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Mitch Berger (left) and Eddie Murray celebrate Minnesota's last-second victory Saturday in the NFL playoffs

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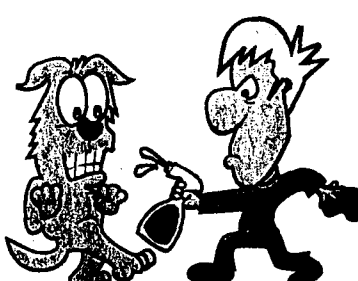
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# 1997

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LIFE & LEISURE



## GOOD MORNING

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# The Gazette

Sunday Dec. 28, 1997

FINAL / VOL. 115 NO. 349

THE NEWSPAPER OF EASTERN IOWA

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# Answers elusive on 4 murders

1997 cases involving Eastern Iowa women remain high priority

By Steve Gravelle

Gazette staff writer

1997 was more than half over before the first woman was killed. By the end of September, four Eastern Iowa women had been murdered.

All four cases remain open:

- The body of Traci Evenson, 22, was discovered by her sister, Jodi Jackson, in Evenson's Cedar Rapids apartment the morning of June 22. Police said Evenson was suffocated.



Traci Evenson  
Body found in C.R. apartment

- Julie Bell Davis, 33, of Marion, was found stabbed to death Aug. 28 in the Des Moines office where she worked a day or two a week.



Julie Bell Davis  
Stabbed to death in D.M. office

Her car also was missing.

Two days later authorities in Rockford, Ill., confirmed that a body found in a ditch there was that of Bloomfield. The Winnebago County (Ill.) Coroner's Of-

fice said she died of strangulation.

Blood stains found by authorities searching the Bloomfield home indicated she may have died there. Bloomfield's body had been bound with pantyhose and wrapped in plastic that was secured with duct tape.



Frances Bloomfield  
Body found in Illinois ditch

- Erin J. Miller Darnall, 27, was bludgeoned to death by an apparent intruder in her Shellsburg mobile home early Sept. 26. Her son, Jesse, 10, ran to a neighbor's home for help after unsuccessfully trying to fight off the attacker.

**AUTHORITIES IN** the Bloomfield case say they have no suspects, but are far from running out of leads. "It's definitely still going," Iowa City Police Detective Ed Schultz recently told The Gazette.

And Des Moines police admit their investigation into Davis' death is at a standstill.

However, Benton County Sheriff Ken Popenhagen is hopeful DNA tests may lead to an arrest in the Darnall case. "If that's what we can put our hands on, we might be coming up with a suspect pretty soon," Popenhagen said Friday.

Darnall's husband, Kent, was in Nebraska preparing to open a new business when she was killed. Her family members closely guard their privacy.

■ Turn to 10A: Murders



Photo by Kenneth Steinhart for The Gazette

Members of the Jefferson High School Band of Blue getting ready to enjoy the Hammerhead ride at Knott's Berry Farm amusement park in Buena Park, Calif., are (from left) Jessica Panosh, 17, Shawna Trenary, 18, Jill Enyart, 17, and Katie Taylor, 17. The band members were able to take to the rides after performing at the park Saturday.

## 'Night patrol' keeps band in line

Rose Bowl trip chaperons maintain humor amid bed checks, rule reminders

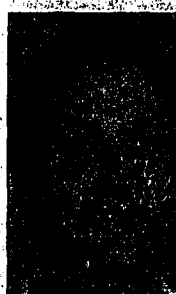
By Bev Duffy

Gazette staff writer

**B**REA, Calif. — It's 10 p.m., time for all members of the Jefferson High School Band of Blue to be in their hotel rooms.

And just to make sure they are, chaperons traveling with the Cedar Rapids band begin their nightly rounds, knocking on doors and making certain all of the more than 300 students on this Rose parade trip are accounted for.

Bob Manson, band director at Taft Middle School, is a veteran of numerous journeys with the Band of Blue and an old hand at the bed-check



Bob Manson  
Veteran of numerous trips with Band of Blue

game. As the band instructor at one of Jefferson's feeder schools, Manson gave many of these teens their start in instrumental music. He deals with them in an easy way born of long experience as a teacher and, in many cases, long acquaintance with individual students and their families.

"How ya doin'?" he asks as he steps inside the door and quickly casts his eyes about the room for any sign of something amiss. "I've got a bunch of things to tell you."

This is a time not only to check up on students, but to review rules of the trip, to make sure students understand what will be expected of them the next day, and to communicate on a more individual level about how the trip is going. Some of the younger students seize the opportunity to get questions answered and insecurities soothed.

Starting down his checklist, Manson

Marching with the Jefferson Band

For more daily coverage: Call CITYLINE at 363-7000 or 337-7000, Category ROSE (7673), or The Gazette's home page: <http://www.GazetteOnline.com/special/rose/index.htm>

Band performance goes well, 15A  
Another photo, 15A

touches on housekeeping. Rooms should be left clean and all furniture stays inside, he reminds them. There's also a review of certain rules, like always traveling in groups of four and wearing the buttons that identify them as Jefferson students to chaperons who may not know them.

Then there's the uniform check. "Are all those uniforms hanging up? Let's get those hanging up! I see three blue bags (for uniforms)," he says, poking through the closet. "Where's the fourth one? Have you got all the pieces — gloves? shoes? plume? Tomorrow's a blue pants day."

Manson asks what time students expect to get up to make an early breakfast

■ Turn to 10A: Band

## TOMORROW

### Farmer's artwork part of recovery

Farmer Nile Anderson put idle hours following a stroke to good use, learning to draw. Now he creates works of art that revolve around rural life. *Iowa Today* in Monday's Gazette.

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## High schoolers test worms as alternative food

BUTLER, Pa. (AP) — The school cafeteria was never like this.

Students in Ray Greco's 11th-grade science class fried worms, coated them with chocolate, took deep breaths, closed their eyes and swallowed last week as part of an experiment in alternative food sources.

"I did it 'cause it was cool," Knoch High School student Josh Murdoch said. "It's really not that bad."

The day may come when humans need to eat worms to survive because of food shortages, Greco said.

"With the continuing overpopulation of the world, there are bound to be adjustments in behavior," Greco said at the school 25 miles north of Pittsburgh. "Part of that can mean adjusting food sources and what we eat."

Erica Link opted for the worms without chocolate and reported that they tasted like pumpkin seeds — "crunchy and hollow."

"I always tell them it's no different than a sausage," Greco said. "When you think about a sausage, what could be in there?"

Some students took the worms home to give to their families for Christmas. The majority of the class tried at least one. Andrea Karenbauer did not.

"I wasn't even going to come today because I have better things to do than eat worms," she said.

## Digging in against fraud

Beneficiaries taught to watch over Medicare, Medicaid

By Joshua Nichols

Gazette news intern

Dr. Charles Buckley Jr., a Fairfield doctor, had been submitting claims to Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance companies for psychotherapy services provided by his wife.

The only problem was that Buckley's wife did not have a professional license authorizing her to provide such services. With the assistance of his wife and his beneficiaries, the fraud was detected and charges were filed against Buckley in May 1994.

Operation Restore Trust of Iowa, a demonstration project dedicated to re-

ducing Medicare and Medicaid fraud, is using lessons learned from Buckley's example and many other similar situations to make it easier to catch those committing such fraud.

The project, part of a national demonstration project begun in 1995, is run locally by the Heritage Area Agency on Aging. The agency is hoping to teach beneficiaries to recognize fraud so it can be brought to the attention of authorities.

"This is a big effort, but we need to make contact with the beneficiaries because they are the eyes and ears of the community," said Juede Landhauser, the support services coordinator for the agency. "We need them to be watching and calling in because we cannot do this alone."

Since the project started in May, the agency has been coordinating with



Juede Landhauser  
Says beneficiaries are 'eyes and ears of the community'

the Hawkeye Valley Area Agency on Aging in Waterloo to cover 17 counties surrounding Cedar Rapids and Waterloo.

Once limited to the five states viewed as having the greatest incidence of abuse — California, Florida, Illinois, New York and Texas — the national project has expanded to include

27 states. "Eventually, we hope the program will become nationwide," Landhauser said. "Right now we're just digging in right here."

Concentrating on the three fastest growing areas in health care — home health care, skilled nursing and providers of medical equipment — the national project has so far managed to return \$23 for every \$1 spent on the effort, adding up to \$180 million in fines and penalties, she said.

The effort comes at a time when the federal government is concerned about finding ways to keep Medicare solvent.

According to a report issued on Dec. 3 by the General Accounting Office (GAO), the government loses between \$17.8 billion and \$28.6 billion per year on improper payments to Medicare vendors. The report was released during the first hearing of the Democratic Caucus Task Force on

## HOT LINE AVAILABLE

■ To report possible health care fraud, call Operation Restore Trust of Iowa's toll-free hot line: 1-(800) 423-2449.

Medicare chaired by Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa.

"This fits overall with a real growing awareness on the part of the government and citizens," Landhauser said.

There is no lack of examples similar to that of Dr. Buckley. Landhauser provided a few other examples of Iowa health-care fraud gathered by the Iowa Medicaid Fraud Control Bureau:

- John Douglas Weber, a Cedar Falls dentist, billed Medicaid for 376 procedures between 1990 and 1992 that were not necessary or had not been performed. Weber was convicted in 1995 in U.S. District Court of submitting false claims. He was sentenced to two years' probation and fines and restitution exceeding \$16,000.

- In another case, an officer of a nursing facility in Glenwood claimed inappropriate expenses on cost reports submitted for reimbursement in 1989. The expenses ranged from a "salary" being paid to the officer's wife and father, to items that were purchased but never brought to the facility. The corporation that owns the facility paid fines and restitution exceeding \$55,000.

■ Turn to 10A: Fraud



Murders: Families, investigators frustrated

■ From page 1A

"We really don't know much, so there really isn't much to say," said Darnall's mother, Patricia Miller of Marion. She declined to discuss how Darnall's children are coping, or where they've been living since their mother's death.

In addition to Jesse, Darnall's son through an earlier marriage, Kent and Erin had a 4-year-old son, Storm.

"It's pretty difficult to say" how the boys are doing, Miller said. "I'd prefer that it not be known where they are right now."

**SUZU BESHEARS** is bothered that her young friend, Evenson, is dead while her killer sees another new year.

"I don't know where, but I believe that person is out there," said Beshears, who said Evenson was like a daughter to her. "I think about it a lot."

Cedar Rapids Police Capt. Glen Fox said detectives believe their initial scenario is still the most likely one: that Evenson was killed by someone she knew at least well enough to let into her apartment.

"We're pretty much sticking with our original (theory), but I'm not entirely ruling out a stranger," said Fox. "We believe it to be someone that was let in."

That premise was questioned by Norma Zillyette, the mother of Traci and Jodi. Zillyette said Evenson had no enemies that she knew of.

Beshears thinks Evenson may have trusted someone she shouldn't have.

"Just getting out on her own and trying to learn the ropes, she trusted people too much," Beshears said. "She believed what people told her. I wouldn't call it naive, I would just call it not knowing all the ropes."

Beshears said Evenson was a quiet girl unlikely to find trouble on her own.

"She didn't run around, she didn't do drugs, she didn't even smoke," said Beshears. "For the type of person she was, it's so difficult for us to understand."

The year turned unimaginably worse for Evenson's family and friends the day before Thanksgiving. Evenson's sister, Jodi Jackson, 27, her husband, Anthony Jackson, 28, and their children, Anthony Jr., 5, and Jazmine, 3, were killed when the sports utility vehicle driven by Jodi was struck broadside by a tractor-trailer along Highway 63 in Howard County.

The Jacksons were on the way from Minnesota, where they'd moved after Evenson's death, to visit Anthony Jackson's family in Waterloo when they were killed.

Zillyette said Jodi was "haunted" by the experience of finding Traci's body.

"She's back with her sister, and she doesn't have to be haunted by the nightmare anymore," Zillyette said from her apartment in West St. Paul, Minn. "That's the only thing that keeps me going, I guess — knowing they're back together."

Fox doesn't expect Jodi's death to affect the investigation into her sister's murder.

"We had already talked to her several times, and I don't know if there was much more there to learn," Fox said. "It's obviously a tremendous tragedy for the family."

Among the suspects crossed off Fox's list is a student from El Salvador who'd given Evenson a ring about three weeks before she was killed. Detectives confirmed the young man was out of



Photo by Jeremy Powers  
**Norma Zillyette of West St. Paul, Minn., the mother of Cedar Rapids murder victim Traci Evenson, holds two of her daughter's favorite teddy bears.**

the country June 22, he said.

Fox is also not surprised that a \$16,000 reward — funded through an insurance settlement and \$5,000 from Evenson's employer, APAC Teleservices — has turned up nothing.

"I don't think this is the type of crime that someone is going to talk too much about," he said.

**A \$6,000 REWARD** offer in the Davis murder has also led nowhere in a case authorities have called a classic "whodunit." The offer yielded three responses that failed to flush out a suspect.

"The investigation is at a stalemate," said Des Moines Police Sgt. Bruce Elrod. "Somebody out there knows what happened, but they haven't shared that information with detectives. Right now it is stuck."

Elrod said the case remains open in hopes that authorities will get a break in their investigation.

"It will continue forever," he said. "A homicide case is open until somebody is convicted."

That dogged approach is what may someday lead to arrests.

"These kinds of cases our investigators take very personally," said Fox. "They might be assigned to something else (in the meantime), but this would take priority."

Beshears said an arrest would make the loss of her friend a little easier to bear.

"If they could find out who did it, that might ease the question of why," she said. "Why is God a question now in my life because of this?"

In the apartment she shares with her son, Zillyette waits, too. She didn't plan to observe Christmas this year, but agreed when her son decided to put some decorations on their patio the week before Thanksgiving.

"When he heard about Jodi and her family, he went back out and tore it all down," Zillyette said.

Cuban young people returning to churches

**HAVANA (AP)** — They grew up without God in what was once an officially atheist country, the sons and daughters of militant communists who never considered enrolling them in catechism class.

Others were baptized as children of nominal Roman Catholics, and never returned to church.

But Cuba's young people are flocking to the Roman Catholic Church and other faiths, searching for lost traditions and a spirituality they say is lacking in their lives. Their presence in the pews has become even more pronounced with the approach of Pope John Paul II's visit to Cuba next month.

"I needed a change in my life. My life was so turbulent with too many parties, too much drinking," Alfredo Placencia, 30, said Saturday outside the Jesus de Miramar Catholic church, where Cuba's leading prelate led a gathering of 1,200 young people.

"Now if I don't go to Mass every day, I feel bad. The church is now the center of my life," he said. Placencia was baptized as an infant, but did not return to church until a year and a half ago. He is studying for his first communion.

"These young people are the hope of the church in the 21st century," said the Rev. Felipe Tejerino, the parish priest at Jesus de Miramar. Tejerino, who is from Spain, said he has seen interest in the church blossom since he arrived in Cuba six years ago.

"The young people are looking for a way out from their problems and find that the church satisfies them," the priest said.



AP photo  
**Lizbeth Fuentes and hundreds of others sing and dance during a Catholic youth celebration Saturday at the Jesus de Miramar church in Havana.**

Saturday's crowd, including those from their early teens to early 30s, crammed into the pews at Jesus de Miramar — Havana's largest church — to sing Christmas songs and listen to a special message from Cardinal Jaime Ortega.

Ortega warned them to beware of "escapes" from life that could cause physical and spiritual harm — drugs, sexual promiscuity, alcohol.

"A home with a family, an affectionate life: a husband, a wife, children — that is naturally right," the prelate said. "In your search for sense in your life, look for a centering place: the Catholic Church."

Ortega also spoke of young

Cubans' mounting interest in the church, saying 1,500 letters reach the Vatican each week from Cuba, most of them from young people.

The young men and women, most of them wearing T-shirts announcing the upcoming papal visit, listened attentively and responded enthusiastically.

"Long live the pope!" they shouted. "Long live the church! Long live Cuba!"

The Cuban church has no estimates of the number of young people attending services, but a visit to any Roman Catholic parish in Havana will find a majority of worshippers under 30, singing loudly and swaying to the music.

Band: Common advice is to get sound sleep

■ From page 1A

and, specifically, how they plan to be sure they're awake in time. If the answer is an alarm clock, he inquires, "Have you got it set yet?"

Nothing left to chance.

The parting question is health-related.

"Everybody feeling good?" he asks.

When several students complain of mild sore throats, his common advice is to get a sound night's sleep.

"I encourage you to hit the sack," he says. "You're going to look in a lot better tomorrow. When people get tired, that is when they get sick."

As he heads out the door of a room of upper-classmen, he comments wryly about the calendar picture of a scantily clad "Miss January" taped at eye level, but leaves it hanging.

Students' responses to Manson are respectful and compliant.

"Usually the kids are pretty good, and if you just tell them to cut something out, they'll knock it off," he says.

But that's not to say they never try to pull a fast one on the chaperons. Manson recalls a room check on a previous trip when only three students were in the room that was supposed to be shared by four. The fourth student was in the shower, his roommates claimed, and indeed, a running shower could be heard. But it was running into an empty tub, Manson discovered.

"Earle (Dickinson, Jefferson band director) immediately flew into action with a posse of chaperons and we found him," Manson says, noting that a Dickinson-planned trip is choice duty for chap-

erons.

"Earle's so darned organized," he says. "Most of the kids understand exactly what the expectations are."

By now, it's 11 p.m., lights-out time. Manson is joined by Jefferson Associate Principal Terry Strait and drumline instructors Doug Krejci and Craig Hauschildt for a walking patrol of the five floors of this Embassy Suites hotel, where 380 Jefferson students and chaperons are staying. When they spot lights on in a Jefferson room, Manson knocks and reminds students of the time. Usually, the room goes dark within seconds.

It's midnight now — 2 a.m. Iowa time — close to 23 hours since the four chaperons began their day. They settle into lounge chairs in the hotel's center court for a few more minutes of watching and listening to make sure all is quiet for the night. The rooms open onto railed walkways that ring the center court, much like the Collins Plaza Hotel in Cedar Rapids. Any light or movement is visible from the chaperons' vantage point.

When it comes to night patrol, they agree, this is a snap.

Vigilance pays off. At 12:30 a.m., one unsuspecting student slips from his room, only to be nabbed by the night patrol.

"He'll be spending the day with me," says Andy Houk, associate director of bands at Jefferson and director of the marching band. "He'll be riding the 4-year-old rides at Knott's Berry Farm," says Houk, who is accompanied on the trip by his wife, Arlene, and their son, Adam, 4.

Fraud: Most providers 'genuinely honest'

■ From page 1A

"Iowa is not as bad as some other states, like the original five," said Angela Lang, director of the state project. "There are a few people out there stretching the rules, and it's our job to identify those people taking advantage of the system."

The battle against Medicare and Medicaid fraud is being fought statewide by the Department of Health and Human Services, the Office of Inspector General, the Administration on Aging and the Health Care Finance Administration, which operates and regulates Medicare, Landhauser said.

The Heritage Area Agency on Aging recently trained more than 160 volunteers to do community education on Medicare and Medicaid fraud. Some volunteers are available to speak to groups about fraud and how to avoid it. Others have undergone additional training to become qualified for individual counseling, Landhauser said.

When people come to the agency with problems, the coun-

selling volunteers can help resolve the issue, making referrals to investigators and law enforcement if necessary. Those volunteers must take a five-day training program provided by the Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP). SHIIP is a service of the Iowa Insurance Division that provides counseling for Iowa's Medicare beneficiaries and their families.

The main component of the agency's effort is a toll-free number, 1-(800) 423-2449, people can call to report items they think may be fraud. Counselors will discuss callers' concerns, determine whether there is a valid complaint and pass it along to the proper agencies.

Landhauser offered tips for those interested in watching for fraud. The most important thing for beneficiaries to remember is to never give out their Medicare or Medicaid number. Once someone has that number, he or she can bill Medicare for appointments and equipment that never existed.

It's also important for people to read their statements, even though the sheer amount of paperwork involved can make that hard, she said. Beneficiaries should especially watch for services they did not receive or are inflated or changed, diagnoses that are altered, and duplicate billings.

Landhauser said beneficiaries should remember that not everything that looks like fraud will turn out to be fraud.

"Most providers are genuinely honest," she said.

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