



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

**St. Lucie County
FIRE DISTRICT**

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BYSTANDERS RESCUE COUPLE FROM BURNING CAR ST. LUCIE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT PRESENTS THE CITIZEN HERO AWARD

ST. LUCIE COUNTY, FL – The Fire District will honor four individuals that stopped to assist a motorist and his passenger following a motor vehicle accident that left the driver with burns over 20% of his body.

The presentation will be on Wednesday, May 16, 2018 at 3:00 pm, at the beginning of the Fire Board Meeting, held at the St. Lucie County Fire District Administration offices, 5160 NW Milner Drive, Port St. Lucie, FL.

In the afternoon of April 16, 2018, units were dispatched to a MVC at the intersection of Kings Highway & Indrio Road. Upon their arrival, crews found one vehicle completely engulfed in fire. The driver and the passenger in the vehicle had been pulled to safety through the collaborative efforts of Robert Grzech, Tony Kobbe, Jonathan Rivera, Joe Shaddock, and Bob Messinger.

Bystanders converged on the area when the car came through the intersection and flipped end to end, bursting into flames. With the driver's door crushed, they ran to the other side of the car, cutting the seatbelt of the passenger and pulling her to safety. As the fire continued to intensify, someone quickly cut the seatbelt through the driver's window and he was pulled out through the passenger's side of the car.

The accident sent both patients to the hospital in serious condition, but if not for the quick and brave actions of these quick thinking bystanders, the outcome could have been very different.

“It was touch and go- we didn't know if we were going to get the driver out because the headliner was already on fire. His hair was on fire when we finally pulled him out.” – Bystander Bob Messinger (Retired Volunteer Firefighter)

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