

Police pursuit closes Hwy. 401

Vehicle collides with guardrail

NORTHUMBERLAND— All Hwy. 401 eastbound lanes were closed at the Colborne exit after a police pursuit of a vehicle ended in the pursued vehicle striking a guardrail.

According to Northumberland County OPP, officers were involved in a chase on the highway eastbound in Northumberland County shortly after 1 p.m. Wednesday.

The pursuit ended when the vehicle struck a guardrail near Lake Road in Cramahe Township.

The OPP has one man in custody.

Police estimated the eastbound lanes would be closed for several hours,



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CRAMAHE — Northumberland OPP officers wait for the Technical Traffic Collision Investigation Unit after a suspect pursuit on Hwy. 401 on Feb. 22.

while OPP accident investigators were on scene.

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EMERGENCY SERVICES

Castleton couple saved by smoke alarms: fire chief

Cause of fire electrical

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CASTLETON — Smoke alarms may have saved the lives of a Castleton couple whose home caught fire Saturday, say fire officials.

The home, on Old Shelter Valley Road, was destroyed in the blaze early Saturday morning. Amanda Shields said she and her commonlaw husband David Hockney awoke to the sound of smoke alarms sometime after 1 a.m. Feb. 18.

"It was just full of smoke," said Ms. Shields. They rushed out of the home and called 911. Their two daughters were not at home when the fire broke out, she said. Mr. Hockney was treated for smoke inhalation in hospital, but was later released, said Ms. Shields. A pet hamster was saved from the fire, she said.

Ms. Shields praised the work of the firefighters and how quickly they came to help. "They were incredible," she said. "They tried to save it."

The call came in at 1:49 a.m., said Cramahe Township Fire Chief Brandon Northrup. The fire originated in the basement and investigators determined its cause was electrical, Chief Northrup said.

Fire Chief Northrup emphasized the importance of working smoke detectors and said this fire proves detectors really



KAREN LONGWELL / THE INDEPENDENT

CASTLETON — A fire destroyed a home on Old Shelter Valley Road early Saturday morning.

do save lives. The occupants were able to evacuate the burning home just in time, he said. The couple was sleeping on the second floor and could have easily been trapped by the fire had they not been alerted by the smoke alarm, he added.

"I cannot stress enough that all residential dwellings must have a working smoke alarm on every level of the home and battery operated smoke alarms should have their batteries changed twice per year," said Chief Northrup. "And it's the law. If the owner of this home did not have working smoke alarms, it could have been a very different outcome."

Ms. Shields estimated the home was 120

years old. She and Mr. Hockney moved in last August and were working on renovating the home, and had put a lot of work into it, she said. "That is just the biggest heartache," she said.

Ms. Shields said she wasn't sure where the couple would stay, but they have amazing friends who were helping. They were insured, she added.

Crews from Cramahe and Brighton responded to the fire and remained on scene on Saturday morning. The home was bulldozed on Sunday, said Chief Northrup.

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