

Abortion doctor's office burned

ASHLAND (AP) — Evidence indicates that someone broke a window and splashed gasoline on the floor to start a weekend fire that gutted the office of a doctor who performs abortions, a fire official said Monday.

Investigators hope to have confirmation of their theory within a week from the Oregon State Police crime lab, said Don Paul, assistant chief of the Ashland Fire Department.

The fire swept through the office of gynecologist Dr. Willard L. Brown and caused smoke damage to the rest of the offices in the four-suite medical building early Saturday.

The doctor's office has been the frequent target of anti-abortion protests, but there has been no violence, Paul said.

The fire caused \$100,000 in damage to the building and \$125,000 in damage to the contents, Paul said.

"They'll be out of business for awhile," he said. "Their equipment was all pretty well damaged too."

It appears that whoever started the fire didn't go inside to pour the gasoline on the floor, Paul said.

Investigators sent pieces of the floor to the crime lab to be tested.

POLICE

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through our alley picking up cans and bottles." The victim told the men he had a wife and child to support with the income from the bottles and cans.

The 36-year-old suspect then stepped out of his way and removed three bottles from the victim's bike, according to police. The victim then pushed his bike to the street and called EPD. Both the 36-year-old suspect and a 32-year-old suspect were arrested.

An unknown suspect or suspects stole a 30-by-18-inch white bulletin board from outside the ASUO Student Health Insurance office April 3, according to police reports. Someone removed the bulletin board outside of EMU Room 16A and threw the posters and pamphlets on it all over the hallway.

Police arrested a 21-year-old man for possession of marijuana and a 21-year-old woman for having an open container of alcohol in public on April 3, according to police reports.

A police officer was dispatched to the 700 block of East 16th Avenue because of a loud party, according to police reports. The officer saw the man holding up and looking at a plastic bag, and saw the woman standing next to him holding a white plastic cup. Both were on the sidewalk on the south side of the street.

As the officer walked up to the man he dropped the plastic bag on the ground, according to police. The officer recovered the bag and found it contained marijuana.



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GOP

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The final straw was an annual meeting called the Dorchester Conference, which U.S. Sen. Bob Packwood started in 1968 as a way for Republicans to discuss issues in a relaxed, non-official setting.

The OCA initiative was widely criticized at this year's conference, and when a vote was called, the participants vote against it, 293-10.

"The flavor of the Dorchester Conference was very strongly pushing homosexual rights," said Scott Lively, OCA state communications director.

Lively said the Dorchester Conference proved to the OCA that moderate Republicans could not be trusted to keep the party true to its conservative mission.

"The Republican party is the whole of conservatism, but the liberals have taken it over and changed it," Lively said.

GOP state Chairman Craig Berkman is one of the men the OCA blames for allowing this change, and Berkman was one of those responsible for orchestrating what happened at the Dorchester Conference, Lively said.

"The word is that Berkman is committed to changing the party toward gay rights and abortion rights," said OCA Chairman Lon Mabon.

For that reason, the OCA is running its own supporters for precinct committee positions in the upcoming May 19 election, Lively said.

"We are battling for the heart and soul of the party," he said.

The OCA will be able to elect the state chairman and determine the state party platform if it wins enough precincts, Whitfield said.

Whitfield said a lot of precinct committee seats are usually left empty and a concentrated effort could seize the party.

The OCA has made it no secret that Berkman would be ousted as chairman if it takes control of the party.

Mabon said the chances are pretty good that the OCA will hold a majority of seats after the May 19 election.

"We're going to take it back," Lively said.

But the party is not without its defenders. Jean Tate, a retired businesswoman, is leading the effort in Lane County to stop the OCA takeover.

Jeff Lewis, who is working with Tate, said the OCA has 268 supporters running for precinct committee seats, while the moderates have a little more than 100.

To defeat the OCA advantage, Tate and Lewis are planning on writing letters to registered Republicans identifying which precinct candidates are OCA-affiliated.

The letters may suggest some write-in candidates if there is no moderate running against an OCA member in a certain precinct, Lewis said.

"If we can get enough people to understand which candidates are moderates and which are conservative, then we will win," Tate said.

But some OCA members already have plans to break from the party.

"It is evident that a third political party is going to be formed," Mobley said. "Every time we work within the party it seems more interested in battling conservatives in their own party than Democrats."

OCA members have reserved a building at the state fairgrounds in Salem on June 13, and a decision will be made at that time whether to break with the party, Mobley said.

The key factor in forming a new party will be whether the GOP has made an effort to adopt a more conservative platform, he said.

"We may be beyond healing the wounds," Mobley said. "We've tried for four years to deal with the moderate republicans, but all they've done is bash conservatives."


Mobley said if the OCA does form a third party, he may run for Packwood's Senate seat.

A few powerful republicans, such as TV evangelist Pat Robertson and U.S. Sen. Orrin Hatch of Utah have asked both sides to settle their differences without splitting the party.

Sadler said Packwood is concerned that Mobley will divide republican voters if he runs and will allow a Democrat to win the Senate seat.

"The people that are watching all this and licking their chops are the Democrats," Sadler said.

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