



# **"Miraculous Escape:" Alton Woman Survives Raging Fire, GoFundMe Set To Assist Her**

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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ALTON - Francine Jackson was renting the home in the 1300 block of Taylor in Alton on Friday, July 8, and was sound asleep when a burning smell and coughing caused her to rise out of bed. At first, she thought it was the “smell of burning leaves” that captured her attention, and she grabbed her phone to contact the fire department.



Then, she realized this wasn't burning leaves, but she looked at the window and saw the whole window engulfed in flames. She tried to grab a fire extinguisher in her cabinet but she realized she had to get outside. She trudged in a blind fashion through a gulf of smoke and was barely able to get out the doorway.

"I was sound asleep and I woke up coughing," she said. "I have asthma."

Jackson's asthma issues may have ultimately saved her life in what seemed what she called "a miraculous escape."

“I felt lucky,” she said. “I had no idea I was that close to death. If I had woken up 30 seconds later I would have been dead. I am grateful to get out of the house and be alive.”

Jackson lost everything she owned in the fire. A GoFundMe has been established for her to help her acquire new items to rebuild her life and find another place to live. Right now, she is living with her family while she waits to figure out her next move.

“I don’t have anything,” she said. “I lost everything I had. I was able to salvage my phone, but nothing else.”

Maxine Jackson-Caldwell, her mother, owns Maxine’s Daycare in Alton. She believed “Our father in heaven breathed his breath upon her and woke her up and to live and see another day.”

“I am so grateful she lived through it,” Maxine said. “It is like we have to now start all over from scratch, but she will do it. Somehow things will be OK in the end.”

Francine Jackson believed it was divine intervention in waking her up during the terrible blaze.

“I believe my deceased ancestors were there with me to wake me up and get out of the house,” she said. “I am so thankful I was able to get out.”

**To contribute to the GoFundMe visit here:**

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/hrvuvv-help-francine-start-over>.