

Fire guts Canby multi-purpose outbuilding

by Bend Weekly News Sources

Fire gutted a Canby man's multi-purpose outbuilding Monday evening, destroying a 1970 Chevelle SS he was restoring, several limited edition collectibles, years of business records, and many other family belongings.

Twenty-four firefighters from Canby, Monitor, Molalla, and Clackamas Fire District were called to the scene of a 38-foot by 50-foot two-level multi-purpose building burning in Canby's rural southwest section. The homeowner reported the fire about 5:45 p.m. January 29.

Fire gutted a multi-purpose outbuilding in rural Canby, Oregon, Monday evening, destroying a 1970 Chevelle SS being restored, several limited edition collectibles, years of business records, and many other family belongings. Photo provided by Canby Fire District.

Bob Smith, whose home and out-building are located at 8951 S. Grizzle Bear Court explained, "When I drove up my street I could see smoke coming from the roof line of my shop. It was thick, black smoke. I ran to my house to have my wife call 911, but the phones were dead. We ran next door to call for help."

The building serves as a home office, a shop, and a storage garage for the Smith family. Destroyed in the fire were many limited edition collectible displays, a 1970 Chevelle SS being restore to show quality conditions, a large salt water reef tank, and years of Smiths business records. "I hate to think about what was actually stored in here," said Smith. The family had just finished a home remodeling project and the shop was the safe-haven for many of the family's belongings. As firefighters approached the area they could see fire venting from the roofline. Deputy Fire Marshal Todd Gary said, "We had reports that the fire was visible from Macksburg Road." Firefighters attacked the fire from multiple locations attempting to get to the seat of the fire. "There was deep seated, difficult to extinguish fire throughout many parts of the building," explained Gary. "In some areas of the building total structural collapse occurred, in other portions of the building the contents themselves acted as obstacles, which challenged firefighters." Firefighters also had to utilize water shuttle techniques, since this area of rural Canby has no fire Hydrants. It took firefighters nearly one-hour to declare that the fire was under control. Investigators have identified the most likely area of origin, and are now sifting through the rubble in an attempt to determine cause. "We take these investigations layer by layer," says Gary. "It's a slow and methodical approach, looking at every possibility as we rule out ignition sources one by one." Accurate fire investigations are a critical component for the fire service. These investigations provide essential data that is shared with The State Fire Marshal's Office, the insurance industry, and the Consumer Product Safety Commission. "In a round-about way, fire investigations save lives," claims Gary. In the aftermath of this fire there are a few lessons we can all learn. First, any and all critical documents should be protected in a fire-rated file cabinet or safe. Fire, heat, smoke, and water will easily destroy these documents. Second, keep an accurate inventory of your belonging. A safely stored video or photo inventory will not only help you remember what you had, but also be helpful to prove what you had when dealing with your insurance

company. And finally, make sure you are adequately insured. Often times there are policy limitations that may not adequately cover items like antiques, jewelry, art, or collectibles.

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