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SARAH MOSES
TIMES-NEWS STAFF WRITER

FAULTY WIRING CAUSES FIRE

Faulty wiring ignited combustibles in the exterior covered porch and resulted in $70,000 worth of damage to the home of David and Sharon Mawhinney, 12141 Marigold Ave., Potomac Park. The fire began at 2:50 Saturday morning and took about 10 minutes to bring under control. Responding to the scene were volunteer fire companies from Bowling Green, Cresaptown, LaVale, Shaft, Frostburg, Bowman's Addition and Bedford Road Fire. The Maryland State Fire Marshal's Office investigated.

Kitsmiller store job progressing

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**Kitzmiller: Work progressing on historic store**

CONTINUED FROM 1C

building and preparing it for its ultimate restoration.

Already crews have removed a false ceiling that made the main room of the store seem considerably smaller, as there was originally a walkway above that was open to the store below. Browning said that by removing the false ceiling, it helped to restore the “Great Room” quality that the store once had.

When the project is completed, it will serve a variety of purposes from local to state levels. The State Highway Administration has given money toward the renovation of the building so that part of it can serve as a welcome center for the state on the coal heritage trail. The Garrett County Chamber of Commerce has already taken out a lease, paying in advance, for a kiosk to be placed inside the store featuring Garrett county events and businesses. At the local level, there are hopes to turn the store into a gathering place for the community.

Diane Paugh, town secretary, said part of the building might be an area for the youth of the community. “It will possibly have video games, an exercise machine, coffee and things,” Paugh said. “It will be a place to gather for the younger people in the community.”

Browning described the area as a drop-in center, a place where local youth could lounge with possible Internet access. He said that such a center would be determined on how well it can work and how the younger people who use it treat the area.

At the opposite side of the building from where they plan to put the youth area, there is an apartment that the town plans on renting out as an added income for the historic store, though the money for that renovation has come from sources other than the State Highway Administration, as their funds do not go toward residential work.

For Browning, this has been a pet project for some time, as he started on the project with the former mayor Nancy Brady in 2000. Browning said that Brady had begun getting the store some attention, as she had gotten the building marked as a Maryland Historic Treasure during the millennium celebration.

Now, it is only left to wait as construction crews strip the store of additions and changes and restore the building to again show the heritage and history of the town.

Sarah Moses can be reached at smoses@times-news.com.