



FIRE CREW OF THE YEAR 2024



Lt. George Hill, D/E Jamie McGaughey, Lt. John Sleppy, FF/PM Lucas

Traditionally, Madeira Beach Fire Department has allowed the firefighters to vote on the annual firefighter of the year award, but this year we decided to do something a little different. Throughout the year all crews are dispatched to various types of incidents and there is no schedule for emergencies to happen. One shift, in particular, seemed to have the opportunity to respond to many of the major calls for service. Below are several noteworthy calls that the crew responded to.

- Alligator and Wildlife Discovery Center; on July 13, 2023 at approximately 3 am crews were dispatched to a 2 alarm structure fire. Upon arrival Lieutenant Hill was presented with an older structure with heavy fire and smoke conditions and immediately called a second alarm which unquestionably saved many animals and the structure from being a total loss.
- Water rescue in Johns Pass; this rescue happened under the bridge. As Marine 25 approached the patient in rough conditions she began to lose her grip and Marine Operator Lucas was able to position the vessel close enough for Rescue Swimmer McGaughey to jump from the boat and grab the victim just as she let go due to exhaustion and floated with her until M25 was able to pick them up. They were met with raucous applause by a packed house at Crabby's on the Pass.
- On this specific day there were two significant water rescue emergencies. The first was a glider plane that crashed near the shore in Treasure Island. The patient was in critical condition and M25 was able to rescue him out of the water and transfer patient care to ground transport as a trauma alert. The second rescue call came in later that evening. This was a victim off Madeira Beach who was swept out into deeper waters and was attempting to fight the current but with exhaustion setting in, could not any longer as M25 approached and was able to make contact and pull the victim out of the water.

- Another significant call answered by A-shift occurred in August (2023). Just after midnight the crew was dispatched to Johns Pass for a water rescue. As they approached the location, they were able to rescue a male victim who was holding on to a garden hose to keep from being swept under the 68' Calypso Breeze. Once he was rescued, they happened to notice a second victim under Johns Pass bridge and raced towards her. As they pulled up, Rescue Swimmer McGaughey once again was able to jump in the water and save her as she too was completely exhausted.
- Multi-patient MVC in North Redington Beach. Two individuals were loading items into the trunk of their car which was located on Gulf Blvd with a car parked behind them. A drunk driver hit the parked car behind them launching one patient approximately 20' away while pinning the other patient between the two vehicles, crushing both legs. Lt. Sleppy was a FF then and was able to initiate the extrication while Lt. Hill established incident command. Both patients were transported as trauma alerts.

In recognition for the work, dedication and bravery they have shown the community and department while in the line of duty.

Lt. Hill DOH 3/27/2013; Promoted 4/9/2018

Lt. Sleppy DOH 2/3/2014; Promoted 11/17/2023

D/E McGaughey DOH 3/17/2014; Promoted 10/08/2018

FF/PM Lucas DOH 4/12/2021