

Maryland Firefighters Rescue Cat from Utility Pole

Prince George's County firefighters retrieved Snowball the cat from her perch on a Fort Washington, Md., power pole.

Posted: March 27, 2007, 5 a.m. EST

Firefighters Todd Szelkowsky and Kevin Hedges rescued Snowball from a utility pole. (Photo courtesy of PGFD/Rudy Thomas) The Prince George Fire Department rescued a Fort Washington, Md., cat from a dangerous perch on a utility pole earlier this month, reports Firehouse.com, a news resource for firemen and emergency personnel nationwide. The firefighters responded to the situation after they received a call from a concerned neighborhood resident.

Snowball the cat took refuge on the cable wires of a utility pole after being chased up the pole by an aggressive dog. Snowball's perch was dangerously close to high-voltage electrical lines.

Firefighters Todd Szelkowsky and Kevin Hedges, under the supervision of Battalion Chief Rudy Thomas, used an extension ladder with attached "bucket" to ascend toward the cat's position on the utility pole. Snowball cooperated by not attempting to escape the rescue attempt, and the firefighters were able to return the cat to her owner.

"This was a difficult decision to make in attempting this rescue," Thomas said, noting the danger of working in close proximity to high-voltage lines. "However, we took the time to identify all the power lines, established ground rules and implemented all safety precautions to avoid injury to our personnel. If we were not 100 percent positive about avoiding injury to firefighters, we would not have attempted this rescue, fortunately, everything went as planned and we were able to help members of our community."