

Family escapes fire #2

Sarah Simpson

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The worry was evident on the face of Duncan's Karie Evoy on Tuesday afternoon as she stood barefoot on the sidewalk outside her Festubert Street home watching Duncan volunteer firefighters come and go from the back of her house, lugging hoses and big fans.

Her family lost nearly everything they owned two years ago when their downstairs neighbour fell asleep without butting out his cigarette properly. That house burned to the ground.

"We almost lost one of our daughters then," she said, looking over to her vehicle, which this time safely housed her daughter Keanna, 5, and her son Drew, 12, along with the family's two dogs.

"We moved here after the last one," she said, the panic slowly draining from her face.

The remaining four family pets, two cats and two birds, were still in the house as the firefighters worked Tuesday and her two other children were still either at school, or on their way home, but the flames were extinguished and the industrial-sized fans were sucking the smoke out of the house so the worst was over.

Duncan Fire Chief Mike McKinlay said the smoke damage was minimal.

McKinlay had arrived at the scene within minutes of hearing the alarm sound, and he was able to knock the brewing blaze down on his own with a garden hose before he got some help from his crew to finish it off with about 30 gallons of water "at the most" from the fire hose -- nevertheless confining the damage to Drew's bedroom and the back porch.

"It's not as bad as it looks, explained McKinlay to the family, whose supporters had grown to include Evoy's husband Bill, his workmate, and Evoy's almost inconsolable mother.

"I can't go through this again," she said, hugging her son-in-law and daughter before checking in on her grandkids.

It was Drew who found the flames and alerted his mother.

Keanna and her mom were upstairs watching television and Drew was playing video games when he asked his mom if he should let the dogs out.

She said good idea.



CREDIT: Sarah Simpson, Citizen

Five-year-old Keanna Evoy didn't have her own teddy bear as she waited outside her home, so Duncan firefighter Doug Roe went to the firetruck and came back with a brand new one to soothe her as her brother Drew and mom Karie look on.

When Drew got to the bottom of the stairs he saw the smoke, then the flames.

From what the family understands, the fire began in or near a fake plant in a plastic pot on the deck. Drew's bedroom curtains had blown out the window and attracted the flames.

"It was windy that day," said McKinley, still not certain just how the fire started. "There was nothing that pointed to anything other than we figure that the fire started on the porch and she had long curtains and the curtains caught on fire and went back into the room."

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