

Quick response by Godfrey firefighters saves GFPD Board of Trustees president's home

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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GODFREY - One of Godfrey's newest firefighters - **Tommy Byrd** - was introduced to the art of firefighting, quickly responding to a call in his second day on the job.

Byrd was part of the firefighters who responded to a fire at the home of **Godfrey Fire Protection District** board of trustees president **Steve Rynders** on Tuesday. The fire occurred when an accident with a alcohol-filled bucket that was soaking corks for use as fire starters turned over and caught fire.

In nearly heroic fashion, the Godfrey firefighters quickly had the fire extinguished, then

they worked on blowing the black smoke out of the home. The smoke damage was pretty substantial, **Godfrey Fire Protection District Chief Erik Kambarian** said.

“Somehow the process of soaking the corks went awry and an ignition source allowed it to catch fire from a nearby fireplace,” Kambarian said. “It was a relatively small fire upon arrival but the amount of black smoke it created was pretty substantial. I arrived first and immediately shut the door to the house to prevent oxygen from causing the fire to grow any further our firefighters stretched house line and quickly extinguished the fire.”

Kambarian said he was at the scene within 3 minutes and the firefighters with the engine in 4-5 minutes.

“It was a quick response and the fire was taken care of very quickly,” he said. “It is always unfortunate when this happens this time of year with Christmas items and holiday decorations in the house. They will be just fine.”

Byrd, **Nicholas Dawdy and Matthew Halliday** are the recent Godfrey Fire Department additions. Probationary trainees require over 200 hours of training on a variety of topics, Kambarian said.

“We had a badge ceremony for three of our paid on-call firefighters and the very next day one responded to scene from his home and was ready to work,” Kambarian said. “That is exactly what we are looking for. He has been through a year process training process with the others.”