

THURSDAY, MARCH 8, 2007

WEATHER: PARTLY CLOUDY, HIGH 30, LOW 23 > Weather, B-7

GREEN BAY PRESS-GAZETTE

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THUNDERSTRUCK

Seymour's streak of eight consecutive state tournament appearances is simply incredible > C-1

INSIDE TODAY



Crash raises safety concerns

■ A third jet crash in three months has Indonesian officials concerned about the safety of its airlines. > B-3

Vets' injury claims can take awhile

■ U.S. military veterans face a backlog of claims of up to six months with the Department of Veterans Affairs, officials said. > B-3



Iran says U.S. lied about nuke program

■ Iranian ambassador tells the United Nations that the United States and its allies are lying about Iran's nuclear intentions. > B-3

Packers, fullback still talking

■ The Packers and free-agent fullback Justin Griffith were believed to be in negotiations after the team officially released William Henderson. > C-1

PIC OF THE DAY Easy victory



Nicole Soules battles for the ball in the second half of UW-Green Bay's 84-69 Monrovia J. Leitch, jleitch@uwgb.edu

PRESS-GAZETTE FOCUS: SCHOOLS

Schools' snow days come with a cost

Lost time often must be made up

BY KELLY MCBRIDE
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Every kid, it seems, looks forward to a snow day. But those unplanned days of lounging thanks to inclement weather can cause headaches for school district administrators, especially when they've had to take one too many. Recent harsh weather has caused most area schools to close their doors at least twice — once for cold, once for snow — since Feb. 1. In the Green Bay School District, that's twice as many weather days as they'd allotted. "We've taken two," said district Superintendent Daniel Nerad. "Our calendar allows for one, so with the closing (March 1) we've got two issues to resolve. One is the makeup of parent-teacher conferences at middle and high schools, and two is the additional day."

District officials are allowing the schools to use some discretion on the conference issue, Nerad said. As to the extra day end-of-year school activities that were scheduled for Friday, June 8, have been moved to Monday, June 11, Nerad said.

For elementary school students, that means June 11 will be a half-day with a teacher workday in the afternoon. Middle-schoolers will finish their school year June 8 instead of June 7, and high school students will have semester exams on the morning of June 11 instead of June 8.

The last time district officials had to add time to the school year was 2000-01, Nerad said. So far, the Wrightstown School District is in good shape when it comes to days off for bad weather. The district's calendar allows two each year, which it now has taken, but plans for an extra day in case one is needed, said Superintendent Carla Bulbott. "We live in Wisconsin," she said. "So we need to plan for exceeding two — just in case."

West De Pere High School will have to make up some time because of inclement weather, district Superintendent Lanny Thibault said.

"Our elementary and middle school have enough time built in, so there was no problem," he said. "The high school — we would've been short."

To prevent the high school from being short a day, the school day will get a little longer in West



Students at McAuiffie Elementary School in Bellevue slide down one of the mountains of snow that line the playground Wednesday. The snow that makes for a great time on the playground can also be responsible for closing schools when it falls too heavily and then school districts must decide when to make up that time. Photos by Jim Matthews/Press-Gazette



McAuiffie Elementary students play Wednesday in the piles of snow during recess in Green Bay.

Photo galleries
For a photo gallery of kids playing in the snow at McAuiffie Elementary School, go to www.greenbaypressgazette.com and click on this story.

> See Snow, A-2

Prosecution rests; Avery defense opens today

It's unclear whether accused will testify

BY ANDY NELESEN
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CHILTON — After 3½ weeks of testimony from 53 witnesses, the prosecution called a close to its case and cleared the way for Steven Avery's lawyers to begin their defense today.

"I think any time that you have a case as serious as this, the conclusion of the state's case-in-chief is a big moment," lead special prosecutor Ken Kratz said. "I'm happy that that part of the case is completed. I think the case went in as well as I could have expected the case to go in. "Certainly all of the evidence we expected to get in did get into evidence."

Avery, 44, is charged with homicide, mutilation of a corpse and false imprisonment for allegedly killing Teresa Halbach in 2005 on his family's salvage yard property near Mishicot. Prosecutors allege Halbach was shot at least twice in the head and her body burned to cover the crime. If convicted, Avery faces life in prison.

Halbach, 25, was on Avery's property on Halloween 2005 to take photographs of a minivan Avery said he wanted to sell in Auto Trader magazine.

Investigators found her charred remains in a burn pit near Avery's garage on Nov. 8, 2005.

Avery's lawyers are expected to begin calling witnesses this afternoon after a morning of house-keeping legal work and motions without the jury. Defense attorneys Dean Strang and Jerome Buting expect their case will stretch into next week.

Strang said they still don't know if Avery will take the stand in his own defense. Avery's defense team has hammered on the theory that Manitowish County authorities planted Avery's blood inside Halbach's sports utility vehicle using a vial of blood held in the Manitowish County Clerk of Courts file from Avery's 1985 sexual-assault conviction there. The blood was collected in 1986 as part of Avery's successful post-conviction efforts.

Avery was released in 2003 after DNA evidence exonerated him in the sexual assault case. Avery sued Manitowish County in 2004 for the wrongful conviction and demanded \$36 million. He later settled for \$400,000. The prosecution's move to end its case came at the end of a full day of testimony Wednesday.

Among the testimony, Rod Reytso, a fire investigator with the State Department of Justice's Division of Criminal Investigation, testified he was among the investigators who recovered bone fragments and "a darkened mass roughly the size of a golf ball, believed to be charred muscle tissue" on Avery's property. Those remains were later determined to be Halbach's through DNA testing.



The Steven Avery trial

More online
For complete coverage of the Steven Avery trial, including stories, blogs, photos, streaming video of the trial and daily video clips, go to www.greenbaypressgazette.com/coverystory.

More inside
> Defense to take center stage, A-2
> Side of killing still unclear, A-2

A-2 Thursday, March 8, 2007 Green Bay Press-Gazette www.greenbaypressgazette.com

Local/State

Testimony leaves some openings

Where Halbach was killed still undetermined

BY ANDY NELSON
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A wood boiler on Steven Avery's property was ruled out Wednesday as the place where Teresa Halbach's body was burned because the boiler tank was cold and the heater's combustion chamber was filled with unburned paper products.

Special agent lead Pevoy, a fire investigator with the State Department of Justice's Division of Criminal Investigation, testified that a gas bucket topped the boiler's metal smokestack, apparently to keep rainwater out of the boiler, Pevoy testified.

He said detectives removed the ash from the bottom of the boiler to check for remains, but that search came up empty.

Avery, 44, is charged with homicide, mutilation of a corpse and false imprisonment for allegedly killing Teresa Halbach in 2006 on his family's salvage yard property near Mishicot. Prosecutors allege Halbach was shot at least twice in the head and her body burned to cover the crime. If convicted, Avery faces life in prison.

Halbach, 25, was on Avery's property on Halloween 2006 to take photographs of a minivan. Avery said he wanted to sell it.

Auto Trader magazine investigators found her charred remains in a burn pit near Avery's garage on Nov. 2006.

Pevoy on Wednesday also ruled out a propane-fueled aluminum smelter on the Avery property as the place

Send us your questions

But expect an opinion about Avery's guilt or innocence, but other explanations about how specific testimony fits other sides of the story.

The case is still our quest to report to Wisconsin courts.

We'll send the questions and Nelson's replies to our Web site on coming days.

Halbach's body was burned. "I stuck my head down in there and reached around. Pevoy testified under cross-examination. 'I did not physically step into the smelter.' Pevoy said he stuck his hand all the way into the melting pot, but found nothing.

Pevoy said it appeared the device had not been used recently in part because of the amount of aluminum parts around the smelter and the intact beer cans inside the smelter.

Pevoy testified that recovered bone fragments found on Avery's property were later determined to be Halbach's through DNA testing.

In other testimony Wednesday, State Crime Lab fingerprint expert Michael Riddie testified he found the prints of an Air National Guard lawyer and a computer guard for a digital camera marked "Teresa Halbach's Toyota Ray-4 on Nov. 7. The sport utility vehicle was discovered among the wrecks in the heavy salvage yard Nov. 5 and taken in a trailer to the State Crime Lab in Madison. The lawyer loop — intro-

duced as evidence on Feb. 27 of the trial — was a match for the 50 found with the key to Halbach's vehicle discovered in Avery's bedroom. Katie Halbach, Teresa's sister, listed the two pieces during her testimony Feb. 25.

Katie Halbach testified that she gave her sister the lawyer's loop chain clipped tightly to the 50 found with the key. Riddie said he also tested fingerprints on a package of vial of Avery's blood discovered in the Manitowish County Clerk of Courts' Office. It's the sample of blood that Avery's lawyer contended was used to plant evidence in Halbach's car.

"There was some ridge detail, but nothing suitable for comparison," Riddie said of the vial.

A digital network expert, Anthony Zimmerman, a voice mail support tech, cleared up confusion about Nov. 2, 2006, call to Halbach's voice mail.

During testimony on Feb. 27, Zimmerman from two cell service providers created confusion over when Halbach last took a call on her cell phone and when her voice mail last was accessed.

Defense team gears up for time in spotlight

BY ANDY NELSON
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CHETTON — For attorney Dean Strang and Jerry Buting, it's the night before the grand jury's ready to charge.

The lawyers' defending covers Avery against charges of murder and mutilation of a corpse have spent 18 days litigating with prosecutors witness testimony and trying to slip away at the prosecution's case.

"We feel comfortable that we've done a good job raising a lot of questions through our cross-examination," Buting said after the prosecution closed its case Wednesday. "I think we're comfortable with the state of things."

He has not come quickly or easily.

"We think that after a month of testimony there are a number of very, very serious questions that remain unanswered," Buting said. "Where was she killed, how was she killed, there are other things we'll talk about."

"At this point, we're comfortable with reasonable doubt."

Both men said private jury cases came at the end of February.

"The night before the big game was about a month ago," Buting said. "The defense team often partly comes out through the state's case as well. It's not like you're only heard once side-along."

Today they get to be the nine guys and will begin calling witnesses to bolster their case's side of things.

Their witness list includes Avery's family, Jerry's respect, friends, many of the law enforcement witnesses from the prosecution's list and an anthropology bone expert.

Buting and Strang declined

More online

- www.greenbaypressgazette.com/ave
- Complete coverage of the Avery trial features include:
- Live video
- Audio news
- Teresa Halbach case timeline
- Steven Avery background
- Avery and his wife
- John Lee's true blog
- Photo galleries
- Community conversation

Snow/Longer school days at West De Pere

From A-1

De Pere starting March 13 nine minutes, to be exact. Between the extended days and turning what was school into a half day into a full day, the school will be able to make up time differences. That's what the state Department of Education requires that schools schedule at least 180 school days each year and outlines a certain number of required hours of direct pupil instruction for various grade levels.

But schools vary as to how they plan for inclement weather. Some districts are still waiting it out, officials said.

The Denmark School Board will look at the days missed picture once the snow has stopped falling for the season, said Jean Pahl, the district's administrative assistant.

Snowed in

The number of times, per school year, the Green Bay School District has canceled or delayed classes because of inclement weather:

- 1994-95: Two cancellations; one two-hour delay
- 1995-96: Two cancellations; one two-hour delay
- 1996-97: Two cancellations; one two-hour delay
- 1997-98: Two cancellations; one two-hour delay
- 1998-99: No cancellations; one two-hour delay
- 1999-2000: No cancellations; one two-hour delay

The district twice canceled school because of inclement weather during the current school year. But the state of additional days remains up in the air, officials said.

Superintendent Tony Klambauer said Tuesday.

"If we have one more," he said, "we will need, for sure, to make that up."

one two-hour delay

- 2000-01: Two cancellations; one two-hour delay
- 2001-02: One cancellation; one two-hour delay
- 2002-03: No cancellations; one two-hour delay
- 2003-04: No cancellations; one two-hour delay
- 2004-05: No cancellations; no delay
- 2005-06: One cancellation; one two-hour delay
- 2006-07: Two cancellations; one two-hour delay (no snow)

Ashtaburton schools have canceled school three times this year — the two most other districts closed, as well as a day that was originally scheduled as a half-day.

But whether they'll have to go longer remains unclear, said Keith Larson, district business manager. District Superintendent Steve Alberti was not in the office this week.

Officials in the De Pere School District planned for two snow days this year, said Superintendent Ben Villmarow. He laughingly predicts they don't need another one.

"Summer's right around the corner," he said, jokingly. "We're going to turn the air conditioning on."

Father faces charges in son's car crash death

The Associated Press

FOND DU LAC — A 55-year-old West Bend, Wis., man was charged Wednesday in the death of his 9-year-old son, John, after police said he was driving drunk.

John E. Beme was charged with intoxicated use of a vehicle, and two counts of operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated causing injury to a child.

Beme struck another car Friday in Oscoda, killing the driver and his two other children and the two people in the car he hit were injured.

Fond du Lac County Sheriff's deputies arrested Beme after the Friday driving drunk.

John Toney said John Beme was not wearing a seat belt when he died, and a police report said the other two children, ages 6 and 7, also were not wearing seat belts or in safety seats.

Beme was held on a \$5,000 cash bond.

his 9-year-old son, John Beme Jr. His two other children and the two people in the car he hit were injured.

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Doyle denies playing favorites with donors

Donations, casino bid unrelated, he says

BY SCOTT BAUER
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MADISON — Gov. Jim Doyle said Wednesday that donations to his campaign from indicted businessmen Dennis Troha "absolutely" did not come with expectations that Doyle would look favorably upon Troha's bid to build a casino in Kenosha.

Doyle, in his first interview since the indictment was handed down March 1, would not say whether he has been contacted by federal investigators looking into the more than \$100,000 Troha and his relatives gave Doyle and others.

The just not going to comment about the course of an investigation, Doyle said in an interview with The Associated Press in his Capitol office. "You shouldn't take that in any way to mean that I have been, but you shouldn't in any way take it to mean I haven't."

Doyle also said he had no role in state Department of Transportation efforts to fund Troha's trucking companies had with the other states. DOT officials visited two of the states to work out the problem, Doyle called that routine and said the state had a legal responsibility to do the work.

Troha was charged last week with fraud and trying to bribe the FBI.

The indictment alleges Troha funneled more than \$100,000 to Doyle's campaign and others in an attempt to win approval of an \$800 million casino he had been developing in Kenosha. Troha agreed to sell his interest in the project to the Michigan Tribe of Connecticut shortly before he was indicted.

He was adamant that his campaign had done nothing wrong, by accepting money from the Troha family and said he would return it unless a court decided Troha had given money illegally.

"We received checks from people that were sent to our office," Doyle said. "We did react to what you are supposed to do, which is to verify who sent the check and what their occupation was and to report it."

Troha and his relatives have donated \$200,000 to Doyle since 2002, campaign finance records show. That makes Troha the single largest donor to Doyle, according to the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign.

The indictment accuses Troha's campaign of asking Troha to help raise money in June 2005. On June 29 and June 29, eight Troha family members donated \$72,000 to the governor's campaign.

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- Fungal smelling breath
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- Facial pressure
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- Cough



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