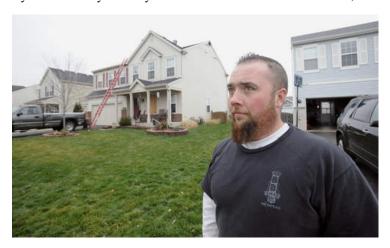# Joliet man credited with saving four neighbors from fire

By Brian Stanley bstanley@stmedianetwork.com December 16, 2012 2:30PM

Don Marino stands in front of his neighbor's home at 1817 Black Hill Ridge Drive in Joliet, IL on Sunday December 16, 2012. He was on his way to work at 4:30 this morning and noticed fire coming from the home; He broke a window with a chair on the front level to awaken the family who were asleep at the time of the fire. | Matt Marton~Sun-Times Media

JOLIET — Firefighters say a neighbor is responsible for saving four people from a house fire earlier this month.

According to reports, Don Marino was preparing to leave for work around 4:30 a.m. on Dec. 16, when he noticed, "sparks in the air" near the house next door in the 1800 block of Black Hill Ridge Drive.

Fire Investigator Mike Stapp said Moreno saw more flames coming from the back of the two-story house and began pounding on the front door.

"When nobody came down he threw a chair through the front window and climbed in," Stapp said. "He found the family and grabbed the youngest and middle daughters to bring them out."

Marino then went back to make sure their brother and mother also escaped. The father of the family was at work at the time of the fire, reports said.

"He returned once more to look for the family dog, but the house was filling up with smoke and he had to get out," Stapp said. It was later discovered the animal had already escaped on its own.

The house was damaged and is currently uninhabitable. Reports said the fire is not considered suspicious. Several neighbors, including Marino, were helping the family secure their belongings Sunday.

"He saved their lives going in there," Stapp said.

Marino will be receiving a letter of appreciation from the fire department.