Be careful who you hire for home improvements

Dear Attorney General Kline: An elderly neighbor of mine recently told me that a couple of men had approached him about doing some repair work on the roof of his house and garage.

When I asked him for some specifics as to who these men were and what company they worked for, he said they had driven up in an outof-state truck and indicated they would return in a week or so.

I advised him to be wary of doing business with an outfit like the one he described, but I'm concerned he may be taken advantage of in the future. What can be done to protect him and others like him?

Dear Kansas Consumer: The advice you gave your neighbor is right on the mark; he's fortu-



attorney general

scribed is becoming more and more common each year.

Immediately upon taking office, I created the Vulnerable Adults Task and persons with disabilities from retary of State seeking background consumer fraud and exploitation information. through education, investigation and prosecution.

nate to have someone to trust. But provement projects, always try to mated start and completion date are

and never deal with firms with no business address. Companies that do business where they are located have more of an incentive to do the job right the first time. Firms that do not

"travelers group," which are wellknown for shoddy workmanship.

Research the company. Ask for references and contact the Better Force. The task force focuses on Business Bureau, local trade orgaprotecting Kansas' senior citizens nizations and the Office of the Sec-

Get everything in writing. The agreement should be clear, concise When considering home im- and complete. Make sure an esti-

deal with local firms included, as well as a payment plan. plaint form and send it with all re- ized by the very people they trust Never pay for the entire job be-

fore work begins, and shy away from doing business with a home contractor that will not take a check or money order instead of cash.

"Cash only" is the hallmark of a contractor who does not want to be held responsible for payments reunfortunately, the situation you de- list an address may very well be a ceived. If you pay by check, make sure it is dated to allow your three day right to cancel the sale.

If either you or someone you know has been targeted by a scam artist or is a vulnerable adult, help is available. As soon as you believe financial abuse has occurred, you should take these steps:

1. Report the incident to local law enforcement agencies and your county or district attorney.

lated documents to my Consumer Protection Division. If the conabled, be sure to note that on the complaint form.

if the amount is \$4,000 or less and both parties are within the state. You do not even have to hire an attorney.

In many cases, senior citizens kids, paid taxes, fought wars, scrimped and saved to have enough money to retire on, are now the tarwould leave them with nothing.

cal or mental handicaps must rely Ave., 2nd Floor, Topeka, Kansas 2. Complete a consumer comneeds, and these adults are victim-sumer Hotline, 1-800-342-2310.

with everything they have.

Our mission is to protect those sumer involved is elderly or dis- who have given so much from those who would steal as much as they could and to make justice for vul-3. File suit in small claims court nerable adults a top priority.

Attorney General Phill Kline offers this public service to help you avoid becoming a victim of consumer fraud. Although some of the who have lived their entire lives in details have been changed, the our communities, who raised their cases appearing in this column are based on actual complaints or ques-

For further information or to file gets of scammers and con-men who a complaint, please write Attorney General Phill Kline, Consumer In other cases, adults with physi- Protection Division, 120 SW 10th on others to meet their most basic 66612, or call the toll-free Con-

Goodland graduate on motorsports team that was 12th in nation

graduate was on the Jayhawk Motorsports team that earned its best finish ever at the 2005 Society of Automotive Engineers Formula Car Chal-

The team, made up of students from the University of Kansas School of Engineering, finished

in Pontiac, Mich.

is the son of Fred and Sharon Hall of Goodland.

A 2003 Goodland High School 12th in the competition May 18-22 of the past seven years. Its 12th-quality machine and then honed place finish put KU's team ahead of Matt Hall, a junior in all others from the Big 12 and above mechanical engineering, teams from several highly ranked engineering programs.

> "These KU students have done a He was on the team that great job," said Robb Sorem, assodesigned, built and drove ciate dean of engineering and faca small formula-style race ulty adviser for the team. "The rigor involved in getting to the competi-The Jayhawk team has tion, and in the competition itself, placed in the top 25 in five is demanding. They designed a

their skills to be top contenders."

The team of 24 students represents one of two schools in the naevent in the past six Formula SAE competitions.

Only 140 teams are allowed to register for this international event, and not all are able to complete their vehicles in time.

The student teams begin their

year-long endeavor with a four-cylinder motorcycle engine and a 109page rule book. The resulting com- nical presentations during the competition cars and the student teams petition. Students must adhere to tion to complete every aspect of the are judged in three categories static inspection and engineering the design and construction of their design, solo performance trials and vehicle as well as during the comhigh-performance track endurance. petition.

Student teams submit detailed design information and make techsafety rules and regulations during

Internet tonight! Call 899-2338.



CONTEST RULES

participating grain elevators 3rd prize: \$15. with moisture content of 14 percent or less: **Goodland** 4. Persons age 18 or older are Equity Exchange

Brewster, Ruleton Goodland. 2. Entry guesses may be made harvest starts earlier, entry only at participating busi-

nesses advertised on these to delivery of the first load. pages. Look for the sign in the while you are there!

- 1. Winner is the entry which 3. Winner will receive the folcomes closest to guessing the lowing amounts in scrip day, hour and minute the first money good at any of these load of 2005 Sherman fine places of business: 1st County wheat arrives at the prize: \$50; 2nd prize: \$35;
- Mueller Grain or Frontier eligible to enter. No purchase in necessary.
 - 5. Deadline for entries: June 21. If the Sherman County must be at least 24 hours prior
- window of participating busi- 6. Previous winners and preness places and sign up at their vious first loads are ineligible, service counters. Check their as are employees and relatives merchandise and services of The Goodland Star-News.



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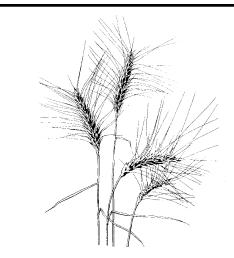
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