

Stabber pleads guilty in arraignment

By Kathryn Burke
The Goodland Star-News
A Utah man accused of attempted murder after stabbing a Goodland man pleaded guilty to a lesser charge in District Court on Monday.

Michael D. Whitaker, 34, was facing charges of attempted second-degree murder, aggravated assault of a law enforcement officer and a lesser charge of aggravated battery. County Attorney Bonnie Selby said through a plea agreement, the state amended the original charges to include only the aggravated battery, a level 4 person felony. Whitaker admitted in court that he stabbed Rustin Leiker, 21, Goodland, after an altercation on Nov. 8. Reports indicate the stabbing was over a "female acquaintance." Whitaker's file states he "stabbed and sliced the throat and arm area of Leiker." That night, Leiker was flown to St. Anthony Central Hospital in Denver in critical condition. Today, Leiker is physically healthy, but still has scars from the attack. After the stabbing, Whitaker fled. He was found that night atop a roof

at 706 W. Eighth in Goodland. Police attempted to talk him down. He allegedly assaulted a state wildlife officer, Michael Hopper, after he came down from the roof, and was shot. Monday, Judge Burr said Whitaker had not yet gone through a preliminary hearing. He asked if Whitaker understood what he was giving up. "Yes," Whitaker replied. Burr accepted the waiver of the preliminary hearing and went straight into an arraignment. Selby informed Burr that the state was amending the charges. Burr asked if Whitaker wanted a formal reading of the charges. Scott Showalter, Whitaker's attorney, said they were familiar with the charges and didn't need a reading. Whitaker agreed. Burr asked if Whitaker wanted to enter a plea. "Guilty," Whitaker said. Burr asked if Whitaker understood he was giving up the right to a jury trial, to question any witnesses against him, to present any witnesses on his behalf, to testify himself and to appeal the court's ruling.

"Yes, sir," Whitaker answered. "You are entering a plea of guilty to the charges ... because you are guilty, is that correct," asked Burr. "Yes, sir," Whitaker said. Burr asked if Whitaker "feloniously and intentionally caused great bodily harm or disfigurement to another person," Rustin Leiker. "Yes, sir," answered Whitaker. Burr asked if the incident happened at approximately 11th and Syracuse in Goodland, Kansas? "Yes, sir," Whitaker said. Burr asked if Whitaker had been promised anything or threatened into a plea of guilty. "No sir," he answered. Depending on Whitaker's criminal history, Burr said, the sentencing guidelines are anywhere between 38 and 172 months in prison for the level 4 person felony. He said Whitaker could be assessed a fine as well. Whitaker was ordered to help provide information for a pre-sentencing report. The defendant, who has spent the past six months in the Sherman County Bastille on \$500,000 bond, was to return to the jail to await sentencing.

Craig speaks at graduation

Spring graduation for the Northwest Kansas Technical College will be at 1:30 p.m. Friday, May 20, at the Max Jones Fieldhouse. The speaker will be Harry W. Craig Jr., chairman of Martin Tractor. Craig graduated from the University of Kansas in 1961 with a bachelor of arts degree and graduated from the university's

law school 1964. He began his career with the law firm of Schroeder, Heeney, Groff, Spies and Craig, where he became a partner. He also worked part-time as an instructor at the Washburn University School of Law, lecturing on estate planning. He held the position until 1970, when he took a position with Martin Tractor. He has served civic and

political organizations over the years. He was a regional vice president of the Kansas Association of School Boards, a member of the Kansas Board of Regents and a member of the Washburn University Board of Regents. He has been a director the Business-Industry Political Action Committee. He has been a director of the Kansas Industrial Council and the Kansas Chamber of Commerce and Industry.



Craig

Woman pleads in drug case

By Kathryn Burke
The Goodland Star-News
In a preliminary hearing turned into an arraignment Friday, a Kanorado woman pleaded not guilty to drug charges. Crystal L. Baumfalk, 29, said she is not guilty of six felony drug charges and one misdemeanor for possession and manufacturing methamphetamine. Baumfalk is the wife of Scott Baumfalk, who is facing similar charges. Crystal Baumfalk was released the Monday after her arrest roughly two years ago on \$50,000 bond. Both arrests stem from a raid Thursday, Dec. 19, 2002, when officers from the Quad County Drug

Task Force, Sherman County Sheriff's Department and the Kansas Bureau of Investigation executed a warrant to search Baumfalk's business, Scotty's Motors Co., 209 Main, Kanorado. Friday, Crystal appeared before District Judge Jack Burr along with her attorney Calvin Williams. She waived her preliminary hearing and opted to go directly into an arraignment. Baumfalk is charged with manufacturing a controlled substance, two counts of possession of ephedrine or derivative as precursor to illegal substances, possession of opiates, opium or narcotic drugs, possession of paraphernalia to grow or distribute marijuana, conspiracy

to manufacture controlled substance, first offense, all felonies, and a misdemeanor charge of possession of drug paraphernalia. Judge Burr asked if the defense wanted to enter a plea for the arraignment. "Not guilty," said Williams. "Mrs. Baumfalk, is that what you wish to do?" asked Judge Burr. "Yes, sir," she answered.

Comrades have memorial



A special memorial service for Sgt. Derrick Lutters was held by the 194th Engineer Brigade of the Tennessee Army National Guard, at their post in Iraq on Saturday. The photo was sent to *The Goodland Star-News* by Public Affairs Officer Sgt. First Class Pete Quinton.

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.

student of the week



Name: Aubrea Winter
Parents: Gary and Deb Winter
Grade: Senior
Age: 18
We've nominated this student because: Aubrea is a responsible role model for her high school young people. Her strong work ethic and her ability to reach her goals are major reasons for her success. She works well with others, peers and adults alike. Obviously, Aubrea is a positive to all whose life she touches.
Student Comment: My

favorite thing about Goodland High School is my friends and being involved in things. Stuco has been a fun experience for me. I have learned a lot at Goodland High School and loved high school.
Activities involved in at school: Stuco president, Girls Athletic Association, FCCLA, National Honor Society, volleyball, softball and peer counseling.
My choice of movies, books, and games: My favorite movie is Save the Last Dance and my favorite type of music is country.
After I leave Goodland High School I intend to: Attend Fort Hays State University and major in pre-vet.
And 10 years from now, I think I'll be: Working as a veterinarian somewhere in a mixed practice.
Favorite Quote: "What lies behind us and what lies ahead of us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us."



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Listings



1108 Harrison

Take a look at this beautiful home today! It offers all new interior paint and a newly remodeled basement. Two bedrooms on the main floor, two bedrooms with bath and family room in basement. New steel doors on front and garage entrance. Baths have new tile on floors. Nice location on the east side of Goodland. This home is priced at \$51.61 per sq. ft. including the finished basement. Offered at \$118,500.



1101 Grand

A must see ranch style home with 3 bedrooms, 2 1/2 baths. Spacious living is what you will find. Family Room also called the Cedar Room has wall-to-wall cabinets on the west wall with wood burning fireplace, open to kitchen, which has center island and a lighted built-in hutch. Large living room and dining room, Master bedroom has master bath complete with Jacuzzi tub, shower and double sinks, walk-in closet and linen closet. Bedrooms and Utility Room located on main floor has cedar lined closets as well. Partial basement has lots of storage, wet bar and extra room for office or Bedroom. Property has an attached single car garage, and detached single garage, large yard and covered patio. Home priced at \$54.64 per sq.ft. including basement. Offered at \$140,000.



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