

# Fire station gets boost from civic-minded residents

*Nonprofit that supports Station 47 plans another benefit.*

By LINDA HAASE  
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When Fire Rescue Lt. Grant Bain was invited to speak at Palm Isles, he never imagined his speech would make such a difference.

But resident Sid Trager, a rapt audience member, was impressed by what he heard.

"I never realized how broad a scope they cover and how important they are to us," he said about Fire Station 47, which covers his neighborhood. "We decided we would raise funds to try and supply things that would make their lives easier."

Shortly after that speech in 2003, Trager spearheaded the establishment of the nonprofit Community Assistance & Benefit Corp. to raise awareness and money for the station, which covers 27 communities in west Boynton Beach. Trager is its president.

The first fund-raiser was a golf outing in 2004, which became an annual event. Other fund-raising events were added. This year's golf event is Thursday, May 1 at Atlantis Golf Club, and other fund-raising events are in the works.

Each year, the group's events raise between \$4,000 and \$5,000, which benefits the station on Boynton Beach Boulevard, just east of Florida's Turnpike.

"We rarely hear 'thank you.' This takes thank you to a whole new level," said Bain.

Items bought with the donations include small TVs for the firefighters' bunks, cookware, newspaper subscriptions, a computer and Internet service, monthly cable service, food for the commissary and special flashlights.

Although the county provides a computer, it doesn't pay for Internet service, Bain said. Having an extra computer with Internet access allows firefighters to do research, he said.

However, the residents' appreciation, as well as Trager's friendship, have been the biggest reward through the years, Bain said.

On Easter, a barbecue hosted by Tivoli Lakes residents Lance and Fran Berkowitz raised more than \$4,000 for the station.

The couple, who moved here from Maryland two years ago, got involved with the group after two of their friends received emergency care from fire-rescue personnel at the station.

One of them, Dr. Ivan Portnoy, had a heart attack while playing tennis in June 2007.

"They knew exactly



ELIZA GUTIERREZ/Staff Photographer

Sid Trager (third from left), president of the Community Assistance & Benefit Corp., and Lance Berkowitz of Tivoli Lakes are flanked by crew members of Fire Station 47 (from left) Lt.

what to do," said Portnoy, a retired dentist who was rushed to Delray Medical Center, where he had angioplasty and a stent. "From the time I got in the ambulance to the end of the surgery was only 50 minutes start to finish," said Portnoy, who has resumed

his tennis games.

"His life was saved due to the prompt, professional service from Fire Station 47," Berkowitz said. "This is one of the most important services we have. It saves lives."

With the impending budget cuts, he said, it will

Grant Bain, firefighter-EMT Miriam Delgado, firefighter-paramedics Jim Glass and Don Deyo and driver Dan Davies. The CABC raises money to support the station.

become even more imperative to support the station.

"They are there for us ... we feel we should be there for them," said Trager, who estimates the station has responded to more than 300 calls in his 1,100-home community in the past year.

*The Community Assistance and Benefit Corp. golf outing to benefit Fire Station 47 is 7:30 a.m. Thursday, May 1. Cost is \$100 per person and also includes breakfast, lunch and prizes. For information, call Sid Trager at (561) 364-8922.*

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