

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2007 WEATHER: CLOUDY, HIGH 30, LOW 19 > Weather, B-5

GREEN BAY PRESS-GAZETTE

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UWGB ROLLS PAST WRIGHT ST.

Defense steals show as No. 24 Phoenix cruises to a 73-42 victory over the Raiders. > Sports, C-1

INSIDE TODAY



Deputy: Planted evidence 'possible'

Defense lawyers in the Steven Avery homicide trial questioned a Calumet County Sheriff's deputy Thursday about the likelihood that officers planted the key to Teresa Hilbach's SUV in Avery's bedroom — a charge the deputy denied, but admitted could be possible. > A-2

Favre tries on new endorsement deal

Green Bay Packers quarterback Brett Favre has endorsed heartburn medication, a credit card, toothpaste, and now, denim jeans. Favre will appear in national ads and promotions and on in-store signs and product labeling for Wrangler's Free-Star Premium Denim products. > B-1

Reading skills lag, new report says

Average reading scores for 12th-graders nationwide continue to languish despite a new study that suggests seniors are taking tougher courses and getting higher grades. > B-3

PIC OF THE DAY

Working the crowd



University of Wisconsin-Green Bay mascot Fishan high-fives the crowd during Thursday's Horizon League game between UWGB and Wright State at the Phoenix Sports Center in Green Bay. Evan Siegel/Press-Gazette > Story, more photos, C-1

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PRESS-GAZETTE FOCUS: HORTICULTURE



Voddyer Khmischerko moves a cart of newly planted seedlings into a greenhouse at Schroeder's Flowers For Valley Greenhouse complex on Thursday in Orono. Photos by H. Marc Larson/Press-Gazette

Green thumbs have signs of spring in bloom

Greenhouse workers busy planting for coming season

BY PAUL BRINKMANN
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Outside, dirty leaves snow still hugs the white walls of Schroeder's Flowerland greenhouses on Orono County H in Orono.

Inside, it's warm, muggy and bright — a crop of spring flowers is taking shape. Employees are planting seedlings that will eventually yield plants that will grace lawns and gardens around the Green Bay area.

"It's the time of year when people start cutting and talking about gardening. We're heading into our 'boom' season," said Connie Schroeder, one of the company's managers.

Greenhouses around the area are sprouting to 100,000s of employees are starting tens of thousands of plants — part of the state's estimated \$3 billion "green" industry.

Schroeder's is one of the largest local producers in the area that still has a retail operation. It also sells wholesale to smaller independent operators around the state. Owners are anticipating the sale of 60,000 hanging baskets alone this season.

On Thursday, employees were planting Osteospermum.

> See Spring, A-2



Carlie Mudd takes cuttings of geraniums for repotting Thursday at Schroeder's Flowers in Orono. Schroeder's is one of the local producers/retailers in the area.

Wholesale plant sales in Wisconsin

	2004	2005
Potted flowering plants	\$10 million	\$13.5 million
Bedding plants	\$55.4 million	\$60 million

Source: USDA Agricultural Statistics

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County mulls list for drug offenders

Online posting would hurt job chances, opponents say

BY PAUL SRUBAS
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It's a tough time to be a convicted felon in the Green Bay area, and it's not going to get any easier.

Those convicted of sex crimes already face being publicly labeled a sexual predator, which means the community will be notified upon their release from prison, and the convict's name, address and photograph is posted on the Internet.

Now Brown County and Green Bay are considering a similar posting for convicted drug offenders — even those convicted of minor drug offenses. The county's Public Safety Committee will consider the matter at its March 7 meeting. The county also is considering what the county does with the measures.

The goal is to have those people with drug offenses have their names listed, said District Attorney John Zakowicki. "The idea is it may have an effect on users as a deterrent or at least on people who are interested in knowing those who have been using drugs."

The practice could discourage even simple possession violations, and it also would help make it easier for prospective employers, landlords and others to do background checks, Zakowicki said. "Those who have been convicted of drug offenses expressed concern."

"To post the names of drug offenders would be counterproductive, because it's preventing people from making changes in their lives," said Richard Harris, former executive director of Self Help of Wisconsin and a convicted cocaine dealer who speaks to youth groups and others about the evils of illegal drug use.

Helda Rottler of Green Bay, who was convicted two years ago of both selling and using crack cocaine, said the doubt she'd ever have gotten free of drugs and gainfully employed if the county had posted her name and crimes.

"It's almost getting another barrier on somebody like me," she said.

Alderman Guy Zima pitched the plan to both City Council and the County Board after listening to a report from area drug enforcement officers.

The investigators said earlier this year that limited resources forced them to focus their attention on the "sucky" side of drug transactions, but that drug abuse needs to have more primary put on the users, to help dry up demand.

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—Richard Harris, former executive director of Self Help of Wisconsin

Incidents stress danger of strangers to kids

East-side cases had men attempting to lure children away

BY MIKE HOEFT
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Green Bay police urged parents to warn their children about strangers after two incidents this week in which suspects were allegedly approached kids on Green Bay's east side.

The first case, which appeared to be unrelated, remains under investigation, said Capt. Karl Fleury.

The first occurred Tuesday at 3 p.m. near St. George and South streets near Eastman Park.

A 5-year-old girl was walking home from school when she was approached by a white man wearing a black jacket, brown pants and black ski mask pulled over his face. The man told the girl that his

Suspicious men cases



"a white man wearing a black jacket approached a 5-year-old girl."

"a man was trapped" and needed help to free it. She started to follow the man, but her 11-year-old brother ran up and pulled her away by the arm. The boy screamed at the man, who after urinating on a lawn,

ran north on St. George Street. In the second incident, an 11-year-old boy was walking south on Dantz Avenue near Newberry Avenue at 2:30 p.m. Wednesday when he was approached by a white man in

a small red car. The man asked if the boy wanted a ride and offered him candy. The boy ignored the man and walked home. A second man was in the vehicle, police said.

"The children in both cases did what they should have done," Fleury said in a news release. In the first case, the brother prevented his sister from following the man and screamed to alert officers. In the second case, the boy discontinued contact and hurried home and notified his father. Fleury offered these tips for parents:

• Tell children to never get in a stranger's vehicle.

• Tell them to never follow a stranger.

• Children should report any incidents to parents, police or school officials.

• Parents should talk to their children about safety and dealing with strangers.

Police ask anyone with information on these incidents to contact them at (920) 448-3208.

A-2 • Friday, February 23, 2007 Green Bay Press-Gazette www.greenbaypressgazette.com

Local/State

Planted key 'possible,' deputy says

Defense team, officer argue over opportunity for placing evidence

BY ANDY HELESEN
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CHILTON — A recurring question after nine days of testimony in the Steven Avery trial is why so many searches cover so many days for investigators to turn up critical pieces of evidence linking Avery to Teresa Halbach's death.

The testimony phase of the trial has now lasted one day longer than the initial law enforcement searches in 2005 of the Avery family property after Halbach's vehicle was found among the scrap yards' streets.

Prosecutors are taking a methodical approach to listing every detail of the searches, including the fact that the initial sweeps were made in hopes of finding Halbach alive, not with an eye toward gathering evidence of a homicide.

Avery heard Thursday from the eighth consecutive investigator about what they found on the Avery property in 2005. Kucharski, who said "I did not see a bullet on Nov. 8, 2005." Busting asked "Because if you had, you would have discovered it," Busting said.

"No," Kucharski said. "Because it would have been on the ground." Busting said, "There were four of you in that garage." Kucharski said, "Correct," Kucharski said.

A Calumet County Sheriff's deputy — witness No. 29 — testified Thursday that he was with Remiker when the fragment was found and he took custody of the metal shard after it was discovered.

"We were looking for whatever jumped out at us. It was just a general search."

— Calumet County Sheriff's Deputy Dan Kucharski

based upon your positioning a couple of feet away from that key did you believe that either Lt. Lenk or Sgt. Colborn had an opportunity — out of your eyesight — to place or what's called plant, that key there?" Kratz asked.

"No, they did not," Kucharski said. "How can you be so sure?" Kratz countered.

"Well, first of all, they would have had to have the key," Kucharski said. "I think the only person that would have had the key was the person that killed Teresa."

That comment drew an objection from Jerome Busting, one of Avery's lawyers on the

part of Thursday morning questioning Kucharski about what he found on the Avery property and how he documented his discoveries. Among the issues:

■ Why Kucharski did not comment on the contents and condition of the items in Avery's garage before removing a snowmobile in the search for evidence.

■ How Kucharski miscounted the number of 22-caliber shell casings found on the average floor. Kucharski's evidence notes indicate he found 19 spent shells. It was sent to the State Crime Lab for analysis.

■ How four men searching the garage did not find a bullet fragment that was discovered by Manitowish County Sheriff's Detective David Remiker during a search in early March. The bullet fragment, named the "Magic Bullet" by Avery's lawyers — was later determined to have Halbach's DNA on it.

"Did you see a bullet on Nov. 8, 2005?" Busting asked Kucharski, who said "No."

"Because if you had, you would have discovered it," Busting said.

"No," Kucharski said. "Because it would have been on the ground." Busting said, "There were four of you in that garage."

"Correct," Kucharski said. A Calumet County Sheriff's deputy — witness No. 29 — testified Thursday that he was with Remiker when the fragment was found and he took custody of the metal shard after it was discovered.

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Steven Avery's attorney Jerome Busting questions Calumet County Sheriff's Deputy Dan Kucharski during testimony Thursday in the courtroom at the Calumet County Courthouse in Chilton. Busting stands before a photo showing a key found in Steven Avery's bedroom. Photos by Kyla Wiegman for Wisconsin Newspapers



Calumet County Sheriff's investigator Mark Wiegert shows Calumet County Sheriff's Deputy Dan Kucharski a rifle found in Steven Avery's bedroom during testimony Thursday.

grounds that it was speculative. Manitowish County Circuit Judge Patrick Willis agreed, sustained the objection and struck the comment from the record. "I'm based upon your observations (trials) you believe (it) was impossible or improbable to plant that key?" Kratz countered. "My actual observations, I would have to say that it could be possible as it was doing other things. I was taking photographs. I was taking photographs. So if we're just limiting it to if it was possible they could do it without me seeing it, then yes, I guess it is possible." "In that in the sense of anything is possible?" Kratz asked. "That's in the sense of 'it's possible that aliens put it there' I guess," Kucharski said. Under additional questioning, Kucharski said that he wasn't watching to ensure that Halbach's wardrobe

Avery lawyers deflect media questions on Dassey

BY ANDY HELESEN
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CHILTON — Don Strang, Steven Avery's defense lawyer, has resisted a trial of this size to the Super Bowl and the television cameras wrapped into one for an attorney who likes to try

Strang's passion for the practice of law — and the presentation of evidence to 12 average people — has been evident when he musters a smile even after six hours of detailed testimony.

After a spirited debate Thursday over a juror's history with a prosecutor witness, then the cross-examination of three law enforcement officers, Strang showed the soul of a true defendant. He calmly assembled media quizzed the defense team about whether

Avery's 17-year-old nephew, Brendan Dassey, would be called as part of its case.

Both Avery 44, and Dassey, are charged with the killing of Fredricka Halbach on Oct. 21, 2005.

Strang's co-counsel, Jerome Busting, first folded a reporter's question about Dassey at a news conference in the basement of the Calumet County courthouse following Thursday's proceedings.

"Mr. Dassey has his own case," Busting said. "He has a Fifth Amendment right not to testify. We cannot subpoena him and expect that he is going to testify. He can easily invoke his rights. He has a lawyer; he has his own case."

Strang interrupted and took over Busting's place at the podium with an emphatic plea.

"Look, look — we're not going to talk about that, but I want to talk to you as a human being to human being," Strang said. "The fatigue of nine days worth of jury trial evident on

Brendan Dassey is a boy; he's a child," Strang said. "He is presumed innocent here of the most serious crime anybody can be charged with."

"Let him talk to his lawyer," Strang said, according to his words by pausing that fat on the podium. "Let him have his own day in court. Let's not test."

"This is his trial and you know, however, that we had a hard enough time to protect a grown man's right to a fair trial here in the state of the press," Strang said. "Let this poor kid have a jury who will presume him innocent."

Dassey, who faces a homicide charge, along with a host of other felonies stemming from Halbach's death, is expected to stand trial in April.

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Attorneys agree on decision to retain juror

Both sides praise woman for alerting judge to possible conflict

BY JOHN LEE
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CHILTON — Attorneys in the Steven Avery case have been squaring off for a year beginning with pretrial motions, so it was almost a shock when they found themselves in the same camp after nine days of testimonial trial.

Special prosecutor Ken Kratz and defense lawyer Don Strang agreed Thursday that the decision by Judge Patrick Willis not to disqualify a juror wasn't — as a television reporter put it — the greatest "having your way."

The two spoke in brief news conferences in the media room at the Calumet County court-

room. Kratz said he had been impressed with the jurors. "All of them have been extremely attentive."

Strang said the ruling wasn't a matter of the state's having "its way" — the judge or the five attorneys who make up the prosecution and defense had experienced a similar situation.

"I don't think one of us ever had a situation like this arise," Strang said. "We came down on different ideas of that, but this is not a well-trod path."

"There is no question at all in our minds the juror did the right thing."

Both sides praised the woman for being conscientious enough to notify Willis when she recognized Remiker in person although she didn't recognize his name on witness lists when jurors were questioned.

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Halbachs to testify

Karen and Katie Halbach, Teresa's mother and younger sister, are on the witness list, and Mike Halbach, Teresa's brother, said they are looking forward to testifying.

"She is happy to be up there for her daughter," Mike Halbach said. "She wants to do this for Teresa, and my sister wants to do the same."

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Spring/Most bedding plants won't survive outside until May

From A-1

sometimes called "African daisies" in purple and white shades. The seedlings are planted by hand and wheeled on a cart into a nearby greenhouse.

The company has 8.5 acres of indoor area available for planting. About 15 to 20 percent of it was full this week. Around 100 people are working at the rural greenhouses alone, and another few dozen

at the Webster Avenue store in Allouez.

It's not until May that most bedding plants will survive outside. Depending on where you live, some northern varieties along the lakeshore aren't ready for outdoor planting until early June.

Mayflower Greenhouse in Hobart is also gearing up for the season.

"Oh yes, I'm trying not to pull my hair out, we are so busy," owner Jan Wiss said,

laughing.

A much smaller operation, Wiss has eight to 10 employees coping in row to start small plants growing. He emphasizes his business focuses on special flower varieties like Mexican perennials.

Wiss has also started planting some containers for specific customers, like Diane Lougven.

"I like to garden but it's not something I'm an expert at," Lougven said. "I'm looking

forward to getting some plants. I'm just happy to see spring coming. It means I get to do some hiking and some gardening again."

Local greenhouse owners said there's more emphasis on container gardening than ever, and they are preparing more products for that demand. Many of those will be sold on Mother's Day, which is May 13 this year, and the unofficial start of the garden sales season.

2007 BEJA SHRINE

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