

CITY OF MUSCATINE



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FAMILY THANKS RESCUERS AFTER HOUSE FIRE TUESDAY

MUSCATINE, Iowa – A Muscatine resident and his dogs were safely evacuated from a structure fire Tuesday (Feb. 18) by an off-duty firefighter, a neighbor, and on duty personnel, and the family was at the Muscatine City Council meeting Thursday (Feb. 20) to thank the off-duty firefighter.

Off-duty Firefighter Travis Edwards was driving down the street when he saw smoke coming from the Larry Dunnahoo residence at 1006 East 7th Street. Edwards notified the dispatch of the fire and then went to the structure where he extricated Dunnahoo through a window. A neighbor, Joey Knerr, was also driving down the street, saw the fire, and assisted in getting Dunnahoo to safety and rescuing one of three dogs that were inside the house.

Dunnahoo's granddaughter, Vanessa Lopez, wrote to Muscatine Mayor Brad Bark about the incident and Bark invited the family to the Council meeting so that they could properly thank the first responders.

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"My grandfather's house was the house involved in the fire that occurred on February 18," Lopez wrote. "He was not aware that the house was on fire until it was too late. He was trapped in his bedroom. He is in his mid-70s so he is not overly mobile."

Lopez went on to say that off-duty firefighter Travis Edwards risked his life in pulling her grandfather out of the window.

"If it was not for his bravery and willingness to jump into action, my grandfather may not be here today," Lopez said.

Lopez added that he was told another neighbor assisted in helping but she had not found out a name at the time of her writing to Mayor Bark. That individual was later identified as Joey Knerr.

"We also want to ensure all personnel involved know they are appreciated and we thank them with all of our hearts," Lopez said in the letter.

Battalion Chief Gary Ronzheimer said that he observed smoke coming from the home when he arrived on the scene and initiated a second alarm callback to bring in additional resources. Heavy fire was visible from a window on the right side of the structure as fire crews worked to contain the fire and prevent further damage.

During search efforts, firefighters located and safely removed two dogs from a bedroom off the living room.