



NEWS RELEASE – FPRA Volusia/Flagler Chapter

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November 16, 2023

Beach Safety Rescue Exhibition Drew Onlookers At Volusia/Flagler FPRA Media Day

Daytona Beach, Fla — A multi-agency beach rescue exercise earlier in November (November 9) intrigued beachgoers and participants of a “Media Day” event, hosted by the Volusia-Flagler Chapter of the Florida Public Relations Association (FPRA) and held by Volusia County Beach Safety. Public information officers and public relations specialists in attendance watched from the 3rd floor balcony of Volusia County Beach Safety headquarters in Daytona Beach as lifeguards and beach patrol officers “rescued” two individuals from the surf, treated them for exhaustion and placed them into Volusia County Emergency Medical Services ambulances.

The exercise was the finale to the FPRA chapter’s bi-annual professional development Media Day event including three media panels; breakfast by Jimmy Hula’s; and a “fireside chat” with Claire Metz, recently retired from WESH 2 News. The drill was executed by Volusia County Beach Safety in coordination with other county public safety organizations.

The rescue scenario started with a scene beachers may have seen before... a lifeguard expressing concern over something happening in possible rip currents. Within moments, the lifeguard was running toward the Daytona surf after notifying the team, and was joined by another. Next, a jet ski and two beach patrol trucks joined the effort as the first “victim” was pulled from the surf. The rescuer began examination and medical assistance on the sand as Volusia County EMS arrived and a second staff volunteer was recovered from the waves.

As the ambulance drove away, activities increased. Rescue became recovery as tireless divers and jet ski operators worked a grid pattern, searching for other possible victims.

“This scenario is something that happens at least once a year when a swimmer is lost in the water and needs to be found,” said Beach Services Deputy Chief Tammy Malphurs. “And these are the steps we take when that happens” On average, Beach Services rescues about 3,000 people from Volusia County ocean waters each year. Mock rescue operations on this scale may happen two to three times per year but in a live scenario, more agencies are typically involved, including Volusia County Sheriff’s Department helicopters and the United States Coast Guard, according to Malphurs. Regular training is extensive even for part-time lifeguards, but the county’s full-time lifeguards are certified for more than ocean rescue. For 25 years, they have also been Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and law enforcement officers, to qualify to serve with this Advanced Lifesaving Agency under the United States Lifesaving Association. In 2020, the Florida Beach Patrol Chiefs Association awarded the department “Beach Patrol of the Year.”

The timing of November’s drill worked out to entertain the FPRA guests and media representatives.

“We love hosting events like this at headquarters. A lot of people aren’t familiar with all we do here,” Malphurs said.

News agencies sending panelists or speakers to the Media Day sessions included WOFL Fox 35 News, WESH 2 News, WFTV Channel 9, WKMG News 6, Spectrum News 13, WVYB Radio, WNDB Radio, WSBB Radio, Daytona Beach NewsJournal, Hometown News, and the Ormond Beach Observer.

About FPRA Volusia/Flagler:

FPRA [Volusia/Flagler](https://www.fpra.org/) is one of 16 chapters of the Florida Public Relations Association. The chapter is the premier professional development association for PR practitioners in Volusia and Flagler counties on Florida’s central-east coast. Members represent corporate, nonprofit and government sectors. For more than 40 years, the chapter has provided professional development, leadership and networking opportunities for public relations professionals in the two-county area. We promote the highest standards of professional public relations ethics and provide a forum for the exchange of PR knowledge, trends, ideas and innovations. FPRA has over 1,000 members statewide and is dedicated to developing public relations practitioners who utilize ethical practices to enhance the public relations profession. To learn more about FPRA visit: <https://www.fpra.org/>