

Rivendell hospital faces possible license removal

SEWARD (AP) — A state Health Department team began investigating Thursday whether the license should be continued for a children's psychiatric hospital.

Rivendell Psychiatric Center faces allegations of patient mistreatment and Medicaid fraud. Treatment, staff training and safety at the hospital are being investigated, said department spokeswoman Marla Augustine.

Because the mental hospital plans to close its doors next week, inspectors primarily will document practices in case facility officials change their mind, she said.

The center has been under investigation since Sept. 27 by the Nebraska State Patrol, Seward County attorney's office and Social Services officials.

An affidavit in support of a search warrant used to seize documents at the hospital cited allegations of sex arranged between patients, improper sedation and restraint of patients, in-

sufficient training of staff and poor management practices. Patients at the center were between the ages of 5 and 18 years old.

Rivendell officials have said a preliminary internal investigation showed nothing to support the allegations.

Social Services has concluded there are problems in treatment, monitoring of medication and special programs.

Augustine said the state last inspected Rivendell in July and received no complaints about treatment until last week. Rivendell has been licensed in Nebraska since 1986.

Rivendell officials decided to close the hospital after the state announced Wednesday it was removing all of the children in its care from Rivendell. State wards and Medicaid patients account for most of Rivendell's patients.

Rivendell had 39 patients Wednesday, compared with 51 late last week.

Adoption battle heard again

OMAHA (AP) — The state Supreme Court will hear arguments Friday for the second time in an adoption battle, and apparently no one will know why until court is in session.

The case pits a birth father who has had problems with drugs, drinking and brushes with the law against an adoptive couple living in small-town Nebraska. The biological father, Martin Gomez of Omaha, says he never gave up the two children who were given up for adoption by their unmarried mother.

It is rare for the Supreme Court to request a rehearing. The high court first heard arguments in the case in April. The order for another hearing did not give a reason.

Gomez wants custody of 9-year-old Cassandra and 6-year-old Nicholas. He is asking the court to remove them from the custody of Tim and Karen Savage of Murray,

who have cared for them since 1991.

The Savages' attorney, Herbert Elworth of Plattsmouth, said the Cass County Court already had legally terminated Gomez's parental rights by ruling him an unfit father. The only question to be decided, he said, is what action is in the best interests of the children.

Catherine Mahern of the Creighton Legal Clinic represents Gomez. She says the children's interests are not an issue legally until the birth father consents to the adoption — and he has not.

The birth mother, Anita Bechtold of Omaha, wants the children to remain with the Savages, according to her attorney, Edward Fogarty.

Gomez and Bechtold separated in 1990. The court record shows Gomez did not file a paternity claim to Cassandra and Nicholas until he learned they were being adopted.

Under state law, an unwed fa-

ther has five days after the birth of his child to file papers saying he will assert parental rights. Gomez missed that deadline — Cassandra was born in 1986, Nicholas in 1989. They were adopted in 1991.

Gomez asked Cass County Court for a hearing on his parental fitness in order to gain custody and stop the adoption.

Testimony showed he had problems with alcohol and drugs, had run-ins with police, did not pay any of the costs of the births of either child and offered little financial or emotional support.

The court found him to be unfit.

Gomez appealed to the District Court, which reversed the lower court, saying there was not enough evidence to show that he was unfit. The state Court of Appeals sided with the District Court, and ordered the children returned to Gomez. The Savages appealed to the Supreme Court.

WHEN YOU RIDE DRUNK, ONE MORE FOR THE ROAD CAN HAVE AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT MEANING.

Alcohol quickly affects your judgment, balance, and coordination. Don't drink and ride. Or your last drink might be your last drink.

MOTORCYCLE SAFETY FOUNDATION

PERM SALE

Complete consultation, perm, cut, style and a PERM FRESH conditioner to take home.

only \$39.00

SHEAR SUCCESS

210 GATEWAY N. 467-3625

Long hair extra

SYSTEME BIOLAGE[®]
BY MATRIX ESSENTIALS

TANNING

10 & 20 Minute Beds

Save 25%

on all Lotions.

1 Month Unlimited

\$21.95

12 Session

\$22.95

Single Session

\$1.98

SHEAR SUCCESS

210 Gateway N. 467-3625

DOUGLAS THEATRES

Movie Info:
441-0222
Call for Showtimes!

PRESS:

- ① CINEMA TWIN
- ② DOUGLAS
- ③ EAST PARK 3
- ④ EDGEWOOD 3
- ⑤ THE LINCOLN
- ⑥ PLAZA 4
- ⑦ STARSHIP
- ⑧ STUART
- ⑨ COMING SOON

Welcome to Fall Sidewalk Sale



Save

20-30-50%

outside and throughout the store.

Our Big Fall

Extravaganza!

Everything on Sale!

Great Clothes At Great Popular Prices

Join us for great savings storewide on this fall's newest men's and women's clothing, sportswear, and footwear.

3 Days Only

Friday 10-6
Saturday 10-6
Sunday 12-6

the Post and Nickel

Men's and Women's Clothing, Sportswear, and Footwear
Downtown at 14th & P

