

Jacksonville Fire Rescue receives extrication equipment

By Ann Friedman
For Current

The Jacksonville Fire Rescue Department received extrication equipment on Jan. 31 to help remove victims of car accidents from a vehicle that has been crushed.

The equipment was funded by a \$28,475 life-saving equipment grant through Jacksonville-based Firehouse Subs.

The sandwich chain launched the Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation in 2005 after founders Chris and Robin Sorensen travelled to Mississippi to provide food to first responders and survivors of Hurricane Katrina.

Since its inception, more than \$31 million has been awarded to hometown heroes including more than \$2 million in Jacksonville.

Hurst Rescue Tool Specialist Tom Winkler said extrication equipment is important to fire departments.

“They’re so much better than traditional tools because of the portability, speed and efficiency,” he said. “The fire department will mostly use the tools to rescue victims out of vehicles, however, in certain circumstances, the tools can be used outside of the roadways in buildings, warehouses or on the water.”

Winkler said having the equipment would have a significant impact on the Jacksonville community.

“In the past, firefighters had to go through multiple steps to get the equipment started,” he said. “Now, with the technologically advanced eDraulic rescue tools, (which refers to the use of hydraulics and electricity) the firefighter is able to simply get the tool out from the compartment, hit a button and the tool is operationally ready to be used.”

If the department is able

to transport the patient to a trauma center within an hour, Winkler said their chance of survival increases drastically.

“My hopes for the department are that the tools will help provide quick and efficient services to benefit the community,” he said. “I also hope that that more and more first responder departments around the state of Florida will transition to this more effective rescue tool.”

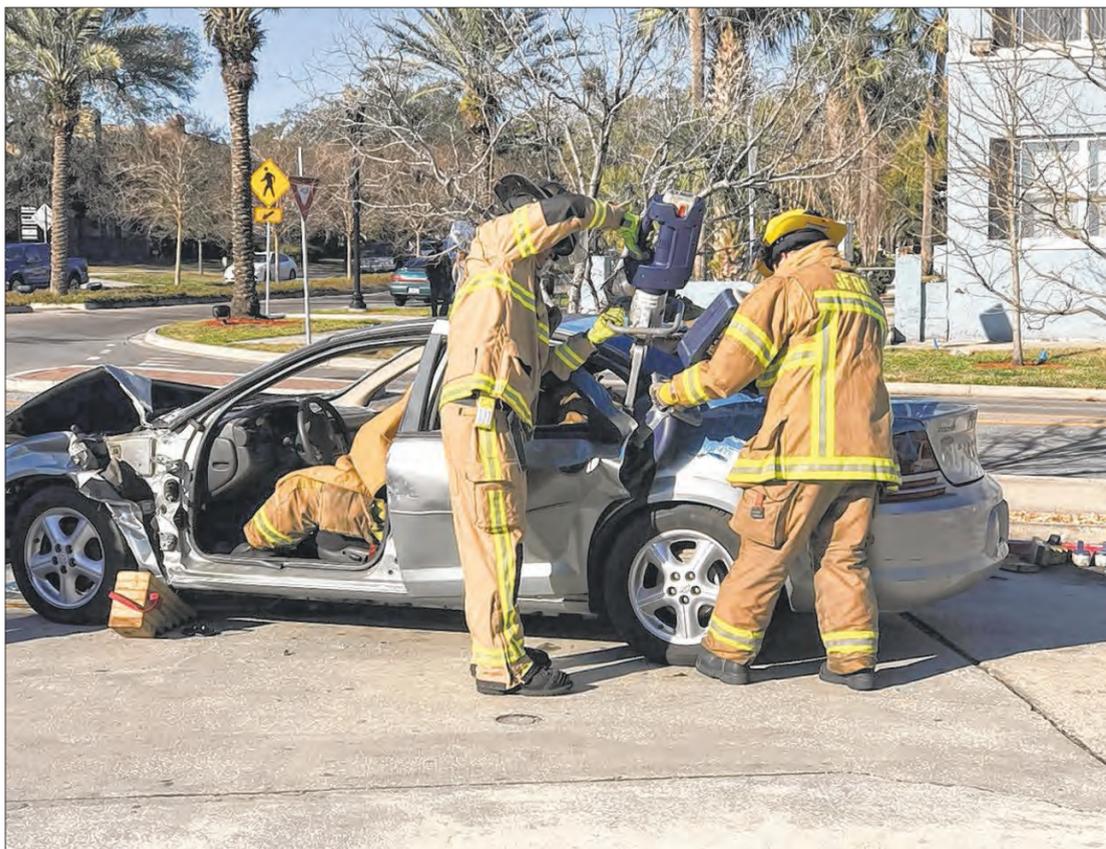
Mike Branson, senior director of operations for Firehouse Subs, said funds for the Public Safety Foundation are raised year-round at the more than 1,100 restaurants across the nation.

Each restaurant recycles leftover, five-gallon buckets that are available to guests for a \$2 donation to the foundation. Donation canisters are also on register counters to collect spare change, and the Round Up Program allows guests to “round up” their bill to the nearest dollar to contribute to the foundation.

“First responders are our community’s heroes and without their generous contributions, these departments and organizations might not have been able to purchase the equipment on their own,” he said.

Branson said it’s important for the Jacksonville Fire Rescue Department to have updated tools to pry away vehicles from victims of car accidents.

“With this newly awarded equipment the department will be able to provide more efficient services to the community, helping improve a motor vehicle accident victim’s chance of survival,” he said. “Jacksonville Fire Rescue Department and the community will greatly benefit from the awarded equipment.”



Jacksonville Fire Rescue firefighters demonstrate extrication equipment. The equipment was funded by a \$28,475 life-saving equipment grant through Jacksonville-based Firehouse Subs. (Photos provided by the Zimmerman Agency)



From left, Jacksonville Fire Rescue Department Chief Keith Powers, firefighter Chris Fox and Hurst Rescue Tools specialist Tom Winkler.

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