

Heroic dog saves paraplegic from flaming truck

FRANKLIN, Ind. (AP) A paraplegic woman credits her pet Rottweiler with pulling her from her small truck moments before it burst into flames.

The dog, named Eve, dragged 41-year-old Kathie Vaughn from the vehicle Wednesday night after it caught fire along an interstate highway near Franklin, she said Thursday.

"When I pulled up, the dog was pulling the lady through the grass, to get her away from the fire," said Trooper Mike Snider of the Indiana State Police.

Vaughn, who is paralyzed from the waist down, escaped uninjured, but her 6-year-old dog suffered burns on the pads of her paws.

Vaughn, an antiques dealer, said she was headed toward Atlanta for an antiques



INDIANAPOLIS — Kathie Vaughn gets kiss Thursday from her pet Rottweiler, Eve, the day after Eve pulled Vaughn from a burning truck.

AP PHOTO

show when she heard a single pop and smelled smoke in her brand new van. As she pulled to a stop on the shoulder of the road, she saw smoke coming from the engine compartment.

When she realized she couldn't control the fire, she began gathering the parts of her dissembled wheelchair. But "the smoke was really getting bad and I was disoriented at this point," she said.

Eve grabbed Vaughn and pulled her out the door of the van. Vaughn fell to the ground and the 47 kilo dog pulled her away, dragging her into a drainage ditch about six meters away.

"Not too long after we got there, the cab poofed (exploded)," Vaughn said, and flames spread quickly through the passenger and cargo areas, destroying the

load of antiques.

Snider was summoned by a trucker who reported the fire by radio, but the trooper was unable to stop the flames with a fire extinguisher that he carries in his car.

As for Eve, she continued to protect her owner — this time from the policeman. The dog "had to help me get to the police car, because she wouldn't let the policeman get to me," Vaughn said.

Vaughn said the heroics were second nature for Eve, even though the dog has had no special training for working with the handicapped.

"That's the true nature of the Rottweiler," she said. "They're very loyal and loving and will take care of their owners at all cost.

"She just loves me. She helps me all the time."