



*Congratulations to the  
2010 Fire Safety Educator  
of the Year!*

**PAST Fire Safety Educator of the Year Award Recipients**

<b>Year:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Fire Department:</b>
2005	Glenn Sickles	Scottsville Fire Department
2006	Jeffrey S. Burkhart	Oriskany Independent Fire and Hose Company
2007	Donald P. Dalrymple	Valois, Logan & Hector Fire Company, Inc
2008	David Bowen	Vischer Ferry Volunteer Fire Company
2009	Brian Niggli	Penfield Fire Company



**2010  
FIRE SAFETY  
EDUCATOR OF  
THE YEAR**  
*Kenneth Clair, Jr.*

Presented June 17, 2010  
at the Hudson Valley Volunteer Firemen's  
Association's Annual Convention  
in Lake George, NY

# Kenneth Clair, Jr.

## FIRE SAFETY EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR



The recipient of the Fire Safety Educator of the Year Award from the FASNY Fire Prevention and Life Safety Committee is Kenneth Clair, Jr. from the Brewster Fire Department. Currently serving as Deputy Chief, Ken is a past president of the Putnam County Volunteer Firemen's Association.

The President of Brewster Fire Department as well as the First Vice President of Putnam County Volunteer Firemen's Association nominated Ken for this prestigious honor.

Since the year of conception of his program, virtually every graduating senior from Brewster

High School has participated in at least one fire prevention program hosted by Ken, who is known by the students more affectionately as "Fireman Ken." These high school students will testify that they still remember him at the fire prevention demonstrations performing the "stop, drop, and roll" techniques off the stage to a cheering crowd each year during Fire Prevention Week. Throughout his career as Fire Safety Educator, Ken has taught over 6,000 children in the vicinity of the Brewster area the crucial fundamentals of fire prevention. He now co-chairs the fire prevention committee for the Brewster Volunteer Fire Department along with his partner, Tom Lannon.

In the year 2009, more than 50 classes have been taught the valuable lessons of fire safety. Ken has also helped organize the scheduling of programs, exceed presentations and recruited new members of the department to assist with the various hands-on demonstrations. Approximately 3,500 children and an additional 2,500 younger children from other local private schools and daycare centers have been provided with the expertise and training skills of fire prevention by Ken.

Ken has also inspired an involvement in the statewide FASNY Fire Prevention and Life Safety Poster Contest for fourth and fifth grade classes at the C.V. Starr Elementary School in Brewster. In addition, each year, eight winning students are awarded smoke detectors and fire extinguishers by participating in the "Home Fire Escape Contest" created by the Brewster Fire Department under the direction of Ken. He and his fire prevention committee partner, Tom, serve as judges for the contest.

Ken has an engaging presentation style which helps to make fire prevention a fun and educational event for everyone involved. He engages the assistance of "Sparky" the fire engine and "Andy" the ambulance to further aid him in his presentation of proper techniques of fire prevention. He has initiated his own brand of illustrations for the younger students. Ken will often ask participation from a mother or father of one of the young students to serve as a firefighter in a demonstration, as he realizes that a firefighter in turnout gear breathing through an SCBA can be an extremely frightening and disturbing sight for young children. So when the students realize that the firefighter is a classmate's mom or dad beneath all the equipment, their surprise and laughter helps them to be reassured that actual firefighters are regular people and need not be feared.

Ken employs tactics that make teaching even children in nursery school much easier. He seats himself right down on the floor among the children where they feel at ease and utilizes puppets to demonstrate that fires are so hot, they can melt a smoke detector or telephone. He actually uses smoke detectors and telephones that have been melted in fires to demonstrate this. This lesson seems to be an effective way to drive home his points.

Another unique technique that Ken uses incorporates the idea that children love to correct adults if they know they have done something wrong. An extremely successful teaching method that Ken incorporates into his demonstrations is to first demonstrate the correct way to escape a fire using the fire prevention house. He will then repeat the escape, however, this time making mistakes so that the children correct him with the proper procedures. He feels that this turns the students into teachers and makes this lesson one that they will remember.

Ken recognized that he wanted to increase his fire safety program into a larger audience, thus orchestrating two extremely successful fire prevention golf outings and purchasing a fire safety house trailer. This extremely valuable tool is now taken to schools and community events throughout his area. It is an extremely popular aid with children and grownups alike. The trailer is currently in its second year of involvement in the fire prevention program.

Ken and his fire prevention partner, Tom, were awarded the third annual Michael Neuner Fire Prevention and Life Safety Award. Michael Neuner perished 12 years ago when battling a house fire leaving his wife and young children behind. This award was conceived to recognize the efforts of an individual or group of individuals who significantly contribute towards an ultimate goal of creating a fire-safe community in Putnam County. This achievement instilled a remarkable amount of gratitude in Ken as he had the ultimate honor of serving side-by-side with Michael. Ken noted during the acceptance of this achievement that he felt this was an excellent way of keeping Michael's memory alive.

President Bruce Colombraro summed up the nomination of Kenneth Clair, Jr with the following statement: "Fireman Ken Clair, Jr. truly epitomizes the role of an inspirational educator and champion for fire prevention who has helped make the Town of Southeast and Village of Brewster a safer place to live and work since 1994."