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Moraga Native, MOFD Firefighter Receives Award for Saving Family

By Lucy Amaral



Chris Davies at Station 41 Photo Andy Scheck

Chris Davies, a Moraga Orinda Fire District (MOFD) firefighter didn't plan on being a hero. He just wanted to make it to the CPR class he was scheduled to teach. The fates, however, had a different idea on the morning of April 4.

Walking out of his house in Concord a little after 6 a.m., Davies heard a distinctive crackling noise, searched out the sound and saw that his neighbor's home was on fire. "I ran down to the end of the drive and expected to see the family standing outside but nobody was there. I saw the cars in driveway and, on a Saturday morning, I knew they were home," said Davies.

Davies said his training automatically kicked in and made a quick evaluation of the situation. After calling the local fire department to give them a 'report on conditions,' Davis knocked on the door, trying to alert the residents. With no response and determining that there was no immediate threat of the building collapsing, Davies pushed open the door and began yelling. "The house was full of smoke and the fire was coming in through the walls," said Davies. "I saw the husband coming down the hall, and at that point

he knew the house was on fire."

Davies carried the family's young son out of the burning house while the husband made sure his wife got out. Davies then reentered the house and got the family's two dogs out of the building. Once the family was safely outside and the fire department was on scene, Davies left to make it to his scheduled CPR training class. "I had some smoke inhalation, but other than that I'm fine," Davies said.

Davies, 25, has been with the MOFD for six years and according to his mother, Joan, this Moraga native always wanted to be a firefighter. "We have friends and family that were firefighters and that's all Chris wanted to be," she said. "Chris was determined. He persevered and worked hard to become one."

The Fire District found out about the rescue in a roundabout way. A brief mention of the event by Davies to a coworker at a barbecue worked its way up the chain of command, finally reaching his Battalion Chief, Stephen Healy. "I found out from another Battalion Chief, who was quick to point out that Chris left once he rescued those people because he didn't want the attention," Healy said.

A bit of attention came his way, anyway. At an award ceremony held on June 17, Davies was presented with a resolution recognizing his heroism as well as a plaque honoring his work. "Chris is a great example of what firefighters are like," said Healy. "He did what any firefighter would do - helped someone in need, regardless of the risk."

MOFD Fire Chief Pete Nowicki echoed Healy's sentiments. "We are extremely proud of Chris," he said. "His immediate and bold actions exemplify what we have come to expect from all of our firefighters."

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