

Good Samaritans try saving teens

By Julie Slack
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Michael Easton broke down and cried on Monday after closing his eyes and reliving the crash scene that took the

lives of two 17-year-old Milton residents the day before. Michael, 35, and his father Murray Easton, 62, were among the first to come upon the horrific scene on James Snow Parkway near Esquesing Line

around 2:30 p.m. April 10. Grade 12 Craig Kielburger Secondary School students Dylan Stephenson and Faruq Anani were inside a Nissan 350Z that lost control, and crashed into a street-lamp, shearing it at its base. The car burst into flames. "I can close my eyes and it's like a movie, it's so sad," Michael said. "The flames were shooting five feet above the roof of the car."

When the Eastons came upon the scene, Michael said he saw several people standing around screaming and crying, while others were using their phones to take photos and videos.

Someone screamed that there were kids in the car, and Murray said it was impossible to see because the windows were heavily tinted.

While Michael, a resident of Milton, tried to help the driver of the vehicle, he quickly realized he was in bad shape. He had studied police foundations before becoming a teacher at Mohawk College, so he was well-versed in first aid and CPR.

He tried to find a pulse, but there wasn't one.

"It was very disheartening," he said.

He quickly ran to the passenger side, where someone had managed to pry open the car door.

He tried to get the passenger out, but his seat-belt was preventing him from pulling him out. The passenger was hardly breathing, and when he did manage a breath, he was inhaling smoke-filled air, Michael said. As they struggled to get the seat-belt undone, everyone was screaming to find a knife, Michael recalled. Finally, a teenager came running to the car with a knife and used it to cut his seat-belt off.

A married father to three young children, Michael said he never got the name of the teenager who took off almost immediately after making the cut.

"I'd really like to find him to say that he did such a great thing," he said.

Another man named Jesse, who Michael said works at Sobeys' warehouse, helped as well. While his father Murray used a fire extinguisher to smash the back windshield out to try to locate any other passengers, his son dove into the car to pull the passenger, Dylan, to the ground. Flames were engulfing the compartment of the car, licking across the roof, Murray said.

"Michael dove into the car to save him and the flames were right across the inside of the car, it was totally on fire. Another couple of minutes and that kids' clothing would have been on fire."

Michael said it was difficult to get him out because he was tall and his legs were pinned against the smashed-in dash.

"I looked at (Jesse) and said, 'It's now or never, we have to pull,'" he recalled.

They did and they pulled him a few feet from the car. His breathing was shallow but he took a big breath of fresh air.

Michael did a quick examination of the teen and realized his injuries were extreme.

Police and fire department officials worked to extinguish the vehicle's blaze, but it took a lot of efforts, Murray explained.

After what seemed like ages, the air ambulance showed up. Michael said by this time, he had the passenger in his care. He was talking with him, kept telling him to stay with him.

"He told me he lived in Milton, he told me his name and the driver's name and he said there wasn't anyone else in the car," Michael recalled.

"When we heard there were kids in the car, it was a nightmare," Murray said, trying to locate them.

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