



Dog Saves Dallas Woman from House Fire Operation Kindness Rescue Makes Heroic Rescue of Her Own

CARROLLTON, TX (March 3, 2014)... Zooney, a six-year-old German shepherd mix from [Operation Kindness](#), became a heroine last month when she helped save her owner, Alyssia Webb Birnbaum, from a house fire. Birnbaum credits Zooney with discovering the fire and alerting her to danger.

"The firefighters told me that the room I had been in collapsed just after Zooney led me to safety," said Birnbaum. "She saved my life."

For Birnbaum, that day was ordinary until she went to take a shower. Zooney immediately followed her, which was unusual because Zooney is afraid of running water.

"Normally she won't even go near the bathroom, but that day she did. She just stood there, shifting from paw to paw," recalled Birnbaum. "Then she started making this weird, modulating sound I've never heard before. The water was running, and Zooney just kept making that noise and staring at this spot in the wall behind me. Then she was jumping up on the glass shower door – something she never does. I opened it and she leaped in, even though she hates the water. I figured maybe she really needed to go potty, so I turned off the shower, grabbed my robe and got ready to take her outside."



"It felt really hot, and it was hard to breathe in there. I kept coughing, but at that point I thought it was steam from the shower. I had no idea it was actually smoke."

Zooney led Birnbaum out of the bathroom and to the door. That's when Birnbaum noticed the commotion coming from outside.

"As I was getting ready to take her out, I heard all this noise. Our back fence was shaking and people were pounding on the door, ringing the bell and screaming at me. I heard them telling me to get out because the house was on fire. So we did."

Once outside, Birnbaum learned that one of her neighbors had seen a tall fire blazing along the property line between houses. He called 911 and while waiting for help to arrive, he used a garden hose to try to keep the flames at bay. Despite his efforts, the fire burned quickly, engulfing the outside wall of Birnbaum's bathroom in a matter of minutes.

"I'm so thankful to my neighbor for calling 911, and for Zooney and everyone else who tried to help us," said Birnbaum.

Zooney came into Birnbaum's life as a four-month-old puppy with oversized ears and bright eyes. Birnbaum knew Zooney was special from the start, but she had no idea that a rescue dog from **Operation Kindness** – the oldest and largest no-kill animal shelter in North Texas – would one day rescue her.

"I love those animal rescue stickers that people put on their cars that say 'Who rescued who?' because Zooney rescues me in so many ways. She makes me laugh and is so loyal. When I'm sick, she just lies in bed next to me. She's just amazing," Birnbaum added.

Every year **Operation Kindness** takes in and cares for hundreds of rescues like Zooney. The organization cares for an average of 300 dogs and cats at its Carrollton, Texas, shelter with an additional 100 animals living in its foster home network. **Operation Kindness** has saved more than 75,000 animals since its inception. Learn how to adopt, donate or volunteer by visiting www.OperationKindness.org or by calling 972-418-PAWS.

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