

Man, 73, saves neighbor when truck rolls on his chest

by Cheryl McDermott

A 65-year old Washington County man is alive today following an accident last week when his truck rolled down a steep driveway, knocked him down, and came to rest with a tire on his chest — thanks to a quick-acting neighbor.

On March 30 about 1:40 p.m., Kerry Gerttula pulled into his steep driveway at 310 NW 87th Avenue in an unincorporated area of Washington County, Oregon. He may have forgotten to put the truck in park, Sheriff's Office public information officer Sgt. Vance Stimler reported.

As Gerttula stepped out of the truck, it rolled back, knocked him down, and came to a stop with the left front wheel on top of his chest.

A neighbor, John Salvatori, 73, happened to be looking out his window and he and his wife jumped into action. Salvatori's wife phoned 911 and he quickly got into the truck and pulled it forward and off his neighbor's chest.

“He likely saved Mr. Gerttula's life,” Sgt. Stimler said, referring to Salvatori.

Gerttula was transported to Oregon Health Sciences University with non-life threatening injuries.

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