

By Jan Schultz

The Imperial Republican

At a March 25 Chase County Court hearing, a 13-year-old youth admitted to the state's petitions of home break-ins and a church fire in Imperial.

Judge Edward Steenburg also set a disposition hearing for Wednesday, April 22, when he will likely decide on an ordered program of treatment for the youth, based on information gathered by the Nebraska Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS).

At the March 25 hearing, the youth admitted to the juvenile court petitions, which alleged the youth had been breaking into homes to steal money and other property from the period of Nov. 1, 2008, to Feb. 26, 2009.

The state's petition also cited the youth's involvement in specific break-ins at homes on Dec. 14, 2008, and Feb. 26, and to the Aug. 28, 2008, fire at St. Patrick Catholic Church in Imperial.

At the church last August, the fire damaged the lectern on the altar, a small wooden pedestal, a decorative burse and carpeting.

Chase County Attorney Arlan Wine said he expects there will be a measure of accountability put into place by the judge at the April 22 hearing by way of a treatment program and regular, follow-up review hearings to gauge his progress.

Judge Steenburg ordered an HHS Office of Juvenile Services (OJS) evaluation at the March 25 hearing, and also ruled that the 13-year-old remain housed at a youth shelter in North Platte, where he is also enrolled in a school program.