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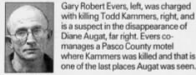
WEATHER High 89, low 73

Fatal shooting revives case of missing woman

By COLLEEN JENKINS and TAMARA LUSH

HUDSON — The run-down buildings of the Coral Sands Motel of U.S. 19 are a haven for people seeking cheap, no-frills lodging. But on Friday, even those people were leaving the motel.

About 4 a.m. Wednesday, two men wearing black ski masks and carrying guns opened the office door. They got a look at the manager yanked to her boyfriend.



Gary Robert Evers, left, was charged with killing Todd Kammers, right, and is a suspect in the disappearance of Diane Augat, far right. Evers co-manages a Pasco County motel where Kammers was killed and that is one of the last places Augat was seen.



Todd Kammers, 26, a man with a criminal record that includes burglary, battery and battery on a law enforcement officer.

About 3 p.m. Friday, a detective called Deborah Crain. She told the St. Petersburg Times that Evers has long been a suspect in the disappearance of her sister.

The detective "suggested me to know that (Evers) was arrested," Crain said.

Back in 1996, detectives had told Crain that one of the last places her sister, Diane Augat, was seen was the Coral Sands Motel, co-managed by Evers and his girlfriend, Rose Kasper, since 1997.

Six days after her disappearance, the tip of Augat's middle finger was found on U.S. 19 — one block from the Coral Sands. She

THE TIMES TODAY



Retired clerk wins jackpot

Alcrist Cash-Flora is \$20.9-million richer after taking a lump-sum payment on the largest single-state lottery jackpot in history. 3A

Milosevic fallout

In the wake of Slobodan Milosevic's extradition, billions in foreign aid are granted and Yugoslavia's prime minister resigns. 2A

LOCAL

Murder details unsealed

Indictments against the two men charged in the 1997 murder of 9-year-old Shara Fergert paint a grim picture of the crime. 1B

An eye on Your

A new monitoring system being installed in Centro Your could help solve the riddle of three for-wanted criminals. 1B

SPORTS

hankovic ousts teen

Three-time Wimbledon finalist Goran Ivanisevic slips past hereditary tennis Andy Roddick, Sampras and Capriati also advance. 1C

Yankees 7, Rays 5

The Rays' surge is real, but can't overcome New York as Yankee Stadium despite Aubrey Huff's three hits and three RBIs. 1C



Up, up and away

The Pikes Peak International Hill Climb finish line is less than a mile from the start. But it takes 12.5 miles to get there. 1C

BUSINESS

Postal rate hike starts

Rates on several items — including basic first-class mail — will rise Sunday as the Postal Service reacts to a potential shortfall. 1E

HOUSES

Rental, sweet rental

The number of renters by choice, those who earn \$20,000 or more, is set to rise as new, larger and more modern apartments are responding. 1F

Keeping energy use down

With Joe Dalley's checklist, a walk-through your home will save quick bucks, your checkbook will be more energy efficient. 1D



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Senate sets up patients' bill fight

As the Democrat-backed bill prevails, opponents, including the president, work to persuade the House to restrict the right to sue.

By Knight-Ridder Newspapers

WASHINGTON — The Senate approved a sweeping bill Friday night that would give health-care patients new rights and leverage over their managed care plans, as Republicans sided repeatedly to weaken the bill.

The landmark bill, which passed 59-36, would clamp down on insurers that delay or deny necessary medical care. Nine Republicans joined all 50 Senate Democrats in voting for the legislation.

It would force managed-care firms to provide a host of basic medical services such as access to specialists, emergency room care and experimental treatments. It also would establish an important new right for 180-million insured Americans to sue for damage awards if insurers or managed-care plans make medical decisions that cause injury or death.

"Today's vote brings us a giant step closer to guaranteeing that millions of Americans will no longer be powerless when their HMOs override their doctors and deny needed care," said Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., who sponsored the bill with Sens. John McCain, R-Ariz., and John Edwards, D-N.C.

President Bush has threatened to veto the measure because it would reward trial lawyers.

Please see PATIENTS 7A

Racial issues keep dogging Republicans

Gov. Jeb Bush remains a frequent target of criticism as the 2002 gubernatorial election approaches.

By TIM NICKENS

Gov. Jeb Bush and other Florida Republicans, their modest inroads among black voters washed away, are on the defensive as they struggle to limit the damage done by the 2002 elections.

Democrats are pounding away at Bush's overall record of affirmative action and the presidential election recount last year that left thousands of black voters convinced that their ballots for Al Gore were improperly discarded. Both issues were highlighted at last week's Democratic Party leadership dinner in Miami Beach, an unstable effort to encourage blacks to return to the polls in record numbers next year and vote against Bush.

But while the attacks by Florida Democrats are unusually well-choreographed, frustrated Republicans are uncharacteristically subdued in their response.

The governor and his supporters vigorously

Please see RACE 12A

"I look on this as an insurance policy." — VICE PRESIDENT DICK CHENEY

Cheney likely to get heartbeat regulator



At a hastily announced news conference Friday morning, Vice President Dick Cheney announced he had experienced several episodes of rapid heartbeat. Tests will be done today to determine if he needs a device to slow the fast rhythms.

WASHINGTON — Vice President Dick Cheney said Friday that doctors would almost certainly implant a sophisticated heart pacemaker and defibrillator in his chest during an operation today, his third significant medical procedure to combat heart disease since he was elected vice president.

Cheney, appearing in the White House press room on short notice Friday morning, said he had decided to have the small electronic device inserted to counter periodic episodes of rapid heart rhythms, a problem that often develops among patients who have had a history of heart attacks. A final decision will be made after tests are conducted this morning.

But Cheney, 60, insisted that he would be back at work on Monday, participating in full national security briefings with President Bush. He said his doctors had assured him that the device, called an implantable cardioverter defibrillator, would not impair his ability to do his job.

Cheney, speaking in his characteristic, low-key manner, said that he discussed the procedure with Bush on Tuesday, and that Bush had urged him to go ahead with it. He said he has never discussed resigning his post with the president.

"If there were any inhibition on my ability to function, it'd be the doctors' judgment that any of those developments constituted the kind of information that indicated I would not be able to perform. It'd be the first to send down," Cheney said.

His counselor and spokeswoman, Mary Matalin, said in an interview on Friday that Cheney had extensively queried his doctor

after he underwent heart tests. Vice President Dick Cheney may be given a "smart" pacemaker if doctors think his episodes of irregular heartbeats are potentially dangerous. The test lasts two to four hours.

Heart test: Electrophysiology study (EPS) Electrode inserted into heart to measure how it beats under stress. 1 Thin probe threaded up vein to heart. 2 Heart stimulated with electric signals to vary its speed. 3 If irregular beat occurs, doctor gives different medicines to see which corrects beat fast.

Possible treatment: Implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD) An ICD is about the size of a small pager. It is implanted under the skin in the upper chest and wire leads are threaded through veins that connect to the heart chambers. The wire leads have sensors that detect the heartbeat, carrying the information to the control unit. The sensors detect when the heart suddenly races, causing the defibrillator to send a charge of electricity to stabilize and slow the beat. Sometimes after the shock, the pacemaker part of the device kicks in to control the heart rate.

Source: Associated Press, Knight-Ridder Tribune. Times art — JEFF GOERTZEN. Please see CHENEY 15A