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Dixie County deputy honored for saving lives



Dixie County Deputy Samantha Polvere and Dixie County Sheriff Dewey Hatcher Sr. stand with Deputy Polvere wearing her Service Bars and being presented with her Letter of Commendation from the sheriff.

Story and Photo

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CROSS CITY -- In December of last year, deputies with the Dixie County Sheriff's Office were attempting to serve a warrant on an individual when they saw him riding as a passenger in the front of a small extended-cab pickup truck.

Upon attempting to stop the vehicle, the driver fled -- leading deputies on a high-speed chase through northern Dixie and Gilchrist counties.

The pickup truck crashed into a tree on residential property off of State Road 47 in northern Gilchrist County. When the vehicle came to a stop, the wanted passenger fled on foot with the lead DCSO deputy giving chase on foot.

As the second deputy arrived, the truck became engulfed in flames. The driver was unconscious in the driver's seat and two females in the rear seat were unable to climb out of the passenger side due to the flames.

The second deputy -- Dixie County Sheriff's Deputy Samantha Polvere -- went to the

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driver's door and attempted to force the door open, but she was unable to do so.

After failing to force the door open, Deputy Polvere retrieved a shovel that was on the scene. Then Deputy Polvere got into the back bed of the truck and broke the rear window out with the shovel. After breaking the rear window, Deputy Polvere pulled the two female passengers through the rear window.

Having rescued the two passengers, Deputy Polvere entered the rear window of the truck where she grabbed the driver and pulled him between the front two seats and out of the rear window.

All three of those individuals were transported to a hospital in Gainesville by Dixie County for their injuries.

Deputy Polvere suffered minor injuries during the incident and she was treated at a Gainesville hospital too.

Since being released from the hospital, two of the passengers reached out to Deputy Polvere and the Dixie County Sheriff's Office to personally thank Deputy Polvere for her actions.

Both of those individuals expressed their belief that had it not been for Deputy Polvere's actions, they would have both died.

As a result of the investigation into the incident, Dixie County Sheriff Dewey Hatcher Sr. met with law enforcement staff on the afternoon of Feb. 2 to recognize Deputy Polvere for her actions.

Sheriff Hatcher presented Deputy Polvere with a Letter of Commendation for her actions on the afternoon of Dec. 20, 2017, and the sheriff of Dixie County presented the deputy sheriff with Service Bars for Valor and Life Saving.

The Life Saving Bar is awarded to a DCSO member who, under true emergency circumstances, acts to prevent the probable loss of life.

It is awarded to a DCSO member for competent and expedient action that is directly accountable for sustaining or saving a human life.

The Valor Bar is awarded to a DCSO member who distinguishes himself or herself by an act of heroism, or who puts himself or herself in imminent personal danger, and who takes such action(s) with knowledge of the risk(s) involved. The act must be so outstanding that it clearly distinguishes the member's courage and has been performed for the purpose of protecting human life.