



TEMPLE TERRACE FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS RELEASE

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May 2, 2011

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAN TO RETURN ON ANNIVERSARY OF LIFE-SAVING EVENT

(TEMPLE TERRACE, FL. – 5/2/11) – Eric Stockley had just turned 45, and never felt better in his life.

He was in terrific shape, having just completed a 10,000-mile bicycle trek across Australia. His physique was impressive – just 8 percent body fat. If anyone was fit, it was Stockley.

But while visiting Temple Terrace one afternoon, he was working out at World Gym when suddenly he became nauseous. He began sweating profusely, and throwing up. A registered nurse, Stockley realized he was having a heart attack. He asked gym personnel to call an ambulance, and he collapsed on the floor.

“My life was hanging in the balance,” he says, recalling that day in 1996.

The Temple Terrace Fire Department soon arrived, and two young paramedics went to work, giving Stockley electrical shock treatment, restarting his heart several times. Paramedic Marsha Hall held Stockley’s hand on the way to the hospital, reassuring him.

“You feel powerless when you’re having a heart attack,” he recalled. “It really meant a lot to me to have someone there who showed they cared.”

The other paramedic was a young rookie firefighter named Keith Chapman. Today, Chapman is the City’s fire chief.

“When I met him, he was at the bottom of the gurney -- and the bottom of the totem pole,” Stockley quipped. “Now, he’s the fire chief!”

Today Stockley, who lives in Port Charlotte, works for the Charlotte County Health Department, where he teaches health education. He instills the value of learning basic skills, such as CPR, that could mean the difference between life and death.

This month marks the 15th anniversary of Stockley’s life-threatening ordeal, and to commemorate that fateful day, Stockley and his wife will visit the Temple Terrace Fire Department on May 13 to say ‘Thank You’ once again. They’ll celebrate with pizza, a few laughs and plenty of stories.

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In fact, Stockley's story will be among those featured May 24 at the annual ***Our Heroes Luncheon*** in Tampa. He still feels a tinge of emotion when he recalls his brush with death. He also feels a closeness to Chapman and Hall that will never be extinguished.

"I'm still alive, and the past 15 years have been the best of my life," he says. "It's all due to the teamwork of these two; the fact they didn't give up on me. I can understand why the community feels so strongly about this fire department. It's head and shoulders above the rest."

NOTE: Stockley will be at Fire Station No. 1 at 124 Bullard Parkway, Temple Terrace at noon on Friday, May 13 to meet with Chief Chapman and Paramedic/Engineer Hall to express his gratitude. He'll be available for interviews about his life, and his brush with death.

For more information, contact PIO Michael Dunn at (813) 506-6406.

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