

Puppy Named Hero Saves Family from Fire

Lab-Dalmatian's name had been chosen on a whim.

Posted: December 29, 2006, 5 a.m. EST

A name that a 4-year-old boy chose on a whim for his puppy – Hero – turned out to be prophetic when the Labrador Retriever-Dalmatian mix saved his owners from a fire at their northwest Indiana home the day after Christmas.

Around 4 a.m. on Dec. 26, Hero, a 6-month-old who had been adopted from a local humane society shortly after birth, sensed the fire, then warned the boy, Noah Ford, by licking his face to wake him. Noah awakened and then started screaming for his mother, Melissa Ford.

The mother and son ran outside and called 911. When firefighters arrived, they pulled Hero from the house. He suffered from smoke inhalation and a burned throat, but was otherwise unhurt. He's currently on antibiotics to prevent pneumonia.

Fire investigators think a short circuit in a coffee maker probably started the fire, according to Lake Station Fire Chief Ron Goode.

Melissa Ford said that her son chose the puppy's name after she took him to the local humane society.

"For him to be named Hero, be a Dalmatian – a fire dog – and for him to save Noah, it's a miracle. We named him Hero, and now he's a hero. It really is incredible. The dog saved our lives," Ford said.