



*****For Immediate Release*****

Captain Neil Weaver
Government and Media Relations

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Contact: Trooper Chelsea A. Hodgson

Phone: (360) 265-1332

Email: Chelsea.Hodgson@wsp.wa.gov

WSP sergeant offers home to stranded German family touring United States

CATHLAMET – A family of six visiting from Germany was two miles from completing their year-long tour of the United States when disaster struck Friday afternoon.

The Fischer family of Oldenburg, Germany, spent the past year traveling the United States in their truck and travel trailer, experiencing the trip of a lifetime while updating their family and friends on their YouTube channel “50 in 365”. The journey began in Florida, with plans to finish sometime this month by visiting the Redwoods of California, then head to Utah to sell the truck and trailer before flying home.

At around 4 p.m. Friday, July 5, 2019, the family was nearing the final leg of their journey, two miles from crossing over the border of their final, unvisited state in the continental U.S.: Oregon. While traveling on State Route 401 in Pacific County, Benjamin Fischer thought he struck something in the road. He slowed and drifted to the right, his wheels sinking into the soft, earthen shoulder. The wheels became stuck and the ground gave way, causing the truck and trailer to tip over into the ditch.

The good news: his wife, Melanie, and four children, Jakob, 15, Emilie, 13, Linus, 10, and Eli, 7, were unharmed. The bad news: their truck and trailer were totaled and belongings dispersed.

Washington State Patrol (WSP) troopers arrived on scene and assisted the family with collecting their things and calling for a tow truck to right the vehicle. WSP Sgt. Brad Moon then took it one step further by arranging for the family to stay with him and his family at their Cathlamet home. His wife, Shawna, came to the scene and brought the family home.

The father of four boys himself, the Moon household doubled from a family of six to a family of 12, and remained that way throughout the weekend as the Fischers went through their belongings, consolidating everything from their truck and trailer to the rented minivan they will use to complete their journey.

“We just saw a family in need that had just lost nearly everything, and we felt that we could reach out and help them,” said Sgt. Moon. “It’s just doing my job and helping in any way we can.”

Between Sgt. Moon's house and his in-laws across the street, the group functioned throughout the weekend as extended family, sharing meals, swapping stories, playing games and even celebrating Benjamin's 42nd birthday on July 7.

"My heart is full; we ask our employees every day to earn their badge, and this goes above and beyond earning their badge," said WSP District 8 Captain James Mjor. "For a person like Brad, this is actually typical throughout his career. I am glad he is on our team as one of our leaders, setting the example for law enforcement."

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