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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

I LOVE MY THEATRE ORANGEVILLE: Artistic director at Theatre Orangeville David Nairn (left) and the theatre's general manager Sharyn Ayliffe hold up an "I Love My Theatre Orangeville" sign at the Opera House to announce the launch of the theatre's latest fundraising campaign. Pandemic related government supports have dried up and the theatre's looking to the community for support to help it stay healthy and vibrant. Read a story on the campaign on Page A11.

Local man kicks in door of burning house to rescue elderly neighbour

Written By JAMES MATTHEWS LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

After a hero rescues a sleeping man from a inside the house. burning home, you know what he does?

The hero makes a round of coffees for the arriving emergency service personnel and but to make as much noise as he could then he goes back to watching television, of course.

Grand Valley resident Al Mackie was March 2. It was something before midnight, judging by the time a 911 call was received from Mackie's phone.

said. "I thought it was fire or ambulance on uation. They were banging on the side of the his driveway."

has some health issues, so it was reasonable inside, he said. to expect such cause for flickering lights in the night's stillness.

flame shooting out the roof," he said.

Mackie shouted to his wife to call 911, but in.

she wasn't anywhere near a phone. "So I got back to my phone and out the door locked in. I had to go in."

and called 911 quicker than she could," he said.

"I said yeah," he said. "Should I go in?" Mackie was told to stay out of the house

outside, the thinking being anybody inside would be rousted from their sleep.

watching television in his living room on parked in the driveway. Mackie's driveway is backwards." side-by-side to his neighbour's.

The car horn was ineffective so Mackie "I could see flickering on the driveway," he through windows, tried to ascertain the sitburning house. They tried to figure out any-

"I said screw this and I kicked in the door," "When I get to the door, there's a four-foot answered weakly from the bedroom. Had he the elderly man was taken to the hospital

"But, once he answered, I was kind of

Mackie said he dodged flames that were Mackie provided the address and the 911 spreading through the kitchen, growing in dispatcher asked him if there was anybody intensity, and made his way to a bedroom door and his neighbour's voice.

> "He was not very steady on his feet," Mackie said. "He was up out of bed but kind of just standing there. Couldn't see much between the smoke and darkness.

"I grabbed his walker, spun him around, He honked the horn of his car that was sat him on his walker, and dragged him out

An ambulance from Dufferin Paramedic Service was pulling up to the house as and his wife tried to see into the house Mackie got the walker to the door. A paramedic jumped out and went to them.

"Then they got him on a stretcher and were gone pretty quickly," he said. "I guess they His Gier Street neighbour is elderly and thing else that could be done to alert the man had him on oxygen and were gone pretty quick."

> Police and firefighters from Grand Valley he said. "I yelled for him and he kind of and Orangeville responded to the blaze and not answered I'm not sure I would've gone with serious injuries, according to a press release from Dufferin OPP.

> > Continued on Page A2



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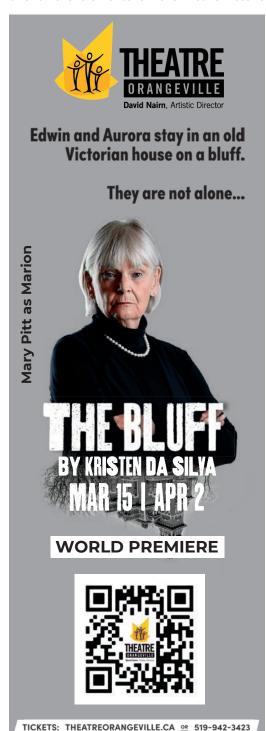
Local man kicks in door of burning house to rescue elderly neighbour

"I made them some coffee and went back and watched TV," Mackie said.

In the press release about the fire, police said the elderly man is lucky to be alive. They credited "the heroic actions of a neighbour" who rescued the elderly resident from the home.

The Ontario Fire Marshall has deemed the fire non-suspicious.

Mackie and the neighbour's son walked through the house days after the fire. He said one of the elements on the kitchen stove





RECOGNIZING HEROIC ACTIONS: Al Mackie, who rescued an elderly man from a fire on Mar. 2, was pleasantly surprised with a pizza party at Miedmas, where he works as a mechanic, on Mar. 3. His coworkers heard about his heroic actions and decided to celebrate his efforts.

was heavily damaged and a pot was burned through.

Mackie said he was a tow truck driver for 20 years on Ontario's often harried highways. So he's seen a thing or two in his time. He's seen the results of accident scene heroics, the magnitude of such actions seldom thought about until afterwards.

think; you just do. I couldn't live with myself if I hadn't tried to do something."

His colleagues at Miedemas Auto Sales cheers to Join us to celebrate the birthday of Jack Martin

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

"I can't even explain it," he said. "You don't STRUCTURE FIRE: A house on Gier Street in Grand Valley caught on fire around 11:30 p.m. on Mar. 2. Orangeville Fire responded and lauded the heroic actions of Al Mackie, who rescued an older man from the blaze before firefighters arrived. The Ontario Fire Marshal has deemed the fire non-suspicious

> where Mackie is a mechanic threw him a pizza party to recognize his heroics. Indeed, it for me ... and I appreciated that," he said. such selflessness in a cynical world should "But I'm really not ... You talk about cynical be rewarded if for nothing else than for its people and stuff. I can't even imagine being

"The guys at work made a big deal about that way."



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