

**Cuddle time**  
What to look for in a blanket to keep warm this winter, 1E

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## CORRIDOR

IOWA CITY

### Personal information of UI students exposed

The University of Iowa College of Engineering has notified 216 former students that some of their personal information, including Social Security numbers, was exposed inadvertently on the Internet for several months.

The erroneous file location was discovered early this month, UI officials said. The information did not include birth dates, specific grades or any financial information, such as credit card numbers, the official said.

UI technology staff said they think there is little risk the information was or will be misused. But they advised students to take precautions to protect their financial information by placing "fraud alerts" on their files with the three major credit bureaus.

CEDAR RAPIDS

### St. Luke's to participate in patient health study

St. Luke's Hospital will participate in a pilot study with Zynx Health to help improve patient health.

The study will begin with doctors who treat heart failure patients and eventually expand to pneumonia and heart attack patients.

Zynx, a subsidiary of Hearst Corp., will provide admission and discharge recommendations for doctors, such as discussing smoking cessation.

The yearlong study aims to link increased adherence to evidence-based health care with improved patient outcomes.

MARION

### Lammers named mayor pro tem at meeting

Kay Lammers has been named mayor pro tem. The Marion City Council named Lammers to the post at its Thursday meeting.

The mayor pro tem performs mayoral duties when Mayor Paul Rehn is unavailable.

Council member Mary Lou Pazour was elected deputy mayor pro tem.

Before the council meeting, Rehn was sworn in as mayor by District Judge Fae Hoover-Grinde. He replaces John Nieland, who retired.

Hoover-Grinde also swore in new council members Steve Sprague, Ward 1 representative, and Nick Glew, at-large representative.

### Jan. 18 last day for tree, debris curbside pickup

The city of Marion has finished its pickup of debris created by recent ice storms, as well as Christmas trees. Citizens with either debris or Christmas trees still waiting on the curb for pickup should call (319) 377-6367 before 4 p.m. Thursday, as the last day for pickup will be Friday.

Tree limbs or Christmas trees can be dropped off at 195 35th St.

# C.R. murders remain unsolved

Police often cannot obtain ample evidence to connect suspect

By Alicia Ebaugh  
The Gazette

CEDAR RAPIDS — One month after Calvin Stringer was murdered in the parking lot of a northeast Cedar Rapids apartment complex, police are still looking for people who may be key witnesses or suspects in the case.

Stringer, 29, of Cedar Rapids, was one of three victims of unsolved murders in Cedar Rapids in 2007, police said. Only one murder that happened last year has been solved — that of Mary McBride of Marion, who was strangled and beaten by Christopher Murray in June.

"Many times there are people under suspicion that cannot be located," police Lt. Ken-

neth Washburn said.

In the June stabbing death of Nathan Williams, for instance, officials issued warrants for the arrest of Timothy T. Hines, whose criminal record extends to Minnesota and Wisconsin. Authorities haven't found him.

There also are times when charges are filed related to a murder, but investigators don't have enough evidence to connect a suspect to the murder itself, Washburn said.

In Stringer's case, 16-year-old Bernard Butler was arrested for hiding the handgun used to shoot him. Butler has been interviewed in connection with

Only one murder that happened last year has been solved — that of Mary McBride of Marion.

Stringer's murder, Washburn said, but he would not specify whether he was under suspicion. No other arrests have been made.

But sometimes, clues aren't forthcoming. No arrests, for example, have been made in the May stabbing of Dennis First, 64, at his apartment in southwest Cedar Rapids.

Stringer was shot once in the head outside the apartments at 3300 Oakland Rd. NE early Dec. 12. An anonymous letter sent to news station KCRG-TV9 claimed that police interviewed the person who shot Stringer but let him go.

It also claimed Butler "knows what happen(ed)." Authorities had no comment on those claims.

"There are still particular people we'd like to interview or reinterview, but they haven't been located," Washburn said. "It is still an active investigation."

In the Stringer slaying, redacted transcripts of 911 calls made to police dispatchers that morning provide little information. One caller reported seeing two or three men in a vehicle outside of the apartment complex after the shooting. The description is similar to the maroon GMC Yukon impounded by police.

Anyone with information about any of the murders can call police at (319) 286-5491.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

## C.R. police search for attackers

By Alicia Ebaugh  
The Gazette

CEDAR RAPIDS — A group of seven or eight teenagers attacked several passers-by Thursday afternoon, with one beaten so badly his jaw was broken, police said.

Officers have arrested three males in connection with the assaults but are still looking for others who were involved.

Alexander Morwood, 24, was walking his dog in the 300 block of 15th Street SE around 5 p.m. when the group started to assault him, said Lt. Kenneth Washburn. Morwood was knocked to the ground as he was punched and kicked. His ribs were bruised and his jaw broken.

A 17-year-old boy saw the assault as he was walking home, and group of teenagers left Morwood to begin attacking him, Washburn said. He suffered minor injuries. Another witness caught Morwood's dog as it was running away.

Investigators have been unable to determine why the group attacked Morwood, Washburn said. There was also no indication whether the assault was gang-related.

By the time Morwood used his cell phone to call police and officers arrived, Washburn said the group had moved on to assault another person in the alley in the 1500 block between Second and Third avenues SE. That person did not press charges.

Officers searched the area and found three males believed to be involved in the assaults — Dion Hicks Jr., 14, of Cedar Rapids; Maxwell Woods, 16, of 3415 First Ave. SE; and Tracy Traylor, 15, of 1548 A Ave. NE. Each was charged with willful injury and assault with bodily injury and booked into the Linn County Detention Center. Traylor, who was already wanted on four warrants for probation violation, was also charged with interference with official acts.

Two other boys allegedly involved with the assaults have been identified but not found. Officers are still trying to identify two or three others.

Morwood remains in stable condition at St. Luke's Medical Center, a hospital spokeswoman said Friday.

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## Show choirs step it up at competition



Courtney Sargent/The Gazette

Kennedy High School's Paige Beatty (right) twirls in front of the mirror with her show choir "Protege" during warm-up before performing at the Supernova Show Choir competition at Linn-Mar High School in Marion on Friday.

## Dogs and cats, giving together — blood, that is

Dogs and cats get a sweet deal when they donate blood. That's right, donate blood, just like people do. I was searching

for information about blood donations when I stumbled upon a Web site for the Companion Animal Blood Bank at the University of Minnesota's Veterinary Medical Center. I never knew cats and dogs can donate blood. If I'd given the matter any thought, I'd have realized that veterinarians need a supply of blood for surgeries and emergencies, just like doctors for people do.

Turns out there are several national pet-blood banks and about a half dozen regional blood banks, along with a whole slew of other programs.

In Iowa, there's the Animal Emergency and Referral Center of Central Iowa in Des Moines, a blood bank at Iowa State University's Veterinary Teaching Hospital that serves the hospital and its clinics, and the Animal Emergency Center of the Quad Cities. (There may be others in our state, but I couldn't find them.)

The procedure for dog and cat blood donations is much the same as when I give blood. The animals have to meet certain size and age requirements, and they're screened to be sure they're current on vaccinations, taking the appropriate preventive medications (like heartworm, flea and tick medicines), and free of diseases. Unlike me, though, they offer up their jugular veins to the technicians who draw the blood. The people who do this tell me it's a virtually painless procedure, but the dogs and cats aren't talking.

In addition to treats for being cooperative and generous, donor animals

can go home with bandannas, bags of food, toys and other great stuff every time they make a donation. Some donor animals also get the promise of free blood if they need a transfusion.

In the Minnesota program, pets get food (a 20-pound bag for dogs or an 8-pound bag for cats) with every donation and for every six donations, dogs get a six-month supply of heartworm preventive. At a similar donor program run by the Emergency Clinic for Animals in Madison, Wis., donating dogs get to pick out a toy to take home. At the Canine Blood Bank that serves the Des Moines area, dogs get a Canine Critical Care Club bandanna and a T-shirt for the human companion.

All I get are a couple of cookies. Delicious as they are (thank you, Hy-Vee), they just don't equate to a two-months' supply of meals. My dog, Kobie, goes through a \$40, 30-pound bag of food about every four months. I wouldn't mind getting his food for

free, but my hopes for that have been dashed.

Allan Berger, a veterinarian at the Emergency Veterinary Service of Iowa City, told me the vets are too busy using blood to deal with the hassles of a donation program. The time needed to operate such a program, he said, would distract the staff from their main mission. The service goes through about 10 units of canine blood a month, which they order from one of the national or regional suppliers.

Still, Berger said, the staff has talked about starting a program, as have the folks at the Eastern Iowa Veterinary Specialty Center in Cedar Rapids. Maybe they'll pool resources and start a Corridor companion animal blood bank, and Kobie will be in business.

■ Linda Detroy Alexander's column appears on Wednesdays and Saturdays. She can be reached at (319) 399-5956 or linda.alexander@gazettecommunications.com

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