



# AFTER ACTION REVIEW

The Official Newsletter of Clearwater Fire & Rescue  
Clearwater, Florida



## Inside the AAR

March 2010



NFFM...Shelter Care Christmas...Target Safety Training...Employee News...Awards Ceremony...Recruit Class 12.....& MORE...

## News From Your Chief

This year is already passing quickly. We have some projects and events that I would like to update you on.

Station 48's remodel is still in progress. We are working with the General Contractor on satisfaction of work completed and a punch list of items yet to be completed. A target move-in date has not been set yet and your patience is appreciated.

While on the subject of station remodeling, the design phase of Station 45 has begun. Preliminary design information has been completed with the architect. We are waiting for financing to be identified and approved before final design is achieved. The new station will accommodate the line personnel as well as all administrative staff, including Prevention and Inspection.

We will also be welcoming a new engine this summer. The Truck Committee traveled to Pierce Manufacturing in Wisconsin to review final specifications.

Contract negotiations are ongoing. Although the recent ratified contract was voted down by the membership, I am confident that progress will continue and that an agreement can be reached in the near future.

The Matrix Consulting Group's efficiency study of the department will be published at the end of March. The process of gathering the necessary information concluded at the beginning of the year. The next step will be the evaluation of the results by City Council.

Soon we will begin negotiations with the County for a new fire protection agreement and EMS contract. Although the county is facing significant budget reductions, our goal is to maintain current level of funding for EMS and fire.

The City is also facing substantial budget challenges for fiscal year 2010/11. The city's general fund will be substantially lower and it is yet to be determined how that will affect our department as well as other city departments. We are just beginning the budget process with CIP and the general fund budgeting with the March 16th Budget Workshop.

Thank you for your hard work during 2009. I'm looking forward to new challenges in 2010, and with your assistance we'll continue to provide the excellent services that our citizens rely on.

## "COLD FIRE" SHOOT

Clearwater Fire and Rescue's Training Center was once again used by a production company for a product testing demonstration January 18th through the 20th. Anthony Sullivan and crew were on hand to demonstrate RDR Technolo-



gies' "Cold Fire." Sullivan Productions is best known for promoting such products as Oxiclean, Kaboom, and the Turbie Twist. "Cold Fire" is a fire suppressant that quickly puts out Class A, B, D and K fires. The motorized racing, steel, and forestry industries are just a few of the long list of industries that are currently utilizing this innovative product that puts out fires safer, faster and with less water. According to their website, [www.coldfire.biz](http://www.coldfire.biz), "the suppressant ingredients use water as a catalyst to remove the heat as well as encapsulate and break down the hydrocarbons in the fuel source to extinguish the fire more rapidly." Look for this episode of *Pitchmen* to air in August as the kickoff to the new season, only on Discovery Channel.

## **Special Operations Team Members Complete National Standards Training**

*By Assistant Chief of Special Operations Kent Watts*

The Clearwater Fire and Rescue Special Operations Technical Rescue Team reached a significant milestone in emergency preparedness in January when 23 team members successfully completed an 18 month long national standards Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Training course. The course was the culmination of a three year plan to bring our team up to national standards for emergency response by using the federal standard FEMA Structural Collapse Technicians curriculum which provides students with the knowledge, skills and abilities to perform search and rescue activities at incidents due to accidents, natural disasters, or terrorist events. Team members had attended required classes every other month since June 2008, accruing over 80 hours of instruction and practice in order to master all of the required skills.

The course focused specifically on the fundamental competencies for dealing with collapsed structures. The course started with members learning how to use GPS and maps to plan disaster operations including searching and marking buildings to allow for an organized response to any incident. This was followed by instruction from experts in the field about structural engineering, building design, building construction, and the mechanisms of structural failure. They next learned how to perform exterior and interior shoring of unstable buildings to make them safe for search and rescue operations. Advanced training then taught them how to enter and search the collapsed buildings using breaching, breaking, and cutting equipment to move through solid barriers such as wall and roofs; how to rig and use cranes to lift heavy objects out of the way; and how to safely tunnel through debris to reach trapped victims. The course culminated in an all-day practical assessment exercise that allowed them to put all of their skills together to rescue victims from simulated disaster events.

The national curriculum course was the capstone of the Special Ops plan and was taught every other month as part of the countywide technical rescue team training. However, team members kept busy during the intervening months participating in supplementary training in order to round out their advanced skill set and bring them up to national standards in all areas of technical rescue operations. During additional advanced training sessions, team members learned and honed their other technical rescue proficiencies at drills covering advanced methods in trench/below grade rescue, confined space rescue, high angle rope rescue, and use of complex rescue equipment.

In addition to acquiring technical skills, the team has also acquired the necessary state of the art equipment that will allow them to use these skills to the utmost. Through over \$100,000 in grants and external funding, the team has assembled a caché of equipment that will allow them to respond to nearly any special rescue incident for the City. However, these new skills and equipment are not just for extraordinary circumstances, the new abilities of the team members will benefit our citizens on a daily basis in innumerable rescue situations. Common incidents such as a stuck window washer, a construction worker trapped in a collapsed trench, or a building made unstable when a car drives into it, are all examples of events the team can respond to with an improved level of readiness.

The Clearwater Fire and Rescue Technical Rescue Team now boasts a skill level comparable to or better than most departments in the United States, and best of all, the real beneficiaries of this improved readiness are our citizens. They are protected by a nationally capable team, properly equipped and prepared to respond to a diversity of emergency and disaster situations.



Run Totals

| Units         | Jan.        | Feb.        | TOTALS      |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Engine 44     | 68          | 59          | 127         |
| Engine 45     | 160         | 139         | 299         |
| Engine 46     | 36          | 45          | 81          |
| Engine 47     | 128         | 97          | 225         |
| Engine 48     | 176         | 135         | 311         |
| Engine 49     | 178         | 153         | 331         |
| Engine 50     | 101         | 83          | 184         |
| Engine 51     | 205         | 212         | 417         |
| Rescue 45     | 303         | 272         | 575         |
| Rescue 46     | 69          | 78          | 147         |
| Rescue 47     | 269         | 246         | 515         |
| Rescue 48     | 304         | 259         | 563         |
| Rescue 49     | 300         | 293         | 593         |
| Rescue 50     | 200         | 202         | 402         |
| Truck 45      | 115         | 108         | 223         |
| Truck 48      | 145         | 149         | 294         |
| Squad 49      | 88          | 102         | 190         |
| AC 45         | 93          | 100         | 193         |
| AC 48         | 117         | 106         | 223         |
| LR 49         | 161         | 137         | 298         |
| <b>TOTALS</b> | <b>3216</b> | <b>2975</b> | <b>6191</b> |

Health and Safety Message

From Assistant Chief Doug Swartz



Line of duty deaths have hit a 16 year low this past year. That is the good news. What is concerning is that we are still experiencing very preventable injuries and deaths. The root of prevention is personal accountability: buckle your seat belt, take care of yourself physically and mentally, utilize PPE and other safety equipment provided. These are all measures each of you can take to help keep us all safe.

There have been several injuries and deaths recently that have involved public safety workers being struck while operating on the side of the road. We keep seeing a trend with this type of incident where we have several injuries or fatalities, awareness gets heightened, and we see a decrease. Unfortunately, complacency returns and the frequency rises again. This is one of those incidents that we may not be able to eliminate all risks. What is important is that we take advantage of any opportunity we can to reduce our risk: wear your vest, use traffic control measures, and watch out for each other.

A successful safety culture is all about attitude. Have the "courage to be safe!"



On January 11th, a car was accidentally driven into the Yellow Jacket Locksmith building at 1300 S. Missouri Avenue. Pictured left and right, the Clearwater Fire and Rescue Technical Operations Team shore up the building to make it structurally stable so that further damage wouldn't occur.



Promotions and Awards

**Firefighter of the Year 2010**

was awarded to FM Travis Connolly. To quote from the nomination form, "He has consistently proven to be an exemplary employee and consistently goes above and beyond what is asked of him in order to help others and the department."

The **Turner Award for Excellence 2009** was given to LT Anthony Tedesco (pictured below with Mrs. Freda Turner.) He was selected for his dedication to duty, skills in life-saving procedures and his efficiency and compassion. Mrs. Turner and her late husband, Thomas, established the award in 1977 to recognize paramedics who best exemplify EMS professionalism.



*Thank you  
all for  
your  
dedication  
and hard  
work!*

Promotions 2009

- October**  
Patrick Conrey, Peter Georgantas, Andrew Hawkins, Mark Hery, and Zeb Veale to LT
- November**  
Jeremiah Mills to FM
- December**  
Adam Siegel, Heath Brenner, Craig Krueger, Mark Viola, Mike Brown, and Robert Lee to D/O and Casey Matz to FM

**March 2010 Employee of the Month**



Congratulations to Timothy Sparrow, Assistant Chief of Training, on being honored with employee of the month. Nominated by Division Chief Richard Riley, Chief Sparrow was instrumental in the opening of our Training Center and sets the standard for excellence in the training of our line personnel.

**Fire Medic Arrest Team Award 2009**

- FM Nathaniel Brooks
- FM Monica Juarbe
- PEER Award**
- FF Jim Schaus
- FF Christian Schuele
- DO James Van Zandt



**Congratulations to Recruit Class #12**

who received their graduation certificates and had their badges pinned on by family and friends. The Clearwater Fire and Rescue family is proud to welcome: Dominick Briganti, Aaron Campbell, Robert Finke, Christopher Johnson, Casey Matz, Christian Miller, Kyle Mueller, Steven Peters, Alan Ryan, David Sowers, and Hieu Tran.

## Recruit Class 12

From Lt Todd Connors



On October 12, 2009, thirteen new members joined our organization. This is the first Recruit Class that enjoyed the full potential of the recently completed training facilities. These future leaders of our Department were trained on various aspects of their job functions to include EVOC, Water Rescue, all of the Single and Company Standard Evolutions, and EMS skills along with the City Orientation and Diversity Training. This could not have been possible without the continued efforts of all the Instructors that participated making the program a success. The Recruit Class 12 would like to extend their deepest appreciation for everyone's heartfelt welcome and support.

Pictured, from left to right, starting with the top row:  
 FF David Sowers,  
 FF Dominick Briganti,  
 FF Steven Peters,  
 FF Christopher Johnson;  
 middle row:  
 FF Robert Finke,  
 FF Jarrett Hood;  
 bottom row:  
 FM Casey Matz,  
 FF Kyle Mueller,  
 FF Aaron Campbell,  
 FF Douglas Kellin,  
 FF Alan Ryan,  
 FF Tran, and  
 FF Miller.

## Shelter Care Christmas

Save the date, December 18th, for this year's Shelter Care!

Last Year's Shelter Care was a huge success. Despite these tough economic times, the community came together and donated more than anyone involved could ever remember. We had "elves" (pictured) who contributed their wrapping skills the day before the actual party. Santa found time in his busy schedule and was on hand to pass out the gifts. Special thanks to Chief Doug Swartz who coordinated all efforts.



From Diane Devol, Staff Assistant

## Target Safety Training



So what is this Target Safety anyway? Target Safety is Clearwater Fire and Rescue's new online training program. It was implemented during the month of February, and all personnel were scheduled throughout the month to attend a one hour training session at the MSB computer lab. At each session Chief Sparrow gave an overview of what Target Safety is and how CFR would be using it. Since all training hours need to be documented, each person will be responsible for logging into Target Safety and completing assignments that the Training Bureau has assigned them. Assignments are completed by entering the training date and hours completed. Target Safety provides tremendous report writing capabilities, which CFR has not had in the past. This report writing allows for supervisors to extract training information by person, task, specific dates, and a number of other ways, for review. Another unique feature that Target Safety provides is a "Resources Center." This feature is available for all personnel to utilize. It provides the ability to view videos and files that have been downloaded from Fire Departments all over the country. Additionally, it gives us the capability to download CFR's most commonly used or needed files for easy access. Self study courses are also available through Target Safety, with some giving Continuing Education Credit. If you haven't attended a Target Safety training session or are unsure on how to login to the website to get started, please contact either your immediate supervisor or Chief Sparrow at the Training Bureau.

### Service Awards for the end of 2009

#### **15 Years of Service**

FM Stephen Colbert; D/O Darrin Maser; LT Brian Schonborn

#### **10 Years of Service**

LT Matt Daerr; FM Gerard DeVivo; LT Andrew Hawkins; LT Steven Smith; FM Shawn Taber; LT Absolom Young

### Service Awards for January—April 2010

#### **20 Years of Service**

FM Bradley Golomb; FM Keith Shive

#### **10 Years of Service**

Admin. Support Manager Marty Moran; D/O Kevin Boaden; D/O William Muniz

#### **5 Years of Service**

Deputy Chief Robert Weiss; D/O Jose Fernandez; D/O Joseph Kraus; D/O Craig Krueger; FM Jason Matthews; Fire Marshal Steve Strong; Accounting Technician Rosanne Lacey

News In Brief



The Census, as stated in the Constitution of the United States, is required to be conducted every 10 years. Census forms are being sent to every residence in the United States and Puerto Rico during the month of March. The information collected helps determine how more than \$400 billion dollars of federal funding is spent on infrastructure and services such as hospitals, schools, public works projects and emergency services. For more information visit [www.2010census.gov](http://www.2010census.gov).

**Do you part, be counted.**

Assistant Chief Scott Magness was presented with a **2009 Rotary Public Safety and Service Award**. The annual award recognizes those who make a commitment to community involvement by using their personal time, skills, and efforts to help others. Chief Magness travels each year to Central America and provides medical supplies and services while also training the local firefighters there.



**play safe! be safe! Workshop**

On February 26th, Clearwater Fire and Rescue was honored to host and co-sponsor, with the State Fire Marshal, the play safe! be safe! workshop. Aimed at teaching children ages three through five fire safety, the workshop was developed by BIC Corporation along with educators and fire-safety experts. Each year only seven communities in the United States are selected to receive this award-winning program. Dr. Robert Cole presided over the three hour workshop with an attendance of about 26 attendees from not only our immediate area but from as far away as Tallahassee. Educating our young children is the key to prevention. Thank you to all involved.

**Reclassifications**

**FM to D/O**

Sean Becker, Nathan Brooks, Thomas Knobl, Shawn Lawrentz, Jason Thibault, Tim Smith

**Inspection**

By Assistant Fire Marshal Lenny Rickard



Inspections of new construction are provided for all structures built within the Clearwater Fire District. These inspections must be 'passed' prior to occupancy. Technical inspections range from a visual check of sprinkler and alarm systems to an observed discharge of a special extinguishing system. Some of these projects are years in the making. As an example, our inspectors have been working on **Aqualea**, located at 321 S. Gulfview Boulevard, since site plan reviews began in July of 2004 until it's completion in January of this year. The Plan Reviewers process starts with the Development Review Committee who does a site plan review. This process can take up to six months to complete with constant communication between the developer and the reviewer. Once this is done and a development order is issued by the Community Development Board, the developer submits the building plans for approval. In the case of the Aqualea project, these plans took 35 hours for the initial review and were re-reviewed three more times for corrections. During the construction of this building there were also 26 plan amendments that had to be reviewed and approved. The Construction Inspector then took over and spent 126 hours on site for inspections and other issues before occupancy could occur.

Photo Gallery



LT Jevon Graham receiving his **Motivational Mentor Award** at Station 45 with FF Wendy Arnold, nominator, and FF James Groth. The Motivational Mentor Award recognizes those who dedicate time to facilitate, develop, advise, motivate and train employees by taking a proactive role in the personal development of others. LT Graham was given a day off with pay and a letter of recognition for his personnel file. Congratulations LT Graham!

**Clearwater Fire & Rescue Honor Guard** presents the colors at the Tampa Bay Buccaneers final home game against the Falcons on January 3, 2010. Pictured from left to right: Mark Herny, Patrick Conrey, Peter Georgantas, Travis Connolly, Doug Swartz, Tammy Whitham and Kevin Bowler.



FF Jarett Hood and Public Information Specialist Betsy Clement in December.

While waiting for our first call the day I spent with the crew of **Station 48**, I got a chance to try on the bunker gear. I quickly discovered that moving around in it requires more than a passing ability to defy gravity. With all that extra weight and bulk and hauling a 50-pound hose into a burning structure, especially in Florida’s typical sultry heat, I could only guess at the workout firefighters get before they’ve even really done anything. “This is nothing,” said firefighter Jarrett Hood. “Wait till your facemask gets blacked out during a fire and you can’t see through it and you can’t take it off.” Working in the gloves was also a new experience. Hood challenged me to tie a bow wearing them. “You don’t normally do that in Ove Gloves,” he said, “but they couldn’t be any thinner and still protect you.” My take on it? I applaud every firefighter who can successfully adjust an airpack without being able to feel anything through that thick padding. (Adapted from Betsy’s first hand experience.)



At left, members of our **Technical Operations Team** participate in a confined space rescue exercise during their USAR Training course. Pictured right, D/O Carino working through a high angle rescue exercise. Recently completing the course were D/O Bishop, LT Capo, D/O Carino, LT Conrey, LT Coward, LT Georgantas, LT Graham, FM Knobl, FM Keane, FF Lee, LT March, LT Monte, LT Sammartano, LT Schmitt, LT Schonborn, FF Siegel, LT Shore, FM Smith, D/O Smyth, LT Wargin, D/O Wilensky, LT Williams and LT Young.



## More Personnel News

### Congratulations to:

- ♥ D/O Al Hinson and his wife, proud parents of Aalyah, born on September 30th, 2009.
- ♥ Shannon DeFazio, our previous administrative intern, and her family on her baby boy, Matthew, born October 18th, 2009.
- ♥ FF Michael Cannarelli and his wife, Tina, welcomed a baby girl, Noella Christina, 7 lbs. 11 oz., on December 21, 2009.
- ♥ FM Tiffany Seabolt and her family on the birth of Taylor Lynn who *finally* arrived on February 18th, weighing in at 8 lbs., 14 oz. and measuring 21 inches long.
- ♥ FM Fred Morris and his family welcomed a baby girl on March 7th.
- ♥ LT Spike Fry and his family who welcomed Talon James on March 10th weighing 6lbs. 13 oz. and measuring 21 inches long.



## Honor Guard

By FF Wendy Arnold

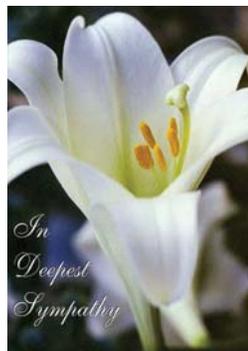
The Clearwater Fire & Rescue Honor Guard participated in the National Fallen Firefighter Memorial in Emmitsburg, MD the weekend of October 2nd, 2009. The Memorial Weekend is held annually and is the official national tribute to all firefighters who died in the line-of-duty during the previous year. Honor Guard members from across the country come to participate to help honor the fallen and participate in the memorial services provided for the families.

I went to serve, honor, and pay respect and left with a whirlwind of emotion and a new outlook on this wonderful career we all have chosen. The brotherhood of the fire service is second to none. Whether it be a coworker or a firefighter from across the country, an immediate family bond is made and felt among us.

While running calls we all have within us the ability to detach ourselves from emotional feelings related to death and loss. I can tell you first hand that while honoring and watching the families, wives, husbands, parents, and children of over 100 fallen firefighters walk through the Memorial Service for their fallen and accepting the flag honoring their service, my detachment capabilities were long gone. I could not help but feel an attachment to the families of the survivors, the families that have lost one of my brothers in serving in his/her career that he and we all love. My heart went out to them all as I tried to keep my composure.

Looking into a young boy's eyes who is dressed like a mini-firefighter and is there to accept his dad's folded American flag was an unforgettable moment. I could not help but immediately bring myself back to CFR and think of the beautiful children I am blessed to watch grow up amongst us. While I would love to continue to live in my bubble and believe it could never happen here, attending the weekend brings you to the realization that LODDs happen everywhere.

Attending such a weekend could not remind you more as a firefighter for your love and pride for this job. It will definitely further motivate within you to never stop training, to stay safe, and to always continue to do what you can in reducing the numbers of our fallen.



### *With condolences to the following who have lost a loved one:*

- |                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| ≈ D/O Stephen Avise  | ≈ D/O Jennifer Terrell  |
| ≈ FF Nathan Ballouz  | ≈ FM Jason Rath         |
| ≈ D/O Robert Going   | ≈ D/O Greg Record       |
| ≈ FM Greg Keane      | ≈ AC Raymond Roby       |
| ≈ D/O Kevin O'Connor | ≈ LT Anthony Sammartano |
| ≈ FF Denis O'Connor  | ≈ FM Blaise Sciarra     |



## Clearwater Fire & Rescue

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On the Web at  
[www.myclearwater.com](http://www.myclearwater.com)

## Get Well Soon

- \* Fred Maier, Spring Hill, C-Shift Retiree
- \* LT Don March's son in Washington DC
- \* LT Louis Georgantas
- \* FM Jesse Cross
- \* FM Patricia Schauer

## Contributions From

FF Wendy Arnold  
Admin. Analyst Denise Balog  
P.I.S. Betsy Clement  
LT Todd Connors  
Staff Assistant Diane Devol  
Fire Chief Jamie Geer  
Assistant Fire Marshal Lenny Rickard  
Assistant Chief Doug Swartz  
Assistant Chief Kent Watts

It's still not too late to  
file your taxes.  
The looming deadline is  
April 15th, 2010.  
There are an abundance of  
resources online at  
[www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)



## Quotation



Man is the only creature that dares to  
light a fire and live with it. The  
reason? Because he alone has learned  
to put it out.

~Henry Jackson Vandyke, Jr. ,  
American Poet (1852-1933)

## Did We Miss Something?

Do you have a story to share? Did I  
forget to mention something? Please  
send your stories and pictures for our  
next newsletter to:

[michelle.benjamin@myclearwater.com](mailto:michelle.benjamin@myclearwater.com)

