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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Fire Rescue crews receive lifesaving awards

November 21, 2017 – Nine Flagler County firefighter-paramedics were awarded lifesaving awards Monday for their April 13 rescue of a UPS tandem trailer driver.

Crews were called out to a rollover crash on Interstate 95 and worked four hours to extricate the driver, Scott Breidenstein, from the crushed cabin – a mere 24 inches of space to maneuver.



“When crews arrived on scene, they saw what they believed to be a fatal accident due to the wreckage,” Flagler Rescue Chief Don Petito told the Board of County Commissioners during the presentation to honor the rescuers. “The cab was positioned on its roof, crushed by the impact with only 24 inches between the floor board and the roof of the cab.”

Petito showed pictures, a tangle of trees and metal, as he spoke.

“Crews had to first stabilize the large vehicle so that it would not shift during operations,” Petito said. “They began to assess the patient and figure a way to get him out without crushing him or causing more harm.”

Rescuers used Paratech threaded struts to support the truck, and the Jaws of Life to remove pieces of the cab.

“The rescue crews tunneled into the cab of the truck to not only treat the patient, but to calm him and let him know what was going on,” Petito said, noting that a paramedic had to start IV medications for the driver while upside down.



Breidenstein’s supervisor, Diane Morris, choked back tears and spoke at the award presentation. She said that Breidenstein completed rehabilitation and recently married.

“I was working that night when the call came in that we had a truck in the woods, and it was four hours of wondering whether he was alive or dead,” Morris said. “You all did a tremendous job ... on behalf of UPS, we are indebted to you. It doesn’t always turn out like this.”

Firefighter-paramedics each received a Hurst Green Cross Award for their use of the Jaws of Life, and a Paratech Rescue Award for their use of vehicle stabilization equipment. Awards were presented to the following rescuers: Lt. John Keppler, Sean Walker, Alex Patton, Kyle Lockwood, Ty Epling, Kevin Buckler, Dan VanDeusen, Richard Steinhardt, and Kris Kendra.

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