

Family who lost home soon to be back living in Milton

By JASON MISNER
The Champion

From the ashes of charred clothes and melted toys, the Loukisha Martin family has discovered a spirit of giving they would have thought nearly impossible to imagine.

"The kids are shocked more than me with the donations we've been receiving," said Ms Martin, 29, about the support garnered after she and her four children were burned out of their home last month. "They're so happy, they're so excited, it has raised their spirits."

Even better news has come their way — they've found a place to live in town, not far from their burned home.

"It's more than what I could ever imagine," Ms Martin said, disbelief shooting through her cellphone. It's become a lifeline, of sorts, for communication and is racking up major minutes these days.

"I've got to thank everyone, I've just got to think of how. This is really touching everyone."

A quick emotional rebound appeared difficult to fathom given the scare the family endured the night of February 18. With the house filling with smoke, and all of them in their PJs, Ms Martin, clutching her six-month-old son, Pierson, swiftly led her daughters



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Mom Loukisha Martin soon won't have to drive so far to drop off her kids (from left) Jasmyne, 6, Shaneikah, 9, and Tenisha, 10, at school as the family is moving back to Milton.

Shaneikah, 10, Tenisha, 9, and Jasmyne, 6, outside to safety.

The house was destroyed, throwing the family's life into disarray. They've lived in Milton for only a year-and-a-half.

Since the fire, Ms Martin, on maternity leave, has been living with her mom in Toronto. Ms Martin has been commuting almost two hours a day in a rented 2004 Pontiac Montana to get three of her kids back and forth to school in Milton.

Jasmyne goes to Chris Hadfield Public School and Shaneikah and

Tenisha attend E.W. Foster Public School.

The long drive will come to an end March 24, when the family moves into a four-bedroom house, just around the corner from their former Somerville Terrace home. Ms Martin signed a six-month lease, with an opportunity to renew on a monthly basis while her insurance company decides what will become of her burned house.

The outpouring of generosity has touched more than the lives of the Martin family.

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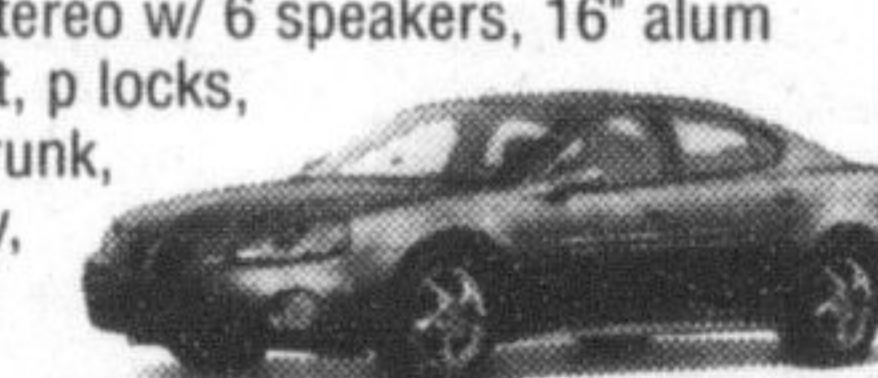
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