

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF NEBRASKA  
Roman L. Hruska U.S. Courthouse  
111 South 18th Plaza, Suite 3259  
Omaha, NE 68102-1322**

**Joseph F. Bataillon  
Chief United States District Judge**

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**July 20, 2011**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Heroism by Federal Court Employee**

Kathy Griess, the operations administrator for the United States District Court for the District of Nebraska, is being hailed as a hero by her community and her employer for saving two small children from a burning mobile home. On the evening of July 18, 2011, Kathy was returning to her home near Fremont, Nebraska when she saw smoke coming from the roof of a mobile home in a Fremont trailer park. She pulled into a near-by parking lot and got out of her car to call 911. As she was about to dial, however, a window on the mobile home broke and an eight-year old girl leaped through the window to the ground. Kathy dropped her cell phone and ran to help the girl, who told Kathy that her brothers were still in the home. Despite the smoke pouring from the window, Kathy was able to reach through the chest-high broken window and pull out a three-year old boy. When the girl said her baby brother was still in the home, Kathy went back to the window, calling out to the child while she blindly felt along the inside of the window. When her fingers made contact with flesh, she was able to pull a one-year old baby through the smoke and broken glass by his leg. Kathy then stayed with the children until help arrived. Miraculously, neither Kathy nor the children were injured; the mobile home, however, was a total loss. When asked about the incident, Kathy says, "It was just a total God thing" that she happened to drive by the trailer park when she did.

Immediately after the incident, Fremont Rural Fire Chief Carl Nielsen told the Fremont Tribune newspaper, "There is probably no way they (the boys) would have survived (without Kathy's actions). You don't get people like that every day. That's going above and beyond the call." The Fremont Rural Fire Department will honor Kathy at a ceremony to be held the evening of July 20.

The United States District Court will also recognize Kathy for her heroism in an award ceremony during a judges' meeting on July 29. Kathy has been with the court since 1990.

***For Further Information, Contact:***

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