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# Team of Good Samaritans Save Elderly Women from Fiery Car Wreck after Deer Encounter

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Multiple good samaritans sprung into action on Tuesday afternoon, rescuing two older individuals from a smoking vehicle which collided with a deer.

Frederiksted resident Christina Lake was on her way home from the pharmacy, driving in the vicinity of the old Centerline Bakery building, when the deer suddenly ran out from the bushes in front of her vehicle. Lake says she quickly slammed on her brakes, screaming in shock.

Though the animal escaped contact with her vehicle, the small car coming from the opposite direction was not so lucky, and collided with the deer. “It was just a loud impact, so when I heard it I pulled over,” Lake told Consortium journalists. Concerned for the safety of the other driver, she quickly ran across the street to offer assistance. At least two other good samaritans also

followed suit and they discovered two visibly shaken older women in the car.

“A gentleman ran across the street also, and I remember him telling the lady to pop the hood, ‘cuz it started smoking,” Ms. Lake recounted. Once people became aware of the smoke pouring out from the front of the car, attention shifted to getting the vehicle’s occupants to safety. “And now one of the older ladies was trying to get out of the vehicle but she was more concerned about the groceries in her car.”

Ms. Lake noted that due to their age, and perhaps initial shock, both driver and passenger were not able to move as quickly as perhaps necessary. Lake and the other woman did not hesitate, taking hold of the elderly ladies’ hands and ushering them to safety, urging the pair to forget about the groceries and put distance between them and the smoldering vehicle. “My concern was just their safety,” Ms. Lake said.

Moments after the women were rescued from the car’s smoking interior, Ms. Lake and other bystanders heard the unmistakable sound of something being engulfed in flames. “We just started to hear, like, popping sounds...in no time – it happened so quickly – the car just lit on fire, it started burning...it was like a loud ‘whoosh’ and it was just in flames...everything happened within minutes,” she recounted.

Apart from the three initial citizen responders, others approached to offer assistance to the shaken women who had been in the vehicle just prior. Someone brought water, others offered comforting words, and everyone at the scene helped calm the driver and passenger before escorting them into the safety of another vehicle which had stopped to offer assistance.

“It was terrifying...it was frightening for me, the fact that everything happened so fast. I’m just glad that we were able to move so quickly to get them away from the vehicle before ...it got to that point,” Lake said. She also commended the quick response of the fire department, police and other responders who arrived on the scene. While Lake says she has thankfully experienced no lasting ill effects from the incident; she has emphasized the importance of careful driving on St. Croix roadways. “These deers...they just pop out suddenly, and it’s like, you have to drive with caution, and really really be paying attention on the road. Because yesterday, what happened, it could happen to anyone.”

The Virgin Islands Fire and Emergency Medical Services confirmed details of the incident to the Consortium.