



# CITY OF CLEARWATER

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POLICE DEPARTMENT

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## **CLEARWATER OFFICER AND K-9 PARTNER NAMED PINELLAS K-9 TEAM OF THE YEAR BY COMMISSIONER JOHN MORRONI; OFFICERS MICHAEL HATCH AND CHAD REED RECOGNIZED FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE ABOVE AND BEYOND**

**Clearwater, Fla.**— Clearwater Police Officer Michael Spitaleri and his K-9 partner “Major” will be recognized as Pinellas County’s K-9 Team of the Year at Commissioner John Morroni’s 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Appreciation Dinner for Emergency Personnel on January 28. The K-9 Team award is sponsored by the Pinellas County Veterinary Medical Association.

Ofc. Spitaleri and Major were nominated for the award for a canine sniff that resulted in the seizure of more than \$215,000 during a traffic stop on March 12, 2010. Based on the seizure, DEA was able to obtain and execute several search warrants throughout Pinellas County. Four individuals were arrested and are currently pending Federal Money Laundering in conjunction with Conspiracy to Distribute Cocaine charges. It was determined that the suspects were involved in narcotics trafficking from Mexico to Pinellas County. The canine sniff was instrumental in making the above case, as the seized money was packaged and hidden in a way that a visual search would not have revealed it.

Clearwater Police Officers Michael Hatch and Chad Reed will also be recognized for Outstanding Service Above and Beyond for their actions following a vehicle that crashed into a retention pond near the District III substation on September 30, 2010. Although the vehicle was almost completely submerged and still sinking, they rushed into the water and pulled the driver from his vehicle and to shore where he received medical attention. Ofc. Hatch and Reed acted without hesitation and put their own lives at risk to help another in his time of need.

### Event Information:

Commissioner John Morroni's

16th Annual Appreciation Dinner for Emergency Personnel

Friday, January 28, 2011 @ 7p.m.

Hilton St. Petersburg Carillon Park

**OPEN TO THE MEDIA. For more information contact Scott Kirby @ 727-464-3568.**



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