



Media Opportunity from
**BONITA SPRINGS FIRE CONTROL
& RESCUE DISTRICT**

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Bystanders who saved tennis player on court awarded by the Bonita Springs Fire District

Racquets, strings, tennis balls, and an automatic external defibrillator? That's precisely the equipment required at the tennis match in Bonita Springs on September 1st between Ron Katz and Harold Altz, when Katz went into a sudden cardiac arrest.

When Mr. Katz left home for a day of tennis, he never expected to die... and then live to talk about it. A retired police officer, retired nurse, his personal trainer, and a concerned friend and tennis partner, came together for the betterment of Katz - they saved his life.

Firefighters on Engine 24 responded to a cardiac arrest at the Tennis Club in Palmira on September 1 of 2017, to find their life-less patient receiving shocks by the Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) used by personal trainer John Hernandez. They witnessed the effective compressions performed by retired police officer Bill Handworth, and the life-giving breaths provided by his friend Harold Altz. They saw the concern Ms. Sheri Young had for Mr. Katz - a complete stranger, and observed her compassion for Mrs. Katz who was understandably shaken by the sudden death of her husband. It was these four bystanders who made the most difference on this day! Their decision to get involved is what saved this man!

Before firefighters and paramedics arrived, Mr. Katz had been shocked by the AED three times! CPR was performed and breaths were provided. In the mere minutes before professional help arrived, Katz was given a fighting chance by friends and strangers who didn't have to act... but chose to try!

Upon arrival of the firefighters, the patient was alert but quickly became pulseless and lost consciousness, again. Firefighters defibrillated the patient and regained his heart beat and pulse. Before transferring care to Lee County EMS, the patient was alert and free from chest pain; he was able to easily breathe again.

Bonita Springs' firefighters, Lee County EMS, and these four bystanders will be recognized on

WHEN: January 8th at 5:00 p.m.

WHERE: Fire Station Four, 27701 Bonita Grande Drive

WHAT: The District's most prestigious honor – The Phoenix Award.

The Bonita Springs Fire District has extended a heartfelt invitation for the award presentation to our patient and his family with the hope of reuniting the firefighters, bystanders, and patient again.

In order to recognize the dedication and skill of emergency responders, Bonita Springs Fire-Rescue adopted the Phoenix Award after implementing advanced life support services in March of 1999. The Phoenix is recognized as a symbol of excellence and also a mythical bird, said to rise again from its ashes.

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