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PRESS RELEASE

A Piece of History Arrives to SPI

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

South Padre Island

July 20, 2011
Carlos Centeno

A Piece of the World Trade Center destroyed in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, arrived in the lower Valley late Tuesday, July 19, 2011. The 8 ft long, 1750 lb "I" beam was donated to the South Padre Island Fire Department by the Port Authority of New York. Members of the South Padre Island Firefighter's Association traveled to Ponderosa, Texas, just North of Houston to pick up the artifact. It had been transported there along with another piece of the World Trade Center donated to the Ponderosa Volunteer Fire Department.

The vehicle transporting the artifact was escorted down Highway 100 by the Cameron County Sheriff's Department, Cameron County Constables, Rancho Viejo Police Department, Los Fresnos Police Department, Los Fresnos Fire Department, Laguna Vista Fire Department and the South Padre Island Fire Chief.

South Padre Island Fire Chief Burney Baskett said, "Seeing this artifact, actually being able to touch a piece from ground zero, it brings up a lot of emotions. I am honored that we were chosen as a caretaker of this artifact but it is also a reminder of a very tragic day in our history. The many people who sacrificed on that day, not just police and firefighters, but folks from all walks of life, all nationality, it is inspiring and heartbreaking at the same time."

The World Trade Center artifact will be stored off the island until this coming September 11th, where a ceremony and unveiling will be held at the South Padre Island City Hall for the 10th anniversary of the attack. The steel beam will ultimately be incorporated into a memorial in front of the new Fire Station currently under construction and scheduled for completion in late spring 2012.

For more information please contact Fire Chief, Burney Baskett at (956) 761-3206 or by e-mail at BBaskett@MySPI.org.