'Stone Reader' review Film about search for C.R. author unfolds like a mystery, 3B

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Murea in house fire dies

By Christoph Trappe The Gazette

CEDAR RAPIDS — A family that already lost a daughter in a house fire now has lost a father.

Jay Grahlman, 38, died early Wednesday morning at University Hospitals in Iowa City. He was injured during a Saturday night fire at his 3755 H Ave. NE home, the Cedar Rapids Fire Department reported. Sunday night, his daugh-

Jaymie Grahlman, 6, taken off life-support equipment.



Jay Grahlman Father dies of fire injuries



Jaymie Grahlman Daughter died of fire injuries Sunday

She trapped inside firefighters found her in the bathtub. up and talk-

(Tuesmorning and (Tuesday) afternoon from great good, to bad worse,' said Vickie Reed-Grahlman, 32, Jay's wife of one year and his companion for four. "It's bad. It

was a great loss to our family. Accidents happen and you can only accept them. They always will be loved and greatly missed."

Fire investigators have determined the fire started in a waste basket in the kitchen. The investigation into the exact cause is continuing, said Dave Koch, department spokesman.

Also in the home at the time of the fire were the other three daughters, Kylie Reed, 9, Nicole Reed, 7, and Ida Mae Grahlman, 3. Reed-Grahlman previously told The Gazette she pulled the three daughters and her husband to safety. She couldn't find Jaymie.

Family members remained with Jay Grahlman in his room at the Burn Treatment/Trauma Center at University Hospitals until he died.

"We were there when it was over; we were there for the whole thing," she said. "We were able to say good-

She said her husband hit complications during an episode of pneumonia and went into cardiac arrest.

"It was more than they were able to control but the hospital did everything they could," Reed-Grahlman said.

Please see obituary on page 4B.

Report: UI should not get involved in resolving crime investigations

> By Tom Owen The Gazette

IOWA CITY --- The University of Iowa should not get involved in resolving criminal cases, if it hopes to avoid repeating the mishandling of the Pierre Pierce incident.

That is one of a series of

vestigate the university's handling of the Pierce case.

Pierce, 19, a sophomore basketball player from Westmont, Ill., was charged last September with third-degree sexual abuse after a female athlete told Iowa City police she had been assaulted at hoc committee formed to in- lesser charge of assault caus- trol of Athletics.

ing injury after a mediation session involving Des Moines attorney Roxanne Conlin.

In releasing the report Wednesday, UI President David Skorton pledged in a written statement to improve the university's response to such incidents.

He said he first needed to study both the report released Wednesday and another set of recommendations in a report Pierce's home. On Nov. 1, recommendations released in issued Wednesday by an ad Pierce pleaded guilty to the January by the Board in Con-

next several weeks, a series of responses to these two sets of recommendations," he said. Interim UI President Willard "Sandy" Boyd formed the ad hoc committee in December. Its membership included UI law professors John Allen and Margaret Raymond, Assistant Dean Madgetta Dungy of the medical school and math professor Philip Kutzko.

The report took issue with > REPORT, PAGE 8B

"I will announce, in the the mediation in which attorneys reached a settlement.

It noted that UI General Counsel Mark Schantz was only invited to participate once the meeting began, and then he focused mostly on concerns raised by the athletic department over the deal's implications for Pierce's role on the basketball team. As a result, Schantz's role raised the possibility of favoritism for Pierce.

ai ideas

released Task force offers 7 recommendations

> By Frank Gluck The Gazette

to ease overcrowding

CORALVILLE — The Johnson County Jail Task Force wrapped up nearly a year of deliberations Wednesday with a list of seven recommendations acknowledging the need for more jail space but also advocating "alternatives" to incarceration.

Members devoted Wednesday's meeting to fine tuning the wording and voicing their individual concerns with the recommendations, which now go to the Johnson County supervisors. Echoing the sentiments of many on the 26member task force, John Robertson said he disagrees with some of its specifics but called it overall "a pretty darn good plan."

Johnson County Supervisor Sally Stutsman said the board may hold a formal presentation of the report in June. She added that she was pleased with the final product. (see list, Page 5B)

"I was looking for some options and I think they've done what we asked them to do," Stutsman said. "There's a lot of food for thought, a lot of direction."

Specificity remained a point of contention for some task force members.

"The supervisors wanted recommended solutions and we've recommended ideas rather than solutions," said County Attorney J. Patrick White. "I think it's a good starting point but don't believe it was worth 10 months and \$70,000 (in consulting fees

paid by the county)." White also argued that the emphasis on incarceration alternatives might lead some to believe it will be inexpensive and will alleviate jail crowding on its own.

The task force included an appendix to the final

► JAIL, PAGE 5B

ECONOMIC TRENDS



Brian Ray photos/The Gazette

Ev Allamand of Marion, lowa Fire Protection estimator and project coordinator, checks a diagram of the SCI building's sprinkler system as he takes measurements April 2 to upgrade the system. Architect Stephen Emerson recently purchased the downtown Cedar Rapids building, and will use city tax abatements to upgrade it to Class A office space.

Office glut

Soaring downtown vacancies could hit C.R. in pocketbook

By Dave DeWitte The Gazette

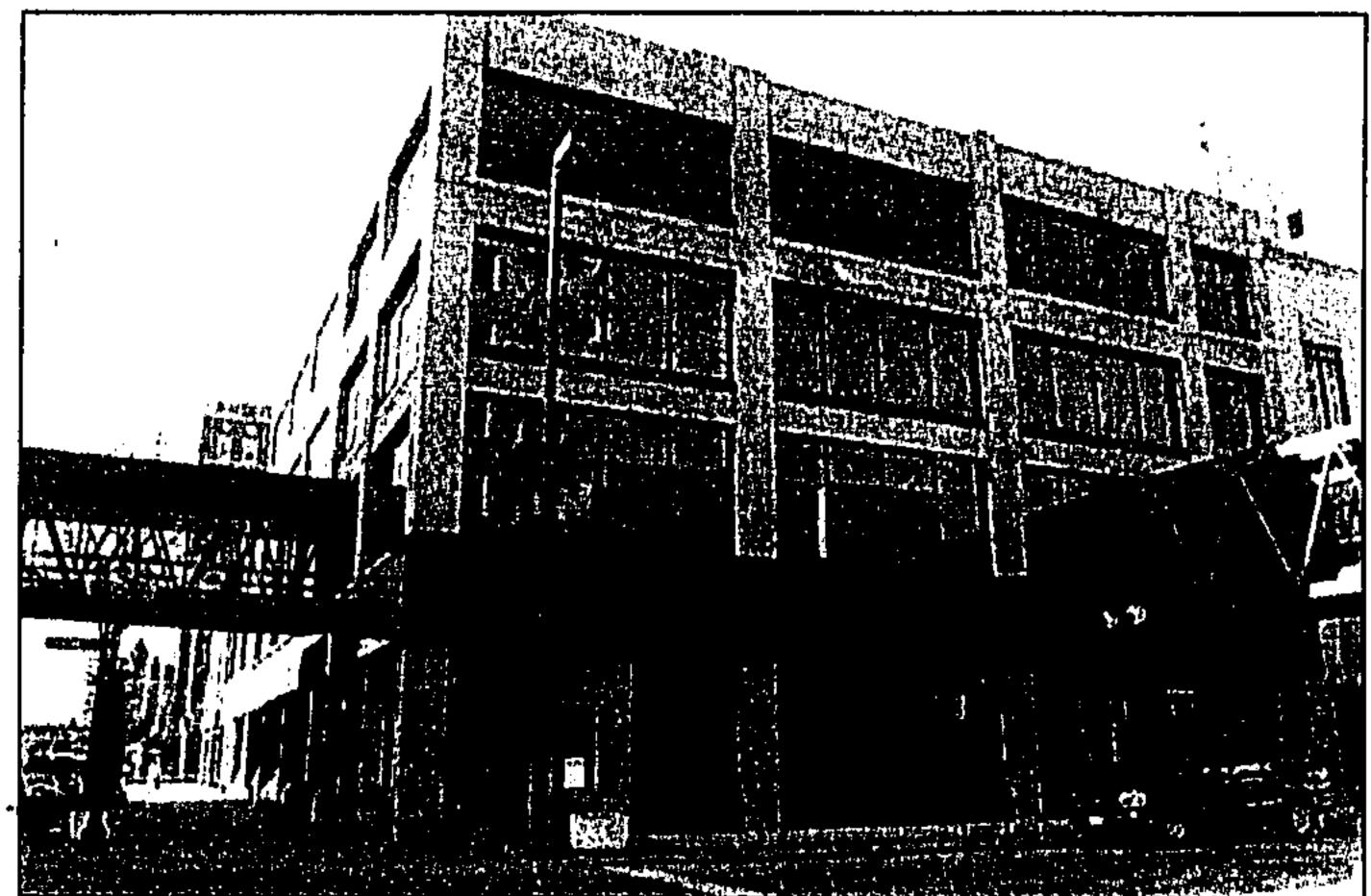
CEDAR RAPIDS — Downtown Cedar Rapids has a glut of office vacancies in the wake of the telecommunications downturn, leaving the prospect of falling property values in the city's core on top of lost jobs.

Downtown office vacan-" cies hit an all-time high of 400,000 square feet at the end of 2002, and will soon top 20 percent of the available office space, according to NAI/Iowa Realty Commercial's annual real estate trends report.

The downturn is evident in places such as the prominent Armstrong Centre. One-fourth of the center's 200,000 square feet of leasable space is empty after pullbacks by WorldCom and Global Crossing.

"We had a tremendous run in the nineties," said Jon Dusek, president of Armstrong-Race Development, the building's owner. "I was at about 2 percent wouldn't last."

Although lease rates remain relatively stable on paper, that's not the reality of the marketplace, accord-



Architect Stephen Emerson acquired the former SCI Building in Cedar Rapids this year for a fraction of its appraised value.

A trickle of new financial FOR RENT, PAGE 8B

ing to Scott Byers, NAI/Io- companies helped buoy the wa Realty Commercial sagging fortunes of the president. With scarcely downtown area last year. vacancy, and I knew that any major leases signed Bankers Trust, Countrydowntown last year, fresh wide Mortgage, and Village statistics to gauge the Bank and Trust were downturn office market are among the largest new

Saddam falls (literally); some pundits eat crow

The value of symbolism is sometimes exaggerated, but it's hard to overstate the impact



Mike Deupree The Gazette

of that scene in

Baghdad yesterday. It wasn't just the idea of U.S. troops bringing down the giant statue of Saddam Hussein as Iraqi citizens celebrated. It was the fact that the Iraqis tried to do the job themselves, and when they lacked the equipment and power, they asked the

Americans for help. If the folks in charge of promoting positive imagery could have come up with something better, it's hard

to imagine what it would be. Of course, you also wonder how many people saw it, and how the

event will be spun by those who aren't elated by what happened.

If you believed this was an invasion instead of a liberation, and all you saw was the brief moment when someone draped an American flag over the head of the statue, the scene would merely reinforce the idea of Western bullying and imperialism.

Even those who were happy about the events should avoid becoming too giddy. A lot of people died, too many of them innocent people, despite unprecedented steps by coalition forces to limit civilian casualties. More people are going to die before it's over. The questions of whether the war was justified and/or legal remain, as the answers do not depend on the outcome. A whole lot of rebuilding remains to be done, some of it steel and concrete, some of it international

Having said that, though, winning

relationships.

sure beats the heck out of losing.

THE SCENE actually made a person miss "Baghdad Bob," the minister of information who was declaring victories for Saddam's troops until his office went up in smoke.

Someone said he reminded them of a "Saturday Night Live" character, but I thought a better analogy was the pet shop owner in the classic Monty Python skit who denies that a parrot he sold is dead.

Baghdad Bob isn't the only one who lost a bit of credibility at the sight of Iraqi people gleefully welcoming the troops. A number of critics here at home must have red faces, too, or if not, they should have.

I'm thinking especially of the people who ripped Vice President Dick Cheney for saying the war's duration would be measured in

weeks, not months, and the Iraqis would welcome coalition forces as liberators. The current issue of Newsweek describes Cheney's comment as "an arrogant blunder for the ages."

Well, not exactly.

AS LONG as we're talking about arrogant blunders and red faces, don't you just love it when some pompous loudmouth makes a statement based on prejudice and ends up not only eating crow, but actually suffers because of his bias? Me, too.

I'd prefer I wasn't the one eating crow, but sometimes you have to take the bitter with the sweet.

My dinner features what looks like a stunted raven because I wrote earlier this week that I was going to skip Monday's Crosby, Stills and Nash concert in Cedar Rapids for fear the aging hippies would use the

appearance to spew political invective that is counter to the political invective I spew.

Well, it turns out I was wrong. According to those who were there, the politics was limited to an a cappella rendition of "America" during one of the encores. It apparently was a marvelous three-hour performance by one of my favorite groups, but I can't say for sure, because I missed it.

Rats.

I may have learned a lesson here. I should have given Crosby, Stills and Nash the benefit of the doubt. I'll try to keep a more open mind in

the future. If Michael Moore comes to town, though, I'm not going.

■ Mike Deupree's column appears Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. He can be reached at (319) 398-8452 or mike.deupree@gazettecommunications.com

(Previous columns at www.gazetteonline.com)