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SERVING TAFT AND THE WESTSIDE COMMUNITIES SINCE 1910

Thursday, September 30, 2021

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Fire had engulfed entire 6,000-square-foot Midway Sunset Trading Post by the time firefighters arrived. See additional photos on page A8

Photo by Doug Keeler/Midway Driller

Morning fire destroys historic Midway Sunset Trading Post

By Doug Keeler
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Fire destroyed a Taft landmark early Monday.

The old Midway Sunset Trading Post at Second and Supply Row, last used during the 2010 Oildorado celebration, went up in flames just before 5 a.m.

The two-story building, which covers about 6,000 square feet, was engulfed in fire when the first Kern County Fire Department engines arrived after the 4:49 a.m. call.

By sunrise, the building had been reduced to a pile of ashes and twisted tin.

The building was owned by the city of Taft, which took it over by default.

Last owned by businessman and one-time city councilman Craig Noble, the building was partially restored and used as an antique store until about 2007.

It was built in the early 1900s as Howard Supply Company, an oilfield supply and hardware store and was one of the last historic buildings along the old railroad tracks from Taft's booming early days

In this century, it was the site of several public events, including art shows and Taft Chamber of Commerce mixers and the large loading dock next door, which was undamaged, was the site of the 2005 chamber gala.

It was the site of an art show during the 2010 centennial Oildorado celebration. It could only be used with a special permit from the KCFD, who told city officials

that it was a fire hazard due to the old lumber it was built from, City Manager Craig Jones.

There were actually two parts to the business, and the larger front section had a second floor that once housed an office and studio apartment.

The cause of the fire is unknown.

The building had been frequented by transients in the past, but Jones said their had been no recent problems.

Public works employees were there last week to clean up graffiti and found no signs of break-ins or use by transients, Jones said.

Most of the trespassing issues involved people loitering on the outside, Jones said.

The total loss hasn't been determined.

Entry deadline nears for Oildorado Parade

One of the features of Taft Oildorado Days is the Grand Parade, which will be held on Saturday, October 16, 2021.

Entries are starting to come in, we hope to have a huge turn out this year! The Grand Marshal for this year's parade is Virgie Beard, longtime Taft resident and CEO of General Production Services.

Deadline for entries is Friday, October 1. Entry forms can be accessed and completed online at www.taftoildorado.com.

Oildorado parades are longer than other parades held in Taft, primarily to accommodate the large crowds that turn out for the once-every-five-year celebration.

The parade will get rolling at 10 a.m. at the corner of Ash and Sixth Street, travel south on Sixth to Center Street, then turn east on Center before disbanding at First Street.

The parade will cross Kern Street, which is Highway 33, and that will create some gaps because California Highway Patrol officers will intermittently halt the parade to allow traffic to pass.

The judging stand will be located in front of Lincoln Junior High.

For any questions, please contact Parade Chairs Chuck & Kristy Brown 661-577-0047.



Photo by Doug Keeler/Midway Driller

Maids of Petroleum "kidnapped" by the Wooden Nickel Gang are held by their captors in the back of the truck. This all took place at the grand opening for the Oildorado Store on Sept. 24. Turn to page A9 for more photos from the event.

STARTING THURSDAY, JULY 1, 2021
West Side Family Health Care will open at
7:00 am Monday - Friday
 Holiday and weekend hours will remain 10:00 am - 9:00 pm

NEW HOURS

West Side Family Health
 100 E. North St. Taft, CA 92368
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