# Where is Naomi Wilson?

Why would a 32-year-old Cedar Rapids woman walk away and leave her house, her car, a good job and friends and family who love her?

That's the puzzle behind the disappearance of Naomi Wilson, 1618 13th Ave. SE. Last seen on Sunday afternoon, April 12, her car was found two afternoons later in the K-mart parking lot at 2727 16th

Police have not ruled out foul play in connection with Wilson's disappearance. But neither is there enough evidence at this point to suggest someone may have killed her, according to police sources.

Wilson is one of three adults reported missing to Cedar Rapids Police since Jan. 1. Three detectives have been assigned to investigate her disappearance, and the investigation has generated a thick file of

Wilson's is one of 23 unsolved missing-person cases on file with Cedar Rapids Police since 1978. Fourteen of those reports involve juveniles.

**BUT NAOMI WILSON** was more than just another name on a list to people who knew her — people such as her brothers John and Lorenzo Pollard, who hurried here from Atlanta last week to join in the search for their sister; and Colbert "Billy" Beets, her boyfriend for three

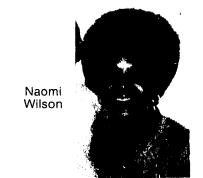
Naomi Wilson would not go away without letting someone know where she was, agreed both John Pollard, interviewed this week by phone, and Beets, who was interviewed at The Gazette.

"She's very level-headed," Pollard continued. "She thinks about building up her life in many ways."

'She's real friendly," Beets said. "She's pleasant to talk to," not necessarily outgoing, he said. Her temper occasionally flared, "but she was plain-spoken. She didn't beat around the bush. If she didn't like something, she'd say so."

Both men said they knew her to be a reliable worker at Harnischfeger, where she worked in materials-handling and later at a factory 'checkpoint.

"It's most unusual for someone to up and leave a job where you're making \$1,000 a month," Pollard continued. "She has acquired furniture, a car, and bought a house last July. She had been buying things to fix up the house," he said.



raised in Birmingham, Ala. After high school she moved to Chicago, where she married Bennie Wilson. The couple divorced three years ago, some time after moving to Cedar Rapids. Since remarrying, Bennie Wilson now lives in Denver.

SUNDAY, APRIL 12 started normally, Beets said, when he went to church. Although she didn't go that day, Naomi also usually attended church.

Beets said he returned from a noon church service during midafternoon. The two left Naomi's house within minutes of each other about 4 p.m., Beets said.

Beets went to his mother's house with some ice. Wilson went to get gasoline for her car and to visit a woman she worked with at Harnischfeger.

But the friend told Beets later Naomi never showed up.

# **Browning given** 25-year sentence

King Junior Browning has received a sentence of up to 25 years in prison on his guilty plea to a second-degree murder charge in Linn District Court.

Browning, 46, of 1052 Fifth Ave. SE originally was charged with firstdegree murder in the Jan. 13 shotgun slaying of T.J. Mayfield, but he pleaded guilty to the reduced charge as part of a plea bargain.

Judge Larry Conmey imposed the only sentence allowed by law. A statute dealing with forcible felonies involving a firearm requires that at least five years of the sentence be

Mayfield's body was found inside a garage at 815 Fifth Ave. SE. Browning reportedly told acquaintances he had shot Mayfield, and they

Beets and Wilson passed each other on the street an hour later, he for the car," Beets said. said. That was the last time he saw

When she didn't return home, Beets said he searched for her until 3 a.m. Monday. He and others searched again for her Monday.

"I still didn't report it to the police, and I still didn't put it out on the street, because I didn't want to get everyone all stirred up and have her drive up all of a sudden."

When another Harnischfeger employee phoned Beets to let him know Naomi never showed up for work Monday, Beets called police.

Friends searched the city by car Tuesday and Beets' brother found Naomi Wilson's car at the K-mart at 2:55 p.m., according to police re-

More friends, aided by the Linn County 'Civil Defense office, searched a wooded area near K-mart Wednesday, April 15.

BEETS FEELS police could have done more the day after they were told Naomi Wilson was missing.

For example, at one point he flagged down a uniformed police officer while he was trying to find Naomi's car. He asked the officer if he'd seen the car, and the officer didn't know that the police had put out an "attempt to locate" report on Wilson's car.

"I'don't believe they even looked

And when the car was found at Kmart, police didn't take fingerprints off the car at the scene, Beets added. Instead, officers checked the car and its trunk at the scene and allowed him to drive it home.

"I think they've done a poor job,' said Pollard. "I don't think they took the missing person report seriously when it was first reported. Being from the South, and being black, I grew up knowing that if you're white, the police jump on the case. If you're black, they wait around a little before acting."

Beets and Pollard seem to have opposite "gut feelings" about the case, when each was asked to speculate her fate.

"I guess I have a positive atti-tude," Pollard said. "I don't have that gut feeling that something is wrong with her right now." He just hopes that "if some person or persons are holding her," that she can break free and call her family.

"My parents in Birmingham are upset now," Pollard added."They've lost two of my brothers, one in '58 and one in '72.'

Beets seemed to suspect foul play. "Something would just have to have happened to her," he said. "I can never believe that she would just leave town," he said.

## Chinese visitors

Educators from the Republic of China (Taiwan) visited the Kirkwood Community College campus and the Amanas this week. Above, they look over bedding plants in the Kirkwood greenhouse. From the left are, Leo C.H. Lee, who is studying in Cedar Rapids; I-Fan Chang, director of the department of technology and vocational education; Clifford Sung-Nien Yoh, president of Taichung Junior College of Commerce; Mel Essex of the Kirkwood staff; Tong Tien Chih Chen, president of Tahwa Junior College of Technology, and Wai Chan Ong, an attorney and counselor for the ministry of education. The four visitors arrived at Kirkwood Thursday and will leave today.



6 DAY **EOM SALE** 



Colonial sofa, wood trim, Plaid

Traditional nylon upholstered sofa

#### **SAVE UP TO \$82.18** STRATOLOUNGER' **CLOSE-UP®** RECLINERS

You never have to move them more than a tiny 3 inches from the wall, They're the perfect space-savers for today's smaller > rooms > Stra-tolounger has styled them beautifully

E.O.M. PRICE

\$799

\$474

**\$347** 

**\$237** 

**\$167** 

# Linn-Mar FFA is top winner

SIOUX CITY - The Linn-Mar Linn-Mar FFA won more gold Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapter of Marion has won four gold awards, the highest given, in speaking contests at the state FFA convention in Sioux City.

Farm

News

Those winning the top awards cluded:

• Extemporaneous speaking, Doug Dostal.

 Public speaking, Chris Novak. • Parliamentary procedure, including team members Mark Arkema, Jeff Biedenbach, Joe Heyer and Nate Morrison.

• Greenhand conduct of meetings, including team members Dave Beckner, Doug Biedenbach, Connor Callahan, Amy Geers, Mary Moes, Carla Ruley and Deb Wirather.

In addition, the Linn-Mar FFA chapter received a gold award in judging of reporter's scrapbooks.

awards than any other FFA chapter in The Gazette circulation area.

Other award winners at the state convention in The Gazette circulation area included: • Freshman creed speaking contest. Silver

or second place, Andrew Craft of Decorah. Bronze or third place, Liza Schaul of North Linn at Troy Mills: Tom Poduska, Stanwood, and Mark Hanson, Williamsburg. • Extemporaneous speaking contest. Silver, Eric Craft, Burr Oak near Decorah.

Washington; Janet Gibbs, West Union. · Chapter program. Gold, Manchester, including team members Marty Pins and Greg Klein. Gold, Vinton, Denise Inman and Roger Parliamentary procedure. Silver, Man-

Public speaking, Silver, Kerry Fladung,

chester, including team members Rob Gudenkauf, Kenny Klein, Dave McDonald, Dan Reiss, · Secretary's record book. Gold, Dysart-

• Treasurer's book. Gold, North Linn of Troy Mills, Monticello, Mid-Prairie of Well-

man, Silver, Keota. Reporter's scrapbook. Gold, Manchester.

### **DONUTLAND** does it again!



You can Save . . . and Enjoyover and over again . . . with this attractive new Donutland Special

# Filled with 12 ounces of

our delicious, hot coffee For just . .

#### . . . and that's only the beginning! here's more good news:

 Bring it back anytime during the year — we'll fill it up for you FREE every time you buy ½ dozen or more of our super delicious donuts!

Open 6 am 'til Midnight 4505 First Avenue SE

2606 Williams Blvd. SW

4307 Center Point Rd. NE

Open 6 am to 10 pm 2329 Mt. Vernon Rd. SE (in Dutchess Plaza next to Drugtown)

Open 6 am to 10 pm 2155 7th Ave., Marion New Drive-up Window Open 5:30 AM-10:30 pm

Open 24 Hours in coralville lighway 6 West Coralville AND in Iowa City 6 am-11 pm 817 South Riverside Drive, Former lowa City McDonald's



#### \$99 Lounge chair. Plaid herculon upholstered \$284 Mini Sofa Pine accented, 64" lg. \$874

MANY E.O.M. SALE PRICES IN HALL'S NEW

**CLEARANCE CENTER** 

This is a special area of Hall's that is entirely devoted to exceptional bargains from our 101 Model Rooms.

YOU SAVE UP TO 50% & MORE

**\$367** §67 Room divider 57 lg x 57 high x 15 in box \$134 **\$117** 72 Bookcase with door base,  $30 \times 16$  depth \$264 **\$29** Entertainment center 47 lg x 26 x 17 in box \$59 **\$284** Desk, chair & 2-3 drawer chests, Stanley \$569

MORE & MORE ITEMS IN CLEARANCE CENTER

Burlington barrel Chair tangerine upholstered \$339

### Sleep Two Tonight — Sit Two Tomorrow HIDE-A-WAY-BED FROM \$297 Terms Choose from contemporary, traditional or colonial styling.

Each sofa quickly makes into a bed for two. Choose from Norwalk, Mastercraft, Simmons and

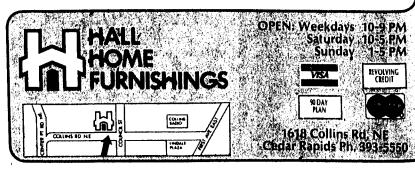
#### DINING ROOM — SAVE 50%

Round Table 42" extension with 2 chairs \$289 \$144 All ½ Off

Odd dining chairs Modern, Colonial 100" Stanley 7 Pc. Dining room, Oak 53" Dearborn China Pine finish

from \$42.47 \$2029 \$997 \$789 \$394

- MORE BARGAINS -





**USED MOWERS IN STOCK** 

803 3rd Ave. S.E. Co., Inc.

**Spring Hours** 

SAT. 8:30-5

SUN. 12-5 Other Days 9-8

∎Mon. & Thurs. 9-8

FREE PARKING