



NEWS RELEASE

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A Neighbor, a Sledgehammer, a Life Saved

Dave Kolander thought it was odd how a delivery truck pulled over in front of his home just prior to 1:30 PM today. When he stepped out to see what the driver was up to, he noticed smoke coming from his neighbor's house. That wasn't unusual as the occupant, an elderly gentleman, often used his fire place. Dave decided to investigate anyway, even as the delivery truck drove off. When he saw smoke curling up under the eave, it was clear that something much more serious was happening.

Dave rushed to the front door of 13639 NW Springville Road and tried to roust the neighbor he knew was inside. The door was locked, so he hurried next door to his home, yelled to his wife Marge to call 911, and grabbed a sledgehammer. With fire crews now underway, but several minutes away, he went to work at breaking into the home. He was quickly joined by two younger neighbors, Eddie Passadore and Jay Belcher. They broke out windows to vent the dark smoke that was clearly building inside the small home. Once the door came lose, they step into the smoke-filled living room, located their neighbor, and carried him outside and across the street.

When fire crews arrived, they found heavy fire coming from the kitchen area of the home, which they quickly controlled. An interior search of the home confirmed that no one else was inside. Other personnel provided emergency medical aid to the homeowner, who was stabilized and transported to an area hospital. No information is available on his condition.

Crews from Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue, Portland, Hillsboro, and AMR all responded to the scene. "The emergency personnel did a great job, but they were quick to identify the neighbors as the real heroes here today; and the neighbors all pointed to Dave as the guy who led the charge," said Walt Peck, Community Services Director for Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue. "Had he not taken the time to check on the welfare of the elder next door, this would have had a very different and tragic outcome.

The cause of the fire is under investigation; there is no estimate of damage at this time.

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