

# Royal Treatment



Kris Boggess  
brings a bit  
of ancient  
Egypt  
to Marion  
Arts Festival

**YOUTH  
PLUS**

# The Gazette

Thursday May 13, 1999

**GOOD MORNING**

**TODAY**

Some light rain  
Wind: NE 10-15

High 61  
Low 50

**FRIDAY**

Partly sunny  
Wind: S 5-15

High 73  
Low 48

**Weather Report, 14C**

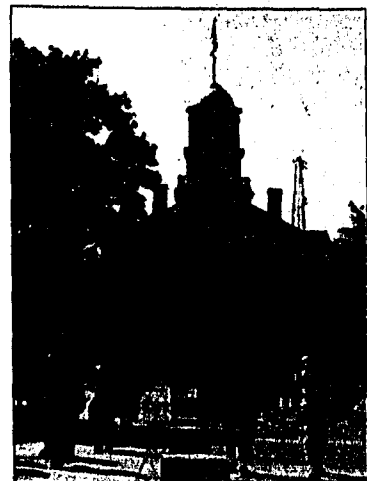
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FINAL / VOL. 116 NO. 111

THE NEWSPAPER OF EASTERN IOWA

CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA 50 CENTS

## TODAY



### University pay plans sent to regents

Employees of Iowa's state universities are likely to get raises of 4 percent on average. Details, 1B.

### McLeodUSA gets 13 FCC licenses

The telecommunications company, based in Cedar Rapids, pledged \$4.96 million for the licenses in five states. Details, 6D.

### Junior college advised for Range

Hawkeye basketball coach Steve Alford recommends a transfer to junior college for Joey Range, who will be academically ineligible to play next season. Details, 1D.

### What makes a good moisturizer?

Columnist Paula Begoun says a good moisturizer contains emollients, among other ingredients. Details in Accent, 9B.

### 3 more linked to crime-family case

Three more associates of limo-service operator Scotter Clark of Cedar Rapids have been charged in federal court. Details, 1B.

### ISU women bound for Scandinavia

The women's basketball team will visit Denmark, Sweden and Norway for a five-game tour. Details, 1D.

## TOMORROW



### Lucas, Ebert, local fans on 'Star Wars'

Local fans will celebrate next week's opening of the latest "Star Wars" installment; Roger Ebert comments on "The Phantom Menace"; and George Lucas talks about reactions to the movie. Weekend! in Friday's Gazette.

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## Iowa City council majority backs library tax hike

By Adam Lowenstein  
Gazette Johnson County Bureau

IOWA CITY — A majority of City Council members say they'd support a tax increase to fund expansion of the Iowa City Public Library.

At a work session Wednesday morning, Mayor Ernie Lehman and council members Karen Kubby, Dee Norton and Connie Champion said they would back such an effort.

Depending on the cost of the project, council member Dee Vanderhoef said she might support a tax increase.

Council members Mike O'Donnell and Dean Thornberry were squarely against any tax increase.

The hike in property tax rates would come if voters approve a bond issue for the library project.

**The hike in property tax rates would come if voters approve a bond issue for the library project.**

But a lot has to be determined before such a measure would be put on the ballot, primarily how to pay for operating a bigger library.

"I'm not saying no to the library, but we have to be realistic about the budget and where we are going,"

Champion said.

Also unknown is when a bond referendum might be held. Kubby and Norton agree with the library board that November would be an opportune time.

But the other council members said it would be better if the project could be postponed until there is more budgetary leeway for operating expenses and a better sense of voter mood.

"We have to do something, or we're telling the library no," Kubby responded.

These matters will be discussed at a council work session with the library board Monday at the Civic Center.

Given the resounding defeat of the last attempt at increasing taxes — the March 30 local option sales tax initiative — several council members wondered whether a bond referendum would be approved, especially if the council is divided on the issue.

"I don't want to see the bond issue not pass," Lehman said. "We need 100 percent support from the council."

The library board will spend \$15,000 to commission a random telephone survey to gauge how voters feel about the library, the possible expansion and the failed local option sales tax bid, board President Jesse Singerman told the council. The results are due in about five weeks.

## Downing's sanity key to murder trial



Sandra Dunn of Fort Dodge, the sister of murder victim Ruth Downing, weeps during opening statements Wednesday in the Linn County murder trial of Scott Downing. Downing is also charged with the murder of his daughter Cassie, 7, and the attempted murder of his daughter Abbie, 4.

Prosecution stresses planning, but defense cites mental illness

By Dave Gosch  
Gazette staff writer

Jurors will have to decide whether Scott Downing planned and executed the murders of his wife and daughter or whether he couldn't comprehend his actions because he was mentally ill.

Those two theories were presented by prosecution and defense attorneys as the first-degree murder trial for Downing began Wednesday in Linn County District Court.

Downing, who turned 33 on Wednesday, was shot and captured after a chase through Iowa and Keokuk counties Aug. 25, the day after the bodies of his estranged wife, Ruth Downing, 30, and their 7-year-old daughter, Cassie, were found in his apartment at 4122 Wilson Ave. SW.

About four hours after the bodies were found, a second Downing daughter, Abbie, 4, was found alive near the Cedar River roller dam.

Downing's defense attorney Jill Ableidinger, in her opening statement, conceded Downing had committed the murders.

But she described Scott Downing as a "time bomb waiting to go off" after he quit taking medication in 1997 that had been prescribed for a mental illness.

■ Turn to 7A: Downing

## Treasury secretary resigns amid lavish praise

Rubin credited with playing major role in economic boom

WASHINGTON (AP) — Robert Rubin, praised as one of the most successful Treasury secretaries in history, will step down from his post in July with the national economy in an unprecedented expansion and the badly shaken global economy apparently on the mend.

President Clinton announced Wednesday that he would nominate Deputy Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers, a former Harvard professor who has worked closely with Rubin, as his third Treasury secretary.

Parting applause was plentiful for Rubin — and there was also a positive reception for Sum-



Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin (right) and his designated successor, Lawrence Summers (left), acknowledge guests on the White House lawn after the announcement Wednesday of Rubin's resignation.

mers. The stock market tumbled at the first reports of Rubin's departure, but that quickly turned around (details, 6D).

Clinton said he agreed with

Rubin, speaking to reporters after the White House announcement, said that he had not made any decision on what position he will take after leaving the administration this summer.

Rubin has been rumored as a possible replacement for Greenspan if the 73-year-old Fed chairman decides he does not want a fourth term when his current term expires in June 2000.

Summers should have little trouble winning Senate confirmation.

Iowans in Congress generally praised Rubin's performance.

"He had the ability to work with members of both political parties," Republican Sen. Charles Grassley said.

Democratic Sen. Tom Harkin called him "a good influence in the White House."

"Bob Rubin was always open

■ Rubin ideas helped spark boom times, 12A  
■ Little change in policy likely under Summers, 12A

and responsive," Harkin said. Republican Rep. James Leach, chairman of the House Banking and Financial Services Committee, called Rubin "one of the most effective secretaries of the Treasury in recent American history in both domestic and international fields."

Republican Rep. Jim Nussle credited Rubin with "very responsible work, particularly with regard to the currency crisis in the Far East."

Clinton also announced the nomination of Stuart Eizenstat, an undersecretary of state, to Summers' post as the No. 2 official at the Treasury.

## Arrest in 1980 murder 'a miracle,' mother says

Knoxville man, 53, held in killing of teen-ager

By Frank Gluck  
Gazette staff writer

The mother of a Davenport teen murdered 19 years ago says she has mixed feelings about the Wednesday arrest of a man charged in that murder.

"It's been hard today," said Eleanor Strong of Montpelier. "I'm weak, and I've cried and cried. But I knew he was going to be caught."

She called the arrest of Dean Ray Tumey, 53, of Knoxville, "a miracle."

Strong described her daughter Sandra Jo Pittman as a "beautiful and feisty girl who had a lot of energy. I thought she was the most wonderful person on Earth."

Chicago & North Western railroad workers found Pittman's body in a roadside park on Highway 30 a mile west of Clarence on Sept. 17, 1980. The teen was

from Davenport. An autopsy revealed she died after being struck on her head by a heavy object, possibly a claw hammer or crowbar.

Pittman, who was 17 when she died, was last seen at a Catholic Worker house the day before in Davenport.

Tumey was being held last night in the Cedar County Jail in Tipton. He is to make an initial court appearance this morning in the Cedar County Court-house. Judge John Nahra has set bond at \$1 million.

Police said Tumey was arrested without incident in Knoxville on Wednesday afternoon.

Police and prosecutors remained tight-lipped about the investigation and what led them to Tumey.



Sandra Jo Pittman  
17-year-old found beaten to death

## Dark side of night lights

Study finds babies face higher risk of nearsightedness

Associated Press

Children who sleep under the soft glow of a night light to keep the scary monsters away may be more likely to suffer a very real and lifelong problem — nearsightedness.

Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia say that youngsters who sleep in a dimly lighted room until age 2 may be as much as five times more likely to develop myopia, or nearsightedness, as they grow up.

Genetic and environmental factors, such as nutrition and eyestrain from television and computer screens, are thought to hurt people's vision.

The Philadelphia study raises the provocative new possibility that too much light prompts the eyes to grow excessively and skews their natural focus during the first two years of life, when the eyes develop most rapidly.

The study of 479 children was published in today's issue of the journal Nature.

"Just as the body needs to rest, this suggests that the eyes need a period of darkness," said ophthalmologist Dr. Graham Quinn, the study's lead author.

However, eye specialists from many institutions dismissed the study as premature and incomplete.

They said the researchers had failed to take into account obvious risk factors, such as heredity.

"There are other factors involved in childhood myopia, the most important of which is whether the parents are nearsighted or not," said myopia researcher Donald Mutti of the University of California at Berkeley.

Also, they said the study is flawed because the researchers relied on information supplied by the parents of nearsighted children after several years. Nor did they account for other, stronger sources of light that parents cannot control, such as a streetlight shining through a bedroom window.

■ Turn to 7A: Murder

## Downing: Defense cites history of mental illness; prosecution stresses planning

■ From page 1A

Ableidinger said Downing suffered from "schizo affective disorder" when he committed the crimes. People with the disorder suffer from depression, delusions and psychotic behavior.

But Assistant Linn County Attorney Russell Keast said Downing "brutally" and "selfishly" murdered his wife and daughter "to prove that no court would dictate to him how often he would get to see his children."

The Downings' marriage was over last summer, he said, adding Scott Downing didn't like being restricted on when he could see his daughters.

The state is charging Downing beat Ruth Downing to death with a baseball bat and choked and suffocated Cassie. He then strangled Abbie and, when she wouldn't die, threw the child in the Cedar River. (Abbie is now living with maternal relatives in Florida.)

Keast said Downing took his daughters shopping the day of the murders and bought duct tape, handcuffs, sleeping pills and a curling iron with a long cord at two Cedar Rapids' Kmart stores.

An autopsy found high levels of the sleeping pills in Cassie Downing's body, according to Keast.

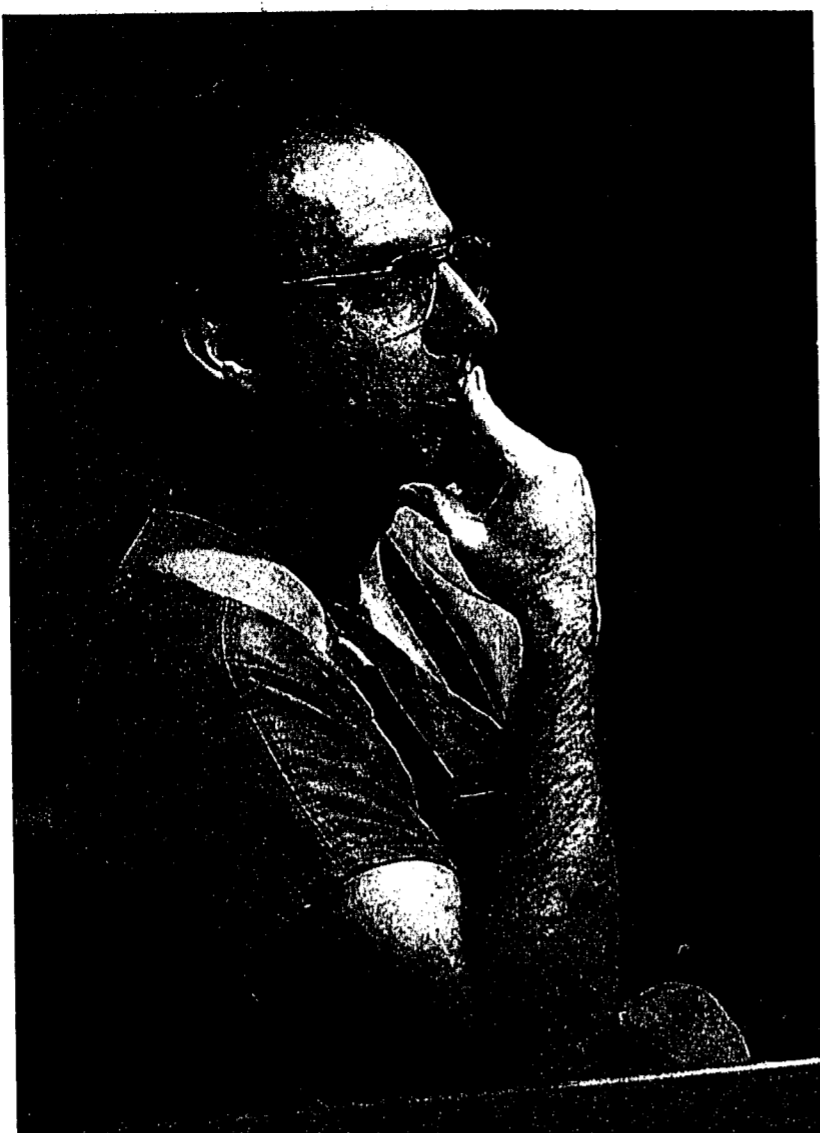
Testimony later indicated the curling iron cord had Abbie Downing's blood on it. Adhesive from the duct tape was found on Cassie Downing's hands. Handcuffs were found beside the dead child and her mother.

Keast said that after Downing left his apartment, he went to the Meskwaki Bingo-Casino-Hotel near Tama and cashed a \$200 check. At one point, he called his mother, who told him Abbie was found alive.

Keast said Downing's response was, "Oh, no."

Keast also pointed out that the baseball bat used to kill Ruth Downing had been wiped clean.

Ableidinger, the Linn County public defender representing Downing, said her client's mental health problems began in



Gazette photo by John F. Martin

Scott Downing listens to opening statements Wednesday in his murder and attempted murder trial at the Linn County courthouse.

1989 when he was treated by a psychiatrist who observed that Downing was depressed and had feelings of inadequacy.

In 1994, Downing was diagnosed with anxiety and depression disorders.

Downing's condition worsened when he lost his job at Kwik-Way in 1995 when the company filed for bankruptcy.

"Scott's condition continued to get worse and worse," said

Ableidinger.

He quit taking his medication in 1997 because it made him lethargic, and he felt he was losing touch with his family.

Then Ruth Downing filed for divorce in July 1998 and took the children with her, Ableidinger said.

She said Downing, after committing the murders, went to Tama and then Nebraska before returning to Iowa and being

stopped after a high speed chase.

At that point, she said, Downing had finally realized what he had done and wanted to die. That's why he pointed a pellet gun at officers after he was stopped in Iowa County.

"He wanted police to kill him," she said.

Wednesday's testimony focused on what officers found at the murder scene.

Jurors were shown a bloody scene of Ruth Downing's partly-clad body on Scott Downing's water bed. Other photos showed the body of Cassie Downing with her head in the toilet in the nearby bathroom.

Officers had been summoned to the scene by Ruth Downing's friend Lisa Phillips. Ruth Downing and her daughters were living with Phillips.

Phillips testified she became concerned when Ruth Downing did not come home at midnight after working at Hy-Vee. Ruth Downing was going to Scott Downing's apartment to pick up the girls before returning to Phillips' home.

Police met Phillips outside Downing's apartment and said they could not enter because there was no evidence that a crime had been committed.

Phillips said she later told Scott Downing's parents about her concerns. Downing's parents then called police and let them into the apartment.

Dr. Kathleen Opdebeeck, medical director at the St. Luke's Child Protection Center, testified that she examined Abbie Downing after she was found.

She said Abbie did not appear to understand "what the major issues" were in connection with the incident.

Abbie had "numerous bruises and abrasions" to her head and a mark around her neck consistent with someone who had been strangled. Abbie's eye had hemorrhaged, which was also related to strangulation.

Testimony is to begin at 1 p.m. today.

## Murder: Man arrested in 1980 case

■ From page 1A

Strong, the victim's mother, said she never met Tumey and does not know if her daughter knew him.

Cedar County Sheriff Keith Whitlatch would say only that Tumey and Pittman had been "acquaintances."

Investigators first sought Tumey for questioning a week after Pittman's body was found but declined at the time to say he was a suspect.

John Jennings, a reporter for the Knoxville Journal-Express, said people in the central Iowa town of 8,000 who knew Tumey said he had been a patient at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Knoxville.

Muscatine County Attorney Richard Phillips said the U.S. Division of Veterans Affairs Police Department assisted in the investigation leading to Tumey's arrest.

Phillips will head the prosecution of Tumey, even though he is the county attorney in the county adjacent to Cedar.

That arrangement is "due to conflicts of interest on the part of the Cedar County Attorney's Office and the attorney general of Iowa," Phillips said in a statement released Wednesday.

Phillips declined to be specific about the conflict of interest but did say it relates to the fact that an Iowa assistant attorney general will be called as a witness in the case. He did not identify that state prosecutor.

Whitlatch said he's pleased the investigation has resulted in an arrest.

"I'm real satisfied today," Whitlatch said.

The investigation "hasn't been actively pursued every day for the last 19 years, but it's never been out of sight," he said.

The investigation was conducted by the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation, the Cedar County and Marion County sheriff's departments, the Knoxville Police Department and the VA police.

## Beverly Hills rejects fur measure

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP) — Voters in this city of the well-dressed and well-heeled rejected a measure Tuesday that would have required fur merchants to attach labels explaining how the animals died.

Measure A would have been the first such ordinance in the nation.

With all eight precincts counted, the proposal had 1,908 votes

in favor compared with 3,363 votes against, or 36.2 percent to 63.8 percent, said city spokeswoman Robin Chancellor.

"It's disappointing to lose the election, but we've won the battle," said Luke Montgomery, campaign manager of Beverly Hills Consumers for Informed Choice, the group behind the measure.

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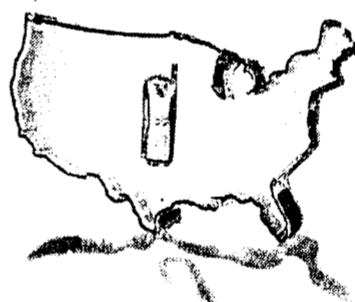
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