



GREEN COVE POST

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THE VOICE OF THE COVE

KARAOKE WRECK SHOCKS SALOON 17!

SINGERS INTERRUPTED, HEROIC DRIVER RESCUE!

Patrons fall silent as inferno blazes yards from 'Open' sign. Quick-thinking patrons and police pull driver from burning wreck just moments before total engulfment. FULL DRAMATIC STORY, PAGE 3



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SALOON 17 KARAOKE INFERNO: Patrons Tell of Chaos, Heroic Rescue

Singer's 'Don't Stop Believin' Cut Short by Explosion; Patrons Describe Pulling Driver from Burning Wreck.



THE AFTERMATH: Authorities survey the car. Driver is in stable condition.



SILENCED VOICES: Patrons at the weekly karaoke night describe the 'shockwave'.

THE MOMENT OF IMPACT

Inside, local resident Jess was halfway through her Amy Winehouse set list, when the shockwave hit.

"One minute I'm gearing up for a high note, and the next, the entire building rattled. The front doors practically bowed inward," she told the *POST*, still clutching a half-drained Bud Light, her hands visibly trembling. "We thought a bomb went off. Then somebody screamed, 'Fire!'"

Patrons spilled out the front door into the parking lot, witnessing a mangled silver four-door engulfed in flames. The driver, later identified by authorities as a 28-year-old out-of-towner, was trapped behind the wheel, unconscious.

A RUSH TO HELP

That's when the regulars of Saloon 17 proved they were more than just amateur vocalists.

Bar manager Christine didn't hesitate. Grabbing the heavy-duty fire extinguisher from behind the bar, she pushed through the crown and sprinted into the blinding heat. Close behind him were off-duty Green Cove police officer Mark Davis and two

unidentified patrons who had been playing pool just moments before.

"The heat was melting the plastic on my boots," Sullivan recounted. "Davis took his jacket, wrapped it around his arm, and just smashed the driver's side window. The smoke pouring out of that cabin was thick as tar."

Working together, the group managed to unbuckle the unconscious driver and drag him through the broken window. They pulled him across the asphalt, just seconds before the vehicle's gas tank ruptured, sending a secondary fireball into the night sky.

WITNESSES SHAKEN

Emergency services arrived three minutes later, fully extinguishing the blaze and tending to the driver. Authorities confirmed early Wednesday morning that the driver is currently in stable condition at a local hospital, treated for smoke inhalation and minor burns.

"If those guys hadn't rushed out there, we'd be looking at a

fatality, no question," said Green Cove Fire Chief Henderson at the scene. "They had seconds to act, and they didn't blink."

Back inside Saloon 17, Zoey remained on station at her laptop, and the karaoke carried on without a hitch, "Back To Black" still scrolling silently across the screen. For the patrons nursing their drinks in the aftermath, the reality of how close tragedy had come was just beginning to set in.

"We always say this bar is a family," Zoey whispered, watching the flashing lights of the fire engines through the front door. "Tonight, I guess we proved it."

FULL DRAMATIC STORY

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