



Lifesaving heroes lauded at sheriff's awards ceremony

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FORT LAUDERDALE — Sheriff's Deputy Frank Biro and Sgt. Adam Rubin were off duty when they responded to an accident site and found a truck ablaze, the driver barely breathing and a woman trapped inside.

The men sprang into action, not hesitating to respond.

Both deputies were among the 148 law enforcement officials and residents honored by the Broward Sheriff's Office at the agency's Lifesaving Awards, presented for "competent and expedient action."

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"I hate the cliché, but that is our job," said Biro, who tended to the stricken driver and helped free the woman from the truck. "It's an honor to be recognized, but not necessary. I would never hesitate to act again."

Sheriff Scott Israel presented the awards at Broward Center for the Performing Arts, with honorees and their families in attendance.

"The public needs to know about these men and women," Israel said of their heroism and bravery. "These are people who rolled up their sleeves, put themselves in harm's way and said, 'You know what? I'm going to save a life.'"

Among those recognized were deputies Michael Conroy and Joseph Bialczak, as well as Lantana Police Officer Joel Shackelford.

On the morning of Oct. 2, while traveling on I-95, Conroy and Bialczak spotted a vehicle that had crashed into a wall and came to rest in the path of traffic. Bialczak, trying to assist the injured driver, then was struck by another vehicle.

Bialczak, who has since undergone several surgeries, faces a long recovery, the agency said.

Deputy Thomas Cupo also received an award for his actions in September 2011, when he saved a crime suspect by pulling him from a Lauderhill canal.

The suspect had jumped into the murky water while running away from police and did not resurface. Cupo arrived, shed his gear and dove into the canal seven times before emerging with the unconscious suspect, who he then resuscitated.

Twelve residents also were commended for helping people in distress.

John Jones, owner of Mack's Fish Camp in Pembroke Pines, received his second lifesaving award for

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rescuing the passengers of a pickup sinking into a canal. Jones, his brother, Marshall Jones, and a third man, Paul Johnson, dove into the water to rescue the occupants, and also pulled the vehicle from the water.

Residents who were honored either acted alone or helped authorities during the emergencies.

Israel said, "Citizens can't do it without us, and we know we can't do it without them."

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