



PRESS RELEASE

May 20, 2021

For Immediate Release

FIRE DISTRICT RECOGNIZES CITIZENS AND OFF-DUTY FIRST RESPONDERS

ST. LUCIE COUNTY, FL The St. Lucie County Fire District (SLCFD) had several recognitions at yesterday's fire board meeting. Five first responders and two citizens were honored and presented with certificates for their actions.

PUBLIC SAFETY EXCELLENCE: On April 15, beach unit 9 was dispatched for a possible drowning. Firefighters, Matt Coney and Jeff Kraft, arrived to find several people stranded on the rocks because of the pounding waves. Deputy Dennis Devaney from the St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office was in the area in the marine unit and handed off lifejackets to off-duty Firefighter Bill Francoeur on a nearby surfboard. Francoeur was on duty working as a lifeguard. From a nearby surfboard, off-duty Martin County Firefighter, Charles Adams, realized a young child was also stranded on the rocks, he maneuvered his board to the rocks and brought the child to safety.

Even though the job of a first responder is to protect, rescue and serve, there are those challenging and dangerous calls that sometimes compromise their own safety. With the crashing waves and the southerly wind, this was definitely one of those situations.

CITIZEN HERO AWARD: On May 9, while many households were celebrating Mother's Day, a large brush fire broke out in the northeastern section of Port St Lucie. In an off-road area that could only be accessed by a brush truck, homes were being threatened. Before a brush truck could respond, Mike Day, using his own front end loader, began pushing the fire out and clearing brush to protect the threatened homes.

At the fire district we recognize citizens that go above and beyond, without hesitation to lend aid during an emergency, sometimes risking their own safety. If not for the quick actions by Mr. Day, the outcome could have been very different for his neighbors' homes.

GOOD SAMARITAN AWARD: On March 20, when tow truck driver Jefferson Summerlin was driving on I-95, he noticed a brushfire that had started and was spotting-over in several areas on the side of the road. He stopped and began putting out the smaller fires with his extinguisher. When the first fire district crews began arriving, he also situated his tow truck in a position to keep traffic moved over until fire equipment was put into place.

Mr. Summerlin was unable to attend the meeting today, but we still honored him with this award for going out of his way, without hesitation to help mitigate a situation that could have had the potential of becoming a real threat.

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