

COURTS

Kathi Rickard pleads to theft

Former Goshen County Clerk, accused of embezzling more than \$209,000, pleads to two felony charges.

By Denise Heilbrun-Ellis
Star-Herald

A former Goshen County Court Clerk accused of embezzling more than \$209,000 in funds had agreed to a plea agreement in her case.

Kathi Rickard, who was charged after a 2019 investigation, has agreed to plea to two felony charges of theft. Rickard had previously been charged with six felony counts.

Charges against Rickard stem from an inves-

tigation began in January 2019. According to court documents, DCI Special Agent Michael Carlson was assigned to investigate funds that were reported missing from the Eighth Judicial District Court in Goshen County.

Carlson said in documents that then-Deputy District Court Clerk Brandi Correa had notified Goshen County Attorney Eric Boyer that she had received notices in the mail that there was insufficient fund returned checks.

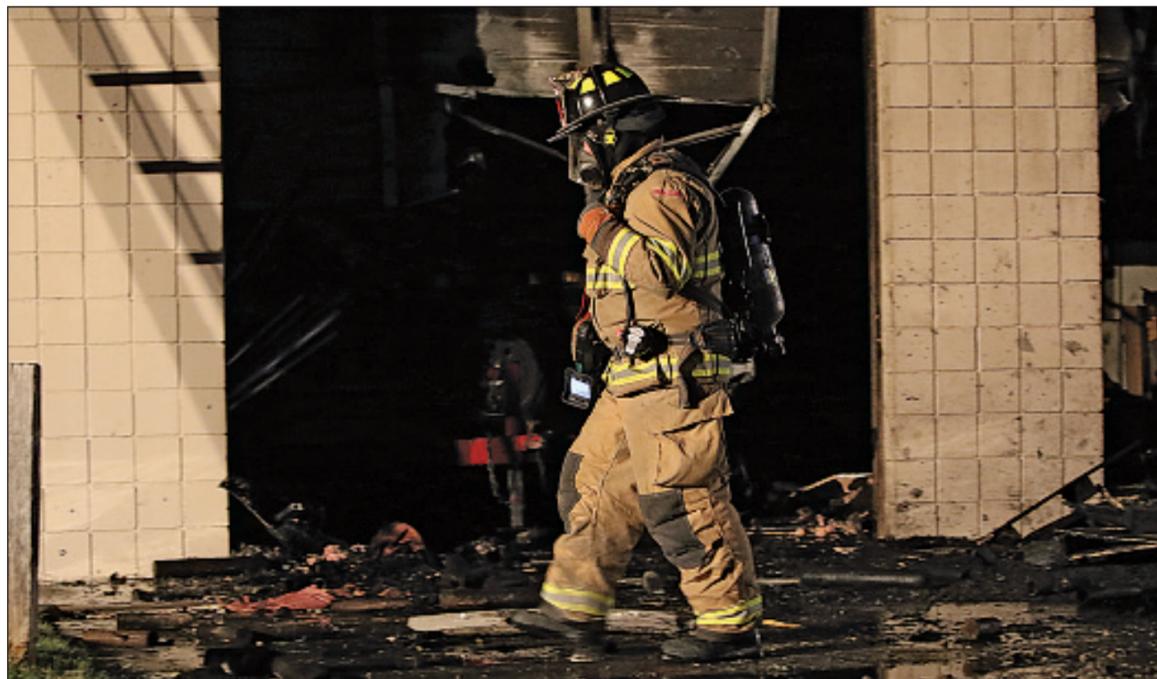
She told Boyer there was more than \$100,000 missing from bank accounts maintained and administered by Kathi Rickard, the elected Clerk of District Court.

Carlson said the investigation showed

there were two bank accounts used for the district court. One known as "WYUSER," and the other at a Quick Books account; the WYUSER account was an account drawn on

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FIRE AT TORRINGTON DEPARTMENT UNDER INVESTIGATION



A Torrington firefighter walks the scene at a fire at the Torrington Fire Department Wednesday night. Fireworks in a trailer inside the department's building exploded. Read the full story on page 3A.

Elise Balin/Star-Herald

FOURTH OF JULY

Eyes to the Sky

Several fireworks shows set for the area.

By Kamie Stephen
Star-Herald

Every year, tunes have filled the air in Mitchell's Centennial Park on the last Saturday of June. As the date approached, COVID-related restrictions forced organizers to cancel. This Saturday, the concert is making a comeback.

"We have a concert in the park every year," organizer Shane Reinbold said.

When it became clear that the usual June date wouldn't work, Reinbold began trying to come up with an alternative plan with the help of the Panhandle Public Health District.

Initially, the concert was going to be moved to the Scotts Bluff County Fairgrounds.

"Last week, they told me we can use the park," he said.

The park can be used at 75% of its normal capacity, he said. Attendees will be asked to come in groups of eight or less, and groups must spread out at least six feet apart.

The event will feature the sounds of Larry Soto and the Dynamics, but unlike previous years, it won't be an all-day event. Things will kick off at 6 p.m.

"They're going to play some music for a while," Reinbold said. "When it gets dark, we'll start shooting off fireworks."

The fireworks are sponsored by About Time Clock Maker, and a free will donation will be collected to pay for the band.

Attendees are encouraged to bring a blanket, lawn chair and bug spray. There will be no craft or food vendors this year, however, the restrooms will be available. Reinbold said

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ENTERTAINMENT

Smokey and Bandit looking for help

Riverside Discovery Center asking for votes on new bear logo.

By Kamie Stephen
Star-Herald

When the bear brothers arrived at Riverside Discovery Center, the community voted to name them Smokey and Bandit. Now, they are being asked to vote on the logo that will represent the bears.

"We feel like this is a way to get people involved and get them excited about this new exhibit," Riverside Discovery Center director Anthony Mason said.

Starting July 3, the public is asked to visit the RDC Facebook page or vote in person at the zoo. The three options, designed by RDC employee Kimber Duncan, all feature the bears and elements of the exhibit.

"The theme for the whole exhibit is kind of a fron-

tier-era mill," Mason said.

A winner will be selected randomly from those who vote, and that person will receive a T-shirt featuring the logo and a \$50 gift card to the zoo's gift shop.

The bears were taken in by the zoo after their mother was illegally killed. Their new exhibit spans more than 20,000 square feet and will feature a training wall so the public can watch keepers work with the bears.

A water tower has been put

in the exhibit and a waterwheel will be installed near it. Crates and old barrels will be around the outside of the exhibit, some of which will feature the logo.

"The logo will end up on some of the materials associated with the exhibit," he said. "It'll be on shirts and stuff as well."

Currently, the logos are black and white, but color will be added to the final product

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