

Help a Grand Island Family Who Lost Everything in a Fire

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GRAND ISLAND, NY -- On Monday, November 5th, everything changed for one Grand Island family.

Christopher Ray was home alone in the family's apartment.

He was working on an essay for a college class. It was just after 6:30am. Chris didn't realize it, but he had tossed a blanket onto a candle. It took just minutes for the blanket to go up in flames.

Then, the couch began to burn. Chris tried to put the fire out, but within moments he couldn't see and could hardly breathe.

Chris tried to save his dog and two cats. Unfortunately, he couldn't.

Chris was taken to ECMC with smoke inhalation and minor burns. His mom, Linda remembers the call. Her son was okay, but their apartment was completely burned, along with everything inside. Including their beloved pets.

Sixteen-year old Daniel was told about the fire at school a little later in the day. The family had only moved into the apartment months earlier. They had no choice. They had to move out of their home after Linda's husband, the boys' stepfather, passed away. He died one year exactly before the fire. The family has faced great challenges. Now, it was another one.

Without renter's insurance, Linda Smith and her boys, Chris and Daniel Ray are left with nothing. But, the community is helping.

The Grand Island School District is raising money. On Tuesday, November 13th, students can wear baseball hats for \$1. Teachers can dress down for \$5. All of the money will go to the family.

There's more.

The Supervisor of Grand Island, Mary Cooke, is also helping. She has offered to open the Town Hall as a drop off point for much needed items for the family. Cooke hopes the community will come to the aid of this family. They need everything. Officials are asking that you **not** bring bags of clothing that you may have lying around because they don't have the staff to sort things and make runs to the Salvation Army or other charity.

They are asking for new items or gift cards.

If you think about what you might lose in a fire like this, you realize how much has to be replaced. Everything from towels, sheets, dishes, clothing, shoes and furniture.

The Grand Island High School and Town Hall are open for drop-offs during regular business hours.