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The Gazette

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CEDAR RAPIDS

EAST IOWA JOURNAL

NEWS ROUNDUP

LISBON

Road project on again

■ The City Council Wednesday abandoned its demand for left-turn lanes at the high school and Jackson Street Wednesday and gave the green light to a Highway 30 resurfacing project.

However, the council will request that the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) start the reduced speed limit zone farther from the school.

"If we're not going to get the turning lanes, maybe we can at least slow drivers down a little bit," Councilman Gary Port said.

Lisbon had balked at approving IDOT plans for the \$1.5 million resurfacing project, and its refusal to sign could have delayed the project.

Mayor Steve Goldin said that since the project was only resurfacing and no structural changes were planned, he decided to drop his objection.

The project, set for next year, is the first part of a proposed \$15.8 million project that would add two lanes to a 6.6-mile stretch from Highway 13 to just east of Country Club Drive in Mount Vernon.

WATERLOO

Driver killed in wreck

■ A Waterloo man was killed in a rollover accident Wednesday just north of Waterloo city limits. Dedric Campbell, 19, was pronounced dead at the scene after being ejected from his vehicle on Elk Run Road, the Black Hawk County Sheriff's Department reported. The accident was reported just after 7 a.m.

15 city workers laid off

■ Waterloo budget problems have forced the layoffs of 15 people in the police and fire departments.

Four uniformed police officers and two clerks are going to be laid off and one vacancy will not be filled because of city budget problems.

The budget problems also will force the layoffs of nine firefighters and the closing of one fire station.

The layoffs were in response to budget cuts announced Tuesday by Mayor Al Manning to cope with a \$500,000 budget deficit.

IOWA CITY

Crash victim dies

■ An Iowa City woman died Wednesday, a day after being involved in a multiple-rollover accident.

The victim, Nicole R. Vitosh, 20, was driving westbound on American Legion Road, approaching Taft Avenue about 12:40 p.m. Tuesday when her car went out of control and veered into the south ditch, rolling several times, police said.

Vitosh was wearing a safety belt but was thrown from the car, according to an Iowa State Patrol report.

U of I law library cuts back

■ Tight state budgeting forced the University of Iowa law library to cancel updates last year from 731 publications it maintains, said Arthur Bonfield, associate dean for research at the U of I College of Law.

The State Board of Regents, meeting Wednesday in Iowa City, heard Bonfield's report and promised to seek state money for the law library and the other libraries at Iowa's three public universities.

MASON CITY

3 victims' names released

■ The Iowa State Patrol has released names of the victims in a triple-fatality, car-semi crash early Tuesday afternoon.

Killed in the accident were Timothy Helm, 22, of Mason City, the lone occupant of the car, and two passengers in the semi, Kristine Bates, 24, and Brooke Bates, 4, both of Rockwell. The driver of the semi-trailer truck, Scot Baubatz, 25, of Rockwell, was treated for minor injuries.

PEOSTA

AIDS quilt on display

■ A small portion of the AIDS Memorial Quilt will be on display at Northeast Iowa Community College today through Saturday.

Six hundred 3-by-6-foot panels, each commemorating an Iowan or other Midwesterner who had AIDS, will be displayed throughout the hallways, conference rooms and glass display cases at NICC.

Condo foes may file suit

By Lonnie Zingula
Gazette City Hall reporter

Neighbors of a controversial First Avenue condominium project may be about to make good on their threats of a lawsuit to block the development.

With the City Council standing behind its split-vote approval of the project last month, an attorney hired by adjacent property owners said the issue may next be taken up in court.

"My clients have authorized me to pursue any and all remedies," Alfred Willett told The Gazette.

The options are Linn County District

Court, the Cedar Rapids Board of Adjustment, or both, he said. He also said the neighbors would be willing to try to work out a compromise with architect Leo Peiffer.

The council voted 3-2 in favor of Peiffer's \$12 million development on a 2.9-acre hilltop near the historic Bruce-moore estate. Neighborhood opposition had centered on plans for an access drive to the property from Cottage Grove Avenue across an adjacent single-family lot.

Neighbors had threatened a lawsuit challenging the legality of the access,

but have found another point of contention. Willett contends state law requires the site development plan be approved by three-fourths of the council — instead of a simple majority — since opposition represented more than 20 percent of the property owners within 200 feet of the project.

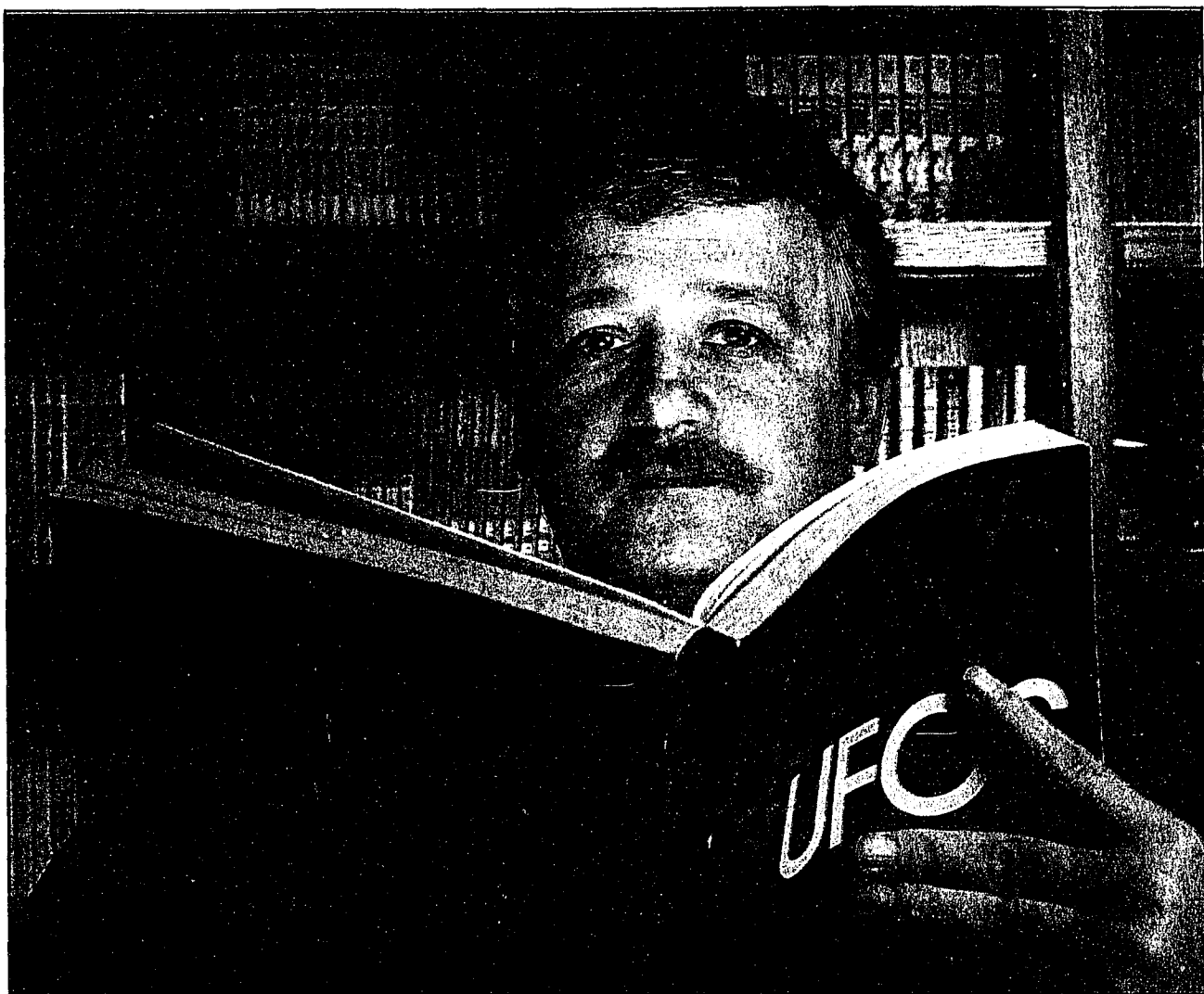
In a written response to Willett, Mayor Larry Serbousek said the council consulted the city attorney and will not rescind the resolution of approval.

City Attorney David McGuire said the reference to site development plans was added to state law in 1985 and is

unclear whether the Legislature intended the super majority provision to apply to them as well as zoning changes.

Furthermore, he said, the law addresses ordinances and Peiffer's project was passed on a resolution, a procedure Willett also questioned. McGuire and Willett agree on one point: they may be entering uncharted legal waters. Neither could find Iowa case law dealing with the issues in question.

Peiffer did not respond to Willett's comments at the council meeting, but has said a renewed controversy could prove damaging to his project.



Gazette photo by Chris Stewart

Kevin Randle of Cedar Rapids has mastered the art of popular fiction. His 70 published works of science fiction, action adventure, techno-thriller and mystery, as well as westerns, loom behind him. Only in the realm of the UFO does he claim to write non-fiction.

Cover-up in UFO case?

C.R.'s Randle to be on 'Good Morning America' today

By Rick Smith
Gazette staff writer

It is a story that sounds illogical. No, lunatic.

Even the storyteller, Kevin Randle, admits it is a monumental sell as you begin to listen.

A flying saucer from outer space, says Randle, crashed on a ranch northwest of the Army Air Base at Roswell, N.M., the evening of July 4, 1947.

The U.S. military recovered the craft, 25-feet or so in diameter, along with five dead, human-like extraterrestrials. The dead aliens — a little taller and with faces more human-like than Steven Spielberg's E.T. character — remain to this day frozen in a secret room at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio.

THE GOVERNMENT, through 45 years, has continued to keep secret this proof of life from space because, Randle says, it believes earthlings can't bear the truth.

Randle — a superprolific Cedar Rapids writer of action adventures, techno-thrillers, science fiction, westerns and murder mysteries — has researched and written a book that he says goes much of the way to proving the Roswell story is true.

"UFO Crash at Roswell" makes its case, in part, by trying to prove that the government covered up

what supposedly happened in New Mexico 45 years ago. The alleged lies, coupled with interviews of purported eyewitnesses and others familiar with the event, prove a flying saucer must have crashed, concludes Randle and co-author Donald Schmitt of the Center for UFO Studies.

Randle — something of national curiosity because of the book — is scheduled to revisit the Roswell crash this morning on ABC-TV's "Good Morning America."

He calls the Roswell crash a self-keeping secret. That's because most Americans think they are too sophisticated to believe in UFOs and most serious journalists think tales of flying saucers are jokes, he says.

The 43-year-old Randle doesn't look or act like a kook.

IN FACT, HE HAS all the trappings of normalcy — the handsome home in the Bowman Woods subdivision in north Cedar Rapids, the two cars, the exercise treadmill and home computer, a wife teaching elementary school. A bookcase from floor to ceiling in his den is a testament to his prolificacy as a writer. It is full of multiple copies of his 70 published books. One book he wrote in eight days. One year, he wrote 19.

Randle admits to a lifelong fascination with UFOs. His first published work, in 1973, was an article in a Saga magazine special, "The UFO Report." He was a student at the University of Iowa then.

By 1980, though, he concluded in a piece for "The Encyclopedia of

UFOs" that he did not believe UFOs were extraterrestrial craft.

Even today, he believes UFO nuts are out there aplenty. For that reason, he and his wife are not listed in the phone book.

"There is a group that is just not socially adept," Randle says. "They don't realize people have private lives. They're on my doorstep wanting to come in and talk about flying saucers."

BUT WHAT HAPPENED at Roswell changed Randle's mind again. Today, he is a UFO believer. And skeptics are wrong to lump his investigation of the Roswell crash with the "lunatic fringe" of the UFO faithful, he says.

Randle is certain that before he dies the U.S. government will tell Americans the truth about what happened at Roswell.

It is a truth Americans can endure, he says. Aliens landing in Washington, D.C., would cause a public terror, but people will realize they have survived just fine the last 45 years, even if aliens crashed at Roswell, he says.

A new edition of Randle's book, which sells for \$6 in paperback form, is in the works — one that provides more interviews with eyewitnesses. He hopes to convince mainstream journalists to take up the Roswell crash case.

"I have sat in the living rooms with these witnesses, and I've watched them tell their stories," Randle says. "They all describe nearly the same thing. It's an incredible story."

Radeke's defense to begin today

In trial on 1st-degree kidnapping charge

By Dick Hogan
Gazette courts reporter

Dee Jay Radeke's defense begins today in the Cedar Rapids man's first-degree kidnapping trial, but his attorneys have declined to say whether Radeke will testify.

The prosecution ends its case this morning with testimony from two Division of Criminal Investigation personnel. The DCI people are expected to relate results of tests performed on evidence taken from Radeke and the 7-year-old female alleged victim.

Tests performed included hair, blood and saliva samples from Radeke and the girl; stains on the girl's shirt and stains on an old mattress cover.

THE PROSECUTION Wednesday trotted 11 witnesses, most of them Cedar Rapids police officers, to the witness stand to relate their findings.

Detective Gary Stark of the department's sex crimes unit described the girl the night of May 31 as appearing "to me to be a traumatized little girl. She appeared to me to be very strong and brave about what had happened to her."

And St. Luke's Hospital emergency room nurse Corinne Wall testified samples of a dried, sticky substance in the girl's hair were taken that night and were sent for analysis.

Officer Kenneth Bracy told jurors that when he arrested Radeke May 31, he only told him it was for kidnapping and mentioned nothing about sexual implications. Later, at the Police Station, Bracy said Radeke told him that "he wouldn't need an attorney because he was not a child molester."

RADEKE, 28, is charged with abducting the girl May 31 from a northwest-side apartment complex where they both lived (in separate buildings) and later forcing her to perform oral sex. The case was moved to Jones County because of pretrial publicity in Linn County.

The girl testified Tuesday she was taken to a rural area and the act allegedly happened on an old mattress in what she called a barn.

According to testimony Wednesday: Working from her description and a picture she had drawn, police and relatives scoured the area but failed to locate the barn. The girl also helped search for the barn.

THE GIRL'S UNCLE found a structure June 6 — a corn crib off 60th Avenue SW. Police checked it out, but the youngster was out of town. When she returned, Detective Joel Kessler took her to the site.

Kessler said she identified it as the place where Radeke had taken her.

Cedar Rapids police officers who investigated the corn crib testified it fit the girl's description of the structure. But they admitted under cross-examination they found no physical evidence that would place Radeke and the youngster at the corn crib.

CROSS-EXAMINING Stark, Assistant Public Defender David Grinde asked if any witnesses were found who saw Radeke and the girl together.

"I know of no one who saw them together," Stark replied.

Police also testified footprints at the scene did not match Radeke's shoes which police seized when he was arrested May 31.

Police Identification Officer Richard White also said a check of Radeke's car found no physical evidence, such as hair or fingerprints, that the girl had been inside the vehicle.

New leads in Mather case called in after telecast

By Douglas Neumann
Gazette staff writer

Several new leads in the Tom Mather murder case were called in after a television re-enactment of the crime last night, Cedar County Sheriff Keith Whitlatch said.

Dispatchers at four phones were constantly busy for hours after the program, and Whitlatch said he hoped calls would keep coming in all week with the renewed media coverage of the year-old murder.

Whitlatch said some callers

just provided support for the investigation, some reinforced prior information and a few gave police new leads.

He said none of the new leads provided an immediate break in the case, "but sometimes something little turns into something big."

Mather was shot in the head and slashed several times on Sept. 30, 1991, in his home on County Road X-40, about a mile north of the West Liberty exit off Interstate 80.

His wife, Dawn, said he was

shot by an intruder, a stranger. She escaped to a nearby farmhouse from where the Cedar County Sheriff's Department was called.

The re-enactment on KCRG-TV (Channel 9) revealed several previously undisclosed facts about the case, including the focus on a late-model, blue Pontiac Grand Am. The car, believed to be about a 1986 or 1987 with mag wheels, was seen on a gravel road near the Mathers' home about 6:45 p.m. the night of the murder. A couple

were seen exiting a similar car in the Mathers' driveway that night between 8 and 8:30.

Tracks found in a cornfield there also could match the dimensions of those of a Grand Am, according to police.

A man dressed in tan coveralls was seen coming from the direction of the cornfield, carrying a pole or pipe about 8:45.

The re-enactment also revealed that a light-colored car was seen quickly leaving the Mathers' driveway about 6:55, about 10 minutes after a man

had come to the door asking for directions to either Wilton or Wellman.

A light-colored car also was seen parked in the driveway about 8:45.

Whitlatch said he was pleased with the response and the show. "We wanted to make it factual and not overly dramatic," he said.

Whitlatch urged anyone with information to call the Cedar County Sheriff's Department at 886-2121 or the Cedar County Crimestoppers at 886-6618.

NEWS TIPS

- Please call us with your tips for stories and photos: 398-8254 or 1-800-397-8212

- To subscribe please call: 398-8333 or 1-800-397-8333

