



Valparaiso Fire Department Presents Two with Axe Award

The Valparaiso Fire Department presented Matt Slack and Jake Tudor, Valparaiso Parks employees, with the VFD's prestigious Axe Award for bravery, dedication and service. Avid outdoorsmen, Slack and Tudor were off duty on Saturday, June 8, 2024 when they heard commotion on the water at Rogers Lakewood Park. They discovered a capsized boater struggling in the water. "These two men acted with bravery, responding quickly and rescuing the boater after he went under the water for what could have been his last time," said Valparaiso Fire Captain Jon Parkhouse who led the VFD crew that responded to incident and transported the boater to the hospital for treatment.

The boater, who was visiting Valparaiso from Lake County, has since recovered. "On behalf of the Valparaiso Fire Department and City of Valparaiso, we commend Matt Slack and Jake Tudor for their efforts which helped to save a life," said Captain Parkhouse at a special recognition held in their honor, attended by many members of the VFD, Valpo Parks, Mayor Costas and city leadership team.

Photo caption: The Valparaiso Fire Department presented their Axe Award for bravery dedication and service to two off-duty Valpo Parks employees, recognizing their heroism in rescuing a boater who had capsized at Rogers Lakewood Park on June 8, 2024. Left to right are VFD Captain Jon Parkhouse, Jake Tudor, Matt Slack and Mayor Jon Costas.