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## KVFD packs out manpower for northwest wildfire fight

By KIM SCHMIDT , Hub Staff Writer

**KEARNEY — Firefighters say they have a special bond no matter where they go.**

“There’s a brotherhood of firefighters. It’s a very loose family, but at the same time, if somebody has a fire, we’re willing to go help, and they’re willing to help us,” said Jerry Thompson, Kearney Volunteer Fire Department chief.

Monday, Thompson sent 10 of his firefighters to Harrison to help fight the wildfires near Chadron and Harrison, which have scorched almost 80 square miles.

Thompson said Kearney volunteers would be equipped with hand tools and wildland gear: lighter bunker gear and hard hats. They will primarily be working with shovels clearing vegetation so the fire doesn’t spread and working to extinguish hot spots.



AP photo Smoke from wildfires Sunday obscures the bluffs in northwest Nebraska.

“It’s great training for volunteers,” Thompson said. “It’s like a grander scale of what we actually do around the area here.”

Firefighter Todd “Walt” Walton is one of Kearney’s firefighters who went to the Panhandle. Walton said offering mutual aid to another agency is what being a volunteer firefighter is about.

“Fire departments help each other. It’s what we do,” he said.

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