

Dust storms, accidents, rescue top 2004 story list

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said Miller got out of the car after the accident, but couldn't walk or get help because her right ankle was broken. When the temperature dropped, he said, she crawled back into the car.

The final road death of the year came on Oct. 23, when a Goodland High freshman was killed and four students injured in an accident about midnight on County Road 64 three miles east of town.

Michael J. Klinge, 14, was riding in a 1999 Dodge Durango driven by Brett Bahe, 16, when it went out of control and rolled at least twice, Sheriff Doug Whitson said. None of the youths was wearing a seat belt.

Bahe, son of Randy and Kathy Bahe, was treated at Goodland Regional Medical Center and then taken by ambulance to St. Anthony Central Hospital in Denver.

Ashley J. Christians, 14, was taken to Goodland Regional Medical Center and then flown to Children's Hospital in Denver, where she underwent surgery. She was back in town for the funeral that Wednesday at Max Jones Fieldhouse.

Brewster man guilty of killing his wife

2. Kerrie Bevington was killed by a shotgun blast to the head just over a year ago, on Dec. 28. Her husband, Lanny Bevington, was charged with first-degree murder and kidnapping. Almost nine months later, he pleaded guilty to kidnapping and second-degree murder, and he is now serving a nearly 19-year prison sentence.

At Bevington's preliminary hearing on April 14, a KBI agent testified that Bevington told her during questioning after his arrest that he pointed the shotgun at his wife and fired. This testimony came after the first witness called said he saw Bevington unloading the weapon the night before the shooting.

District Magistrate Judge Tom Carroll ruled there was probable cause for a charge of first-degree murder and set a trial for July 19.



Bevington



Fanny Menold, mother of Aircraft Seal and Gasket Corp. President Herb Menold (back to camera), talked to Lt. Gov. John Moore on Thursday morning Feb. 15, about how pleased she was to see the company open a plant in Kansas. She lived in Sabetha before moving to California.

Photos by Tom Betz / The Goodland Star-News

As the trial was to open, District Judge Jack Burr accepted a plea agreement which included Bevington's plea to second-degree murder and aggravated kidnapping charges and set sentencing on Sept. 15. On that day, Judge Burr sentenced him to 176 months for the murder charge and 51 months for the kidnapping, with the sentences to run consecutively for a total of 18 years 11 months.

Bevington could be eligible for parole after serving 16 years. The victim's mother said she was determined to be there if it comes up to ensure that he is kept off the streets.

"When you do come up for parole," she told him in court, "you will see my face again."

3. With the Goodland Cowboys' football season approaching, the community was troubled by reported attacks on the coach, then rocked by his arrest for setting his own house on fire.

The Goodland School Board called an emergency meeting to

suspend the coach and teachers scrambled to cover his classes. The turmoil didn't seem to bother the Cowboys, however, as Assistant Coach Jon McLean stepped up to lead them to an 8-1 regular season and a trip to the state playoffs, where they won two rounds.

The year ended with the arson charges against Tony Diehl dismissed and the school accepting his resignation as teacher and coach about mid-December.

Diehl was arrested Saturday, Aug. 28, on suspicion of arson after the second fire at his home in two weeks. He had complained to police about vandalism and at least one arson attempt at his home after he reported a teen-age party to the sheriff's department. He said the windshield was broken out of his pickup, and someone had attempted to set fire to his house.

Neighbors said someone set the second fire with gasoline or diesel fuel on the back side of the roof of Diehl's house. Police watching for vandals apparently were surprised to catch the "victim" instead.

After the fire was put out, officers got permission from Diehl to search his house at 1108 Harrison,

and then they arrested him and took him to the Sherman County Bastille.

The school board met Sunday afternoon, Aug. 29, and suspended Diehl with pay as both a high school English teacher and coach. Linda VanLoenen, who was supposed to transfer to Grant Junior High, agreed to stay at the high school and take over Diehl's classes, and McLean agreed to take over as head football coach.

VanLoenen's stay at the high school led to a scramble at the junior high, with three other teachers, Brenda Linin, Tanya Gray and Lindsey Emig, taking on extra classes to fill the gap.

Man shot after stabbing another

4. A Utah man was shot by a state law enforcement officer Monday, Nov. 8, 2003, after he allegedly stabbed a Goodland man in a dispute over a woman, fled, then fought officers trying to arrest.

Michael D. Whitaker, 34, is still in the Sherman County Bastille, facing charges of attempted second-



The Goodland Star-News hosted a crowd of 630 who attended the Taste of Home Cooking School Tuesday, April 13, at Max Jones Fieldhouse. Margaret McCutcheson, home economist for the cooking school, stirred Mandarin orange slices into the Strawberry Orange Delight.

Photos by Liz West / The Goodland Star-News

degree murder, aggravated battery and aggravated assault on a law enforcement officer.

The stabbing happened after a disagreement over a woman allegedly led Whitaker to attack Rustin Leiker, 21, cutting him in the neck and arm.

Agent Kyle Smith with the Kansas Bureau of Investigation said Whitaker then fled. Leiker was taken to St. Anthony's Central Hospital in Denver, where he was released just one week before Thanksgiving.

Smith said Whitaker was found on the roof of a home at 706 W. 8th in Goodland, where officers tried to talk him down.

Court reports say Whitaker threatened Mike Hopper, a Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks game warden, with a knife. Hopper

fired, and the bullet hit Whitaker in the arm, continuing into his left rib. Authorities said it took several officers to subdue the man even after he was shot.

Leiker was taken to Goodland Regional Medical Center and then to Denver Today, he is back at work at Taco John's and doctors say he is doing well.

Whitaker was taken to the same Denver hospital, where he was treated and released a few days later. He is still awaiting a hearing.

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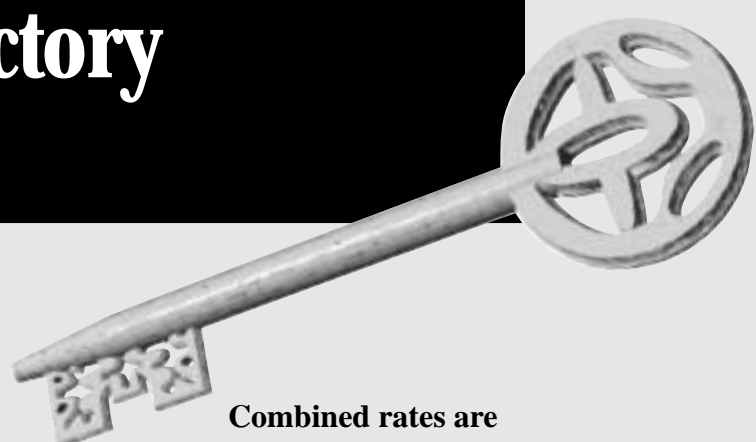
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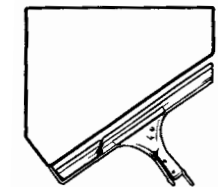
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