

## 70 years in love

A Valentine's Day salute to three Eastern Iowa couples, **Community**

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**B** The Gazette  
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## CORRIDOR

### GEDAR RAPIDS

#### Demolition of old 'Y' begins at 9 a.m. Monday

Crews will start demolishing the old YMCA at 500 First Ave. SE at 9 a.m. Monday, and the public is invited to watch.

Robert Carlson, president and CEO of the metro YMCA, said he will tell the public when the time capsule is retrieved from the cornerstone.

The Central YMCA was built in 1918 and last renovated in 1980. It was closed when the Helen G. Nassif YMCA opened at 207 Seventh Ave. SE in August 2002.

The demolition will make way for a three- to four-story office building with up to 55,000 square feet of space, which the development group 500First LLC plans to build.

D.W. Zinser Co. of Walford is handling the demolition.

### MARION

#### 2 charged after pound of marijuana discovered

Marion police arrested Ronald W. Purcell, 20, of 560 Bentley Dr., No. 12, Marion, and Phillippe R. Shavers, 26, of 2045 Holiday Rd., No. 3, Coralville, in a drug bust Thursday night.

Officers found a pound of marijuana in a vehicle while investigating suspicious activity in a Marion parking lot about 9:45 p.m., Chief Harry Daugherty said.

That discovery led police to Purcell's apartment, where they found more marijuana, scales and about \$1,600 cash.

Purcell faces charges of delivering marijuana, and both men face charges of possessing marijuana with the intent to deliver it and a drug tax stamp violation.

A judge ordered both men released from the Linn County Jail on their own recognizance Friday morning, jail officials said last night.

### HILLS

#### Man found outside car died from heart attack

The Johnson County medical examiner has ruled Dennis Hamilton died of a heart attack.

Hamilton, 62, of Hills, was found outside his burning car around 4:40 a.m. Sunday about two blocks away from his home. The vehicle apparently got hung up in a snowdrift off the road.

Johnson County sheriff's Detective Doug Vannoy said the fire started when the car's tires spun after hitting some prairie grass and being stranded in the snow.

Hamilton was not burned, Vannoy said.

# Vilsack: Deficit debilitating

## Governor blasts Bush's economics in Washington speech

By E. Michael Myers  
News correspondent

WASHINGTON — Iowa Gov. Tom Vilsack said Friday President Bush has squandered a rich surplus on unfair tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans, producing a crippling record deficit that endangers America's economic security.

"Here is my bottom line," Vilsack said in a speech at Georgetown University, alma mater of President Clinton, whose tax policy the fellow

Democrat praised. "This administration has pursued the most shortsighted, breathtakingly misguided economic policy of any in my lifetime.

"It has faced some difficult economic choices — and it simply failed to deal with them," Vilsack said. "It has walked away from its job of creating jobs. All the while, it has mortgaged our future with an astonishingly reckless tax policy."

Vilsack, 53, said the thrust and tone of his unusually sharp-edged remarks were a warning to Bush before the upcoming National Governors Association meeting in Washington about the dire econom-

ic conditions faced by colleagues of the former Texas governor.

"We have to deal with real consequences," Vilsack said.

Vilsack spoke to students at a forum organized by the Center for American Progress, a self-described non-partisan research and educational institute headed by John Podesta, Clinton's former chief of staff. Vilsack's remarks could have served as a robust keynote



Gov.  
Tom Vilsack  
Speaks at  
Georgetown

address at the Democratic Party National Convention in July.

Vilsack said Bush has reversed the benefits of what he called political discipline and sacrifice by the Clinton administration that produced surpluses and "a boom that, whatever its excesses, was based on balanced budgets, rising productivity, and ultimately rising wages."

Vilsack said some economic stimulus was required in 2001 to ease the economy out of a recession but that it should have been short-term tax relief targeted at working people and the middle class.

"This deficit is caused,

## Radio response

■ Gov. Tom Vilsack will deliver the Democratic response to President Bush's weekly radio address today.

■ The address will be broadcast nationwide on ABC News Radio affiliate stations and rebroadcast on C-SPAN television at approximately 5:45 p.m. Text and audio will also be posted on C-SPAN's Web site: [www.cspan.org](http://www.cspan.org)

above all else, by the president's insistence on massive

► VILSACK, PAGE 6B

## COURTS

# IQ of murder suspect at issue

Expert: Zirtzman can't understand his rights

By Steve Gravelle  
The Gazette

CEDAR RAPIDS — The man charged with setting a fire that killed two people last year is mentally retarded and unable to understand his rights when interviewed by investigators, a psychologist testified Friday.

Brian Zirtzman's IQ of 67 places him in the bottom 1 percent of adults, according to Dr. Dan Rogers of Fort Dodge. Rogers interviewed Zirtzman at the Linn County Jail in December.

Zirtzman, 39, faces two counts of first-degree murder in the deaths of Jay Grahman, 38 and Grahman's daughter Jaymie, 6. Jaymie died April 6, 2003, the day after a late-night fire swept her family's rented home at 3755 H Ave. NE in Cedar Rapids. Jay Grahman died three days later.

Four other family members escaped the fire.

Prosecutors said Zirtzman, who'd spent the night of the fire at the Grahmans' home playing cards and socializing, returned to set the blaze, intending to "rescue" the family.

Rogers testified in support of a defense motion to suppress Zirtzman's statements to Capt. Al Brockhohn, the

► IQ, PAGE 6B



Brian  
Zirtzman  
Charged with  
2 murders

## FIRE



Buzz Orr/The Gazette

A firefighter sprays water on a house fire on Echo Avenue, north of Highway 6 just outside Oxford, on Friday. The lone casualty was a cat belonging to the family of Dwayne Molyneux. Cause of the fire and the amount of damage are unknown.

# Century-old farmhouse damaged

## Man who was sleeping escapes smoke-filled house near Oxford

By Sara Konrad  
The Gazette

OXFORD — A smoke detector saved Dwayne Molyneux's life when it awakened him to a smoke-filled house Friday afternoon.

Molyneux, who lives with his wife, Tamara, and 15-year-old daughter, Apryl, on Echo Avenue, north of Highway 6 just outside Oxford, was alone in the century-old family farmhouse, sleeping in a first-floor bedroom when the fire broke out.

Molyneux said he went to the base-

ment, thinking the smoke was caused by a problem with the chimney, but could not locate the source.

"The phone wasn't working so I jumped in my truck and drove over to use the phone at a relative's house nearby," Molyneux said.

Fire departments from Oxford, Tiffin, North Liberty, Coralville, Swisher and Iowa City responded to the call shortly before 2 p.m., said Jim Henne, second assistant chief of the Oxford Fire Department.

Clayton Forman of Oxford and Lucienne Boeing of Coralville were driving past the house when they noticed smoke.

"We saw the chimney smoking and pulled in to inform them," Forman said. "We saw smoke in the house and opened the screen door and

yelled, but no one answered."

The two were using their cell phone to call for help when Molyneux returned to the house.

The fire's only casualty was a cat belonging to the Molyneux family. Their dog and another cat escaped injury.

Representatives of Red Cross Disaster Relief were on the scene to help the homeowners.

Dwayne Molyneux said his family has lived in the house four years. It is owned by Tamara Molyneux's grandfather, who farms nearby.

Henne said officials did not yet know what caused the fire.

■ Contact the writer: (319) 339-3161 or [sara.konrad@gazettecommunications.com](mailto:sara.konrad@gazettecommunications.com)

## FAITH AND VALUES

# Reality TV: Reflection or ruin?

Religious, social science experts question value

By Keith E. Gottschalk  
The Gazette

Reality TV, the hottest genre on television, continues to intrude on innocent bystanders.

Take "My Big Fat Obnoxious Fiancee" star Randi Coy, who had to resign her first-grade teaching job at a Phoenix Catholic school because the principal felt she was setting a bad example for her students.

Many in the religious and social science fields wonder if the popularity of reality TV is mirroring or fostering a creeping cultural malaise in this country, reflecting something deep in our national soul.

University of Iowa communications professor Kristine Fitch believes the genre has helped coarsen the culture, saying she sees the backlash in previously unheard of places like student course evaluations.

"Vicious, wide-ranging criticism of things that used to be touchy or off-limits —

'You're fat.' 'Your personality stinks.' 'You need to wash your hair more often' — may be at the moment heard as more acceptable because reality TV gives us a tasty dose of it every night," Fitch said.

"It's one thing to say they hated your class, but to talk about your personality, clothes and hair — students just didn't used to go there."

It may surprise some, said Stephen Winzenburg, communications professor and TV researcher at Lutheran-affiliated Grand View College in Des Moines, that research shows more Christians than

## Inside

■ "The Bachelorette" group gathers Wednesday nights at Cedar Rapids bistro, **7B**

non-Christians watch the genre.

"The reason, I think, is that what's being portrayed is really forbidden fruit," Winzenburg said. "Christians can't live the lifestyle portrayed on these shows, so they find titillation in watching them."

► REALITY TV, PAGE 7B



Laura Segall/The Gazette

Sara VonRoden, (from left) Cindy Robeson and Alisha Reid, all of Cedar Rapids, talk while watching the "The Bachelorette" on Wednesday at Muddy Waters, 415 First St. SE in Cedar Rapids. Muddy Waters hands out roses to ladies who watch the show.

## Ready for Hawkeye Downs Boat Show



Laura Segall/The Gazette

Nick Murphy of North Liberty cleans a boat from Harper's Marine in North Liberty before the 20th annual Boat Show at Hawkeye Downs in Cedar Rapids. The show runs today from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is \$3 for all weekend, with children 12 and under free. The show is host to boat dealers from Iowa and Illinois.

## Former Czech president could visit

By Steve Gravelle

The Gazette

CEDAR RAPIDS — Officials at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library hope former Czech President Vaclav Havel may return to Cedar Rapids this year.

"We've made some contacts" after learning Havel will spend three months in the United States this spring, said Gail Naughton, the museum's president and CEO.

There are no definite plans for Havel to return to the museum for the first time since October 1996, when he joined President Clinton and Slovakian President Michal Kovac

## IQ/Test 'as low as norms go'

► FROM PAGE 1B

Cedar Rapids Fire Department's lead investigator.

"He said something to the effect of, he didn't want to hurt anyone" in the June 19 interview at the Fire Department, Brockhohn testified.

Before the interview, Zirtzman signed a Miranda statement waiving his right to silence, Brockhohn said. But after the session was transcribed, Zirtzman balked when Brockhohn reviewed the Miranda waiver.

"Maybe I should do that, have an attorney," Zirtzman said in a videotape made to corroborate the interview. "I want to have an attorney, I guess."

At that point, Brockhohn ended the session and placed Zirtzman under arrest.

Zirtzman, who reads at a second- or third-grade level, scored "very poorly" in a standard Miranda comprehension test — in the bottom 0.5 percent, Rogers testified.

"That's as low as the norms go," Rogers said. "He clearly did not understand there is a right to remain silent. He thought he'd be arrested if he didn't talk."

Rogers said his evaluation of Zirtzman is consistent with those conducted since 1979, when Zirtzman set fire to two other homes in the 3700 block of H Avenue NE. Except for at least three terms at the state Mental Health Institute in Independence — one lasting 11 months — Zirtzman has lived all his life at 3748 H Ave. NE with his parents, Delbert and Orian, according to court records.

Judge Patrick Grady took the motion by public defenders Jill Ableidinger and Brian Sissel under advisement for later, along with a motion for access to the report of an insurance investigator who inspected the scene.

Grady granted a defense motion to postpone Zirtzman's trial from March 8 to May 24. Linn County Attorney Harold Denton, the prosecutor in the case, did not object to the postponement.

Contact the writer: (319) 398-5819 or steve.gravelle@gazettecommunications.com

## Vilsack cautious on gambling

Governor neutral about expansion idea

By James Q. Lynch

The Gazette

Gov. Tom Vilsack continued to avoid taking sides in the debate over expanded gambling that is ramping up in the Legislature, but said Friday it's not his first choice for growing the Iowa economy.

Vilsack said he hasn't had a chance to study the proposal unveiled by a House subcommittee Thursday, but has concerns about gambling tax proposals that could land the

issue back in the courts.

Among the recommendations a House State Government subcommittee made Thursday were allowing the Iowa Racing and Gaming Commission to sell up to five new licenses for \$10 million apiece, eliminating cruising requirements for riverboat casinos and allowing table games at race tracks — if they buy a \$10 million license.

Vilsack doubts that when the debate is over the state will have five new casinos.

"There has been a study that has suggested there are a couple of areas in the state

where there is capacity for this industry to grow," Vilsack said.

While expanded gambling may create jobs and produce revenue for the state's coffers, Vilsack urged lawmakers to look at a broad range of efforts to grow the economy.

"My preferred way has not been necessarily on the gaming issue, but on making sure that the (Iowa) Values Fund funding is permanent and secure so we can begin to make multi-year commitments to businesses that are expressing interest in locating in the state," Vilsack said.

## Vilsack/Nussle calls speech 'job interview'

► FROM PAGE 1B

and repeated tax cuts targeted to those in our nation who need them the least," Vilsack said.

Instead of strong job growth, the governor said, the nation is saddled with years of budget deficits projected at more than \$500 billion a year.

"The economic mess we are in today does not result from a lingering recession and is not a result of terrorist attacks," Vilsack said. "It is the result of policies by this president and this administration that were deeply ideological, politically cynical, and deceptive."

The Bush tax cuts were overseen in the Senate by

Iowa's Chuck Grassley, a Republican running for re-election. Vilsack, who has said he will not seek a third term in 2006, brushed aside a question about whether he should attack the Bush tax policies by challenging Grassley.

"I have all the respect in the world for Sen. Grassley, but I do not agree what was passed was in the best interests of this country," Vilsack said. "With all respect for Sen. Grassley, I would hope he would rethink his position."

Grassley promptly declined to do so.

"Federal taxes were at some of the highest levels in history after the 1993 tax increase signed by President Clinton," Grassley said of the

tax increase Vilsack praised. "President Bush has led the effort to bring that federal tax burden on families back in line. We have deficits because the government spends too much. The economic repercussions of September 11th and the spending demands of the war against terrorism are the reason for the deficits we see today."

Rep. Jim Nussle, 1st District Republican, chairman of the House Budget Committee, dismissed Vilsack's remarks. "Sounds more like a job interview than an economic dissertation," Nussle said.

Gazette writer James Q. Lynch contributed to this story.

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