


THIS OLD ARENA
CARVER-HAWKEYE RENOVATION
PLAN OK'D, SPORTS, 1C

RIDE OF A LIFETIME
BMX BIKES STOLEN, BUT
FAMILY WINS, SPORTS, 1C

MIX MASTERS
HOMEMADE MIXES ARE CHEAP,
QUICK GIFTS, ACCENT, 1D


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AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER IN IOWA'S TECHNOLOGY CORRIDOR

50 CENTS

Dawn of the dead, again

C.R. workers trot out crow corpses to shoo nuisances from park

By Rick Smith
The Gazette

CEDAR RAPIDS — One of the city's signature features is back in place again.

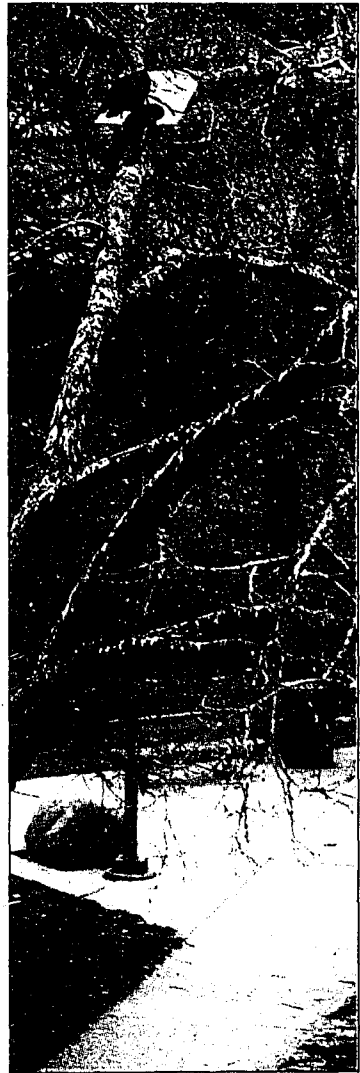
Dead crows wired to boards have taken to the trees in Greene Square Park where their mere presence scares away the thousands of crows that otherwise congregate there at night, defecating on everything beneath them.

After several cold nights of such behavior, city crews in the last couple of days turned to the trusty crow-coffins once again.

By Sunday night, the hordes of living crows had vanished, Parks Director Dave Kramer reported Monday.

Crows have congregated at the park on winter nights for years, likely because the downtown buildings and the city asphalt, heated in the daytime, create a microclimate that keeps the birds relatively warm in the cold.

► **CROWS, PAGE 6A**



Cliff Jette/The Gazette
Dead crows attached to boards (such as the one top left) have been put in trees at Greene Square Park to scare away crows.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Cracking cold cases

Johnson County agencies consider forming a team to tackle unsolved murders



Frances Bloomfield
Sept. 25, 1997



Susan Kersten
Sept. 24, 1995



Jane Wakefield
1975

By Zack Kucharski
The Gazette

Police chiefs in Johnson County want to create a part-time cold case unit to dig into new leads that could help solve old murders.

The effort would be a departure from the current approach — working when investigators have spare time or when new information comes to light — that many Corridor departments use instead of full-time units because of heavy caseloads.

Cold case investigators at the Cedar Rapids Police Department, for example, work on old cases when the number of new cases slows and time allows.

Johnson County's departments would have to find a way to blend resources without taking away from new cases that emerge, law enforcement officials from Iowa City, Coralville and Johnson County told The Gazette.

"We need partners. We can't do it by ourselves," said Iowa City Police Chief Sam Hargadine. "All of the departments are committed to it. It's just a matter of when we're going to be able to do it."

Hargadine said he wants

Johnson County unsolved murder cases

- **Frances Bloomfield**, 57, Iowa City, strangled in her home and body dumped near Rockford, Ill., Sept. 25, 1997.
- **Donna Lee Marshall**, 37, Iowa City, shot in her home, Jan. 9, 1996.
- **Susan Kersten**, 38, Iowa City, body burned in her car, Sept. 24, 1995.
- **Unidentified baby**, found in Iowa City landfill, Dec. 21, 1991.
- **Lance DeWoody**, 22, Iowa City, shot on University of Iowa Oakdale campus in Coralville, Aug. 13, 1985.
- **Jane Wakefield**, 26, Iowa City. Presumed murdered in 1975. Body never found.
- **Ronald Lipsius**, 30. Shot by robber in Iowa City in 1966.

On the Net

■ Go to www.GazetteOnline.com for a list of unsolved murders in Eastern Iowa.

Can you help?

- **Iowa City police:** (319) 356-5280
- **Coralville police:** (319) 248-1800
- **Johnson County sheriff:** (319) 356-6020

Other cases in the Corridor

- **Cedar Rapids police:** 1-(800) CR-CRIME or 286-5400
- **Marion police:** (319) 377-1511
- **Linn County sheriff:** (319) 892-6100

Demand pushes up corn prices

10-year high matched, likely will be topped; ethanol drives boom

By Marlene Lucas
The Gazette

Today's good price for corn, at \$3.23 per bushel in Cedar Rapids, could go much higher because of demand for animal feed and ethanol.

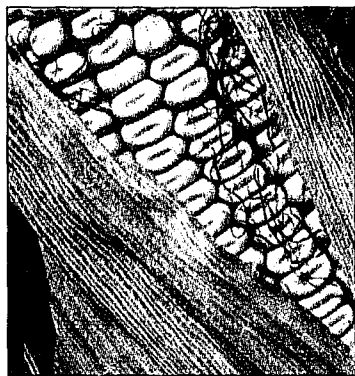
"There's still a strong pull between the food and fuel sectors," said Joe Victor, vice president of marketing for Allendale Inc. in McHenry, Ill. "The futures market wants to rally higher."

Inside

■ Farmland value posts small gains in Iowa, 7B

The last time Eastern Iowa farmers saw corn prices this high was in 1995, when the season average was \$3.24 and cash prices spiked during the season to \$5 a bushel.

Iowa's projected production of 2.02 billion bushels of corn could be valued at \$6.06 billion if sold at \$3 per bushel. "We think about 50 percent of the corn crop has been



Strong demand is elevating prices paid for corn in the United States and is boosting corn acreage in Africa and South America. Prices haven't been this high in Eastern Iowa since 1995, when a drought reduced supply.

marketed this year at an average price of about \$2.70 a bushel," said Keith Collins, chief economist for the Agriculture Department. "As we look for the other 50 percent to be marketed, we think it could probably average about \$3.50 a bushel."

July corn futures recently
► **CORN, PAGE 6A**

HEALTH

More of us gain control of high blood pressure

Yet the problem remains prevalent

DALLAS (AP) — Americans, especially those 60 and older, are doing a better job of keeping their blood pressure under control, a new analysis says, a sign that people are getting the message about high blood pressure's risks.

But the study also found that the prevalence of high blood pressure was about the same.

"I think it gives more evidence that the modest improvement in blood pressure control rates are continuing," said Dr. Daniel Jones, the American Heart Association's president-elect. "The good news is they're better than 10 to 15 years ago. The bad news is they're not nearly as good as they need to be."

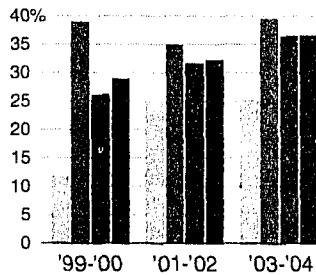
About 37 percent of Americans with high blood pressure had it under control in 2003-04, compared with about 29 percent just four years

Controlling hypertension

A study published in the journal Hypertension shows more Americans are controlling their high blood pressure.

People with controlled hypertension, by age

■ 18-39 ■ All with hypertension
■ 40-59
■ Over 60



SOURCE: American Heart Association

AP

earlier, the research showed. High blood pressure is a serious problem that affects more than 65 million adults in the United States. Not getting it under control can increase the risk for heart attack, stroke, heart failure and kidney failure.

Experts say that the
► **HEALTH, PAGE 6A**

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TODAY'S WEATHER
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Cases/Project talks have been on hold

► FROM PAGE 1A

to resume talks that have been on hold. He has proposed assigning one investigator from each involved Johnson County department and the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation to a team that works for a set time, perhaps three months.

Investigators would work in a rented office away from their regular departments to avoid distractions, Hargadine said. They could review evidence and crime scene photos, reinterview officers and investigators, revisit witnesses and see whether evidence, such as blood, can be reviewed for DNA or other forensic clues.

"Whatever it takes to shake

new leads loose," Hargadine said. "Most of the cases I've seen go this route were pretty close to the guy all along. It turns out they did interview the guy, they just didn't have enough to focus in on him. It's amazing how close you come sometimes, but don't realize it."

Iowa City, Coralville and Johnson County officials discussed creating the cold case unit months ago but didn't get it off the ground because of major ongoing investigations. Officer turnover and military deployments also have spread departments thin, Hargadine said.

Coralville Police Chief Barry Bedford said his department would support a team the best it could, but finding resources would be difficult. Bedford points to the 2003 conviction of Richard Dodd for the 1981 rape and murder of Vicki Klotzbach, 22, in Coralville as a successful ending to a cold case investigation.



Lonny Pulkrabek
Johnson County
sheriff



Barry Bedford
Coralville
police chief

DNA technology helped seal the case, said Bedford, who worked the case as a detective with former DCI special agent J.D. Smith and continued to review it after becoming chief in 1988. "Every time I'd think of something I could carve out a little time and work on it," he said.

Solving homicides rarely is as easy as it appears on the popular cold case television shows, police said. Such is the case in Cedar Rapids, where police in October said they had the blood of the man

who stabbed Michelle Martin-ko to death in December 1979. Police sought public help linking DNA evidence, but no arrests have been made.

Cold case detectives in that case, one of the Corridor's best-known unsolved murders, began looking into the case a year ago.

In Coralville, Bedford said a cold case team should examine the unsolved murder of 22-year-old Lance DeWoody of Iowa City, who was found shot to death in the head at the University of Iowa Oakdale campus in 1985.

Johnson County Sheriff Lonny Pulkrabek said he supports creating a unit but that his detectives have been busy this year. He said a cold case team could review a department priority — the 1995 murder of Susan Kersten, an Iowa City Regency Mobile Home Park resident found murdered in a burned-out car about two miles from her home.

Investigators got tips that led to additional interviews after a September media report marking the 11-year anniversary of Kersten's death, he said.

Kersten's son, Jason, 28, of Williamsburg, said family members would support having investigators concentrate on the case again.

"It's something I've been looking forward to," Jason Kersten said. "I don't know how long it takes something like this to officially become a cold case, but it's been that in my eyes for quite a while."

While family members believe they have a suspect, past leads in the case have stalled quickly and family members have gotten few updates from investigators, Jason Kersten said. "I'm pretty confident it will be solved someday," he said.

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Crows/C.R. will clean up smelly mess

► FROM PAGE 1A

The crow coffins, which send the crows somewhere else, is a true local invention, concocted by former city veterinarian Russell Anthony.

The crow-coffin idea came to Anthony in 1991 after years of tangling with the birds. He tried banging tin garbage can lids, broadcasting the sound of gunshots through the night and even blasting away with a shotgun. Nothing worked.

Anthony credits a crow-hunting friend in northeast Iowa — crows abandoned a tree after a dead crow lodged in it — with giving him the idea.

Anthony's design calls for wiring two dead crows, one face up, one face down, on each board. The boards then are placed in the upper limbs of the park's trees.

Parks Director Kramer said Monday that 13 boards are in place. On Monday, city crews adjusted one board because the dead crows were noticeable from the ground, he said.

Recent Parks Commissioner Wade Wagner thought the enterprise inhumane and discontinued it during his four years in office.

Kramer returned the boards in January 2006 when Wagner left office. The boards come down in spring.

Crews will be in Greene Square Park this week to scrub away what crows left behind, which has a noticeable odor. Rain expected this week will help with the problem, too, Kramer said.

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Health/Using multiple medications gains acceptance

► FROM PAGE 1A

improvement in controlling blood pressure is likely due to aggressive efforts at educating the public.

"We're constantly talking about the importance of it, and I believe that message is sinking in," said Jones, dean of the medical school at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson, Miss.

Also, doctors note it has become more accepted in the last few years to use multiple medications to attack the problem instead of just one. "It's been a gradual change

toward combination therapy," said Dr. Shawna Nesbitt, who specializes in hypertension and is an associate professor of internal medicine at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center.

Doctors say that since high blood pressure often does not have accompanying symptoms, it can be a challenge to get patients to understand the importance of taking several drugs to control it.

Despite the improved control rate, the proportion of Americans who had high blood pressure stayed roughly the same — about 27 percent in 1999-2000 and about 29 per-

cent in 2003-04.

Still, an improvement in control rates should have a positive effect on stroke and heart attack rates, said the study's author, Bernard Cheung, an associate professor at the University Department of Medicine of Hong Kong.

For the study, published online Monday in the American Heart Association journal Hypertension, high blood pressure was defined as 140/90 or higher, or by someone taking blood pressure-lowering medication. The new information came from a comparison of data from

14,653 adults in the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey.

In those older than 60, control rates improved from 26 percent in the time period studied to 37 percent. Awareness in that age group improved from 71 percent to 81 percent.

Researchers found that besides older people, overweight people also had better rates of control and awareness, probably because of growing attention in this country on the health risks of obesity.

Cheung said that high blood pressure in those under 40 is often easy to control, but

younger people are less likely to be aware of the risks.

And researchers note that in 2003-04, about a third of all patients with high blood pressure remained unaware of their condition and the treatment rate was still only 54 percent, meaning about half of high blood pressure patients weren't being treated.

"Things are getting better, but there's still a long way to go," said Dr. Karol Watson, assistant professor of medicine and cardiology at the David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Corn/Futures look bright

► FROM PAGE 1A

were as high as \$4.05 per bushel. On Monday at the Chicago Board of Trade, corn for March delivery rose 2 1/4 cents to \$3.70 1/4 a bushel.

"Another 20 cents or 25 cents would not be unheard of," Victor told The Gazette on Monday after the U.S. Department of Agriculture released its report on worldwide supply and demand.

"Demand is not showing strong signs of economic rationing. Prices of \$4.30 to \$4.40 are not out of the realm."

The government has raised its projected season average price on corn by 10 cents on both ends of the range to \$2.90 to \$3.30 per bushel. Last year's average was \$2 a bushel.

The difference between 1995 and 2006 is the market this time around, according to Ken McCauley, a White Cloud, Kan., corn grower.

"We've got solid demand. It's a demand-driven market, where it was a supply shortage in the 1995 crop. There wasn't enough corn because of the drought," said McCauley, who is president of the National Corn Growers Association.

With ethanol plants coming out of the ground around the Midwest, the corn-based fuel is expected to be a major factor driving higher corn prices.

Ethanol's consumption of corn is projected at 2.2 billion bushels for 2006-07. U.S. corn ending stocks are estimated at 935 million bushels, unchanged this month compared with November, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

That demand is boosting corn acreage in South America and Africa.

Corn production in the Southern Hemisphere is projected to increase by 4.5 million tons, from last month, to 969 million tons.

"They planted on the bullish rally in futures," Victor said. "We're far from considering those crops in the bin. They planted bigger acres without sacrifice to soybeans."

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Sentiments

OF THE

Season

Create a special memory for your loved ones and friends this holiday season with a message and photo in the "Sentiments of the Season" feature in the Dec. 24th issue of Milestones.

How to submit items

Information may be written on an 8 1/2 by 11-inch sheet of paper, including the size and color of photo(s) you'd like published or use the Day to Remember form, available at www.gazetteonline.com under the "Announcements" prompt. Provide a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return of your picture(s).

Prepayment is required

Include your name, address and home phone number and a check made payable to The Gazette or a credit/debit card number, expiration date and the 3-or 4-digit security code on the back of the card.

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1-12 words, \$6; 13-25 words, \$11; 26-50 words, \$20; each additional 50 words, \$20.

Photo sizes/prices

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Mail items to

Holidays/Milestones, P.O. Box 511, Cedar Rapids IA 52406.

Deadline:

DEADLINE FOR THE DEC. 24th MILESTONES IS NO LATER THAN NOON FRIDAY, DEC 15th.
 Submitting items prior to the deadline is appreciated.

Merry Christmas, Paul

One doesn't realize how hard the road to letting go is, Until you are the one traveling it. Remembering you with much love this Holiday Season.
 - Love, your family

For more information

(319) 368-8873

Milestones

Merry Christmas to all our Grandmas & Grandpas!

Terry & Dennis Zaruba, Marion; Linda & Dayle McCleary, Springville; Jean Strait (Grandma "Harry"), Cedar Rapids; Betty & Bill Blemann, Waterloo; Merle Zaruba, Springville.
 We love you all!
 - Cade & Ashlynn Zaruba