

Investigation of shed fire results in alleged confessions by 12-year-old boys

Written by Marty Randall

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Two 12-year-old boys are the prime suspects in a September 17 shed fire that occurred at a residence on North Bond Street in Scottsburg.

According to information released by the Scottsburg Police Department, the two boys had apparently stuck charcoal and newspapers at the edges of the shed and then poured lighter fluid on the material to start fires.

A neighbor told Scottsburg police that he had been near the scene when he was approached by two young boys who ran up to him and asked to use his water hose. The neighbor saw smoke and call 9-1-1 to report a blaze, and the boys ran away from him, he said.

Scottsburg firemen extinguished fires in "...several locations..." behind the storage shed and garage. An empty charcoal bag, stick matches and a butane lighter were collected from the scene.

As police were watching the scene, a child approached one of them and said he "...saw the fire." The boy then admitted he had been at the scene of the North Bond St. fire with a friend. The youth said the boys had taken the charcoal and lighter fluid from a neighbor's porch.

The boy was transported by police to his home and released to his mother after officers spoke with the woman.

According to the child's story, his friend originally told him he was going to cook a snake that the pair had found. The boy pointed out the house where the charcoal and other material had been taken.

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He also said the pair ran to neighbors to get a bucket to put out the fire and then saw the man whom they approached to borrow his garden hose.

The boy's companion was interviewed later. He also allegedly admitted stealing the butane lighter from his mother and that the pair had started small fires behind the shed on N. Bond St. and then "stomping" them out.

After putting out about four small fires, the boy said his friend then allegedly started the larger fires at the base of the wood shed. He also reportedly admitted to entering the shed. He denied having lighted any of the blazes.

The second boy had reportedly been caught with a lighter at school, the officer's report related.

Firemen advised that one of the boys had been seen watching firemen extinguish recent blazes that had been started at the old corn factory at the east end of Lake Iola.

The youths will be ordered to attend a court juvenile hearing in Scott Circuit Court in connection with the case, it was learned from the Scott County Prosecutor's Office.