

Boone Family Saved by NFL Rookie On I-40

Written by Steve Frank
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A family from Boone were pulled over on I-40 in Tennessee by NFL rookie Jonathan “Tig” Willard, who noticed their car was on fire—and made national news on Good Morning America. The former Clemson University linebacker, 23, was headed to the Tennessee Titans’ training camp in Nashville, Tenn., Tuesday night, when he saw the SUV in flames near Oak Ridge, Tenn. “The car in front of me just started smoking,” Willard said. “Once I rushed to the car, I saw that there were three little kids in the back seat. The adrenaline just kicked in. I was just on ‘go’ mode.”

Cheri Hubbard of Boone was driving with her three young children to visit their dad when her engine suddenly caught fire, “They were God sent. It was a miracle that they were there.” By the time the fire was out, there was only a charred frame of the SUV left behind. “The whole front end of the car was just about ignited,” Hubbard said. “The tires started popping one by one. It was really scary.” Willard, along with Clint Dowty from White House, Tenn., helped pull the family, including a toddler, and their pet Chihuahua to safety, as flames engulfed the vehicle. The family was saved—their SUV—totaled in the fire.

Photos: ABC News via WSOC-TV