

Drivers' efforts lessen runaway truck's crash

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In just a few seconds, actions taken by two drivers respectively operating a runaway fully-loaded log semi-tractor-trailer and a pickup served to lessen the effect of an imminent crash.

The mishap occurred on Leota Road about 1,000 feet from the Scott/Washington County line. Terry A. Peacock, 39, Austin, was at the wheel of the big rig just before 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 10. The semi's trailer, owned by Peacock Logging of Austin, was loaded with massive logs that had been recently harvested. As he steered the 1995 Volvo rig east on Leota Rd., Peacock told Deputy Mark Shapinsky that he began experiencing mechanical problems. When the rig came down a fairly steep grade on the county road, Peacock said the motor quit, and he started losing air pressure necessary to operate his brakes.

As he began rounding a curve in the road, Peacock said he saw a 2001 Ford F150 pickup being driven by Donald G. Pugh, 67, Salem, coming west toward him.

Pugh saw the rig and realized there may be trouble ahead. He tried to get over as far as he could to the right and then he stopped his pickup. Swerving his semi-tractor-trailer into an embankment on the left, Peacock managed to get the Volvo tractor past Pugh, but the trailer swung out and sideswiped the driver's side before stopping.

Peacock was listed as uninjured, but Pugh suffered back pain and was assisted at the scene by Scott County EMS, which then took him by ambulance to Scott Memorial Hospital in Scottsburg.

Pugh's truck was badly damaged, and total property damage was estimated by Deputy Shapinsky at up to \$25,000. Both vehicles were towed from the scene.

Two other officers of the Sheriff's Department, Chief Deputy Wayne Williams and Reserve Deputy Bobby Thompson, assisted Deputy Shapinsky at the scene.