

NEWS JOURNAL

SUMNER

Man dies of collision injuries

Richard J. Shields of Sumner died from injuries suffered in a head-on collision with a semi-trailer truck Friday morning in rural Bremer County, the Iowa State Patrol reported. (See obituary, page 2B.)

Shields, 33, was driving a van southbound on Highway 63 near the junction of Highway 93 when he crossed the center line into the path of the northbound semi-trailer truck about 1:20 a.m., the patrol reported.

The accident happened about 18 miles north of Waterloo.

The patrol is continuing its investigation of the accident.

KALONA

High-speed chase ends in arrest

A Kalona man, wanted on criminal charges, led officers on a high-speed chase Friday afternoon before being arrested in Johnson County.

Washington County sheriff's deputies pursued Anthony Shepherd, 32, from his Kalona residence to northbound Highway 1. There, Shepherd tried to elude capture until police forced him off the highway, the Sheriff's Department reported.

Shepherd then fled from his overturned car on foot until police captured him, the department reported.

He was taken to the Johnson County Jail for an Iowa City Police Department warrant for fourth-degree theft and four Coralville Police Department warrants, including firearm possession by a felon, first-degree robbery, eluding police and driving under suspension.

Charges are pending in Washington County for the Friday incident.

IOWA CITY

2 school threats investigated

Police have investigated two incidents of students threatening their peers and authorities at Iowa City schools in the wake of "hit lists" surfacing at a Coralville school.

Timothy Gottwalt, 14, of 820 Maggard St., was charged with first-degree harassment for allegedly threatening to bring a gun to South East Junior High School, 2501 Bradford Dr., and kill staff. The incident happened around 8:20 a.m. Wednesday. Police responding to the scene searched Gottwalt and found no gun, Sgt. Mike Lord said.

Officials at Horace Mann Elementary, 521 N. Dodge St., reported to police on Thursday afternoon that an 11-year-old male student had threatened staff in the morning. The boy was suspended and police were following up on the case Friday, Lord said.

Tensions throughout the school district were aroused on May 7 when two notes were found at Northwest Junior High School, 1507 Eighth St., Coralville. The notes named eight students specifically as targets of violence to occur Monday.

There were no incidents at Northwest, though police still guarded the school throughout the week and many students stayed home.

Murder trial postponed

The trial of a homeless man accused of killing another homeless man has been postponed to Sept. 13.

Marc Plettenberg, 29, is accused of killing Benjamin Bailey, 44, with blunt force trauma to the upper body. He was to stand trial May 24.

An anonymous caller alerted police on Feb. 20 to the body of Bailey lying under a railroad trestle on a bank of the Iowa River behind Moore Business Forms, 1960 S. Riverside Dr.

Plettenberg was arrested for allegedly trying to break in to Moore Business Forms on Jan. 29. He became a suspect in Bailey's killing in mid-February, after authorities seized his belongings from the Johnson County Jail and determined some were actually Bailey's.

CEDAR RAPIDS

AIDS Walk is Sunday

The Rapids AIDS Project (RAP) of the Grant Wood Area Chapter of the American Red Cross will host a Candlelight Memorial and AIDS Walk at 5 p.m. Sunday to remember those who have died of AIDS and celebrate those who continue to fight HIV/AIDS.

Participants can help raise needed funds for the Rapids AIDS Project by having family and friends sponsor them in AIDS Walk Cedar Rapids. For a pledge sheet or for information, call 393-9579.

Police Station tours today

Free pork sandwiches and soda will be served from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. today to the first 5,000 visitors to tour the Cedar Rapids Police Department. The sandwiches are provided by the Linn County Pork Producers.

Visitors can meet area officers and inspect the equipment they use at an open house from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Police Station is located at 505 First St. SW.

Downing death wish told

Prosecutor rests case against man accused of killing wife, girl

By Dave Gosch
 Gazette staff writer

Scott Downing's defense attorneys plan to call two psychiatrists to the witness stand as they begin their case Monday.

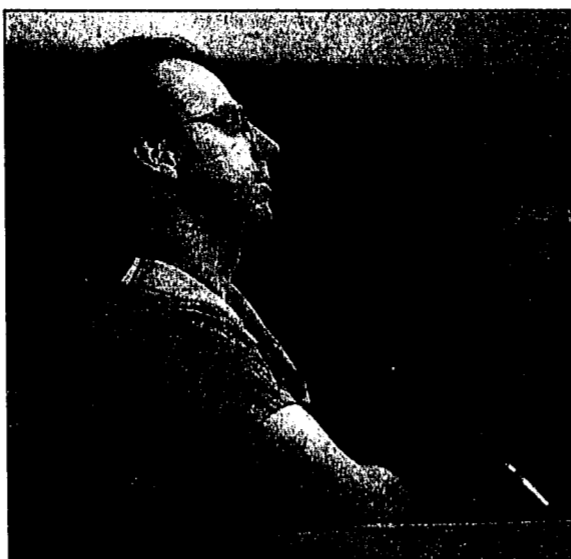
Assistant Public Defender Tyler Johnston declined to say whether Downing would take the witness stand.

The defense claims that Downing was insane when he killed his wife and daughter.

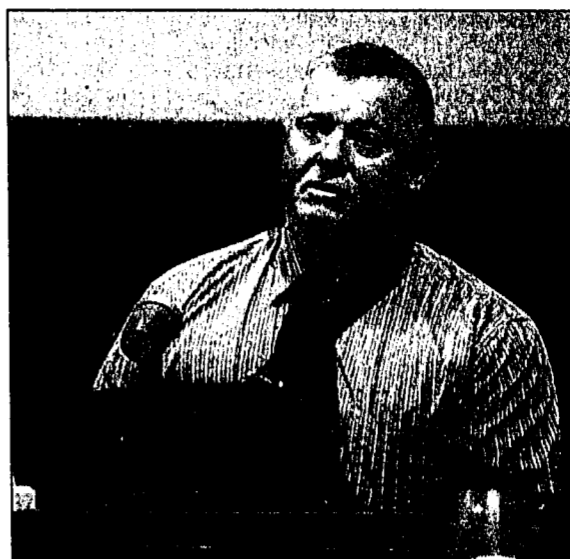
Assistant Linn County Attorney Russell Keast claims that Downing "brutally" and "selfishly" committed the acts to "prove that no court would dictate to him how often he would get to see his children."

Downing, 33, 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 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



Scott Downing (left) listens Friday to the testimony of Keokuk County Sheriff Ron George (right) at the Linn County Courthouse. Downing is accused of murdering his estranged wife and a daughter and attempting to murder another daughter.



Gazette photos by Miranda Meyer

daughter, Abbie Downing, 4, was found alive near the Cedar River roller dam.

Authorities charge that Downing beat his wife to death with a baseball bat and choked and suffocated Cassie. Downing is accused of trying to strangle and drown Abbie.

The prosecution rested its

case Friday after calling two witnesses.

Keokuk County Sheriff Ron George testified Friday in Linn County District Court about the chase and capture of Downing.

George testified that he and two deputies pursued Downing's car some 20 miles from

rural South English into Iowa County. Downing stopped his car at a roadblock and then got out.

Downing, carrying a pistol, then walked toward George and his two deputies. The weapon was later determined to be a pellet gun.

George said officers yelled at

Downing to get down, but he continued walking toward them. George then stepped out from behind his car door and fired two rounds. One round struck Downing in the hand.

Deputy Jeff Shipley then fired a shot that struck Downing on the right side. That caused Downing to fall to the ground.

Fifteen 9mm rounds were fired. George said Shipley fired several "blind shots" from over the top of the car door.

Officers then approached Downing, who said, "Tell them I'm sorry."

John Graham, identification officer with the Cedar Rapids Police Department, testified that he recovered several notes from Downing's car. The notes apparently were written by Downing.

One note described Downing's dissatisfaction with getting to see his children only one or two nights per week.

Downing expressed remorse for killing the "two most important girls" in his life in another note. He also wrote that he wanted the cops to kill him and also wrote, "Where are the cops?"



ABOVE: Lizz Huntley, 13, chats with friends Friday as she helps pull weeds at Kate Wickham Elementary School in Coralville as part of a Northwest Junior High cleanup project. The seventh graders from Northwest were participating in "Vikings Make a Difference Day." RIGHT: Nick Kempf, 12, puts all his weight onto his shovel Friday while Justin Parrish, 13, operates a posthole digger. Nick and Justin were digging holes for soccer goalposts at Kate Wickham Elementary School.

From bad news to good Coralville students work out 'hit' scare

By John Kenyon
 Gazette Johnson County Bureau

CORALVILLE — A volunteer day Friday gave Northwest Junior High students the chance to clean up their community and their image at the same time.

The day came one week after a "hit list" was found at the school, prompting about half the student body to stay home Monday and drawing media to the school.

Because of that, Lois Crowley, the teacher who organized the event, called it "a day of healing."

"It's really nice the kids are bringing back our team spirit," she said.

The students were aware

they had a chance to put the school in a positive light.

"It represents Northwest in a good way," said Quinn Miller, 13. "We'll be in the news for good things."

About 400 seventh graders participated in the event, dubbed "Make a Difference Day." It is the second year for the effort.

The students visited eight areas around Coralville, including Brown Deer golf course, the former Camp Cardinal and near Coral Ridge Mall, cleaning up, doing landscape work and providing labor to spruce up the town.

Lt. Terry Koehn of the Coralville Police Department was watching over the

work at Wickham. He praised the students' efforts.

"I think it's pretty commendable for seventh graders," he said. "They have a tendency to goof off, but these guys are working."

Tyler Betcher, 13, was pulling weeds at Wickham Elementary School. He said it was good to help the community, clean up the town and set an example for the younger students. "We can help these kids learn about cleaning up," he said.

Brandon Ryan, 12, also said he hoped to set an example. Wickham students were on the playground at recess watching while Ryan and others worked.



Photos by Max Whittaker, Gazette intern

Tumey pleads not guilty to murder

Medical care sought for man held in old Cedar County case

By Rick Smith
 Gazette staff writer

TIPTON — A judge Friday granted murder defendant Dean Tumey's request to be held at a state medical corrections facility pending trial because of what Tumey's attorney has termed a "preexisting and existing" psychiatric disorder.

However, the facility — the Iowa Medical & Classification Center (IMCC) at Oakdale — declined to admit Tumey, the 53-year-old arrested Monday and charged with the murder here in Cedar County of a Davenport girl 19 years earlier.

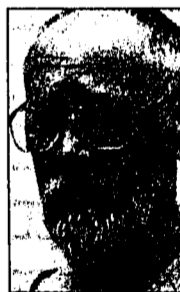
The IMCC, operated by the Iowa Department of Corrections, primarily houses those entering or in the prison system. It holds those awaiting trial such as Tumey only if a court orders a pretrial psychiatric evaluation, Jeanette Bucklew, department administrator, explained Friday afternoon.

Tumey's attorney, Bradley Norton of Lowden, likely will seek a placement at another psychiatric-medical facility.

For now, Tumey remains in the Cedar County Jail under \$1 million bond.

The defendant appeared in court Friday for arraignment and pleaded not guilty to first-degree murder in the September 1980 murder of Sandra Jo Pittman.

Pittman, then 17, was beaten to death and her body dumped in a rest area a mile west of



Dean Tumey
 Accused of killing Davenport girl 19 years earlier.

■ Turn to 3B: Tumey

Judge limits use of photos against Iowa City principal

By Lynn M. Tafft
 Gazette Johnson County Bureau

IOWA CITY — The prosecution in the child endangerment case against Lucas Elementary School principal Brian Lehmann may not show the jury the suggestive photos Roland Thomson took at the school, unless it can prove Lehmann had knowledge of them, a judge has ruled.

Associate Judge Sylvia Lewis made her ruling after a hearing Friday on motions filed by Lehmann's attorneys, Mitchell Behr and Stephen

Greenleaf of Iowa City.

Lehmann, 44, of 11 Montrose Ave. Iowa City, is accused of not taking action to remove Thomson from Lucas school after being warned about Thomson's past. His trial is set for May 24.

Behr and Greenleaf argued the photos are offensive and will inflame the passions of the jury, adding that Lehmann did not know of them until after charges were filed.

Lewis said at Friday's hearing that she will rule closer to the trial on other motions filed

by Behr and Greenleaf.

The two also have asked the court to bar the prosecution from using the words "sexual abuse" during jury selection, opening or closing arguments or any other part of the trial.

Nineteen Roland Thomson is charged with sexual abuse, they stated, arguing that the phrase would be prejudicial to Lehmann and mislead the jury.

Behr and Greenleaf also seek to limit testimony in the case to what Lehmann knew of Thomson, not what others

knew. They also want to ban the testimony of four children allegedly harmed by Thomson, arguing that Lehmann had no knowledge Thomson had harmed them before banning Thomson from the school.

Thomson is accused of taking inappropriate pictures in 1997 and 1998 in the classroom of his wife, Shirley, who retired last year. Thomson, 71, of West Des Moines, faces state charges of indecent contact with a child, child endangerment and simple assault in connection with the Lucas

photos.

He also faces federal child pornography charges. Trial on those charges is set for May 25.

Thomson was convicted of child neglect in 1985 after admitting to taking photos of girls in suggestive poses at Hoover Elementary, where he worked.



Brian Lehmann
 Accused of child endangerment

