

Second man faces charge in fatal explosion-fire case

Buchanan County Assistant Prosecutor Dean Shepherd Thursday filed an arson charge against a second man in connection with a fatal house fire earlier this week.

Charles Tolliver, 21, who suffered second-degree burns to his arm and face in the incident, has been placed in protective custody at Methodist Medical Center.

Like Matt C. Cary, who was charged before Associate Circuit Court Judge Randall R. Jackson Tuesday, Tolliver faces charges of second degree-arson in connection with an explosion and fire about 10:30 p.m. Monday at the Cary home at 3424 Olive St.

Joe Cleggett, 36, 602½ S. 17th St., died in the blaze.

Linda Meade, 26, who reportedly

lived at the house, suffered second-degree burns over 50 percent of her body.

After extinguishing the blaze, firemen said they found evidence of gasoline having been poured on the floor inside the two-story frame house.

Shepherd said he has left the option open in each instance for filing additional charges in the case.

"It's fairly unsettled in the law as to whether another charge will be warranted," Shepherd said. "We're still reading the law."

Because Cleggett lost his life, the possibility of a murder charge exists. Shepherd said while he hasn't filed such a charge, he hasn't ruled out the matter either.

Cary, 54, remains in jail in lieu of \$10,000 bond.