

Elkhorn Music Festival Chamber Players concert featuring Patricia George, Julianne Eberl, Mark Neiwrth and Joan Tallman at 8 p.m. Friday at University Place, Idaho Falls.

Idaho Falls, Idaho

Thursday, February 9, 1989

Rigby official faults teen-age suspect's classmates

By CHRISTINE LIEBENTHAL

RIGBY — A hostage situation at Rigby Junior High School Wednesday morning could have been averted if the 14-year-old suspect's classmates had told school officials what they knew about his plans, says Jefferson County School Superintendent Elwood Wilson said.

"My personal concern is that kids need to be more conscious. Apparently, there had been talk among his peers that he was planning to take a hostage. Kids have got to be less afraid of being a 'narc,'" Wilson said in an interview Wednesday afternoon.

Authorities would not release the boy's name because of his age. At a detention hearing Wednesday afternoon, Magistrate Michael Kennedy ruled that the boy would remain in

police custody. Detention hearings determine if officials have enough evidence to keep a juvenile in custody and whether suspects are a danger to themselves or to society. The youth was taken to the Fremont County Juvenile Detention Center at St. Anthony Wednesday evening. He faces charges of kidnapping, aggravated assault with a deadly weapon and aggravated assault on a police officer, Rigby Police Chief Larry Anderson said.

Juveniles are not eligible for bail. Wilson said he's not sure what the district can do to prevent similar situations from happening.

"We'll do whatever we can do. I don't know what could have been done to prevent it," he said.

"Fortunately for everyone involved, no one was hurt," Anderson said at a news conference

Wednesday afternoon.

Police have not yet determined the boy's motive, Jefferson County Sheriff Blair Olsen said. The youth knew the 14-year-old girl he took hostage, he said.

Olsen said the student pulled the .22 caliber revolver in a class just before 11 a.m. Olsen said the boy threatened a teacher and two students, Olsen said.

"The gun was loaded, the hammer was cocked, and his finger was on the trigger," he said.

The youth brought the gun from home, Olsen said.

The youth then took a classmate out of the room at gunpoint, Olsen said. They left the school and went across the street to the Rigby LDS Stake Center, he said.

Wanda Phillips of Rigby and another woman were in the middle

of a morning workout, walking around the track inside the gym at the stake center, when the building's custodian, Leon Guymon, came in.

"He came to the door, put his finger to his lips, and quietly led us out," Mrs. Phillips said.

She said Guymon knew the boy was holding a hostage, and quickly evacuated the women and two classes of seminary students from the building.

"He kept a cool head. He knew the kids were there. He kept his cool and he didn't try to be a hero," she said.

Guymon, contacted at home Wednesday night, declined comment.

Guymon called the Rigby Police Department and Jefferson County Sheriff's Office. Officers went to the scene and spotted the boy and the hostage in a hallway, Anderson said.

The four officers waited around the corner in a different hallway, Olsen said. The girl was walking ahead of the boy, who was still holding her at gunpoint, he said. She walked around the corner first, and officers quickly got her out of the way, he said.

"This little girl is a brave little girl," Anderson said. "When she saw the officers, she made no reaction."

The youth pointed the gun at one of the officers, Olsen said. The other three immediately moved in on the boy, got the gun out of his hand and wrestled him to the ground, Olsen said.

Olsen said the officers thought they were in danger of being shot.

"Everybody had that thought going through their mind, but at that point there was no recourse but to get the gun," he said.

"We had the element of surprise to our advantage," he said.

Officers were stationed outside the building to keep people away, Olsen said.

There was no dialogue between the boy and police, Olsen said.

Officers were prepared for the first hostage situation they'd had to handle, Olsen and Anderson said.

Deputy Jefferson County Prosecutor Steve Clark said he will consider a number of factors before deciding whether to try the boy as an adult.

Anderson said he thought the school handled the situation well. As a safety measure, school custodians locked the doors to all the classrooms until police had apprehended the youth, Olsen said. The students were locked in for about one hour, he said.



Squirelly

TRYING TO GET warm, this well-fed squirrel sits in the sunshine on a fence on Juniper Drive at Idaho Falls this week. Cold weather is expected to continue Saturday and Sunday, but may begin to warm next week. (Post-Register/Monte LaOrange)

Council reviews greenbelt plans

By CHRISTINE LIEBENTHAL

Although the banks of the Snake River in Idaho Falls are covered with snow, the Idaho Falls City Council is dreaming of a green riverfront.

The council this week reviewed plans for a greenbelt with City Planning Consultant Lee Nellis. The proposed greenbelt would cover stretches of the riverfront between John's Hole Bridge and Broadway, south of Broadway to Panchari Drive, and north of John's Hole Bridge to the city's upper power plant.

The city plans to spend three to five years developing the greenbelt, installing trails for bicycling, running and walking, building landscaped sitting areas and planting flower beds.

The city spent about \$80,000 in private grant money on the project last year, Mayor Tom Campbell said.

The city plans to spend about \$55,000 this year, he said, about \$30,000 of which will come from a state grant, with the additional \$25,000 coming from the city's general fund. He said the city will fund the project year by year.

Nellis said he has included an arboretum in the plans, in which a sampling of trees and shrubs that thrive in the Idaho Falls area will be planted.

One controversial part of the plan recommends that part of River Parkway be closed between the Driftwood Motel and Land Bank Street. A cul-de-sac at the end of the road just beyond the motel would serve as a vehicle turnaround.

Businessmen along River Parkway protested the proposed closure of the

Council to discuss road closure

Topping the Idaho Falls City Council's agenda tonight is discussion on a proposal to close part of River Parkway.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 7:30 p.m. at the Electrical Division Building at 140 S. Capital Ave. The proposal is the first item on the agenda.

road at a council meeting last June, saying it would hurt business.

The area between John's Hole Bridge and Broadway includes a 10-foot concrete path to accommodate walkers and bicyclists. But councilman Paul Hovey said he thinks a narrow gravel path would be sufficient and cost less.

"I'm not sure why you have to have a trail for bicycles," Hovey said. "It seems to me you have a lot of added cost when you have to have a 10-foot path."

Nellis said the cost needs to be taken into consideration, but that a wide trail would allow cyclists to enjoy the river.

The proposal includes a major reconstruction of Memorial Drive, which would include eliminating the parking spaces in the center of the street and changing the parallel parking spaces on both sides of the street to angle parking spaces. A landscaped divider would be put in the middle of the street.

Congressmen to offer land bill for WIPP

By KEVIN RICHERT

A New Mexico congressman and Rep. Richard Stallings have introduced a land withdrawal bill for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant near Carlsbad, N.M.

Stallings, D-Idaho, and Rep. Joe Skeen, R-N.M., aren't alone, however. A second bill is being planned by Rep. Bill Richardson, D-N.M., although Richardson spokesman Stu Nagurka said the bill has not been introduced yet.

In most areas, the two bills are similar. Both would take over 10,000 acres of land out of public use for WIPP, a permanent underground storage site for nuclear waste.

Both also would provide \$250 million in payments to New Mexico for road improvements and compensa-

tion for the state for the land withdrawal.

The bills differ on how much waste can be stored at WIPP during its five-year trial period.

The Skeen-Stallings bill would allow the Department of Energy to fill WIPP to up to 8 percent of capacity during tests.

Disposal cannot exceed the 8 percent ceiling until Environmental Protection Agency disposal standards are met, Skeen spokeswoman Sherry Kiesling said.

However, she said the 8 percent figure is strictly a cap. "The DOE still has to justify every barrel that they put in there."

The Richardson bill would require "full compliance" with EPA disposal standards, Nagurka said. No waste would be disposed at WIPP until the

DOE met these guidelines.

"I don't see that as an insurmountable issue," Stallings said. By summer or fall, he expects one of the bills to emerge as a frontrunner with consensus support.

Eventually, Nagurka expects a compromise between no disposal and 8 percent.

"Somewhere in that range will be the final bill," he said.

Before WIPP can open, DOE must complete several steps, including final safety analysis work and certification of containers to transport the waste. Ms. Kiesling is hopeful these steps will be completed by the end of the year.

DOE officials want to open WIPP by Sept. 1.

"We want to have the bill in place," she said, "so (DOE's) not sit-

ting around waiting for Congress to take action."

Stallings agrees that DOE "has a lot to do" to get WIPP ready. However, he said the land withdrawal process will take time as well.

"We did need a vehicle. We did need to get this process going," he said.

Meanwhile, DOE's Rocky Flats site outside Denver has very limited storage space for transuranic waste. It could be filled to capacity within a month, Stallings said.

And Gov. Cecil Andrus — who has banned the DOE from shipping transuranic waste from Rocky Flats to the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory — has insisted on a bill allowing 8 percent waste disposal at WIPP in order to cut into the back-

log of waste at the INEL, Stallings said.

"We have that as a driving force," he said.

In October, Andrus banned transuranic waste shipments into Idaho, citing delays in opening WIPP.

In a prepared statement, Andrus said he was encouraged by this morning's action on Capitol Hill, but said his waste ban remains intact.

WIPP is slated to handle two million cubic feet of transuranic waste in temporary storage at the INEL. Some has been stored at the INEL's Radioactive Waste Management Complex since the early 1970s.

Over several years, RWMC workers have certified about 15,000 drums of waste for permanent storage at WIPP.

In brief

Bonneville board sets Feb. 15 meeting

The Bonneville School Board will meet at 7:30 p.m. Feb. 15.

The meeting, normally held on the second Wednesday of each month, was rescheduled in January.

'Pennies' drive rescheduled

The Pennies-by-the-Inch drive, a fund-raiser for Primary Children's Medical Center in Salt Lake City, begins Monday and will continue through Feb. 28 in Idaho Falls.

The drive had been scheduled earlier, but was postponed due to the cold weather.

Children from throughout the West are treated at the hospital, regardless of their ability to pay. Volunteers will be going door-to-door to ask for contributions.

Beverly Branson of Idaho Falls is area chairman.

Skyline presents play for children

The Skyline High School Shoe-string Players will present a children's play "The Magical Porridge Pot" Saturday afternoon.

The 30-minute play will be presented at 2 p.m. at Longfellow Elementary School. Admission is 50 cents, said Debbie Gerard, Skyline High School drama teacher.

Idaho Falls students to remain in class

Idaho Falls School District students will be dismissed at the regular time Monday, district officials have decided.

District officials said earlier this week that classes would be dismissed early Monday for a teacher in-service day.

But because of the five days district schools were closed due to inclement weather, the decision was made to dismiss classes at the regular time, said Dorothy Mandiloff, district spokeswoman.

Clark ranchers look at long-term damage

By POST-REGISTER STAFF

DUBOIS — Livestock losses may not be as bad as originally feared, but the worst is not yet over for ranchers in storm-ravaged Clark County, according to the Idaho Bureau of Disaster Services.

Ranchers have found many animals alive, but extremely weak after several days without food. Their concern now is the long-range effects the damage will have on the animals, especially during lambing and calving later this spring.

The confirmed number of dead domestic animals reached 1,638 as of this morning, said Bonnie Stoddard, a spokeswoman for the bureau.

Tom McCullough, who ranches south of Spencer, found nearly 350 snow-covered animals had sought shelter in canyons and draws, Mrs. Stoddard said. He has found only three of his cattle dead so far, she said.

The problem facing stockmen now is getting hay to stranded animals and saving animals whose limbs were frozen during the storm, Mrs. Stoddard said.

"It's not over for the livestock people," she said. Ranchers are finding cows with frozen udders and bags and bulls with frozen testicles. Frozen ears and legs are also a problem.

Many ranchers will begin lambing and calving operations in another month, and do not know how many animals will abort or have no milk for their young.

Meanwhile, the search is continuing for livestock. An Idaho National Guard helicopter was scheduled to search the Cedar Butte, Hamer and Medicine Lodge areas today.

Last week's blizzard kept ranchers from their livestock for four days last week. Winds of 50 to 60 miles per hour, driving the temperature to as low as minus 110 degrees.

Sheep and cattle suffocated or froze as they scattered in the storm.

Salt Lake By-products in Salt Lake City, the sister company of Golden Valley Packers in Roberts, is planning to haul the sheep and cattle carcasses to its plant for processing, said Al Alan, hide warehouse supervisor said.

Engineer says Idaho 'safe'

By CHUCK MALLOY

BOISE — Small counties can provide misleading numbers in regard to cancer, an Idaho National Engineering Laboratory chemical engineer told a House committee Wednesday.

Russ Brown of Idaho Falls, a Westinghouse Idaho Nuclear Co. engineer, spent almost an hour criticizing a 4-year-old study that indicated a high rate of cancer in Clark County.

That county, and the state as a whole, are well below the national average in incidences of cancer, Brown told the Health and Welfare Committee.

"If you live in Idaho, you're in pretty good shape," he said in summary. "Idaho is a safe place to live, especially eastern Idaho."

But Richard Hansen of Norland, a small community near Rupert, said later in a telephone interview that Brown's testimony did not explain the high rate of cancer near his home.

"I'm looking out my window and see 11 homes, and 100 percent of those homes have had incidence of cancer," he said. "I'm not saying that the INEL or anything else has caused it — I don't know enough to say that. All I'm saying is that somebody needs to come here and do a better study."

Hansen said Minidoka County has a low cancer rate. "But when it hits so many people who are living here or have lived here, you have a whole different problem."

Senate Republican Caucus Chairman Lynn Tominga, of Rupert, said the situation has caused some alarm in the Norland area.

"I have a concern, because I live up there too," Tominga said. "But I don't think it's from the INEL, because the county is on the same water system. And the types of cancer that have been reported are not commonly caused by radiation."

Brown was invited to the committee meeting by Rep. Reed Hansen, R-Idaho Falls, the committee chairman. He said he wanted someone to refute a recent newspaper article about cancer in the Norland area.

Brown did not address that problem specifically, but blasted the findings in a study issued four years ago by Michael Blain, a sociology instructor at Boise State University, and Dr. Carl Johnson of Colorado. That report was sponsored by the Snake River Alliance.

"They created fear where none was justified," Brown said.

After his testimony, Brown said he did not have data concerning the alleged rash of cancer in Norland.

Rep. Hansen was criticized by committee members for allowing one-sided testimony.

"It's insulting to not have the other side of the story," said Rep. Ron Black, R-Twin Falls. "It's unfortunate that opposing groups are not available to ask questions."

Rep. Deanna Vickers, D-Lewiston, said after the meeting that it was "insulting" to assume legislators could be swayed by one newspaper article. But she said there were two sides to an issue that should be explored. She is not willing to accept blindly that there are no risks or dangers connected with the INEL, she said.

"There are so many unknowns," she said. "Hanford (Wash.) was the darling of the nuclear industry 15 years ago and now they're shutting it down."

Rep. Hansen said his intent was not to set up a debate on the issue in his committee. He said he would be willing to hear opposing testimony from responsible individuals or groups.

Richard Hansen said he'd be glad to testify before the committee. But he was scheduled to leave today for Central America. He said he would not return until after the legislative session.