

Fire burns kitchen, walls, floors

By Sharon Corcoran
slcorcoran@nwkansas.com
A Goodland couple found themselves putting out a fire instead of going to bed Tuesday night. They're trying to fix the damage to their home, but they say they need some help.

Levi Hatfield, 25, and Kim Crocker, 35, said they had finished dinner and were getting ready for bed when he noticed smoke in the bathroom. He used a fire extinguisher and then a garden hose to contain the flames while waiting for the fire department.

The roof, ceiling, walls in the bathroom and kitchen and floor in the bathroom, kitchen, hallway and living room were damaged.

The couple said they are buying the house from her mother, Judy Morris of Goodland, and had just moved in 2 1/2 months ago. They didn't have insurance. They said they can do the repairs with help from friends and family and don't need furniture or clothes, but they need help with building supplies. Morris said she set up an account at Rasure Lumber Do-It Center for donations.

"It was really idiotic not having insurance," Morris said. "I had the papers ready ... but just didn't bring the money in yet ... I just keep kicking myself over and over."

There's a lot of damage, Hatfield said, but it is fixable. He and Crocker had painted the inside of the house and were fixing it up and said they are heartbroken at seeing what happened.

Morris said Hatfield was so proud of the pot of flowers he planted and put in the front yard, and Crocker proud of the work they were doing inside.

Fire Chief Brian James said the fire was determined to be accidental and caused by an electrical wiring problem.

He said a Kansas fire marshal arrived Wednesday morning to investigate and determined it was the old wiring that was at fault. He said the fire marshal told him it was something that would not have been spotted in a normal home inspection.

James said one of the problems the firemen had was there was a second roof that trapped the heat and fire between them. The firemen had to pull the ceiling down



A fire burned the walls and ceiling and left melted paint hanging in Levi Hatfield and Kim Crocker's kitchen at 705 Washington Tuesday night. Firefighters had to cut through two roofs and pull

from inside and had to cut holes in the roofs to vent the fire and get it under control.

James said the fire was in the kitchen area above the back door area, and went up into the roof and down into the wall to the floor and across the ceiling.

He said they firemen had to go into the attic and had to cut into the

roof to vent the fire.

He said the roof was starting to collapse a bit so we went outside and cut a hole in the roof.

Hatfield said they had finished dinner and headed to bed because they had to go to work early in the morning.

When he went into the bathroom and saw smoke, he grabbed

down one of the two ceilings to put out the blaze.

Photo by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News

the fire extinguisher, then went outside and got a hose to spray the fire.

Their plan to get to bed early sort of went up in smoke, he said.

"Ten-thirty turned into 2:30," he said.

He works at Adronics and Hank's Cafe, and she works at SS Country Store in Sharon Springs.

They are staying with Morris and made arrangements to stay with a friend after she moves if they are still working on the house, the couple said.

Morris she she has sold her home and will be moving to Sheridan Lake, Colo., in July with two grandchildren, Bobby and LeAnn, whom she has custody of.

Brewster man charged

By Jan Katz Ackerman
jkackerman@gmail.com

A retired Brewster businessman has been charged with sex crimes against two children age 6 to 12 for incidents that took place 12 to eight years ago.

Warren Reid, 80, who formerly operated the Reid Grain elevator in Brewster, has been charged in Thomas County District Court with two counts of aggravated indecent liberties with a child.

Thomas County Attorney Andrea Wyrick on Wednesday said a family member reported the alleged incidents to law enforcement.

Thomas County Sheriff Mike Baughn said while the alleged crimes took place some time ago, it wasn't until recently that the victims came forward.

Reid is charged with having sexual contact with a child during a six-year period from the summer of 1994 through 2000. The child, now 20, was age 6 to 12 at the time. Reid also is charged with having contact with a child, now 15, who was 8 in 2000.

If convicted, he could face 4 1/2 to 20 1/2 years in prison and a fine up to \$300,000 on each count.

Reid was arrested June 13. He was released Wednesday on a \$100,000 bond and is scheduled for a first appearance in Thomas County District Court at 9 a.m. today.

Sheriff searches for vandals

Sheriff Kevin Butts said Monday he feels the evidence seized in a search at 1315 College last Wednesday will produce arrests of those responsible for an estimated \$6,000 in damage to a county loader parked on a road northeast of town June 6.

The sheriff said he and four deputies served the warrant last Wednesday evening, seizing a car, tools and clothing from the house.

Butts said the loader had been "viciously attacked," with all the windows smashed, gages broken and radiator hoses cut.

"They spent quite a bit of time working over that loader," he said. "They even climbed on top and were tearing up things on the roof. It looked like somebody had a lot of anger and took it out on the loader."

Butts said he is waiting for a positive identification of tire marks and some of the other items recovered in the search, which he took to the KBI lab in Topeka.

County offices will be rolling out the red carpet

By Tom Betz
ntbetz@nwkansas.com

County offices on the main floor and the district court will be Regency Red this summer after the commissioners approved a bid from Wane's Carpet to put flooring in five offices.

The commissioners put off a decision on the carpet bids last Tuesday, and representatives from the three bidders were at the meeting this week with samples.

Commissioner Mitch Tiede asked who was going to make a call on the color. Commissioner Kevin Rasure said he thought those who were in charge of the rooms should look at the carpets and pick one.

County Clerk Janet Rumpel, Treasurer Iris Scheopner, Register of Deeds Billie Hoyt and Linda Bowen of the district court looked at the samples and picked the shade of red.

The four spent time looking at the samples, then decided it would be good to reduce the selection.

"Give us three choices," Rumpel

said, adding it would be good to find a color that does not show dirt.

Sharon Bowker represented Elliott's, the high bidder at \$11,950. She said it was her understanding the other two bids were lower, took her samples off the table and left.

That left Millers and Wane's. The women set one sample book from Millers aside and compared the two that were left. Discussing the colors and fabric, the women concentrated on the sample from Wane's.

Tiede at one point tried to give his two cents worth, pointing to another color, but the women, saying they had to live with it, selected Regency Red.

Commissioner Chuck Thomas said the commissioners could say they left the choice up to the women.

Commissioner Mitch Tiede asked Chuck Bohme of Millers to explain why he had submitted two bids for carpet. Bohme said both were for nylon, 28-ounce carpet, but that one had fewer color choices and was a bit cheaper. The two bids were

\$8,134 and \$9,884.

Bob Horton from Wane's said the samples he brought were of a carpet that would not show seams once it is on the floor.

Horton said he laid the carpets in the court house, and thought it was more than 20 years ago. His bid was \$9,100.

"What about painting before they lay the carpet," Hoyt asked.

"Are you going to do it?" Tiede asked.

Rasure said it made sense to paint before the new carpet goes down.

Rumpel said the last time the walls were painted was probably when the old carpet was laid years ago.

Tiede asked when Horton would want to get started. He said it would take him about a month to be ready. He said that would give the office people time to do some painting.

Rasure said he was somewhat disappointed the women had not chosen the lower-priced carpet from

Millers. Rumpel said the thing about not seeing the seams was a deciding factor to her.

Thomas asked if Hoyt would do the painting herself. Hoyt said she had not thought about that, but wondered if there was someone who could be hired to do the painting. Rasure said he might have some names and would give those to Rumpel.

Thomas asked if the other offices wanted to paint, and all said yes. McKnight said he felt it would be good to go with a lighter color for the walls.

Rumpel said since the commissioners were not going to carpet the county attorney's office because of a planned remodeling project, maybe they should do the commissioner's room so it would match the carpet in the clerk's office.

Tiede said that was a good idea, noting it would keep the bid about the same with five rooms. Horton said he would measure the room and refigure the total.

corrections

The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to report errors. We believe that news should be fair and factual. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

Foreclosure Sales

317 Clark St, Goodland
June 26, 2008 at 9:00 AM MDT
Sherman County Courthouse
Minimum Bid: \$16,000
2 BR, 1 Bath -- 768 Square Feet
Property sold as is -- Repairs may be required. Subject to 3-month Redemption Rights. Buyer responsible for any outstanding real estate taxes.

1502 Caldwell Ave, Goodland
June 30, 2008 at 9:00 am MDT
Sherman County Courthouse
Minimum Bid: \$1,000
2 BR, 1 Bath -- 1,020 Square Feet
Property is sold as is -- Repairs may be required. Lead-Based Paint is Present. No Right of Redemption. Buyer is responsible for any outstanding real estate taxes.

For more information contact:
USDA Rural Development
2715 Canterbury Drive
Hays, KS 67601
Phone: 785-628-3081, option 4
www.resales.usda.gov

The Sherman County Conservation District will conduct a sign up June 23 through July 30 for both Non-Point and State Water Resources Cost Share Programs.

Some of the State Water Resources Cost Share Program practices eligible for cost share include Contour Buffer Strips, Critical Area Planting, Diversions, Fencing, Grassed Waterways, Pipelines, Terraces and Livestock Wells and Tanks. Windbreaks have been added this year! Practices will be cost shared at 70% of average cost or actual cost, whichever is less with a \$5,000 landowner limit.

The Non Point Source Funds can be used for FAIL-ING on site waste water systems and plugging abandoned wells. LEPG will have to evaluate and rank the applications and there will be a \$50 fee upfront for these services.

For further information call Sandy Rodgers at the Conservation District Office
785-899-3070 extension 35.
210 W. 10th St. • Goodland, Kan. 67735

Meet KEVIN BERENS Republican Candidate for DISTRICT COURT JUDGE

15th Judicial District, Division 2

Saturday, June 28

Goodland: 9 a.m. at Gulick Park

Saturday, July 12

Kanorado: 11:30 a.m. at City Park

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