

Woman's death rivets block: Neighbor remembers Miss Kay and her love of cats

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - The death of an Alton woman in the 3200 block of Duco Street riveted her neighborhood Thursday morning.

The fire call came in to the Alton Fire Department at 5:37 a.m. The fire was extinguished in just seconds, but one woman, 75, was found deceased after the fire was out.

One neighbor across the street - Mary Ann Perry - said she loved her neighbor and used to help take care of her.

“She was one of those women who didn’t have a filter and would speak her mind,” Lewis said. “When you think of an Irish woman, she was it. Years ago before I got sick, I would go over there in the morning and make sure she was OK. I know she had another lady who would come and check on her too. She lived alone.

“I remember the time I saw her she was doing better. She saw me at doctor’s office with a cane and she asked ‘Mary Ann, you took care of me; who is going to take care of you?’ I have several auto immune diseases and I have trouble walking. When she saw me with a cane, she wanted to know what was wrong and help.”

Mary Ann was asked to recall the last time she talked to Miss Kay and she said:

“We are all stunned because we didn’t hear it or see anything. The last time I saw her was a week or two ago and the last thing we said to each other was, ‘Hey Kay, and she said, ‘Hey Mary Ann.’ Pretty much everybody on this part of the street is close. My mom and dad bought this house in 1990. Miss Kay was the last of the oldest people living on the street now.”

Mary Ann said there were times before she became sick that she would go over and help the neighbor “tidy up.”

“Those of us in the neighborhood always called her the ‘Cat Lady,’” Mary Ann said. “She loved cats.”

Mary Ann explained her cat was a descendant of one of her neighbors’ cats and that cat will be even more special to her now that Miss Kay is gone.

“It just breaks my heart,” Mary Ann said. “We are all stunned we because we didn’t hear or see anything.”