitting Helmets to the new integrated face shield that is replacing the goggles, eventually all helmets will have the new NFPA compliant shield.



Ground Ladder Training

EMS Division News

Joe Falcone, EMS Training

The word “change” when used in the fire service concerning operational and administrative procedure always seems to be taboo and sometimes tough to implement if not presented properly. But as we all realize, technology is progressing, new medical studies surface, old ways of doing business are improved upon and unfortunately sometimes budget issues force change. In the world of EMS concerning Delray Beach Fire Rescue we are facing upcoming changes that will affect our way of doing business, I believe, for the better. First and foremost, I would like to welcome Dr. Craig Kushnir, who assumed our Medical Director position full time earlier this year, his brief bio is below. I can tell you from speaking to him personally he is very excited to get started and meet all of you at the stations at some point. In an effort to stay ahead of the game, I will try to provide as much information and training to allow some of the changes to be seamless.

In the coming months, we are going to implement our new report writing system (Firehouse E-PCR) and will be training crews on its use in March. The EMS division is meeting with Dr. Kushnir regarding training, operational and protocol review and study areas where we could improve. We are going to re-establish our EMS committee in the coming weeks to help steer this area, please be on the lookout for an e-mail. It is anticipated that we will have a new EMS division chief who will also be working closely with Dr. Kushnir in the coming months. CPR standards are changing and the direction I received was that all updates will be presented during our renewal period which expires February 2012.

We have taken over our EMS billing, so please take the time to capture the information requested from the billing department when ever possible. As always, I welcome any ideas regarding training that you think would be beneficial to our paramedics and EMT's. EMS is a for ever changing field and we will strive to keep on top of the current trends and latest technology. I think if we provide the adequate training and enough information along the way we will adapt to our upcoming improvements with little or no effect on day to day operations. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Craig Benjamin Kushnir, D.O., FACEP

As the newly appointed Medical Director of Delray Beach Fire Rescue, I am very excited to serve my home city and provide medical leadership to the position. I have currently worked since 2003 as an Emergency Department attending Physician at Bethesda Memorial Hospital. Likewise, since 2008 I have been the Medical Director of the Emergency Department at Bethesda. Prior to arriving at Bethesda, I completed my Emergency Medicine Residency at the University of Florida Shands Jacksonville/Gainesville. I graduated Medical School in 2000 from the University of New England. I have been very involved in EMS activities. Currently, I am a member of the County EMS Advisory Council and the EMS Grants' Committee. I am a regular contributor to the County EMS Providers. I look forward to working with and meeting all of you.

January 2011					
A Shift		B Shift		C Shift	
Station 1	150	Station 1	106	Station 1	156
Station 2	84	Station 2	143	Station 2	121
Station 3	114	Station 3	118	Station 3	131
Station 4	136	Station 4	176	Station 4	132
Station 5	179	Station 5	153	Station 5	197
Station 6	137	Station 6	107	Station 6	139
Total	800	Total	803	Total	876

March Training

Week 1 – Auto Extrication (Non Shift)
 Week 2 – STEMI Training
 Week 3 – Firehouse Software Training
 Week 4 – Escape Pack Training
 Week 5 – Night Dive/ EPCR Software Training

February Anniversaries

17th
James TabEEK
28yrs

22nd
Michael McCleary
Michelle Murphy
23 yrs

21st
Clint Cason
Russell Accardi
Fredrick McAlley
22 yrs

28th
Christopher Zidar
Shawn Beckowitz
Randy Bahe
17 yrs

18th
Cecelia Shade
14 yrs

Birthdays

5th
Desiree Kazakevicius

6th
Danielle Connor

13
James Bunnell

14th
Brian Fiorey

16th
Justin Caruso

18th
Joseph Mazzeo

21st
Idania Miller-Angel

23rd
Robert Baker

25th
Dale Fagan

28th
Eric Patrie
William Roulette

