Photo by SCOTT PIPER

Detective Al Perry examines cross burned in a yard near Howell

Police, FBI investigating cross-burning in Howell

them (the Griffins) and if they are caught, they'll be turned in."

"She called me—I thought it was very disgusting. I was scared for them and the dangers they faced," Koivu said. "I think it's an adult in this area. I don't know if it's affiliatd with the KKK, but somebody has been giving Shirley a hard time."

Koivu said her son and husband heard racial slurs tossed out by two white men in a passing truck shortly before the incident.

"Any time a threat has been made, you're scared or you're stupid," Koivu said. "Because what triggered them to do that? Was it one extra beer or was it a dare?"

Koivu said she was raised in the "old south," but, "I have come beyond that and realize that people have rights."

"They've paid their dues, they've saved their money and they bought that home," Koivu said. "That is their home . . . they shouldn't have to worry about people bothering them."

Shirley Griffin said the incident was embarrassing because she had friends coming from Detroit and "this is the kind of treatment I'm exposed to and (they might wonder why) you stay . . . and of course, that's not the way the town is."