

Victim thanks first responders who saved her life in Hinsdale

By Matt Nanci Sentinel Staff | Posted: Tuesday, April 19, 2016 12:00 pm

HINSDALE — Kelli Morton wasn't just happy to be standing at a meeting in Hinsdale Monday night. She was happy to be standing at all.

Morton was one of two people saved by first responders from Hinsdale last month, and she was on hand as Hinsdale Police Chief Todd A. Faulkner honored 15 people at Monday night's selectmen's meeting at the town police station.

"In our job, a lot of us don't get the thanks that we tend to deserve and it's just a thankless job," Faulkner said. "And for years we go out and do the job, we hear the good results, but recognition sometimes isn't there."

Each person received a certificate and a pin for his or her dress uniform as part of the Hinsdale Police Department's award program.

For Morton, March 28 was the first time she actually met some of them, though there wasn't time for formal introductions. On that day she suffered a medical emergency and lost control of her vehicle, which struck a tree in the area of Thicket Hill Mobile Home Park on Thicket Hill Drive, police said.

Staff from the police and fire departments, as well as Brattleboro-based Rescue Inc., performed CPR and used a defibrillator to save Morton, according to Faulkner.

"I'd just like to say thank you because if it wasn't for all of you, I wouldn't be here and my daughter wouldn't have a mother and I can't thank you enough because of you guys that I'm here," Morton said. "Thank you."

Morton's aunt, Tamara Wetherby of Winchester, said doctors told the family that it was a miracle Morton survived.

To make matters worse, the family had already recently suffered the loss of a loved one when they heard



A life saved

Michael Moore / Sentinel Staff
Victim and survivor Kelli Morton is hugged by her daughter, Shealyn Spicer, 12, after emergency personnel were honored at the Hinsdale police station on Monday night. At right is Morton's partner, Matt Spicer.

what happened to Morton.

“When we got the phone call, we weren’t quite sure what we were going to do because three weeks prior to this, we lost their dad and my brother,” Wetherby said through tears. “So the thought of losing her was not something we could imagine. So all of you have no idea what you gave us. Thank you so, so much.”

The other life-saving call was on March 18, when police responded to a medical emergency on Plain Road. When officers arrived, they witnessed a cardiac arrest, according to Faulkner.

The fire department arrived minutes later and together they performed CPR, used a defibrillator and administered Narcan, the drug used to reverse opioid overdoses, Faulkner said.

Then, personnel from Rescue Inc. arrived and were able to regain a pulse on the person and take them to the hospital.

Between the two calls, Cpl. Joshua Murray, Officer Timothy Richmond and Lt. David A. Eldridge were honored from the Hinsdale Police Department.

Fire Chief Jay Matuszewski, Assistant Chief Terry Zavorotny, Lt. Jason Antos, Patricia Lachenal, Kevin Cole, Jon Bobak and Ben Aither were recognized from the town’s fire department.

Clifford Hastings, a passerby at the March 28 call was also recognized for his medical help. He works with Claremont-based Golden Cross Ambulance Inc.

From Rescue Inc., Lt. Nick Bergeron, Isaac Smith, Christine Hume and Brittany Miner were honored.

“This is why we train,” Faulkner said. “This is why you see the firefighters at the station all the time training and why we always go out and we train and we work with other agencies is for stuff like this. It turns into one big team and I’m glad we could help.”

The honorees were humble while receiving their certificates and pins, just simply happy these emergency calls had happy endings.

“We were doing our jobs as far as I’m concerned,” Lachenal said.

Matuszewski concurred, adding his thankfulness for the other personnel on scene who weren’t providing medical care, but made the rescues possible.

“There were several other guys that if they didn’t show up, do a vehicle stabilization, traffic control and all the other stuff, the people that were doing medical care wouldn’t have been able to do their jobs, so I appreciate what you guys did,” he said.