

# Arrest in St. Francis linked to missing teen

**By Amanda Moberly**  
[amoberly@nwkansas.com](mailto:amoberly@nwkansas.com)

A man was arrested in Saint Francis who has been linked to a missing Nebraska teenager since 2019. He now faces gun and drug charges in federal court in Sioux City, Iowa.

Floyd Clifford Coates Jr., also known as Cliff Coates, 46, of St. Francis, pleaded not guilty last week to conspiracy to distribute a controlled substance, possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime, possession of ammunition by a felon and a drug user and possession of a firearm by a felon and drug user and an armed career criminal.

He and Dennis Lawson, 58, Iowa,

were also charged with tampering with evidence and physically intimidating another person, though federal court documents don't indicate if the tampering and intimidation are related to the missing Nebraska teenager.

Coates and Lawson have also been charged with two counts of concealing an object with the intent to impair its availability for an official proceeding; threatening another person with intent to conceal an object with the intent to impair its integrity or availability for use in an official proceeding and threatening another person with the intent to hinder, delay or prevent communication to a law enforcement officer relating

to the commission and possible commission of a federal offense.

The pair is scheduled to stand trial July 1 in U.S. District Court in Sioux City.

Coates was the last person seen with Sunny Sramek, 18, of Trenton, Neb., on April 20, 2019. She left Trenton in a Ford Explorer driven by Coates, who said he was traveling to Omaha. She was never heard from again.

In a possible related investigation, it was reported on May 8 that skeletal remains believed to be human were found in Council Bluffs, Iowa. The Council Bluffs Police are investigating the remains, which were found in the area of Veterans Memorial Highway and

E Manawa Drive. The remains will be sent to the Iowa Medical Examiner's Office for examination, but it may take several weeks to learn an identity, Council Bluffs Police said.

According to the indictment, sometime between Sramek's disappearance and the present, Coates and Lawson altered, destroyed, mutilated or concealed objects to impair their use in an official proceeding. During that same time period, the two are accused of threatening physical force against a person, who is not identified, to conceal objects and hinder communication between that person and law enforcement.

A search warrant was also issued

for Coate's Ford Explorer, the vehicle he was driving when he left Trenton with Sramek.

The complaint did not say that any evidence linked to Sramek was found. Instead it detailed the ammunition found in Coates' bedroom closet and a handgun with a laser sight and two loaded magazines found inside a safe in one of Coates' vehicles. The complaint also has statements from others on times they have seen Coates in possession of guns and methamphetamine.

Coates is prohibited from

possession guns and ammunition due to lengthy criminal history of at least 19 convictions: including drug possession and distribution, theft, burglary, false imprisonment, and assault in multiple states including Kansas.

Lawson has been in custody since April 2021, when he was found guilty of second-degree robbery and is serving a 10 year prison sentence. He was living in Whiting, Iowa, at the time of his arrest, made in 2019.

According to the complaint, Coates moved to St. Francis, Kansas, in April of 2023.

## Goodland hospital chief to be replaced

Board Chairpersons Greg Cure and Harlan Holste announced that Craig Loveless, chief executive officer for both Goodland Regional Medical Center and Rawlins County Health Center, will start a leave of absence Friday, May 10. Loveless has been the chief executive officer since 2021.

Josh Neff, CommonSpirit executive, has worked with both Goodland Regional Medical Center and Rawlins County Health Center Board of Directors to select Jeanette Filpi as

interim chief executive officer to assume responsibility for both hospitals.

"Jeanette brings a wealth of experience to the table as a seasoned chief executive officer who specializes in interim leadership assignments," Neff said. "With over 30 years of experience, she has deep roots in rural healthcare and is a trusted resource among rural leaders in Colorado and Kansas."

Filpi has a bachelor of science in biology from Colorado State University, a bachelor of science

in physical therapy from the University of Colorado Health Science Center, and a master's in healthcare administration from Trinity University. Jeanette will join the Rawlins County Health Center and Goodland Regional Medical Center team Tuesday the 21st of May.

"This is a great opportunity to help two incredibly strong rural hospitals. Their boards, and leadership team continue to advance their work serving the communities in northwest Kansas" said Filpi. "I look forward to

helping both RCHC and GRMC achieve their strategic initiatives and continue to grow in service to their patients."

"I am confident in this leadership team's ability to continue to carry the torch for both hospitals, to keep the focus on our important projects and to function without missing a beat," Loveless said.

"Our work over the past few years to develop a cohesive and shared leadership team has prepared us for an event like this."

## deeds

The following real estate transactions have been reported by the Sherman County Register of Deeds:

Sheriff's Deed: Property owned by Rose Dorine Aaron, Royal D. Reid, et al; was foreclosed on and awarded in a tax sale to Jeanell Tucker Schields. Property is described as all interest in oil, gas and other minerals in NW/4 of Sec.32, T6S, R39W.

Sheriff's Deed: Property owned by Rose Dorine Aaron, Mary A. Cabral, et al; was foreclosed on and awarded

in a tax sale to the Michelle L. Cooper Trust. Property is described as a tract of land in SE/4 of Sec.19, T8S, R39W

(SW corner of Lot 5, Block 11, CK&N Addition to City of Goodland).

## corrections

The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to report errors. We believe that news should be fair and factual. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

The Goodland Star-News

SUBSCRIBER

Irvin Elfman

You receive two free passes to see:

IF (PG)

Clip and bring to the show. Non Transferable

The SHERMAN THEATRE

1203 Main Avenue • (785) 899-6103

EXTRA! EXTRA!

READ ALL ABOUT IT!!

NEWS

We are always here with the latest community news, so don't miss another issue! Subscribe to The Goodland Star-News today by stopping by or calling the office!

The Goodland Star-News

104 W. US Hwy. 24, Goodland (785) 890-2338

Enjoy a night out at your favorite local theatre!

May 17-30, 2024

IF National release date!

PG: Thematic elements and mild language  
Closed Captioning and Descriptive Audio available.

Bring this AD to the theatre. \$1 Off Large popcorn & 2 med. drinks Exp. 12/31

Showing Nightly 7PM  
Movie Bucks make great gifts!

The SHERMAN THEATRE

1203 Main - Phone 899-6103

Cool Off With A McFlurry!



Treat yourself to a delicious McFlurry! The McDonald's McFlurry is a sweet combination of creamy vanilla soft serve with your choice of crunchy M&M'S or Oreo chunks added in. It's a perfectly sweet addition to any McDonald's meal!


Stop in and try one today!



Order ahead on the McDonald's App!

Enjoy your favorite McDonald's in Goodland, KS!

The Sherman County Conservation District State Water Resources Cost Share Program Sign-up period will be May 20-May 31, 2024.



Some of the State Water Resources Cost practices eligible for cost share include Critical Area Planting, Diversions, Fencing, Grassed Waterways, Pipelines, Terraces, Livestock Wells and Tanks. The landowner limit is **\$10,000**. The Non-Point source funds can be used for FAILING on site wastewater systems. NWLEPG will have to evaluate and rank the applications and there will be upfront fees to NWLEPG for these services. The cost-share rate is limited to \$2500 on septic systems. All practices considered for cost-share require a resource concern identified by NRCS technical guidelines. Construction **CANNOT** begin prior to contract approval.

For more information call Sandy Rodgers at the Conservation District Office at 785-899-3070 ext. 3117, or stop by 210 W. 10th, Goodland, KS 67735

CLOSED MEMORIAL DAY!


Thank You

The family of Todd Neitzel would like to thank all those who have reached out with love and support during this difficult time.

We would like to extend a special thank you to Living Life Home Care, Cheyenne County Clinic, Hospital staff, and EMS.

Your sincerity means a lot to us.

The Neitzel Family



LAND FOR SALE

160 acres m/l Irrigated Land Sherman County Kansas

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: SE ¼ 32-9-42



159.13 HEL  
\$880,000  
T 578  
Located 7 ½ miles South of Kanorado KS. on road 3 with Valley Center pivot  
Minerals in tact and will go to the buyer  
Mostly Keith silt loam soil 0-1% slope



SCAN ME!  


FSA Info:  
159.13 Farmland  
Corn base 124.09 acres  
Wheat base 17.81 acres  
2023 taxes \$2,173.23



More Photos on website

www.GOODLANDHOMESTEAD.COM

LISTING AGENT: TERRY RICHARDSON 785.899.8094  
terry@goodlandhomestead.com  
OFFICE: 800.974.2426  
OFFICE: 785.899.2328



TERRY RICHARDSON/BROKER  
1023 Main Street Goodland, KS 67735-2942