



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

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Award given to the Bonita Springs Firefighter who brought woman back to life

Eileene Kurtz knew something wasn't right when she asked her husband to bring her to the Bonita Springs Fire Station on the morning of December 9th, what she didn't realize was she would take her last breath in the back of an ambulance. Before the unthinkable happened Mrs. Kurtz was leisurely walking her dogs, something she'd done a million times. So why was this morning any different? Why was she in pain? She would soon find out in the back of that ambulance.

Upon arrival to Bonita Springs Fire Station 25, Mrs. Kurtz was visibly anxious and told the firefighters of the pain throughout her chest and arms. She was promptly ushered to a Lee County Emergency Medical Ambulance and put on a heart monitor. The report from the monitor was not good. Urgently, the Paramedics called the STEMI alert to the closest hospital. They had to leave immediately, she was having a serious heart attack.

A STEMI alert is called into the hospital to notify nurses and doctors that a serious cardiac patient is on their way. This allows the hospital staff to prep for the incoming patient, to reduce the prep time before treating the patient in hospitals where the cath lab must be prepared, staff called in, and elective procedures delayed. When these tasks are done prior to arrival, STEMI patients may go directly to the cath lab for faster coronary reperfusion. First Responder need to notify the hospital early so they can arrange the resources they'll need. STEMI stands for ST-Elevation Myocardial Infarction. It is a very serious type of heart attack during which one of the heart's major

arteries (the one that supplies oxygen and nutrient-rich blood to the heart muscle) is blocked. An elevation in the ST-segment is an abnormality detected on the 12-lead ECG. Prehospital 12-lead ECGs have been shown to reduce the time of heart reperfusion in hospitals.

But Mrs. Kurtz would soon give her paramedics even more to fret about. Upon leaving the fire station, Eileene began to seize. With only one paramedic in the back of the ambulance, and one driving, Firefighter-Paramedic Joe Sanderson was asked to ride-into the hospital to give Mrs. Kurtz the best possible chance at survival. FF Sanderson rushed to start an IV. He administered the drugs that would successfully stop the seizing, only to find that Eileene no longer had a pulse. She began gasping for breath. FF Sanderson began chest compressions. Mrs. Kurtz was given oxygen, more drugs, and AED pads were in-place. Eileene was given one shock by the AED. Ventricular Fibrillation was confirmed, more drugs given, and another full round of CPR was performed. Eileene was shocked yet again. Still no pulse. Chest compressions were resumed. Just before arrival at the hospital, Eileene was shocked a third time. FF Sanderson transferred chest compressions to the Paramedic and opened the patient's airway with an intubation tool. Chest compressions and oxygen were continued as Mrs. Kurtz was moved to the hospital bed. Just before the first responders switched care to the hospital staff, a fourth shock was administered. This time, the shock was successful. Eileene had a pulse and blood pressure!

Bonita Springs' firefighters and Lee County EMS will be recognized on:

WHEN: Today, February 12th 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 her family with the hope of reuniting the first responders 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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