

**For Immediate Release**

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**Slidell Area Fire Department Presents Awards**

**St. Tammany Fire District No. 1 recognized several members of the fire department for acts of valor and named its 2009 Firefighter of the Year during a ceremony last Friday evening.**

**During the January 2010 Board of Commissioner's meeting the Fire District will recognize additional members for community and distinguished service; however, the awards presented on last Friday evening represent the highest recognition bestowed by the fire department said Fire Chief Larry Hess.**

**Fire Captain, Matt Parish; Fire Operator/Paramedic, Kris Remerow; and Firefighter, Ray Pearce were presented Awards of Valor.**

**On the night January, 26<sup>th</sup> their engine responded to the scene of a vehicle submerged at the bottom of Eagle Lake off of Highway 11. The vehicle sank in approximately 12 feet of water and entrapped two young women as it sat on the bottom of the dark, murky lake.**

**As noted in their citations, each of them with measured regard for their own safety swam to the bottom of the lake, gained entry into the vehicle, and extricated the victims to the safety of the shore where other fire department and Acadian paramedics could treat them.**

**District No. 1 Fire Chief Larry Hess noted during the presentation that it is unselfish and courageous acts such as this that are in the finest traditions of America's Fire Service and, in general, are so unknown by the public we serve.**

**Firefighter Ray Pearce was also awarded Firefighter of the Year. He received this esteemed recognition as when he was involved in the Eagle Lake incident he had only been with the fire department a total of five months.**

**Hess said that is new employees such as Firefighter Pearce that are demonstrating the commitment and dedication that will carry our noble profession into the future.**