

TUNING UP FOR TENNIS

Coe Coach Eric Rodgers shows stretches to avoid injuries

HEALTH & SCIENCE

The Gazette

Monday June 23, 1997

FORECAST

TODAY	TUESDAY
Partly cloudy, humid	Storms developing
Wind: S 12-18	Wind: S 10-20
High 89	High 87
Low 69	Low 70
Weather Details 8B	

FINAL / VOL. 115 NO. 165

THE NEWSPAPER OF EASTERN IOWA

CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA 50 CENTS

2 deaths probed

- Parnell man enters Iowa City home of his estranged wife and dies after a scuffle
- 22-year-old Cedar Rapids woman was found dead in her apartment on Ninth Avenue SW



Traci Evenson Found dead in Cedar Rapids

IOWA CITY

Johnson County sheriff's deputy S.J. Koshatka (left) talks with DCI agent Rick Benson in front of 903 Spring Ridge Dr., Iowa City, on Sunday afternoon. An armed intruder was found dead at the scene.

For updates on this story call 363-7000 or 337-7000, category 2551.



Gazette photo by Buzz Orr



Photo by Jason Behnken, Gazette Intern

CEDAR RAPIDS

Cedar Rapids police put on latex gloves before investigating a possible homicide in the second-floor apartment at 438 1/2 Ninth Ave. SW on Sunday afternoon. Traci Evenson, 22, was found dead there Sunday morning.

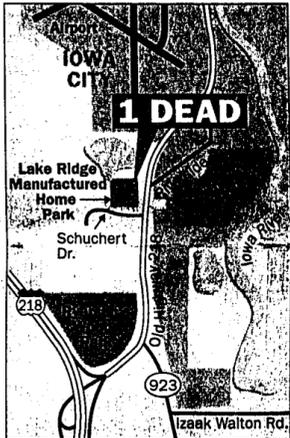
For updates on this story call 363-7000 or 337-7000, category 2552.

Man's fatal gunshot wound may have been self-inflicted

By Lynn M. Tefft
Gazette Johnson County Bureau
IOWA CITY — A Parnell man entered his estranged wife's home in southwest Iowa City on Sunday morning and after a scuffle with her, a guest, died from what may have been a self-inflicted gunshot wound, according to authorities.
Authorities said Marc Laine Evans, 35 broke into Joan Evans' home at 903 Spring Ridge Dr. in the Lake Ridge Manufactured Home Park around 5:30 a.m. Sunday. Home at the time were Evans, 26, Kevin Rohrer, 30, of Brooklyn, Iowa, and Roh-

rer's two children.
Joan Evans and Rohrer alerted police of an armed subject shortly after Marc Evans arrived, Johnson County Sheriff Bob Carpenter said. Iowa City police officers responding to the scene heard gunshots from inside the residence. Officers found Joan Evans and Rohrer injured and Marc Evans dead. The children were unharmed.
The case has been turned over to the state Division of Criminal Investigation and the Johnson County Sheriff's Department.

■ Turn to 8A: Iowa City



Gazette map

C.R. police are investigating death as a possible homicide

By Steve Gravelle
Gazette staff writer
Police are investigating the death of a woman whose body was found Sunday in her southwest Cedar Rapids apartment.
The body of Traci Evenson, 22, was discovered in her second-floor apartment at 438 1/2 Ninth Ave. SW about 9 a.m. Sunday by her sister. While a definitive ruling wouldn't be made until completion of an autopsy late Sunday night, police are investigating Evenson's death as a possible homicide.
"We're looking at it as a possi-

bility, and we're investigating it as such," said Lt. Ken Washburn of the police Investigative Unit. "Nothing has been ruled out yet, but at this point we're looking at it as a possible homicide."
Washburn said Evenson died in the 36 hours before the discovery of her body, placing her death sometime after 9:30 Saturday night. He said he couldn't comment on details relating to the case, including whether Evenson's body bore any apparent injuries or whether she was clothed.
Neighbors said Evenson

BODY FOUND

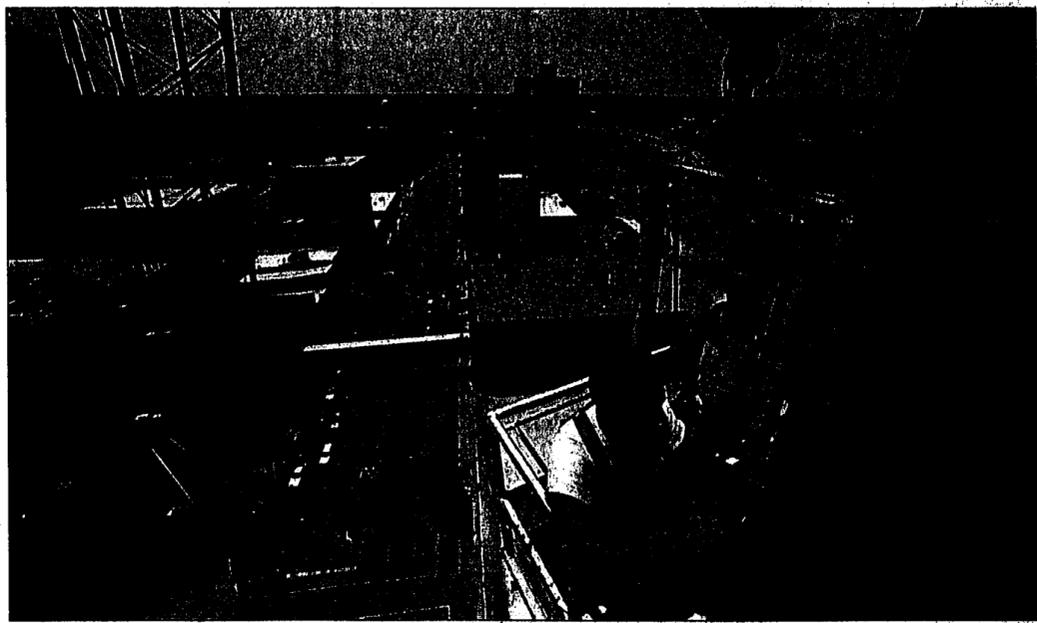


Gazette map

moved into the apartment over the small two-story house about a month ago.
"She seemed to be a nice person," said Emma Turner, who came onto her porch for some fresh air on a sultry afternoon.
Turner, who has lived at 441

■ Turn to 8A: Cedar Rapids

A crown for the Crowne



The Crowne Plaza Five Seasons Hotel, formerly the Wyndham Five Seasons Hotel, is now topped with its new name. Two Crowne Plaza signs, which retain "Five Seasons" in small lettering, were installed Sunday. ABOVE: Brad Mears of Cedar Rapids and Dustin Dighton of Lisbon fasten a sign to the side of the hotel. The sign was erected by Nesper Signs with the help of Coonrod cranes. RIGHT: Before the installation, Steve Edaburn of Marlon cleans a new sign. Last month, ownership of the 280-room, 16-story hotel was transferred to Servico Inc. of West Palm Beach, Fla., from Aetna Life Insurance Co. and Cedar Rapids Hotel Business Partners Inc.



Photos by Jason Behnken, Gazette Intern

2 girls say they were held captive

By Dale Kueter
Gazette staff writer
OSKALOOSA — After a week of travel with two fugitive stepbrothers suspected of murder, two Oskaloosa teen-age girls began to get a hint of what had happened back in Iowa, a family friend said Sunday.
Then "everything began to hit the fan," said Tim Hunolt, the boyfriend of Gayla Smith, mother of Mandi Smith.
"The girls are extremely scared," Hunolt said about the girls, Mandi Smith, 17, and Amanda Miller, 16. The two were in seclusion Sunday after traveling from Florida to Ottumwa, arriving on Amtrak's California Zephyr on Saturday night.
The girls had been missing since June 11, the same day authorities issued first-degree murder warrants for Jamie McMahan, 22, of rural Rose Hill, and Christopher Kauffman, 18, of Oskaloosa, in the shooting death of Barbara Garber, 52, of rural What Cheer.
The men also are suspected in the shooting death of Island Schultz, 18, of rural Gibson, and the robbery of the Gibson Savings Bank that day. All the crimes occurred within five miles of one another.
Hunolt said the girls left with the two men not knowing of the crime spree.
"They wanted some fun, a little vacation, and then it turned into a nightmare. They were threatened and held against their will."
Finally, he said, the men left the girls, first giving them some money. Hunolt said the girls weren't harmed physically. He said there was an "immense change in the boys' behavior" after the girls became aware that someone had been killed and robbed.
Hunolt declined to say how those events unfolded. He said the girls "didn't get a full picture (of the crimes) until they got back here."



Mandi Smith Age 17



Amanda Miller Age 16

The Oskaloosa girls who traveled with two men suspected of murder did not know about the crime spree before they left, a family friend says.

■ Turn to 8A: Girls

BRIEFLY

Decorah farm fits endangered breeds

The Farm Park at Luther College is a mix of zoo and museum for preserving endangered farm animals. Details, 1B.

Book promotes northeast Iowa

Bob Wolf used writing workshops to help people of the region tell their own stories for The Northeast Iowa Book. Details, 1B.

Lugnuts bolt down win over Kernels

A shoulder injury shelved the Kernels pitcher, and the Lugnuts rallied from behind to beat Cedar Rapids, 7-5. Details, 1D.

Els golfs toward another victory

Ernie Els overcame shaky putting and a rain delay for a two-stroke win over Jeff Maggert at the Buick Classic. Details, 1D.

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Iowa City: 2 adults were hurt, 2 kids unharmed

■ From page 1A

State Medical Examiner Thomas Bennett performed an autopsy on Marc Evans last night. Results of the autopsy were not immediately available.

Evans and Rohrer were treated and released at University Hospitals. Carpenter would not comment on the nature of their injuries.

A truck, believed to be Marc Evans' and found south of the manufactured home park at the Johnson County Fairgrounds, was impounded. Carpenter said it appears Marc Evans walked from the fairgrounds through a wooded area straight into Joan Evans' back yard.

Joan Evans has lived in the manufactured home park for about two months, according to her neighbor Dan Prosser. Prosser said he knew she was get-

ting a divorce.

"She was seldom home, pretty quiet, kept to herself," said Prosser, who has lived in the park since December.

According to authorities, Marc and Joan Evans had lived in the small Johnson County town of Windham. Residents of Windham contacted last night either said they had not heard of Sunday's incident or declined to talk about it.

Authorities called Prosser, who was camping in Washington County at the time of the break-in, back to his home be-

cause one of the bullets from the crime had penetrated his home. The deer slug entered an outside wall and traveled through a dresser, bedroom door, and two interior walls before lodging in another outside wall.

Carpenter said authorities also were alerted to a possible explosive device in Joan Evans' home. The Johnson County Metro Bomb Squad searched the trailer but did not find one.

Gazette news intern Karina Halter contributed to this report.

Girls: They say fugitives held them against their will

■ From page 1A

Hunolt said the girls' families are "extremely relieved, but we don't feel it's totally over yet," referring to the fact the men are still at large. "Their testimony (to authorities) was helpful. They have been released and not charged with anything."

Hunolt said the girls' families would like to see authorities make a statement about the girls' cooperation. He said many rumors continue, including those that the girls somehow were involved in the crimes.

After arriving in Ottumwa and phoning their parents,

Smith and Miller were interviewed extensively for several hours by authorities before being allowed to go home.

Mahaska County Sheriff Charles Van Toorn said the girls were not interviewed Sunday. "There's not much we can do at this point here in Mahaska County. We don't believe the boys are in the area. It's kind of a wait-and-see situation."

Peggy Bailey of Oskaloosa, Christopher's mother, declined comment on any aspect of the case last night.

Authorities said on Friday

that McMahan and Kauffman had been seen visiting Walt Disney World. The FBI, which has filed a criminal complaint charging the pair with traveling across state lines to avoid prosecution on the murder charges, said the men had stayed in a posh motel in Kissimmee, Fla., until Wednesday.

FBI officials said both men still may be in the Tampa-Orlando area and said they should be considered armed and "extremely dangerous."

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Cedar Rapids

■ From page 1A

Ninth Ave. SW for more than 50 years, watched as detectives wearing rubber gloves and white plastic shoe coverings came and went from the house across the street.

Turner and other neighbors said they exchanged greetings with Evenson when they saw her on the street. They said she was a quiet neighbor, and they hadn't seen or heard anything suspicious over the past few days.

"It has always been really nice — pretty quiet" Turner said of her neighborhood. "I was surprised that happened over there."

Another neighbor agreed, adding a lack of parking on the block makes strange vehicles especially noticeable. The man, who didn't want his name in the paper, said he hadn't noticed any recently, although someone on the block apparently had several guests Friday night.

"You can always tell when different cars come in," said the man, who lives across the street from Evenson's apartment. He said he noticed some unfamiliar vehicles Friday, but added they may have belonged to people visiting at another house.

Washburn declined to confirm Evenson's employment, but a co-worker said she worked part-time at the Hy-Vee store at 279 Collins Rd. NE. Evenson was a 1994 Washington High School graduate.

Efforts to contact Evenson's family were not successful last night.

In an incident related to the investigation but not apparently to Evenson's death, the owner of the home was arrested Sunday afternoon after detectives found marijuana plants growing there.

Eileen Balducki, 48, of 438 Ninth Ave. SW, was arrested on a charge of manufacturing a controlled substance. Balducki, who lives downstairs from Evenson's apartment, was booked into the Linn County Jail and held in lieu of \$3,250 bail pending a court appearance today.

Washburn said the marijuana plants were discovered "incidental to the search" of her house.

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The Gazette
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