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Community effort restores home after fire; *Kindness and love shine brightly in Inglis*



The initial team of workers on Thursday morning included Paramedic Jon Gilbert, Capt. Katie Salter, and the following individuals Alfred Rios, Alex Whitmer, Jeff Norton, Presless Salter, Johnny MacDonald II, Ken Kotas, Hunter Kline, Levi McFarland, Jennifer Elshoff and Josh Hicks. These volunteers are not listed in a particular order because they were able to stand together for about one minute, before they had to return their mission of the day – repairing a mobile home for fire victims. Capt. Katie Salter is the third person from the left in the front row, with Inglis Fire on a sleeve.

Story and Photos

By Jeff M. Hardison © Nov. 9, 2018 at 12:38 p.m.

INGLIS – More than a dozen firefighters, EMTs, paramedics, members of the United States Coast Guard and others joined forces Thursday for a one-day mission Thursday (Nov. 8) that restored a home for a woman in her 90s and her 61-year-old son.



Among the many workers are this brother and sister team – EMT-Firefighter Crystal Jordan and EMT-Firefighter Hunter Kline

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This is one part of the area devastated by the blaze that leveled a singlewide mobile home on Saturday (Nov. 3) in eastern Inglis.



The neighboring singlewide mobile home suffered damage, but with the restoration and repair work by a strong set of volunteers, this home was saved for the Taylor family.

Hazel Taylor, 90-something, and Wayne Taylor, 61, live on East Cason Boulevard in Inglis. They used to live in two separate single-wide mobile homes that were near each other at a 90-degree angle.

On Saturday (Nov. 3), Wayne Taylor was cooking and a grease fire quickly got out of control. He was able to escape from the burning mobile home and all of his pet cats survived as well.

The fire spread to his mother's mobile home, however, as well as destroying other property in the immediate vicinity.

Every piece of the man's clothing except what he was wearing, and all of his other belongings were lost in the fire.

On Sunday (Nov. 9), Levy County Department of Public Safety Paramedic-Firefighter Jon Gilbert responded to a medical call at the address where the fire had forced Wayne Taylor to move into his mother's neighboring home.

Paramedic Gilbert, who has been in the lifesaving profession for 30 years, saw the plight of the Taylors, including the immediate need for clothes and toiletries for Wayne Taylor, who was taken to a

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Gainesville hospital for surgery.

Gilbert contacted Inglis Fire-Rescue Capt. Captain Kelly A. Salter, an EMT and firefighter who also works for LCDPS, and Crystal Jordan, another multi-agency EMT-firefighter.

“Kelly Salter exploded on this,” Gilbert said. “She found people and local businesses that wanted to help immediately. Crystal Jordan also took the reins and donated her time to make this succeed.”

Gilbert, who is in the midst of remodeling his home, spoke with Josh Hicks, owner of Handy Hicks-Insured Handyman of Inverness. Hicks and his principles agreed to donate whatever they could to make this project happen.

The volunteers all decided to do what was needed to repair and restore Hazel Taylor’s singlewide mobile home. The fire had taken parts of the roof and some wall areas.

Another part of the project was clearing the extensive debris field that was left by the inferno.

Gilbert set the goal of doing the whole project in one day – Thursday (Nov. 8).

The team began recruiting other workers and they visited at least 20 business interests to seek donations of material and services. Some interests donated completely, others provided discounts.

The team of volunteers put their needs aside and focused on one mission, which came together with precision like a Swiss watch. Well, there may have been a couple of rough or quirky moments, but the people all put their hearts and souls into the task at hand.

Capt. Salter said this was not a project of Inglis Fire Rescue, or the LCDPS. This was action by people who wanted to help a woman in her 90s, whose son had lost all of his belongings.

The fire was an accident, but there was no insurance to cover any of the losses, Paramedic Gilbert said.

The initial team of workers on Thursday morning included Paramedic Gilbert, Capt. Salter, and the following individuals Alfred Rios, Alex Whitmer, Jeff Norton, Presless Salter, Johnny MacDonald II, Ken Kotas, Hunter Kline, Levi McFarland, Jennifer Elshoff and Josh Hicks. Others showed up throughout the day.

Capt. Salter said she greatly appreciates the work by people who helped repair and restore the mobile home for the Taylors.

Capt. Salter she especially wants to note the assistance provided by the following business interests: Buddy and Fred's Hardware of Inglis; Handy Hicks Insured Handyman; Nichols Lumber; Beasley's Auto; W. Soule (a company in Florida); Pioneer Precision Metal & Powder Coating of Inglis; Tri-County Metals of Trenton; Carl Roof Land Clearing; Quality Painting; Curry's Roofing; the No. 324 F&AM Masonic Lodge of Inglis; Lowe's; Home Depot; Rural King; Little Caesar Pizza of Inglis; Kangaroo/Marathon gas station in Inglis; Shrimp Landing Restaurant of Inglis; Citrus Custom Cabinets; and Quality Paint and Pressure Washing.

Paramedic Gilbert and Capt. Salter said they hope to be able to help the Taylor family a bit more in their time of need. They said people who want to donate money for this extended effort can contact Capt. Salter at ksalteringlisfire@gmail.com.